Part C

Thematic Analysis

Part C includes chapters three, four and five.

Chapter III Anthropological Concepts

This chapter contains three sections

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Chapter III  Section 1

The Image and the Likeness of God in Man

Introduction.

\(\text{ܢܫܐ ܒܨܠܡܢ  ܐܦ ܒܕܡܘܬܢ} = \text{“Let us make man in our image and likeness”}^{682}\). ‘Image’ (\(\text{s}\)\(\text{almo}\)) and ‘likeness’ (\(\text{dmuto}\)) are the two key words – the two wheels on which the chariot – of the Four Mimre ‘On Creation’ of Mar Jacob of Sarug moves along from the beginning till the end. They are the nucleus around which the whole story revolves. Mar Jacob quotes the Biblical passage, “let us make man in our image” over and over again in his mimre (\(\text{FMC}\) I 29, 52, 146, 220, 248, III 181 etc.).

Mar Jacob of Sarug is very much impressed in the verses of the creation narrative of the Bible, especially of the creation of man. Usually the Pentateuch, especially the Book of Genesis of the Holy Scripture is being explained with the help of three traditions: Yahwist, Elohist and Priestly, and in particular with Yahwist and Priestly traditions.\(^{683}\) In the creation narrative of man in the first two chapters of the Book of Genesis, we see the influence of the Yahwist and Priestly traditions.\(^{684}\) Comparing to the creation of other creatures, the design and the creation of man were unique: “Male and female He created them”,\(^{685}\) “The Lord God created man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living being”\(^{686}\) and “So God created man in His own image; in the image of

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\(^{682}\) Gen. 1/26.
\(^{684}\) Cf. Ibid., 11-12.
\(^{685}\) Gen. 1/27.
\(^{686}\) Gen. 2/7.
God He created him”. Mar Jacob doesn’t introduce in his Four Mimre ‘On Creation’ any debate on the issue of these traditions and on the disparity between the two narrations on the creation of man, but accepts both the traditions; Yahwist and Priestly, and he combines the creation narrative of both the traditions as it is given in the Holy Scripture.

In the following session, after an etymological analysis we discuss on the distinction between the ‘image’ (šalmo) and the ‘likeness’ (dmuto) and there we find how Mar Jacob ascertains the connotation of the ‘likeness’ (dmuto). Subsequently we look into the narration on the construction of the ‘image’ (šalmo) and then to the greatness of the ‘image’ (šalmo). Since the image of God is granted to the dust (dahiho), poet’s notions on the dust are included afterwards. In order to see the prominence of Mar Jacob among the great fathers of the Church, we try to compare his ideas on the ‘image and likeness’ with that of theirs.

III.1. A. **Use of various terms**

We see that Mar Jacob employs a variety of terms in his mimre to illustrate a particular concept. This shows his erudition, poetical calibre and rich vocabulary. In the context of ‘image and likeness’ the following terms are found being used in the mimre.

III. 1. A. 1. **Various terms employed in the Mimre for ‘Creation’**

Diverse terms are being employed in the mimre by the poet in order to speak about God’s creation. For him, the generating act of God is creating, fashioning, making, moulding, constructing, mixing, imprinting, setting in order, devising, composing, constituting, binding together, arranging etc. The terms used by the poet are:

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687 Gen. 1/27 and 9/6.
It doesn’t seem that he employs a distinct term particularly to refer the creation of man and some other terms to indicate the creation of other creatures, instead he uses these terms interchangeably. All these terms are used synonymously to connote the creation of the creatures, including man. Hence a comparison among these terms in order to discern the mind of the poet with regard to the special creation of man seems to be unnecessary. At the same time all these terms contain notions of a conscious effort of a skilful Being in order to produce the effect. But it is noticeable how much the poet is fascinated with the comeliness of the created world as well as of the image, because, this fascination urges the poetic mind of Mar Jacob to use more diverse terms that connote fashioning and decoration of the image than
simply using ܕܢ (bro = to create) or ܚܕ (’bad = to make). Some of such decorative terms used in the mimre are ܓܒܠ (gbal = to form, fashion, mould), ܕܡ (taqen = to construct, frame, fashion, furnish), ܡܣܠ (hlat = to mingle, mix, unite), ܢܕ (rakeb = to compound, put together, construct), ܣܡ (hosal = to frame, devise, fabricate), ܒܐ (tba’ = to imprint, mark, coin), ܪܥ (šmad = to bind together, bind up), ܫܐ (šro = to rip up, mangle), ܫܐ (kden = to yoke, couple, bind).688

III. 1. A. 2. Various terms used in the Mimre for ‘Image’ and ‘Likeness’

Mar Jacob employs different terms to denote the image. He always uses singular noun for the image except in few places (FMC III 64, IV 66, 96). But in FMC IV 66, even though, the noun ܪܘܬܐ (šuroto) is given in plural, since its suffix is given in singular, it can also be considered a singular noun and the seyame diacritic sign may be a printing mistake. But in FMC III 64 and IV 96, ܪܘܬܐ (šuroto) is used in plural number. In FMC III 64 it is used to denote images of various companies of the angels and in FMC IV 96 it is given in plural, may be to denote the whole limbs of the image.

688 Cf. Smith, Compendious Syriac Dictionary.
Various terms for ‘image and likness’

The poet employs various terms to denote the image, he doesn’t use separate terms for the image of God and the image of man. Whenever the poet refers to the image of God which is imparted to man, he uses the above mentioned terms except (dmuto) (FMC I 181-182, 185-188, 59, 271 etc.), but wherever he speaks of the model in which the image is created and about the incarnation of the Son of God, he uses (dmuto) (FMC I 63-64, 61-62, 39-40 etc.). But we see also that while he speaks of the image of the Son of God, he uses other words also like (šalmo) instead of (dmuto) (Eg. FMC I 183, 199, 214 etc.). Moreover, we find that Mar Jacob uses (šalmo) analogously to denote the inner meaning of the Scriptures also. It is in this sense that he requests God to direct his vision towards the eternal truths of the Word of God:

“Direct the vision of my eyes to the image (šalmo) of your writings” (FMC II 11).
But here, actually the poet is using the term ܐܡܐ (šalmo) not in a quite different manner, because, he considers the Scripture as the image of God,\textsuperscript{689} by the reason that there is no place in the Scripture where there is no presence of the Son of God (\textit{FMC} I 25-28). Hence, here, the use of (šalmo) indirectly connotes to the image (šalmo) of God that he sees in the Scripture.

In one place of the mimre ܘܪܬܐ (šurto) is found used in its metaphorical sense (\textit{FMC} II 274). There the poet gives the connotation as of the objects that adorn the image and hence, there it is translated as ‘embroidery’. In some other places like \textit{FMC} IV 96, 333 etc. ܘܪܬܐ (šurto) is used to denote the beautiful form of the image as well as to mention the similarity as in III 64; in both the cases the plural number of ܘܪܬܐ (šurto) is used.

III. 1. B. \textbf{Distinction between image and likeness}

God’s words, ܢܫܐ ܒܨܠܡܢ ܐܦ ܒܕܡܘܬܢ (ne’bed nošo bšalman op badmutan) = “Let us make man in our image and likeness”\textsuperscript{690} is the basis of the narrative of man’s creation. The precise distinction between the image and the likeness as well as the aspects to which they correspond to is not a perfectly solved topic of discussion even today. A lot of versions have been brought forth on the terms, ‘image’ (šalmo) and ‘likeness’ (dmuto).

III. 1. B. 1. \textbf{General notions}

Among the various interpretations on the issue, some even believe and interpret it as

\textsuperscript{689} See below, p. 261.
\textsuperscript{690} Gen. 1/26.
that the ‘likeness’ (dmuto) lies in the physiological structure of man. King James Version of
the Bible conceives the image as, “Adam is in the image of God in the sense that he is a
reasoning, moral being with emotions and a spiritual nature. It is the moral and spiritual nature
that is lacking in the rest of the creatures on earth”. It is a too shallow conception of the
class of the image of God in man. A dictionary of the Bible puts together various
interpretations on the matter: “Kohler (says) that likeness consists in the erect stature of man,
which symbolises his elevation over the animals and his power to rule them. T. C. Vriezen
thinks that the likeness means a direct and positive relation of community between God and
man...... W. Eichrodt places the likeness in the spiritual qualities of man, his capacity of self-
consciousness and self-determination – in a word, his personality” A dictionary of Biblical
theology enumerates a few phases of the image and likeness of man; “... to be in the image of
God, in His likeness, implies the power to rule over all earthly creatures, and also, seemingly,
if not to create, at least to procreate living images. Ordinarily, the texts of the O T (Ps.8; Si 17)
develop the first theme, that of domination”.

Since God is eternal, yet another characteristic
of man that relates his image with that of God is the immortality that he possessed at his pre-

sin state.

On the basis of the scriptural narration on the generating of Eve, some even points to
man’s transition from ‘in’ the image’ to a superior level of ‘is’ the image’. When Adam was
created he was in the image of God. But, when he gives birth to Eve he acts as the image of
God. The Jerome Biblical commentary conceives the image and likeness as the total
personality of man, as his representation on earth and as his sovereignty over the creatures:

694 Cf. Ibid.
696 Cf. Ibid.
“Selēm (image) means, ordinarily, an exact copy or reproduction. Again, the harshness of the implication is softened by the addition of demut (likeness), ordinarily meaning resemblance or similarity. The Semites knew of no dichotomy in man in our terms; the whole man, as a complete personality, had God’s image, manifested especially in the resulting ability to rule over other creatures. Man, as God’s image, is his representative on earth”.

Thus general notions on the ‘image and likeness’ vary as there are innumerable explanations.

III. 1. B. 2. Mar Jacob’s distinction between ‘image and the likeness’

Mar Jacob also distinguishes the ‘image’ (šalmo) and ‘likeness’ (dmuto) on the basis of the passage, “Let us make man in our image and likeness”. On this basis he formulates his anthropology also. Mar Jacob in his Four Mimre ‘On Creation’ explains the differences between the ‘image’ (šalmo) and ‘likeness’ (dmuto) as well as its complementarities. This distinction can be seen from his verse:

“The mercy had inclined God towards the dust and He gave it His image and fashioned it (in) the likeness of His only begotten Son” (FMC I 31-32)

where he uses both the terms distinctively.

The Four Mimre of Mar Jacob ‘On Creation’ also mentions man’s powers like
dominion over the creatures, freedom, immortality etc. The second and the fourth mimre among the four deal more with these topics. His thoughts on the dominion of man over the creatures can be summarised from his own verses:

“It is for Adam that the creatures and their construction were established; because of this, He made him in His image, so that he may possess them.

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697 Brown, Jerome Biblical Commentary, 11
698 Gen. 1/26.
700 Ibid., p. 347.
701 See the section, “Freedom and Freewill of Man”, p. 305 ff.
702 See below. P. 272 ff.
The creatures shall see the image of the Lord in Adam and it should fear him and be obedient to him, for, indeed he is its lord”, (FMC I 267-270)

“By his Creator, he was a god of flesh for the creatures”, (FMC IV 3)

“The whole creation is a great city which the Righteous one had built, and He established a rational image in it and made it its (city’s) lord”, (FMC IV 61-62).

“The Creator placed a source of light at the top of the crown, so that, as from the height, he should gaze the creatures which surrounded him”, (FMC IV 113-114)

“The Creator created something great out of nothing, so that, through his wisdom, he shall become a lord over everything”, (FMC IV 139-140),

“He gave the whole garden to the new children to possess” (FMC IV 173) etc.

It is true that, according to the poet, the freedom (hiruto) of man makes his conformity with God and this helps him to choose his immortality to become like God. There is a long narration in the mimre on the concept of freedom of man\(^{703}\) and also of his immortality.\(^{704}\) This freedom of choice is considered by Mar Jacob as the greatest power in man. So the poet writes,

“Freedom was also granted to the rational vessel, so that, he shall select death and life according to his Will.
And it is on account of this (reason) he is mortal or immortal:
that he will remain there, which his soul has inclined and selected”. (FMC II 141-144).

Wondering at the magnanimity the poet exclaims;

“This is great that he is powerful like God:
he will lead death and life which are placed in him”. (FMC II 289-290).

Mar Jacob conceives the image of man as the manifestation of God’s wisdom. In this respect he writes;

“The image was so great that the wisdom of the Most High could be seen through it
and the incomprehensible knowledge was proclaimed through it.
His image declared how much wise is his fashioner ........
Through this image the Lord had manifested His wisdom” (FMC IV 7-11).

Mar Jacob even speaks of Man’s power to create,

“His Will, like the tongue, creates (decides) everything:
to which side it attracts him, he outweighs that (side)” (FMC II 155-156).

\(^{703}\) See the section, “Freedom and Freewill of Man”, p. 305 ff.

\(^{704}\) See below, p. 272.
But, as many others do,\textsuperscript{705} Mar Jacob never synonymises the ‘likeness’ (\textit{dmuto}) with human image’s sharing with God’s powers alone; not only that, he never seems to compare the image of God in man either with his lordship over the creatures or with the freedom of choice or with the immortality of man or with the creative power in him alone. At the same time he considers all these as the greatness and characteristics of the image and at times he extols in the mimre all these powers of the image. Here, Mar Jacob, through his own explanation, surpasses even those later scholars in their explanation on the image of God in man. They say, “Created in the image of God, man can enter into dialogue with Him. He is not God, but lives dependant upon God in a relation analogous to that of a son to his father. But there is this difference that the image cannot subsist independently of the one whom it should express. .... Man exercises his role as image in two major activities: as image of the divine paternity, he ought to multiply and fill the earth; as image of the divine lordship, he ought to subject the earth to his domination. Man is the Lord of the earth; he is the presence of God on the earth”.\textsuperscript{706} In such a view, the scope and the greatness of the image of man seem to be curtailed: to the level of an obedient servant, if little more need to be added, to the level of an obedient minister or an ambassador. But, for Mar Jacob, the ‘likeness’ (\textit{dmuto}) of the image is much more than these ‘belongings’ of the image.

III. 1. B. 2. i. ‘\textbf{Likeness} (\textit{dmuto}) \textbf{is the} \textbf{resemblance} \textbf{of the Son}’

The uniqueness of Mar Jacob’s explanation consists in the fact that he perceives the ‘image of man’ (\textit{šalmo dnogo}) as the image of God the Father (\textit{šalmo daloho dabo}) and the ‘likeness’ (\textit{dmuto}) as the resemblance of His only begotten Son (\textit{dmuto dihīdo}) who is incarnated. But Mar Jacob calls the incarnated Son of God also as the image of God in another

\textsuperscript{705} See above, p. 254.
homily: “The Living Fire from the essence of the Father has descended: taking a body, and in the likeness of man, It went out into the world. The Image of the Father and the magnificent splendour of the divinity, behold, in the cave, is girded round in the swaddling clothes of poverty”.\textsuperscript{707} Also, in the same homily he calls Mary, the image of the Father; there he emphasises that she was created in the image of God the Father: “He fashioned His mother in the image of His Father when He created her and finally He came and was formed in her and became born from her”.\textsuperscript{708} Thus, for the poet, the image of God in man is the image (\textit{\textit{šalmo}}) of God the Father and his resemblance is the likeness (\textit{\textit{dmuto}}) of the only begotten Son of God.

This thesis of the poet can be seen from his words in the mimre,

\begin{quote}
\textit{“When the Father fashioned Adam, He fashioned him in the likeness of His son and in the resemblance (\textit{\textit{dmuto}}) of His incarnation He fashioned his image (\textit{\textit{ṣurto}}). In the image (\textit{\textit{ṣurto}}) of the Son, that came out to the world openly, He typified through it the head of the race, when He created him. At the heavenly Adam, who is Lord Jesus, the Father looked and in that resemblance (\textit{\textit{dmuto}}) He made Adam. Because, He is the Son of God, his name was there before the sun. He gave his likeness (\textit{\textit{dmuto}}), so that, the dust of Adam shall be honoured by it.”} (FMC I 181-188)
\end{quote}

Various other verses of the mimre also underline this thought of the poet:

\begin{quote}
\textit{“The dust received the semblance (\textit{\textit{dmuto}}) of the Son and it was exalted through it”}. (FMC I 59)
\end{quote}

In order to emphasise it, the poet narrates the fact on a cause-effect basis,

\begin{quote}
\textit{“For, if He had not given him His image (\textit{\textit{šalmo}}), when He created him, He would not have handed over His Son for him, while redeeming him. His love brought Him down in order to give His likeness (\textit{\textit{dmuto}}) to the dust and it is the same love that persuaded the Son of God to death”} (FMC I 37-40),

\textit{“He became great by that image which the Lord had given His servant and behold the reason which called the Son to die for his sake”} (FMC I 205-206) etc.
\end{quote}

Thus Mar Jacob affirms the veracity of man’s image and likeness beyond any doubt:

\textsuperscript{707} As quoted by Kollamparampil, Jacob of Sarug’s Homilies on the Nativity, 218.
\textsuperscript{708} Ibid, 216.
“From now onwards, when you hear the Father who says, “Let us make man in our image”, you look at the Son who manifested himself.

For, Adam had the image (šalmo) of that majesty; the advent of his Lord near him happened because of His love”. (FMC I 219-222).

Accordingly, one can distinguish the image and the likeness from the mimre of Mar Jacob ‘On Creation’ as that the image (šalmo) of God in man is the totality of man’s personality that he received from the Father and the likeness (dmuto) is the form in which the Son of God appeared in the world when He took flesh to redeem man.

The strong conviction of Mar Jacob on the creation of image, due to the firm imprinting in his heart with the living words from the Scripture, urges him to repeat the same notion in his other mimre also other than in the Four ‘On Creation’. Thus, in one of his homilies he writes, “Before the created things, the Father sealed the image of his Son, and formed him and showed him how he would shine among earthly beings. The Father looked at the image of his Son and formed Adam .... Because of this, he said, ‘let us make man in our image’, in this image of the child of Mary, the only begotten”.709 Thus it is clear how Mar Jacob understands the ‘likeness’.

III. 1. B. 2. ii. Scriptural background for the assertion of the ‘likeness’

For such a distinction between the image and likeness of man, it seems that, Mar Jacob is more influenced by the New Testament than the Old and that influence makes him to say that the likeness of man is the resemblance of the Son of God. Besides the passages from the Book of Genesis710 and the glory and splendour as the psalmist praises of man,711 as supports for the poet for his narration on the greatness of the image of man, the words of St. Paul also helped him to distinguish the image and likeness: “Christ is the visible likeness of the invisible

709 As quoted by Chesnut, Three Monophysite Christologies, 113.
710 Cf. Gen. 1/26, 5/1, 9/6.
711 Cf. Ps. 8/ 1 ff.
God. He is the first-born son, superior to all created things. For through him God created everything in heaven and on earth, the seen and unseen things, including spiritual powers, lords, rulers and authorities. God created the whole universe through him and for him”.\textsuperscript{712} St. Paul also speaks, “For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first born among many brethren”.\textsuperscript{713} The second letter of Paul to the Corinthians also alludes to the sharing of the resemblance between Christ and man: “But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord”.\textsuperscript{714} The concept of St. Paul on the putting on the new man\textsuperscript{715} also alludes to the regaining of the resemblance of the Son of God. Yet another passage might be “.... He is the image and glory of God”.\textsuperscript{716} Besides Paul, the words of James, “With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God”\textsuperscript{717} and of John, “If some one says, ‘I love God’, and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen,”\textsuperscript{718} were few other strong backgrounds for the poet for making the distinction between image and likeness.

III. 1. B. 3. **Holy Scripture itself is the resemblance of the Son**

According to Mar Jacob, not man alone is the image of God. The scripture itself is the resemblance of the Son of God, because, He is spread all over the Books from the very first word till the end. Moreover, He is the life behind the words of the Scripture. At the very saying

\textsuperscript{712} Col. 1/15-16.
\textsuperscript{713} Rom. 8/29.
\textsuperscript{714} 2 Cor. 3/18.
\textsuperscript{715} Cf. Col. 3/12 ff.
\textsuperscript{716} 1 Cor. 11/7.
\textsuperscript{717} Jas. 3/9.
\textsuperscript{718} 1Jn. 4/20.
“let us make man in our image and likeness” the poet understands God’s intention to teach the world about His dear one (FMC I 29-30). God gave His image to the dust and fashioned it in the image of His only begotten Son (FMC I 31-32). Moreover, according to him the whole Holy Scripture contains the image of the Son:

> "Moses, the scribe, wrote for me your story among the readings …… At the beginning of the book he composed and established a great icon (yuqno) of You, through the prophecy, you have designed an image (šalmo) of your nativity. From the Torah, the treasure of the books and of revelations, one comprehends that you are the beginning and you are the end. I opened to read the great Book of the great Moses and the great mystery (rozo) of the Son of God has restrained me. Is there a place in the Book where He is not, or, a reading in the scriptures that doesn’t contain His name? " (FMC I 19-28).

Parables, types, allegories, redemptions and revelations of the prophesy – all these are for the sake of the Son (FMC I 179-180).

**III. 1. B. 4. The reason behind giving man the resemblance of the Son**

According to the poet, the fall of Adam and the consequential redemption of him were already there in the mind of God. The role of the Son of God in this redemption also was there in the original plan. That is why the poet underlines that God united Himself with man organically (gansonoit) (FMC I 73). This biological union was intentional; because at the fullness of the time when the Son comes to redeem the fallen man, He can come to His own and not to a stranger (FMC I 73-74, 147-148 ff.). Only by the reason that God mixed His image with the dust, later, the Son of God had mingled with us (FMC I 41-42). The son of God humbled himself to become one among us (FMC I 65, 70, 72 etc.), He became a servant and a companion to Adam while He being our Lord (FMC I 62). The image of the Son of God is

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719 Gen. 1/26.
720 This aspect of sin is discussed in the segment, “Sin as the Soteriological Causality”, p. 540.
typified in the head of the human race and thus revealed to the world (FMC I 183- 184). The son would not have suffered these passions if His image had not been given to Adam at the beginning (FMC I 197-198). Hence when God said, ‘let us make man in our image’, it was an invitation to look and recognize the same image at the Son and at Adam (FMC I 219-220).

Another reason for the granting of the image of the Son of God to man is that the Son of God shall be willing at the time when it is required to suffer for the redemption of man. It is for the redemption of Adam, God delivered His only begotten Son for suffering and death (FMC I 35). When the time for the redemption arrives the Son of God should see that He is not redeeming a foreigner but He saves His own image. Thus the poet says,

“That was why, when He created, He gave him His image (šalmo), so that, He may not be reluctant to suffer for his sake” (FMC I 199-200, 206).

Acknowledging the willingness of the Son of God for the suffering and death for Adam, the poet says,

“... it was pleasing to Him, hence He did not renounce His image to be perished” (FMC I 214).

This rationale is applicable to Adam also. Even though the poet states that since everything which is granted to Adam were free and out of the love of God towards him (FMC IV 222) and Adam is incapable of recompensing for these gratuitous gifts (FMC IV 217-221), Adam had to return his image and likeness to the Son of God when He incarnated in the world for the redemption of man. Thus the poet writes,

“He gave him His image (šalmo) and set it upon him as a pledge to Adam, so that, Adam also should give his image (šalmo) to the Son at the end” (FMC I 201-202).

These narrations show that the poet is quite sure of the main reasons behind giving man the resemblance of the Son of God by the Father.
III. 1. B. 5. **The basis of making man in God’s image**

The only basis on which God created man in His own image and likeness is God’s abundant mercy\(^{721}\). It is the urge of the mercy of God\(^{722}\) that made Him create man from the dust (*FMC* I 31-32). The poet views all activities of God on the basis of His mercy and compassion. That is why he affirms;

> "He shows love and He loved from when He created and because of this He said, “let us make man in our image and in our resemblance”* (FMC I 247-248).\(^ {723}\)

After describing the purposes behind the creation of the world (*FMC* I 253 ff.) the poet states;

> "Since all the courses of all creatures are with Him everything that is created is useless for Him”* (FMC I 265-266)

and he asks,

> "If it was not out of His love He created the creatures; He would not have possessed the possessions that are not useful to Him”. *(FMC I 253-254).*

Hence, the only thrust behind the creation of man was God’s plentiful mercy.

III. 1. B. 6. **The Purposes behind imparting the image**

According to Mar Jacob, God had many projects in His mind while He was imparting His own image to man. First of all, God wished that Adam should be exalted like God (*FMC* I 203). He also wished that Adam shall be lord over everything (*FMC IV* 140). Thus, seeing the implementation of God’s plan, the poet writes,

> "And it became the lord of the creatures while he remained a servant”* (FMC I 60)

and

> "By his Creator, he was (made) a god of flesh (’loh besro) for the creatures”* (FMC IV 3).

\(^{721}\) Details on “God’s mercy can be seen in the section, “God’s Mercy as the Catalytic Code”, p. 427 ff.

\(^{722}\) See ‘Mercifulness – an intrinsic force in God’s person’ in the section, “God’s Mercy as the Catalytic Code”, p. 440.

\(^{723}\) Diverse facets of God’s mercy is discussed in detail in the segment, “God’s Mercy as the Catalytic Code”, p. 439 ff.
And on the basis of this, God places another purpose, that is, all the creatures shall be fearful and obedient towards him (FMC I 272-274).

Another intention of God for the granting of the image was that the image must grow (ireb) (FMC I 59) and reach its fullness and attain the reward at the end and at the same time it shall never perish:

“And on account of this, He gave the great image(šalmo rabo) in advance, that, let it be a reason to the dust which He fashioned, it should not perish” (FMC I 191-192).

The poet adds,

“It is for this reason that He gave him His image at the beginning, so that, it may be a reason for him for life at the end” (FMC I 217-218).

Another significant reason for sharing God’s own image with man is God’s generousness to honour the dust:

“He gave his likeness, so that, the dust of Adam shall be honoured (netyaqr) by it” (FMC I 188 and 271).

According to the poet, the creation of man in the image of God was an occasion for the self revelation of God before the world. Thus he opines,

“The creatures shall see the image (šalmo) of the Lord in Adam” (FMC I 269).

Thus the invisible God becomes visible to the created world. The poet finds a further plan of God in giving His image to man:

“The image (šalmo) was so great that the wisdom of the Most High could be seen through it” (FMC IV 7),

“His image (šurto) declared how much wise is his fashioner” (FMC IV 9)

and “Through this image (šalmo) the Lord had manifested His wisdom” (FMC IV 11, 53-54).

God created every other thing for Adam (FMC I 253-266). This gave Adam a share in the divinity and hence he became the co-possessor of the created things; he must become their lord:

“It is for Adam the creatures and their construction were established,
because of this, He made him in His image (šalmo), so that he may possess them” (FMC I 267-268).

While revealing the purpose of creating man in the image of God, the poet discloses the mind of God:

“So that, Adam should consecrate (offer) everything what he has, without any change”. (FMC IV 216).

III. 1. C. Making of the image

Mar Jacob has a lot of things to narrate about the creation of man. Since the heading of the mimre being the creation of man, it is not surprising to see that Mar Jacob takes much of his space to illustrate how man was created.

III. 1. C. 1. Contemplation of the Father

In many places Mar Jacob discloses the mind of God as the storehouse of every thing that has already happened, that takes place now and the things that will occur later. It will be a futile attempt of limiting God if we say that God knows everything from the beginning till the end, because beginning and end are contexts related to material objects and since God is immaterial and not bound by space or time, His knowledge spills over any boundaries. Being fully conscious of this fact Mar Jacob always speaks only of God’s infinite knowledge. Hence he writes,

“And if you look well, it is not new with God” (FMC I 36),
“No new idea sprang up from God” (FMC I 277) etc.

Since a new idea cannot spring up in the mind of God by the reason that a ‘new thing’ connotes to the absence of its prior existence and such an absence will be a limitation to the omniscience and perfection of God, Mar Jacob states that the image in which man is to be created was there from eternity in the mind of God. This may not be an original thought of the
poet, because we see that this was the common thought of the early Syriac fathers like Aphrahat, Ephrem etc. With the same thought on the contemplation of God about the creation of Adam the poet writes of the eternity of Adam:

“Adam was (shaped by God) from the very beginning and because of this, all creatures are obedient to him” (FMC I 273-274).

According to the order of creation, man was created as the last creation after all other creatures were created. So when the poet writes of Adam’s pre-existence, it is certainly about his existence in the mind of God. This is true not in the case of Adam alone; His contemplation is visible at the birth of Eve also: “And the Lord God said, “It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him”.

According to the fathers of the Church, God contemplates on the birth of every child; God conceives each human person in his mind first and then later only one is born in the world.

This contemplation of the Father can be seen not at the scene of man’s creation alone. Mar Jacob points out the same mind of God at the mutual exchange of the ‘likeness’ between Adam and the Son of God at the time of the suffering on the cross of His only begotten Son, at the resuscitation of man etc.:

“That was why, when He created, He gave him His image, so that, He may not be reluctant to suffer for his sake. He gave him His image and set upon him as a pledge to Adam, so that, Adam also should give his image to the Son at the end” (FMC I199-202).

The poet demonstrates the instances of the restoration of the two tablets which was destroyed by Moses (FMC I 105 ff) and the renovation of the pot by the maker at the time of Jeremiah (FMC I 151 ff) as types of the renewal of the destructed image through the second

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724 See ‘Concept of the image – early fathers and Mar Jacob’ in this segment, p. 295 ff.
725 Gen 2/18.
726 Cf. Kollamparampil, Jacob of Sarug’s homilies on Nativity, 42.
extension of God’s hands, which in turn, is an example of God’s pre-planning and contemplation. Emphatically Mar Jacob speaks of it:

“For, He was prepared to descend towards him again, a second time, 
Lest He should descend to a stranger, He made him “in our image 
(šalman)”. 
Since He knew that He would have to extend His hand a second time, 
He gave His semblance (dmuto) to him, so that, He may assume it from 
him when He saves him” (FMC I 147-150).

Nothing exists anywhere in any form which does not exist in the mind of God.

III. 1. C. 2. Mixing and clothing of the image

Although Mar Jacob uses different words to indicate the creation of man in the image of God such as creating, fashioning, making, moulding, constructing, imprinting, composing, constituting, binding together etc., a few other expressions invite our special attention. The poet had in his mind the mingling (ḥlat) of the Son of God with man through His incarnation (FMC I 42), because both parties are not strangers, but one and the same due to their image and the likeness (FMC I 73-74, 147-148, 181-182 etc.). On this basis, the poet opines that God was mixing and mingling His image with the dust and thus He made man:

“He mixed (ḥlat) the image (šalmo) of the Creator with the dust of Adam 
and it is not strange that the Son of God had mingled (ḥlat) with us”. (FMC I 41-42, 197 etc.)

Mar Jacob emphasises this ‘mixing’ (ḥlat) in the act of creation, first of all, for establishing and ensuring that this image of God has been amalgamated all over in man from top to bottom and from left to right as well as within and outside of him. One of his fine expressions in this regard is:

“From the beginning He (God) was united with it (image) by means of 
race (gansonoit)” (FMC I 73).

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727 See above in this section, p. 250.
This organic union includes the whole person of man. And this genetic union is the merger between the essence of man and the Being of God. With more or less the same signification the poet narrates the mixing of elements of colours and painting of the image:

“He mixed (ḥlat) the elements like colours and mingled (mzag) them, and out of them He made a comely image which was full of beauties” (FMC IV 155-156).

For him, colours are not the paints which are painted outside on a fleshy object of man but the colours and beauty of human being is the brilliance and magnificence of the image of God in man.\(^{728}\) It also indicates the purity and so the attraction of the image at its pre-sin state.

Another implication of Mar Jacob’s usage of this ‘mixing’ (ḥlat) of the image of God with that of man is the uniqueness of human being along with as well as apart from God and from other creatures. So with this ‘mixing’ (ḥlat), it becomes a new creature, above other creatures and below God; at the same time having the qualities and possessions of both the sides. Hence this ‘mixing’ (ḥlat) concept of the poet shall not be understood as joining of two or more things together. R. C. Chesnut understands this concept of Mar Jacob as, “Here the term ‘ḥlt’ (ḥlat) applies to the type of mixture in which the two things joined are not only brought together: their union produces a third entity, different from the original ingredients, namely man”.\(^{729}\) Here ‘the colour mixing’ of Mar Jacob shall not be misunderstood, because when two colours are mixed proportionately, it produces only a new colour, but not a new entity. For the poet, when the image of God was mixed with that of the dust, a new creature with a new entity and with all specialities, was made and it was not a coupling of two independent parts together.

Another expression of Mar Jacob for the granting of God’s image to man is ‘clothing (lbeš) the image with the dust’ (FMC I 272). ‘Clothing’ (lbeš) is a favourite topic of Mar Jacob

\(^{728}\) See below in this section, ‘Comeliness … of the Image’, p. 281 ff.

\(^{729}\) Chesnut, *Three Monophysite Christologies*, 132.
as well as of Mar Ephrem. But when he employs the term ‘clothing’ (lbes) with regard to the creation of man, it has deeper meaning. For him, ‘clothing’ (lbes) is not simply covering the body with a tunic, but it is the inclusion of the whole person of a man into a unique system and framework. With the aim of affirming this idea the poet writes,

“\textit{He clothed (ksi) them with magnificent light and dazzling brightness’}. (FMC IV 163)

This magnificent light and dazzling brightness is the radiance and purity of the image (šalmo) of God which is granted to man. This entire brightness symbolizes and includes the total luminosity of the whole person of man in his faultless state and thus his original cloth was not an outer garment but, it was his total person. This is clear from the statement of the poet:

“\textit{Sin tore that ordinance which they had put on (kban); and the flesh remained exposed in tremble when it was terrified }”. (FMC III 607-608).

Thus as immediately as they transgressed the commandments, the sin had extinguished this brightness of the image in man and made them naked in the garden. But when they were expelled from there, God clothed (lbes) them with another tunic; the skin (FMC III 1002), which became integral part of man. When the poet affirms:

“\textit{And it was not on another beam it (creative energy) wove it (tunic) and then clothed (lbes) them}” (FMC III 1004),

the mind of the poet is clear, that is, he understands this new tunic as part of the imparting of the image as well as of the creation of man. That is why he underlines,

“\textit{The Creator made a sign and the garment came to be ‘out of nothing’}” (FMC III 1001).

\textsuperscript{730} Kollamparampil, \textit{Salvation in Christ according to Jacob of Sarug}, 412. Moreover, Sebastian Brock explains in detail the imagery and the theological significance of ‘Clothing’ in “Clothing Metaphors” and hence those notions are not repeated here.

\textsuperscript{731} See ‘Cyclic History of the garment’ in the section, “Eschatological Perceptions of the Poet”, p. 615 ff.

\textsuperscript{732} For details on this concept of the poet, see the segment, “Sin as the Soteriological Causality”, p. 555 ff.
If it were made of something else it would have been alien to their flesh and the flesh would have rejected it. According to the poet, his new tunic came to be known as the skin (FMC III 1002).

This notion of the poet becomes clearer when he speaks of the new dress which will be given to the image after its revival at the end of the ages. The regaining of the image of God and its original brightness at the resuscitation is expressed in terms of clothing with the garment of glory:

“*It is this (body) which was exposed and it is this (body) which the garment of glory is being clothed (kṣa)*” (FMC IV 455)

and “*This flesh was remaining stripped in the garden, that is to say, it clothes (lbes) itself with glory and shines due to the resurrection*” (FMC IV 461-462).

Here also, when the poet refers to ‘clothing’, he means it not as a simple covering but, as something that affects the whole person of man.

III. 1. D. Greatness of the image

Mar Jacob seems to be thrilled to express the greatness of the image of God in man, His emphatic statement,

“*From the beginning, much great (sagi rabo) was the creation of Adam*” (FMC IV 1)

reverberates throughout the mimre. Over and again he asserts:

“*The image was so great (rabo) that the wisdom of the Most High could be seen through it*” (FMC IV 7).

The poet astounds at the prominence of Adam’s image and in his thrill he picks the choicest words out to express his sentiments of awe and admiration towards the created man as well as the Creator, such as ﮫܒܘܬܐ (rabuto = majestic) (FMC I 221), ﻲ人大常委 (sbiḥ = glorious) (FMC II
(tamiho = amazing) (FMC II 287), ܒܐ (tehro = marvellous) (FMC II 288), ܪܒܐ (rabo = great)\(^2\) (FMC I 191 and 211) etc.

Mar Jacob cannot control his excitement at the sight of the greatness of the image and thus he exclaims,

“Amazing (tamiho) is His creation, who fashioned this image in such a manner; marvellous (tehro) is his history into which I have entered; I am amazed in it”. (FMC II 287-288).

The image’s prime greatness certainly is due to its possession of God’s image:

“It is a great thing that the dust becomes the image of God” (FMC I 67).

The poet describes the growth of the dust into its fullness:

“The dust received the semblance of the Son and it was exalted through it and it became the lord of the creatures while he remained a servant”. (FMC I 59-60)

While Adam was only an earthly creature, he was raised to the honour of a superior over other earthly creatures (FMC II 183). The magnanimity of the image is also because of the fact that, unlike other creatures, it was made by God’s own hands with utmost care and concern as well as it was infused with God’s own spirit and soul (FMC II 175-176).

III. 1. D. 1. Mortal as well as immortal

One of the greatness of the image consists in its dual characteristic: according to Mar Jacob, the marvellous image of Adam was not with one nature, but two (FMC II 163, 196).\(^3\)

Immortality (lo moyutoto) is a divine quality and it is the characteristic of celestial beings and so angels cannot die even if they commit sin (FMC II 65-70). Mortality (moyutoto) is the consequence of change and it belongs to material world; everything that is made of

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\(^2\) See Smith, *Compendious Syriac Dictionary*.

\(^3\) Cf. Steephen, “Adam, Mortal or Immortal”, *Harp*, XXII, 151.
matter will die out and so all creatures other than man will die even if they lead a very holy life (FMC II 49-64). Since God is unalterable He will never die; hence He is immortal. Satan also doesn’t die:

“Behold the Satan, who being immortal (lo moyuto), is unable to die” (FMC II 47).

But he is always under punishment and totally separated from God. The uniqueness of the human being is that he possesses both the natures (FMC II 165-166): mortality and immortality;

“He was composed both mortal (moyuto) and immortal (lo moyuto). The creator, who in His skilfulness had, juxtaposed the natures while creating man from life and death. He set an image that shared death and shared life” (FMC II 132-135, III 173-174 etc.)

Consequently man has the potential for vitality and mortality (FMC II 222, 236, 268, 273, 306). Here, by insisting on the dual characteristics of man as mortal as well as immortal, Mar Jacob was retorting against the Hellenistic view that man is mortal alone and also against the views of some fathers of the Church like Theodore of Mopsuestia who opined: “Man was not created immortal, but mortal; Adam and Eve harmed only themselves by their sin; universal mortality is not a chastisement of Adam’s sin; the effects of the sin of Adam – the present condition of man – are not penalties, but a test, an experiment instituted by God. The tortures of the damned will come to an end”.

But Mar Jacob adopts the notion of Ephrem, who, while commenting on Genesis, had already underlined the uniqueness of man as mortal and immortal and who asserted that it is left to the choice of man to decide to which side he wishes to be: “For, when God created Adam, He did not make him mortal, nor did he fashion him immortal, so that, Adam, by either keeping or transgressing the commandment, might acquire from one of the

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735 More reasons for the mortality of man is discussed in the section, “Freedom and Freewill of Man”, p. 322 ff.
737 As quoted by Quasten, Patrology, III, 419.
trees, the (life) that preferred”.  

Although God created Adam mortal as well as immortal, Adam recognized it only after the death had conquered him due to his sin (FMC II 196-200, 219). The poet puts forward few contrary arguments. If God made Adam only immortal from the beginning what would have happened when he transgressed the commandments? (FMC II 281-282). And again what would have been the profit of observing the commandment if Adam was created a mortal being like animals? (FMC II 283-284).

“Therefore, it is fair that he be mortal (moyuto) and immortal (lo moyuto) and He gave freedom (hiruto): the power upon these two” (FMC II 285-286)

The poet praises the skilfulness of the craftsman who devised the image in such a wonderful manner. Besides many factors that contribute to the greatness of the image, the poet extols the wisdom as well as the graciousness of God who gave the gift of choice to the image between the two possibilities, mortality and immortality (FMC II 133-134, 275-276 etc.):

“Adam, the marvellous image (šalmo dtehro), was not with one nature and his making was not attached towards one side alone” (FMC II 163-164).

The arguments of the poet for praising the wisdom and the skilfulness of God in making man are logical. No other creature possesses the likeness of the Son of God and it is,

“The wisdom (hektmo) of the Lord had composed him from the elements (’estuko)” (FMC II 269).

The second reason is that God put the two possibilities – mortality (moyuto) and immortality (lo moyuto) – in him (FMC II 277). Another basis for the praising is that God willed neither the death nor the eternity of Adam but He left it to the choice of man (FMC II 279-280). Yet another reason for admiring God’s wisdom is that He wished to exalt the image like God (FMC

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738 McVey, Fathers of the Church, 109.
739 See features of the greatness of the image in this segment, p. 271 ff. Also, see below in this segment, ‘Comeliness ... of the Image’, p. 281 ff.
I 203, 271-272, 188, 205 etc.).

III. 1. D. 2. The status of the image

Another basis for the prominence of the image is its exceptional placement among the creatures. Basing on the scriptural passages\(^{740}\) the poet also states that the position of man among the creatures is under angels and above the other living creatures:

> “He raised the dust (‘vreb ‘preh) more than that of the animals, while being dust and He lowered his soul more than that of the angels, while he being true spirit. He made him as such, so that he may not be spiritual by reason of his body and he was not wholly bodily because of his soul” (FMC II 183-186).\(^{741}\)

Speciality of the image among other creatures is that God carved the image neither in the die of the angels lest it should possess eternity alone nor He concealed it in the mould of living creatures so as to live always under the threat of death (FMC II 179-182). The body-soul combination made him to be neither purely a spiritual being nor simply a carnal one (FMC 185-188). The two are to be mutually supportive because there is no life to the body without soul and there is no consciousness to the soul without the body (FMC II 189-194). No other creature has more than one nature. But Adam was specially created with two potentialities – for eternal life and eternal death (FMC II 273-274).

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\(^{740}\) E.g. Ps. 8/5.

\(^{741}\) But only in one place, while describing the reason for the envy of Satan, Mar Jacob points to the superiority of man’s image over the angels: “Behold, from that time onwards Satan rose up to envy against Adam, because, he heard that his (Adam’s) image is greater than that of angels” (FMC III 183-184). The superiority of the image over angels is an expression of the poet intended to explain the enormity of the envy of Satan. Angels do not possess the image of God, likeness of the Son of God and the freedom of the choice of their destiny (FMC II 69-70) as man does. This elevates the place of the image of man over the angels. Another reason for the expression may be because Satan, once, was an angel (FMC III 149). If the status of the image of man was below the rank of an angel it would not have created envy in Satan, that is why it is narrated in the mimre as above him as well as that of angels. This makes Satan envious. The image of man is inferior to the angels owing to its mortality and material characteristic and it is superior to angels because of its possession of the image of God and its specialities.
III. 1. D. 3. Authority of the image

Another eminence of the image is its powerfulness like that of God:

"This is great that he (Adam) is powerful (saliţo) like God; he will lead death and life which are placed in him" (FMC II 289-290)

Resembling God, it has also powerful dominance over other creatures:

"Because, the Creative power (boruyuto)(Creator) had given him (Adam) the governorship (saliţuto). His Will has to be his master (moro)...." (FMC II 298-299).

Since the benevolent God had set it accordingly and placed it at the summit of the Garden of Eden (IV 5), he was like a god of flesh (aloh besro) over the creatures (FMC IV 3). Mar Jacob establishes the authority of the image:

"The creatures shall see the image (šalmo) of the Lord in Adam and it should fear him and be obedient to him, for, indeed he is its lord (moro)" (FMC I 269-270).

III. 1. D. 4. Comprehensiveness of the image

Another reason why Adam’s image is so splendid is that the whole creatures and their structures are attached with it:

"His appearance is small, but his creation is very splendid, for, all creatures and their structures are bound in him" (FMC IV 23-24)

and also "Adam was (shaped by God) from the very beginning (men suryo) and because of this, all creatures are obedient to him" (FMC I 273-274).

The invisible heights and depths, breadth and length of the universe are visible in his image and he is the mediator of all these levels. And Adam was fashioned as the centre of all sides, the four corners as well as the height and depth. (FMC IV 25-26, 35-38). He is a mixture of diverse elements (FMC II 195 and 269), especially of contrary elements (FMC IV 39). Fire and water, also clay and water naturally do not exist together; but in his image the Creator mixed fire, air, water and soil in one accord and made the contrary characteristics of the elements in agreement (FMC IV 29 and 41-44). This image was capable of controlling and directing all
these wild elements as companions (FMC IV 40). The poet admires at the miraculous combination of these opposing elements in the image where the clay, fire, water and air are bound together as in a yoke, where the heavy and the light objects are balanced evenly and where the cold and the hot are united together (FMC IV 41-52). If the whole creation can be considered a city, this image was established in the middle of the city and made it the lord of the city by its master (moro) (FMC IV 61-62). The whole elements, senses, limbs and all other parts of the image are fastened together with the string of soul:\(^{742}\)

"He put together the organ by organ and set in order very distinctively in the image while the Wise one of the worlds was fashioning him in beauties" (FMC IV 137-138)

His feet are set underneath to run like a chariot and on his sides the hands and on them the ten fingers (FMC IV 115-117). All these were set on the image and made it most gorgeous and particular,

"So that, he should possess with them the sea, dry land and the whole world" (FMC IV 118).

III. 1. D. 5. Preciousness of the image

Through its particular, meticulous and skilful composition, the image obtained its magnanimity over other creatures. Very poetically Mar Jacob describes the composition of the image:

"On the thread of the soul (bhuto dnapso), in the form of a necklace of pearls (‘ego dmargonyoto), it (image) was stringed with the limbs and set in order; wholly covetable" (FMC IV 101-102).

Besides for narrating the coherence of the limbs in the image, Mar Jacob brings this imagery of the necklace for exhibiting the costliness also of the image. Moreover, in one of his prayers also, he brings in the imagery of the necklace in connection with the image of man, but

\(^{742}\) This aspect of man’s creation is discussed in the section, “Anthropological Concepts in the Mimre”, p. 357 ff.
there, he considers it as a decoration on the image: “You were sealed with the King’s own necklace”. Another imagery that he uses to tell about the costliness and magnitude of the image is the crown (FMC IV 113-114).

People use to bewail only over the loss or destruction of valuable things and they use to throw away useless things. The heartbreaking grief of Mar Jacob over what is lost shows how much precious was the lost thing! He laments over the destruction of the valuable gems and precious pearls of the image, which were its properties, at its death due to the sin:

“But the dragon entered and bit sharply the string of life and it collapsed, and behold, the lovely necklace is broken and scattered within the cells of Sheol. The valuable gems and precious pearls, it (death) had overthrown into it (Sheol) and it (necklace) entirely became a circle of light (klilo dnuhro). And the viper (asp) blew, due to its harshness it threw off the crown (klilo), and behold, within the tomb, its gems were dispersed and it (death) scattered its beauty” (FMC IV 105-110).

Roberta C. Chesnut understands the notion of Mar Jacob on the costliness of the image in this way: while mentioning the themes of ‘pearl of great price’ and the ‘Hymn of the soul’, Chesnut writes, “At death, Christ had dived into hell like a brave swimmer to retrieve the pearl, precious to the waters, the image of the Father. This he did by allowing Death to swallow him, death assuming that he was wholesome food, rather than the Lord of life”.

III. 1. D. 6. Properties of the image

Rationality is yet another basis for the excellence of the image. Besides the outer arrangements on the image,

“He fabricated the brain, the place of reason, so that, he shall be steady in order that he should live like a god (aloho) in great lofty

743 Brock, “A Prayer Song by St. Jacob of Serugh recovered”, Harp, XVI, 352.
744 Chesnut, Three Monophysite Christologies, 117.
All the inner-settings of the image are its distinguishing marks. A palate filled with discernment to distinguish the sweet from the bitter, nostrils, a pathway to differentiate the ill-smell from the fragrance, the sense of hearing by opening a hole and by fortifying it in the manner of a shell fish to surround the voices around it; the creator adorned the image with all these\(^{745}\) (\textit{FMC} IV 121-126). Adam was given everything, so that, he should prudently utilize all the potentialities of his image. That was why in one limb he was given bile and heat to inflame against sin when it takes place and in another limb he was given the capability of receiving the adversity when it happens, so that he should repent on the wickedness, and in yet another limb the creator gave him cheerfulness in order to make him rejoice (\textit{FMC} IV 131-136). Mar Jacob of Sarug establishes that Adam was created with free will and thus he was free to choose to become mortal or immortal. He sets apart the second mimre among the four to answer a heatedly debated question of his time ‘whether Adam was created mortal or immortal or of the relation between freedom and immortality?’\(^{746}\) (\textit{FMC} II 77-78 and 99).

III. 1. D. 7. \textbf{Image as treasury}

The image, as the storehouse of every good thing, becomes grandeur among other creatures. The Creator placed the heart in its chest as a huge treasury (\textit{gazo rabo}) where all thoughts are put together (\textit{FMC} IV 127-128). From its heart all goodness must pour out towards other creatures. This is typical to this image alone. In its mouth the Designer had placed the melodious voices and on its lips the sweet words. And the pupils of the eye are set in order in the eyelids and its eyebrows are set for making signs (\textit{FMC} IV 129-130).

Considering all these the poet acknowledges:

\(^{745}\) ‘Coherence of limbs’ is narrated in the section, “Anthropological Concepts in the Mimre”, p. 354.
\(^{746}\) A detailed narration on this aspect of man can be seen in the section, “Freedom and Freewill of Man”, p. 322.
“The Creator created something great out of nothing (men lo medem), so that, through his wisdom, he shall become a lord (moro) over everything” (FMC IV 139-140).

III. 1. D. 8. **Presentation of gifts**

The poet proves how this image became great through the gifts presented to it by its maker. Gifts and presentations are marks of one’s affection, concern, esteem and honour towards the one to whom they are offered. God gave no such gifts to any other creature. God honoured the image of man alone by offering it abundance of precious gifts. Finding that no other creature is a comparable helper to Adam (Gen. 2/20), God decided to give him his helper as a special gift. This first and the much loved gift was Eve, Adam’s spouse:

“He adorned Eve, the virgin bride, and gave her to Adam” (FMC IV 159). She was specially designed by God\(^747\) and when she was presented to Adam and he received her with the exclamation: “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh!”\(^748\) The gift of the child to Eve\(^749\) is also mentionable here (FMC III 910 ff.).

III. 1. D. 9. **Covenant with the image**

Yet another reason for the greatness of the image is that God made a covenant (*qyomo*) with the image. The whole effort of this covenant is from the part of God and its whole obligation is also on Him. But, amazingly, its entire benefit is for the image of man alone. The words of the poet on this covenant is this,

“He entered into a covenant (*qyomo*) with the dust when He fashioned him that even if he falls or become corrupted, He will set him in order.” (FMC I 189-190).

\(^747\) Cf. Gen. 2/22.
\(^748\) Gen. 2/23.
\(^749\) Cf. Gen. 3/15-16.
Dr. P. G. Thomas Paniker considers the mercy of God on the basis of covenant relationship between God and man, especially that of at Mount Sinai and hence covenant is conceived as a criterion. But here, the poet mentions of an unpublished covenant between God and Adam and so, beyond being the criteria of God’s mercy, this covenant shall be conceived as part of God’s generosity to honour the image of Adam, because no rigid requirement is expected here from the part of man.

III. 1. D. 10. Comeliness and majesty of the image

The unique gorgeousness of the image made it admirable and brought it to the forefront of all other creatures. The image which the human race received from God was beautiful, great, matchless, most attractive and eye-catching in appearance. Because the image gave immense pleasure and gratification to its Creator and since He was fully satisfied in His work, like an artist who presents his masterpiece before the viewers, God presented the image, His masterpiece before the world in order to share His thrill on the image with the whole world and that the world might appreciate the image. Thus Mar Jacob writes,

“The Wisdom had depicted the great image which is full of wonders; it (wisdom) brought in and placed it (image) at the centre of the worlds, so that, they should look it” (FMC IV 55-56).

It is the unmatched comeliness and majesty of the image that made it splendorous among other creatures:

“He mixed (hlat) the elements like colours and mingled (mzag) them, and out of them He made a comely image (ṣurto pito) which was full of beauties (malyo supre)” (FMC IV 155-156).

Since Mar Jacob was an excellent poet, he could not but narrate lavishly on how the image

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became such a beautiful one.\textsuperscript{751} Mar Jacob suggests a lot of reasons for the unparalleled attractiveness of the image. The main source of this comeliness is that, it is the human translation of the supreme majesty, which is the fullness of all beauties:

“For, Adam had the image (šalmo) of that majesty (rabuto)” (FMC I 221)

One of the other reasons for this incomparable attractiveness is the magnanimity and the skilfulness of its artisan:

“Glorious (šbih) is the craftsman (omuno) who, in His skilfulness (bmahiruteh), has devised the image (yuqno)” (FMC II 275)

Since it is the Omniscient one who had composed it from the elements (FMC II 269 and 303), it cannot but be the fairest one:

“The image was so great that the wisdom of the Most High (hekmat rmo) could be seen through it and the unfathomable knowledge (yida’to) was proclaimed through it. His image declared how wise (hakim) is his fashioner” (FMC IV 7-9).

God made the image most beautifully by instilling in it the essence of all the beautiful things of the universe:

“When He created, He created all kinds of beauties (šupre) according to their natures and He came and comprehended all the beauties (šupre) in the beauty of Adam” (FMC IV 19-20).

and “The whole beauties (šupre) of all creatures are engraved in him, so that, one should see in him the far and the near which the nature possesses” (FMC IV 33-34)

No other creatures possess this amount of exclusivity. This comprehension and the consequential beautifulness had made it so great:

“Whole beauties (šupren šupren) of all generations (dren dren) were embroidered in it and it was made a grand beauty (šupro rabo) which was infinite (d-lo mestik)” (FMC IV 103-104)

And the poet reiterates that there is no element of beauty in the universe which is not included in the beauty of Adam and so Adam is the comprehension of all beauties:

\textsuperscript{751} See ‘Passionate lover of Beauty’ in the section, “Man behind the Book”, p. 160 ff.
“The heaven and earth, sea and dry land, and everything in them, the hidden worlds and the big bodies of all creatures: 
The well arranged beauties of all created things in their (natural) form and every establishment of places and their arrangements: 
When He created, He created all kinds of beauties according to their natures 
and He came and comprehended all the beauties in the beauty of Adam” (FMC IV 15-20).

In his exalted beauty Adam was more glorious than any precious crown and this beauty was incomparable (FMC IV 111-112). Due to this comprehensiveness and totality, he is a microcosm, in which the whole world is visible (FMC IV 21-22).

Coherence and integrity of the image is yet another reason for the attractiveness of the image. Because, the norm of beauty is neither the attractiveness of any part of an object or living being, nor is it based on the projection of the colour of it; instead, it is the totality, perfection, integrity, coherence, propriety etc. that makes something beautiful and colour comes only as one of the parts of the criteria. Being fully conscious of this fact Mar Jacob, while describing the beauty of the image, gives ample space in the mimre to narrate the coherence of the limbs of the image. Besides sporadic reference in other mimre, he sets apart the entire first part of the fourth mimre up to verse 160, exclusively for narrating the perfect making of the image.752 Thus he exclaims;

“Who is this, who, since eternity, had designed the image in this way and completed it with wonder, so that, it should be the marvel (tehro) for the world”? (FMC IV 51-52).

How much importance the poet had given to the perfection of the image as part of its beauty can be understood from his lamentation over the loss of its coherence:

“The equilibrium (savyo) of the four (elements) had been collapsed and each one went its own way; one from its companion, and together with them it destroyed the five (senses) and they ceased from the composition. 
The body was bound by the four (elements) and was running like a chariot (markabto);

752 The arrangements of limbs in man is analyzed in the section, “Anthropological Concepts in the Mimre”, p. 354 ff.
the five senses were set on it as charioteers (henyuke)” (FMC IV 71-74).

People use to wear ornaments in order to decorate as well as to beautify them. Mar Jacob conceives this notion and declares that one of the reasons of the most attractiveness of the image is the ornaments through which it was decorated by its Creator:

“It (wisdom) decorated it with ornaments (šebte), so that, the whole creatures shall be seen in it” (FMC IV 57).

But, for the poet, these ornaments are not objects made of metals or pearls but they are the inner and outer limbs of human stature, including the soul, freedom, physical organs etc. In this context he compares the image with a necklace of pearls (FMC IV 101). The poet sums up the attractiveness of the image in its ornamented status and outfits through the narration of the magnificence of Adam and Eve in the garden:

“The couple shined in their crowns and garments. He clothed them with magnificent light and dazzling brightness” (FMC IV 162-163).

In order to disclose the loveliness of the image more, the poet explains how the Creator had beautified the image through painting it with the choicest pigments:

“The image is great, rich in colour (‘tir gavne) and (with) comely embroideries (payo šurte)” (FMC II 274), and

“He painted (šar) the image with choicest and suitable pigments (sammone)” (FMC IV 157).

The narration of the poet on the decoration of the bride and bridegroom and thus the depiction of God as a companion of bride and groom are also with the intention of disclosing how God had taken that much interest in making the image the most beautiful:

“And He fixed the bridegroom in this vast bride-chamber which He had prepared. He adorned (š-bat) Eve, the virgin bride, and gave her to Adam” (FMC IV 158-159).

As a whole, according to the poet, the two basic criteria for the comeliness of the image were the resemblance and likeness of the human image with that of God and then, the sinless
state of the human image. These we understand from the lamentation of the poet over the fall of the image and at the withering away of its beauties at the commission of sin.\textsuperscript{753}

\textit{“The sin took off the glorious garment of creatorship (Creator) and the rebellion had clothed them with the confusion of the face. The iniquity drove the innocence away from them” \textsuperscript{(FMC III 573-575)}, “But the comely graces (ṣupre payo), which were covetable, were dissolved and it was burned fiercely, and all the beautiful forms (ṣurte ṣapiroto) had fallen down into destruction” \textsuperscript{(FMC IV 95-96)}

and \textit{“The death scattered it (image) and it threw it (image) into the corners of the grave: and all its beauties (ṣupre) which were already put together were destroyed in it (grave)” \textsuperscript{(FMC IV 87-88)}.}

III. 1. D. 11. \textbf{Image creates envy and tremble}

The image of God in man was high enough to create tremble in addition to envy among its viewers. This much of magnificence of the image made Satan envious \textit{(FMC I 207)}. Satan, before his fall, was a celestial being and enjoyed that status.\textsuperscript{754} But now, due to the fall, his position is much lower than that of man’s image and he had been fallen into the extreme pit. So it is quite natural that Satan got envied. The poet writes,

\textit{“From the time when the Lord said, “let us make man in our image”; the deceitful devil was struck by jealousy (ḥesmo) on account of his freedom. Behold, from that time onwards Satan rose up to envy (ḥsam) against Adam, because, he heard that his image is greater than that of angels. Behold, henceforth, the deceitful one began to suffer agony as if why indeed this dignity to the son of the dust”? \textsuperscript{(FMC III 181-186)}.}

As he could not control his envy, he trampled this image, shattered it and made it dust as this image was before and he spoiled the image \textit{(FMC I 209-210, III 287 ff.)}. The greatness of the image creates fear in Satan. According to the poet, the reason behind the appointment of the serpent as Satan’s envoy and the reluctance of Satan to approach

\textsuperscript{753} The poet laments because he was an infatuated lover of beauty - see ‘Passionate lover’ in the section, “Man behind the Book” p. 160 ff. and by the same reason he bewails at the fall of the image due to the sin – see the segment “Sin as the Soteriological Causality”, p. 583.

\textsuperscript{754} Cf. Rev.12/9 ff.
Adam and Eve directly and personally is the greatness of the image. The poet expresses it as the soliloquy of Satan:

“It is not right for me that I shall come near him face to face, for, the image is great and its dignity terrifies me” (FMC III 307-308).

The image trembles the poet also;

“On this, our image of dust, my word has been shaken” (FMC II 25, 287-288).

The poet fears to approach the genealogy of the dust that is already set and which is kept secret from all (FMC II 30, 33).

III. 1. D. 12. Destruction of the image

The beautiful, valuable, consistent, perfect, superior, great and the envied image of God in man was faded out due to the sin of man. The mourning of the poet over its destruction is a proof for the preciousness of the image and the poet’s cry echoes throughout the mimre:

“The serpent was envious and from that blessed height of Eden he dragged and brought him down, carried in and threw him into the abyss of Sheol. He trampled him, shattered him and made him dust as he was and his entire beautiful image was spoiled” (FMC I 207-210).

III. 1. D. 13. The search for the image

It is only because of the greatness and value of the image, God made a long and painful search for the lost image:

“Because he was a great image, a great search was undertaken by the Father for his sake, so that, he may not be lost” (FMC I 211-212).

For this purpose alone God sent His only begotten Son to the world and the Son suffered all kinds of pain unto death (FMC I 213 ff.). Mar Jacob explains that the questioning

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755 Also see, ‘Passionate lover of beauty’ in the section, “Man Behind the Book”, p. 160 and see the notions on the fall of the image in the section “Sin as the Soteriological Causality”, p. 541.
the culprits at the Garden, especially the question, ‘where are you Adam’, was part of this search (III 707 ff). Knowing well the worthiness of what is being lost, the poet writes,

“The pastor went after the sheep that willed (insolently) and perished” (FMC III 703).

Descend of the supreme one was only for this purpose (FMC IV 197 ff.) and the poet says,

“The Lord made a long search for the lost sheep” (FMC IV 195).

III. 1. D. 14. Restoration and retention of the image after the fall

The expressions of hope of the poet at the revival of the image of man from its catastrophe indicate another aspect of the importance of the image. According to the poet, when God decided:

“For, it was not proper to lose His image in the abyss of Sheol” (FMC I 216).

He sent His only begotten Son to save the fallen image (FMC I 213, 215) and He redeemed it through His crucifixion. This image will be totally revived and regain its original shape at the end of the ages (FMC IV 393 ff.). When the poet insists on the revival of the image, it is clear that he was not telling of God’s action of creating a new image other than the old one, but was only narrating the revitalizing act of God on the same image that was created at the first time. This brings in the fact that the image of man exists even after its fall and destruction caused by his sin; that is, man possesses and retains for ever the basic characteristics of the divine image despite his sin. Basing on this fact, in prayers for the remission of sins or during the religious and ritualistic clothing, it is prayed for the clothing with the cloth of the renewed image. Francis Acharya, while explaining the rituals for the clothing of monks, cites one of such prayers: “May the Lord clothe you in the new man, renewed in the image of his

756 More details on the revival and renewal of the image is discussed in the section, “Eschatological Perceptions of the Poet”, p. 603 ff.
757 Ibid.
Creator, in uprightness and true holiness”.

III. 1. E. The dust and the image

Mar Jacob gives us a detailed description on the significance of the dust in relation to the image of God in man. But one may attribute exclusive rights of this notion on Mar Jacob, because more or less the same notions of the poet on the dust from which man was created, its ascension, greatness as well as the weakness, close association between man and dust, man’s destiny to return to the ground etc. can be seen in the mimre of Mar Ephrem also.

The Lord created man from the dust (dahihol ‘apro) of the ground. The poet is astounded at the majesty which the earthly dust attained when it was used for the creation of man. The dust need be considered a negligible item among the created things when it is compared with the powerful sun or shining stars in heaven, with a roaring sea or a tempestuous wind, with a precious pearl or a costly ornament, with a lovely flower or a ripened fruit, from among the created things. But the magnanimity of none of these could turn God’s special attention towards them; instead, He turned towards the dust alone:

“The mercy had inclined God towards the dust (dahihol) and He gave it His image and fashioned it (in) the likeness of His only begotten Son” (FMC I 31-32).

III. 1. E. 1. Metaphorical use of the term ‘dust’

It is to be noticed that whenever Mar Jacob uses the term ‘dust’ (dahihol ‘apro), it doesn’t always denote the powder form the earth; but in many occasions, he uses it metaphorically to connote Adam or human being who was made of the dust (dahihol ‘apro).

But, in some places in the mimre, it is difficult to distinguish the mind of the poet so as to

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758 Acharya, F. The Ritual of the Clothing of Monks, 77.
759 Cf. Koonammakkal, “Imagery of Dust in Ephrem”, Harp, XVIII, 357 ff. Also, see below - descriptions on the unanimity of thoughts of the early Syriac Fathers, p. 308 ff.
identify in which connotation he had used it in each situation, because, both the connotations as Adam and the powder from the earth, will be applicable in certain occasions. So, in the following explanation on the notion of ‘dust’ (dahiho/ apro) both these senses are taken together, but more emphasis is given for the original meaning – powder from the earth.

III. 1. E. 2. Various terms used in the Mimre to denote ‘dust’

Mar Jacob’s poetic calibre in making use of a lot of synonyms in order to decorate the mimre so as to make it most appealing as well as his enthusiasm in following certain precepts which the poets are obliged to pursue in their creation,\textsuperscript{760} can be seen here also when he uses diverse terms to denote the material, the dust, out of which man was created by God. He employs them in both the cases: at the occasions of praising it at its elevation to be the complementary part in the making of man in the image of God and also at the instances of condemning it for its weaknesses. We see the poet using the same term while he praises it as well as reproaches it and hence, not much distinction among these terms can be distinguished; all of them are used in the mimre with the same connotation.


\textit{דָּחִיחוֹ} (dahiho) (\textit{FMC I} 31, 39, 59, 63, 66, 77, 96, II 32, 79, 176, 183, 234 III 954, 968,

\textsuperscript{760} See the section, “Hellenic Influence in the Formation of the Mimre”, p. 679 ff.
III. 1. E. 3. **Ascent of the dust**

The insignificant dust assumed the image of the son of God, because, God was mixing His image with the dust (FMC I 41, 197) and it grew up and became the lord of all creatures through Adam (FMC I 59-60). Thus dust became so precious so as to attract God’s mercy and attention and to make Him descend towards it (FMC I 43). The dust acts as a catalyst to bring God down at the time of redemption of man as well as when He created him at the beginning (FMC I 63-64). Unempirical, omniscient and omnipotent God humbles himself to become one among the figures of the dust (FMC I 65-66). The greatest miracle ever happened is the ascension of the dust, by that reason it turned out to be the image of God, in addition to God’s descend towards the dust in order to create and redeem (FMC I 67-78). God gave His image to the dust so that God shall be honoured and feared through it; thus dust was elevated to the status of a mediator between God and other creatures and a it became dreadful commander:

> “God gave His resemblance to the dust, so that, He may be honoured by it; in order that the creatures may respect him, He clothed him the image” (FMC I 271-272).

By giving the Son’s resemblance to the dust, God’s intention was that the dust of Adam shall be honoured by all other creatures of the universe (FMC I 187-188).

III. 1. E. 4. **Deliberateness of God in selecting the dust**

All creatures other than man were created out of nothing.\(^{761}\) Even though the poet mentions the creation of man out of nothing,\(^{762}\) he gives more stress to the deliberateness of

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\(^{761}\) Cf. Gen.1/1ff.
God in creating him from the dust. God was sure that all other created things will never intentionally turn away from God and from their original purpose. And since their consequential return to the original nature need not be foreseen, God created them out of nothing. But God premeditated the fall of man and as a result his return to the dust becomes inevitable, God created him from the dust. Hence, according to the poet, it made God to say,

"you are from the dust and you will return to it" (FMC I 98, III 953, 957)

and

"You will return towards your earth (and) you will become dust, as it was in the beginning” (FMC III 979).

III. 1. E. 5. Dust as parent

Since the dust being the womb and source from where man was created, the dust is portrayed in the mimre as his parent (FMC III 948, 978). That was why the poet considers his mimre a genealogy of the son of the earth (FMC II 79, 231-232). A mother and child relation between the earth and Adam was drawn by the poet when he elucidated the judgment after the transgression:

"He cursed the mother (emo) because of her child, while she is uncorrupted.
The foster mother (mrabyonito) received punishment without any transgression, so that the child, whom she bore, should not have been beaten” (FMC III 938-940).

III. 1. E. 6. The dust becomes weak

When the dust tried to go beyond its natural status coveting to snatch the divinity, it lost its powers. The dust becomes powerless, dead and inactive when it was shattered by sin and was thrown into Sheol by Satan (FMC II 293-294, 300-301). It was God who reveals the race and origin of Adam and the capacity of his dust (FMC III 951-952, 978). When God said that you are dust and you will return to the dust (FMC I 98, III 953, 957, 959, 979, 982), it was to

show him that he is not a self existent being but weak and only a product of the earth (FMC III 954). He is not competent enough to possess divinity (FMC III 959). A lump of earth can’t comprehend the vast sea, drive away the clouds upwards, bring the rain down, lead the streams against its sources and cross over the deluge (FMC III 963-978).

III. 1. E. 7. The dust becomes accursed

This dust or earth was cursed by the produce of the earth itself. The dust was glorious when God used it to impart His image on it. Basically the dust is faultless. But the son of the earth, Adam, who willed against God, had brought curse upon it. God cursed the earth:

“The Lord said to him, ‘the earth is cursed because of you” (FMC III 937, 941, 1047),

and hence “It will bring forth thorns on the ways to inflict you” (FMC III 943).

The dust, which was once the collaborator in the making of man in the image of God has become the food of the serpent (FMC III 820); cursing the serpent God said, “And you shall eat dust all the days of your life” 763.

III. 1. F. Model images

Mar Jacob presents before us some of the model images such as Abel, Enoch and Elijah, who lived a life pleasing to God. In the poet’s opinion the original nature of the dust of man and its natural ending can be seen in Abel, Enoch and Elijah. Adam was rebuked by God for his violation of the commandment. 764 But Abel, Adam’s son, was respected by God and his offerings were accepted. 765 God spoke well of Abel 766 and ill of Adam. 767 Even though

763 Gen. 3/14.
Abel was killed by Cain,\textsuperscript{768} Abel was righteous and blameless before God. Enoch was the great grandson of Adam.\textsuperscript{769} God sent Adam out from the Paradise due to his transgression of the commandment.\textsuperscript{770} But God receives his great grandson. Since Enoch walked with God faultless and thus pleased Him, he did not die (\textit{FMC} II 207-208) but God took him.\textsuperscript{771} St. Paul also confirms it: “By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous ..... By faith Enoch was translated so that he did not see death, and was not found because God has translated him, for before his translation he had this testimony that he pleased God”.\textsuperscript{772} Elijah was a man of God who obeyed the commands of the Lord.\textsuperscript{773} As a consequence Elijah was taken to heaven corporally: “... suddenly a chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire and separated the two of them; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven”.\textsuperscript{774}

The poet underlines that the immortality of Enoch and Elijah was not because of their natures were from another clay, holier than that of Adam (\textit{FMC} II 230, 232-235). Also, they were taken up to heaven corporally not because they were not from the dust. All of them had the same dust that of Adam (\textit{FMC} II 233-234). Even though their clay remains the same, Adam was perished in Sheol but these men were taken immortally into heaven. The poet points it out as a proof for his argument that man is made of both mortal as well as immortal and the two ways were determined from the beginning (\textit{FMC} II 219-224).

The poet finds the immortality of Enoch and Elijah as a reproof and blame on Adam (\textit{FMC} II 207, 209). To know the quality and taste of the fruits of a tree, one tastes one of its

\begin{footnotes}
\item[767] Cf. Gen. 3/17 ff.
\item[768] Cf. Gen. 4/8.
\item[769] Cf. Gen. 5/18 ff.
\item[771] Cf. Gen. 5/24.
\item[772] Heb. 11/4-5.
\item[773] Cf. 2King. 1/9
\item[774] 2Kings. 2/11.
\end{footnotes}
fruits (FMC II 203-204). By this inductive method one comes to the conclusion on its taste and quality. From the first fruit the taste of all the fruits of the tree could be distinguished:

“If a man gathers the first fruit from the branches, There is in it, the taste of all the fruits of that tree ” (FMC II 205-206).

Here, Adam is the trunk of the tree and Abel, Enoch, Elijah etc. are its branches and fruits. Since Enoch and Elijah pleased God and attained immortality they are considered sweet fruits and the disobedience of Adam was counted as bitterness (FMC II 211-212). The poet admonishes Adam:

“If the fruit were immortal; how much more the whole off-shoot (tree), which carried it, would have survived” (FMC II 217-218).

Adam could have been more pleasing to God than these men if he had followed the commandments (FMC II 213-214).

In the homily ‘About the Love of God towards men and love of the Just towards God’ Mar Jacob clarifies why and how Abel and Enoch became perfect and surpassed Adam in attaining the goal of their life, “Abel chose the first born males of his sheep and the fattest once (ones) and he separated them, full of reverence and sanctified to make an offering. He honoured the Lord with the perfect sacrifices which he brought to him and in addition to his offering with his own blood, shed in the presence of Majesty”.775 Even though Mar Jacob places Abel above Adam, he doesn’t attempt to elevate Abel to the status of being a type of Christ, whereas Adam was the type (FMC I 55-56, 220-221, 283-284 etc.) and resemblance of Christ (FMC I 181-186). We see the poet’s carefulness in this regard while he describes the priesthood of Malkizedeq, where he finds that the offering of Abel doesn’t make him a type of Christ; “His (David’s) soul was illumined and he saw Abel who was a priest and he understood that he did not resemble the Son of God. Abel was handsome, and also his offering was

775 Philip, “Dimensions of Love According to Jacob of Sarug”, Harp, VIII, IX, 188.
excellent; but he did not attain the heights to be a type of our Lord”.  

According to the poet Enoch became beloved to God because, “Enoch also had great zeal in high and godly virtues and he purified himself by holy continence and cleanliness. He distinguished himself by reverent and impeccable behaviour and he pleased God by his thoughts which were full of love. He was brought up in pure and impeccable behaviour and he lived cleanly without care and without anger. He inhabited the world without behaving in a worldly manner and he pleased God for three hundred years during which God watched him. He saw no fault in his walking life, nor even in his sleep and no single thought of laxity which leaned towards the world. For all those three hundred years he gazed daily upon the Lord and preserved his virtues and was not demeaned by vices”. What was lacking in Adam was this kind of vigilance to safeguard the word of God and to observe the commandments.

III. 1. G. The concept of the image: early fathers and Mar Jacob

An elaborate study comparing the whole views of the early fathers of the Church with that of Mar Jacob is not intended here by the reason that it is not the targeted area of my work. Moreover, since the exegetical and theologising patterns of the early fathers of the Church, especially of the Syriac fathers seem alike, a thorough mark of the one over the other can’t be easily ascertained. Thomas kollampamparampil underlines this fact, “Within the early Syriac tradition we find a few prominent theological orientations shared by almost all authors of early Syriac Christian literature. In fact the theological views of the early Syriac Christianity were ecclesial and communitarian reflections on faith based on the scriptural revelations”. Mar Ephrem as the greatest literary genius among Syriac fathers remained as a standard of thoughts

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776 Thekeparampil, “Jacob of Sarug’s homily on Malkizedeq”, Harp, 55.
778 Kollampamparampil, Salvation in Christ according to Jacob of Sarug, 385.

\textbf{III. 1. G. 1. Syriac fathers}

Creation of Adam from the dust as well as in the image of God was a common topic of literature of the early fathers: “Adam had been created in the model of the uncreated Only-Begotten. Among the created beings Adam is older in conception and younger in birth. This view on the creation of Adam is prominent in Syriac Christianity possibly by a carrying over Rabbinical traditions”.\footnote{Ibid.} Aphrahat and Ephrem are the prominent ones among them other than Mar Jacob among the Syriac fathers who narrated very beautifully about the creation of Adam in the image of God.

For Aphrahat, Adam was conceived in the mind of God first. The whole material world was created by God before the creation of Adam so as to arrange a marriage feast for Adam. Thus for Aphrahat Adam is the youngest as well as the oldest among the creatures. Ephrem also keeps the same notion of the creation of man. For him “The very creation of Adam in the image of God is for Ephrem a mysterious revelation of God’s First-born who is active in creation and redemption”.\footnote{Ibid, 391.} Mar Jacob also had almost the same thought, as said above, about the creation of Adam in the image and likeness of the Son of God.\footnote{See above.}

Mar Ephrem’s explanation on the distinction between ‘the image and likeness’ as it is given in his Commentary on Genesis, is on the basis of dominion of man over the creatures. Basing on the Gen. 1/26, he opines that the ‘likeness’ is the shared power of God’s over
creatures: “Moses explains in what way we are the image of God, when he said, ‘Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds, and over the cattle, and all over the earth’. It is the dominion that Adam received over the earth and over all that is in it that constitutes the likeness of God who has dominion over the heavenly things and the earthly things”.

III. 1. G. 2. Greek fathers

But we see difference of opinion on the ‘image and likeness’ of God in man among the fathers of the Greek Church. The Greek Fathers from the excellent centres of learning - from the School of Alexandria: Origen, St. Athanasius, Gregory of Nyssa, Cyril of Alexandria, Iranaeus, Clement of Alexandria etc. and from the School of Antioch, John Chrysostom, Theodore of Mopsuestia etc. had produced volumes of works on the dogmatic as well as other areas of Christian doctrines. Mar Jacob had before him, besides the teachings of the Syriac Fathers, the teachings of these early Greek Fathers also. Some of them had quantitative material on various topics which Mar Jacob had elaborated in his Four Mimre ‘On Creation’, among which the image of God in man has prominence. Hilda C. Graef, a scholar in Patrology opines, “The image of God in which Man was made, plays a very important part in the mystical theology of the Greek Fathers, who speculated especially on the exact characteristic by which man reflects the Divine. The Alexandrian School, that is to say, Clement and Origen and their disciples, place it in the soul as the rational part of man. Iraneus saw in it man’s freewill; Gregory held it to consist especially in freedom from necessity”.

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784 McVey, Fathers of the Church, 94.
785 Cf. Quasten, Patrology, 2 ff.
786 The association of Mar Jacob with Greek culture and civilization are discussed in the section “Hellenic Influence in the Formation of the Mimre”, p. 651 ff.
opines, “Image and likeness were commonly distinguished by the Greek Fathers; the statement that the image is ineffaceable, but the likeness lost by the fall was supported by the allegation that the latter word was never used of man in the scripture after the account of fall”\textsuperscript{788}

St. Gregory of Nyssa makes a distinction between the image and likeness of God in man. Johannes Quasten distinguishes them as the following: “Man is much more than just a microcosm and an initiation of the material universe. His excellence and greatness rest not upon his likeness to the created universe but upon the fact that he has been made in the image of the nature of the creator’. Man is the faithful image of his maker principally by the reason of his soul, and more precisely because this soul possesses reason, freedom of the will, and supernatural grace. Gregory uses the term (eikon) as the comprehensive expression for man’s entire endowment of divine gifts, his original state of perfection”.\textsuperscript{789} Thus for him, the image of God in man is man’s freewill and its possessions. Quasten continues by describing the thoughts of Gregory: “By this image man becomes a relative of God and able to know God. Gregory adopts the famous axiom of the ancients ‘like is known by like’, when he emphasises that the likeness of the soul to God is the conditio sine qua non of our knowledge of God’s nature”\textsuperscript{790} And “Thus the image of God in man enables him to attain the mystic vision of Him and compensates for the deficiencies of human reason and the limitations of our rational knowledge of God.\textsuperscript{791} For Gregory of Nyssa, the likeness in man is his holiness as to that of God: “The purity, freedom from passion, blessedness, alienation from all evils, and all those attributes of the like kind, which help to form in men the likeness of God. By this likeness man is second to none of the wonders of the world and easily the greatest of all things known to us, because none of the existing things has been made in the likeness of God, except that creature which is

\textsuperscript{788} P. Smith, “St. Iranaeus”, \textit{Ancient Christian Writers}, 126.
\textsuperscript{789} Quasten, \textit{Patrology}, 292.
\textsuperscript{790} Ibid, 293.
\textsuperscript{791} Cf. Ibid, 293.
Thus according to Gregory; “The purpose of fleeing from evils seems to me precisely to achieve likeness to God. To become like God means to become just, holy, and good and such like things”. It seems that Gregory understands the likeness of God in which man is created something to be achieved in the future. But for Mar Jacob this likeness of God in man is not something to be achieved later but it is already granted to him, which is the likeness of the Son of God in which man was fashioned.

Irenaeus, who lived at the end of the second century, had a different thought on the image and likeness of man. Jean Danielou distinguishes the image concept of Irenaeus. According to him, “On the one hand, he does draw a distinction between the image and likeness: the image is the body, which the Father’s hands fashioned, and into which he breathed the soul; the likeness is the gift of the spirit. Nevertheless this endowment of the spirit is an integral part of man, is incomplete without it”. According to Irenaeus, “But man He (God) fashioned with His own hands, taking of the purest and finest of earth, in measured wise mingling with the earth His own power; for He gave his frame the outline of His own form, that the visible appearance too should be godlike – for it was an image of God that man was fashioned and set on earth – and that he might come to life, He breathed into his face the breath of life, so that the man became like God in inspiration as well as in frame”. That is, for Irenaeus, the image of God is in the frame of man and the likeness is in the spirit. According to Irenaeus the order of the creation of man is this: God first formed man’s body and gave him soul and lastly gave the spirit. It is noticeable that in a way Irenaeus contrasts soul and breath

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792 Ibid, 292.
793 As quoted, Ibid, 295.
795 See above.
796 Danielou, Gospel Message and Hellenistic Culture, 398.
797 As quoted by Quasten, Ancient Christian Writers, 54.
Iranaeus combines the image and likeness of man with eschatology: “Just as from the beginning of our formation in Adam, the breath of life which was from God, united to the material form, gave man life, and revealed him as a rational animal; so the ancient substance from which Adam was formed, made a living and perfect man who received the perfection of the Father; so that, as in the animal man we all died, so in the spiritual man we shall all be made alive. For, Adam never escaped from the hands of God, to which the Father addressed these words: Let us make man in our image and Likeness. And that is why, at the end, not by the will of the flesh, nor by the will of man, but by the decision of the Father, his hands perfected man, so that Adam should be in the image and likeness of God”. And in this context Iraneus makes a distinction between the breath of life and life-giving spirit, “For the breath of life which makes man animal, is one thing; and the life-giving spirit, which perfects him as spiritual, is another ..... Now something which made is different from the one who made it. Therefore the breath of life is temporal, but the spirit is eternal ..... For, it was necessary first that man should be formed, and that having been formed he should receive a soul; and only then that he should in this way share in the spirit”. Mar Jacob’s views are quite different from that of Iraneus, because Mar Jacob doesn’t consider the soul of man or the spirit in him neither as the image of God nor his likeness; for him, soul is a special gift of God to man and he states it as,

“He collected the dust, moulded it, rent it, bound together and plucked it and He infused the soul and poured out the spirit into the son of the dust” (FMC II 175-176).

Moreover Iranaeus relates the image of God in man with the son of God: “For as the image of God hath He made man; and the ‘image’ is the Son of God, in whose image man was

798 Cf. Ibid, 149.
800 Ibid.
made. And therefore, He was manifested in the last times to show the image like unto Himself”.  

But for Mar Jacob, the image of God in man is the image of God the Father and the likeness is the likeness of the Son of God.  

Clement of Alexandria also spoke about the image of God in man. For him, the mind of man is the image of God. Jean Danielou finds different stages suggested by Clement in the formation of man and analyses his views on the image of God in man and quotes: “God formed him from the dust, regenerated him by water, and made him grow in the spirit .... in order that the divine word might be fulfilled: Let us make man in our image and likeness. Now Christ was fully that of which God spoke; the rest of the mankind is only in the image .... The divine and royal Logos is the image of God, the human mind is the image of the image; and again: ‘The image of God is his Logos and true man is the image of the Logos, by which I mean the mind which is in man’.

Danielou analyses that Clement protests against the view that it is by virtue of his body that man is in the image of God, instead he insisted that it is the mind of man which gives him his real dignity that he is the image of God. And regarding the likeness of man with God, Clement suggests it as the gift of spirit, which does not belong to man by nature, but he has to attain it by exercising his freedom.

But we find that Mar Jacob differs from the views of Clement who said that the Logos of God is the real image of God and man is the image of the Logos and the resemblance of man to God is something to be attained later. But for Mar Jacob the resemblance of man to God is

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801 As quoted by Quasten, Ancient Christian Writers, 61.
802 See above P. 256
804 Cf. Ibid, 411.
805 Cf. Ibid, 412.
806 Ibid.
not something to be attained in the future, but it has already been given to man at the time of creation and this resemblance is the likeness of the Son of God. This we infer from the verses of the poet:

“When the Father fashioned Adam, He fashioned him in the likeness of His Son and in the resemblance of His incarnation He fashioned his image” (FMC I 181-182)

and “At the heavenly Adam, who is Lord Jesus, the Father looked at and in that resemblance He made Adam” (FMC I 185-186).807

Thus, these Greek fathers differ in their notions of the image and likeness of God in man from Syriac fathers: some of them relate the image of God with the soul of man, some others find in the rational part of man, yet for some other few, it consists in the freewill of man and one of them said Logos is the image of God.808 With regard to the likeness of God in man, some Greek fathers opine that it is lost due to the commission of sin and the consequent fall and hence it is something to be attained in the future. But we see that Mar Jacob of Sarug, while comparing with that of the Greek fathers, has a different, but more accurate, clear and reliable opinion and teaching on the image and likeness of God in man.809

Conclusion

In almost all organised Syriac conferences as well as in unorganised get-togethers of the Syriac scholars, a common grievance that resounds is that if our early Syriac Fathers were discovered and studied properly, the history of the Church would have been in another shape, because, the Syriac fathers had already given appropriate solutions to a lot of exegetical problems. One such explicit example is the explanation of Mar Jacob of Sarug on the issue of the image and likeness of God in man. His clarification on it is unambiguous, more sensible and acceptable than that of many others. On this issue he excels his predecessors, including __________________

807 Details on this topic are given above.
809 Jacob’s views are discussed in detail elsewhere in this section.
Mar Ephrem[^810] and he differs from the views of the Greek fathers. For Mar Jacob the image of God in man is the totality of the human person, including his essence, existence, physical and metaphysical properties, in its pre-sin state. While some others misunderstand a few of the possessions of human being as his likeness with God, Mar Jacob categorically underlines that the likeness is the form of the Son of God which He had before and after His incarnation.\(^\text{811}\)

The anthropomorphic description on the construction of the image not only gives a correct picture of its making but it also aims at giving details on God’s special concern for and His direct intervention in its formation. The long narrations on the greatness of the image that we see elsewhere in the mimre come not from the joyful heart of the poet that enjoys them, but from a bewailing, sympathetic as well as an empathetic heart, because, the whole mimre give us the picture of the poet who greatly worries at the loss of those greatness caused by the sin. The unfolding of the comeliness of the image also reveals the poet’s artistic mind. A great amount of uniqueness can be claimed by Mar Jacob on the illustrations on the theme.

[^810]: This topic is discussed above, see p. 296.
[^811]: This topic is discussed above, see p. 256.
Chapter III  Section  2. Freedom and Freewill of man

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Chapter III  Section 2.

Freedom and Freewill of man

Introduction

The usual connotation of the word ‘freedom’ is one’s state of being free from any kind of bondage or slavery and also it is his liberation from the control of some other force; internal and external or of some arbitrary power. Hence the implication of ‘freedom’ is ‘not being a slave’ to any one, anything or to any circumstance. It is a state of being able to act, move, express etc. without any hindrance or restraint. Even though ‘freedom’ in this sense includes certain inner aspects also of the free man, it primarily speaks about his outer or social existence and the amount of such kind of freedom is measured with the gauge of social principles and standards of living. To a greater level ‘freedom’ may be more a general term that connotes one’s liberty over his own thoughts, emotions, actions and possessions. We see that many centuries back Mar Jacob of Sarug expounds in detail in his Four Mimre ‘On Creation’, especially in its second one, on the divine gift of man’s freedom and illustrates its characteristics as well as factors related to man’s freewill. In the mimre Mar Jacob goes beyond the common level of understanding on ‘freedom’ and points to a deeper sense of the concept, where the inner aspect of man is given much more importance than the outer realm.

Following is an etymological study on the concept of freewill and freedom and then we go to the basic concepts on ‘freedom’ where we look into the teachings of the fathers of the Church. Then we see how the assertion of the poet on the topic is supported by various backgrounds. Subsequently we see the uniqueness of Mar Jacob in illustrating the freedom of man, including the illustrations on the dignity of man. One will certainly meet Mar Jacob only with a lot of novelty, especially in his elucidations on the freewill and freedom of man.
III. 2. A. **Various terms used in the Mimre for Freedom and Freewill**

Mar Jacob employs both the terms ܐܪܘܬܐ (hiruto) and ܪܒܝܢܐ (šebyono) to denote freedom and freewill. ܐܪܘܬܐ (hiruto) is from the root ܗܪ (PA) ܗܪܐ (harar) = to set free etc., especially the slaves. Here the stress of the term is for liberation from an external bondage. Mar Jacob uses the term very frequently in the mimre (*FMC* II 130, 141, 145, 197, 286, 302, III 35, 44, 95, 103, 178, 182, 517, 833, 853 and IV 4). The second term ܪܒܝܢܐ (šebyono) (Will, will power etc.) is from the root ܒܐ (šbo) = to will, wish etc., here the stress is for a superior faculty in man that elevates him to a higher status among the creatures; even beyond the angels. Since no other creatures of the world can choose their own destiny for the reason that they are predestined, man alone can choose his destiny. In this sense the poet says,

> “On herds of oxen, camels, sheepfold, swine, and all animals; the death has power and will reduce them to nothing. Demons and devils and Satan, along with them the wicked one; there is no means that the death enter into their legion. Death destroyed the living creatures not because they went astray; also, the devils remain alive, not because they kept (the commandment). Also, if Gabriel were to sin: let it not happen, there will not be a chance for death to approach him. The animals, even if they were to keep all commandments, They would not live long, because, they were formed mortally” (*FMC* II 63-72).

The power of choosing his own fortune in man makes the poet to exclaim,

> “This is great that he is powerful (sali) like God (’loho): he will lead death and life which are placed in him” (*FMC* II 289-290).

The poet uses the terms and phrases that bring up the power of choice in many places of the mimre (*FMC* I 89, II 142, 155, 159, 276, 293, 299, III 57, 79, 94, 98, 101, 174, 177 etc.)

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812 Cf. Smith, *Compendious Syriac Dictionary*
III. 2. A. 1. Synonymy between Freedom and Freewill

Mar Jacob’s concept of freedom (ḥiruto) is mostly related to man’s capacity to take decision for or against a given situation; hence his freedom (ḥiruto) concept is more related to the freewill (Šebyono) of man. ‘Freewill’ (Šebyono) implies the faculty behind one’s deliberate exercise of the power of choice. While keeping this distinction between freedom (ḥiruto) and freewill (Šebyono) in mind, if we look into the mimre we see that they are used almost synonymously. For example, in the same context and to illustrate the same point, Mar Jacob uses both the terms:

“And, when the Will (Šebyono) of the deceitful one cast him for deception, again, out of his freedom (ḥiruto), Adam fell down into the hands of death” (FMC III 177-178).

Thus we may not always find in the Four Mimre of Mar Jacob ‘On Creation’ the exact and clear-cut distinction between the terms Šebyono and ḥiruto, instead, they are found used interchangeably. When he uses ḥiruto he doesn’t seem always using it in the sense of emancipation from an external slavery, instead, we see him using it as an internal power of man that enables him to decide and choose. This is clear from many verses of the poet like,

“Freedom (ḥiruto) was also granted to the rational vessel (mono mlilo), so that, he shall select death and life according to his Will (Šebyono)” (FMC II 141-142),

“Besides, the freedom (ḥiruto) existed in him as a charioteer (henyuko) and it held bridles to guide his senses” (FMC II 145-146) etc.

But in one place we see the meaning of the word ḥrw (hruro) from the same root ḥr (har) is used in the sense of emancipation:

“But when He redeems it, He gives it freedom (hruro) from captivity” (FMC IV 214).

Otherwise, whenever the poet uses the terms - Šebyono and ḥiruto - in the mimre, we find that more than a freedom from an external bondage, the insistence is given to the freewill
of man which was granted to him by the benevolent God and which has to be exercised properly.

III. 2. B. Basic concepts of Freedom

The Christian concept of freedom is much more elevated than its common understanding; sometimes it is distinct and different from other elucidations on the notion of freedom. While the common understanding on freedom considers it solely in relation to the individuals and his relation to the society, the theological understanding of freedom considers it as lying in man’s life with God. Thus freedom, in Christian understanding, goes beyond mere ethical choice made with regard to individual acts. It is the freedom of choice for becoming an image and likeness of God through the exercise of one’s creative power and so, a real partnership with God to which man is called through creation, is possible only when and where man can choose.

III. 2. B. 1. The Fathers of the Church and the concept of the gift of Freewill

The concept of the freedom or freewill of man is a topic widely discussed throughout the ages, especially in connection with the themes of the crime or sin of man and also of the question of the predestination of man. Since it is a problem extensively being talked about in various branches of science as well as it is an issue that affects a variety of the fields of man’s life like anthropological, philosophical, psychological, theological, sociological etc., an innumerable number of explanations are possible. Hence I am required to confine myself to consult only a few of them, especially from the category of the same feather of Mar Jacob; from the early fathers of the Syriac and Greek Churches and in particular, their assessment of freedom as the gift of God. It is a common understanding and belief among the fathers of the
Church that God’s greatest and gratuitous gift to man, along with His image, is the freewill. For them freedom or freewill is not an uncontrolled state of a Being to do anything according to his own whims and fancies; but it is an unpressurised, self-controlled and appropriate exercise of one’s own capacity of freewill to choose the right thing and to act accordingly on the basis of certain determined and given criteria. In the Biblical context this criteria is the commandment given by God.

III. 2. B. 1. i. Syriac Fathers

The concept of the freedom or freewill of man is one of the major themes in the writings of the early Syriac fathers. They consider freedom as a gratuitous gift of God for man, because freewill is a mark of human identity that elevates him above other creatures and allows him to choose his own destiny. Among them Mar Ephrem highlights the indispensible relation between the commandment of God and the freewill of man: commandments are given for the benefit of man. Thus he writes, “Blessed is who wove the commandments so that through them freewill might be crowned”. In order to insist on the responsibility of each man for his own ruin through the misuse of his free will, Mar Ephrem points also to God’s justice in granting man’s freewill equally to every one: “The nature of our free will is the same in every one: if its power is weak in one, it is weak in all, if its power is strong in one, it is the same in all”.

III. 2. B. 1. ii. Greek Fathers

The Greek fathers of the Church also conceive the freewill of man as one of the greatest gifts of God to man. It is left to man to exercise his freewill and to choose accordingly. Origen,

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813 Details of God’s image in man are discussed in the segment, “Image and Likeness of God in Man”, p. 249 ff.
814 Cf. Ex. 20/ 1ff.
a great father of the early Greek Church, conceives freewill as, “Man’s freewill makes it possible for him to oppose God and to sin, to repent and to return to Him”.

Another Greek father of the Church, Gregory of Nyssa opines: “Every man is capable of moving his freewill in two directions; according to what seems good to him he may be turning towards temperance on the one hand, or towards license on the other .... For man’s character is divided into opposite impulses. Wrath is opposed to gentleness, arrogance to modesty; envy to wishing people well....”

The approximate resemblance among the thoughts on freedom of these fathers with that of Mar Jacob in no way covers up the beauty of his creativity.

III. 2. B. 2. **Freedom for self realisation**

God is infinite and hence He is powerful and free to do anything. So, freedom is one of the divine characteristics. Since God Willed to hand this basic power over to man also, naturally, then onwards man became possessor of the freewill. The common understanding is that the primary intention behind the gratuitous gift of freedom to man is the self manifestation of God to the world; through the revelations as well as the executions of His will man gets the idea of who God is. The salient feature of freedom lies in its intrinsic competency to choose. Discernment, which is a co-existant as well as a requirement of freedom, is yet another divine power which is granted to man. It is the power to distinguish between good and evil, to differentiate the precious things from the debris and to categorize everything according to their worth and values. Philosophically and psychologically also the basic notion of freedom is based on this power. So, “Those ‘human’ qualities that distinguish man from the animals – primarily his free will and his drive toward self-actualization”.

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817 As quoted by Quasten, *Ancient Christian Writers*, 224.
We see at the very beginning itself of the human race that man exercises his freedom or freewill and realises his potency: God brings every beast of the field and every bird of the air before Adam and out of his freedom and wisdom; he gives them names. Mar Jacob also points out this occasion and explains it as one of the major events which proved that Adam was sagacious and free:

“Again, if his knowledge was imperfect, how is it so, that he assigned names to all creatures which came near him? Behold, it is clear that he was eminent (tuliqo), full of discernment (mlo buyono)” (FMC III 117-119).

And out of his freedom (hiruto) and discernment (buyono), he discerns his own part and partner, Eve, and accepts her as his own.

III. 2. B. 3. Implementation of Freedom is participation in the Divinity

Mar Jacob conceives God’s gift of commandment as an occasion of God’s self revelation. The commandments contain the power of God’s living words as well as essence of His Will; in a way they are an extension of God. That is why, while disclosing the intention of God behind this gift, the poet says,

“And, in order that they should understand who the Lord is, who raised them to honour,
He constituted the law that they should not eat from the tree” (FMC IV 171-172).

Since God’s Will is coming out through the words of His commandments, they are manifestations of God. So, any attempt of the exercise of the freewill (sebyono) attuned for the observance of the commandment is an attempt to discern God through them. Vice versa, disobedience to the commandment by misusing one’s own freedom (hiruto) becomes an action against its giver; in that sense it becomes sin. Since the commandments are extensions of

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820 Gen. 2/19-20.
822 This aspect of the commandments is discussed in the segment, “God’s Mercy as the Catalytic Code”, p. 460.
God’s divinity, observance of them is a divine act as well as a participation in divinity. In this context, the poet reveals the contradiction in and mocks at the foolish attempt of Eve to snatch the divinity through the transgression of the commandment:

“She cleaved (and) entered, so that, she shall pluck the fruit first in order to become the chief in divinity over Adam, her husband” (FMC III 505-506),

“She did not invite Adam, so that, he may eat first from it; instead, she made haste to be declared eldest in the divinity” (FMC III 537-538)

etc.

Thus, for the poet, the misuse of one’s freedom not only as sin but he views it also as the extinction of the divinity in man.

III. 2. C. **Scriptural support for the poet’s assertion on Freewill**

Mar Jacob’s concepts on freedom and freewill of man are strongly supported by the Holy Scripture. In fact, the whole Biblical tradition supposes that man is capable of making free decisions and hence it constantly appeals to his power of choice and at the same time stresses his responsibility. Even though Mar Jacob was describing the Old Testament events in his mimre such as the creation of man, his sin, fall etc. he stands a few steps ahead of the Old Testament concept of freedom. In the Old Testament, freedom consists where there are questions of emancipating a slave, mostly in connection with the emancipation of debtors of Israelite stock after seven years. Freedom concept of Old Testament can also be understood as independence from the foreign dominations. But these types of freedom are relative in character, because the degree of such freedom varies in accordance with the changes of situations and of social values. But we see that, for his concept of freedom, Mar Jacob strongly depends on the words from Ecclesiasticus (Sirah); “It was he who created man in the

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823 This aspect of sin can be seen in the section, “Sin as the soteriological causality”, p. 526.
825 Cf. Ex. 21/2.
beginning, and he left him in the power of his own inclination. If you will, you can keep the commandments, and to act faithfully is a matter of your own choice”.

Many of the expositions of Mar Jacob on the freedom (hiruto) of man are closely connected with the New Testament teachings. Jesus Christ has come to liberate man from the slavery of sin and He proclaims it at the very outset of His mission: “....... To set at liberty those who are oppressed”. The core of the New Testament perception on freedom can be seen in the teachings of St. Paul as well as of St. John where the dominant factor is the freedom from sin as well as from its consequential eternal death. Paul exhorts, “Brothers, you have been called to liberty”. Paul insists also on the necessity of one’s freedom from the obligation of vain observance of the Jewish Law. And it is the Son of God who gives this freedom to the people: “Therefore, if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed”. Jesus Christ affirms: “And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free”, in the sense that He is the truth. St. Paul attests this truth; “Stand fast, therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage”. While St. Paul exhorts people to liberate themselves from the Jewish Law, at the same time, giving more clarity to the Christian concept of freedom, he urges to come under a new law, a law of love which is the sign of Christian freedom: “For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For, all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: ‘you shall love your neighbour as

826 Sir. 15/14-15.
827 Luke. 4/18
829 Gal. 5/13.
830 Cf. Rom. 7/3 ff., Gal. 4/21 ff., 5/1 ff. etc.
831 Jn. 8/36.
832 Jn. 8/32.
834 Gal. 5/1.
Hence the speciality of freedom in the New Testament is that everyone enjoys equal freedom, especially through their baptism; “For, by one spirit we were all baptised into one body – whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free – and have all been made to drink into one spirit”.

Basing on these notions from Scripture Mar Jacob expounds his account on the concept of freedom. For him freedom is the state of union with God and slavery is the yoke of sin through the misuse of one’s own free will.

III. 2. D. Illustration on man’s freedom

Mar Jacob characterises the concept of freewill (šebyono) in man through correlations. But we do not find a conscious effort of the poet to distinguish freedom (hiruto) from other faculties in man. The characteristics of man’s freedom are drawn here from the descriptions of the poet in the mimre on its use and misuse. Diverse illustrations can be seen in the mimre to describe the God-given gift of freedom (hiruto/šebyono) in man. Mar Jacob uses all of them to tell about freedom as the enormous power within man that makes him different and divine as well as powerful and authoritative.

III. 2. D. 1. Freedom - a charioteer

Freedom is considered in the mimre as a charioteer within a human being to guide him:

“Besides, the freedom (hiruto) existed in him as a charioteer (henyuko) and it held bridles to guide his senses” (FMC II 145-146).

Charioteer and bridle are symbols of guiding and controlling. Mar Jacob employs them in the

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835 Gal. 8/13-14.
837 I Cor. 13/13.
838 This characteristic of sin is discussed in the segment, “Sin as the Soteriological Causality”, p. 526.
mimre in order to show the necessity of controlling oneself. The poet considers the body of man as a chariot:

“The body was bound by the four (elements) and was running like a chariot (markabto)” (FMC IV 73).

and while describing the construction of the image also he repeats the same notion:

“He furnished underneath, the feet to run like a chariot (markabto)” (FMC IV 115).

Chariot is a symbol of royal magnificence. Adam, being the bearer of the image of God\textsuperscript{839} and thus he being the lord of the creatures (FMC IV 62), has a royal lineage and this majesty is symbolised in ‘chariot’ (markabto) or charioteer (henyuko). The chariot (markabto) denotes also to the coherence in an establishment: smooth functioning of its each part and the objective it has to be achieved. A chariot (markabto) presupposes a charioteer (henyuko) who controls the chariot and also the horses that pull it. Mar Jacob was explaining the smooth performance, despite their basic differences, of the four elements in man like the unanimous running of the four wheels of a chariot pulled by the horses in its course. Usually a chariot is driven for attaining an objective like victory over the enemy in war etc. Behind the usage of the imagery of a chariot to represent the perfection of the physique, the poet aims at reminding man of his goal, the leadership over the whole universe and victory over Satan.

A charioteer (henyuko) rides the chariot (markabto) to the direction which he has chosen; leading the horses towards it and using the bridles which he holds in his hands. Here, it is the charioteer (henyuko) who decides where, when and how to go. And his carriage and the driving force follow only what he orders; he keeps the sole control over them. But with regard to man, his body, mind, soul, life, senses, reason, thoughts, decisions, words, activities etc. are the chariot (markabto) and horses, his freewill (šebyono) is the charioteer (henyuko) and the commandments of God are the bridles (pgudo). Hence the poet points out the necessity of

\textsuperscript{839} For details on God’s image in man, see the segment, “Image and Likeness of God in Man”, p. 249 ff.
controlling man by himself on the basis of the commandments and also reminds him of his journey through the right path. The poet wishes that as a charioteer, man must exercise his willpower and bridle his whole actions towards the right direction:

“Wherever it wanted, it guided (bridled) him to go with it: to death or to life, he holds the power ( salarié)!” (FMC II 147-148).

But what the poet narrated in the mimre is the catastrophic failure of man in the proper use of his freewill. Instead of controlling his or her senses through their Will (Sebyono), Adam and Eve happened to be controlled by them and thus they became sinners and perished accordingly. It is also noticeable that in another place of the mimre the poet views the five senses of the human body as the charioteer:

“The five senses were set on it as charioteers (henyuke)” (FMC IV 74).

But these two notions are not contradictory, but are complementary for the reason that the senses are directed by the Will of man (FMC II 145-146).

III. 2. D. 2. Freedom - a weighing balance

The poet portrays freedom as a weighing balance in man between the two inclinations:

“It (freedom) was devised as a balance (masato) between the two inclinations and the two sides: death and life are constituted in him” (FMC II 153-154).

Each wing of a weighing balance weighs in proportion to the quantity of the matter placed in it. In this situation Mar Jacob evaluates that in man there is reason for death because he is from the dust and there is also a place for everlasting life in him by the reason of his soul being the spirit (FMC II 157-158). If he is away from guilt and outweighs to be spiritual, he can draw both the body and spirit towards immortality. At the same time, if he loves wretchedness and thus inclines towards death, his whole Being will be perished (FMC II 161-162). Here also, it

840 See the effects of sin in the section, “Sin as the Soteriological Causality”, p. 539 ff.
is left to the Will of man for the proper exercise his freedom to decide the side to which he wishes to belong.

III. 2. D. 3. Freewill – an architect

Freedom of a man is compared in the mimre with an architech who builds a big house:

“It is a great wonder that the architect (ʾrdiklo) who builds a house: it is left to this (being) (the power) either to destroy or not to destroy” (FMC II 169-170).

Thus it is left to the architect either to construct or to demolish a house. Here, the choosing factor of freedom or the deciding power of the freewill is more stressed by the poet.

Only an architect who constructs a beautiful house will be rewarded. Like that, man can exercise his freedom for establishing himself straight and for gaining his eternal life. He can use the same power for destructing himself and fall into his total ruin. Along with the comparison between the freedom and architect, Mar Jacob states,

“He established in it the nature of the soul as a column (ʾmudo)” (FMC II 171).

It is the proper construction and strength of the columns that decides the strength, stability and durability of the building. Proper spiritual enrichment of the soul through the observance of the commandments, the perfect protection of it from everything that weakens it, by abstaining from all kinds of evils etc. will bring about eternity for body and soul together (FMC II 174).

III. 2. D. 4. Freewill – a dietician

As experts in dietetics do, the freedom of man can plan special diets for the nourishment and growth of man’s life. For the poet, the commandments given by God are the only nutrients a dietician can prescribe for man’s growth. Through a strong decision by the freewill they can be availed and consumed for the self actualisation of the human beings.
Observance of the commandments is the nutrient for the growth, maturity, perfection and attainment of man’s ultimate goal. The growth of a human being can be measured on the basis of how much he observes the commandments of God. As one observes the commandments perfectly he grows steadily in his image towards its fullness until it becomes one with God. It is in this context that the poet emphatically states:

“That was why the Lord had constituted the law for Adam, so that, the observance of the law should become something which makes him grow (mrapyono)” (FMC III 197-198).

Here also, it is left to the freewill of man to decide whether he should grow through the observance of the commandment or be curtailed by evading them.

III. 2. D. 5. Freewill – a suction apparatus

Along with the concept of the nutrient factor of the observance of the commandments, the poet conceives it as a device of God so as to operate it as a sucker which draws the inner potentialities of man out and thus to make him conscious of his hidden talents. These verses of the poet points to this factor of the commandments:

“Unless a man fights, he neither fails nor wins
and if he doesn’t meet with contest, he is not victorious. Also, an athlete doesn’t have a crown without a contest
and without a battle bravery can’t be ascertained.
Also, the observance of the commandment doesn’t exist without a commandment;
again, propriety is not recognized without a limit” (FMC III 191-196).

So, for the poet, observance of the commandment is the act of freedom, perhaps the only act of freedom, for the perfection of man. This observance depends on decision of the freewill of man; hence it is the freewill of man acts as a suction apparatus that brings his potency out.
III. 2. E. **Freewill in association with other faculties of man**

St. Paul distinguishes an outer man and an inner man within a human being: “Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day”. In this line, the descriptions of the poet on the freewill of man point to such an inner man within human being. Those illustrations on the freewill as the charioteer, weighing balance, mason, suction apparatus etc., perhaps, give us a picture of poet’s concept on freewill as an inner man within man who controls and guides the whole activities of man. But here, it is to be distinguished that Mar Jacob does not consider the freewill as the totality of the inner man that controls the human activities, but for him, the image of God in man is the principal factor of man and his freewill is only one of the faculties of the image in man.

III. 2. E. 1. **Freewill and the Image**

Mar Jacob states that, God, out of His generousness, imparted the freedom, the divine power, to man when He created him in His own image:

“*Freedom (hiruto) was also granted to the rational vessel (mono mlilo), so that, he shall select death and life according to his Will (Sebyono)*” (FMC II 141-142).

Even though the first verse of this statement of the poet indicates an intentional handing over of God’s power to man, actually, the second verse clarifies that the intrinsic characteristic of God had been flowing from God to man simultaneously while He was imparting the image to man, because, the characteristics of God are always attached with His image. So, when God’s image was shared with man, God did not withhold any of its characteristics, hence, all of them had followed with it towards man. Neither the angels nor the devils have the freedom to

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841 2 Cor. 4/16.
842 See above.
843 More details on the existance of the image of God in man can be seen in the segment, “Image and Likeness of God in Man”, p. 249 ff.
die:

“Also, if Gabriel were to sin: let it not happen, there will not be a chance for death to approach him” (FMC II 69-70)

and “Demons and devils and Satan, along with them the wicked one; there is no means that the death enter into their legion” (FMC II 65-66).

Also, the animals cannot live everlastinglly even if they wish for it:

“On herds of oxen, camels, sheepfold, swine, and all animals; the death has power and will reduce them to nothing” (FMC II 63-64).

But it is left to man alone the power to choose either to die or not to die and this is only by the reason of God’s image and likeness in him. Hence, in the mimre, freewill is conceived by the poet as an essential associate power of the image of man.

III. 2. E. 2. Freedom and the Soul

According to the poet, while keeping in mind the indissoluble relation between the image of man and his freedom, the powers of man were passed onto him when he received the spirit:

“He infused the spirit (nsak hvo ruho) into an earthen vessel (mono dešpo) mixed with dust (‘apro) and He mingled them intelligibly one with its companion” (FMC II 137-138, 173).

By declaring this, the poet was establishing the indissoluble relation between the soul of man and his freedom. In a way he was telling that the freedom comes from the soul. Because, the poet underlines that when Adam misused his freedom what affected more was his soul:

“In his freedom (hiruto) and without any compulsion, he enslaved his soul (napšo)” (FMC II 302).

This statement of the poet is a clear proof for the close association between the soul of man and his freedom.

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844 See below the integral relation between freewill and sin, ‘Freewill and slavery by sin’, p. 327.
III. 2. E. 3. **Freewill and Rationality**

Since Mar Jacob knows the close association between the freedom and rationality, he emphatically states,

“Freedom (*hiruto*) was also granted to the rational vessel (*mono mli*lo)” *(FMC II 141).*

This verse of the poet gives us the clue that he was not considering freedom as an offshoot of reason; in its place, for him, reason and freedom are co-existent. While rational capacity of a man analyses various possibilities of a given situation; his freewill chooses the best among them. And sometimes, it rejects all such occasions considering it unbecoming or irrelevant. Hence, it depends on the competence of man’s rationality and freewill together to pick up the pearls while rejecting the rubbish. So, this thought of the poet enables him to exhort people to choose discriminately the best from among the options:

“So that it may be subject to two choices independently (*porusoi*)” *(FMC II 136, III 173-174).*

Freedom and discernment must go hand in hand. These powers elevate man to a realm of his divinity.

III. 2. E. 4. **Freewill and lordship**

The poet conceives that since God is the creator and owner of life, He alone has the authority over it. But God Willed to hand this power over to man:

“So that, he shall select death and life according to his Will (*sebyono*)” *(FMC II 142).*

Thus the poet opines that when the divine power of choice was gratuitously granted to man, he became powerful like God. Mar Jacob tries to explore the mind of God and says,

“The Creator wished that Adam should become great (*yireb*) like God (*loho*)” *(FMC I 203).*
In order to raise Adam near to Him, God gave him the power of choosing death and life. This power in man gave him the chance to be placed next to God and above all other creatures. On the basis of this power, God allows him to share His duties; God asks Adam to name the living creatures other than him\(^{845}\) \((FMC\ III\ 117-118)\). This freedom (hiruto) was greatly exalted and precious so much so to make Satan envious:

> "From the time when the Lord said, ‘let us make man in our image’; the deceitful devil was struck by jealousy (hsomo) on account of his (Adam’s)freedom (hiruto)” \(FMC\ III\ 181-182, I\ 207\).

Looking at the image of Adam the poet exclaims,

> “This is great that he is powerful (salit) like God (‘loho): he will lead death and life which are placed in him If he had held the way of life as it was commanded, he could never have turned away from life!” \(FMC\ II\ 289-292\).

Thus, for the poet, the basis on which Adam became lord (moro) over the creatures is his freedom of choice (hiruto) as part of the image (salmo) of God in man.

III. 2. E. 5. Freewill and Immortality

The spiritual beings can’t die by the reason that they do not have a body \(FMC\ II\ 47-48, 65-66, 68-70\ etc.) and other creatures of the world cannot live long because they were not granted the gift of soul, so, naturally they will die \(FMC\ II\ 49-58, 63-64, 67, 71-74\). In his second mimre, as Mar Jacob himself says, he was trying to find a solution to the question of heated discussion on human beings’ mortality and immortality:

> “Oh, behold, the distinguished ones, therefore, there is a debate on these” \(FMC\ II\ 99\).

According to the poet, the creation of Adam was very special and the very creation of him itself gives the answer to the question of mortality and immortality of man:

> “If you examined the fashioning (of Adam), you would learn that

\(^{845}\) Cf. Gen. 2/19 ff.
he was composed mortal and immortal (moyuto u lomoyuto).
The creator, who in His skilfulness, (mahiruto) had juxtaosed the
natures:
while creating man from life and death (hayuto u mituto) (FMC II 131-134).

Moreover, the poet finds that the gratuitous gift of the spirit of God into man and the making of
the flesh out of the dust are the reasons behind the possibilities of this immortality and
mortality respectively in man:

“For, there is in him a reason for death (’elto lmavto), because, he is
from the dust (daḥiḥo)
and again, there is a place in him for life (’tro lhayo), because, his
soul (napṣo) is spirit (ruḥo)” (FMC II 157-158, 137-138).

The poet considers that the magnificent figure of man with the two natures is the outcome of
the wisdom of God; hence he entitles God\(^{846}\) as the ‘Wise one’ (hakimo) (FMC II 139, 269),
skilful one (mahiro) (FMC II 133, 167, 177, 275) glorious (ṣbih) (FMC II 275) etc.

Unlike the other living creatures, according to the poet, God had wisely established the
two ways in man, the way towards life and the way towards death (FMC II 148-149). This is
the peculiarity of the creation of man; it is left to him whether to live or die. In order to decide
his death or life God granted him freedom, the power to choice (FMC II 277-280). As quoted
above,\(^{847}\) the poet affirms that it is the freedom which was granted to the rational vessel (man)
that enables him to select death and life according to his Will (FMC II 141-142). Mar Jacob
appreciates the integrity of the image:

“Therefore, it is fair that he be mortal and immortal (moyuto lomoyuto)
and He gave freedom (ḥiruto): the power (ṣulṭono) upon these two” (FMC II
285-286).

As a psychologist\(^{848}\) the poet makes a statement that the inclinations of man naturally
draw him to that side (FMC II 144). But man, using his freedom as a charioteer who holds

\(^{846}\) More titles of God as the poet uses them in the Mimre can be seen in the segment, “God’s Mercy as the

\(^{847}\) See above – ‘Freedom and Rationality’.

\(^{848}\) See the segment, “Man behind the Book”, p. 164 ff.
bridles in his hands, \(^{849}\) must control himself from falling into inclinations and thus he should lead his person, including the image, soul, freedom etc. towards eternal life (FMC II 145-148). Mar Jacob makes the notion of ‘inclination’ clearer by saying that if man is free from guilt keeping him away and controlling him from among the ocean of temptations of sin that opened its mouth wide to swallow him, then it is a sign that he loves life, certainly he will be immortal. On the other hand, if he loves the cool of the inclinations towards sin and fall in wretchedness, naturally he will die (FMC II 159-162).

Through a very detailed narration on the freedom of man in his mimre, especially, by allotting the second mimre exclusively for the illustration, Mar Jacob was underlying the fact that the freedom of man was gratuitously granted to him by God solely for the purpose of selecting for man the eternal life by himself. It was easy for God to grant man the eternal life freely and without any involvement from the part of man; then man will be only a receiver of gift which would make him equal or inferior to other creatures. Since God wished that man should be like God, He gave him the freedom of choice (FMC I 203).

III. 2. E. 6. **Freedom and Prudence**

Mar Jacob points to the necessity of sufficient prudence (zahiruto) in man for the proper exercise of his freedom (hiruto). Prudence (zahiruto) is conceived in the mimre not as a synonym for freedom but as another entity in man as supporter of as well as an essential co-existant with freedom. Prudence (zahiruto) and its discerning power (ta’mo) are very close to the intelligence of man. And with this conviction Mar Jacob speaks of God’s gift of freedom to a rational vessel (FMC II 141). It is the prudence (zahiruto) in man that distinguishes the merits and demerits of a given situation. When they are discriminated, the

\(^{849}\) See above in this section – ‘Freedom - a Charioteer’
freewill of man chooses one of the options. For the poet, one’s capacity of discernment can be measured on the basis of the number of questions – for or against - one asks at a given situation. That is why he extols the discernment of Mary who asked a lot of questions to the messenger:

“Blessed is the discernment (ta’mo) of the daughter of David, for, how much diligent she was! For, she sharpened the disputation against the angel who descended near her” (FMC III 437-438).

But he ridicules the hastiness of Eve:

“If she (Eve) had debated with the serpent, she could have overcome him and it would not have been possible (for him) to attack her severely” (FMC III 431-432).

The prudence of Mary helped her to exercise her freedom and to make the right choice for the eternity not only for herself but for the whole generations. The imprudence and hastiness of Eve caused the catastrophe for the mankind (FMC III 457 ff.).

God wished that Adam must distinguish the merits of the given commandments and opt for its observance and thus for eternal life (FMC III 197-198). The exegesis of the poet on the commandment given at the garden is based on the discernment of man. Thus he explains it as,

“With great prudence (zahiruto) flee as far as from it, lest you should come to an end,
but if it is that, you neglect and you are brought near to it, you cause defeat for yourself (you will die)” (FMC III 225-226).

Thus the poet states:

“So long as the ordinance was kept entirely with prudence (zahiruto), there was no chance to the flesh to be ashamed due to the nakedness” (FMC III 613-614).

But what happened was the contradictory; Adam and Eve failed to employ their power of discernment and they themselves were given to be subdued by the chance. The poet bewails over this pathetic situation of the first parents:

\[850\] Feministic approach of Mar Jacob can be seen in the segment, “Man behind the Book”, p. 181 ff.
“She (Eve) obeyed the serpent without the discernment of truth” (FMC III 501).

Mar Jacob explains what should have been done,

“It belonged to her (Eve), to give ear to his words with discernment (buyono) and through a question she could have learned his discourse diligently” (FMC III 435-436).

III. 2. F. Freewill in association with the obligations of man

Even though the freewill of man is a gracious gift of God, the one who receives it has certain obligations to be fulfilled; there are certain things which he has to undertake and there are a few other things from which he has to keep himself away.

III. 2. F. 1. Freewill and the observance of the commandment

Mar Jacob likes to see the freedom of man in connection with how far it is useful and how much it can be employed for keeping the commandments given by God. If this greatest capacity of man was not exercised for the greater glory of God and also in accordance with the precepts of God, it is worthless and sometimes its possession will become detrimental to the very true existence of man. Thus the poet reminds:

“The transgression of the commandment killed Adam through the tree” (FMC III 245).

God did not wish to enforce His commandments upon man, because they were given not for profiting Himself, but for the benefit of man alone. So, for the poet, this capacity of freewill was granted to man with the sole purpose that out of his own interest man shall decide to observe the commandment. Mar Jacob narrates this intention of God behind the gift of freedom:

“If He (God) wanted to compel him (Adam) in the garden, He would have detained him from the many and have given him one. And since His law is out of love and not out of constraint ….” (FMC III 199-201).
Thus, for the poet, the gift of freedom in man urges him to observe God’s commandments.

III. 2. F. 2. Freewill and slavery by sin

Usually the concept of slavery is considered as oppression by an external force which takes away primarily the freedom of the slave.\textsuperscript{851} Thus, “Slavery is the condition of being a slave; bondage; servitude” and a slave is “A human being who is owned as property by another and is absolutely subject to his (owner’s) will; bondservant divested of all freedom and personal rights”.\textsuperscript{852} All those who speak of sin mention its enslavement nature. Mar Jacob clearly narrates this fact in his mimre.\textsuperscript{853}

\begin{quote}
\textit{“The sin enchained (pkar) it and delivered it to death in order to scoff at it” (FMC IV 67).}
\end{quote}

But slavery by sin in man is happened primarily not by an external bondage, but mainly by one’s own freewill and voluntary action which lead him to that state and consequently he becomes a slave to sin by subduing himself under the yoke and clutches of it. Mar Jacob was fully conscious of this aspect of slavery by sin. That is why he says,

\begin{quote}
\textit{“In his freedom (hiruto) and without any compulsion, he enslaved (ṣa’bed) his soul” (FMC II 302).}
\end{quote}

At the same time the role of external forces like the provocation by Satan etc. for the enslavement by sin are not overlooked by the poet, because, he also said,

\begin{quote}
\textit{“Like a hunter (ṣayodo), he (Satan) twined the net (neṣbo) and laid the snares (paho) hidden in order to entangle (‘arqel) the two partridges into his snare (mzidto)” (FMC III 301-302).}
\end{quote}

Contrary to the common understanding of slavery, where, one is totally deprived of his freedom during his slavery and where remains no chance of exercising his own freedom but to

\textsuperscript{851} See the introduction to this section.
\textsuperscript{853} More details on this topic can be seen in the section, “Sin as the Soteriological Causality”, p. 560, 526 etc.
be fully obedient to the master’s will, in the slavery by sin, even though one is at the clutches of sin, he is not totally deprived of freedom, because, he can exercise his freewill to choose against sin, even against his own sin and to make a choice to oppose sin even while he being in sin. Thus, to say that a sinner has lost his liberty due to sin does not mean that freewill is lost through sin so completely as to make man totally incapable of making a free choice. It is true that Mar Jacob had said,

“Sin comes suddenly to act this (way) upon those who possess it; for, through its pleasant love, it will terribly take the reason away captive” (FMC III 529-530).

But here, he doesn’t mean a situation of total annihilation of the reason of man or its ensuing freedom, instead, he narrates only about how one becomes enslaved by the outer attractiveness of sin. We understand this mind of the poet from his exhortation for the sinners for repentance of the sins committed (FMC IV 375 ff), where full exercise of sinner’s freewill is essential.

III. 2. G. Dignity of Man’s freedom

The freewill of man is envisaged in the mimre as a principal power that was gratuitously granted to man by God (FMC II 141-142). Besides being a status of dignity and a reason for the supremacy over other creatures (FMC IV 3), the freewill is the power over his own life also and with this power he chooses his own destiny:

“Since this existed with him, it was not easy that this one should die; moreover, this one should live forever and should never die” (FMC II 151-152).

Early Syriac fathers were commonly well informed of the greatness of this capacity of man and they bewail at its misuse, especially by the misuse of Adam. Mar Ephrem, when he compares the beauty of the freewill of man with that of the Paradise, he outweighs more the freewill of man than Paradise: “If the beauty of Paradise strikes us with astonishment, how much more
should we be astonished at the beauty of the mind: one is the product of nature, the other of the will. Free will was envious of the Garden and from itself brought forth victorious fruits whose crowns vanquish the very splendours of Paradise”.  

III. 2. G. 1. **Assertion on Adam’s freedom**

A scientific process of asserting a truth requires an enquiry into all possible areas of a given subject through pros and cons arguments and experiments. Mar Jacob of Sarug appears not only an excellent poet but he was also a philosopher and logician. He searches for any contrary or contradictory reasons for Adam’s fall other than his proposal; the misuse of Adam’s freedom. He argues like this: one can consider Adam as a child. If he was a child in the Garden of Eden, and since children are innocent and immature to take a decision, he would not have been blamed for his transgression (*FMC* III 107-108). Thus the poet asks,

“And now, let us seek whether it is visible that he was innocent, that, his ignorance defends his transgression? ” (*FMC* III 109-110).

By analysing various activities also of Adam, the poet attests that he was a complete man and not a child. God created every creature in the world so that they become useful for Adam and He brought them before Adam to give them names: “So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field”. Referring to this passage, the poet asks,

“Again, if his knowledge was imperfect, how is it so, that he assigned names to all creatures which came near him? ” (*FMC* III 117-118).

The transgression of Adam and Eve and the thought process behind it show that Adam

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855 This characteristic of the poet can be seen in the section, “Hellenic Influence in the Formation of the Mimre”, p. 663 ff.
856 Cf. Gen. 2/18-19.
was not a child and he did not carry it out childishly. It is sure that he was sagacious when he received the commandment (III 121). The poet again asks,

“If he was a child, why did he covet the divinity and who showed him that its rank is higher than that of his own?” (FMC III 111-112).

Only a matured man, having full measure of discernment, can make such discretional decisions. Mar Jacob argues that Adam’s actions were of a strong man and not of a feeble child. That is why,

“He desired to seize the divinity as if by violence!” (FMC III 120)

He dared to snatch the rank of creatorship and the poet compares it as lifting a big stone up (FMC III 122-123). The poet evaluates,

“And there was no infancy with him when he had stumbled on it” (FMC III 124).

His transgression was like a giant leap to cross over and reach near God. Mar Jacob scornfully comments asking, ‘who can consider one who makes such a huge jump, a child?’ This trial to ascend to the exalted position through all sorts of impudent craftiness can’t be considered a child’s innocent move with his soft feet’ (FMC III 125-130). So the freedom of Adam and Eve at the time of transgression was full, mature and perfect and hence there is no reason to excuse Adam for his transgression by mishandling his power of discernment and choice (FMC III133).

III. 2. G. 2. God respects man’s freedom

Even though this power of choice was given to man out of the graciousness of God, according to the poet, God respects man’s freedom and He never attempts to overcome it. The poet views the very act of giving God’s own image to man (FMC I 271) and the very decision of God that the observance of the law must not be out of constraint but it should be out of man’s choice (FMC III 199 ff.) etc. as occasions of honouring man’s freedom. Thus the poet
affirms that God’s law is out of love and not out of constraint (FMC III 201). Another picture of God’s uprightness in upholding the dignity of man’s freedom is the occasion where God gives Adam a chance to give names to all the living beings that are brought before him (FMC III 117-118). It was not the incapability of the Creator to name His creatures that made Him to hand the task over to Adam but it was an act of respecting the capacity of discernment of His human image. If God had interfered intermittently in the exercise of the freedom of man, it would have been an act contrary to the very nature and purpose of the grant of the freedom.

According to the poet, God never restricted man’s freedom even when he misused it and thus committed sin, instead, while respecting the freedom of man, He was waiting for the culmination of the transgression. While comparing the sin of the first parents with a wrestling contest and considering God as a referee of the same, the poet writes,

“The Justice (Just one) effected as a spectator to that contest and it (He) waited for the whole contest be brought to an end” (FMC III 553-554).

It was easy for God to punish the culprit at the very moment when man committed sin. But giving a lot of opportunities and clues, through many questions, for the remission of the sin by way of repentance and confession of the same (FMC III 707 ff.), God was showing His respect towards the freedom of man. Through the exercise of one’s own freedom one must repent on the sin committed by way of the misuse of the same freedom:

“He made an opening on him; for this reason (alone) He asked questions and not for anything else, but, his recovery (discovery) should have been voluntarily from him alone (FMC III 731-732).

This attitude of God becomes clearer from the curse suddenly shot upon the serpent without any questioning and without giving it any chance for contrition and confession, because these

858 Cf. Gen. 2/19-20.
will not help the serpent to get rid of his sin, for the reason that he is doomed for it. God wished that Adam, out of his discernment, should have distinguished his folly and have saved himself and his race from the ruin (FMC III 719 ff.). Mar Jacob of Sarug emphasises that God honours even a culprit:

“Even when he went astray, he was precious to Him when He looked upon him. He sinned but He did not curse him, since His love was with him He did not hate him: not to curse him, He cursed the earth on account of him. With hope He cursed it when He cast him out from the Paradise, lest He should curse him, He showed softness and brought him in. When He cast him out He did not cast out an enemy; but He raised up a friend a little near to His beloved one” (FMC I 224-230).

An appeal to God by the poet:

“The Good one who gave inheritance, a garden of blessings, to the one who did not obey Him; teach me also...” (FMC III 3)

shows the poet’s concept of the generousness of God in respecting the freedom of man even to commit sin.

God did not send Adam and Eve out from Paradise naked; instead He covered them with a new tunic (FMC III 995 ff.). The poet views that the reason behind this act of God is His respect towards the freedom of man. The best example for the gratuitous respect of God towards man’s can be inferred from the fact that God did not revoke the grant of freedom even when man misused it and even when, with its support, man revolted against God.

III. 2. G. 3. The exercise of man’s freedom

Throughout the mimre we see that the poet laments over the folly of Adam through the misuse of his freedom. His transgression caused his own fall, ruin and his pathetic situation in Sheol (FMC I 208 -210). Mar Jacob says,

“And since, in his Will (šeyono), he disobeyed the commandment rebelliously,
he is rightly dead (mit) and became dust (‘apro) in Sheol” (FMC II 293-294).

The second mimre of the poet ‘On Creation’ ends with the expression of grief of the poet over the consequences of the misuse of the freedom of man. Rebuking Adam the poet says,

“Had he not ruined his soul by his hands, he would not have fallen down, because, the Creative power (boruyuto) had given him the governorship (saliüto). His Will (sebyono) has to be his master (moro); but he uprooted and threw it down; and behold, his earth (‘apro), of which he was taken, has been scattered as dust (dahiho). Look, thenceforward the condemnation had remained with them, for, in his freedom (hiruto) and without any compulsion, he enslaved his soul” (FMC II 297-302).

III. 2. G. 3. i. The fathers of the Church on the exercise of man’s freedom

Mar Jacob of Sarug’s thoughts on the exercise of man’s freedom is attuned to the common feelings of the fathers of the Church, who, while approving the fact that the freedom of man is gratuitous gift of God, they emphasise that it is man’s misuse of freedom that caused his sin, ruin and death. For example, Mar Ephrem defends the sinless status of animals on the basis of their want of freedom: “In His justice He gave abundant comfort to the animals; they do not feel shame for adultery, nor guilt for stealing; without being ashamed they pursue every comfort they encounter, for they are above care and shame; the satisfaction of their desires is sufficient to please them. Because, they have no resurrection, neither are they subject to blame”. 859 The commandment of God was the criteria on which the exercise of man’s freewill was tested. Observance of the commandment through the proper exercise of the freewill of man would have gained him eternity. Mar Ephrem in his Commentary on Genesis says, “Now because God had given to Adam everything inside and outside Paradise through Grace, requiring nothing in return, either for his creation or for the glory in which He had clothed him, He nevertheless, out of Justice, held back one tree from him to whom He had given, in Grace

859 Brock, Hymns on Paradise (Tr.), 167.
everything in Paradise and on earth, in the air and in the seas. For when God created Adam He
did not make him mortal, nor did He fashion him as immortal; this was so that Adam himself,
either through keeping the commandment, or by transgressing it, might acquire from this one
of the trees whichever outcome he wanted”.\textsuperscript{860}

III. 2. H. \textbf{Freedom of man compared with that of other creatures}

In order to praise the greatness of the freedom of man, Mar Jacob compares it with the
capacities of other creatures of the universe.

III. 2. H. 1. \textbf{Freedom of Animals}

Creatures other than man, like animals or insects, have no freedom of choice on their
life and death (FMC II 53-54). By performing on the basis of their instinct they satisfy the
objective of their creation as well as of their existence.\textsuperscript{861} But the poet evaluates that this
obedience doesn’t profit them for their immortality:

\textit{“They do not live like angels even if they had kept the commandment” (FMC II
58).}

No animal or insect live immoderately (FMC II 54, 181-182) instead; they are placed under
death daily (FMC II 49). At the same time, this mortality was not caused by their transgression
of any commandment (FMC II 49-52, 67). It is only because of their original constitution by
their Creator so as there is no chance for them to live forever (FMC II 53-54). Thus the poet
ascertains:

\textit{“The animals, even if they were to keep all commandments, they would not live long, because, they were formed mortally” (FMC II 71-72).}

The power of death will reduce them to come to naught (FMC II 63-64). Since they have no

\textsuperscript{860} As quoted by Brock, Ibid, 59.
\textsuperscript{861} Cf. Ps. 19, 104, 148 etc.
freedom of choice as man possesses, even if they do something against what is expected them to do, it does not become a sin, because sin always presupposes involvement of freewill.

III. 2. H. 2. Freedom of the serpent

The issue of transgression can be discussed only on the ground of freedom. Thus the poet examines in detail the freedom of the serpent that deceived Eve at the garden (FMC III 831 ff.). The serpent was only an embodiment as well as ambassador of Satan (FMC III 309). Hence, naturally, one may think that since the serpent had no freedom he had to be exempted from punishment and in its place the Satan must be punished. The poet expresses it as,

“The serpent had no freedom (hiruto), then why indeed he received the punishment out of justice ...” (FMC III 833-834).

But as a clarification and conclusion the poet says that the serpent was only an instrument of Satan like a flute in the hands of its player (FMC III 835-836). When the instrument is broken it causes distress to its owner. In a battlefield the horse will be shot down for the defeat of the horseman (FMC III 865), a ship is being broken down in order to cast harm to its sailor (FMC III 866) and the earth, although there arises no question of its freedom:

“The earth had neither transgression nor freedom (hiruto)” (FMC III 853), it was cursed on account of Adam (III 851, 853, 857, 859). Likewise, according to the poet, even though the serpent was not liable for the curse, it was cursed there not because of its freedom:

“(in the same manner) The serpent had neither Will (šebýono) nor deception” (FMC III 854), but it was in order to punish its owner, Satan (FMC III 852, 858, 860).
III. 2. H. 3. **Freedom of the Spiritual beings**

As he goes on describing on freewill of the living beings, the poet throws light into the freedom of spiritual beings. Angels are spiritual beings. A group of them revolted against God, planning in their hearts to ascend to heaven, to exalt their throne above the stars of God and to become like the most High; but they were expelled from their heavenly habitation. They became Satan and were put into Sheol. The poet opines that since their nature being spiritual, they did not die even if they disobeyed God (*FMC* II 68-70). It shows that they can’t but live long:

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“Behold the Satan, who being immortal, is unable to die
even while not keeping the commandment from afore time, he lives
while causing to err!” (*FMC* II 47-48).
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They have no freedom to choose between death and life and hence the death can’t conquer them (*FMC* II 65-66, 69-70). They enjoy a good amount of freedom; except to choose their death and life as man does.

III. 2. I. **Proper use and misuse of freedom**

Mar Jacob of Sarug very poetically expresses the proper use and misuse of freedom and the capacity of the freewill by devils and angels, by Peter, Thomas, Judas, Adam, and Satan.

III. 2. I. 1. **Angels and devils**

Mar Jacob states that natures of angels and Satan were one and the same:

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“The King imprinted him (Satan) in the same die of the house of Gabriel
and his Goldsmith fashioned (him) as the images of the house of
Michael” (*FMC* III 63-64).
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In the original form of God’s creation all angels were equal in their nature (*FMC* III 68, 90). Michael, Gabriel and other angels obeyed God and they remain pure and beloved to God (*FMC* III 86); a group of angels revolted, thus they became Satan and were dethroned and expelled from heaven\(^{864}\) (*FMC* III 95). But consider the devils; they misused their freedom when they revolted against God and when Satan deceived Adam. In this sense the poet writes,

“*It is in his freedom, Satan turned aside and deceived Adam*” (*FMC* III 44).

From the curse which is reserved to those who do evil, “Depart from me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels”, \(^{865}\) it is clear that Sheol was set aside for the devils and all wrong doers who willed deliberately against God (*FMC* III 47-54).

Underlining this fact Mar Jacob says,

“*God created him without error like a spiritual being and this wickedness which he sought and met with, was from himself*” (*FMC* III 59-60).

It is in his liberty Satan fell in error (III 104) and the plots of treachery which he laid hidden were his own (*FMC* III 61),

“*Behold, the perverse way, through which he travelled, was from himself*” (*FMC* III 62).

Devils are not destined to make conflict, deceive and lead men astray; God did not commission Satan to commit evil (*FMC* III 88, 100). If they were pre-destined in such a way, the poet says, they are not only blameless but also worthy enough to receive rewards (*FMC* III 37-38):

“If the Creator had made him to deceive the people, applause is proper to him also, because, how vigorous he is!” (*FMC* III 31-32).

If they were appointed with the mission to deceive men, they have done a wonderful thing obeying God’s will (*FMC* III 39-40) and God would not have condemned Satan. \(^{866}\) The poet comes to the conclusion,

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\(^{864}\) Cf. Is.14/12-15, Jude 1/6.

\(^{865}\) Matt. 25/41.

“Hence it was not God who appointed him to seduce the people. It was he (Satan) who Willed, revolted, desired, deviated, fell in error and ventured” (FMC III 56-57).

God judged Satan on the basis that he had freedom and by the reason that he acted in his Will against God,

“Since he was freeborn from the beginning, the judgment was reserved to him” (FMC III 58).

III. 2. I. 2. Adam and Satan

After comparing their similar as well as dissimilar natures, Mar Jacob begins to explain how Adam had misused their freewill. Freedom, the divine power, was granted to Adam and it should have been under the control of Adam. God gratuitously gave it to him to choose the right thing and abstain from evil. He was powerful like God to lead death and life according to his will (FMC II 289-290). But he mishandled it. Following God’s will he must have chosen the right thing for his eternity. The poet wishes:

“If he had held the way of life as it was commanded, he could never have turned away from life” (FMC II 291-292).

In its place, the poet says,

“And since, in his Will, he disobeyed the commandment rebelliously, he is rightly dead and became dust in Sheol” (FMC II 293-294, 197-198).

If he had not ruined his soul through his misbehaviour he would not have fallen down from his highest rank (FMC II 297). Instead of being the master of the soul and governing it with the power which God had given him, by misusing the power of choice he uprooted the soul, threw it down and it was scattered as dust (FMC II 298-300).

One may disagree with God’s introduction of the law in the garden saying, ‘If there was no ordinance Adam would not have sinned’ (FMC III 273-275). But the poet refutes this argument and says that the precept was given for the benefit of Adam. He, by using his
freedom, should have observed the law and abstain from death. With great prudence he should have fled from the tree and lived eternally (FMC III 209-210, 225-226). The poet continues:

“And, it was easy for Adam either to die or not to die and for Satan, either to deceive or not to deceive” (FMC III 175-176).

Adam disregarded his divine power of discernment, acted according to his instinct and died. It was this transgression of the commandment through the abuse of freedom had killed Adam (FMC III 272). Satan’s fall was also due to the maltreatment of his freedom. Mar Jacob concludes that since both of them abused their freedom they slipped from their natural prominence:

“All, anymore can Adam be immortal?
And now onwards, Satan has no time but to deceive” (FMC III 179-180).

Conclusion

The very fact that a whole mimre, the second one, is set apart for the discussion on the freewill of man, in addition to the sporadic illustrations in other mimre, is an indication of how much importance the poet has given for the issue. What he wanted to insist in the mimre are mainly five: the gratuitousness of God in the gift of man’s freewill, the distinctiveness of man’s freewill, the essentiality of the freedom or the exercise of the freewill behind every wrong doing in order that it be called a sin, the purpose of the gift of the freewill as for the self realisation and perfection of the image of God in man, and lastly the contradictory misuse of man’s freedom and the consequential total mishap. Hence over and again in his mimre he gives more emphasis to the inner aspect of the freedom than to the liberation from an external force. Proper exercise of the freewill is the occasion for man to participate in the divinity of God. His depiction on freedom as a charioteer, a weighing balance, a mason, a dietician etc. was to underline the centrality of the freewill for all other capacities of man.
It is noticeable that he does not synonymise the freewill of man with the image of God in him as some others do, in its place, for the poet, the freewill is only the constituent part of the image as well as of the soul. Also, he does not attempt to equate the rationality of man with his freewill. For him, rationality is also a gift of God, but it only helps the freewill of man to analyse and take decision. It is the proper application of the freewill along with the implementation of his rationality, as part of the image of God in man that makes man lord over other creatures. According to Mar Jacob, the freewill of man becomes that much important in the life of man, because, its exercise decides his destiny; its functioning decides his mortality or immortality. So the poet warns every one to handle the freewill very prudently and with very much caution, because, a slight slip-up in its implementation would result in brutal catastrophe.

The poet teaches that the freewill of man, granted to him by the benevolent God was not for making decisions against God and thus to revolt against Him but to make choices and resolutions in accordance with the ways of God and thus to observe His commandments. And so, whenever one chooses other paths and deviates from that of God, he becomes a slave to sin. Thus the poet emphasises that one’s own freewill’s choice for God’s ways is for his own eternal freedom and a choice vice versa will end in his own eternal slavery.

The poet sets apart a good amount of the descriptions on the freewill of man for praising God for His vastness to honour the gift of freewill which was granted to man, even after man dishonoured the donor while he misused and spoiled it; God never intervenes in the exercise of the freewill of man and He never compels him to do this or that, instead, it is left to the entire choice of man. According to the poet, this ‘mind-set’ of God had not only shown His greatness but it revealed the greatness of the gift also. Keeping this in mind the poet asserts that the blame of the sin of Adam was totally on him alone, because, he was perfectly free when he

See above in this section – ‘Freewill and Image of God’.
committed it and so the blame for the commission of sin of Adam cannot be placed on the reason of the existence of God’s commandments. Adam’s wrong doing becomes a sin only on the basis of his perfect freedom and by the same reason the wrong doings of other creatures cannot be categorised as sin, because they have no freewill to choose otherwise. One will certainly applaud at Mar Jacob at the richness as well as comprehensiveness of his exposition on the gift of the freewill of man.
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Chapter III    Section 3

Anthropological concepts in the Mimre

Introduction

Anthropology, in general, is a wide field of investigations on the various aspects of human beings. Normally it is understood as a branch of science that studies man’s origin and development based on his physiological and cultural characteristics, sociological relationships, institutional distributions etc. But when man is viewed from a theological point of view, it is also anthropology, then, it should be seen not from an investigative mindset but it should be seen as a doctrine. It is in this sense that we try to see the anthropological concepts of Mar Jacob of Sarug.

Anthropology of Mar Jacob, as it is envisaged in his Four Mimre ‘On Creation’, is purely based on the Holy Scripture. For this reason, he was not making a new theory on the origin and development of the life of human species but his attempt was only to elaborate what he had assimilated from the Scripture. Hence the characteristic of his anthropology is that it is theological. Thomas kollamparampil underlines this fact and says, “The creation of Man in the image (salma) and the likeness (dmutha) of God is basic to the theological anthropology of Mar Jacob and quite naturally it is the focus of his vision on the need and nature of redemption and salvation”.\(^{868}\) Since his treatises on the topic are not based on physical science, in its place, it was totally set up on theological foundation; his structural analysis on man need not be considered complete and scientific and hence it can’t be measured with modern gauges, but it shall be considered a theological anthropology.

\(^{868}\) Kollamparampil, *Salvation in Christ According to …*, 207.
The scope of the topic is limited because the main content of his anthropology consists only of the creation, life, fall and resuscitation of man. Also, human beings’ relations among themselves, with God and nature, factors that enfeebled the relation etc. are carefully included in the mimre. For his research, the only investigational species on his table are Adam, Eve and very few characters from the Holy Scripture and hence comprehensiveness on the topic can’t be expected from him. But, on the contrary, while speaking lamentably about the fallen human body, the poet seems to be tempted to be talkative on the resurrected body of human being at the final consummation. Issues like divine mercy’s intervention in creating and redeeming man, magnificence of the original human stature, provisions for livelihood, insolence of man, effects of transgression, recreation of the fallen image, elements of the human physique, purpose of each bodily component etc are handled much elaborately.

The poet reiterates that man is a composite of body and soul (FMC IV 101-102); consequently he mentions the physical as well as the spiritual aspects of man. Hence a study into the corporal and divine characteristics of each human being as it is narrated in the mimre will help us to figure out the anthropology of the poet. There, we will see the poet’s descriptions on how the fleshy part of man was created, the relevance and properties of soul in man, unity between man and woman etc.

As the context demanded, some of the issues related to the anthropology of the poet have already been discussed very briefly in the first session of this chapter; ‘Image and likeness of God in man’. If I tried to analyse in the section, “Image and likeness of God in man”, how the image of God was formed into man in with a theological mood, here, in this third session of the same chapter, “Anthropological concepts”, I try to examine the anthropological aspect of the creation. Even though some of those themes reoccurred, I have to elaborate them here also for the completeness in the understanding of the anthropological views of the poet as we see
them in the Four Mimre ‘On Creation’. But I tried my level best not to reproduce them verbatim in this session.

At the outset of the session an analysis is done on the notion of the poet on the origin and development of humanity which is followed by long investigation on the particulars of the first man and woman, including their creation and characteristics, as we see them in the in the mimre. Then, the distinctiveness of the poet’s concept on family is discussed. And before the conclusion, the findings of the poet on the deterioration of the humanity are enlisted.

III. 3. A. **Origin and development of Adam and humanity**

Mar Jacob seems to be garrulous in describing the unique origin of Adam, the merits which he and his race originally possessed and the calamitous end after his fall due to the sin. The intrinsic worth of Adam, merits attached to his status as well as the benevolences he received from the merciful God: all these flow effortlessly from the pen of Mar Jacob and extend throughout the mimre like a gentle stream that flows from the top to the bottom and wets the surroundings. The purpose of the poet in being lavish in admiring Adam’s original status was to show the catastrophe the sin effected in the world besides in Adam’s and humanity’s life.

III. 3. A. 1. **Creation of man by God**

Since the main theme of the mimre of Mar Jacob being the creation of man, we see in the mimre that he goes even into its very minute details from its very initiation. Whenever the poet extols the dignity of man, certainly he had in his mind, the words of the psalmist: “What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him? For, You have made him a little lower than the angels, and You have crowned him with glory and honour. You have
made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen – even the beast of the fields, the birds of the air and the fish of the sea that pass through the paths of the seas”.

III. 3. A. 1. i. Descent of God

Unlike the creation of other creatures which were made by the word of God, in Adam’s creation God willed to descend (nhet) unto earth (FMC I 39, 43, 89, 103, 161, 251, 281-282) and this incident had elevated the status of the dust (FMC I 69). Due to this elevation of the dust God had to descend again into the world in order to save the ruined image (FMC I 70-72, 77-78, 81-82, 97 etc.). God mercifully descended even to the extent of making a covenant of salvation with the dust (FMC I 189-190).

III. 3. A. 1. ii. Creation out of nothing

In a few places in the fourth mimre Mar Jacob states that Adam was created out of nothing (men lo medem) (FMC IV 90, 139, 150, 219, 227, 447 etc). But one shall not find fault with him as if he was unaware of the fact of the creation of man out of the dust from the earth. Elsewhere in the mimre he speaks elaborately on the creation of man from the dust (men ‘apro). What the poet intends, when he writes ‘out of nothing’ (men lo medem), is that Adam was created not on his own merit: to a certain extent the creation of man was not even necessary; but the creation is exclusively and absolutely out of an enormous outpouring of the compassion of God. This notion is clear from his verse:

“It is (out of) great kindness that Adam came to be out of nothing (men lo medem)” (FMC IV 227).

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869 Ps. 8/5 ff.
870 Cf. Gen. 1/3 ff.
871 Descent of God is discussed in detail in the section ‘God’s Mercy as the Catalytic Code”, p. 434 ff.
872 ‘Covenant with the image” can be seen in the segment “Image and Likeness of God in Man”, p. 280.
And he repeats in the mimre this lone intervention of God’s mercifulness in creating man out of nothing (FMC I 31, 39 etc.). The concept of God’s creation of the universe out of nothing\(^{873}\) might have also been there in the poet’s mind when he spoke of creation of man out of nothing.

III. 3. A. 1. iii. Creation by gesture

Even though the poet is voluble in narrating the creation of man from the dust (men ‘apro) and with the hands of God (id aloho) (FMC II 175 ff.), he describes also the creation by a gesture of God. This we see this from his verse:

“A secret sign (remzo kasyo) of the Creator had assembled the scattered ones” (FMC IV 151).

The poet expresses this idea yet in another occasion when he speaks of the consummation of the world where he says,

“The sign (remzo) which gave it existence from nothing (men lo medem), appears...” (FMC IV 447).

In his other works also like homily ‘On Nativity’ etc. he describes the creation of man by a gesture of God. While describing the birth of John the Baptist, he says, “The Creator gave a gesture and the offspring, the son of the barren woman, exulted”.\(^{874}\)

III. 3. A. 1. iv. Creation from the dust

Description of Mar Jacob on the creation of man from the dust is very poetical.

Considering Adam’s creation as a ceramic work, the dust as potter’s clay and God a potter, the poet says,

“He collected the dust, moulded it, rent it, bound together and plucked it and He infused the soul and poured the spirit into the son of the dust. In His skilfulness He mixed the nature here and there (and) He marked and lifted up the image which (is capable) to turn

\(^{873}\) Cf. Gen.1/ ff.

\(^{874}\) Kollamparampil, Jacob of Sarug’s Homilies on the Nativity, 66.
towards both the sides” (FMC II 175-178).

Here, the poet attributes human qualities to God and assumes and poeticises that God made man with His own hands⁸⁷⁵. Again, the poet draws the picture of God’s performances in human traits:

“And He poured water, formed the clay and imparted air.
And He burnt it in fire and gave it the life giving spirit,
and it became an image which is burnt up, cool, moist and warm” (FMC IV 152-153).

Emphasising the creation of man from the dust, the poet reinstates:

“He (God) established him from soil (medro) ….” (FMC II 173).

III. 3. A. 1. iv. a. Genealogy of Adam by earth: Over and again the poet gives stress to the fact that Adam’s genealogy is by earth (FMC II 34, III 948, 951, 953 etc.) and the poet recites this genealogy (FMC II 79). Whenever the poet wanted to speak of the creation of Adam, the purpose of his creation, his return to his original stature, his resurrection etc. and wherever he wanted to rebuke him for his transgression, then and there he refers to the dust⁸⁷⁶ (‘aprodahiho) of Adam (FMC I 59, 67, 69, 71, 77, 97, 188, 189,197, 201, II 29, 34, 36,79,137, 139,157, 173, 176, 294, 300, III 5, 186, 948, 951, 953,954, 955, 957, 959, 962, 964, 967, 968, 969, 971, 973,975, 977,978, 979, 982, IV 68, 142,146, 205, 221 etc.).

Mar Jacob identifies Adam as ‘son of the dust’ (bar dahiho) (FMC II 79, 176 etc.), an ‘earthen vessel’ (mono dțino) (FMC I 163, II 137 etc.), a ‘lump of earth’ (medro) (FMC II 29, 139, 964, 967 etc.), ‘child of the earth’ (talyo dar’o) (FMC III 937-940, 951-952 etc.), ‘brick (l-beto) and a product of dust’ (FMC III 971, 954 etc.), ‘god of clay’ (aloho dmedro) (FMC III 973) etc. The dust, once possessed gloriousness along with the image of God, had lost its

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⁸⁷⁵ See the poet’s concepts on Anthropomorphism in the section, ‘God’s Mercy as the Catalytic Code”, p. 424 ff.
⁸⁷⁶ An elaborate discussion on ‘dust’ can be seen in the section, “Image and likeness of God in man”, p. 288 ff.
greatness due to sin and it became neglected. The poet has to speak disappointedly also about
the neglected clay, a lump of earth (FMC II 29, 34, 36, 294, 300 etc.).

III. 3. A. 1. v. Creation from the elements

Going into more anatomical details, the poet states that Adam is made up of elements
(estukso) of the universe (FMC IV 39, 89, 155, 355 etc.) and he is the combination and
amalgamation of all elements of the universe (FMC IV 25-26, 33-34 etc.). Thus he writes,

“\textit{The wisdom of the Lord had composed him from the elements (estukso)}” (FMC
II 269).

Fire, air, water, soil etc. are some of the earthly elements comprehensively attached to
the image (FMC IV 29-30, 45-46, 71, 73 etc.). Man was given power to bring all these
opposing elements under his total control (FMC IV 40). The poet elucidates that in addition to
the components of mass (FMC IV 47) and sensitivity of cold and heat (FMC IV 49-50), the
ingredients of measurements and directions were also fastened with the nature. These are the
verses of the poet:

“\textit{When He fashioned him, He made him facing six sides,}
\textit{for, the height and the depth, and four corners are to be confined in him}”
(FMC IV 37-38).

Five senses were given as devices for sensation (FMC IV 74, 81-82, 84, 94). The poet
compares these four elements with a chariot and the five senses of man as charioteers (FMC
IV 73-74). Mar Jacob speaks only of four basic elements, but according to the Indian thoughts
the material objects are made up of five elements known as ‘Panchabhoota’, the earth,
water, fire, air and ether. But some scientists consider air and ether together as one element
and Mar Jacob also follows that.

Mar Jacob wonders at the wisdom of the maker who put these contrary elements

\textsuperscript{877} = five elements.
\textsuperscript{878} Cf. Mani, \textit{Puranic Encyclopedia}, 711.
together within one vessel in proper harmony as companions and without any contradiction
\((FMC \ IV \ 39-52)\). The homily of Mar Jacob on the Forty Days of Fasting is yet another instance
where the poet speaks of the construction of the image with the four elements. Thomas
kollampampil asserts: “The theme of the four elements of the human constitution and the
divine image imprinted on their harmony is well treated in the homily ‘On the forty Days’
Fasting’. 879 In the mimre, while describing the eschatological aspects of the human body, there
also Mar Jacob speaks of the elements out of which it was made up, that the elements will be
dissolved \((FMC \ IV \ 69, 93, 271, 362, 415 \ ff. \ etc.)\).

III. 3. A. 1. v. a. Connotation of ‘the elements’: For the poet, the four elements in man
are not mere constituents of the human flesh; in addition to that, they also possess
soteriological value. All these elements must help man for attaining his final perfection.
According to him, even after the commission of the sin of the first parents, these elements are
significant. Because, being astonished at the skilfulness of the maker, Mar Jacob tries to find
reasons for the placement of the contrary and contradictory elements in man. The first reason
why God placed these contrary elements in man is that it is for the fulfilment of the task given
to man by God; “Fill the earth and subdue it”. 880 The fulfilment of this task is indissolubly
attached to the final perfection of man; he will be perfected as a reward for the fulfilment of the
task. These elements are the elements of the world and since all these elements are within him,
man can be one with the world and thus it is easy for him to fill the earth and subdue it. The
poet’s verses approve this fact:

“For, the world and the man are two worlds to contemplate” \((FMC \ IV \ 330)\)
and “Because, in his composition he is also a world, as it was already said” \((FMC \ IV \ 356)\).

Mar Jacob conceives that, in order to begin this process of subduing the world from within

879 Kollampampil, Salvation in Christ According to...., 409.
880 Gen. 1/28.
himself and then to lengthen it to the whole universe, God had placed in him the contrary

elements:

“He mixed (and) fashioned him from contrary elements (esukso saqubloyo) and He placed in him the power, so that, he shall subdue what is wild” (FMC IV 39-40).

The second reason for the combination of the wild elements in man is that, while seeing the harmonious existence of these contrary elements in man, the skilfulness as well as the wisdom of his maker shall be glorified. Mar Jacob discloses the thought of God that man must be a visible sign of God in the world and in this sense he writes,

“The Creator wished that Adam should be exalted like God” (FMC I 203),
“The Maker had mixed the fire and air with water and soil and He tied up an image in order to show His wisdom to the world” (FMC IV 29-30)

and “Glorious is this image which proclaims the wonder of its Creator, that is, how wise, capable and powerful He is!” (FMC IV 53-54).

Yet another reason behind the mixing of contrary elements for man is soteriological. Man is called to be in the eternal bliss with God and hence he must be cheerful always. But there are hidden situations like commission of sin that attacks and thus takes this heavenly happiness away from him. At the moment when he recognises his folly, he must explode against sin and must be regretful on what he had done against God. The poet clearly mentions this soteriological aspect in the place of these contrary elements in man:

“Along with the fire He placed the bile and heat in one limb, so that, through it, he should be inflamed (netgavzal) against sin when it takes place.
And He placed in another (organ), which is capable of receiving the grief, which might happen, so that, he can repent on the wickedness which might happen.
He gave another (limb), to serve the cheerfulness, so that, when it (cheerfulness) effects, the mould may gladden and make his face cheerful” (FMC IV 131-136).

Thus the poet affirms the purpose of God’s skilful placement of these elements in man.

Connotation of the dust, the primary element out of which man is created, shall also be seen in this soteriological context. Mar Jacob, at his disappointment at the humiliation of the dust after
the sin, gives various connotations to ‘dust’ in the context where God pronounces Adam’s verdict at the garden: ‘you are dust and you will return to it’ (FMC III 948 ff.). He thinks that by calling him ‘dust’ God wanted to make Adam clear about his real nature, that is, he is originated from earth (FMC III 952.), he is not a self existant being (FMC III 954), his nature is wretched and he is in want of purification (FMC III 956), he, by nature, is not competent enough for attaining divinity (FMC III 959), he is powerless (FMC III 960-978) etc. And the poet ascertains:

“Also, Adam learned that he is so and he recognized that he is (both) mortal and immortal” (FMC II 199-200).

III. 3. A. 1. v. b. Disparity in the creation narrative: The narrations of Mar Jacob on creation: out of nothing (lo medem) and from the dust (‘aprol/dahîho) as well as with the elements (estûkso) of the world, need not be considered a slip-up from his part. It is to be understood as poet’s explanations on the creation of man based on the two creative narrations that we see in the Holy Scripture according to the Yahwist and Priestly traditions.  

When he spoke of the creation out of nothing (lo medem), his basis was the creation narrative: “So, God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them”. But it is visible that much more than the first one, Mar Jacob is impressed by the second narration: “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living being”. And based on this second narration, he makes his long Four Mimre ‘On creation’. Both the descriptions on God’s creation: ‘out of nothing’ (lo medem) and ‘creation by a gesture’ (remzo), are primarily intended to demonstrate the skilfulness, the powerfulness as well as the mercy of God to create man in His own image.

881 For details on the traditions of the Holy Scripture, see the introduction to the section “Image and Likeness of God in Man”, p. 249.
882 Gen. 1/27, also see Gen. 5/2, Matt. 19/4 etc.
883 Gen. 2/7, also see Gen. 7/22.
III. 3. A. 1. v. c. Colour complexion: God mingled the elements of colours (gavno) also with Adam (FMC IV 155). Thus the poet says,

“The whole beauties of all creatures are engraved in him” (FMC IV 33, 15-21)

and along with that, all sensible and non sensible natures of the world are also included in him (FMC IV 27-28). Regarding the loveliness of Adam due to the perfect colour mixing, the poet exclaims:

“There was no other beauty among the creatures equal to that of himself” (FMC IV 112)

and he bore entire magnificence of all the ages and all generations to come (FMC IV 103), because he was adorned with choicest pigments (sammono gbayo) (FMC IV 157) and he is the fullness of all beauties of the whole world and of all ages (FMC IV 156). Besides the natural splendour of the figure of man, by the reason also of the inclusion of the image of God and every element of the universe in it (FMC IV 52-55), the poet finds another reason for the perfect degree of the comeliness of man, that is, the particular interest which God had taken to adorn him with precious ornaments (šepto) (FMC IV 57). God adorned Eve, his wife, also most beautifully, because she is a part of Adam (FMC IV 159).

Even though the discussion of the poet on colours was for speaking about the gorgeousness of the image, from them one can read his mind regarding his ecology, aesthetics and so on. When the poet says,

“When He created, He created all kinds of beauties according to their natures
and He came and comprehended all the beauties in the beauty of Adam” (FMC IV 19-20),

he extols the equal excellence of all colours. He appreciates that Adam was a proper mixture of all colours (FMC IV 156) as they shine in a rainbow.

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884 Greatness of the image is discussed in the section, “Image and Likeness of God in Man”, p. 271 ff.
III. 3. A. 1. vi. Coherence of limbs

Poetically, Mar Jacob compares the human body with a precious, perfect and beautiful necklace (‘eqo) in which soul is the string and each limb is valuable and covetable pearls (margonito) (FMC IV 101-102). He imagines God as a goldsmith and craftsman and writes,

“*He put together the organ by organ and set in order very distinctively in the image while the Wise one of the worlds was fashioning him in beauties*” (FMC IV 137).

Mar Jacob analyses each limb of the human body and narrates the purpose behind its creation: eyes as source of light to watch other creatures (FMC IV 113-114) and also, eyes and their brows for beckoning (FMC IV 130), the feet to run like a chariot (FMC IV 115), hands with ten fingers to possess and control the universe (FMC IV 117-118), brain for making reasoning and judgements on creatures and thus to become god of the universe (FMC IV 119-120), palates to discern tastes (FMC IV 121-122), nostrils for distinguishing fragrance (FMC IV 123-124), ears for surrounding voices (FMC IV 125-126), heart in the chest to put the thoughts together (FMC IV 127-128), mouth and lips for producing words (FMC IV 129) etc.

On the basis of the modern physiological studies one may easily assess the incompleteness in the anatomy of the poet because, the source of his analysis is only the fundamental understanding of the body. But, such an evaluation will be improper, because, what the poet basically wanted to narrate was not a physiological anatomy of man, but his intention was to show how much beautiful and coherent was the image when it was set in order by God and how disastrous was its destruction due to the sin introduced by the devil (FMC IV 75 ff). In this respect the anatomy of the poet is highly valuable and commendable. Mar Jacob had before him the illustrations of St. Paul on the purpose of each limb of the human body\(^{885}\) as a model for his anatomical analysis. Also, this list of the limbs of the human body points to the fact that Mar Jacob mentions in the mimre only those organs of the human body that are more

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\(^{885}\) Cf. 1 Cor. 12/12 ff.
related to the sensations, outer performances of man and that are relevant in the making of decisions. Because, by enlisting these human organs what he intends to narrate was how these precious organs of man, through their misuse and thus committing sin, turned to be the causes and means of the curse that was fallen upon him.

Moreover, the common concept of the early church fathers on human physiology was not based on science but on theology, spirituality, eschatology etc. Hence, like Mar Jacob, who considered the heart as the seat of wisdom and thinking (FMC IV 127-128), they also had the same understanding. For them, thinking is not primarily an exercise of brain but of heart, because thinking is not investigative in nature but it is an emotional alliance with the teachings of God and with one’s own passionate decision to follow them. The early church fathers considered an attempt of investigation by human intellect as an arrogant attempt to strip off the mysteries of God.

III. 3. A. 2. Meticulous creation of man with flesh and soul

Mar Jacob confirms the fact that man is a composite of body and soul and hence he writes,

“He made him as such, so that he may not be spiritual (ruhono) by reason of his flesh (pagro) and he was not wholly bodily (pagrōno) because of his soul (napṣo)” (FMC II 185-186).

He was created neither in the die of angels (FMC II 179) nor in the mould of other living creatures (FMC II 181). This special creation of man with flesh and soul enables him to stand between the angels, who are purely spiritual and the creatures, which are entirely carnal (FMC II 183-184).

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886 Cf. Kollampampil, Jacob of Sarug’s Homilies on the Nativity, 62.
887 Ibid p. 20. See Mar Jacob’s concern over the impropriety and futility of the investigation on God in the section “The Man behind the Book”, p. 150.
III. 3. A. 3. Various terms used for ‘flesh’ of man

It seems that Mar Jacob employs various terms in Syriac for denoting the fleshy part of the human being. This also shows how rich he was in his vocabulary.

The terms are: ܦ݁ܓܪܐ (pagro = body, flesh) (FMC II 160, 185, 188, 189, 190-192, III 572, 608, 614, 635, 682, 1005, 1035, IV 73, 400, 410, 419, 428, 433, 445, 453, 461 etc.), ܓܽܘܫܡܳܐ (gusmo= body, solid) (FMC III 925, 990, 992, 1003, IV 409), ܩܰܘܡܳܐ (qavmo = body, stature) (FMC III 1006), ܒܶܣܪܳܐ (besro= flesh, body) (FMC IV 3) and ܫܰܠ ܕܳܐ (saldo= corpse, body) (FMC IV 349).

We do not find that the poet uses these terms intentionally to denote separate meanings, because ܦ݁ܓܪܐ (pagro), ܩܰܘܡܳܐ (qavmo) and ܓܽܘܫܡܳܐ (gusmo) are found being used synonymously in the same context (FMC III 1003, 1005 and 1006, IV 409-410 etc). But it is noticeable that in the whole second mimre and at the first major part of the third mimre up to verse 900, he employs only the common term ܦ݁ܓܪܐ (pagro) and only after that he uses various other terms. ܦ݁ܓܪܐ (pagro) is found used to denote both the flesh of the image in its purity and original status (e.g. FMC II 185) and also in its filthy state of sin (e.g. FMC III 608). The poet employs ܓܽܘܫܡܳܐ (gusmo) more or less in the context of verdict at Eden and in the context of resurrection (FMC III 925, 990, 992, 1003, IV 409). ܒܶܣܪܳܐ (besro) is used in the context of narrating the god-ship of the image of Adam, where ܒܶܣܪܳܐ (besro) has a general
meaning to denote the creation as a whole. Hence we do not find that the poet’s usage of
‘flesh’ in the mimre always assume a negative connotation as St. Paul used it in his letters, 888 except in few places where he refers it to identify its corruption.

III. 3. A. 4. **Existence, nature and purpose of the soul**

The poet compares the existence of the soul in a body with a column (‘amudo) that bears the whole weight of a building (FMC II 171). Through this the poet was affirming that the soul is the centre of the human being (FMC II 167 ff). But in another place of the mimre the poet compares not the soul alone but the whole image of man with a pillar (‘amudo) that is built strongly (FMC IV 89). But this does not mean that Mar Jacob synonymises the soul with the image of God in man. 889 In order to emphasise the centrality of the soul, the poet compares it with a string also, on which the whole limbs of the body are stringed as precious pearls (FMC IV 101-108):

“On the thread of the soul (bhuto dnapsos), in the form of a necklace of pearls (‘eqo dmargonyoto), it (image) was stringed with the limbs and set in order...” (FMC IV 101-102).

For the poet, this centrality of the soul in a human being means that it is the sum total of the whole essence of him, the prime base of his existence as well as the central reason that controls his whole actions. Thus, in the poet’s opinion, any merit of the soul is the merit of the whole human being and any of its defects will affect the whole personality. In the same way, the soul being the centre of the human being, anything that happens to the body also affects the soul. We learn more about this notion of the poet from the criticism he makes on the soul for its passion for the transitory world, where he condemns the soul for the sins committed through the body, mind, intellect etc.:

888 Cf. Rom. 7/5, 8/9 ff, Gal. 5/ 16 ff.
889 This aspect of the creation narrative is discussed below in this segment under ‘Soul, spirit and breath of life’.
“Since it vanishes, your soul shall not hold it on with passion. The sight of the earth quake calls for repentance; through the death it is shown that the soul should think on that consummation” (FMC IV 364-366).

This passage shows that not only the consequences of sin performed through body (FMC III 511-561) shall be borne by the soul (FMC IV 364 ff), but it also indicates that the soul is the storehouse from where the passions for evil things that lead to Sheol as well as virtues that lead to eternity are being sprung up and thus the whole course of action of human being is from the soul.

III. 3. A. 5. **Indisivisibility between body and soul**

Man is a new and unique creature having both the celestial as well as the earthly components; having both body and soul (FMC II 185-186). The maker mixed the diverse natures within the same nature (FMC I 195):

"He infused (nsak) the spirit into an earthen vessel mixed with dust and He mingled them intelligibly one with its companion” (FMC II 137-138) and "He established him from soil and breathed (npah) into him the breath of life” (ngamto dhaye) (FMC II 173).

The mimre gives us the picture that the poet synonymises the soul, spirit and breath of life.  

There are Scriptural passages that exhort the spirit in man and negate the importance of his flesh like, “It is the spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life”.  

St. Paul most of the times stresses on the negative aspect of the flesh of man. But Mar Jacob wanted to stress on the mutual support between body and soul in man. This reciprocity of body and soul is described by Mar Jacob in terms of a give and take principle. And this principle works on the capacity of human freewill. The body of man allows him to die an unfortunate death and the soul earns him an unending life at somebody’s

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890 For the details on this topic, see below in this section under ‘Soul spirit and breath of life’.
891 Jn. 6/63.
892 Cf. Rom. 7/5, 18, 8/ 5-9, Gal. 5/19 ff, 6/12 ff etc.
mercy. Both the extremes, transience to the body and intangibility to the soul, are unfair. So the soul must help the body to save it from an unpleasant ending of a simple animal and in return the body should help the soul to exercise its powers for attaining the everlasting life.

Thus the body and soul are equal components of man, because one is in need of the other for the existence and perfection. So, Mar Jacob does not consider some one who has lost his soul due to the sin a living man, but only a dead one (FMC II 192), even though he is alive in the flesh. That is why he calls Adam ‘beast’ (b’iro) when he sinned against God and thus he lost his soul along with the image. For the poet, the body and soul are mutual sharers. So, flesh is equally important in man as his soul, because the flesh is the integral part of the image of God in man and hence flesh is not something to be condemned as St. Paul opined. The give-and-take and inseparable relationship between body and soul is expressed by the poet in these verses:

“He prolonged the life of the soul endowed with reason (mlilto) for living forever (nihe l’olam) and He enclosed (esar) it with body, so that once died, it may depart (nizal) with it. He did not give the body, a lasting life without the soul or did He give sensibility (reguguto) to the soul without the body. The life of the soul without the body is without feeling, in the same manner, the body that is set upon its dust (alone) is without life. All what these mean is that one needs its companion, because, one neither knows (lo yoda) nor exists (lo it) without the other” (FMC II 187-194).

Mar Jacob’s thoughts on the indivisibility between body and soul go along with the thoughts of Mar Ephrem, who said, “That the soul cannot see without the body’s frame, the body itself persuades, since, if the body becomes blind the soul is blind in it, groping about with it; see how each looks and attests to the other, how the body has need of the soul in order

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893 Here the application of the ‘golden mean’ principle of Aristotle can be seen. For more details on ‘Golden mean’ see the segment “Hellenic Influence in the Formation of the Mimre”, p. 668.
894 Cf. Rom. 7/5, 18, 8/ 5-9, Gal. 5/19 ff, 6/12 ff etc.
to live and the soul too requires the body in order to see and hear”

III. 3. A. 6. **Soul and the Reason**

We also see that Mar Jacob associates the rationality of man with his soul. It is true that he considers the importance of brain in man in the process of reasoning, when he said,

“*He fabricated the brain* (muĥo), *the place of reason* (bayto lhavno), *so that, he shall be steady in order that he should live like a god in great lofty habitations*” (*FMC IV* 119-120).

But he calls the image of man, a rational image (*FMC IV* 62) on the basis of the presence of the soul in his image. In his homily ‘On Nativity’ also, Mar Jacob mentions that God creates the rational images: “He fashions and seals rational images within wombs, but He casts in His mother a corporal image for His concealed being”. Rationality of man added more value to him and made him lord among other creatures (*FMC IV* 62). Even though the brain is considered the place of reasoning, it is a fact that the reasoning faculty emanates from the soul of man, because soul is the central source of all powers, according to the poet. Keeping this in mind, the poet again calls Adam a rational vessel (*FMC II* 141).

III. 3. A. 7. **Soul, spirit and breath of life**

Instead of ‘spirit’ (*ruĥo*), the common term used in other places of the mimre are; in verse II 173 it is ‘breath of life’ (*nsamto dhayyo*), in IV 31 it is ‘the living spirit’ (*ruĥo hayto*) and in IV 153 it is ‘the life giving spirit’ (*ruĥo mahyonito*).

It seems that Mar Jacob sometimes identifies the soul with the breath of life and spirit (*FMC II* 158). According to him God infused the spirit into the dust and thus man became a

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896 Kollamparampil, *Jacob of Sarug’s Homilies on the Nativity*, 62.
special creature *(FMC II 137-140, 160)*:

“*He established (bno) him from soil (medro) and breathed (npah) into him the breath of life (n̄gamto dha ye)”* *(FMC II 173).*

After moulding the image, like a potter moulds his pot from the clay, God gives His ‘life giving spirit’ to the image *(FMC IV 153).* From these verses, the notions of ‘the breath of life’ or the ‘life giving spirit’ can be compared with soul, because in another place the mind of Mar Jacob becomes clearer when he synonymises the soul and the spirit, where he writes,

“*He infused the soul (napso) and poured (n’sak) the spirit (ruh) into the son of the dust*” *(FMC II 176).*

Here he uses the ‘spirit’ *(ruh)* as a synonym as well as an adjective to ‘the soul’ *(napso).* Thus, the poet means that what God had given to Adam – soul *(napso)*, spirit *(ruh)* and breath of life *(n̄gamto dha ye)* - are one and the same. The life giving breath of man is not the same as the breath of an animal; the breath is instilled into man as part of imparting the image of God into man. In his homily ‘On Nativity’ also we see that Mar Jacob relates the breath of life with soul and in this sense he writes, “He breaths a soul of perfection into all embryos but He is made an embryo in the animate body which he has taken up”.\(^897\) We see hints of St. Iranaeus’\(^898\) thoughts in the mimre of Mar Jacob, who made a distinction between breath of life and life-giving spirit. In this regard Jean Danielou quotes Iranaeus: “For the breath of life which makes animal, is one thing; and the life-giving spirit which perfects man as spiritual, is another ..... Now something which is made is different from the one who made it. Therefore the breath of life is temporal, but the spirit is eternal ..... For it was necessary first that man should be formed, and that having been formed he should receive a soul; and only then that he should in this way share in the spirit”\(^899\)

\(^{897}\) Ibid, 62.

\(^{898}\) Iranaeus lived at the end of II cent. AD.

\(^{899}\) Danielou, *Gospel message and Hellenistic Culture*, 400.
By synonymising the soul with the breath of life of God that was breathed into man, the poet discloses that what God had imparted to man is His own very person and life. We see that the poet receives this matching between the breath of life and the spirit of God from the book of Job in the Scripture; “The spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life”.

III. 3. A. 8. The image of God and the soul

As some others do, Mar Jacob doesn’t synonymise soul (nāpsō) with the image (šalmo) of God. For him, the image of God in man is the very person of the human being in its totality, formed in the resemblance of the Son of God and having been shared with the essence and power of God. But the soul is only a part of this image in man: image includes both body and soul of man. Soul is imparted into the earthen vessel (mono dhēšpo) (FMC II 137) as the central column (‘amudo) of the edifice (FMC II 171); the core of the human being, on which one’s whole life is centralised and as the central thread (bhuto) (FMC IV 101-108) on which the pearls, the human limbs, are stringed. At the same time, when the poet talks about the image, he denotes it to the whole person including both the physique and the soul (FMC IV 99-102).

III. 3. A. 9. Life of the soul

Since the nature of the soul is considered as spirit and spiritual (FMC II 158), it can never be demolished as it happens to the flesh. Because, only created things are subject to decay and the things that are made of elements do perish. Since the soul is neither created, because it is the breath of the self-existant God, nor it has earthly elements because of its pure

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900 Job. 33/4.
901 ‘Likeness is the likeness of the Son of God’ - See the segment, “Image and Likeness of God in Man”, p. 256 ff.
spiritual nature, it can never perish and die out. It is clarified in poet’s own words:

“For, there is in him a reason for death, because, he is from the dust and again, there is a place in him for life, because, his soul is spirit” (FMC II 157-158).

The poet’s concept on the eternity of the soul is more visible from his statement:

“He prolonged (avrek) the life of the soul endowed with reason for living forever” (FMC II 187).

III. 3. A. 10. Ulcer of the soul

Although the soul is spiritual in nature and it was created for eternity, the poet finds a possibility in which the soul can be caught by disease. He is sure that the sin of man causes this ulcer to the soul and this sickness is too painful both spiritually and physically. This we infer from the poet’s exhortation,

“Heal your ulcers (suhno) through gentle drops of tears” (FMC IV 379).

Thus the poet laments:

“Woe to you, oh, soul, while you have inclined towards the love of the world...” (FMC IV 369),

“Oh, the dissolute soul, which the world has enslaved with its covetousness ...” (FMC IV 373) etc.

At the same time he exhorts,

“Think, oh, soul, about that renewal which the fire makes; and renew yourself before the flame shall terrify you. Establish (heal) your soul in the delightful sea of repentance ” (FMC IV 375-377).

Since the soul being the string on which the whole human body is set (FMC IV 101-108), the ulcer of sin and its pain will badly affect the whole pearls, the whole limbs of the body.

III. 3. B. The original nature and status of man

Besides describing various aspects of the creation of man, Mar Jacob presents the status of man in his original eminence.
III. 3. B. 1. **Position of the human being**

Uniqueness of man as the image of God and as the composite of body and soul, isolates him from the groups of angels as well as from the cluster of other living creatures. This doesn’t mean that he is nowhere. Based on the Scriptural passages like “What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him? For You have made him a little lower than the angels, and you crowned him with glory and honour”, Mar Jacob places man at a proper place among the creatures. This placement is based on the characteristics as well as the purpose of man’s creation, that is, to attain the perfection of the image by exercising his freewill. Compiling all these, the poet writes,

> “He did not imprint (tbra‘) him with the seal (munti) of the house of Michael, 
> so that, even when he commits sin, he should possess immortality.
> Again, He did not imprint (smo) him with the seal (tab‘o) of all living Creatures, 
> lest he should be reduced entirely to death, even if he had not sinned.
> He raised the dust more than that of animals, while being dust and He lowered his soul more than that of the angels, while it being very spiritual.” (FMC II 179-184).

From this point of existence man can go to either of the extremes; by misusing his freewill he can fall down from this lofty place into the extreme pit and he can join the beasts and be perished. At the same time he can be more elevated and be joined with the groups of angels, become one with God and possess the tree of life through the proper use of the freewill. Hence it is left to man to decide to which side he has to look for. But we see in the mimre the

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902 Ps. 8/4-5.
904 Cf. Luke. 20/36 - Jesus teaches that in resurrection, people will be like angels. But the poet, in one place, while describing the causes of the envy of Satan over the image of God in man, overstates that Adam’s placement is greater than that of the angels, “Behold, from that time onwards Satan rose up to envy against Adam, because, he heard that his image is greater than (rab men) that of angels’ (FMC III 183-184). This type of description on the greatness of the image can be seen elsewhere in the mimre, especially when the poet states that man is a god, - see below in this section, ‘Adam was god’. Also, greatness of man as the image of God is discussed in detail in the segment, “Image and Likeness of God in Man”, p. 249 ff.
lamentation of the poet on the misuse of the freewill of Adam and its catastrophic consequences.\textsuperscript{905}

Mar Jacob evaluates other different statuses of Adam and says that he was considered by God as a friend:

\begin{quote}
\textit{But He raised up a friend (rohmo) a little near to His beloved one” (FMC I 230).}
\end{quote}

He was also placed as the mediator (meš’oyo) between heights and depths (FMC IV 35) and he was proposed to consecrate everything (FMC IV 216). Even though he became corrupted due to his sin, the poet opines that, he was not totally corrupted (FMC III 715) and the divine elements in him together with the mercy of God made him potential for final rising up and the poet imagines the same will happen at the end of the times (FMC IV 398 ff).\textsuperscript{906}

III. 3. B. 2. \textbf{Centre and apex of the universe}

Adam was placed at the centre of the whole universe:

\begin{quote}
\textit{The Wisdom had depicted the great image which is full of wonders; it (wisdom) brought in and placed it (image) at the centre (mṣa‘to) of the worlds, so that, they should look it” (FMC IV 55-56).}
\end{quote}

Why this much importance the poet gives to the centrality of the image is, because of many reasons: a) to illustrate the greatness of the image, b) to show man’s lordship and authority over it,\textsuperscript{907} c) the gratuitous sharing of God’s sovereignty over the universe with man, d) to remind man constantly on the commandment of God to tend and herd it,\textsuperscript{908} e) to exhibit man as the microcosm,\textsuperscript{909} f) to portray man’s birth out of the elements of the universe etc. Mar Jacob takes particular interest to narrate the placement of man at the central-top and thus at an

\textsuperscript{905} Cf. “Sin as the Soteriological Causality”, p. 526.
\textsuperscript{906} See the section “Eschatological perceptions of the poet, p. 603 ff.
\textsuperscript{907} See below in this section, ‘Adam was god’.
\textsuperscript{908} Cf. Gen. 1/28 ff.
\textsuperscript{909} See below in this segment, ‘Adam a microcosm’. 
extremely exalted position. In this sense he writes,

“The benevolent one who fashioned him, had set and placed him at the Summit (ravmo) of Eden” (FMC IV 5, 145, 147, 198 etc).

He compares the whole universe with a city (mdito) and Adam was placed in it as its rational image (yuqno mlilo) and lord (moro) (FMC IV 61-63). The poet points out the exact position of Adam, saying,

“He raised the dust more than that of the animals while being dust and He lowered his soul more than that of the angels, while it being very spirit” (FMC II 183-184).

Exclaiming on the highest position of Adam, even beyond that of the angels, Mar Jacob says that Adam was a god of flesh (aloh besro) for the creatures (FMC IV 3). But unfortunately, the illegal collaboration with Satan and the consequential commission of sin had dethroned Adam from his apex placement (FMC IV 4, 6 etc.).

III. 3. B. 3. Resident of the Garden

God assigned the Garden of Eden as quarters for Adam (FMC III 292) and he and his wife were residing in it (FMC III 141, 166, IV 159, 163). The poet considers the Garden, a bedchamber (gnuno) for the couple (FMC IV 158, 167) and the status of those who entered in it is counted as heavenly and blessed rank (dargo smayono) (FMC III 149-150). Everything that the merciful God had created were handed over to Adam (FMC IV 160-163, 165 ff., 173) for tending and keeping and to have everything for his livelihood. There, God united Adam with Eve, his bride (FMC IV 159). God has prepared everything in advance in the Garden

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910 Cf. Matt. 10/31
911 Cf. Ps. 8/5
912 Cf. Gen. 2/8, 15.
914 Cf. Gen. 2/21 ff.
for the wellbeing of the firstborn human beings (I 253 ff., IV 161 ff.).

III. 3. B. 4. The heir of wealth

Adam was the inheritor of the whole wealth which God had created. In this sense the poet states,

“He gave the whole garden to the new children to possess” (FMC IV 173).

He continues,

“The Lord had created him not to go out from Paradise; but to enter and to become the inheritor (yorto) and the ruler (salito)” (FMC III 169-170).

Also, “It is for Adam that the creatures and their structures were created, because of this, He made him in His image, so that he may possess them” (FMC I 267-268).

In connection with the possession of the wealth of the Garden, there arise a few questions on the withholding of the central tree and of the expulsion. Mar Jacob answers the question, ‘why did God withhold the central tree from Adam’, (FMC III 1049, IV 174) as it was not meant for keeping it under God’s custody forever but only for giving it to him later in its proper time:

“He preserved there the tree of life in watchful care, so that, its fruit will be theirs long after” (FMC III 1049-1050),

and the question of ‘the expulsion of Adam from Paradise’ as it was only for his benefit and return into it in due course of the time:

“And He expelled them from Paradise filled with joy. He expelled them, so that, they shall never approach the tree of life, for, they should not live presumptuously for ever from its food” (FMC III 1040-1042),

and “......the expelled one, Adam, is to be returned into his heritage (yutrono)” (FMC III 1080).

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915 Cf. Gen. 1/2 ff.  
917 Cf. Gen. 2/15 ff.
But, the fury of the poet at the sight of the shattering of Adam’s heritage made him to call Adam, ‘the wretched inheritor’ (yorto seplo) (FMC III 167).

III. 3. B. 5. The couple

God created man as male and female, man and woman\(^ {918} \) and so they were husband and wife. The poet portrays it in this way,

“And He fixed the bridegroom in this vast bride-chamber which He had prepared. He adorned Eve, the virgin bride, and gave her to Adam” (FMC IV 159-160).

This bedchamber was the chamber of light (FMC IV 13). Based on God’s original concept of family life the poet calls Adam the husband (FMC III 506, 514, 536, 540, 639, 893, 895, 896 etc.), bridegroom (FMC IV 158 ff., 166 etc.) and together with Eve he calls them innocent couple (zavgo şapyo) (FMC I 124), lovely couple FMC (III 298, IV 162, 168) etc. Thus the poet draws the picture of equality, purity and parity among them. The excitement of the poet at the sight of the magnificence of the couple can be seen in these verses,

“The couple shined in their crowns and garments. He clothed them with magnificent light and dazzling brightness ” (FMC IV 162-163).

But this plan of God was twisted when the couple committed sin. Repeating the notion from the Bible the poet states that discrepancy and disagreement arose in the relation between these couple. Its consequence can be seen in the verdict of God at the Garden; the husband shall rage and rule over the wife (FMC III 895) and she has to be subdued by him (FMC III 893).

The poet views Adam and Eve as the most coveted pair. He compares them with the two tablets that contained the divine laws:

“The two tablets; so as to say, are Eve and Adam:

\[^ {918} \text{Cf. Gen. 2/21-24.}\]
beloved nature, innocent couple, who are from God” (FMC I 123-124).

The divine law was given at Mount Sinai in two tablets, they were pairs of the same commandment. With this comparison, the poet insists on the reciprocal correlation as well as the indivisibility of the couple, each one’s individual status, their role and responsibility in the family etc. Through this the poet was pointing out also the similarity in the making of the couple and the tablets; the direct intervention of God in creating them with His own hands.

Mar Jacob very poetically narrates the enthusiasm of God in conducting the wedding feast of Adam and Eve in a large scale:

“The whole worlds gathered together for the grand wedding feast which He prepared” (FMC IV 161),

“He clothed them with magnificent light and dazzling brightness” (FMC IV 163)

to the magnanimity of the image of God in them as well as to the holy serenity of the Garden. But when these couple were contaminated by sin, they lost their purity and life.

In another mimre of Mar Jacob we see that in their place God chooses another couple. Hence, following the teachings of St. Paul, he speaks of God’s greater enthusiasm in carrying out another grand wedding feast; the betrothal and marriage between Christ and the Church: “Prophets were gathered, apostles were present, generations hastened ...”, and “The Father made the cloud of light as the bridal chamber for His Son ...... His Father portrayed the bride of light in the cloud of light, for she is the only one whom the symbols betrothed affectionately to the One. For the daughter of light the Father set the signet-ring of light and He betrothed her to His Son because the Bridegroom as well is wholly light”

919 Cf. Exod. 31/18.
920 Cf. Gen. 2/7, Exod. 31/18.
922 Kollamparampil, Salvation in Christ According to .... 158
923 Ibid, 159.
III. 3. B. 6. **Infant and Innocent**

The poet highlights that Adam was pure (sapyo) *(FMC I 124, III 296, 298, IV 177 etc)*, infant (sabro) *(FMC III 24)* and unashamed *(FMC III 611-619)*. He was an uncorrupted (lo mhabel) and beloved vessel *(mono rhimo)* *(FMC I 166, 172)* and his nature was marvellous *(FMC III 296, 298, IV 52, 55, 102, 103, 106, 111, 138, 149-150, 179, 193 etc)*. In many places the poet speaks of Eve’s softness. In one place he narrates Adam’s softness also, but there he finds it as an easy place for Satan’s perforation *(FMC I 164)*. Mar Jacob’s trait to describe Adam’s innocence can be seen in other mimre also, for example, in his homily ‘On the Nativity’ we see him attributing infancy to Adam, the most innocent human state: “On this day in which all commandments are renewed, a decree has descended from the heights to the infant Adam”.*924*

But it is to be noticed that Mar Jacob employs this concept of infancy with two connotations; primarily to demonstrate the innocence and then to describe the inefficiency of some one to stand on his own feet against the wicked. We see the use of the term ‘infancy’ in both these connotations in the mimre:

> “If, there, Adam were a child (sabro) in the Garden, even if he had transgressed the commandment, he would not have been blamed on account of his innocence (sabaruto). And now, let us seek whether it is visible that he was innocent, that, his ignorance defends his transgression? ” *(FMC III 107-110)*.

It is usual and poetical that writers use symbols of calm and mild living beings in order to represent innocence and purity. Mar Jacob also employs the same scheme to signify Adam’s virtuousness. Adam is named as lamb *(emro)* *(FMC III 290, 703, 195)*, chick *(parugo)* *(FMC III 292)*, dove *(yavno)* *(FMC III 296, IV 177)*, sparrow *(šepro)* *(FMC III 298)*, partridge *(haglo)* *(FMC III 302)*, child *(bro)* *(FMC III 1016, IV 173 etc)*. In his homily ‘On the Nativity’

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924 Kollamparmipil, *Jacob of Sarug’s Homilies on Nativity*, 136.
Mar Jacob employs the imagery of ‘dove’ (yavno) to denote the entire humanity also: “On this day the Eagle looked out and the hawks fled, and it has set the dove, the persecuted humanity, in its nest”.  

III. 3. B. 7. Full of knowledge and maturity

Mar Jacob likes to call Adam a rational vessel (mono mlilo) (FMC II 141) and a rational image (yuqno mlilo) (FMC IV 62). Rationality of the image confirms its maturity and hence the poet proved that Adam was mature and full of discernment. Also, while examining whether Adam was a child at the time of the reception of commandments, in order to find an excuse for him to save him from his blame on sin (FMC III 107), the poet makes it clear that Adam was a grown up man:

“He cast a leap to cross over (and) reach near God; after this, who can think that he was an infant?” (FMC III 125-126).

The poet again argues that the naming of animals by Adam shows his perfect knowledge and power of discernment:

“Again, if his knowledge was imperfect, how is it so, that he assigned names to all creatures which came near him? Behold, it is clear that he was eminent (tuliqo), full of discernment (mlo buyono)” (FMC III 117-119, 121).

We see that this notion of the poet goes along with the common understanding of the early fathers especially of Mar Ephrem who also said, “With that manifest knowledge which God gave to Adam, whereby he gave names to Eve and animals, God did not reveal the discoveries of things that were concealed; but in the case of that hidden knowledge from the stars downward, Adam was able to pursue enquiry into all that is within this universe.”

925 Ibid 122.
926 See above in this section under ‘soul and reason’, also see the segment, “Hellenic Influence in the Formation of the Mimre”, p. 663.
Freedom of choice goes along with the rationality and maturity of man. When one possesses this power, he is ought to choose the right path alone (FMC III 145-162) otherwise he would fall down. Hence one must use discernment as his instrument to choose rightly with utmost seriousness and care. According to the poet, Adam was a man with wisdom (FMC IV 140) for distinguishing the good from the evil (FMC IV 122, 124 etc.). Adam had the occasion for the exercise of his maturity and rationality. Since he was judicious and matured, he was powerful enough to guide his will and to make decisions (FMC II 142, 136, 140, 144, 146, 159-162, 277, 280, 290, 296, 299, III 174 etc.). The poet states that Adam’s rationality earned him the power to subdue wild things (FMC IV 40) and thus he became great among other creatures (FMC IV 1, 139, 145, 147, 149-150, 192 etc.). But unfortunately Adam misused his divine power and he was rightly dead (FMC II 293, 302, III 131-132, 175,178, 182, IV 2, 4 etc.). 929

III. 3. B. 8. Merchant

In the mimre, Adam and Eve were termed as merchants and the Satan was portrayed as a robber who lies in wait to rob the merchants (FMC III 300). Mar Jacob might have used this term purposefully, because, elsewhere in the mimre the first parents were pictured as wealthiest people who possess the most precious and colourful image of God (FMC I 32, 37, 39, 67, 182, 221, 268, II 274, III 308, IV 7, 9, 154, 157 etc.). Besides that, they had the bodily limbs much valuable than most costly pearls (FMC IV 101-102), they possessed the whole wealth of the entire world (FMC IV 173, 157 ff. etc.) and they used to wear glorious garments (FMC III 603 ff, 613ff, 646, IV 162-163, 184, 455, 462 etc.). But the poet scornfully as well as

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928 Brock, *Hymn on Paradise*, 166.
929 Also Cf. Ibid, p.
disappointedly illustrates how their wealth was stolen by Satan and how they failed to keep their possessions safe and how they became poor beggars (FMC III 630 ff.).

III. 3. C. Adam – the first ‘Anthropos’

The whole concept on the anthropology of the poet revolves around Adam, the first man. Even though some of the thoughts of the poet on the topic are dealt with elsewhere in the analysis of the mimre, we have to deal with them here in order to get a comprehensive view of the anthropology of the poet. The mimre gives us the picture of the poet’s disapproval on the darker sides of Adam and Eve as well as his appreciation on the brighter aspects.

III. 3. C. 1. Radiances of Adam

Mar Jacob is overgenerous in setting words to draw the magnificent facets of Adam’s life and to portray him the greatest, brilliant and dazzling creature among all living and non-living beings. Thus the poet praises Adam with all possible attributes.

III. 3. C. 1. i. The Image of God in Adam

The radiant factor in Adam was the image of God in him. Adhering to the Scriptural verse, “Let us make man in our image”, the poet repeats that Adam was created in the image of God, especially in the image of the only begotten son (FMC I 32, 37, 39, 67, 182, 221, 268, IV 154 etc.). God typified Adam, the head of the race, in this image of the Son of God (I 184). This image of Adam was great and colourful (FMC II 274, III 308, IV 7, 9, IV 157 etc.) and he

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930 = man
931 Gen. 1/26.
grew up in this image (FMC I 59). Since it is the human form of God’s own image, God loved and cared it exceptionally and compassionately (FMC I 97).

III. 3. C. 2. **Adam was god**

Although the genealogy of Adam is from dust (FMC II 34) and so, in his dusty lowliness, he can’t even approach the greatness of God (FMC II 35), yet, due to God’s gratuitous gift of the image of God, he was bound up (zar) with the divinity (FMC IV 189). According to the poet,

> “The Creator wished that Adam should become great (yireb) like God” (FMC I 203, 205, IV I 120)

and thus he exclaims,

> “This is great that he is powerful (galito) like God: he will lead death and life which are placed in him” (FMC II 289-290).

He was elevated to the post of god of flesh (aloh besro) for the creatures (FMC IV 3) and was having eternal life (hayo l’olam) like God (FMC II 271). According to the poet, although it was not similar to the eternity of God, Adam had a divine life which was without beginning (lo súryo) (FMC I 273) and without death (lo moyuto) (FMC II 271, 76, I 166 etc.). Like the only begotten Son (yihidoyo), Adam was also a child of God (bro daloho) (FMC III 726, I 124, III 1016, IV 173 etc.). Jesus is the messiah, the anointed one of God; but the poet dares to say,

> “The anointed one (májho) of God was Adam until he sinned” (FMC I 283).

He was the sum total of the goodness of the whole created things (FMC I 21-22, 56 etc.) and because of this godliness Adam was infinite (lo sokoyo) (FMC IV 104).

The major factors that make Adam god or lord over other creatures are his possession

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932 A detailed description on this topic is given in the section, “Image and Likeness of God in Man”, p. 249 ff.
of the divine image\textsuperscript{933} and his power of choice.\textsuperscript{934} Being conscious of this superiority of man over the creatures, the poet, while describing the intention of God in giving His image to Adam, affirms the divinity in Adam:

\begin{quote}
"The creatures shall see the image of the Lord (salmeh dmoryo) in Adam and it should fear him and be obedient to him, for, indeed he is its lord (moro)" (FMC I 269-270).
\end{quote}

But in his homily on Malkizedeq, while explaining the power of human word as well as of the Word of God, Mar Jacob states in lines 19-22 that man’s capacity to speak is that which makes him lord over the creatures: “The word is wealth: if it dwells with a poor person it will make him a king equal to other kings. In word alone is man greater than animals; by it Adam became rich to rule over the creatures.”\textsuperscript{935} When this capacity to generate words is considered as a gift from God and attached to the image of God, this statement of the poet is not contrary to Adam’s lord-making factors enumerated by the poet, but it will be complementary to them. Because, the poet elucidates how Adam ought to have exercised his lordship over the creatures; it is through the exercise of his wisdom:

\begin{quote}
"The Creator created something great out of nothing, so that, through his wisdom, he shall become a lord (moro) over everything" (FMC IV 139-140).
\end{quote}

As a result of his wisdom he can make decisions and pronounce them for controlling, keeping and tending the creatures. Since the root of Adam was Royal and hence sovereignty was his birth right because, Adam was created lord (moro) over the whole creatures (FMC I 60, IV 62 etc.). The poet says that this majestic dignity which the dust had assumed made Satan jealous (FMC III 185-186). In order to give more emphasis to this royal dignity of Adam, the poet compares him with an emperor’s magnificent crown (klilo); he was a comely and perfect

\begin{footnotes}
\item[\textsuperscript{933}] See the segment, “Image and Likeness of God in Man”, p. 249 ff.
\item[\textsuperscript{934}] Man’s power of choice as the exercise of his freewill is discussed in detail in the section, “The Freedom and Freewill of Man”, p. 305 ff.
\item[\textsuperscript{935}] Thekeparampil, “Jacob of Sarug’s homily on Malkizedeq”, Harp, VI. 1, 54.
\end{footnotes}
diadem at the beginning (FMC IV 109-110).

III. 3. C. 3. Adam - the second Christ

Mar Jacob considers Adam as the second Christ; Adam is the type of Christ.

Reciprocity as well as similarity between Christ and Adam is not a new notion even at the time of Mar Jacob, but we see that he intensifies this concept in his Four Mimre ‘On Creation’:

“In the image of the Son, that came out to the world openly,
He typified (šar) through it the head of the race, when He created him” (FMC I 183-184).

Many other verses of the poet like,

“At the heavenly Adam (ṣmayono odom), who is Lord Jesus,
the Father looked (ḥur) and in that resemblance (dmuto) He made Adam” (FMC I 185-186),
“For, Adam had the image of that Majesty (rabuto) (Christ)” (FMC I 221) etc.

give us the clear understanding of the indissoluble relation between Christ and Adam. Even though there are numerous factors that make them look alike, the poet compares Jesus Christ and Adam mainly in three aspects; i) the similarity in their birth, ii) sharing of their Messiah-ship, and iii) likeness in their image. i) Alluding to the nativity descriptions in the Gospel of Luke: the birth of Jesus from the Virgin Mary was without a conjugal relation and without the intervention of a man, but only by the ‘power from the highest’, the poet demonstrates us the similarity in the birth of Adam with that of Jesus Christ, because his birth was also not out of a marital relation but by the direct involvement of the ‘Most high’ (FMC II 175 ff). ii) Jesus Christ is the Messiah, the anointed one of God, but the poet goes even to the extent of saying that Adam was the anointed one until he sinned (FMC I 283-284). iii) The images of both of them are one and the same because God created Adam in the model of the Son of God, Jesus Christ (FMC I 181-182, 184-186, 220-221 etc.). The poet states that this is the reason why

the Son of God took up willingly the pains of rescuing the perished one, because it was His own image (FMC I 199-200).

III. 3. C. 4. Adam - a microcosm

The microcosmic ('olmo z’uro) aspect of the human body is very much highlighted in the mimre and this notion becomes clearer from the verses of the poet in the mimre. It is true that the anthropology of the poet is basically theological. But, at the same time, the poet doesn’t consider man aloof from the nature; but for him man is a mixture of the elements as well as at the centre of the universe. Hence, we see almost the same importance in the mimre to the fact of man’s centrality within the universe as equal to his possession of God’s image. So, another conception of the poet on man is that he is a ‘micro-universe' ('olmo z’uro). This concept of the poet can be seen from his creation narrative:

“T[e]he heaven and earth, sea and dry land, and everything in them, the hidden worlds and the big bodies of all creatures: The well arranged beauties of all created things in their (natural) form and every establishment of places and their arrangements: When He created, He created all kinds of beauties according to their natures and He came and comprehended all the beauties in the beauty of Adam. He condensed in the image all those colours that belong to the nature, so that, people should see in him the whole worlds and spaces. His appearance is small, but his creation is very splendid, for, all creatures and their structures are bound in him. While man is not capable enough to see the limit of the spaces, he sees in Adam, the heights and depths, the breadth and length. All their natures, sensible and non sensible, the Wise of the world had laid in His creation when He created him” (FMC IV 15-28).

This microcosmic conception of man enables the poet to correlate man and the universe and to narrate this relation on a reciprocal basis. Through this the poet was underlining the fact

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938 See the introduction to this segment.
939 See above in this section, ‘The creation from the elements’.
940 See above in this segment, ‘Man as the centre and apex of the universe’.
that there is no existence to man without a strong foundation on the universe and there is no
growth for the universe without the proper keeping and herding by man.\textsuperscript{941} This microcosmic
concept of man can also be seen in the poet’s eschatological explanations when he speaks of
the cosmic convergence in man. \textsuperscript{942}

Man is the sum total of the whole universe (\textit{FMC IV} 25 ff) and thus, for the poet, man
is another world (\textit{FMC IV} 330, 356 etc.):

\textit{“Man also is fashioned from the elements of the world, because, in his composition he is also a world, as it was already said”} (\textit{FMC IV} 355-356).

St. Gregory of Nyssa\textsuperscript{943} brings up the microcosmic aspect of man little more poetically
and musically than Mar Jacob. According to him; “If the orderly arrangement of the whole
universe is a kind of musical harmony whose maker and artist is God ..... and if man himself is
a microcosm, then, he too is an imitation of Him who fashioned the universe”.\textsuperscript{944}

\section*{III. 3. C. 5. \textbf{Adam - a mother}}

Alongside, describing Adam as image and reflection of God, his lordship, as well as his
sovereignty over the universe, his other greatness etc.\textsuperscript{945} we see him being described in the
mimre as a mother (\textit{emo}) who gives birth to a woman, Eve. These verses of the poet allude to
the fact:

\textit{“Behold the virgin, from whom is manifested His only begotten Son
and He compared her with Adam, who also engendered without a
marriage”} (\textit{FMC I} 55-56).

Usually exegetes and theologians, including Mar Jacob, used to compare Mary with
Eve (\textit{FMC III} 439 ff). But here, Mary is typologically compared with Adam in both of their

\textsuperscript{941} Cf. Gen. 2/15.
\textsuperscript{942} See the section, “Eschatological Perceptions of the Poet”, p. 629 ff.
\textsuperscript{943} Gregory of Nyssa was born about 335 AD, and he was the Metropolitan of Nyssa and brother of St. Basil.
\textsuperscript{944} Quasten, \textit{Patrology}, III, 292.
\textsuperscript{945} See above in this section. .
capacity of giving birth without a conjugal relation: Mary gave birth to Jesus from her womb, but, Adam gave birth to Eve from his side. Hence Adam is the first human mother as well as the first human father. Mar Ephrem also typologically links the birth of Eve with that of Christ: “Adam brought travail upon the woman who sprang up from him, but today Mary, who bore him a saviour, has redeemed that travail; Adam a man who himself knew no birth, bore Eve the mother, how much more should Eve’s daughter Mary be believed to have given birth without the aid of man”.946

III. 3. C. 6. **House and race of Adam**

Scholars opine of a common thinking pattern of the Semitic fathers: “The second chapter of Genesis is concerned not only with the history of a single man, but with the history of all humanity, as it is clear from the meaning of the word, ‘Adam’, which means man. For the Semitic mind, the ancestor of a race carries in himself the collectivity, ‘which had come from him’. All the descendants are really expressed in him; they are incorporated in him. This is what has been called ‘the corporate personality’”.947

Mar Jacob very often speaks of ‘the house of Adam’ (bayto dodom) or ‘the race of Adam’(tuhma dodom) (FMC I 58, 120, 126, 140, 246, II 121, 201, III 1, 30, 104, 137, 171, 252, 320, 332, 335, 706, 813 etc). This shows that the whole human race was generated from the common genitor, Adam; the entire humanity of all ages belongs to this house and thus shares common paternity (FMC II 231, 229-236). Hence the poet portraits Adam as ‘our father’ (FMC III 26). So, whatever Adam received from God at the time of redemption as well as at the creation, belongs to the whole human race. At the same time, in this connection, the whole generation of all ages must take up the responsibilities and after effects of his sin also. Thus the

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946 As quoted by Brock, *Harp of the Spirit*, 1983, 12
poet directly or indirectly approves the theory of the stain of original sin on every human being of all ages. When the poet repeats the concept of house or race of Adam, it also points to the brotherhood of humanity and its common paternity which is a strong defending position against any division and discrimination on any basis among people.

III. 3. C. 6. i. The tree and fruits compared with house of Adam

The poet compares the house of Adam (bayto dodom) with a tree (ilono) (FMC II 211-218), Adam with its trunk (FMC II 213-216, 218 etc.) and the first fruit (bakoro) (FMC II 205-206); its branches (sgykto) and the rest of the fruits (pire) (FMC II 203-206, 211-218 etc.) are his descendants. Naturally the fruits (bakoro) of a tree taste alike (FMC II 203-204). But in the house of Adam (bayto dodom), even though the first fruit, Adam, tasted bitterness of death (mariruto dmoyuto), the poet brings out some other fruits which tasted the sweetness (halyuto) of everlasting life and the poet finds this contradiction a reproof on the first parent (FMC II 209, 207, 211 etc.). Abel (FMC II 201, 223, 234 etc.)\(^{948}\), Enoch (FMC II 201, 207, 209, 224, 227, 233 etc.)\(^{949}\) and Elijah (FMC II 227, 234 etc.)\(^{950}\) are the enlisted sweet fruits who tasted eternity and rebuked Adam. In order to show the greatness of these men and the stupidity of Adam, the poet emphasises,

> “The dust of Enoch was from that of the clay of Adam and it was from the same dust of Abel, of Elijah also came to be” (FMC II 233-234).

III. 3. C. 7. Scandalous realms of Adam

Mar Jacob is not reluctant to disclose the dark spheres also in the life of Adam; he dares to tell about them along with his brightness. The intention of the poet behind this was not to

\(^{948}\) Cf. Gen. 4/8.
\(^{950}\) 2kings 2/1-15.
scorn alone at Adam, but to reveal the abundance of the flow of God’s mercy even towards a culprit. For this reason he enlists the untoward ways and actions of Adam which necessitated God’s compassion on him.

According to the poet, Adam chose to become mortal (FMC II 21, 45, 95, 272, III 179, 954 etc.) and thus he became the opener of death (FMC II 42, 98, 43, 198, 294, 295, III 178, 245, 247, 256, IV 10, 58, 67ff, 92, 190 etc.). By throwing the ordinances of God out, being lustful (FMC III 551, 676 etc.), and through wantonly longed for divinity and hastily tried to snatch it illicitly (FMC III 111, 114, 120, 122, 125, 130, 676, 723, 959, 961, 972 etc.), he earned the wage of death. From the exalted position next to God the almighty, Adam was reduced to the status of a powerless lump of clay (FMC III 973) and came to be called wretched inheritor (yarto saplo) (FMC III 167). The poet considers Adam ignorant (psito) (FMC III 110, 128, 769 etc.), spiritually blind (FMC III 623) and as unable to discern the will of God (FMC III 707–734, 763, 766 etc.). Mar Jacob finds him cunning (‘rimuto) (FMC III 115, 127 etc.), and his actions for plucking the fruit from the tree which did not belong to him, a theft (ganobuto) and thus calls him a thief (ganobo) (FMC III 627, 630, 689, 735, 741, 781, 794, 1015, 1026, IV 185 etc.).

Destruction of Adam’s soul was compared in the mimre with the annihilation of the tablets by Moses (FMC I 120, 123 etc.). The one who ought to be sweeter had turned out to be a bitter fruit (piro mriro) (FMC II 212), hence the poet calls him ‘a bitter almond’ (sordo) (FMC III 965). His sin made him terribly weak even to the extent of falling down due to helplessness to keep standing by himself (FMC III 959–960, 962, 974, 975, 977, 978, IV 68 ff.).

The poet evaluates that the one who was created as lord of the universe became an unfortunate one (haloso) (FMC II 272), fearful and unconfident (FMC III 577–578, 579, 603,

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951 Cf. Rom. 5/12 ff.
mournful (FMC III 582-585) and constrained (FMC III 664,665,667, 687 etc.). Since the poverty encircled him, the rich one became beggar (silo) (FMC III 631-632, 635, 636, 647, 648, 649, 675,947, 956, 1062, 1071 etc.) and hence he had to struggle hard (FMC III 942, 945 etc.). He became so soft so that anybody can perforate into him (FMC I 164): the poet finds this as the main reason behind the penetration of the serpent. He lost his glorious garments and other possessions (FMC III 573, 575,627, 640, IV 58-59, 184, 187-188,191 etc.) and became naked, humiliated and shameful (FMC I 236, II 301, III 249, 569, 571, 572, 581, 603,608,610, 620, 621, 624, 631, 632, 634,642, 644, 646, 650, 661-662, 685, 686, 687, 767, 768, 956, 994, 995, 996, 998, 1011, 1014, 1022, 1028, 1030, 1032, 1047, IV 2, 58, 59, 100, 145-146, 182, 185-186, 190, 191, 192, 193, 455, 461 etc.). So Adam sought flimsy leaves of the tree, sewed them together and covered his nakedness (FMC III 647, 673 etc.).

Adam, the one who possessed very optimistic and positive attitude to the extent of saying “bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh”\textsuperscript{952} had become negative and destructive in his mind-set even to the level of putting the blame upon God:

\textit{“It is the woman whom you gave me, have given me the fruit and I ate ”} (FMC III 739, 737 ff., 752 ff., 767-768, 770, 780, 787-788, 797, 801 etc.).

The poet finds that Adam boasted himself (FMC III 963-978) and consequently he calls him ‘a boaster’ (maroho) (FMC III 954). He was unfaithful (FMC III 1044) and had fallen to the status of being called ‘a beast’ (b’iro) (FMC IV 4). The one who ought to be fruitful, multiplying and subduing the earth,\textsuperscript{953} had been pierced by the thorns of the earth (FMC III 1073-1078).

The one who was entrusted with the affluent Garden of Eden to tend and keep it\textsuperscript{954}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{952} Gen. 2/23.
\item \textsuperscript{953} Gen. 1/29.
\item \textsuperscript{954} Gen. 2/15.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
happened to become a cause for the curse of the earth (FMC III 935 ff, 937 ff, 941 ff.) and hence he was punished (III 576, 921 ff, 981), expelled from there disgracefully (FMC III 163, 166, 167, 249, 1021, 1033, 1040, 1041, 1047, 1052, 1075 etc.), overthrown into the spiteful pit of Sheol (FMC III 234, 250, IV 6, 106, 110, 143-146, 198 etc.) and consequently he came to be a lost one (FMC III 710, 714, 715, IV 195 etc.). It is only the folly of Adam that turned his dazzling brightness into doomed darkness.

III. 3. D. Eve – the spouse of Adam

Mar Jacob’s views on women can be coagulated from his descriptions in the mimre on two Eves, the first one who transgressed and the new Eve, the Blessed Virgin Mary. Mar Jacob doesn’t seem to give much emphasis in narrating the creation of Eve from the rib of Adam as equal to the importance he gave to the description of the creation of Adam from the dust. But the whole concept on Eve as he envisaged in the entire mimre is certainly based on the scriptural background. Many characteristics attributed to Adam to disclose his blemishes as well as his radiances were employed by the poet to depict Eve also. Even though Eve is portrayed in the mimre as the one who made the first move towards committing the sin, the poet doesn’t seem to be an antifeminist; rather in some places he extols the dignity of woman and her relation with man. In one occasion, extolling the greatness and discernment of St. Mary (FMC III 437 ff.), he retorts to an existing Hellenic and Judaic false impression that woman is lesser in many respects than man, and says,

“Behold, from this lovable girl, every one should learn that the nature of women is not in want of knowledge” (FMC III 455-456).

Since mind of the poet is for the oneness of man and woman, he doesn’t give the impression of

955 The poet’s concept on women is discussed in detail in the section, “Man behind the Book”, p. 181 ff.
being prejudiced to conceive her only an insignificant part of Adam but honours her individuality which she deserves.

III. 3. D. 1. **Status of Eve**

The poet attributes sovereignty over the Garden of Eden to Eve also along with Adam and this can be inferred from the verses in the mimre where the poet narrates the dialogue of Eve with the serpent:

“We are given authority from God on everything that is in Eden” (FMC III 377, 380)

and

“We can eat from all the trees that are in Paradise” (FMC III 371, 375).

This ‘We’ concept reflects her understanding of her sovereignty along with Adam over the possessions. She was portrayed in the mimre as a free one who goes her own way and takes her own decisions, even though it went wrong (FMC III 505, 507, 509, 517 etc.). In the same sense, she is also pictured as physically powerful and valiant even to break open the fence (FMC III 505 ff., 513 ff.), cross over the limit and to make a giant leap (FMC III 507 ff.), to travel with a stranger (FMC III 510) etc. Her valiance is clearly expressed in the verses,

“She pressed onward, entered, coveted, approached (and) plucked the fruit; she snatched, ate and then turned back in order to extend to Adam” (FMC III 547-548).

Mar Jacob considers her status in the garden before her sin as its resident and possessor (FMC IV 158, 164 ff., 173, III 292 etc.), as decorated by God (FMC IV 159 ff), as sumptuous and so never in want of something (FMC III 890), as a queen who is gloriously dressed (FMC IV 163) etc. Following the Scriptural narration of the creation and fall, the poet also repeatedly calls Eve ‘the woman’ (atto) (FMC III 739, 743, 779, 788 etc.) in the sense that she is the best half of Adam. She, along with her husband, was the proposed inheritor of the tree of life (FMC III 1049-1050).
In many other places Mar Jacob replicates the common notion on Eve as the bride (*kalto*) and wife of Adam (*FMC* IV 159, 176, III 506, 639, 780, 796, 802, 893, 895, IV 162, 166, 168 etc.) and she was created as the partner (*savtopo*) (*FMC* III 552) and helper (*m’adrono*) to Adam (*FMC* III 783-784) and hence she has to submit herself to her husband to be subdued by him (III 893). She is the mother to the whole children to come (*FMC* III 891 ff., 906, 912, 917 etc.). Mar Jacob expresses the delight of her motherhood, even in the midst of the acute pain of her punishment and humiliation, when she hears the promise of a child to be born in her race (*FMC* III 904 ff).

III. 3. D. 1. i. **The poet gives prominence to Eve**

When one has to mention about a man and woman together in a place giving them equal importance, it is a polite custom in modern languages that female character should be mentioned first. We see Mar Jacob employs this pattern in his mimre much earlier than the development of the present prevalent languages. In several places he mentions Eve’s name first and then only follows Adam’s name (*FMC* I 123, 129, 132, III 603 etc.). This reveals the mind of the poet on the outstanding place of women in society even though he scolds Eve for her vices.


In the poet’s opinion, before the involvement in sin, Eve was as dazzling as that of Adam in the Garden for many reasons. She was also compared to one of the tablets that bore the commandments and her nature was beloved (*FMC* I 123-124). In addition to her status of a child of God along with Adam (*FMC* IV 173, I 124 etc.), her prominence as the mother of the promised child, Christ, adds her glory (*FMC* III 891 ff., 904 ff.). She is the one who was
specially decorated by God (FMC IV 159 ff.) and she was clothed with magnificent light and dazzling brightness (FMC IV 163).

Mar Jacob calls her ‘the soft one’ (rpito) (FMC III 367, 391, 425, 429, 564, 756 etc.). Here, the mind of the poet can be understood in different ways; a) as to connote negatively so as to show her fragile mental power in discerning and resisting the crookedness of the serpent (FMC III 367, 391, 425, 429 etc.). In the same sense the poet calls Adam also ‘the soft one’, because of this softness it was easy for the serpent to penetrate into him:

“The serpent perforated (nqab) into him and since he was soft (rpo), he was spoiled (ḥbal)” (FMC I 164).

b) It can be also for divulging her feeble physical stature comparing to that of a man (FMC III 564). c) Another intention of the poet might be the disclosure of her childishness in craving for something found attractive, in attempting to possess it by snatching, in yielding to be easily misguided etc. (FMC III 520 ff.). Here, what revealed was her innocence and purity (FMC III 388, IV 159 etc.), because in this sense the poet calls her ‘infant’ (sbarto) (FMC III 334, 462). Since, personally, the poet was not totally against Eve, all these options are probable.

Almost the same symbols that employed to Adam are found being employed by the poet in his mimre to project the greatness of Eve’s sanctity also. She was innocent pair and companion to Adam (FMC I 124, III 296, 298 etc.); as innocent as a dove (FMC III 388, 611-619 etc.). She was lovely (FMC I 124, III 296, 298, IV 166, 179 etc.) and virgin (btulto) (FMC IV 159). In order that the reader may feel her gentleness, the poet takes the mild creatures of the universe as her imagery, like chick (parugo) (FMC III 292), dove (yavno) (FMC III 296, 388, 393, IV 177 etc.), partridge (haglo) (FMC III 397), sparrow (šepro) (FMC III 298) etc.

The offspring of Eve had immeasurably elevated the splendour of their mother. In the middle of the mimre we see that, circumstantially, the poet is thrilled to speak about Mary, the

957 See above in this section, ‘Radiances of Adam’.
wise, purest, and most beloved one of God among women of all ages (FMC III 437-456). There he presents Eve as the mother of Mary and Mary her daughter (FMC III 445). The promised child, later revealed as Jesus Christ, is also a progeny of Eve (FMC III 891-920). Along with Adam, Eve also can be proud of her offspring who found eternity like Abel, Enoch, Elijah etc (FMC II 224, 227-228, 233-234 etc.).

She is the one who received the abundance of mercy from the almighty (FMC III 897 ff.). She is also the one who is promised to receive restitution along with Adam (FMC III 1029, 1031, 1034 etc.). According to the poet God decorated her very specially to make her the bride of Adam and the queen of Eden (FMC IV 159 ff.) and this appended her brightness.


If some one wants to measure analogously the rooms allotted by the poet to describe both the brightness of Eve and her darkened spheres, he will certainly weigh more to the lenience of the poet to emphasize in his mimre on the latter aspect of her life. But none of these accounts of the poet on the polluted side of Eve were for belittling her at any rate but were only for narrating the entrance of sin into the world, her role in it and God’s merciful involvement in eradicating it. An analysis of the mimre will enable us to enlist the following scandalous realms of Eve.

III. 3. D. 3. i. Eve was culpable

The poet estimates that Eve is blameworthy and so he invites every one to join with him to blame her troubled wisdom (FMC III 444), because, in her tumult and without any investigation she accepted the enticing words of Satan (FMC III 433-436, 457 ff.).

958 Eve-Mary Parallelism is a common theme of the early fathers of the Church and Mar Jacob elaborates it in his other mimre also like “On the Virgin”. Cf. Hansbury, Jacob of Serug: On the Mother of God, 17 ff.
absolutely blameworthy (FMC III 442) when she is compared with Mary, who with great prudence and discernment had accepted the words of the angel (FMC III 437-456).

Another reason for her culpability is that through plucking the fruit from the forbidden tree she was the cause for sin and she caused the removal of their glorious garments and the consequent humiliation (FMC III 644). According to the poet,

“It was she who planned to clothe her husband with the borrowed garment, hence, she became the cause to strip him off from the glory” (FMC III 639-640, 641-646 etc.).

She is blameworthy also by the reason of her being the cause for God’s curse upon the earth (FMC III 856).

III. 3. D. 3. ii. She was transgressor

The temperament of the poet appears to be enraged against Eve because she was the first in transgressing the commandment and he portrays her as so zealous to cross the limit before any one else does it (FMC III 505, 442, 494, 507, 511, 570, 579, IV 181 etc.). The verses of the poet are sufficient enough to give us live presentation of the crossing over of the commandments by Eve:

“She demolished (šhap/šehpat) the fence (šyogo) which was built by the law and she looked for moving along in impropriety; she defeated (šhap/šehpat) her husband (gabro)” (FMC III 513-514).

Hence the poet opines,

“The transgression of the commandment (‘obar puqdono) was the way for her towards the tree and she moved along through it contumaciously (morudoit) towards the fruit” (FMC III 515-516).

The poet considers her transgression of the commandment as the most hateful thing (FMC III 605-606). Since the law was broken through the transgression, it effected in the tearing up of their original garment and making them naked and shameful (FMC III 679-680).
Emphasising the transgression of Eve, the poet gives her the title ‘transgressor’ (FMC III 781-782) and he finds the same reason for the insistence of the justice on her to confess her transgressions (FMC III 803-804). According to Mar Jacob Eve was brutally hit by sin:

“The sin had struck (mahet) her conscience (re’ono) and it perverted her” (FMC III 543, 609, 677).

In order to show the severity of her transgression the poet compares it with the punishment she received:

“It (punishment) was not as grievous (qaṣyo) as the transgression and her revolt” (FMC III 898).

To illustrate how much Eve, together with Adam, was destroyed due to her transgression, the poet uses a later symbol of the bruised first tablets of the commandments and says that in the same manner Eve and Adam perished and became non existant (FMC I 127-130).

III. 3. D. 3. iii. She was the perverted and the perished one

Another reason for Eve’s destruction, besides the crossing over of the commandments, was her journey through the perverted ways. The poet elaborates it saying,

“She abandoned (ṣbaq/ṣebqat) the way which was instructed by the Righteous one and in her Will she adopted the pathless desert (tavṣo) with the stranger (nukroyo)” (FMC III 509-510),

“She gave heed to the deceit (neklo), attended the falsehood (ṣuqro)(and) believed firmly the shameful language (bezḥo)” (FMC III 545),

and “She pressed onward(ḥep sat), entered, coveted(rag/regnat), approached (and) plucked (qṭap/qetpat) the fruit; she snatched (qṭap/qetpat), ate and then turned back in order to extend to Adam” (FMC III 547-548).

All these terms represent the valiance and enthusiasm of Eve to disobey God and follow Satan to commit the sin. Also, these terms stand for perverted performances and these were never expected from her and thus the poet puts it in this way; she neither submitted
herself to give place for righteousness (FMC III 542) nor did she approach towards propriety (FMC III 544). This deviation from the right path caused her fall to destruction (FMC III 565).


The poet writes,

“In her tumult, she conceived (bṭen/ bêtnat) iniquity (‘avlo) and gave birth (yiled/yeldat) to deceit (‘eto)” (FMC III 546).

Mar Jacob likes to take this iniquitousness as an acquired nature in Eve, because, with this desire in mind she loved the plunderer (hṭpopoyo) (FMC III 508). The poet evaluates the intensity of Eve’s craving to commit sin:

“She ardently desired to be covered up with iniquity” (FMC III 541).

Her passion for iniquity is expressed, as if live, mainly from verse 503 onwards and particularly from verse 516 onwards in the third mimre. The intensity of her iniquity can be felt from the poet’s own opinion,

“All the trees that were in Paradise were worthless for her and towards one alone she looked fiercely (soruhoit)” (FMC III 527-528).

But finally,

“This passion for iniquity gave her the regret of the soul” (FMC III 583).

Thus the one who was created by God to be the mother of all generations,959 due to her own misconduct, became the mother of all iniquities.

III. 3. D. 3. v. Eve was a harlot

While disclosing the evil features of Eve’s life, the poet goes to the extent of addressing her with most harsh words. Bearing in mind the faithlessness (FMC III 1044) Eve had done towards God, her husband, the commandments, her own responsibilities etc., the poet goes to

the extreme of calling her ‘a harlot’ (zanoyto) (FMC III 17). Because, the poet assesses that, like a harlot who follows a deceitful beckoning of a fornicator for illicit enjoyment and transitory benefit, Eve followed the beckoning of the robber (ganobo) (FMC III 512), she abandoned God’s ways and travelled with a stranger (nukroyo) (FMC III 509-510) and she obeyed the serpent (FMC III 501) just for some enticing benefits. By the reason of following the instigation of the serpent and trying to carry out her own Will without any consultation with Adam, her husband, (FMC III 545-546), Eve was cheating Adam (FMC III 504, 506, 514). The poet condemns her, saying,

“In her sight, it (fruit) was greater than God and of His ordinance” (FMC III 600).

In the poet’s imagination she illegitimately collaborated with the serpent in order to sew the garment of leaves to cover their nakedness (FMC III 683-684). At the trial she had to confess to God her illegal affair with the serpent (FMC III 807-808).

She trusted the fraud and revealed every secret to him that the benevolent God had handed over to them and thus she cheated God also (FMC III 387-390). This made her eligible to be called by the poet, ‘heartless’ (lo lebo) (FMC III 389). As a harlot does, she found pleasure in being with some one else other than God or her husband (gabro) (FMC III 395-396) and she did not resist the deceit that separates her and her husband and God (FMC III 425 ff, 446 ff, 458, 459 ff., 499, 501-502 etc.). Instead of loving her husband and the Lord, she loved the plunderer more (FMC III 508, 509 ff.). Seeing all these, the poet doesn’t try to choose a slighter word other than ‘harlot’ (zanoyto) which is suitable for Eve. The Garden event makes the poet relate the falsehood with adultery and calumny with theft. In his homily ‘On Nativity’ we find that Mar Jacob relates these two: “For, falsehood follows adultery and calumny is joined with theft. Any one who steals, is not truthful, by the fact that he is a thief,
because a single evil is capable of generating many (evils)”.

III. 3. D. 3. vi. **Eve was covetous and lustful**

The poet finds another sinful phase in Eve’s character; her temperament to covet on something lustfully and her trial to possess it through any cheap means (*FMC* III 461-462). Mar Jacob expresses it in this way:

“For, she had wantonly (**srihoit**) desired on the tree” (*FMC* III 526).

Following the evil whispering of the serpent she fancied very much on the ensuing splendour of divinity by eating the fruit from the forbidden tree (*FMC* III 502). Her covetous passion was so deep so as to lead her to fall in love with a robber iniquitously (*FMC* III 508). She gained the pseudo power in order to attempt to demolish the strong and divine fortification of the law (*FMC* III 505-507, 511-513, 547-548, IV 181 etc.).

Mar Jacob, as an expert in mind reading, is cent percent successful in unfolding very poetically the mind set of Eve at the time of her attempt to snatch the prohibited fruit and the reader can have the feeling of happening it live before him:

“She considered it (fruit) desirable and she was enslaved (**s’bo**) so as to approach it
and she began to look consciously at it alone.
There she did not gush forth (**guh**) and look on its surroundings,
because, on it alone she had fixed the eyes pleasantly” (*FMC* III 519-522).

These verses of the poet show how much Eve was enticed by the serpent so as to make her so covetous to eat that fruit. Her fervent passion for the fruit made her disregard all other things and aspects in the Garden (*FMC* III 525-527) and in her extreme desire she weighed the forbidden fruit more valuable than God and every other thing in the Garden (*FMC* III 599-600).

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960 Kollampampil, *Jacob of Sarug’s Homilies on the Nativity*, 80.
961 The psychological expertise of the poet is evaluated in the section, “Man behind the Book”, p. 164.
The amount of the pressure of lust in Eve can be counted from the poet’s statement,

“The hateful (šnito) lust (regto) had burst forth (tra’) from the freedom” (FMC III 517).

While keenly observing her actions, the poet assesses,

“When she looked at it, the lust (regto) for that tree bruised (šqap) her” (FMC III 539).

The poet compares the attempt of Adam and Eve for snatching the fruit with a wrestling contest of lust (FMC III 551, 559) and this contest was for illegal and immature snatching of the divinity (FMC III 676, 538, 506).

At this time the poet’s imagination had been influenced by the teaching of Christ that when a strong man is tied up, it is easy for the robber to break through and enter his house and carry away all his possessions. \(^{962}\) Here the poet presents that Eve was totally tied up by the lust for the fruit and then it was easy for Satan to take her powers of intellect, discernment, sensitivity etc. away.


Another characteristic of Eve that cast a thick and dark shadow over her original radiance was her unsuccessful attempt to exult herself above her normal status and above her husband. Even though Mar Jacob was not so generous and radical to consider Eve equal in every respect to Adam, he never lessens her status and glory. \(^{963}\) But at the same time she is projected in his mimre as one who is discontented of what she possessed and one who is lustfully longing for acquiring more and more improperly. She upset her position as the companion to Adam. \(^{964}\) So the poet opines,

“The pride (hutro) seized (ḥtap) her, so that, the supremacy (risonuto)

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\(^{963}\) The feministic concept of the poet is discussed in detail in the section, “Man behind the Mimre”, p. 181 ff.

\(^{964}\) Cf. Gen.2/18, 22.
shall be introduced in the history (ṣarbo); and behold, in her tumult (ṣgizuto), she behaved haughtily ('lo/'ali/sa'li) against Adam also” (FMC III 503-504).

She wanted to become chief (rīgo) to Adam in divinity (FMC III 506) and in her attempt she was vulgarly successful in defeating her husband (FMC III 514). Adam was appointed by God to tend and keep his fellow creatures\(^{965}\) and hence it was his responsibility to feed others. As against this original plan of God, the poet finds a paradox in Eve’s extension of the fruit of the prohibited tree to Adam and thus feeding him (FMC III 536, 548, 567) and also in making clothes for covering Adam’s nakedness (FMC III 638-639, 643, 645). The harshness of her attitude towards her husband is clearly pictured in the mimre as:

“She did not invite Adam, so that, he may eat first from it; instead, she made haste (rhet) to be declared eldest (qadmoyo) in the divinity (alohuto)” (FMC III 537-538).

In her haste she was not even willing to pause a moment and consider her husband for a while (FMC III 540). Her attempt to triumph over her husband failed miserably (FMC III 895-896).

III. 3. D. 3. viii. Eve tried to become priest

Mar Jacob explains in his mimre how a great thing in life could be turned into a catastrophe. The poet compares the extending of Eve’s hands to place the fruit of the middle tree into the mouth of her husband with the oblation of a priest who extends the sacrificed meal from the altar to the people’s mouth.\(^{966}\) This performance of the priest was for making people pure and divine and what he extends is the food for eternal life. In this manner, according to the poet, she also acted illegally as a priest and plucked the fruit from the tree, which was the tree of good and evil\(^{967}\), and extended the meal to her husband in order to become equal to

\(^{965}\) Cf. Gen. 2/15.

\(^{966}\) In the holy Qurbono, the sacrifice of the New Testament, the priests distribute the sacrificed bread and wine as the flesh and blood of Christ among the faithful in order to be consumed by them and be saved through it.

\(^{967}\) Cf. Gen. 2/17.
God:

“In her perturbation she approached to become a priest (kohno) there and she stretched out the fruit of the tree to her husband (FMC III 535-536).

She not only wanted to overcome her husband (FMC III 503-514) and cross the limits of the divine law (FMC III 547) but she tried even to go beyond the almighty, her Creator also (FMC III 678, 891 etc.).

III. 3. D. 3. ix. **Eve became an imperfect and blemished one**

The poet portrays another aspect of her darker side of life. One who possessed sovereignty over everything (FMC III 375, 377 etc.) had become poor and beggar. As nomads she and her husband sought shelter under the tree and there they underwent utter scarcity and as beggars (hasiro) (FMC III 649) they borrowed leaves to cover their nakedness (FMC III 631-636, 647 etc.). She lost all her possessions including the glorious garments:

The sin took off the glorious garment of creatorship (boruyuto)” (FMC III 573), comeliness (FMC IV 95 ff, 159 ff.), ornaments (FMC IV 101 ff.), and together with them all her brilliance too was lost (FMC IV 186-188). The poet puts it very rudely,

“It was she who might have woven and made that decoration of poverty (sniquto/meskinuto)” (FMC III 641, 675).

III. 3. D. 3. x. **Eve was short-sighted**

Disregarding her power of reasoning she allowed herself to be carried away by her hallucinations (FMC III 518 ff., 600) and consequently her reasoning power was enslaved by the lustful desires (FMC III 519, 543-544). The poet finds Adam and Eve as blinds who are not capable of recognising the sin that was overlaid on their bodies (FMC III 623). She could not view and hope for the fruit of the tree of life to be ripened and which would be granted to her at the maturity of time; instead, she found pleasure in its present attraction, taste and result. Her
short-sightedness led her and her husband to total blindness so as to cover the sight of God from them.

III. 3. D. 3. xi. **She was a fraud companion**

Eve was given to Adam as his companion. A good companion usually helps the friend to save him from dangers. But Eve intentionally pulled her spouse also down while she was falling down. This, we infer from the narration of the poet:

“And when she was conquered she did not fall down (without) her partner” (FMC III 552).

The sight of the force which Eve imposed on Adam to deviate from the right path of God and his willingness to yield to it had provoked the poet to scorn Adam,

“She is not a counsellor (moluko) and so as to instruct the perverse way” (FMC III 784).

III. 3. D. 3. xii. **She was a thief**

No more words are needed to characterise someone who is malicious than calling him a thief (ganobo). Theft is obtaining some one else’s possessions without the consent of the concerned party. The tree of life was not granted to Adam and Eve and hence it was still in the custody of God. According to Mar Jacob, Eve and Adam committed sin by stealing the fruit from the forbidden tree and when they consumed it they had completed the transgression. Quite often the poet calls her and her spouse thieves (FMC III 794, 689, 1015, IV 185 etc.) and ridicules the detestability of what they have gained through the theft (FMC III 627). Mar Jacob narrates also how they were caught red-handed (FMC III 630).

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968 Cf. Gen. 2/18, 22.
III. 3. D. 3. xiii. **Eve turned out to be constrained and grief-stricken**

According to the poet the new cloth of leaves which she had woven for herself (FMC III 637-638) repressed her from moving along (FMC III 665, 667 etc.). She was forced to be mournful due to her sin and this helped the poet to make a philosophical conclusion:

> “This passion for iniquity (rgat ‘avlo) gave her the regret of the soul (tetvo lnapso) and when it was committed, its completion was tied up with lamentation. When the sinner (one who sins) coveted and committed sin, it turned to be lament, for, the reproof (makṣonuto) was brought forth from his conscience (re’yono)” (FMC III 583-586).

The endless lamentation is certainly not a brighter aspect in Eve’s life.

III. 3. D. 3. xiv. **She was stripped and humiliated**

There is nothing more to humiliate a woman than stripping her in public. Eve, along with her husband, was stripped in public and she became disgraced. It was she who caused to strip off the garment of glory (FMC III 640). She collaborated with the serpent in removing the existing glorious garments given by God and sewing new shameful garment of leaves (FMC III 683). The poet emphasizes that it was Eve who planned it first, prepared and clothed Adam (FMC III 637-639);

> “It was she who carried the leaves in her hands in order to fasten together” (FMC III 643, 645, 647, 653, 673 etc.).

Very often Mar Jacob describes the humiliation of both of them:

> “And shame (purṣoyo) made haste (r-het) and seized (d-rak) them equally” (FMC III 568)

and

> “The licentious nakedness (purṣoyo dzaliluto) of the flesh was exposed to them” (FMC III 572, 603, 608, 610, 621 etc.)

But in one place he isolates the humiliation of Eve:

> “She returned ashamed due to the action which stripped (and) defeated her” (FMC III 602).
The situation behind her humiliation was that she had done wrong, slipped from her eminence and fell down from the zenith of her rank. This notion of the poet can be seen in the verse,

“\textit{And when she deviated, she happened to fall due to her own Will }” (FMC III 565, 580)

and the poet discloses that this fall was a slip into destruction (FMC IV 183). Mar Jacob continues admonishing her for her humiliation, saying,

“The nakedness \textit{(purṣoyọ) which came upon them was also from her} ” (FMC III 642).

It was her covetousness that led her and her spouse to commit sin and this iniquity stripped them off (FMC III 620, 644, IV 182, 186 etc.) and seeing the ugliness of their nakedness they became ashamed (FMC III 624, 650 etc.). All efforts made by them to cover their nakedness had not only miserably failed but it caused the multiplication of the extent of their humiliation (FMC III 631-634, 661-664, 685-687, 993-994 etc.).

III. 3. D. 3. xv. \textbf{She was silent}

Mar Jacob highlights the negligence of Eve as a solid background for the humiliation and states that her silence before the serpent invited her as well as her husband’s disastrous end which led them to death. The poet grieves over the silence of Eve:

“If she debated with the serpent, she could have overcome him” (FMC III 431ff, 459, 457 ff, 469 ff, 494 ff.).

Basing on the attitude of Eve, the poet makes a thoughtful statement:

“Some times silence \textit{(ṣetqọ) causes damage to those who keep it} ” (FMC III 495).

Mar Jacob finds this abominable silence of Eve before the serpent a major reason for her death:

“And since Eve kept silence there, death fell upon her” (FMC III 498).

Mar Jacob fears such kind of harm would happen to him also if he fails to proclaim the Word.
of God. So in his homilies on Nativity he says, “Shall I choose silence? But it breed harm, seeing that it belongs to inertia”\textsuperscript{969}

III. 3. D. 3. xvi. \textbf{She was an idiot and an imprudent girl}

Eve was a silly girl so as to give ears to a big fraud like the serpent (\textit{FMC} III 361):

\begin{quote}
“\textit{Eve, the soft one (rpito), regarded him right and she trusted it (discourse)}” (\textit{FMC} III 367);
\end{quote}

she blindly swallowed his deceitful words and followed it indiscriminately (\textit{FMC} III 425-442, 501-502, 545-548 etc.). The poet scolds her imprudence:

\begin{quote}
“\textit{Oh, the perturbed mind (sgiṣat havono), the discourse regarding you should have been with prudence (zahiruto)}” (\textit{FMC} III 390).
\end{quote}

The poet evaluates her too childlike in comparison with the cunningness of the serpent (\textit{FMC} III 463, 460 etc.). The poet wishes that an exercise of a little amount of her good sense would have fled the serpent from misleading her (\textit{FMC} III 491 ff). Her silliness made her weigh more the fancies of the world than trusting God’s plans (\textit{FMC} III 599-600).

III. 3. D. 3. xvii. \textbf{Eve was rebellious}

We see that the poet weighs between the punishment Eve received and her actions:

\begin{quote}
\textit{It was not as grievous (qasyo) as the transgression and her revolt (marduto)}” (\textit{FMC} III 898).
\end{quote}

From this comparison we see how the poet counts her whole actions as rebellious. Rebellion comes out from a disturbed mind which would be filled with wrathful thoughts against the oppressor. But in the case of Eve, her mind was agitated not against God as oppressor, but it was perplexed by the provocation of the serpent. Analysing her performance the poet comes to the conclusion that she was with a perturbed mind in the Garden (\textit{FMC} III 390, 444, 457, 504,

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{969} Kollamparampel, \textit{Jacob of Sarug’s Homilies on the Nativity}, 16.
\end{flushright}
514, 516, 524, 535 etc.). She was totally out of her senses and revolted vehemently against the ordinances of God (FMC III 547-548, 601 etc.). The poet imagines that the reason for God for expelling them out of the Paradise and keeping them away from the tree of life was their rebellious nature. This he states in the verse,

“Perchance they might live rebelliously (marudoit) from it forever” (FMC III 1046).

III. 3. D. 3. xviii. She was only a follower of impulses

The poet views that simply following one’s own impulses without any discernment is a heinous and animal characteristic and when a human being follows his impulses indiscriminately it is equal to committing sin. Eve’s was such a type of scarce personality.

Urged by her impulse she was so enthusiastic to execute the evil words of the serpent and was too hasty to pluck the fruit from the tree (FMC III 500); thus to commit sin and to strip off the garment of glory (FMC III 646). The poet repulsively marvels at the vehemence of her movements towards sin (FMC III 391) and blames her hastiness (FMC III 442). Eve should have been aware of her incompetence in arguing with the astute serpent (FMC III 464) and she should have been mindful of her rank among the creatures (FMC III 538). Mar Jacob draws her impulsiveness:

“She did not place herself in the middle to turn her mind towards her partner” (FMC III 540).

While going through these scandalous realms of Eve, one should not forget her greatness as it was discussed above.

III. 3. E. Mar Jacob’s concept on family

Anthropology of Mar Jacob includes his thoughts also on the formation as well as the decorum of the family; his main thrust in this regard is on the importance of humanity as a
whole. He wants to point out that even though Adam and Eve alone had committed sin against God, it affected the whole humankind. At the same time the entire humanity of all ages are sharers of the blessings bestowed upon the first parents. Hence an understanding of the concepts of Mar Jacob on the family will certainly help us to appreciate his anthropology.

III. 3. E. 1. **Head of the family**

Mar Jacob’s notion on family is solely based on the Holy Scriptural perception of the family. Thus he states that male genus is the head of the family *(FMC III 893, 896)*, who has to protect and look after other members of the family. And so, he calls Adam ‘Tiar’ *(hudo)* *(FMC III 864)*. It is his duty to work hard and earn the livelihood for him and for the family *(FMC III 945-948)*. Also, it is he who has to subdue *(FMC III 893)* and rule over the women *(FMC III 895)*. He is the husband *(gabro)* *(FMC III 506, 514, 536, 550, 895 etc.)*, bridegroom *(hatno)* *(FMC IV 158, 166 etc.)*, couple *(hatne)* *(FMC IV 162, 168 etc.)* and the partner *(savtopo)* *(FMC III 540)*. He is the head of the big family that comprises the whole human race.

The harsh words used by the poet to scold Adam for his compliance with Eve’s thoughts reveal that he favours male domination in making and executing decisions. At the same time he has to consult God alone for the making of his decisions *(FMC III 781-786)*. To show the prominence of Adam in his race, the poet says that he is the first fruit of the tree of generations *(FMC II 203-206, 211-218 etc.)*. It is also noticeable that, even though Eve and Satan were the first causes of sin, God invites Adam first to be questioned at the garden *(FMC

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970 The poet considers the first parents, Adam and Eve as the source as well as the representatives of the whole humanity – see above in this section, ‘House and race of Adam’.

971 Ibid.
It shows that Adam’s appointment to keep and tend\textsuperscript{972} also includes his responsibility to keep the universe and its inhabitants from doing something against the Will of God. In the Garden, the failure of keeping his responsibility was questioned by God.

III. 3. E. 2. \textbf{Woman}

We infer the poet’s opinion about the significance of woman and her role in the family from his portrayal of Eve in the mimre, which is also purely Biblical in nature. He assesses that the place of woman is only in association with man and this order was divinely set. And so he considers any disturbance in this placement as a sin and he finds that this is one of the reasons why God punished Eve:

\begin{quote}
"Adam, your husband (gabro), will bear rule (nehve sali) and will rage (pkad) you, and you will never be the mistress (morto) to your husband according to your thought" (FMC III 895-896).
\end{quote}

That was why with harsh and unkind words he admonishes Eve’s attempts to overtake Adam (FMC III 504-514, 533-542 etc.). She has to be subdued and ruled over by man (FMC III 893). She was created only as a helper to man and she is not expected to be his counsellor, especially, by no means, one who guides him through perverse ways. And according to the poet, Adam has no obligation to follow the whisperings of woman (FMC III 781-786). Her role in the family is to beget children and look after the members of the family (FMC III 891). Presupposing that it was Eve who wove the garment of leaves for both of them (FMC III 637-638) the poet underlines the innate nature and duty of a woman to be concerned for the welfare of the family.

Comparing to the stoutness and sternness of male group, in the poet’s opinion, the physique as well as the mental power of female category is soft and weak (rpiyo) and so very

\textsuperscript{972} Cf. Gen. 2/15.
often the poet calls Eve ‘the soft one’ (rpiyo) (FMC III 367, 391, 425, 429, 564, 756 etc.).

More than that, due to her feminine temperament, she blindly trusts fancy words, she is too emotional and as a result she could easily be moved by the impulses (FMC III 333 ff., 401 ff., 429 ff 517 ff.).\(^973\) The narrations of the poet show another phase also of Eve, that is, she behaved contrary to her natural softness and moved forward valiantly for snatching the fruit and committing the sin (FMC III 547-548, 601). She must have given prominence to man in every aspect of the family life; she has to serve food first to him and for her every action she has to consult her husband (FMC III 537-540) and she is not expected to be priest like (FMC III 535).\(^974\) The notion of the poet on the status of woman is a question of serious debate for the modern feminists.

III. 3. E. 3. Marriage ceremony

Preparation of a grand wedding-feast, honouring the newly wedded couple who are in their wedding dress as celebrities, setting up of a bridal chamber etc. are essential constituents of a marriage celebration. God as the first bride-companion and the first versatile beautician decorates the first couple:

“He clothed them with magnificent light and dazzling brightness and He left them among the trees and their fruits” (FMC IV 163-164) and “The couple shined in their crowns and garments (FMC IV 162).

The luxurious wedding-feast was cooked by putting together everything from the whole world (FMC IV 161). We read in the Scripture: “The Lord had planted a garden eastward in Eden and there He put the man whom He had formed”.\(^975\) The imaginative mind of Mar Jacob viewed it as placing the man and woman in the bridal chamber:

\(^973\) See above in this section. – ‘Eve as the follower of impulses’, also see the section, “Man behind the Book” for the poet’s feministic concepts, p. 181 ff.

\(^974\) Ibid, p.

\(^975\) Gen. 2/8.
“He fixed the bridegroom (ḥatno) in this vast bride-chamber (gnuno) which He had prepared” (FMC IV 158).

All these favours God had done for this image just for the reason of its greatness.

It is a usual practice to give wedding gifts to the newly wedded couples. It is intended to increase their delight and to mark the showers of blessings upon them. According to the poet it is God who initiated this practice. When Adam and Eve were coupled together He gave them the marriage gift:

“He gave all the trees and their fruits as the marriage gift (rumyono)” (FMC IV 165).^976

To no other creatures this gift was awarded by the Creator. Behind this favouritism, the reason what the poet sees is the greatness of the image. Mar Jacob goes a step further and describes it in the manner of a marriage settlement. In certain cultures dowry is part of marriage agreement. Before the marriage the parent of the bride comes to an agreement with the bridegroom and his party on the share of wealth proposed to give to the bride. Thus the poet writes,

“In her marriage settlement (dowry) (pernito), He (God) added the sea, dry land (earth) and the sky” (FMC IV 160)^977

and as a loving and caring father

“He (God) gave the whole garden to the new children to possess” (FMC IV 173).

This sharing of wealth is also an acknowledgement of the bridegroom’s capability of protecting the bride and the newly formed family. For the poet, God gave Adam a dowry recognizing him competent enough to look after the whole generations. But this plan of God was tarnished by our first parents.

^976 Gen. 1/29
^977 Gen. 1/30
III. 3. E. 4. **Descendants**

The poet seems to be garrulous to recite the luminosity of some of the offspring that belong to this family and he goes to the extent of placing them above their first species:

“When the fair Enoch departed, he blamed Adam: since he kept the commandment, he did not die” (FMC II 207-208).

Abel (FMC II 201, 223, 234 etc.), Enoch (FMC II 201, 207, 209, 224, 227, 233 etc.) and Elijah (FMC II 227, 234 etc.) are the dazzling children of this family who did not die due to sin. The poet describes how much happy Eve was to hear from God at the time of her verdict, the promise of the greatest child to be born to her (FMC III 904 ff).

Mar Jacob portrays Mary, the mother of Christ, as one of the most sparkling progeny of Adam and Eve. How much the poet is thrilled to speak about Mary can be seen in his verse:

“The (life) history of Mary had stimulated me to speak here and it doesn’t allow me to pass plainly over it” (FMC III 439-440).

And he feels that it is befitting to speak about her during the course of his mimre (FMC III 441, 443). He extols Mary placing her even above Eve because she was purer and brighter than her mother and the poet states that Mary is the one who was born to wrap up the wounds of her mother, Eve, which was caused by her sin (FMC III 445). The poet points out that Mary is wiser than Eve because she did not receive a message blindly, even if it was conveyed by an angel, until she understood its reality through a series of adequate questions (FMC III 448-454). In its place, Eve followed the words of the serpent without any investigation (FMC III 446). The poet calls Mary a lovable girl and tells every one to imitate her (FMC III 455) and from her he comes to a conclusion on the nobility of women (FMC III 456)981

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978 Gen. 4/8.
980 2kings 2/1-15.
981 The concept of the poet on woman can be seen in the section, “Man behind the Book”, p. 181 ff.
III. 3. F. **Decline and disintegration of Man**

Man, who was gloriously created in the image of God, began to degenerate and was brought to naught due to his insolence against the love and ordinance of God. Even though the main thrusts of the mimre are the illustrations on the brilliance of the image of God in man, immeasurable amount of God’s compassion in redeeming man etc, a major part of it is set apart for describing the wretchedness of Adam due to his transgression of the commandment. In this context, Mar Jacob declares that his poem is about an insolent:

"Behold, I sing about the insolent (maroho) who despised your commandment" (FMC III 7).

Consequently, while narrating the darker sides of Adam the poet conceives him in the mimre as the one who had despised, revolted, transgressed and violated the commandment of God (FMC II 95, 282, 293, III 5, 7, 20-21, 125, 129, 245, 249, 254, 272, 277, 281, 570, 574, 579, 605, 680, 736, 747, 750, 758, 927, 935, 944 etc.), one who went astray (FMC I 224, 235, III 718, 758 etc.), one who enslaved and destroyed the soul (FMC II 302, III 726, 733, 778, IV 67, 201 etc.), self-exalted (FMC II 117-118, III 127, 247, 678, 946 etc.), a sinner (FMC I 225, 283-284, III 1021, 1026, 1046, 1070, 1076, IV 60, 91, 181 etc.), an insolent (FMC III 7, 10, 673 etc.), a culprit (FMC III 795 ff, 921ff, 933 etc.), etc. Due to his sin, Adam fell down from the apex position and this fall was absolutely disastrous:

“It (image) fell down from its heights and it (death) pulled it down into the deep pit of the dead ones: it (death) destroyed its (image’s) beauties and in nakedness it went down into Sheol” (FMC IV 99-100, II 297, III 153, 178, 552, 580, 719, 748, IV 2, 6, 66, 96, 99, 143, 183, 189 etc.).

To specify the sheer decomposition of the image in Adam due to his sin, the poet uses occasionally in his mimre the terms like ‘to perish, destroy, corrupt’ (ebad) etc. (FMC I 129, 160, 164, 171 etc.). The poet doesn’t hesitate to go to the extent of calling Adam the ‘perished one’ (abido) (FMC III 763, 778 etc.).
III. 3. F. 1. Reasons for the decline and degeneration

Besides demolishing disobediently the fence of the commandments and crossing the limits (FMC III 197-198, 131, 505, 507, 511, 513, 515, 547-548, 605-606 etc.), the misuse of freedom also caused Adam and Eve to perish utterly (FMC III 178, 517, 565, IV 2 etc.). Mar Jacob underlines that it was Adam’s own Will that made him perish totally (FMC I 89, II 299 etc.). The misuse of his freedom made him beast-like,

“In his freedom he joined with the beast (b’iro) and resembled it” (FMC IV 4). 982

And in the exercise of the Will of Adam and Eve, they fallaciously placed themselves above their Creator (FMC III 678). Their covetousness, greed, haste for snatching the divinity etc. were yet other reasons for their decline (FMC III 675-676).

Partnership with Satan and his agent, the serpent, is counted yet another basis for the total annihilation of man (FMC III 320-332, 367, 387-392, 502 etc.). Unfolding the unlawful intimacy between Eve and the serpent, the poet says that she revealed the secret of the commandment to the serpent as if to a relative (‘hyono) (III 394). The poet says this partnership was intensified when they sewed together a garment of iniquity (III 683-684). The deviation of man from the right path by following the misguidance of the serpent has also contributed much for their decay (FMC III 319, 359-360 etc.). In this sense the poet states,

“The treachery of the serpent had infatuated (sto), perverted (ḥbal) and entangled (‘argel) them” (FMC IV 180).

By committing sin, Adam was digging his own death-pit (FMC II 295) and by eating the fruit from the tree he was swallowing his own fire of death (FMC III 383-386). The poet reiterates it in this way,

“And they ventured (emrah) and ate from the tree which was full of death” (FMC IV 181).

982 For more details on the poet’s concept of freedom, see the section “Freedom and Freewill of Man”, p. 305 ff.
As immediately as they demolished the fence of the ordinance, approached the tree, plucked the fruit and ate and shared among them, they began to suffer agony and the poet considers it as the starting moment of their painful degeneration:

“*It gives suffering (ḥāso) to drink bitterly (mariroit) to the one who tastes it; truly it clothes with lamentation (eblo) to the one who plucks it*” (*FMC III* 211-212).

Based on this fact, there comes a philosophical statement from the poet:

“*Suffering (ḥāso) exists with the crime as a watcher (noturo), when man commits sin, suffering (ḥāso) seizes him bitterly (mariroit)*” (*FMC III* 589-590, 582-584).

The grievous pain of humiliation and shame resulted from the sin had deepened the process of their deterioration (*FMC II* 301, *III* 567-568, *IV* 181-182 etc.).

Removing something forcefully from someone can be considered an intentional attempt for his dissolution. According to the poet, the serpent’s forceful capturing of their glorious garments (*FMC III* 573-574) was not only for stripping them naked and making them shameful, but it was also for worsening their integrity (*FMC III* 581-582). Eve was so energetic and enthusiastic to approach the tree that was in the middle of the Garden. But, the poet narrates her humiliated return;

“*She returned ashamed due to the action which stripped (pras) (and) defeated (shap) her. Eve and Adam distinguished their nakedness near the tree*” (*FMC III* 602-603).

III. 3. F. 2. **Symptoms of the decline**

One of the symptoms of decline of something or some one is loosing one by one or totally what he or it possesses. In the course of the decline of Adam and Eve the same route can be seen. The poet puts it in this way:

“*The image which the Godhead (alohuto) had designed had fallen down into corruption and behold, in Sheol, the death had trampled (dus) and scoffed*
Very clearly the poet enlists in his mimre what all things had started disappearing from Adam and Eve and thus how their deterioration began. Their freedom was taken away and they became captives (FMC IV 67-68, II 302, III 519-520, 529-530 etc.). And as a result, their discriminative power was hammered and they became paralysed to recognize the real connotation of God’s words (FMC III 599-600, 623-626, 737, 763-764, 953-980 etc.). Their courage disappeared and they began to tremble:

“"The fear (qentô) which shot up from all sides had terrified them" (FMC III 604, 657).

As immediately as their confidence had been fled (FMC III 577), their jubilation also ceased (FMC IV 183). Regarding the loss of other possessions, the poet adds,

“"The serpent seized the garment of glory which they had put on. " (FMC IV 184),
“"The sin took off the glorious garment of creatorship (boruyuto) " (FMC III 573) etc.

Consequently,

“"The glory vanished ('bar) from the glorious thing (one) (image) and disgrace (ša’ro) encircled it (him)" (FMC IV 191).

Not much later they lost their inner qualities also:

“"The iniquity drove the innocence (pasîtoto) away from them" (FMC III 575).

And emphasising on the totality of the deterioration, the poet enlists the following also;

“"It (image) has neither words, nor voices, nor melodies, for, the death had shut the mouth up into silence and it ceased the power of speech.
It fell down from its heights and it (death) pulled it down into the deep pit of the dead ones" (FMC IV 97-99).

All the beauties of the image began to be vanished and the poet imagines it as,

“"All its (image’s) beauties (supre) which were already put together were destroyed in it (grave) " (FMC IV 88, 95-96, 100, 143-144 187-188 etc.).

And also, their unsuccessful venture of exalting themselves above the one who had actually extolled them (FMC III 677-678) made them fall devastatingly and the poet finds it a moment
of the relapse (FMC IV 99-100, II 297, III 153,178, 552, 580, 719, 748, IV 2, 6, 66, 96,99, 143, 183, 189 etc.). The loss of their affluent empire, the Garden of Eden and their expulsion from it aggravated their process of worsening (FMC III 1019, 1021).

Breaking up of relations was another indicator of their deterioration. Hiding behind the fig tree in order to avoid facing God is a sign of their crumbled relation with Him (FMC III 633). As long as they were pure they considered themselves children of God. But at the moment they committed sin they thought of themselves as thieves (ganobe) (FMC III 689-690). The picture of their broken relationship with God can also be seen when God punishes them (FMC III 947). Accusations against God (FMC III 743), among man and woman (FMC III 779-780) and against the nature (FMC III 937, 941, 943-944, 1073 etc.) reveal disharmony. This was a sign of the dissolution of their integrity. They were one in their marriage bond, but the breaking up of this bond has also contributed much to their decomposition. Seeing this the poet writes,

“The malicious one (serpent) entered and cast division (sedqo) in this marriage and he appeared falsely before the bride, whispered, deceived, seduced and betrayed her” (FMC IV 175-176).

These whispering, deception, seduction and betrayal are part of illegal relationship between man and woman which lead them towards fornication and which will result in the breaking up of the marriage bond. Destruction of an existing coherent system is another clear exposition of its degeneration. The whole limbs of a man in their compatibility were like a beautiful necklace (eeqo) (FMC IV 101-104) and a decorated royal crown (klilo) (FMC IV 113). But the poet laments at the deterioration of the corpus of man,

“But the dragon (tanino) entered and bit sharply the string (huto) of life and it collapsed, and behold, the lovely necklace (‘eqo rhimo) is broken and scattered within the cells (‘umro) of Sheol” (FMC IV 105-106, IV 109-110 etc.).
Considering the stupidity in the performances of Adam and Eve, the poet calls them ‘ignorant’ (lo yodu’o) (FMC III 769). Their impudence and ignorance had not only curtailed their anticipated higher growth but caused severe damage to the existing system also. Those who bulldozed the fence of God’s ordinance (FMC III 197-198, 131, 505, 507, 511, 513, 515, 547-548, 605-606 etc.) with the intention of liberating themselves from the restriction of the commandments had became confined within severe limits and thus the poet says,

“The whole earth was too small (z’uryo) in order that he be concealed himself, for, before his transgression, it was considered too big (kmo rabo)” (FMC III 1069-1070).

This limitation also restrained their growth and they began to be slipped back and degenerated.

A blessing of God brings up man and other creatures, but His curse curbs them. The curse of God on Adam and Eve (FMC III 889-890, 945-946 etc.) also had reduced them to naught. Even according to the physical science also, energy from light is essential for the development of an organism. The poet gives us the clue that when the light was taken away from them and they were put into the darkness of Sheol (FMC IV 14), naturally they began to extinct. The poet speaks of entire annihilation of all luminaries which were contaminated by sin (FMC IV 273 ff).\(^{983}\)

The severity of putrefaction of an object in the process of its decay can be counted from the quantity of malodour it emits. The provocation for the sin of Adam and Eve was considered by the poet a brutal and deep bite of the serpent (FMC IV 65) and a vicious blow of the viper (FMC IV 109). This venomous bite and blow of the serpent had putrefied the cells of the human body so as to discharge ill-smell. Feeling the intense ill-smell of this decayed and dirty body, the poet writes,

“The serpent arrived and shed his venom (metro) upon the beautiful one:

\(^{983}\) Dissolution of the cosmos at the end of the times is explained in the section, “Eschatological Perceptions of the Poet”, p. 639 ff.
it decayed and poured ill-smelling (saryo) mud (syono) on his (its) dust” (FMC IV 141-142).

Conclusion

Mar Jacob is compelled to confine his anthropology within the scope of narrating the origin, life and death of Adam and Eve, because his mimre is only on the creation narrative in the Book of Genesis. He seldom brings in other human beings in his mimre than Adam and Eve. The attempt of Mar Jacob in his anthropological concepts in the mimre is not to prove the origin of man, but to categorically accentuate the Biblical narration of the creation of man. Thus he stresses on the fact that the origin of the human species is from Adam by means of the direct involvement of God. With this intention in mind, he elaborates on how man is made out of dust through the hands of God. This emphasis of the poet is a strong foundation against any contrary or contradictory arguments of any period for the origin of man. Since the poet conceives the totality of the whole human race within Adam and Eve, the anthropological narrations in the mimre are applicable to the entire generations of all ages and hence one cannot deny exclusivity in them; at the same time it is also obvious that since Mar Jacob wanted to stick on to theological anthropology he never attempts to mention in the mimre any other ideologies on the creation of man than that of the Holy Scripture.

The main thrust in the mimre as well as the prime intention of the poet in narrating his anthropological concepts is to extol the benevolence and greatness of God in creating man in such a wonderful manner. Mar Jacob allots much space of his mimre to describe how much intense effort God had taken for creating as well as nourishing the human being. Another major theme that is being coagulated from the mimre is the perfection, totality and inclusivity

[984] See above in this section – ‘Descent of God’, also see the section, “God’s mercy as the Catalytic Code”, P. 434 ff.
of all elements of the world in man and hence man is a microcosm. In this context he explains the purpose of each element in man and the rationale behind the compilation of each limb in its particular place of the body as well as the splendour of the human being.

According to Mar Jacob, God had done all these in man for giving the creatures, including man, a chance to have at least a partial vision of God and His wisdom through the creation of man. For this reason, the poet occasionally calls man as god and with the same intention he identifies Adam and Christ. Mar Jacob particularly wanted to pinpoint the placement of Man above other creatures and to speaks intentionally a lot in the mimre on the lavishness of God in handing over His own possessions to man; all these can be understood as the poet’s attempt to praise God’s love towards man. So, to a certain extent, we can argue that the anthropology of Mar Jacob is not simply theological anthropology, but it is anthropology for the sake of theology, because whatever the poet had told about man automatically turns to be the praising of God.

The enticing illustrations on the brilliance of Adam and Eve will certainly persuade the reader to go back to that original nature of his ancestors. From the anthropological point of view, these narrations are intended to draw our attention to the excellence and dignity of humankind. On the contrary the descriptions as well as the comments on the evil and darker phases of them will make an aversion not on the corrupt human nature but on the insolence and imprudence of man in exercising the gifts of God. These descriptions are also deliberate, because, here also, his anthropology insinuates to his theology, where he applies the cause of the calamities of man and of the world not on the austerity of God’s disciplinary actions and also not on the inability of God so as not able to control them and to give man ever pleasance,

985 See above in this section – ‘Adam a microcosm’, ‘Creation from the elements’ etc.
986 See above in this segment – ‘The creation from elements’, ‘Coherence of Limbs’, ‘Radiance of Adam’ etc.
987 See above in this section – ‘Adam was god’.
988 For more details on the mercy of God, see the section, “God’s Mercy as the Catalytic Code”, p. 417 ff.
but he solely puts it on the failure of man in the proper enjoyment of the God-given happiness. For him, no misfortune of man or of the world is designed by God, but it is only due to the malpractice of man and his deviation from the right path. It is on this basic principle that he elaborates the disintegration of man.

The anthropological concepts of the poet enable him to emphasise the essentiality of maintaining the family setup as it was envisaged by God.\textsuperscript{989} The criticism of the poet on the malpractice of the family members alludes to his family concepts. Each one in the family is assigned to undertake his or her obligation and hence any kind of misplacement due to overtaking or slothfulness will harm the integrity of the family life which in turn will cause catastrophe to man and to the world. Even though, based on the Scriptural background,\textsuperscript{990} Mar Jacob proposes male headed family life, he is not a misogynist so as to deny any relevance to woman; instead, his thesis is that woman is equally important in the family as well as before God and she is also assigned to fulfil certain duties in the family which a man can never undertake. Before God, one’s assignment is neither greater nor lesser than the other and so, the equilibrium of the family is maintained as long as the assignment and obligation of each one is fulfilled but, misconduct of any one leads to its collapse.

Even if the basic anthropological concepts of Mar Jacob cannot claim exclusive uniqueness, its importance rests in the fact that it presents the divine concept on anthropology in a unique way; it has a Scriptural background, theological outlook, anthropological orientation, poetical scent and above all a Jacobean imprint.

\textsuperscript{989} See above in this section, ‘Poet’s concept on family’.
\textsuperscript{990} Cf. Gen. 3/16.