


ARAMAIC BIBLE COMPANION

THE BITTER SWEET CROSS

IN THE HEART OF GOD

HEBREWS 1 & ISAIAH53

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The Encourager-as I call the writer to the Hebrews-proceeds to another glorious ancient fragment from Psalm 8.4-6-an extended quote. Through this prism he leads us to the profoundest mystery of the cross and the godhead. He brings us to the “throne” and the “hand of power” which are unshaken by the experience of the cross. “We do not see-we do not yet have full awareness [οραω] of everything subject to the Lord.” This quote in the Peshitta reads *“We see that He is Jesus-He who was a little lower than the angels for the suffering of His death; and glory and honour are placed on His head for by His grace God Himself tasted death for every man NOSH.”* Here the Aramaic scholar *George Lamsa* excepts *“God”* translating “He tasted death for everyone **but God**” in the sense that “without God” in the Aramaic would imply God’s “exclusion” not on account of *wrath on Christ as sin-bearer* or “to tear up the entire old order”(cf. ‘the rent veil’) but were God included the implication would be *the abeyance or dissolution of the Godhead* and out of non-existence to restart the world(as might be argued from the darkened sun)-in this context Bauscher (in company with Moltmann and Barth) argues *God died*. As difficult as the other reality is possibly “understanding why the sun went dark”- but that God died simultaneously is an incongruous concept and no logic but feted enigma i.e. conceptualising an “immortal death”as Charles Wesley does in poesy subtly affirming simultaneously **“the immortal dies”** as a corollary the bible simply does not confirm. It was He who became flesh who died but in dying committed his “spirit” to the “Father of Spirits”. I venture to ask “Did the spirit of Charles Wesley die when he ceased to breath?”

’Tis mystery all! The immortal dies;
Who can explore His strange design?

In vain the firstborn seraph tries
To sound the depths of love divine
'Tis mercy all
! let earth adore,

Let angel minds inquire no more.

God by definition is “immortal”. Some breach the unity of the trinity by the dogmatic of the wrath of the Father being poured on the Son; some against first principles and axiomatic definition of God as everlasting propose the death of the eternal God –whilst I prefer to read Isaiah 53 as stating that “in putting the Son to grief” the Father’s empathy was akin to Kierkegaard’s “*sickness unto death*” –a deep but living experience. Isaiah’s Hebrew entails “*sickening in grieving*”-a reflexive Hiphal is used. On the basis of John5.19 & 30 Bauscher holds *Jesus saw the Father die*. There is a mutuality of impact but Eloha is always addressed as “alive”. Yet with Isaiah we are to apply mutuality correctly like Paul who said “**God was in the circle of Christ reconciling the world to Himself**”. There is indeed no prejudice in this mutuality to **impassivity** for a Spirit is naturally impassive and indeed the Nestorians can argue that the divine **QNUMA** [ARAMAIC for “consciousness” within the personae i.e. “The eternal “being” often termed “one substance”] may at once be impassive and yet consciously share the purest appreciation, highest sensitivity and deepest empathy. A proper linguistic exegesis of Isaiah 53 enables us to side-step the inherent problem for the MIND (Or as with improper awe ad hominem)it might be said “*psychology*” of God as alleged in the hiatus in the trinity alleged or supposed by theologians. Following this tenet of “wrath” as opposed to “judgment” a stubborn phalanx of modern preachers hazardously but very tenaciously proposes as epexegetis at the crescendo of Christ’s suffering when the Father is perceived as heaping wrath upon His Son. From Genesis to Revelation “death” is the penalty of sin and the cross and the thorns represents its curse. **Christ though established to be our judge in this time of amnesty as mediator of the New Covenant has borne that judgment in a substitutionary manner on the cross-nothing need by added to that-certainly creating “attitude” presumptuously within the Godhead can only serve to confuse and is radical error.** It is *redeeming love* in that atoning blood shed freely by Christ (Marya) that cleanses and brings us to God (Eloha) **Who was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself.** Proper exegesis secures us in the *unbroken Love*

of God Father, Son and Holy Spirit, ***unbroken fellowship*** of Father and Son while the Son serves unto death a ransom for our souls and an ***unbroken justification of life*** for the believer in that Judgment without anger is borne by the Son to secure the eternal life of God's children. We can and must acknowledge "sickness unto death" not only physically in Christ but spiritually in the Godhead. Thus heaven is silent, the throne seems inert-Isaiah says "in sickening He (The Father) was sick" [i.e. In the traumatic passion of Marya- Eloha(God in weakness and God in strength-note Jesus cried out "My strong one") was empathetic y l j h in Micah6.13, Hosea7.5 and Isaiah53.10 is a Hebrew "causative with a reflexive suffix agreeing with the verb-effectively a HIPIL NIPHAL-a rare Hebrew & Syriac construction reflecting the "sameness" of the heart of the Father and the Son in the suffering of Calvary.]. Angels are in awe and heaven silent whilst on earth the sun is uncannily dark for several hours and still the earth rolls on. Great is the mystery of God (1Tim3.16). The Western Peshitta and Greek MSS prefer the reading with the vulgate "He tasted death for every man except for God"-that ancient reading is tell-tale. The Father's was an exceptional and utterly personal tasting in His especial **QNUMA** or consciousness. To God involvement with the death of the Son was the ultimate in the "bitter-sweet" and went hand in hand with the ultimate in "strength and weakness". The birth of the "New Creation" at the cross is an imponderable once-for -all but glorious eternal reality. Christ's "being allowed to remain" on the accursed cross till in death His atoning ministry suddenly gave way to His rule from the throne and exercise of the keys in hell as His spirit passed to the realm beyond marks a glorious finished work of redemption. ***St Ambrose along with the vulgate and the manuscripts of Origen the Nestorians have this imponderable" without God he suffered death for all."*** The significance of the valediction "My God why do I remain?" is not "forsaking"(as in turning away) but "leaving"(as in dying) of God Himself going into the darkness which many theologians in frustration call the "death of God" –an incredible experience of our Lord in the depths of the cup which itself is a Gethsemane prayer subject or tryst betwixt Father and Son. This stupendous act of God that circles the cross is not a "self-destruct" but within that "hour" of which Jesus often spoke in which the functions of deity represented distinctly by the Father's presence in the world that

then passed and was no more but equally and expeditiously His presence in the world that was then newborn was everywhere to be realized-even on the cross where Jesus said “Father into thy hands I commend my spirit”. It is most encouraging that though “none but the Father could comprehend the Son” and “only the Son the Father” nevertheless this which is at the heart of the mystery of the cross offers the highest encouragement to believers in the one who is alive for evermore since He rent the veil in two.

George Lamsa correctly points out that the NT verb curiously joined to the Old Testament Hebrew AZABECTANI (Why have you forsaken me?) in the dirge of David which is adopted as a *dereliction* in Matthew 27.46 & Mark 15.34 appears there as the New Testament SABACHTHANI (Why do you allow me to remain?-a *valediction* cry.) is not a notice of breach of relationship but a statement of purpose intended and fulfilled-albeit signaling distress in its query form on account of Christ’s traumatic experience of enduring a broken heart. Christ’s heavenward committal as He expired alongside the immediate shredded veil spell out the integrated and immediate response of the Father.

Bob the Scribbler

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L’shuvkha Marya
To the glory of the Lord
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