

”جِنْدَنْ“ جَمِيْعَهُ دَسْتَنْ

The Mysteries of the Eucharist

مَجْدَنْهُ دَسْتَنْ نَفْسَهُ دَسْتَنْ

بَلْ قَدْ جَدْ بَلْ كَجْدَنْ دَسْتَنْ

جَنْجَنْ بَلْ بَلْهُ دَسْتَنْ دَسْتَنْ

This poem was extracted from Sebastian P. Brock & George A. Kiraz book of Select Poems of Ephrem the Syrian. The original text was scripted in Syriac with English translation; this version is in Aramaic with slight modification to the interpretation of English translation.

بَلْهُ دَسْتَنْ نَحْجَبَهُ دَسْتَنْ فَهُمْهُ دَسْتَنْ

You have had it written, Lord, “Open your mouth and I will fill it” [Ps 81:10]

بَلْهُ دَسْتَنْ كَلْهُ فَهُمْهُ دَسْتَنْ بَلْهُ دَسْتَنْ

Look, Your servant’s mouth is open, and his mind as well;

بَلْهُ دَسْتَنْ دَسْتَنْ بَلْهُ دَسْتَنْ

fill it, Lord, with Your Gift,

جَنْجَنْ بَلْهُ دَسْتَنْ يَوْمَهُ دَسْتَنْ

That I may sing Your praise in accordance with Your will.

جَمِيْعَهُ دَسْتَنْ كَلْهُ لَفْهُمْهُ دَسْتَنْ

Refrain: Make me worthy to approach Your gifts in awe!

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لَهُ عَدِيْمَهُ دَقَدِيْدَهُ جَدَهُ دَهْمَعَشَهُ لَجَدَهُ يَنْجَدَهُ

Each, according to the level of his own measure, can tell of You;

لَجَدَهُ دَسَهُ دَسَهُ دَسَهُ دَسَهُ دَسَهُ

in my boldness I approach the lowest step.

لَكَهُ بَلْهُ يَهَنَهُ سَهَهُ مَهَهُ كَهَنَهُ

Your Birth is sealed up within silence -

بَلْهُ كَهَنَهُ فَهُمْهُ دَسْتَنْ بَلْهُ دَسْتَنْ

what mouth then dares to meditate upon it?

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جَهَنْجَنْ بَلْهُ دَسْتَنْ فَهُمْهُ دَسْتَنْ

Your nature is single, but there are many ways of explaining it;

بَلْهُ دَسْتَنْ دَسْتَنْ دَسْتَنْ دَسْتَنْ دَسْتَنْ

our descriptions may be exalted, or in moderate terms, or lowly.

لَيَهُهُ دَسْتَنْ بَلْهُ دَسْتَنْ

Make me worthy of the lowest part, that I may gather up, as crumbs,

جَمِيْعَهُ دَسْتَنْ دَسْتَنْ دَسْتَنْ

The gleanings from Your wisdom’s [table (Matt 15:27; Mark 7:28)]

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جَدْقَهُ يَلْكَنْتَهُ كَبُرُّهُ وَكَبُرُّهُ تَلْمِذُهُ

Any elevated account of You is hidden with Your Begetter;

جَدِيدَهُ حَمْدَهُ دِيْنَكَنْهُ وَهُنَّا كَبِيرَهُ

at Your lesser riches the angels stand amazed,

فَيُقْرَنْهُ وَكَمْدَهُ مَنْدَهُ كَنْتَهُ

while a small trickle of words describing You, Lord,

كَبُرُّهُ سَمَّتَهُ مَهْمَدَهُ كَمِيمَهُ

Provides a flood of homilies for [mortals] below.

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جَنْهُ وَهُنَّا جَمِيعَهُ وَهُنَّهُ شَيْدَهُ شَفَّهُ

For if the great John cried out and said,

جَنْهُ كَمَ شَهُونَهُ يَنْهُ لَجَدِيدَهُ مَنْهُ كَمَهْفَتَهُ

“I am not worthy, Lord, of the straps of your sandals” [Mark 1:7]

نَبِيَّهُ مُكْتَنَهُ كَبُرُّهُ كَلْكَلَهُ

then I should seek refuge, like the sinful woman, [Matt 9:21; Luke 8:47]

جَنْسَهُ دِيْكَفَهُ دِيْنَيَهُ يَنْجَدَهُ

in the shadow of Your garment, and there begin.

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جَنْهُ لَهُ شَهُونَهُ كَبُرُّهُ كَبِيرَهُ دِيْنَهُ سَلَمَهُ

And as she was affrighted, but took courage because she was healed,

نَهَهُ دِبَرَهُ دِبَرَهُ يَنْهُ كَبِيرَهُ

so do You heal my fear and fright, and so I may take courage in You.

كَبُرُّهُ بَسَهُ دِيْكَفَهُ

and be conveyed from Your garment to Your own Body,

كَبُرُّهُ وَفَلَدَهُ دِبَرَهُ سَلَكَ دِيْنَهُ

so that I may tell of it according to my ability.

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جَنْسَهُ مَنْهُ دِبَرَهُ شَهُونَهُ مَهْمَدَهُ دِهْمَقَتَهُ

Your garment, Lord, is a fountain of medicines:

جَلْجَمَهُ كَلَنَهُ حَدَّهُ دِهُ كَلَنَهُ حَمَنَهُ

in Your visible clothing there dwells a hidden power.

مَهْمَدَهُ وَكَمْدَهُ دِبَرَهُ كَمِيمَهُ

Again, a little spittle from Your mouth [John 9:6]

كَبِيرَهُ كَلَنَهُ دِبَرَهُ شَهُونَهُ كَلَنَهُ كَلِيمَهُ

Became a great miracle of light, for light was in the clay [it made].

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بِهِذِهِ لَهْلَكَتِهِ تَذَوَّلَتِهِ يَسُورٌ وَّبِحَلْكَهِ

Fire descended in wrath and consumed the sinners; [Gen 19:24; 2 Kgs 1:10-14]

بِهِذِهِ فَسْتَقَنَتِهِ تَكَسَّقَتِهِ يَسُورٌ وَّبِحَلْكَهِ

the fire of mercy has now descended and dwelt in the Bread:

سَكَهُ أَنْهِيَّتِهِ بِهِذِهِ بِحَلْكَهِ يَنْتَهِي

instead of that fire which consumed mankind

بِهِذِهِ تَكَسَّقَتِهِ يَجْلَهُمْ وَفَسَنَهُمْ

You have consumed Fire in the Bread - and you have come to life!

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لَهْلَكَتِهِ تَذَوَّلَتِهِ بِهِذِهِ يَسُورٌ وَّبِحَلْكَهِ

Fire descended and consumed Elijah's sacrifices; [1 kgs 18:38]

بِهِذِهِ بَقَسَمَتِهِ تَذَوَّلَتِهِ كَهْلَكَهُ يَسِيَّتِهِ

the Fire of mercies has become a living sacrifice for us:

بِهِذِهِ يَحْكَهُ لَهْلَكَتِهِ

Fire consumed [Elijah's] oblation,

بَقَسَمَتِهِ تَذَوَّلَتِهِ كَهْلَكَهُ يَسِيَّتِهِ

But we, Lord, have consumed Your Fire in Your oblation!

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بَقَسَمَتِهِ تَذَوَّلَتِهِ كَهْلَكَهُ يَسِيَّتِهِ

Who has ever held in his cupped hand wind? Come and see, [Prov 30:4]

هُوَ كَلِيمُهُ مَدِيمُهُ بَلْجَهُ مَدِيمُهُ بَلْجَهُ

Solomon, what the Lord of your father has done: [Ps 110:1]

بَقَسَمَتِهِ تَذَوَّلَتِهِ كَهْلَكَهُ يَسِيَّتِهِ

Against nature, fire and spirit

مَوِيدُهُ فَعَيْنَهُ تَسِيَّتِهِ بَلْكَلْمِيدَهُ

[He] has mingled and poured them out in the hands of His disciples.

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مَهِيَّهُ بَلْكَهُ تَسِيَّتِهِ بَلْكَلْمِيدَهُ

“Who has gathered up water in a veil?” He asked. [Prov 30:4]

هُوَ تَسِيَّتِهِ مَهِيَّهُ تَسِيَّتِهِ بَلْكَلْمِيدَهُ

Here is a Fountain in a veil – Mary's bosom.

بَلْ كَهْلَكَهُ يَسِيَّتِهِ بَلْكَلْمِيدَهُ

From the cup of salvation, drop of salvation,

بَلْ كَهْلَكَهُ يَسِيَّتِهِ تَقْتَلَهُ

within a veil, Your maidservants receive.

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نَّكَنْ حَدَنْ بَهِيَقَنْ دِيَنْ سَبَقَنْ
 There is hidden power in the sanctuary's veil,
 نَّكَنْ دِنْكَنْ لَنْ دَنْدَنْ مِمَّهَدَهَ سَجَنْ
 a power that no mind has ever confined:
 بَدَجَنْ سَبَقَنْ فَنِيَهَ دَيَنْ
 it brought down its love, descended and hovered
 بَدَ حَمِيَقَنْ دَمَدَجَنْ دَدَهَدَنْ
 over this veil on the altar of reconciliation.

نَّكَنْ دِنْ دَنْ دَنْ دَنْ دَنْ دَنْ
 See, Fire and Spirit are in the womb of her who bore Your,
 بَدَنْ دَنْ دَنْ دَنْ دَنْ دَنْ دَنْ
 see, Fire and spirit are in the river¹ in which You were baptized.
 بَدَنْ دَنْ دَنْ دَنْ دَنْ دَنْ
 Fire and Spirit are in our baptismal font,
 كَلِسَنْ دَنْ دَنْ دَنْ دَنْ دَنْ
 In the Bread and Cup are Fire and Holy Spirit.

كَسْقَنْ شَيْدَنْ لَيْهَ لَبَدَنْ دَجَنْ دَيَنْ
 Your Bread slays the greedy one who had made us his bread,
 شَقَنْ مَهَيَهَ لَيْهَ لَفَهَنْ دَنْ دَنْ شَيْكَنْ
 Your Cup destroys death who had swallowed us up;
 بَلَكَنْ مَنْدَنْ دَنْ دَنْ بَعْدَنْ
 we have eaten You, Lord, we have drunken You
 لَنْ دَنْ دَنْ دَنْ دَنْ دَنْ
 - not that we will consume You up, but through You we shall have life.

لَدَنْ دَنْ دَنْ دَنْ دَنْ دَنْ دَنْ
 The thong of Your sandal is something fearful to the discerning,
 حِيَقَنْ دَمَدَهَمَهَنْ دَيَنْ دَنْ دَنْ دَنْ
 the hem of Your cloak is awesome to those who understand,
 دَنْ دَنْ دَنْ دَنْ دَنْ دَنْ
 yet our foolish generation, through its prying into You,
 دَنْ دَنْ دَنْ دَنْ دَنْ دَنْ
 has gone quite mad, drunk with new wine².

جَنَاحَةَ الْمَاءِ وَجَنَاحَةَ الْمَرْأَةِ

There is wonder in Your footsteps, which walked on the water:

جَنَاحَةَ الْمَاءِ وَجَنَاحَةَ الْمَرْأَةِ

You subjected a great sea beneath Your feet,

جَنَاحَةَ الْمَاءِ وَجَنَاحَةَ الْمَرْأَةِ

yet Your very head was subject to just a small river,

جَنَاحَةَ الْمَاءِ وَجَنَاحَةَ الْمَرْأَةِ

In that it bent down and was baptized therein.

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جَنَاحَةَ الْمَاءِ وَجَنَاحَةَ الْمَرْأَةِ

The river resembled John, who baptized in it:

جَنَاحَةَ الْمَاءِ وَجَنَاحَةَ الْمَرْأَةِ

each reflects the other in its smallness;

جَنَاحَةَ الْمَاءِ وَجَنَاحَةَ الْمَرْأَةِ

yet to the small river and to the weak servant

جَنَاحَةَ الْمَاءِ وَجَنَاحَةَ الْمَرْأَةِ

was the Master of them both subjected!

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جَنَاحَةَ الْمَاءِ وَجَنَاحَةَ الْمَرْأَةِ

Look, Lord, my lap is now filled with the crumbs from your [table], (Matt 15:27; Mark 7:28)

جَنَاحَةَ الْمَاءِ وَجَنَاحَةَ الْمَرْأَةِ

there is no more room in the folds [of my garment],

جَنَاحَةَ الْمَاءِ وَجَنَاحَةَ الْمَرْأَةِ

so stay Your Gift, as I worship [before You]:

جَنَاحَةَ الْمَاءِ وَجَنَاحَةَ الْمَرْأَةِ

keep it in Your treasure house in readiness to give us on another occasion.

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1. *Fire, in the river: For the tradition of fire appearing in the Jordan at Christ's baptism.*
2. *drunk with new wine: Ephrem is here accusing the Arians of what the disciples had falsely been accused of by the mockers at Pentecost (Acts 2:13)*