

## **Selected Writings by Estephan ad-Duwayhī'**

*(Chronological Order)*

### **That God the Unfathomed and the Indescribable in Essence Revealed Himself to his Creatures**

He who succeeds in contemplating the change and conformity of times, the rotation and connection of stars, the opposition and harmony of elements, the aggressiveness and retention in characters, the submission and desire of the lower nature to the highest admits that there is a rational and powerful cause directing the universe because he who has no reason is incapable to understand except through the minds of others like the weapon that does not reach its target if not aimed by a reasonable person.

This is how we notice that animated elements are in constant movement and change: plants thrive from seeds and seeds from plants, birds from eggs and eggs from birds. Likewise human being procreate one from the other without any of them eternalizing on earth. It is certain that this series of procreation has a primary cause, the unmoved mover. Human nature is preferred to over other natures and all succumb to Him and worship His Sovereignty. The sun which precedes others was called man's servant by the Syriacs. The frailty of human beings, however, is obvious for the more he becomes knowledgeable and wise, rich and powerful, the more he is anxious and thirsty for power and wealth. This is how the presence of a nobler and better being satisfied in and for himself is necessary to quench man's thirst and satisfy his being.

Everyone agrees that doing good is better and more praiseworthy than doing evil and that evil people often belittle and oppress the virtuous and the righteous.

There must then be a Being who is just and gives everyone his due. This is God that all nations appeal to in times of hardship, and through him they request dread and obtain help on those who extort them. The philosophers were able to reach the knowledge of God by contemplating the creatures. They reached the truth of Him being one, simple, eternal, unchangeable, above the

senses or what is accidental. He is the beginning of creation that no reason can fathom and no tongue can describe. He deserves prostration and respect from all creation.

The books of the Church likewise mention that Abraham rejected the idols, was blessed with the knowledge of the one God and was enabled to reflect on humanity. The brethren asked brother Antonios on his ability to acquire the Divine teachings and the exalted sciences without reading or an instructor. His answer was the following: By contemplating the creatures who represent the image of God and his might as in the Holy book. Mar Efram imagined that things originated in themselves, but after inspecting and contemplating the creatures, he reached the knowledge of God as he mentions in chapter eight: “I saw a house and I noticed the steward. I saw the universe and I realized its order and organization. I saw a ship transported without a seen manager. I saw the deeds of people unaccomplished without God’s providence. I realized that in God all is confirmed and from God all that is on earth thrive”.

Nothing on earth is without a beginning for the origin of all things is God. Rivers are from sources and laws from Divine providence. The earth provides fruits if it rains. This is how nothing can be the cause of itself. Daytime provides light but needs the sun to complete it. This is how people’s praiseworthy qualities are perfected in God. The sun contains light, but needs the sky for its rest and God to confirm it. No light without fire and no darkness without mist for all things need each other and only one is not needy. Nothing created is the cause of itself for no one can make himself. He who makes himself existed before he created and is not becoming because he was there before he became. How would He need another to create what was already existing. Only God then is not created.

### **Patriarch Estephan ad-Duwayhī,**

“The seventh Manāra: Preparing to sanctify the Sacraments, the second exposition: Sacrament of Faith, second chapter: that God the Unfathomable and indescribable revealed Himself to His creatures”, in *Manarat al Aqdas, (The Lighthouse of the Holy Sacraments)*, Vol 2, published for the first time from a copy in Dayr al-Louayze, Rashīd al-Khūrī al-Shartūnī, (Beirut: 1896), pp.32-34. Rashīd al-Shartūnī, as he mentioned, corrected ad-Duwayhī’s language.

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Estephan Ibn ash-Shidyāq Mikhā'ū bin al-Qiss Mūsā ad-Duwayhī from the village of Ihdin. He entered school at the end of his eleventh year. He completed his studies in philosophy and theology in dialogues. The first was with Cardinal Kabouni, and the second was with Patriarch Yūḥannā aṣ-Ṣafrāwī. Finishing school on the third of April 1655, he was chosen by the Council of the Propagation of Faith to be an apostle in his learning with the help of the teacher Ibrāhīm al-Hāqilānī. On the feast of annunciation of the second year, he was ordained a priest in the monastery of Rās al-Nahr by Patriarch Yūḥannā. He tried his best to preach and to write a book on the Sacrament of the Holy Communion.

When the Consul of France in Aleppo Picquet wished to see Andraos Akhijan ordained a bishop of the Syriac church in Aleppo, ad-Duwayhī was his assistant in Patriarch Yuḥannā's bishopric. In 1657 he accompanied him at the beginning of lent to Aleppo and he stayed eight months there supporting the Patriarch in advising and preaching his congregation in the church of Mar Eliās. Returning to Lebanon he lived five years in the Ethiopian monastery of Saint Jacob, which he restored to good condition. In 1668 after Easter he visited the Holy places with his mother and his brother Mūsā. Coming back, Patriarch Jirjis presented him to Bishop of al Ufqusiah in Cyprus and with his permission he went around visiting the congregations in al-Jibba, az-Zāwiya, Akkār and Cyprus struggling for their salvation. He was tired as a result of his tour and the inspection of books.

When Patriarch Jirjis was ordained, he was rewarded with the righteous and he was chosen to lead the Antiochian See. This was on 20<sup>th</sup> of May, 1670 the year of the great plague. He ordained deacon Yūsuf bin al-Khūrī Ya'qūb el Haṣrūnī as a priest and sent him to Rome to his sanctity Pope Zakhia Ishosensios the tenth for his vow of obedience and to ask for the shield of perfection.

While on his tour he visited the congregation and built the quarter which is close to the church of Mar Shallitā Miqbis. In 1672 he came back to Qannubīn where he received with priest Yūsuf, who became his copyist, the shield of confirmation from Rome. Though his times were hard, he tried his best to collect the church hierarchical categories in full. He set forth to explain not only the sacrament of the Holy communion, but also all the accepted traditions and the stories of the fathers who composed it, the ecclesiastical requirements, the church's sacraments, the church's

consecration, the Mayroun and what comes after. He organized all the church's sermons in a clear arrangement to be distinguished one from the other proving the origin of the Maronite church and its perpetual unity with the Roman Church.

Patriarch Estephan ad-Duwayhī's writing in "Athār Jalil lil-patriarch Estephan Ad-Duwayhī", Father Louis Sheikho the Jesuit in *al-Mashriq*. 21(1923), pp. 202-203.

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### **Mar Maroun as a Bridge<sup>1</sup>**

*"Thy neck is like the tower of David built for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men."*

-Song of Songs 4:4

Every edifice is unsteady without foundation and every sanctity without humility is shaky. The grain of wheat, if it does not die, God says, it survives alone, but if it dies it brings forth plenty of fruits. The human soul is in itself proud and haughty and without mortifying itself in humility, obedience, fasting, prayers and perseverance it will remain alone like a naked seed. If it dies it becomes a planted wood on the riverbed to bear its fruits in due time.

Wondering why God left few people in apostasy and damnation while choosing others for good omen and salvation St Paul says: "He accepted those whom he saw subject to his vocation. Those he called he also justified; those he justified he also glorified" (Romans, 8, 30). What is

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<sup>1</sup> Excerpts from one of ad-Duwayhī's eloquent sermons, presented in the church of Mar Elias in Aleppo. It is known that Patriarch Jirjis al-Bsib'alī sent ad-Duwayhī more than once to Aleppo while he was still a priest. He remained there a while serving the congregation and practicing his apostolic activities and teaching in "The Maronite Scribe" that he established there. The sermon was published in full by Father Ferdinand Tawtal al-Yasuī in *al-Mashriq*, in the year 50 (1956), pp.659-667, copied from a manuscript containing a series of Arabic sermons for ad-Duwayhī written in Karshūnī. Father Tawtal kept the Arabic language as it was used by ad-Duwayhī in the seventeen century when mastering the Arabic language was rare among the writers, not excluding the Moslems from among them. See presentation of the Sermon in Father Tawtal. *Opcit.* pp.658-659. Father Tawtal commented on the Sermon as will be shown in the footnotes adding between brackets that it is his own comments. We will also mention the footnotes quoted from the Bible which appears to be ad-Duwayhī's writing without adding any comment. We will however place in the text few words in its correct form between brackets side by side with the original words to facilitate its reading and to rectify its meaning. In the text of the Sermon a number of Syriac expressions are fixed between brackets by Father Tawtal in Arabic letters. We left it as it is.

meant is that he glorified those who are worthy of His vocation before the beginning of the world and from the womb of their mother. (Isaiah 49).

This is what the prophet Isaiah proclaimed: “Listen to me, you Islands; hear this, you distant nations: before I was born the Lord called me: from my birth he has made mentions of my name. He made my mouth like a sharpened sword in the shadow of his hand he hid me; he made me into a published arrow and concealed me in his quiver”. He said to me, “you are my servant, Israel in whom I will display my splendor”. God the all-knowing knew that Mar Maroun the pure Father and the shining enlightening star would be the spot of his call. He converts people to obedience, establishes ascetic life Syra and he preserves the church with his monks. His vocation preceded his coming to the universe. He called him from far from the womb of his mother where his name was mentioned. He justified those whom he called. God made his mouth an arrow and hid him under His coat. He chose him a dart and hid him in His quiver saying: You are my servant Mar Maroun and in you I am glorified. Truly brethren if the tree is known from its fruits then he who contemplates well the glory of sanctity which this faithful gathered and the numerous blessings that through him the Holy Church and our Maronite sect obtained and is still obtaining confirms truly that he is not solely a talking mouth but also the pillar of our Holy Church. Yes he built a strong tower in the face of the enemy so what the Lord said to his bride the church came true: his neck is like the constructed marble David tower where thousand shields and all the weapons of the powerful are hanging from. I will lovingly show you how the faithful Mar Maroun was really a tower.

And that on him is suspended thousand shields for the (numerous saints that are a result of his teachings and advice).

In this erected bridge are all the weapons of the mighty and the powerful. From all the races and kinds of saints that were honored in God’s church against the apostates and the heretics. Listen to us and ask this blessed saint and our lady the mother of salvation to untie my tongue and say peace be with you.

Mar Maroun grew up in Syria as God ordained from well to do parents and believers in Christ. He was brought up in complete piety and fear of God. After obtaining the best sciences and

successful professions he reached the crossroads which is the young age where most people are either saved or lost.

On the one hand the road of salvation is narrow and what leads to destruction is wide. Three temptations call him here to become their friend: one is the body, the other is the world and the third is the devil. These are the three enemies that lead us to destruction.

The first temptation, to the body which was nearer to him, used to tell him: Give me your hand my friend and be my companion for this road contains fancy modifications and fruitful orchards, fancy clothes, passions and lust that will not be given except to those who follow me and if you follow the correct road you will not encounter except hunger, thirst, nakedness, bitter cold and destruction.

The second temptation approached him with a bouquet of flowers saying: If you seek fate and satisfaction to have children, to inherit orchards and villages, to plant for your father's house, to have money and rise to high positions, be our companion for to tell you the truth, there is nothing in the other road except sadness and exhaustion, poverty and anxiety, striving and tiredness. Do not forget it is narrow and nobody can enter it if he is not a child.

The third temptation approached him and this was the devil. He told him: all this kingdom is given to me, if you follow me I will give you what you desire of glory and honor, children and leadership, but if you do not accompany us, I will arouse the world against you, I will open the door roads of hell, I will kindle in you the fire of lust, disturb your sleep in dreams and imagination and assemble all the elements against you, that the rays of the sun burn you, the cold rain of the clouds kill you, the earth disturb you in its monsters and that passions do not relief you from their poison.

The faithful Maroun also saw a small child, a grace from God, in a narrow road. He was barefooted and naked, but was according to ad-Duwayhī full of light though the road to him was narrow. He later realized that this door was wide and full of happiness and joy.

On contemplating the four options, ad-Duwayhī removed the garment of the world, spitted in the face of the devil, anointed himself and surrendered his oath and heart to that child repeating with the wise: the name of God is a well- fortified bridge for me, towards him moves the

faithful and the strong and as you see in a blink of an eye this cheerful hero prevailed over the body, the world, the devil and left for the wilderness. He asked only for the grace of God and His will.

Who is this that is haughty like the rock, beautiful as the moon, chosen as the sun, marbled as the arranged rows.

In the book of Genesis we read that the son of Adam again realized that the wilderness is inhabited by monsters and calamities of nature so he chose to build a city to protect himself and his children. This is what all people do. Saint Maroun, though able to build a house or shelter in a cave or take refuge in Shqīf, chose, as shown in his biography, to live under the atmosphere of the sky to teach us that it is not appropriate for him who depends solely on God to conceal the face of the sky from his sight, repeating what the Lord said: The foxes have their burrows and the birds of the sky their nests but the son of God has no place to lay his head. This is how the faithful Maroun, as he was a defending fortress, did not need the protection of others. Purity and the other virtues were implanted in his heart so that the people and the brethren suggested that he becomes a priest. He toiled and strove with the help and grace of God so one can truly say: He is like the tower of David built for a purpose, on it hangs thousand shields and the other weapons of the powerful.

This place after him was full of heretic worshippers of idols and of the sun and the followers of Marcion the heretic.<sup>1</sup>

But lest the devil comes back again to that, He sanctified it as the house of God and he who did not live before except under the atmosphere of the sky to conquer the devil lived as from now in that temple saying: From the house of David you raised me on the rock, you guided me and became my hope and a strong bridge in the face of enemies, I will dwell in your house for ever.

Even Theodore<sup>1</sup> the bishop of Qoros who was from his generation and in his country testified that the Saint's news propagated in the ears of all and his glory spread in all places. People came

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<sup>1</sup> Markianos or Marcion was born in Synob( land of bantas), A philosopher who spread in Egypt and Syria and Faris teachings that ended in the sect of Mani, died around 150 AD

to him from all places and countries, some to contemplate the sanctity that was implanted in his spirit, others to change and to imitate his virtues and others to be healed from their illnesses. Bishop Theodore mentions that Mar Maroun used solely the design of the cross to heal all races and forms from every pain or disability. Blind people recovered their sight, feverish people, lepers, the blasphemous and those suffering from the devil were restored to health and glorified God.

We, on the other hand, read in his story that God did not bestow on him only the power of healing, but he also was clairvoyant to remind every one of his sins that God called him for. This is why he would not heal the handicap unless people regret their sins and go back to God heartily; he would heal the spirit first and then the body. Who denies that he was not as David's constructed bridge strong and edifying.

One would ask, our Father what are these thousand shields and the rest of the weapon of the powerful hanging. I will say: these are the righteous pure monks and the chosen saints that were taught by the saintly Maroun. In the book of *Ayyam* is written that when Yusafat<sup>2</sup> took power in Yahouadha, he sent priests and leaders of the soldiers to preserve all the cities and teach them the law of God. Likewise the saintly Maroun after erecting many schools for virtues and planted many orchards in the angelic life asked them to go round all these countries to search for Adona<sup>3</sup> the leader who it was said had under his command three thousand brigands; and what would you think of the faithful Ya'qūb<sup>4</sup>, the student of Mar Maroun who, after studying under his teacher, inhabited the wilderness and refused to settle except under the atmosphere of the sky as his teacher. He would not eat except wet lentil, would not sit, but remained standing, overloading his body with very heavy iron. He also raised a peasant's daughter from death. When bishop Tawdoritos was annoyed from the followers of Marqian the heretic and from the devil's hatred and temptation, he was saved by the prayers of this faithful.

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<sup>1</sup> Theodore 393-458. The bishop of Qoros from the scribes of the Syriac church, he resisted the Nestorians in Chalcedon Council. See Miamir and Tārīkh al-Kanīṣah.

<sup>2</sup> Yusafat 1, al-'Ayyām 11, 43.

<sup>3</sup> Adona, al-'Ayyām . 8,17.

<sup>4</sup> Ya'qūb was mentioned by Theodoritus.



The day and night would end and I will not be able to finish writing about the virtues of Mar Maroun and his students. Consider Tawdoritos and Roman Sinksar, and read the stories of Saint Ibrāhīm and Osabius and isklibis, Talyalus and Maras, Salman, Sim‘ān and others who, jealous of Maroun and his students, honored Aleppo and its vicinity in their virtues and convents.

Even the Antiochian St John Chrysostom who in his enlightening teachings and his brightened sanctity illumined the East and the West, mentioned that he was Mar Maroun’s student and this is verified that when he was exiled from the Antiochian Church, he sent a letter to Mar Maroun asking for his prayers and help.

What occurs to you then except that these saints were shields suspended on this honorable bridge like the bridge of David erected with thousand shields and the other weapons of the powerful.

The weapon of the powerful is but the convents and places that Mar Maroun and his students established in Qoros in the village of Jirjara, in Halimeh.. On the mountain of Olympos and on the top of the mountains. There they were like towers fighting against the body, the world and the devil and striving to serve God.

I would have liked you to read the life of saint Tomanina, the student of Mar Maroun, the mother of Marina the mother Kourat the Allepines<sup>1</sup> and see what is recorded that not only men, but also women had left the world, others imprison themselves alone, others live in convents and mountains, others made their orchards convents to an extent that in certain places their number reached two hundred and five hundred. Where does this devotion come from except through their exalted teacher Mar Maroun.

It is true that in this bridge thousand shields were suspended and other weapons of the powerful and he was able to say with the bride of Christ: This bride which appears in front of people small and with no breasts is the miraculously built bridge. Her breasts are bridges – the monks founded the church with the fortified bridges.

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<sup>1</sup> This is an indication that the preacher finds it suitable to remind the Aleppine listeners of their saints. Twadoritus said in *Tarikh ar-Rahbaniyyat*, chapter 30: saint Dominican imitated the life of Mar Maroun who built in her father’s orchard a small hut where she would spend her day crying. Her feast is on the first of March. Also the two saints Kura and Mariana whose feast is on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of February.

**Patriarch Estephan ad-Duwayhī,**

Min Mawā'iz ad-Duwayhī 'an Mar Marūn: That he is a bridge in Estephan ad-Duwayhī al Wā'iz fī Ḥalab. Father Ferdinand Tawtal al Yasū'ūn *al Mashriq*, year 50(1965), pp. 659-657.

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**The theft of the Sultan's Treasury in Akkar and the tyranny of al Pasha  
Ja'far and Ibrāhīm towards the Lebanese Emirs, the Hittites and the Druzes.  
Prince Fakhr ud-Dīn and his brother Emīr Yunis and prince Sayf ud-Dīn.  
The Maronite College**

In 1585 a group of evil people attacked and robbed the treasury of the Sultan in the bay of 'Akkār while on its way to Istanbul. As a result Ja'far Pasha at-Tawwashī was ordered to assemble the soldiers from the borders of the sea, from Sidon to Ḥims, to attack 'Alī Yūsuf Ibn Sayfā. Ja'far Pasha was accused to Ibrāhīm Pasha of Egypt who had become the grand Wizir. The latter collected soldiers from Aleppo, Damascus, Egypt and Cyprus in Marj Armouch with trumpets and kingly banners frightening all the Arab lands. Prince Muḥammad bin 'Assāf, the Druzes and the sons of Ḥubaysh were accused of confiscating the treasury. Ibrāhīm Pasha sent to Prince Qurqumāz asking for fine. The sea roads and the Biqā' were controlled against the Druzes and many people were killed.

Prince Muḥammed bin Jamāl al Din from west 'Aramūn, his cousin Prince Mundhir from 'Abay and Prince Muḥammad Ibn 'Assāf from Aghzir presented themselves in front of Ibrāhīm Pasha. Prince Qorqomāz, on the other hand, fled from al Shūf and died leaving two sons, Prince Fakhr ud-Dīn and his brother Yūnus. Ibrāhīm Pasha betrayed the Sheikhs of the Druzes when they presented themselves to him at 'Ayn Sawfar killing around five hundred persons. He, on the other hand, gave safety to few Emirs, who when they presented themselves took them to Istanbul. There the sultan Murad the son of Sultan Salim accepted them with clemency and granted the princes of the West their lands and to Ibn 'Assāf the whole of the province of Tripoli without the city. They went back safely to their land.

At that time Emir Sayf ad-Dīn at-Tannūkhī brought to al Shūf the sons of his sister Prince Fakhr ad-Dīn and his brother Emir Yūnis. After six years Emir Sayf ad-Dīn returned to 'Abay in the

west and put in charge on al-Shūf Prince Fakhr ad-Dīn. When Muḥammad bin ‘Assāf came from Istanbul, he granted el Sheikh Abū Qanṣū bin Ḥamāda, a quarter in Aghzir. Prince Muḥammad built a palace in Aghzir with the help of a master from Istanbul. It is said that it costed him fourteen thousand piasters apart from the workers and that it was unique in Damascus and its vicinity. He provided it with water from the fountain of the cave and built a mosque beside it.

That year Pope Gregorius established in Rome the school that took the name of the Maronites. He died in that year. He was not able to assign a budget for its expenses and charges except from the private church expenses. Pope Kasostos after him who was supported as well by the Antiochian See provided for the school a revenue sufficient for fifteen persons.

**Patriarch Estephan ad-Duwayhī,**

*Tarīkh al-Azminah*, published first and footnoted by Buṭrus Fahd, Junieh, (Lebanon: Kuraym Press, 1976), pp. 447-449.