



Established 1964

*Dedicated to the
Advancement of Education
of Assyrians*



NINEVEH

FOURTH QUARTER 1998

VOLUME 21 NO. 4



***Farida B. Adam Receiving an Award from
Metropolitan Mar Giwargis Slivo for her
Outstanding Humanitarian Work for
Assyrians in Amman, Jordan***

CULTURAL — EDUCATIONAL — SOCIAL

NINEVEH

FOURTH QUARTER 1998
VOLUME 21 NO.4

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And the Scroll Opened....

A book of ancient wisdom, the scrolls deal with all basic aspects of being human: Love, Marriage, Children, Happiness and Sorrow, Faith, Prayer, Flowers, Wealth, Government, Freedom, Time, and Life in the Hereafter.

By George M. Lamsa

A Word about Ancient Worship

Hidden in the mountain fastnesses of Kurdistan are the remains of some of the ancient customs and ways of life that have existed for centuries. The inhabitants of this region, a part of what was once the Garden of Eden, still worship, pray, and sacrifice as their ancestors did in days of yore. They slaughter sheep and goats as offerings for the fulfillment of vows. They pray at high places where they feel God's Presence is nearer. These ancient customs are so deeply rooted that the faithful travel miles to shrines and oracles, such as the temple of **Korra-Jenney**, in search of answers to the hidden forces that disturb their souls, and to find comfort, consolation, peace, and security.

The Shrine of Korra-Jenney

North of the ancient city of Nineveh on the opposite bank of the Tigris River from present-day Mosul, and south of Mount Ararat, in the region of the Garden of Eden, in the long chain of the mountain fastnesses of Kurdistan, not far from the Turkish-Iranian border, lies the ancient [Assyrian] town of Mar Bishoo and its large and historic cathedral. The town and cathedral are situated in a verdant valley. The area is surrounded by a range of high mountains which divides Turkey from Iran.

Nature has graced this "land of many waters" with verdant pastures, fruit trees, flowers, and a great variety of wild vegetables which grow uncultivated and unmolested by the human hand. Among these are the world-famous giant walnut trees. Indeed the land is a Paradise for its simple, pastoral, religious folk, whose main occupation is sheep and goat raising, and who live an outdoor life.

In the spring and summer months the tribes wander in the valleys and mountains carrying their tents and other household goods on the back of oxen and donkeys searching for pastures. During the cold months of winter they live in the valley in ancient stone houses built by their [Assyrian] ancestors centuries ago.

The historic town of Mar Bishoo is noted for its colossal and ancient cathedral containing seven chapels for worship built by King Khoshap in the fourth century after Christ. This ancient edifice is the largest church in this land because of its

abundant water, fruit trees of many varieties, vegetables, rich pastures, and good climate, was called the Garden of Eden, which means "a delightful place."

This is the story of the building of this beautiful cathedral, which was, until recently, a great [Assyrian] literary center where manuscripts and scrolls were written, old books copied, and young men educated for the priesthood.

King Khoshap hired a famous architect and his masons to build the church. It was stipulated in their contract that the king would pay the architect a pound a week. When the king paid the architect, the latter gave it to the king's daughter, with whom he had fallen in love. She was the only and beloved child of the ruler. The princess, in turn, gave the gold coin to her father without any explanation, and her father paid the architect with it again, not knowing it was the same piece of money he had given him originally. This practice continued until the edifice was completed.

When the cathedral was ready to be dedicated, the architect called on the king and asked for his wages. The king in surprise stated that he had paid him every week. But when the architect told him that he had given the money to the princess, the king realized that it was the same coin which had changed hands throughout the building project. When the king's daughter told him she was in love with the architect and was saving the money for a dowry, the king smilingly looked at the builder and graciously consented to their marriage.

The grave of the princess is still to be seen in one of the chapels. It is visited by the sick, the mentally disturbed, the sufferers who seek healing and answers to their prayers. The author saw a violently insane man healed instantly. Missionaries were among those witnessing this miracle, and others have witnessed hundreds of such healings throughout the years.

The beautiful stone structure is visited from time to time by people from neighboring towns and from far-off places, who come to pray, to worship, and to fulfill their vows.

Nearby, there are many cells in the rocks and caves that once were inhabited by the men who had dedicated their lives to God and who in summer months visited the sheep camps in mountains and valleys. Some of them also had abodes high in the mountains.

On the southern side of the cathedral, near a rivulet, lies the grave of Raban Gamla, a holy man who devoted his life to the study of the word of God, and to prayer and meditation. The grave of this man of God is noted for a miraculous occurrence. Every year a large avalanche comes down from the high mountain and covers the graveyard, but not a flake of snow touches the grave of Raban Gamla. As the sliding snow reaches his grave it parts, and after passing it, joins again, leaving an island free from snow. This phenomenon occurs annually and is known to the people of the region.

In 1904, Mr. Langdon, an Englishman, visited Mar Bishoo in the springtime accompanied by the author and a few other students from the school. A few days after our arrival, the avalanche came down and the large, deep valley was filled with snow and rocks. We went with Mr. Langdon to see the grave and stood high upon the snow piles. As we looked down through the opening, behold, there was the grave of Raban Gamla without a flake of snow upon it!

For many years the people did not know why this spot was not covered by the snow but they felt something holy was there. A few years later, while digging a grave, the people discovered a slab of stone on which was inscribed, "This is the grave of Raban Gamla."

The simple, pastoral people of the area live just as their ancestors lived centuries ago. They still wear the same kind of shoes and clothes as their ancestors did. They believe in healing; they revere the men of God and visit their graves and the places where they worshiped and prayed. They also believe in dreams, visions, and revelations. They visit holy shrines, sacred stones and trees, sacrifice sheep, goats, and lambs as of yore.

On the top of one of the highest mountains in the western range, several hours' journey from the town of Mar Bishoo, is an ancient shrine built of stone. It has four walls, a door, but no roof, and is called **Korra-Jenney**. Probably it is one of the oldest remaining relics of the pre-Christian era.

This roofless shrine is visited yearly, late in August when the tribes, in order to escape the heat in the valleys, migrate to the plateaus where snow has been melting and fresh grass is still growing. The place is so high that it seems as though one is on the roof of the world.

The visitors to the shrine of Korra-Jenney are mostly shepherds, young people, childless women, newly married couples, and those whose hearts are heavy-laden.

An annual feast held in Korra-Jenney is celebrated by the people who live in nearby sheep camps. A great many people from towns also join them for the festival. A number of sheep, goats, and lambs are slaughtered and cooked, and the people pray, dance, eat, and make merry in the

same manner as their ancestors did. This is one of the few occasions when the young men see and dance with their sweethearts, so it is a particularly joyful event for them.

On the top of a nearby mountain on the way between the town of Mar Bishoo and the shrine of Korra-Jenney is a large solitary stone resting in a vertical position. When the pilgrims visit Korra-Jenney they always stop to consult the sacred oracle. They pray and make their wishes known while kneeling before it.

The sacred stone is said to have rolled from its resting place on a high ridge down into the deep valley, and to have come back again miraculously to the ridge. It is a large, somewhat round stone, with one side thereof smooth; and is the only one of its kind found on the mountain ridge. It resembles a river stone.

For centuries, year after year, men and women have knelt and prayed before this sacred oracle, offering their prayers and making wishes. Some of them ask God to grant their wish for a child; some make supplications for prosperity and protection; young men petition God for good wives, and young maids pray for good and handsome husbands. Mothers pray for their children and for their husbands who are away, that the Lord God may bring them home safely and soon.

After the solemn prayers and loud supplications, with tears streaming down the cheeks, each person takes seven small, round pebbles from around the sacred stone and tries to fasten them one after another to the smooth side of the miracle stone, which rests at a vertical angle. The people believe that those whose round stones stick to the surface will have their prayers received and their wishes granted. In the case of those whose stones fall off, their wishes are not granted. As a result of many men and women succeeding in fastening their stones to the surface and having their prayers answered, the pilgrims' faith in the power of the stone has been enhanced over the years.

The Vision at the Sacred Stone

And it came to pass on a feast day that a group of men and women had come to celebrate the feast of Korra-Jenney, and on their way back stopped at a lower ridge to pray before the miracle stone. On their arrival late in the evening, they prayed, made their wishes, and as the day grew older and the evening was nigh they wearily lay down and rested around the stone. Some of those whose supplications had not been granted in the years past continued to pray fervently with tears falling upon the stone, imploring God that their prayers be answered and their wishes granted.

As the shadows lengthened and the August day was spent, the last golden rays which the sun had thrown like a mantle upon the white and pale

summer clouds disappeared, the moon and brilliant stars began to appear in the clear blue sky. When the darkness had fallen, the worshipers, now weary and tired of the day's activities, fell asleep.

At midnight, when nature's silence had fallen on the mountain, the man of God, who centuries before had spent many lonely years of his life in the mountains fasting and praying, appeared in a vision behind the miracle stone with a bundle of ancient, sealed scrolls in his arms. And he said, "I know you all." Then he added, "Oh, how many moons have waxed and waned, and how many summers have been replaced by cold winters, and I have yearned to see your faces and to hear the echoes of the prayers of your departed parents uttered through your lips."

He placed the scrolls upon the stone and then he stretched forth both of his hands as though trying to embrace them, and he continued: "I know why you have come here; I have hearkened to your prayers and I know your heart's desires. Verily, I say to you, the same forces and emotions that made your parents ascend this high mountain, to worship and to make supplications before God, have also brought you here. For you are the fruits of prayers and wishes of your parents whom I have often seen praying before this sacred stone. At that time you were the hidden secrets in their hearts and the unfulfilled desires of their souls. Now you have quickened the memory of your departed parents and brought back their granted wishes. And now your lips utter their prayers and your hearts are filled with their emotions.

"For on this historic and sacred stone the tears of joy and sorrow mingle, and the past and the future merge into the present. Verily, I say to you, the departed souls of your ancestors who prayed and made supplications for your birth, rejoice with you; and they see this sacred stone with your eyes; they hear my voice with your ears, and they play on the strings of your harp with your hands, and sing their melodies with your voices.

"In the past I have spoken to them, when you were the buds in their hearts, and now I will speak to you and impart some of the secrets of life which I have learned from these ancient scrolls in my cave of solitude and on this lonely and beautiful mountain."

Editor's Note: The Scrolls will be unfolded in future issues of Nineveh.

George M. Lamsa, a native Assyrian, was a Biblical scholar, translator, of the Aramaic language, and lecturer. He has over 16 books to his credit, including his monumental work "The Holy Bible" which he translated from the Peshitta, the ancient biblical manuscript written in Aramaic.

Celebration of *Shara d'Mart Mariam* (Feast of Saint Mary) at Holy Hill in Wisconsin By Awisha Z. Lazar

A Newsletter from the Holy Hill (National Shrine of Mary, Help of Christians), Hubertus, Wisconsin, contained an article under the title of "Pilgrims Come from Iraq to Holy Hill". Assyrians come from throughout the United States and Canada to celebrate and honor the Blessed Mother. In fact, not just Assyrian immigrants from Iraq participate in this great event, i.e. *Shara d'Mart Mariam* (Feast of Saint Mary) which is usually celebrated on August 15, but there are also Assyrian immigrants from Iran, Syria, Lebanon, Russia, etc who make this pilgrimage every year.

On August 14, hundreds of Assyrians and dozens of cars start arriving at the Holy Hill, immediately after visiting and praying at the National Shrine of Mary. They start erecting their tents, so by evening the famous "Assyrian City of Tents" comes into existence once again. As soon as the people are settled in by the Feast Eve, they start their camp-fires for cooking their *Dokhrana* (Sacrifice), so by the following morning, the day of *Shara*, the blessed *Dokhrana* would be well cooked and ready for distribution in the Camp; but of course after, almost every body has walked up through the hills where the Stations of the Cross are located, and have attended the Mass and taken the Holy Communion. Some other worshippers arrive late evening, and others early morning the day of the Feast, just in time for the great Mass.

On the Feast Day i.e. August 15 after lunch, people visit each other by the tents, some play volley ball, some arrange Backgammon (*Nar Takhta*) competition, some play cards, others listen to Assyrian music while enjoying their Bar-B-Q, some take a walk in the forest, others visit the gift shop. Ladies, as usual, sit in groups, eat their (famous) watermelon seeds, chat, drink tea and oriental black coffee and perhaps some among them know how to read their coffee cups (fortune-teller!) and have fun. Children play and amuse themselves in and around the City of Tents. By evening musicians start installing their equipment, so by night they are ready for the celebration of *Shara d'Mart Mariam*, when the fun, singing and dancing around the camp fires take place till dawn.

On the second day of the Feast, by evening some people start dismantling their tents and prepare for leaving with unforgettable sweet memories and wishes for repeating their pilgrimage again, while some others stay for another night.

PAULUS KHOFRI

Musician, Artist, Poet

Paulus Khofri was born in Baghdad, Iraq on August 7, 1923 to Jibrael and Victoria Khofri. His father was a gifted artisan. During World II, when spare parts for heavy-duty trucks were scarce or non-existent in Iran, he manufactured them single handedly. Punching them with embossed Assyrian characters, "Oomanota Atoreta" (Assyrian workmanship, art), these parts worked perfectly for a long time, surpassing the quality of those made abroad. His mother was a good natured lady who tended the family.

When Paulus was five years of age, the family returned to Iran and settled in Kermanshah. After graduation from high school he was employed by the British Bank of Iran in the Middle East. After the closure of the bank he was employed by the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company in Abadan in 1950. When Paulus was in Kermanshah he had his own musical band of four pieces, and continued to play in the band in Abadan also at leisure time.

Paulus Khofri has two daughters. The eldest, Touvanita Le Fevre, is an assistant surgeon in Caesar Hospital and lives in the United States with her husband who is a chief legal officer in the immigration department. Their daughter Lisa is a law student and will soon graduate from the university. Paulus' younger daughter, Marganita Vogt, is a graduate of Tehran University with a Bachelor of Science degree in musicology. She lives in Switzerland with her husband - a printing machinery specialist - and their two children: a son, Ilbron is a freshman in college; and a daughter, Anokina who is a pianist and a high school student. Marganita "Maggie" was an opera singer in Tehran Opera House, and continues her singing in Zurich in St. George Cathedral Choir, and part time in Bach Choir and Opera House. In addition, she gives piano lessons to students.

Paulus' real music career started when he decided to become a composer. He then resumed studying music seriously, and eventually acquired his musical education. Receiving intense training

in Composition, Harmony and Counterpoint, he received his Diploma in Composition and Harmony from the United States School of Music in Washington, D.C. and in New York, in May 1964.

Meanwhile he was busy giving concerts to raise funds for the building of an Assyrian school and social hall in Abadan. He also gave exhibitions of his oil and water color paintings, with the proceeds going to finance the school building.

Paulus was then transferred to the National Iranian Oil Company's main office in Tehran. His studies never ceased as he was determined to reach higher echelons in music. Studying music

intensely, and laws governing music prescribed by the most famous scholars like Paul Hindemith of Yale University, Arnold Schonberg, and Walter Piston, Professor of Music Emeritus Harvard University; at last he felt the time was ripe to take the examination at the Royal Academy of Music in Great Britain for the Bachelor of Music degree.

This did not materialize because his request for a two-year leave of absence from work without compensation was denied by his employer. Other conditions imposed were not to Paulus' benefit. But since he had formal education in music, and the know how, he was capable of composing, training and tutoring students of music. Publications in the oil company bubbled him our MAP (Musician, Artist, Poet), in

view of his talents in these fields. To achieve his goal of composing, he set aside his projects of painting, writing and concert giving, and concentrated vigorously on expanding his musical compositions and compiling them, a very tedious and time consuming task. This involved styling, drawing stave lines, writing thousands of notes with different nibs, inserting verses with tiny characters by hand under stave lines, writing songs in neat handwriting and then designing the pictures and illustrating them,

Paulus Khofri's music compositions consist of the following classifications: I - **Vocal**. II - **Instrumental**. III - **Orchestral**. All motives of



music are originals with no adaptations. All illustrations in tiny pen nibs and ink that are created and designed to fit the subject matter are his.

Description of composed music:

I - **Vocal Music:** in books

1. *Yoomani D'Eda Sora* - Christmas Day: - composed in 1972 for piano and singers (illustrated)
2. *Zamrakh Am Ikhdadi* - Let's Sing Together - 1975 Tome 1 for piano and singers (illustrated).
3. *Shita D'Isrei Arbaa Yarkhi* - The Year of 24 Months - 1982, two songs for each month (illustrated).
4. *Zamrakh Mikhdadi* - Together We Sing - 1984 Tome 2 Classic Folkloric Songs for 2, 3 and 4 voices.
5. *Galli D'Zoomari* -The Waves of the Melodies- 1998 Tome 3 for piano and well trained singers (illustrated).
6. *Zmoor B'Lishanookh* - Sing in your own Language - 1998, for very young singers (our children sing in their mother's tongue).
7. Praise songs for organ and various voices - 1998 Tome 1.

II - **Instrumental Music:** in books

1. *Braqala D'Nemati* - Echo of Melodies - 1979 Tome 2 No. 1 for piano.
2. *Braqala D'Memati* - Echo of Melodies - 1980 Tome 2 No. 2 for piano with 4 hands.
3. Assyryt - Tome 1 1984 Classic Folkloric Music to be played by Virtuoso Pianist.
4. *Nemati M'Bazqa* - Dispersed Melodies - 1987 Tome 1 No. 1 for piano.
5. *Braqala D'Nemati* - Echo of Melodies - 1998 Tome 2 No.3 for piano, violin, flute, guitar, etc.

Note: Some contents of Book 5 Tome 2 No. 3 possess special features:

- a. Sonata in G minor for violin and cello - Composed in memory of the late William Daniel, pioneer composer of Assyrian music, and writer.
- b. Sonata in G major for piano - Composed in Zurich, Switzerland, and is dedicated to Essa Benyamin, the renowned Assyrian calligraphist.
- c. Fantasia in G minor for flute and guitar - Dedicated to Simon Tomik, the classic guitar performer.
- d. Suite in D minor for violin, flute, guitar and piano, entitled "*Braqala min Toora*" - Echo from Mountain - and is dedicated to Assyrian mountaineers.
- e. *Dipna D'Atna* - At the Spring - in D major for flute, guitar and piano. Composed for all young girls in the villages bringing fresh,

cool water in their earthen pots for their fathers toiling in the fields of wheat.

III - **Orchestral Music** - for 80 players or more

1. Assyrian Classic, Folkloric, Dances - Book 1 - *Zna Righda Ammaya* - 1997

2. Epic of Gilgamesh - (Composing)

There are scores of composed pieces ready to be compiled in the future. Paulus has tutored and trained more than 1200 students in music in Iran, some of them are writing music for movies and other important occasions.

Conclusion :

It is important to note that Paulus Khofri's music is not meant for dancing but intended for listening. Thus, whatever reaches ones ears reflects all tides of life this Assyrian nation has undergone in the past, present and will experience in the future. The music seeks to retain firmly that spirit. Either sung by men or women, praising God, or humming by a farmer when tilling his field; the joy of a young man whistling, expecting to meet his love; the beating of the drum and the song of the fife in religious festivals (*Shara*); the blaring of the brass instruments in anger, the wailing of the oboe in sorrow, the intimate chatter of the string instruments; all tell and paint vivid pictures of life in waves of sound.

To Our Contributors

In this season of joy, sharing, hope and renewal, you have, with your contributions and support, inspired us to greater levels of effort to advance our humanitarian and educational goals. To merely say thank you for your generosity in this season of giving is not sufficient to express our appreciation. The deeds of charity that have been made possible by your donations are a living testament that you care about your fellow Assyrians in need.

As we stated in our Christmas letter, the Assyrian Foundation of America has served the Assyrian people by providing financial assistance to students and schools, aid to needy Assyrians and refugees, and promoting Assyrian literature and writings. This year our contribution for these causes is over \$57,000.

Our best wishes for a Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year from all of us at the Assyrian Foundation of America. And may you celebrate this Holiday Season by the warmth of happy memories and the love of family and friends.

Truth Triumphant—The Church in the Wilderness

by Benjamin George Wilkinson, Ph.D.

Pacific Press Publishing Association, Mountain View, California. 1944.

Timothy of Bagdad; The Church Under Mohammedan Rule

It was not from Nestorius, but from Thomas, Bartholomew, Thaddeus, and others that this people first received the knowledge of a Saviour, as will be seen in the sequel.¹

They were a strong, and prosperous people before the Mohammedans overran Asia, living on the plains of Assyria, sustaining schools and colleges, whose students carried to China, and throughout India, probably, the first message telling that the Messiah had come.²

Timothy is an outstanding leader of the Church of the East in connection with its great expansion throughout Asia. He belongs to the period when the Mohammedans dominated not only Persia, but also the Near East after having overthrown the Zoroastrian dominion. He is a representative of that line of patriarchs who guided the church through centuries of Moslem power.

From the time of Timothy, and even from a short while before, the Church of the East took its place in gospel and prophetic history when it was driven into the wilderness. This is not because the Arabian rulers persecuted Christians but rather because of the attitude of the papal church in the West. When the Moslem power struck low the Mithraic kings of Persia, Mohammedanism was not yet strong enough to completely oppose other religions. In many general ways Mohammed himself felt kindly toward Christianity, especially toward the more simple believers in Jesus, such as the Assyrian Christians.³ When the victorious Moslem general conquered Zoroastrian Persia, the Church of the East was in the hands of a wise and able head, who secured in the following way a charter of privileges for Christians.

Ishoyabh (sometimes called Jesus-Jabus), as catholicos, succeeded in obtaining a pledge granting protection and freedom of worship on condition that the Christians paid certain tribute. Of this Sir E. A. Wallis Budge says:

The patriarch Isho-yahbh II, who sat from 625-44, seeing that the downfall of the Persian Empire was imminent came to terms with Muhammad, or Abu Bakr ... The patriarch stipulated that the Christians should be protected from the attacks of their foes; that the Arabs should not make them go to war with them; that they should not compel them to change their manners and laws; that they should help them to repair their old churches; that the tax on the poor should not exceed four zuze; that the tax on the merchants and wealthy men should be ten zuze per man, that a Christian woman servant should not be compelled to change her faith, nor to neglect fasting and prayer.⁴

These immunities extended by abu-Bekr were

not only confirmed by Omar, his successor, but even the taxes were remitted. It remained for the renowned warrior Caleb to confirm and extend the high rights and privileges which were allowed the church. The Arabs, like the Persians, were very partial to the Assyrian Christians because they found it necessary in the early days of their power to lean upon the splendid schools which this church had developed. Medicine made great progress in the hands of the Church of the East.⁵ The Arabian court and its extended administrations employed its members as secretaries and imperial representatives.

Justinian's grievous laws against the leaders in Asia Minor and Persia afflicted the Church of the East. He destroyed any possibility of reconciliation with the Assyrian Church when he issued the imperial condemnation of the three church leaders usually called the Three Chapters. By this decree he bitterly alienated the millions of believers in Asia without winning the malcontents. Never again would there be any general movement among the Asiatic Christians toward the religion of Rome. The year of this decree is 553.

Catholicos Moves to New Capital of Moslem Empire

The Mohammedans used the conquered Persian Empire as a steppingstone to further and more rapid conquests. They looked with greedy eyes upon the rich and cultured kingdoms of central Asia. It is difficult for travelers of today who behold the sandy expanses of Palestine to visualize the once mighty kingdoms of Israel and Judah that occupied those wastes. With whirling advances into those gardens of Eden, the intrepid warriors of Mohammed secured decisive victories; then returned to display to astonished eyes the dazzling riches of Transoxiana. Extension of the dominion brought weakness of control. The rapid and unexpected victories of Islam's western armies stretching along the southern Mediterranean to the Atlantic Ocean and extending northeast to Turkestan broke the unity of the empire.

Strife for pre-eminence came in between different

branches of Mohammed's progeny. Instead of one, there arose three caliphates. The name Omniads was given to the dynasty of the prophet's family which seized the power reaching from the Mediterranean Sea to the borders of China. The birth of this new caliphate was the signal for the creation of a new capital. An excellent site on the Tigris River was chosen, and the city of Bagdad, which still stands today, arose in all its splendor.

In 762 with their usual foresight the leaders of the Church of the East removed the central administration of their widely extending work to the new capital at Bagdad. They had received recognition from the caliph as a *melet*, the term usually given to subject religions under Oriental monarchs. Abraham Yohannan writes that an Arabian history of India records for the year 1000 that the bulk of population in Syria, Iraq, and Khurasan was Christian.⁶ He further states that Assyrian Christians held high offices under the caliphs. The historian Arminius Vambery notes that by 1000 the Church of the East had made greater progress in central Asia than Mohammedan historians are willing to allow.⁷

The Catholicate of Timothy

Timothy I (A.D. 780-824) was elected as catholicos at a time when Charlemagne was wielding his heavy sword to advance the interests of the papacy in Europe. His election took place twelve years before the founding of Kyoto, the most famous of Japan's ancient cities. It was during the early years of his catholicate that Japan sent Kobo Daishi, of whom more shall be said later, to visit China and bring about a reconciliation in Japan between Buddhism and the old indigenous religion of the mikado's realm, called Shintoism.

In the days of Timothy a wave of inquiry was sweeping over the minds of men in eastern and northeastern Asia. Literature and learning were in the hands of the Church of the East. Practically all the subjects offered in similar institutions today were taught in their colleges.⁸ Some of the lines of instruction given were science, philosophy, materia medica, medicine, astronomy, law, Bible, theology, geometry, music, arithmetic, dialectics, grammar, rhetoric, Greek literature, and the Greek, Syrian, Chaldean, and Egyptian languages. Claudius Buchanan writes:

They have preserved the manuscripts of the Holy Scriptures incorrupt, during a long series of ages, and have now committed them into our own hands. By their long and energetic defence of pure doctrine against anti-Christian error, they are entitled to the gratitude and thanks of the rest of the Christian world.⁹

Timothy grasped the situation with a master's hand. This unwearied worker was ever busy receiving reports from distant lands, at the same

time stimulating training centers to graduate more and still more missionaries. He watched over the purity of the doctrine. He was continually consecrating devoted young men that had the spirit of sacrifice, missionaries who would bring mercy into cruel hearts, who would instill culture into repulsive peoples, and who would gather the galloping tribes of the desert around them to study the messages of the Sacred Word. Timothy must have been thrilled by the news from China, even though delayed because of the immense distances, that in the day of the preceding catholicos a stone monument had been erected with imperial co-operation in Changan, the capital of the nation, to the triumphs of Christianity amid the yellow race. Moreover, China was then the greatest empire in the world, and its imperial center was the most thrilling city on the globe.¹⁰

There is a record of a letter that Timothy wrote, exulting in the news of the conversion of a king of the Turks. He states that these people have turned from idolatry, have become Christians, and have asked that a metropolitan be consecrated and sent to guide their nation in the new faith. Their demand for a metropolitan would indicate the existence of many leaders of provincial clergy among the Turks. The request, Timothy declares, has already been granted.¹¹ Or, as the letter recites, "In these days the Holy Spirit has anointed a metropolitan for the Turks, and we are preparing to consecrate another one for the Tibetans."¹² The making of this provision for Tibet portrays the success achieved by the Church of the East in that tableland nation.

In other letters to a certain Rabban Sergius, the patriarch not only records the fact that he was preparing to consecrate a metropolitan for the inhabitants of Tibet, but also that in his time many missionaries "crossed the sea and went to the Indians and the Chinese with only a rod and a script." In one of these epistles he apprises his correspondents of the death of the metropolitan of China.¹³ Thus while Charlemagne by the strokes of his battle-ax was destroying the beautiful centers of Celtic Christianity in northwestern Europe, and while agents from Rome were laboring to resist the onward march of Scottish and Irish Christianity into England, the Church of the Wilderness in the East was consecrating metropolitans to superintend spiritual leaders in Tibet, China, India, and among the nations of the Turks.

Thomas of Marga, writing concerning the indefatigable labors of Timothy, tells of the appointment of eighty missionaries sent to convert the heathen of the Far East:

These were the bishops who preached the teaching of Christ in those countries of the Dailamites and Gilanians, and the rest of the savage peoples beyond them, and planted in them the light of the truth of

the gospel of our Lord.... They evangelized them and they baptized them, worked miracles and showed prodigies, and the news of their exploits reached the farthest points of the East. You may learn all these clearly from the letter which some merchants and secretaries of the kings, who had penetrated as far as there for the sake of commerce and of affairs of state, wrote to [the patriarch] Mar Timothy.¹⁴

In another place the same historian relates that about this time Shubbalisho was ordained by Timothy to evangelize the primitive peoples inhabiting the country beyond central Asia. The patriarch declared that the one newly ordained for this task was fitted for it because he was versed not only in Syriac, but also in Arabic and Persian. In this letter it is to be noted that the Church of the East not only brought heathen into their faith, but also overcame a difficult task in converting heretics like the Marcionites and Manichaeans. Thus he continues:

He taught and baptized many towns and numerous villages, and brought them to the teaching of the divine life. He built churches, and set up in them priests and deacons, and singled out some brethren who were missionaries with him to teach them psalms and canticles of the Spirit. And he himself went deep inland to the farthest end of the East, in the work of the great evangelization that he was doing among pagans, Marcionites, manichaeans, and other kinds of beliefs and abominations, and he sowed the sublime light of the teaching of the gospel, the source of life and peace.¹⁵

By these facts, which have been well authenticated, one can get a glimpse of the tremendous activity going on in the bosom of the Assyrian Church. This work was to go on for many centuries after Timothy. Timothy may be taken as a type of the intelligent, devoted and industrious leaders who, for decade after decade throughout Asia, turned many to righteousness.

In the midst of these labors India was not forgotten. It has already been noted how Timothy sent many missionaries to India at the same time he was sending them to China. The patriarch Ishoyabh, who consummated the contract with the Moslem caliph for the protection of his people more than one hundred years previous to Timothy, censured for misconduct the metropolitan of southeastern Persia, who was located near the borders of northwestern India. His written rebuke bemoaned the disastrous effect of this leader's irregularities, because he says that, "Episcopal succession had been interrupted in India," and that "divine teaching by means of rightful bishops" had been withheld from India. In other words, the rebuke infers that throughout the whole of the Hindu peninsula, clergy, provincial directors, organized churches, and companies of Christian communities could be found.

Of Timothy himself it is recorded that while

writing to the monks of Mar Maron regarding the disputed words, "who was crucified for us," adds: "In all the countries of the sunrise, that is to say, — among the Indians, the Chinese, the Tibetans, the Turks, and in all the provinces under the jurisdiction of this patriarchal see, there is no addition of the words 'crucified for us.'"¹⁶

Conquests of the Mongols

Mingana quotes a letter purporting to have been written by Philoxenus. He was a famous writer attached to the smaller Eastern church (Monophysite).¹⁷ The document is in two parts. The second part, which is evidently the work of a later writer, outlines the introduction of Christianity among the Turks. The scope and analysis of its treatment dealing with the nations of farther Asia, as well as the freshness of its descriptions, sheds unusual light on a region that is little known. It presents the Turks as dwelling in tents and having no towns, villages, or houses. Well organized, they live as the children of Israel did during their forty years of wandering in the wilderness. These Turks had their premises well kept, while the people themselves were clean and neat in their habits. They accepted both the Old and New Testaments in Syriac, although evidence indicates that they had the Scriptures also in their own script. When the divine writings were used in public services, they were translated by officiating pastors into the vernacular in order that the people might understand what was read.

It is a most illuminating statement concerning these Turks to read that they were ruled over by four great and powerful kings who evidently lived at quite a distance from each other. The letter applied the name Tartar to all the divisions, and designated their country as Sericon. This is the name (as Mingana points out) which was given to China in the days of Christ. Each of these kings ruled over four hundred thousand families who accepted and obeyed the teachings and gospel of Christ. If each family was composed of an average of five persons, it would mean that the four kingdoms had a population of about eight million, and they all were Christians.

From the twenty-seven grand divisions of the church administration covering the Orient, communications were sent in not only concerning new religious developments, but also about events of international importance. Thus in the year 1009, Abdisho, metropolitan of Merv, the church director in the powerful province of Khurasan, northeast Persia, wrote to the patriarch John informing him that two hundred thousand Turks and Mongolians had embraced Christianity. He pointed out that the conversion occurred because the king of the Keraites, which people spread over the region around Lake Baikal, Siberia, had been found wandering in a high mountain where he had been

overtaken by a violent snowstorm. In his hopelessness he considered himself lost, and dreamed or thought he saw a giant appear to him in vision, saying, "If you will accept Christ, I will lead you to safety." Having promised to become a Christian and having returned safely to his kingdom, he sought out Christian merchants who were traveling among his tribes, and learned from them the way of salvation.

Mention should be made here of the name of Prester John, stories of whom stirred medieval Europe. Reports came through to the West of a powerful Christian king who, in the depths of Scythia, ruled over a mighty people. He is known variously by the names, Prester John, Presbyter John, and Priest John. Some think he was king of the Keraites, and others believe that, in addition to being a great king himself, he was also son-in-law to the king of the powerful Karakitai. The picture of these nations with their dreaded kings, all, or nearly all, of whom had been brought to Christ, confirms the opinion expressed by Mingana that the Church of the East "was by far the greatest missionary church the Christian cause has produced."¹⁸ In following its evangelical conquests, one ranges through Turkestan, Siberia, Mongolia, Manchuria, and Tibet. One is introduced to stretches of territory more vast than would be possible to visualize in any other quarter of the globe. One becomes interested in, and familiarized with, peoples and portions of the earth's nations which previously had no claim upon man's attention. Truly, the Church in the Wilderness was a wonderful missionary church.

Conquests of Genghis Khan

Twelve centuries of ever-widening spiritual conquests were not accomplished any too soon by the Church of the East. The fierce energy of the countless tribes of Mongolia and Siberia, stirred by the new ideas heard from the lips of missionaries, was beginning to display itself as a world menace. These hordes needed only a leader possessing the caliber of a Julius Caesar to go forth on conquests never halting until Germany, France, and England trembled before the next blow. In the beginning of the thirteenth century, that leader appeared. His name was Genghis, a chief of the Mongols. After his first victories over surrounding tribes in Siberia, he took the title of khan, or king. How Genghis Khan conquered all Asia, how he and his son, Ogotai, devastated eastern Europe, and how the pope started up in alarm at the report of this news and sought to utilize the influence of the Church of the East to save Catholic nations in the West is a story of great significance.

The name Mongol, for two centuries after Genghis Khan, was the terror of central Asia. Yet the origin of the tribe is in obscurity. Numerically it was not the largest of the Tartary kingdoms.

Genghis came of a warlike father and mother, but was left fatherless when he was only thirteen years of age. His mother resolutely assumed the reins of the kingdom, and regained supremacy over half of the revolting chiefs. Later, Genghis brought all the rebels back into subjection and began successful conquest of the near-by kingdoms of the Keraites, Merkits, Uigurs, and Naimans.

The immense victories won by Genghis in China were the results as much of strategy as of prowess. He possessed skillful ability in co-ordinating massive bodies of troops spread over wide areas, aiming at separate points of conquest. He was tolerant of religion. He treated Christianity, Buddhism, Mohammedanism, and other faiths with impartiality; some authorities say he killed them all alike if they were in the way of his conquests or were in the cities doomed to destruction. Abul Faraj writes of him that he "commanded the scribes of the Uigurs and they taught the children of the Tatars their books."¹⁹ He was a lawgiver of high order, creating for the people over whom he ruled, a code of regulations which later conquerors were glad to adopt. Fortified by his victories in Siberia, Mongolia, and China, he turned his attention to new successes in western Asia and eastern Europe.

Of the ruin wrought by Genghis Khan, Arminius Vambery writes:

Though already seventy years old, Djenghiz once more took the field against Tanghut, which had rebelled against him; but he died during this campaign in the year 624 (1226), leaving behind him traces throughout all Asia of the fire and sword with which his love of war had devastated the whole continent; but nowhere so deeply marked as in Transoxania, where the civilization of centuries had been destroyed, and the people plunged into a depth of barbarism in which the remembrance of their former greatness and their whole future were alike engulfed. No part of all Asia suffered so severely from the incursions of the Mongolian hordes as the countries bordering on the Oxus and the Yaxartes....

No wonder, then, that within five short years, the great high roads of central Asia, by which the products of China and India were conveyed to western Asia and to Europe, were deserted; that the oases, well known for their fertility, lay barren and neglected; or, finally, that the trade in arms and jewelry, in silks and enamels, so celebrated throughout Islam, decayed forever. The towns were in ruins, the peasants either murdered or compulsorily enrolled in the Mongolian army, and the artisans sent off by thousands to the farthest East to adorn and beautify the home of the conqueror....

Bokhara and Samarkand never regained their former mental activity, and their intellectual labors were henceforth entirely devoted to casuistry, mysticism, and false religion.²⁰

At the time Russia was conquered it consisted of many small independent states constantly at war

with one another and nominally under the common suzerainty of a grand prince or czar.²¹ All the cities ravaged by the armies of Genghis were so completely obliterated from the sight of man that the Mongol chieftain could say, as he said many times to his fallen foe, that he was "the scourge of God." Thus, while his armies were subduing the northern Chinese empire in the east and other armies of the Mongols were conquering the northwestern part of India, Genghis Khan was also laying waste a part of Russia and attacking on the upper Volga. Death overtook him while in this warfare.

He was not a persecutor of Christianity. It is stated that one of his wives, a Kerait by birth and a near relative of Prester John, was a Christian.²² He bequeathed his vast empire, reaching from China all the way to Hungary and Poland, to his three sons. One of the three, Ogotai, was chosen as the king of kings to succeed his father.

Kuyuk Spares Europe

It was the terrible wars waged by Ogotai which brought home to the nations of Europe the threat of subjection to the Mongols. Batu, the intrepid and invincible general of Ogotai, suddenly appeared on the eastern flanks of Poland and Hungary. Hungary had been relied upon to check the Mongols, but unexpectedly it offered comparatively feeble resistance; and for a number of years the forces of the Tartars passed and repassed over her lands, pillaging, ravaging, and devastating. Only the Holy Roman Empire now lay between the conquerors on the east and France and England on the west.

Ogotai died in the year 1241. The princes were recalled from war to elect a new khan. While they were coming together, the queen mother labored earnestly for the election of her favorite son, Kuyuk, and her work resulted in his election. Kuyuk was a true Christian, and in his days the prestige of the numerous Christians in his dominions was very high.²³ Mingana relates that his camp was full of church leaders, clergy, and scholars, and that a Christian by the name of Kaddak was his grand vizier. Under Kuyuk the massacres and devastations which had characterized the rule of Genghis and Ogotai seem to have come to an immediate end. It is a question if Europe was not spared further Mongolian wrath because a Christian, such as Kuyuk, was elected to supreme command.

After the death of Kuyuk in 1251 the succession passed to Mangu. Tule, a brother of Ogotai, was a mighty general. Of Sarkuti Bagi, the wife of Tule, Mingana shows that she was another Christian queen, a true believer and the wisest of all.²⁴ She was the mother of three sons who in turn became vested with imperial dignity, and all of them were professed Christians or possessed of Christian wives. Their names were Mangu, Hulagu, and

Kublai. The thrilling story of their contributions to the Church of the East belongs to the history of China in a later chapter.

When the sword of destruction hung over Germany, Italy, France, and England through the menacing attitude of Ogotai's skillful generals, the pope decided to send an envoy to the relentless Batu, leader of the Tartar armies. Friar John of Plano Carpini was chosen for this task. He journeyed to the banks of the Dnieper where the Tartar legions were encamped, encountering many difficulties on the way. Receiving scant attention, he was hurried on to the Volga, the headquarters of Batu. But Batu was unwilling to handle the proposition, and the wiry friar had to proceed by forced marches to the central camp farther east. He arrived after the death of Ogotai and before the election of the new emperor. Some years after the journey of Friar John, King Louis IX of France commissioned Friar William of Rubruck to proceed to the central camp of the Mongolians, hoping that he might convert the emperor to the Roman faith. Friar William reports many items about the Assyrian Christians.²⁵ What interests one most is what Friar William of Rubruck said of the Assyrian Christians (called by him, Nestorians) whom he encountered in his visits to those realms. He found them in nearly all the countries which he traversed; he met with them in the country of Karakhata, where he noticed that the Turkish people, called Mayman, had as king a Nestorian.²⁶

The Nestorians, he said, were in those parts inhabited by the Turkomans. They conducted their services in the latter's language and wrote books in their alphabet; in all their towns was found a mixture of Nestorians.²⁷ He relates that in fifteen cities of Cathay there were Nestorians possessing an episcopal see. The grand secretary of the emperor Mangu, Bulgai by name, was a Nestorian, whose advice was nearly always followed and who was the imperial interpreter.²⁸

The Doctrines of the Christian Mongols

The long and predominating favor with which the Mongol rulers treated the Church of the East indicates that the doctrines of the Christian Mongols were those of the Assyrian Church. This will appear to be more the case when the later histories of this remarkable people are considered. The beginning of their power, however, is connected with a significant fact from which conclusions can be drawn respecting the type of Christianity that they fell in with during the first years of their dominion.

Again we consider that celebrated personage, Prester John. The name Prester John is connected with a great revolution which took place in Asiatic Tartary about 1000. Many writers of sincerity who are worthy of credit relate that a king of the Keraites had been converted to Christ. He had taken the

name of John, and he with thousands of his people was baptized by the Church of the East. His empire grew; each successive ruler was also called John. After about two centuries, Genghis Khan conquered the last king. Since the victorious Mongol chieftain married the daughter of the slain priest-king, the doctrine of the Church of the East rose to great influence among the Mongols.²⁹ Mosheim says that Europe was deeply stirred at the report concerning the wealth, strength, and happiness of this Christian realm. The king of Portugal sent an embassy to Abyssinia because he concluded that the doctrines of Prester John were those of the Abyssinians.³⁰ The legation discovered many things among the Abyssinians that were analogous to those reported of Prester John.

The Church of the East in Its Wide Extent of Missions

The organization of the Oriental believers is equally as interesting as the stirring events in the midst of which they labored. From the days of Timothy the believers in all Asia had been divided by the church into from twenty-six to thirty grand divisions. Over each of these there was the metropolitan or presiding officer. From time to time, possibly annually, these clergy assembled under their subprovince president to report the condition of the faithful in their parishes and to consider with one another the problems with which they were similarly confronted. Then occasionally there would be a large convention under the chairmanship of the metropolitan with delegates from the different provinces. When the distances were too great to communicate easily with the catholicos, the head at Bagdad, then the metropolitan was expected to hand in a report at least once every six years.

An account has already been given of the purity of doctrine and practice of the Church of the East, which is often wrongly styled Nestorian after Nestorius. M'Clintock and Strong regards them as the Protestants of Eastern Christianity. "The Christians of Saint Thomas, in East India, are a branch of the Nestorians. They are named after the apostle Thomas, who is supposed to have preached the gospel in that country."³¹

They were entirely separated from the church at Rome. Edward Gibbon shows that the St. Thomas Christians as well as the Syrian Christians were not connected with Rome in any way. He says that when the Portuguese in their first discoveries of India presented the image of the Virgin Mary to the St. Thomas Christians in the sixteenth century, they said, "We are Christians, not idolaters."³²

Here is a list of the doctrines of that branch of the Assyrian Christians in India which is called the St. Thomas Christians. Those believers—

1. Condemned the pope's supremacy,
2. Affirmed that the Roman Church had departed

- from the faith,
3. Denied transubstantiation,
4. Condemned the worship of images,
5. Made no use of oils,
6. Denied purgatory,
7. Would not admit of spiritual affinity,
8. Knew nothing of auricular confessions,
9. Never heard of extreme unction,
10. Permitted the clergy to marry,
11. Denied that matrimony and consecration were sacraments,
12. Celebrated with leavened bread and consecrated with prayer.³³

The remarkable fact is that in the face of titanic difficulties the Church of the East was able to maintain through ages such wonderful unity of belief and soundness of Biblical living. "In the first place," says Etheridge, speaking of one branch of the Church of the East, "the Nestorian church has always cherished a remarkable veneration for the Holy Scriptures. Their Rule of Faith has been, and is, the written word of God."³⁴

Widespread and enduring was the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath among the believers of the Church of the East and the St. Thomas Christians of India who never were connected with Rome. It also was maintained among those bodies which broke off from Rome after the Council of Chalcedon; namely, the Abyssinians, the Jacobites, the Maronites, and the Armenians. The numbers sanctifying the Sabbath varied in these bodies; some endured longer than others. Noted church historians, writing of the Nestorians in Kurdistan, say, "The Nestorian fasts are very numerous, meat being forbidden on 152 days. They eat no pork, and keep both the Sabbath and Sunday. They believe in neither auricular confession nor purgatory, and permit their priests to marry."³⁵

Sabbathkeeping among the Abyssinians is especially worthy of notice. Of them the historian Gibbon fittingly remarks, "Encompassed on all sides by the enemies of their religion, the Ethiopians slept near a thousand years, forgetful of the world, by whom they were forgotten."³⁶ When in the sixteenth century Europe again came into contact with the Abyssinians, the seventh day was found to be their weekly rest day; Sunday was only an assembly day. Sorely pressed by Mohammedanism, they made the same mistake which was made by the St. Thomas Christians of India in that they appealed for help in 1534 to the Portuguese, the greatest naval power of Europe in that day. The following argument was presented to Portugal by the Abyssinian ambassador when asked why Ethiopia sanctified the seventh day:

On the Sabbath day, because God, after he had finished the Creation of the World, rested thereon; Which Day, as God would have it called the Holy of Holies, so the not celebrating thereof with great honour and devotion, seems to be plainly

contrary to God's Will and Precept, who will suffer Heaven and Earth to pass away sooner than His Word; and that especially, since Christ came not to dissolve the Law, but to fulfil it. It is not therefore in imitation of the Jews, but in obedience to Christ and his holy Apostles, that we observe that Day.... We do observe the Lord's day after the manner of all other Christians, in memory of Christ's Resurrection.³⁷

When the Portuguese made a gesture of sending help to the Abyssinians, a number of Jesuits were included in the mission, and they immediately began to win the Abyssinian Church to Roman Catholicism. In 1604 they influenced the king to submit to the papacy. One of their first efforts was to have a proclamation issued by the king prohibiting all his subjects upon severe penalties to observe the seventh day any longer.³⁸ Civil war followed. The Jesuits were expelled and their laws were rescinded.

With respect to the Jacobites, there is the statement of that well-known and learned Samuel Purchas, who, having visited them in the beginning of the seventeenth century, writes: "They keepe Saturday holy, nor esteeme Saturday Fast lawfull but on Easter Even. They have Solemne Service on Saturdays."³⁹

Another authority, Josephus Abudacnus, writing in the eighteenth century in his history of the Jacobites, stated that they assembled every Sabbath in their temples, to which statement the later editor, J. Nicholai, adds the following footnote:

Our author states that the Jacobites assembled on the Sabbath day, before the Dommical day, in the temple, and kept that day, as do also the Abyssinians as we have seen from the confession of their faith by the Ethiopia king Claudius.... From this it appears that the Jacobites have kept the Sabbath as well as the Dommical day, and still continue to keep it.⁴⁰

Alexander Ross writes that the Maronites likewise observed the Sabbath as well as Sunday.⁴¹ Thus, we see how these four Eastern communions, three of which never walked with the papacy, continued to honor the Sabbath.

As one looks upon the approximately five centuries of Mohammedan rule in Asia, three things are worthy of notice. In the first place, the comparatively tolerant attitude of the rulers is comforting. This is not to say that at times there were not periods of persecution and fierce opposition. However, one does not witness a persistent, determined purpose to root out Christians by cruel, bloody wantonness. The supreme motive of the Moslem conqueror was the lust of power rather than a fanatical passion to kill and to ruin other faiths. The leaders of Islam were so continuously occupied by war among themselves that they had neither time nor desire to frame within their own ranks an organization of the clergy tied firmly to absolute obedience, as was

seen in the papal hierarchy. Dynasties rose and fell, but the Church of the East grew and extended its missions over all the lands of Asia.

Secondly, one is surprised by the splendidly balanced organization which energized the Church of the East. Rejecting the polygamy of the Moslems, it was not distracted by domestic broils. This same church refused to emphasize an unmarried life for its clergy, the rule which prevailed in Buddhism and in Western Romanism. As marriage was designed of God not only to increase love, but to purify love, the Church of the East was safeguarded against such degradation of standards as was seen in the Buddhist priests and nuns. Their thoughts ever turned toward their Sabbath home, dearer to them than any palace halls. In other words, they obeyed the four divine policies laid down in the first chapter of Genesis; namely, the worship of the Creator, Sabbath observance, family life, and proper diet and temperance.

Lastly, the members of the Church of the East were not only a church of evangelical activities, but also a people of sound doctrines. It is difficult to say which is the more dangerous—sound doctrines without evangelism, or evangelism without sound doctrine. The first leads to coldness in religion; the second produces vaudeville in preaching. Both these extremes were avoided by the Church of the East. It was able to give a reason for the faith, and at the same time, it displayed a life of missionary zeal and sacrifice which has seldom been surpassed.

NOTES

1. Grant, *The Nestorians, or the Lost Tribes*, p. 72.
2. Wishard, *Twenty Years in Persia*, p. 18.
3. Saeki, *The Nestorian Monument in China*, pp. 50, 51.
4. Budge, *The Monks of Kublai Khan, Emperor of China*, pp. 30, 31.
5. Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, vol. 3, pp. 731, 732, note 2.
6. Yohannan, *The Death of a Nation*, p. 102.
7. Vambery, *History of Bokhara*, p. 32, also p. 89, note 2.
8. Neander, *General History of the Christian Religion and Church*, vol. 2, p. 183, note; Saeki, *The Nestorian Monument in China*, pp. 116-118; Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, vol. 3, pp. 731, 732, note; Draper, *History of the Intellectual Development of Europe*, pp. 290, 291.
9. Buchanan, *Christian Researches in Asia*, pp. 146, 147.
10. Among all the memorials which still remain to revive the glorious centuries of the Church of the East, this stone, which it was the privilege of the writer to study and to photograph, attracts the greatest attention.
11. Mingana, "Early Spread of Christianity," *Bulletin of John Ryland's Library*, vol. 9, p. 306.
12. *Ibid.*, vol. 9, p. 306.
13. *Ibid.*, vol. 9, p. 306.
14. Mingana, "Early Spread of Christianity," *Bulletin of John Ryland's Library*, vol. 9, p. 307.
15. *Ibid.*, vol. 9, pp. 307, 308.
16. Mingana, "Early Spread of Christianity," *Bulletin of John Ryland's Library*, vol. 10, p. 466.

17. O'Leary, *The Syriac Church and Fathers*, p. 113.
18. Mingana, "Early Spread of Christianity," *Bulletin of John Ryland's Library*, vol. 10, p. 113.
19. Abul Faraj, *Chronography*, vol. 1, p. 354.
20. Vambery, *History of Bokhara*, pp. 137, 138.
21. Pott, *A Sketch of Chinese History*, p. 81.
22. Huc, *Christianity in China, Tartary, and Thibet*, vol. 1, p. 129.
23. Mingana, "Early Spread of Christianity," *Bulletin of John Ryland's Library*, vol. 9, p. 312.
24. Abul Faraj, *Chronography*, vol. 1, p. 398.
25. Mingana, "Early Spread of Christianity," *Bulletin of John Ryland's Library*, vol. 9, p. 315.
26. Rockhill, *The Journey of William of Rubruck*, pp.109, 110.
27. *Ibid.*, pp. 141, 142.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 168.
29. See Neander, *General History of the Christian Religion and Church*, vol. 4, pp. 46-50.
30. Mosheim, *Institutes of Ecclesiastical History*, b. 3, cent. 12, pt. 1, ch. 1, par. 7, note 12.
31. M'Clintock and Strong, *Cyclopedia*, art. "Nestorians."
32. Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ch. 47, par. 31.
33. D'Orsey, *Portuguese Discoveries, Dependencies, and Missions in Asia and Africa*, pp. 232, 233.
34. Etheridge, *The Syrian Churches*, p. 89.
35. Schaff-Herzog, *The New Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, art. "Nestorians;" also, *Realencyclopaedie für Protestantische Theologie und Kirche*, art. "Nestorianer."
36. Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ch. 47, par. 38.
37. Geddes, *The Church History of Ethiopia*, pp. 87, 88.
38. *Ibid.*, pp. 311, 312.
39. Purchas, *His Pilgrimes*, vol. 8, p. 73.
40. Abudacnus, *Historia Jacobitarum*, pp. 118, 119.
41. Ross, *Religions in the World*, p. 493.

Assyrians of Basra City, Iraq

By: Sargon Yousip Potros
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On August 22, 1997, the Third Habbaniya Reunion held its meeting in the city of Toronto, Canada. And on October 24, 1997, another Assyrian gathering was held in Chicago, Illinois by the Assyrians who had lived in the city of Kirkuk, Iraq. I commend the persons who organize such functions for the reasons that: by so doing they retain their relation and link with our homeland Bet- Nahrain (Iraq); commemorate and honor some Assyrians who had worked for our Assyrian community in Iraq; and record some 20th Century Assyrian history and events, so that it will not be forgotten by the new generation who are born and live in diaspora.

It is my wish that those Assyrians who had lived in Basra would consider holding a meeting to discuss the formation of a committee so that we Basrawis would have such gatherings.

Basra, located in southeastern Iraq, is the principal seaport and one of the largest cities in Iraq. It is situated on Shatt-el-Arab river (formed

by the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers), about 60 miles from the Persian Gulf. Basra exports most of Iraq's products. The oil industry and exports of a variety of dates (for which Basra is renowned) and other products account for a large part of the revenues.

The city of Basra was originally founded by the Caliph Omar-bin-Khtab I in 638 A.D. At various times it has been dominated by Persia and Turkey. Assyrian Christianity penetrated into this region in 225 A.D. when a bishopric was established at Beit Katraye on the Persian Gulf near Bahrain. This occurred after the fall of the Parthians that gave way to the Sassanians. As a result of persecution, notably by Shapur II at about 339 A.D., a great number of Christians left Persia and headed towards the Arab side of the Persian Gulf where they preached the Assyrian Christian faith and established missionary monasteries. About 390 A.D. Abdisho built a monastery on the island of Bahrain. Prior to and subsequent to the time of Muhammad, one of the provinces of Mesopotamia (Iraq) where the Assyrian Church was strong was Maishan near the Persian Gulf, with a Metropolitan See at Basra, at one time headed by Mar Ogen. Basra became of great importance as a center of Islamic theological learning.

The Mongol expansion during the 12th to the 14th centuries caused havoc in Central Asia and the Caliphate territories, including many Assyrian churches that came to an end. The Assyrian Church in the Province of Teredon had a Metropolitan See at Basra, a bishop at Ubullah, Destenasa and Nahar-al-Marah, also came to an end between the years 1222-1260.

Basra was taken by the Turks in 1668. During World War I the British occupied Basra and used it as a supply base, and greatly improved the harbor and the city. During the Second World War the Allies sent supplies to their Soviet allies through Basra. In the postwar decades, the growth of Iraq's petroleum industry turned Basra into a major petroleum refining and exporting center. During the Iran-Iraq War (1980-88), Basra's refinery was much damaged and many of the city's buildings were destroyed by artillery bombardments, and a large number of the population fled the area. Now, with embargo in effect on Iraq, Basra port is not that busy.

When the Assyrians were still in the refugee camps at Baquba in 1920, the Patriarchal house commissioned Shamasha (deacon) Yosip Kelaita - later ordained priest - to go to Malabar, India, to cast Assyrian fonts for printing. He went to Basra and stayed at the home of a Chaldean named Yousif Shawota until he found a ship leaving for India. In Malabar he was graciously received by the Assyrian Church Metropolitan Mar Timotheus. Shamasha Yosip returned with new fonts and a new press. He established the first Assyrian printing press in Mosul, and later established a school.

In 1925, my father, the late Yousip Potros of Berwar, and the late Youawo Zaia Bet-Mar Zaia of Jilo, traveled to Basra to work in the Port. Later, many more Assyrians arrived there. Most of them found employment in the port directorate, steamship company and other commercial facilities. Also, there was an Assyrian Levy Battalion that was stationed at Margeel and the British Air Base at Shaiba.

With the establishment of the Basrah Petroleum Company, and subsequent to World War II in 1945, many more Assyrians went to Basra, especially from Habbaniya. These were mainly the demobilized Assyrian Levies who worked and lived near the oil fields in Zubair, or near the oil port in Fao.

After the end of the Second World War, the Assyrians who were working in the Port Directorate applied for a building to be allocated to them for use as a church. The facility granted to them was a building that was used by the British Army as a wireless station during the war. It was located in the Margeel district; thus the first Assyrian Church of the East since 1222 A.D. was established in Basra in a temporary building. The late Mar Yosip Khnanisho, Metropolitan of the Assyrian Church of the East in Iraq, was requested to appoint a priest for their church. The late Archdeacon Akhikar Haji was the first to serve. Mar Yosip Khnanisho also ordained two deacons, namely, *Shamasha* Gamlial Danial and the late *Shamasha* Paulos Kako. Later, a third deacon named Zaia Dawood also served in the church.

Following the July 14th 1958 Revolution in Iraq, the new government started to allocate land to the people, and so the Assyrians of Basra applied for a piece of land in order to build a church on it. This was granted with the allocation of a 200 sq.m. parcel in the Al-Jamhoria district. For this project enough funds were donated by the Assyrian community to build not only a church but also a home for the priest. The church named Mart Maryam (Virgin Mary) was consecrated in 1960 by the Metropolitan.

Archdeacon Akhikar Haji served in this church for nearly ten years. He opened summer classes to teach Assyrian language as well as Bible study. I studied in his class for two seasons. My knowledge of the Assyrian language is attributed to him. He was succeeded by Archdeacon Younan Youwil who served for more than fifteen years. He is now serving the London, England, parish. The last priest to be appointed to Basra parish was *Kasha* (priest) Youzadiq Youwil who served for more than twenty years. He left Basra during the Gulf War, and is now in Amman, Jordan, waiting to rejoin his sons in Sweden.

In 1960 the government enacted the Society Law. To this effect, the Assyrian community applied for licenses to establish two societies, one for the administration of church affairs called The

Assyrian Mercy Society, and the other for social affairs called The Rafidain Club. Later this name was changed to Assyrian Club. This club was very active in holding parties, picnics and other social activities. In 1972 both the church and the club committees invited His Holiness the late Mar Eshai Shimun, Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East, to visit the Assyrian community in Basra after nearly forty years in exile. In 1973 the two committees also invited the late Assyrian hero Malik Yacou d'Malik Ismael. Banquets were held in their honor where many distinguished people of Basra were invited. In 1975 the Assyrian Club invited some poets from the Assyrian Culture Club of Baghdad, and thus the first Assyrian Poems Festival was held.

The first chairman of the Mart Maryam Church committee was the late Yacou Isaac who later emigrated to Canada, and the first chairman of the Assyrian Club committee was Shimshon Rasho who later emigrated to the United States.

In 1968, when the Baath Party came into power in Iraq, a number of projects were initiated in Basra due to the fact that it is the key transit point for seaborne commerce, and its huge oil reserves. The projects included petrochemical complex, iron and steel enterprises, paper mill, fertilizing factory, sugar factory, cement and building material factory. Demand for workers increased considerably, and a great number went there in the seventies seeking employment, including many Assyrians. During that period some 500 Assyrian families registered in the church records. Soon after the Iraq-Iran War in 1980, and as Basra became the nearest target to Iranian bombshells, many factories stopped production and several foreign companies left the area, as did many Assyrian families.

The first Assyrian killed in this war was William John Baba, an employee in one of the factories when it was hit by Iranian bombs on the second day of the war. Later many more Assyrians were killed. But the most tragic one was when three young Assyrians were killed in combat in 1985, namely, Sanharib Yousip, Yousip Lazar and Albert Phillip.

Our family left Basra for Baghdad in 1987 when the Iranian army advanced to twenty kilometers from Basra. We lived in Baghdad for seven years, and when we decided to leave Iraq in 1994, I went to Basra to get military clearance for my two sons, and to say farewell to my city and to my community. I visited our Mart Maryam (Virgin Mary) Assyrian Church and found it abandoned; there was no priest and no followers. I met Youkhana Sada, the person responsible for the Assyrian community, who told me with great sorrow that only twenty three families remained in Basra.

Supplementary to the article - Sargon Y. Potros also sent a list of names, including the following:

1. Some Assyrians who worked in the Basra Port Directorate and the Petroleum Company.

2. Chairmen of the Church committee: Yacou Isaac, Nissan Melham and Toma Zaia.
3. Chairmen of the Assyrian Club committee: Shimshon Rasho, Yousip Anwia and Sargon Yousip.
4. Assyrian Medical Doctors: Shimoun Yacou, M.D., Benyamin Yousip, M.D. and Zaia Isaac, M.D.
5. Assyrian Engineers: Romail Nimrud, Dawood Gewargis Sada and Kaisar Youwil.
6. Assyrian Lawyers: Fareed William and Androus Dawood.
7. Assyrian High School Teachers: Raid Ishaia, Theadorous William and Rony Emmanuel.
8. Assyrian Women Teachers: *Raabi* Maria Nimrud, *Raabi* Valentine Youlyous and *Raabi* Beta Gewargis Sada.
9. Assyrian Dress Makers: Mary Yousip, Victoria Younan and Nally Alkhas.
10. Assyrian Ph.D. Holders: Dr. Robert Alexander Hanna and Dr. Martin Anwia.

He also lists names of Assyrians who had lived in

Basra and had emigrated to Canada, the United States, England, Australia and Sweden.

Sargon Y. Potros was born in Basra in 1932. He graduated from the University of Basra with a B.Sc. degree in Accountancy and Business Administration. He worked in the oil companies and Basra refinery, and was then transferred to the Planning Department in the Ministry of Oil in Baghdad where he continued working as Chief Accountant until retirement in 1994. Married to Josephine Oshana, they have two sons, Ashoor and Akad. He was very active in the Assyrian Church and the Assyrian Club. The family emigrated to Canada in 1996 after a stay of one year in Amman, Jordan. At present he is the Secretary in the Assyrian Church of the East committee in Toronto.



When **Kasha Yosip Kelaita** returned from Malabar, India, bringing with him Assyrian alphabet fonts and a printing press, he established the first Assyrian press in Mosul, Iraq, in the early 1920's, as well as an Assyrian school. This photo shows the first graduating class in 1927, along with the teachers and *Kasha* Yosip and his daughter.

Top row - Right to left: Timotheus Peyor of Eyeel, Rowel Mukhatas of Mar Bishu, Shmoel Shosho of Mar Bishu, Esho Kaku Marano of Gawar, Khizakia Khamo d'Malik Shamo of Ambe, and Benyamin Yosip Gundelove of Mar Bishu. **Middle row** - Right to left: Neesan Adam of the village (*Mata*) d'Mar Zaya of Jeelu, Yousip Esho Halaby of Mar Bishu, David Tatto Awraham of Halana, Eshaya Elisha of Mar Bishu, Siawosh Khamo of Darband, and Akhsheerash Hawil Bet Malik of Ambe. **Front row** - Right to left: Aladin Petyo of Tkhuma, *Shamasha* (deacon) Gewargis d'Bet Benyamin of Ashita, *Kasha* (priest) Yosip d'Kelaita of Mar Bishu (principal of the school) along with his daughter Ludia, and the instructor Salim of Mosul.

- Photo was submitted by **Pius Haddad of Turlock, CA. Names by Benyamin Yosip Gundelove of Australia.**

Editor's note: Youel A. Baaba, a biographer of *Kasha* Yosip Kelaita, states that over 500 students graduated from the school. The subjects taught were: Assyrian language (both classical and modern dialects), Arabic, English, mathematics, history, geography, sciences, and ethics. *Kasha* Yosip is credited with publishing twenty known books.

“D i c k i e”

A dog is not only man's best friend, but it can also be his savior sometimes!

For many decades, Mesopotamia (today's Iraq), was under the yoke of Ottoman Sultans. During the Great War, the Arabs revolted against the Turks, and the British Expeditionary Forces entered the country, liberated it from Turkish rule, and installed an Arab king to rule it. But picking up the scent of oil, the British also acquired a mandate over the country, established air bases and settled in as the mentors and protectors of the fledgling state. And to keep their hand on the pulse of the restless local “troublemakers”, they set up an intelligence network as well as recruited able-bodied Assyrian refugees from Turkey and Iran into a well-trained local military force called Assyrian Levies to guard their air bases and the Iraqi borders and, when necessary, to put down Arab or Kurdish tribal uprisings.

In 1931, Binyamin Eyou, an Assyrian, was employed as a personal bearer and interpreter for one of the British intelligence officers working in North Iraq, called Kurdistan by the Kurds. Binyamin was in his middle age, but was robust of health, brave, resourceful, and multi-lingual. Besides his mother tongue, he also spoke Kurdish and Turkish well, and passable Arabic and English.

Binyamin's intelligence officer owned a husky wolf dog named “Dickie”, which became Binyamin's charge, too. Binyamin trained, exercised, pampered, and fed it well, and the two became great friends.

While driving on a rough and bumpy road through a little valley in Kurdistan one late May afternoon, the officer's car broke down. Because they were tired and it was almost dusk, the officer decided to pitch their tent and bed down there for the night, hoping to fix the car in the morning. But the officer suddenly developed a severe stomach ailment during the night, despite the precautions he was in the habit of taking in regard to food and drinking water, and was quite sick in the morning. Binyamin nursed him for two days, but with little improvement. They ran out of rations, his employer grew weaker, and Binyamin became desperate!

Binyamin had to get some food in a hurry from one of the neighboring Kurdish villages if they were to survive. But he was faced with a dilemma! The officer was not well enough to fix or drive the car, Binyamin knew nothing about cars, and the nearest village was probably ten miles away! And how was he to leave the sick man all alone—even for a few hours? He could not bring himself to do

it, and yet what was he to do?

But his boss, sick as he was, ordered Binyamin to go. He even instructed him to take Dickie along, leaving himself in the protection of his gun only. He insisted that the dog might be of more help to Binyamin than to himself.

It was just before noontime when Binyamin reluctantly set out on foot, accompanied by Dickie, over a maze of mountain tracks. After trudging for more than three hours, they finally reached the nearest village. Binyamin purchased the needed provisions, he and his dog had something to eat, and then man and dog left the village in the afternoon and began their return journey.

But hardly were they out of the village when Dickie suddenly started to act very strangely! Blocking the path, it leapt up on its hind legs and put its forepaws on Binyamin's chest, snarling and yelping in his face. Each time he pushed the animal away and ordered it to go on, Dickie would repeat its wild behavior.

Though confident of the dog's loyalty, Binyamin began to grow suspicious of the wolfish beast when it persisted in its unusual behavior. He thought the dog had gone wild, or perhaps mad, and might attack him. Standing up on its hind legs, with its front paws on Binyamin's chest, it was almost as tall as Binyamin. And Dickie was muscled and powerful, with sharp fangs that could crush and crunch Binyamin's bones and tear away his flesh!

Carefully setting the small sack of provisions on the ground, Binyamin prepared himself for the worst. But just then the dog ran on an angle to their path, looking back and barking. Then it sat on its haunches for a moment, gazing back at Binyamin and whining as though beckoning him to follow. Puzzled, but curious, Binyamin shouldered his sack and followed the dog.

After a long and tiresome trek, Binyamin smiled to himself as their camp finally came into view. He set the sack on the ground for the last time to mop his face and rest for a few minutes. Then petting Dickie in gratitude he picked up his pack again and hurried on to tend and feed the sick and hungry officer, who was sitting on his little folding chair outside their tent, smiling and waiving weakly.

Had it not been for Dickie's intelligence and remarkable sense of direction, the two would have drifted off their course and got lost in the unfamiliar mountains at nightfall!

Golden Wedding Anniversary



**David and Shooshan on their
Wedding Day**

A surprise party was held on November 28, 1997 at Arvey's Restaurant, Chicago, IL on the occasion of the 50th Wedding Anniversary of **David S. and Shooshan David**. The dinner reception, attended by family members only, was given in their honor by their six children: Shlimon (his wife Lydia), Teddy (his wife Linda), Mary (her husband Gilbert Isaac), Marlene (her husband Aladdin Khamis), Marina David, and Victoria (her husband Gabi Yawanis).

David and Shooshan were married on December 7, 1947 at the Levy Lines in Habbaniya, Iraq, with Zorna and Dawoola (horn and drum) music provided by Amerkhan and Youkhana, the famous entertainers of Habbaniya. David worked for the Royal Air Force Levies, Iraq from 1941 until 1952. For the next eleven years he was employed by the Iraq Petroleum Company, Kirkuk, Iraq, as Chief Administration clerk in the Estates and Commissariat Department. He resigned in 1963 and landed a job as a Government Official in the capacity of a Stores Supervisor for the Iraqi Flying Association in Baghdad, Iraq.

In January 1974 the whole family left Iraq for Beirut, Lebanon where they were granted refugee status for immigration to the United States, and on November 18, 1975 arrived and settled in Chicago, IL where both

David and Shooshan worked. Following his retirement in 1991 David worked part time at Devon Bank, and Shooshan took an early retirement in November 1997.

David and Shooshan have twelve grandchildren: eight boys and four girls, all born in Chicago. David is a sports fan. When he was young he played soccer, but excelled in playing field hockey. Initially, he teamed with Levy C, a selected team from the R.A.F. Levies Civilians, and then, when the Levy C and the R.A.F. Assyrian Employees Club merged, David played hockey for the Employees Club where they won many trophies. He also played for the Iraq Petroleum Company. Alex David, one of David's grandsons, has been picked as an ice hockey player.

- Submitted by David S. David



**David and Shooshan with their 6
children: Mary, Shlimon, Marlene,
Marina, Vicky and Teddy.**



**The entire family of David and
Shooshan**

Raabi Akhtiar B. Moshi

When writing a biography of *Raabi Akhtiar Moshi* one does not know how to begin to describe him. During his lifetime he has been everywhere and has done everything. He is an educator, an author, a poet, a translator of literature, a church elder, a civic leader, and was an editor of a magazine.

Raabi Akhtiar was born in the dark days of August 1915 when our nation was being attacked by Turks and Kurds. His family fled, along with other Assyrians, to Iran first and then to Iraq, ending in the Baquba refugee camp. In Mosul he attended the Assyrian primary school for two years, before moving to Baghdad in 1926 to enter the American Mission school of *Kasha* (priest) *Khando Yonan*, where he graduated with honors in 1934. He spent four years working in *Habbaniya* before joining the Iraq Petroleum Company in Kirkuk, where he was employed for 36 years, before retiring in 1974. While in Kirkuk *Raabi Akhtiar* became a very active civic leader. Here are some of his activities:

- A secretary in the Assyrian Relief Fund.
- Accountant and Secretary in a committee that bought a school building and built the Church of Mar Gewargis.
- Secretary in school committees.
- Chairman for the Assyrian Benevolent Society in Iraq.
- Vice-President for the Assyrian Athletic Club



(Kirkuk Branch).

- Member in the Society of Authors and Intellectuals in Iraq.

In 1973, *Raabi Akhtiar* was awarded a Silver Medal for being one of the founders of the Assyrian Primary School in Kirkuk, Iraq.

As an author, *Raabi Akhtiar* has written a book on Assyrian history based on very reliable sources, an Assyrian book on medicines, and a number of historical books translated from English and Arabic languages. He has also translated a few Shakespearean plays, but above all he has translated the renowned John Stewart's

book "Nestorian Missionary Enterprise - A Church on Fire" (Church of the East) from English into Assyrian. In addition, he has composed many poems.

In 1980 *Raabi Akhtiar* emigrated to the United States, and while here he was appointed chairman of the literary committee by His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East; and for several years was the Editor-in-Chief of the "Voice From the East", a publication of the Assyrian Church of the East, Chicago, IL. In 1983 he was awarded a plaque of honor by the Assyrian National Foundation for his outstanding educational work in the city of Chicago.

This is but a partial list of the achievements of this dedicated Assyrian. Much of the information for this article came from a brief autobiography.

**Congratulations**

Basil Daniel, son of Daniel I. and Wilma Daniel of San Jose, CA graduated in December 1998 from San Jose State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering. He is currently working at Silicon Graphics Inc., a computer company.

A graduate of Baghdad College (a Jesuit High School) with top honors, Basil entered the University of Technology in Baghdad and studied engineering for three years, and then the family emigrated to the United States, and settling in San Jose. Here he enrolled at San Jose State University as a full time student and concurrently held a full time job. Basil is well-versed in Assyrian, English and Arabic languages. We applaud him for his achievements.

CONGRATULATIONS

Sabrina Julie Badal and Rony David were united in holy matrimony on May 16, 1998 by Father Jameel Wardah at Mar Zaia Assyrian Church of the East in Modesto, CA. The maid of honor was Leona David, sister-in-law of the groom, and the best man was Roby David, brother of the groom. In addition, the bridal party consisted of two flower girls, a ring bearer, four groomsmen and bridesmaids, and a junior bridesmaid.

The dinner reception was held at the Assyrian American Civic Club hall in Turlock and was attended by over 500 family and close friends including Father Jameel Wardah, Father Oshana Kanoun, Father Samuel Dinkha and Archdeacon Nenos Michael. The joyous occasion was celebrated to the music of Walter Aziz with Haroot Eskenian and his band.

The bride is the daughter of Victor and Frieda Badal of Sunnyvale, CA, and the groom is the son of Reswena David of Modesto and the late Sargon David. The groom is also the nephew of the late Father David David of San Francisco.

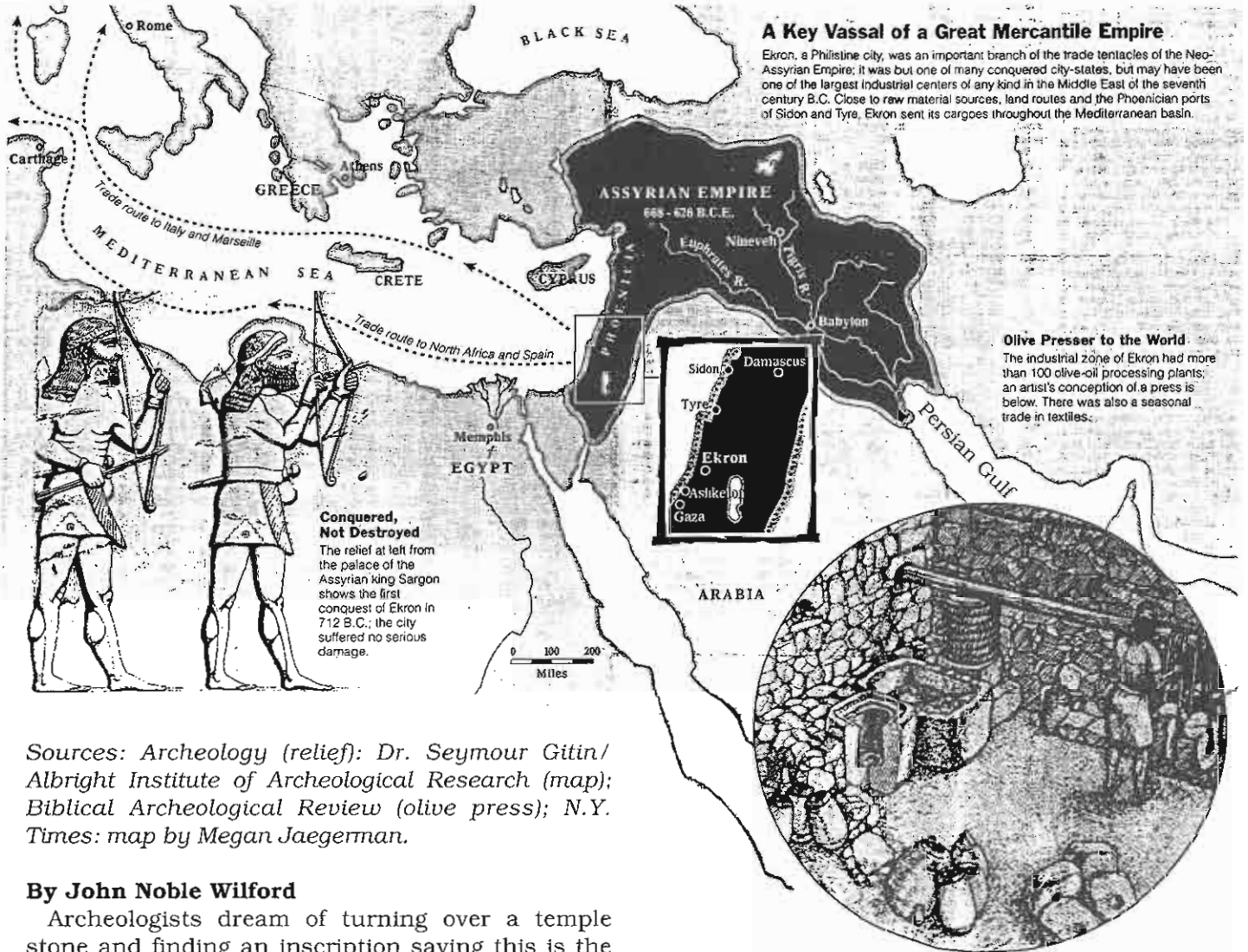
Sabrina is a graduate of San Jose State University with a degree in Occupational Therapy, and Rony is a graduate of California State University, Stanislaus with a degree in Accounting and Finance. Currently, the couple reside in San Francisco. Sabrina and Rony would like to extend a warm thank you to their families for all their love and support.



Left to right:

**Victor Badal
Sabrina, the bride
Reswena David
Rony, the groom
Frieda Badal**

Stone inscription identifies ancient Philistine city of Ekron - a major industrial city of the Neo-Assyrian Empire in the 7th Century B.C.



Sources: Archeology (relief): Dr. Seymour Gitin/Albright Institute of Archeological Research (map); Biblical Archeological Review (olive press); N.Y. Times: map by Megan Jaegerman.

By John Noble Wilford

Archeologists dream of turning over a temple stone and finding an inscription saying this is the place you are looking for. For a team of American and Israeli archeologists, the dream came true early this month.

Since 1983, they have been excavating the ruins of an ancient city at a site called Tel Mique, 20 miles southwest of Jerusalem. They had good reason to think this was the Philistine city of Ekron, mentioned in the Bible and Assyrian annals. The geography was right: where the coastal plane of ancient Philistia met the hill country of Judah. All the artifacts seemed recognizably Philistine.

On the assumption that this was Ekron, archeologists and other scholars examining the decorated pottery and evidence for advanced town planning concluded that contrary to the age-old slander, Philistine culture was no oxymoron. They could also see that this must have been one of the major industrial cities of the far-flung Neo-Assyrian empire in the seventh century B.C. That gave them important insights into how the Assyrians forged a

new imperial ideology based on mercantile principles, creating what some scholars consider the first "world market."

But the archeologists could not be absolutely sure that this was indeed Ekron until Dr. Seymour Gitin, director of the Albright Institute of Archeological Research in Jerusalem, turned over a large block of stone found near the entrance to a colonnade building at Tel Mique. His expectations were low because nothing with writing had been found there yet.

When the caked dirt was cleared away, though, he let out an unscholarly exclamation: "Oh, my God!" He saw a five-line inscription written in Phoenician script, and some of the 69 letters spelled out the name Ekron and the names of two of the city's known kings, Achish and his father Padi. The inscription recorded that Achish had

built a temple here dedicated to a goddess.

"We always felt this was Ekron, but to find the inscription makes the identification 100 percent," Dr. Gitin said. "This you don't find very often in archeology." In fact, he said, this is the first time the name of a biblical city and a list of its kings has ever been found on a site where its historical context is clear. No other such monumental inscription has been found in Israel from the biblical period. Other scholars agreed.

For one thing, the inscription could give scholars the first strong evidence of the language of the Philistines. They were descendants of the enigmatic Sea Peoples, originally from the Aegean Sea region, who arrived in large numbers on the coast of Canaan soon after 1200 B.C. Canaan was a land that included much of present-day Lebanon and Israel.

Whatever language these people first spoke, Greek or something else, in time the Philistines apparently adopted a Canaanite tongue, for the Bible portrays them as having no trouble communicating with the Israelites. Phoenician and Hebrew were dialects of the Canaanite language. But scholars have never found any unambiguous example of the writing of the Philistines, early or later.

A preliminary analysis of the inscription, Dr. Gitin said, showed that not only was the script Phoenician, but probably the language was as well. But it may have been a variation of Phoenician used by the Philistines, with differences on the order of those between British and American English.

A closer study of the inscription is being made by Dr. Gitin and Dr. Trude Dothan, an archeologist at Hebrew University in Jerusalem who is the other leader of the Tel Mique-Ekron project. They are being assisted by Dr. Joseph Naveh, a Hebrew University epigrapher, who was one of the scholars who originally suggested that the ruins might be those of Ekron.

Dr. Gitin said the inscription had already confirmed the close link between Ekron and the Neo-Assyrian empire, which in the late eighth century B.C. and most of the seventh century B.C. was the superpower of what was then considered the known world. Ekron was one of many vassal city-states in the empire and, as current excavations are revealing, must have been one of the largest industrial centers of any kind in the ancient Middle East in the seventh century B.C.

The name Achish in the text established the linkage for archeologists. Achish was the name of a Philistine king mentioned in the Bible in the Books of I Samuel and I Kings during the time of King David and King Solomon of Israel. But he is not the Achish referred to in the inscription. Instead, the Achish in the text, archeologists have determined, corresponds to the name Ikausu, who is mentioned in Assyrian annals of the seventh century B.C. as the King of Ekron.

Ikausu, scholars noted, was 1 of 12 kings of the Mediterranean coast called upon by the Assyrian king in the first quarter of the seventh century B. C. to provide building materials and their transport for the construction of a palace at Nineveh. Ashurbanipal, the successor, ordered the vassal kings of the Philistine cities, including Ikausu of Ekron, to support his military campaigns against Egypt.

The other name in the text —Padi, the father of Achish or Ikausu— is referred to in Assyrian documents at the time the empire's army conquered Ekron, which had been under the control of neighboring Judah. The Assyrians restored Ekron's status as a city-state, though now subservient to Nineveh, and reinstated Padi as its king.

The inscription thus documents a critical period in Ekron's history—its embrace by the Neo-Assyrian empire and the expansion and apparent prosperity that followed.

The stone itself attests to the city's newfound wealth, for it celebrated the construction of a new temple on the west side of a stately palace, a building of Neo-Assyrian design and one of the largest structures of its kind to be excavated in Israel.

Other digging in the last 13 years has shown that Ekron in the seventh century B.C. grew rapidly from not much more than 10 acres to a city of 85 acres, complete with an elite quarter in the center and an industrial zone containing more than 100 olive-oil processing plants.

The discovery of the inscribed stone, Dr. Gitin said, "is going to allow us to write with a great deal of assurance the history of the Neo-Assyrian empire and its revolutionary economic developments."

Through military might and political maneuvers, as well as innovative economic practices, the kings in Nineveh, the Assyrian capital on the upper Tigris River in what is now northern Iraq, controlled territory as far south as Egypt and across present-day Syria, Iraq and parts of Turkey and Iran. The empire's Phoenician traders, operating out of the ports of Tyre and Sidon, extended a Syrian influence as far west as Carthage, Sicily and Iberia. Other economic links reached east into Afghanistan and perhaps India.

In their quest for raw materials and manufactured goods, as well as new sources of silver for use as currency, the Assyrian kings created a new supranational system of political and economic power, leading to 70 years of widespread growth of urban centers, transforming cottage industries into mass production and encouraging specialization in manufacturing. The heartland of the empire was extensively explored in the 19th century by European and American archeologists who uncovered city ruins and royal documents. At the site of Ekron and in other research, scholars are concentrating on the view of

the empire from the periphery, and Dr. Gitin is convinced that this is yielding a telling picture of the empire's dynamics.

In a report on his interpretations of Ekron's imperial role, published last year by the Archeological Institute of America, Dr. Gitin wrote that the Philistine city "was apparently chosen as a focus of Assyrian economic activity because of its geographic and topographic advantages, with its proximity to sources of raw materials, land routes and Mediterranean harbors."

Archeologists were particularly impressed by the extent of Ekron's olive-oil industry. In detailed excavations of only 3 percent of the city's area, they uncovered 105 olive-oil installations, containing stone presses, ceramic storage vessels and other artifacts.

When two such factories were reconstructed, researchers tested their output and determined that Ekron's estimated overall annual production of olive oil could have reached 1,000 tons, or 290,000 gallons. This is the equivalent of 20 percent of Israel's current level of export olive-oil production.

Before this time, archeologists said, there is no evidence of olive-oil production in Ekron and very little elsewhere in the region, most of it for local consumption. "This is a prime example of the innovative policy of industrial specialization and mass production which concentrated large-scale industrial activity in one center," Dr. Gitin said.

Other artifacts at Ekron pointed to a significant textile industry and to extensive foreign contacts, presumably through trade. Among the ruins are goblets and bottles from Assyria, ceramics from Greece and Carthage, and Israelite and Phoenician religious objects. And there are hoards of silver in small ingots and jewelry.

Another of the Neo-Assyrian innovations, it seems, was the widespread use of silver as a currency to supplement and, in some cases, replace conventional modes of payment by goods and services. In Spain, new silver mines were opened to meet the increased currency demands.

At the Ekron site, archeologists came upon four large collections of silver, some hidden in cooking jugs buried beneath the floors and others found in a hole in a large stone— perhaps an early form of a wall safe.

Dr. Michael Notis, a metallurgist at Lehigh University, is analyzing the silver to determine its origin. Other scholars praise the comprehensive excavations at Ekron and have generally endorsed Dr. Gitin's assessment of the innovative dynamics of the Neo-Assyrian empire. But they cautioned against possibly exaggerating the role of Ekron in the empire, just because the research is new and in some cases surprising. Other cities, like Tyre and Sidon, were probably more important to the empire, they pointed out.

Ekron's time of prosperity was fleeting, as was

the Neo-Assyrian empire's. In the late seventh century B. C., first Egypt and then Babylon broke away from the empire, and Babylonian forces conquered Nineveh in 612. Ekron itself fell to the Babylonians of Nebuchadnezzar in 603, and the entire city and its grand palace with Achish's designatory stone became ruins.

Then the Philistines largely disappeared from history.

CONGRATULATIONS



Julie Nasser, daughter of Assyrian Foundation of America members, Nathan and Helen Nasser, Fremont, CA, graduated in June 1998 from Santa Clara University, CA with a Bachelor of Science degree in Finance. Currently, Julie is employed at Charles Schwab & Co. brokerage house in San Francisco, and concurrently studying for her Series 7 license to be a stockbroker. In the future she hopes to attend graduate school to receive her Masters in Business Administration.

We also received a letter from Julie in which she states: "I wish to thank the Assyrian Foundation of America for all their support and encouragement while I was receiving my education at Santa Clara University. Enclosed is a check for \$50 to go towards the education fund. The Foundation was gracious enough to help me with my education, and I want to do a little to help in return. I hope all young Assyrians would strive to further their education. Thank you for being a support in our lives."

Editor's Note: In the past, Julie has made donations to our education program.

Habbaniya Bus Brothers



In 1950 a group of Assyrian students, 18 boys and 4 girls, from the Royal Air Force Base at Habbaniya, would travel to Ramadi, 21 miles away, to continue their high school education. These students would walk to the London Gate where they would hop on the bus, driven by Yaseen, to take them to the school. The boys of this group formed a junior soccer team under the name "Habbaniya Bus Brothers". In May 1951, [Phillip N. Benjamin's] Junior Knock-out Cup was awarded to them when they defeated the Habbaniya School in a lively match. [details of the match appeared in *The Iraq Times* newspaper in a report by Mikhael K. Pius].

Front row - Left to right: Shimon Emmanuel and Wiska Khammo (Basil K. Pius). **Middle row** - Left to right: Shmoel Kamber, Albert Phillip, Khoshaba Yacoub Aboona and Clarence Vincent. **Back row** - Left to right: Youash G. Tamras, Atniel David, Wilson Warda, William Youkhana, Shmoel Lazar, William Khoshaba and Zaia Moshi.

- Submitted by Youash G. Tamras, Australia

This photo shows **Youash G. Tamras** (on the left) and the Assyrian soccer legend **Ammo Baba**. This was Ammo's first visit to Australia on October 3, 1998. He went there for medical treatment as well as to visit his Assyrian people and friends of bygone days, such as Youash Tamras, Zaia Shawel, Awimalk Haider, Youel Gewargis, William Daniel, and others. Youash and Ammo were the first two Assyrians from Iraq to go abroad in 1950 to play in a junior soccer game in Egypt. [Aram Karam was the first Assyrian player to take part in an international soccer match in Turkey at the end of 1951].

- Submitted by Youash G. Tamras, Australia



David Warda, presently of Sydney, Australia, was an active member of the Assyrian Foundation of America for many years when he lived in the San Francisco Bay Area. He is currently active in the Assyrian Australian Association Nineveh Club as secretary. On the 18th Anniversary of the Club, David was honored with the presentation of the Life Member Award for the year 1998. He has kept up his contact with the Foundation through his subscription to Nineveh magazine. His wife's name is Frangie, and they have a son James and a daughter Wendy.

Left: David Warda as a Senior Scout. Photo taken on January 16, 1948 at Habbaniya, on the occasion of his being awarded the A.O.C. Badge by A.O.C. of Royal Air Force Station Habbaniya.

Right: David Warda fifty years later



Elated To Humiliation

By Mikhael K. Pius

Sometimes our moments of elation can turn into humiliation, deflating our ego like a punctured balloon! I had such an experience in April 1953 when I was called upon to cover a field and track meet. The meet was a Royal Air Force Iraq Command athletic championships held annually at Habbaniya.

Habbaniya was a 4-square-mile fenced-in R.A.F. base, 55 miles west of Baghdad city. The main military section was occupied by a thousand R.A.F. personnel and officers' families, and one corner of it was populated by more than 15 thousand local inhabitants, the majority of which were Assyrians. This local population included civilian workers and their families and a contingent of R.A.F. Iraq Levies with their families. Levies was a smart multi-racial local force, dominated by Assyrians. The Force served the British loyally for more than 35 years, in which time they guarded the R.A.F. air bases and their various military installations in Iraq, protected Iraq's borders, and fought for the British in the two world wars and in various local campaigns.

I was one of the hundreds of local civilian clerks employed at the air base and one of the several local sports free-lancers or "stringers" contributing to a British owned daily newspaper, an only English-language paper called *The Iraq Times*, published in Baghdad. My sports reports and other copy had been appearing regularly in the paper for two years when the R.A.F. Physical Fitness Officer officially invited me to act as his reporter on the occasion mentioned. I was rather surprised by the honor, for he certainly had R.A.F. personnel more capable than I for the job. Elated, however, I promptly accepted the assignment. But not without trepidation!

Because I was coy, I'd usually make myself as inconspicuous as a reporter as possible. While standing or sitting among the spectators, I'd scribble a few hasty notes on the sly from which I wrote my report. But for that big event, I finally had to "come out of the woodwork" and act my part.

It was a spring day, but a hot afternoon. It proved a test of nerves for me walking to the official seat allotted to me among the British game officials in the center of the field, with hundreds of spectators watching. But I made it—profusely sweating but without fainting!

My seat with the British score recorders had a small board imprinted "Press" hanging on to my front of the long table. The table, under a canopy, overlooked the pavilion occupied by the air base's Air Officer Commanding, the Station Commander, and R.A.F. officers and their families. Seated in the "grandstand" rows of chairs shaded over by big multi-colored umbrellas, were the R.A.F. airmen and NCOs. Both the pavilion and the grandstand were

gaily decorated with strings of colored bunting, fluttering in the breeze. And standing around the field, in the hot sun, were the local spectators.

The Press Liaison Officer offered to help me get the information I needed and the two score recorders were very co-operative. Everyone was friendly and helpful and treated me as an equal. Someone offered me a "fag" [cigarette] and another brought me a glass of cold lemon squash, which I certainly needed to wet my parched mouth!

The competition consisted of 17 field and track events—various short- and long-distance races, hurdle and relay races, javelin, discus, and shotput, high and long jumps, hop-step-and-jump, tug-of-war, etc.—in which seven R.A.F. unit teams from Habbaniya took part. There were teams also from R.A.F. Stations in Shaibah and Basrah in the South, and from Amman (Jordan), and Mauripur (Pakistan).

The meet opened when the smart Levy band led the competing teams around the field with stirring martial music in a march past and concluded with "God Save the King" following the presentation of the trophies by the A.O.C. Music blaring over the loud-speakers, between athletic score announcements, and lusty cheers from the spectators lent excitement and gaiety to the colorful atmosphere.

When all was said and done, I left for home with a personal sense of elation and with a magnanimous view of the British. I soon turned my notes into a type-written manuscript and promptly mailed it to Baghdad, impatiently looking forward to seeing my report published in *The Iraq Times* a few days later.

Despite my status as the official R.A.F. reporter for the meet, the absence of journalistic competition, the public exposure I had, the attack of nerves I suffered, and the time, effort, and anticipation I expended, my report was, for some reason... NOT PUBLISHED by the paper!

1999 Board of Directors of the Assyrian Foundation of America

At a general membership meeting on November 29, 1998, the following officers were elected to the Board of Directors:

President	Pnoel Shamun
Vice-President	Belles Yelda
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Treasurer	Julius N. Shabbas
Chair, Welfare	Martin Jacob
Chair, Education	Sargon Michael
Chair, Membership	Sargon Warda
Chair, Social	Flora Kingsbury
Chair, Building (Appointed)..	Charles Yonan

Let's Help Our Stranded Assyrians in Amman, Jordan, Now

By Basil (Wisaka) K. Pius

Last September, I went on a personal family mission to Amman, Jordan. I spent 45 days there and it was an eye opening experience, to say the least. Actually I had seen Amman once before in 1989 and enjoyed my two day stay then, but this time it was all so very different. I met a great many brave and deserving Assyrians from Iraq who have taken a big risk by leaving Iraq. These fellow Assyrians have truly left me thinking - what can I do to help them?

This is why I am writing this article. I feel since the Assyrian Foundation of America has been investing time and money in this humanitarian endeavor, it deserves, as well as *Nineveh* readers, to know what another concerned fellow Assyrian saw first hand.

There are two types of displaced Assyrians in Amman. The first group is the lucky ones who have loving relatives in the West keeping them financially supported regularly. I met more than two dozen of these Assyrian families in person, and they certainly appreciate the benevolent generosity of their relatives. They are able to get by, for the most part. However, they are not certain how long they will be able to stay in Jordan, since they have difficulty getting visas to emigrate to Western countries. Naturally, they are particularly concerned about the unexpected health problems which sometimes force them to visit the doctor's office, pharmacy, or even the hospital, and it is not cheap. But they have not given up hope. Many of them are college graduates and skilled laborers.

The second group of our fellow Assyrians is the impoverished ones. Frankly, I learned a lot about these destitute Assyrians from *Raabi* Farida Benyamin Adam who has contact with them quite regularly. They do not have relatives in the West nor are they allowed to work.

I visited with *Raabi* Farida Adam three times while I was in Amman. I found her to be dedicated, trustworthy and a loving lady who has an amazing determination to help the neediest Assyrians, sometimes offering her own money which she receives regularly from a brother in the West. She told me that the funds she receives from the Assyrian Foundation of America through Julius N. Shabbas, *Nineveh* Editor, are distributed to the very needy and sick Assyrians who simply do not have any money. She admits that sometimes it is very hard for her to make these difficult decisions.

Another noble quality Farida has is definitely her love for her mother tongue. In fact, she volunteers her own time to teach the language to the idle youngsters who otherwise can't attend government schools. They all love her and respect her. She told me that as long as she is in Amman, she will



Basil (left) with Farida in her one-room apartment



Basil (3rd left) with displaced Assyrians from Iraq

dedicate herself to helping our fellow Assyrians. She has also received funds from the Assyrian Foundation of America for the children's education. She hopes that eventually one day she too would be reunited with her brothers in the West.

When the Assyrians (and other Iraqis) go to the Western embassies in Amman, the staff realize that these displaced applicants do not have the necessary clout or assertiveness to sustain their side of the story before they are rejected. But I do know that if these people have the backing of a larger body, an aggressive organization or group, the story will be quite different. This simply means that we, as individuals and as Assyrian organizations, wherever we may be in the West, need to get actively involved. If we cannot contribute financially, at least we must let our government representatives realize the urgency for this tragedy and insist that they bring it up to their respective embassies. I firmly believe that these

displaced Assyrians deserve a better treatment by the Western consulates in Amman.

I'm looking into this matter myself by trying to make contact with the responsible Assyrians in high offices in the United States. I pray that many others will do the same. We must push forward collectively and individually for this noble cause.

In some cases, the visit of a sponsoring relative to Amman, and meeting with the consular officer in person can help. At least this was true in our quest as American citizens to bring home our brother. Before my trip to the consul in Amman, not even our Congressman's repeated cables of request were making much of a dent. And neither did our private lawyer's challenge from a distance.

As an American citizen, I had unlimited access to the United States Embassy in Amman, but naturally it is not the same for an Iraqi citizen, unless there is a compelling reason for it. More importantly, the consulate staff will not brush you off, but you'll be able to explain your relatives' side of the story.

Dear readers, let's do what we can to help out. Please accept my best wishes and my appreciation. Let's make the New Year a better one for our brothers and sisters in Amman, Jordan.

The Legend Ammo Baba



Ammo Baba flanked by Jacob E. Yohanan and his wife, Penny

The legend **Ammo Baba**, the great soccer player, was invited from Baghdad, Iraq for an honorary night which was organised by The Gilgamesh Cultural Centre, Australia, along with five other well known Assyrians in their fields, from several countries around the world.¹

On the night of 13th November, 1998 The Assyrian Australian Association (Nineveh Club) presented a memorable party in Ammo's honour. Video clips of Arab Cup tournaments were screened showing him as the coach of The National Team. There was a video screened that was

received on the day of the party from the USA, showing interviews with friends and supporters of Ammo, describing his life in soccer history. Also, during the night several soccer players, who were part of the same era, were called upon to join in a "This is your Life" style show.

Ammo was welcomed at all of Nineveh Club's parties as an honorary guest and at one of these parties, I took the opportunity along with my wife, Penny, to have a photo taken with him, as an old fan of his.

It is a happy occasion to all Assyrians here to have the legend Ammo amongst us and to have the opportunity to meet him.

- 1 Hanibal Alkhas - (Painting-Artist) -Iran
- Nebu Issaby - (Music Composer-Conductor) -USA
- Nimrod Simono - (Assyrian Literature) -Iran
- Prof. Konstantin Matveev - (Historian) -Russia
- Benyamin Gundelove - (Assyrian Literature) - Australia

- Submitted by Jacob E. Yohanan
of St. Pauls, Australia

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Youel A. Baaba, Alamo, CA	100.00
S. Dick Sargon, Danville, CA	250.00
Ted Jacob, Danville, CA	250.00

Donations in Memory of Benjamin B. Pius

The Assyrian Foundation of America has received a total sum of \$1350 from the following contributors, through Mikhael K. Pius, in memory of his nephew, Benjamin B. Pius. These funds, designated to needy Assyrian families in Amman, Jordan, were sent on December 8, 1998 to Farida B. Adam, the Assyrian Foundation source, for distribution. As usual, Farida will submit a list of recipients. In her

letter dated December 13, 1998 Farida confirms receipt of these funds as well as the Assyrian Foundation's funds.

Shimon H. Amadin, Modesto, CA	\$100.00
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(\$200 in memory of George Isaacs)	
Anonymous	75.00
Warda G. Mikhail, Chicago, IL	100.00

Note:

Subsequent to the above we also received the following donations which would be forwarded to Amman, Jordan at a later date:

Mary G. Mirza, Skokie, IL	10.00
Shumon P. Pius, Madison, WI	50.00
Fred Rustam, Arizona City, AZ	50.00
Jenni S. Putrus, Skokie, IL	30.00
Fairouz Kelaita, Australia	55.68

Editor's Note:

Mikhael K. Pius, in a note to me, wishes to reiterate his heartfelt appreciation to the generous contributors in memory of his nephew.

The Arabic-Assyrian Dictionary

The Assyrian Aid Society (AAS) led a campaign to publish and distribute 3,000 copies of an Arabic-Assyrian Dictionary ("Bahra") in North Iraq. This is the first such dictionary for our Assyrian people and fills an important need as they are teaching school in our language there. Because Assyrians educated in Iraq were taught in Arabic, many words, especially technical and scientific ones, were known by them in Arabic but not in Assyrian. Such a dictionary would be a key for translators, educators and researchers in our Assyrian language. It is also very important for the parents because they too can use it to learn the Assyrian words along with their children. Now that the first class of students has completed its primary level of education in Assyrian, the Assyrian Aid and Social Society-Iraq has been granted the right to teach the curriculum in Assyrian to secondary and high school level students.

The dictionary's authors are Younan Hozaiah and Andriuos Youkhana who reside in North Iraq. It was a monumental job. In an interview with the Assyrian Aid Society, Younan Hozaiah said that the words they chose were needed based on their experience in translating the official Assyrian curriculum. At this stage they regard it as an aid for teaching rather than being a comprehensive dictionary, but it is a first step toward developing such a dictionary.

Copies of the dictionary have been distributed free of charge to all teachers, social and cultural organizations, Assyrian media groups and students above the initial grades. And there has been a great demand for this dictionary from Assyrians in neighboring Arabic-speaking countries. Four hundred copies have been sent to Syria at no charge. The Assyrian Aid Society is planning to re-publish this dictionary in the United States.

Editor's Note:

The Assyrian Foundation of America donated \$1,000 towards the production of the dictionary.

IN MEMORIAM

Reverend Benjamin D. Urshan

Benjamin David Urshan, age 91, a resident of Rio Rancho / Albuquerque, New Mexico for 32 years, died October 21, 1998. Reverend Urshan was born in Abajaloo, Urmia, Iran, on October 28, 1906. He is survived by his loving wife, Alice Anita, married 66 years, daughter Joy Tschawuschian, Corrales,

New Mexico, son David Urshan, Duluth, MN and son Paul Urshan, Orlando, FL; nine grandchildren and four great grandchildren. Reverend Urshan is preceded in death by five brothers, Andrew, Timothy, Joseph, Benjamin & Josephus. He is also survived by many nieces and nephews.



Reverend Urshan pastored several churches in Canada and the United States and served as a

missionary to Iran for approximately two years. After his pastoral retirement, he served on the United Pentecostal Church International Curriculum Committee for 14 years.

Reverend Urshan is the author of "Survivor", a story of his life, having survived three massacres in

his homeland during World War I. During a 22 day, 300 mile death march, about 1/3 of the 150,000 Assyrian refugees died. He had seen enough sickness and death to last several lifetimes. Included in this tragedy was the fact that, as such a young boy, he had to bury his own father.

Shortly thereafter, in 1918, with the help of two British soldiers, he was taken in at an orphanage, later found by his step-mother and taken to Kermanshah. With the help of his brother Andrew, and after staying in Bombay, India for one year, Reverend Urshan was sent to England where he was taken in by the Thompsons, a fine English family, where he stayed until 1923 receiving his education. He then journeyed to the United States where he stayed on Ellis Island for 35 days, but due to a filled quota, he was returned to England. Later, he made the steamer trip back to Montreal, Canada where he worked and studied with his brother, Andrew.

In 1927, at the age of 21, he began his ministry throughout Canada and eventually the United States, where he met and married his wife, Alice.

As a result of his early experiences in life, he was tremendously patriotic and had a great love for the Stars and Stripes and the freedoms that we enjoy in this country.

Reverend Urshan has touched the hearts and lives of many people in his lifetime, as his life has been one of dedication to the service of God and to the good of mankind. He has been instrumental in enhancing the spiritual lives of many, and his uncompromising, unwavering faith in the Almighty God has inspired all who have encountered him in life.

He will be deeply mourned and ever loved by his wife, entire family and friends...

- Submitted by the family

Almas Badal-Chamaki

Almas Badal-Chamaki was born in Urmia, Iran on May 3, 1916 and passed away in Palo Alto, California on April 30, 1998. The funeral service was held at St. John's Assyrian Presbyterian Church in Turlock, CA and was presided over by Rev. Dr. George Shahbaz. She was laid to rest at Turlock Memorial Park and was eulogized by family and friends at a memorial luncheon. Almas was preceded in death by her beloved husband, Pius Badal-Chamaki, in 1990, to whom she was married in 1942 in Abadan, Iran.

Almas was only two years old and an orphan during the Assyrian exodus from Urmia, Iran in 1918 to escape the ravages of war. Because of this fact, she had deep interest in the welfare of children. Almas studied nursing in Kermanshah, Iran, and worked for the National Iranian Oil Company's Masjidi-Sulaiman in Abadan.

With a very broad interest in different subjects, Almas was well-versed in the Assyrian language,

English, Persian, Turkish, and a little bit of Armenian. She was greatly devoted to her church, and extremely generous in charitable work. In the words of Martha Yosiph of Turlock, a close friend of Almas, "I can honestly say that she lived by the fruits of the spirit. A loving, hospitable and friendly person, Almas' face would light with joy and kind words when one would visit her. She was a knowledgeable person and an avid reader. Gentle, kind-hearted, intelligent, Almas was a caring mother, devoted to her family and admired by all those who knew her."

Almas, who was a resident of Modesto for twenty years, is survived by three daughters: Annette Benyamin (her husband Ninos), June Badal, and Julia Badal-Chamaki; and four grandchildren. May God rest her soul in peace, and may her cherished memory bring comfort to the hearts of all those who loved her. - Submitted by June Badal

Samrida Moushipour



Samrida Moushipour, a devoted wife and beloved mother, passed to eternity September 3, 1998. Samrida was born May 24, 1916 in the town of Armavir, Russia, to Younathan Yalda and Helen Malik Badal, both of Sepurghan, Urmia. The family, along with many other Assyrian families, had sought refuge in Armavir due to

unsettled conditions in Urmia. Soon after her birth, the family returned to their home in Sepurghan, where Samrida spent her infancy. Later, at the start of World War II, as injustice and catastrophe was visited on our Assyrian people, obliging them to flee from the various cities and towns in Urmia, Samrida's family went to Baghdad, Iraq. There, Samrida grew and completed her education, graduating from the Assyrian School run by Reverend Khando of the Assyrian Evangelical Church of Baghdad.

In 1932, Samrida again moved with her family to settle in the city of Kermanshah, Iran. There she became a teacher in the Anowari School, whose Principal was Rabi Ama Ayoubkhan. During this period, Samrida also taught Sunday school at the Assyrian Evangelical Church of Kermanshah. In 1938 she married Youkhanan Moushe of Gulpashan. God blessed them with three daughters and one son. Eldest daughter Edna, then daughter Eliene, son Edison and youngest daughter Emma.

In 1969, Samrida, with her husband and family, moved to Tehran, Iran. There she continued to

raise her family, but in a few years misfortune struck, as her husband Youkhanan fell with an incurable disease. In the next ten years, Samrida took care of him with great love and meekness of spirit. She ministered to all his needs until 1972, when it was God's will that her husband of 34 years pass to eternal life.

Then in 1980, as her daughters Edna and Eliene had left to start their own family, Samrida, her son Edison and daughter Emma moved to San Francisco, and in 1982, she made her final move with her son to Modesto, California. There she became a diligent member of the Assyrian Women's Aid Committee. Tragedy struck Samrida again in 1989 when her daughter Eliene, then married to Ninev Ovro, passed to eternal life unexpectedly.

God had blessed Samrida with good health until the past few years, when she suffered heart problems and arthritis. She was obliged to enter the hospital occasionally, the last time being August 26, 1998. Then, on September 3, 1998, it was God's will that she pass from this temporary life to eternity.

Samrida is survived by her eldest daughter Edna, and her husband Yoave Police; son Edison Moushipour, and his wife Elizabeth; and daughter Emma and her husband Dr. Lincoln Malik; and seven grandchildren. She also leaves behind sister Lida and her husband Mathew Ganja; sister Freda and her husband Ninos Shabbas; brother Sargon Yelda and wife Nanajan and brother Belles Yelda and wife Linda.

We wish her family and friends solace and God's grace, and pray the Lord enter her into His everlasting kingdom. - Submitted by the family

Odisho Zacharia Latchin



Odisho Zacharia Latchin, aged 92, passed away on November 14, 1998, in a Chicago hospital after a short illness. His Grace Mar Aprim Khamis and five other priests officiated at his funeral at Mar Gewargis Assyrian Church of the East in Chicago, attended by over 300 mourners, and

a breakfast was served at the church in his memory following the interment at Montrose Cemetery.

A native of Galliyeh D'Barkhu in Hakkiari Mountains, the late Odisho was seven years old when his family fled their village, along with thousands of Assyrian villagers in Turkey, soon after the start of World War I. Their men fought gallantly, but were greatly outnumbered by

Turkish soldiers and hordes of Kurds, and were chased down to Salamas in Persia. From Salamas they linked up with the Assyrians in Urmia, from where they retreated in mass, three years later, against overwhelming enemy forces, through Hamadan, Persia, to the British refugee camps in Baquba, near Baghdad. Many thousands were killed, among them Odisho's father, mother, and older brother, during the tragic exodus, while many thousands of others perished from hunger, thirst, exhaustion and diseases. Odisho, orphaned, was raised by an aunt.

In 1924 Odisho joined the R.A.F. Iraq Levies when he was 17 years old, serving for 22 years. And three years after his enlistment, he married Khazi, daughter of Adam Darmo, which union produced six children. Shortly after the end of the Second World War many Levy soldiers were discharged from the Force as redundant. Odisho was among them. But he worked as a civilian for the R.A.F. for ten more years and continued working for the Iraqis for another 11 years after R.A.F. Station of Habbaniya was handed over to the Iraqi Government in May 1955. He then relocated, with his family, to Baghdad, where he ran a small business of his own for five years. In 1979 his wife Khazi emigrated to this country, followed soon after by her husband Odisho and shortly thereafter by son Benyamin and his family, all settling in Chicago, where Odisho had been living ever since. Before coming to the U.S. they stayed for a while with their other son, Zacharia and his wife Helen, who had previously settled in England.

Odisho, who lost his wife in 1983, is survived by two sons: Zacharia (wife Helen) - Modesto, and Benyamin (wife Shameram) - Chicago; four daughters in Chicago: Asmar and Jane Odisho, Maimy Mamook, and Khatun Haroon; 21 grandchildren and 39 great-grandchildren. May his soul rest in peace.

- Submitted by Mikhael K. Pius

Sankhirob Yaldaei



Sankhirob, son of David and Kristina Yaldaei, was born on November 15, 1933 in Baghdad, Iraq. He entered eternal life on September 1, 1998 in Brühl, Germany.

The funeral service was held at the St. Servatius Catholic Church, officiated by Father Liewerscheidt in German, and Pastor Emmanuel Youkhana of

Mar Shimon Bar Sabaia Church of Wiesbaden in

the Assyrian language. The eulogy was given by his nephew Rameil Yaldaei of San Jose.

He was interred at the Südfriedhof Cemetery in his hometown of Brühl. Following the funeral a memorial lunch attended by a large number of friends and family was served at the church hall. On September 11 a memorial service was also arranged by our brother Sargon in San Jose at the Assyrian Church of the East.

When my brother Sankhirob was about three years old, the family returned to Iran. Father's job took us to Abadan, Kermanshah, Tehran and to Urmia. After high school education Sankhirob joined father in Kuwait, working at the Kuwait Petroleum Co., thus contributing to family finances. In 1957 he returned to Urmia and started his own transportation business. In 1958 he married Julia Ovrachim Joseph, and they were blessed with four children.

From 1964 to 1986 the family lived in Tabriz and Esfahan. In Tabriz Sankhirob was employed by the Public Health Office serving as General Manager of Transportation and Maintenance. In Esfahan he held a managerial position at the Kerosene and Fuel Distribution Company, and later he was the transportation supervisor at the Flour Corporation of U.S.A.

During the Islamic Revolution he started a trucking business until the family's departure to Germany in 1986. They finally settled in Brühl where he was very close to our brother Sarkhadun.

Since 1980 he had a couple of heart attacks, but he remained in fairly stable condition. It was unfortunate that we would lose him to liver failure caused by undetected hepatitis B virus. During his ordeal with health problems he was blessed with his wife Julia and daughter Sabrina's loving tender care.

Sankhirob is survived by his wife Julia; four children: Sabrina, Nineveh, Ninos and David - they all live in Germany, except Ninos who resides in New York; three grandchildren: Donna, Eddi and Spencer; two brothers: Sargon of San Jose, Prof. Dr. Sarkhadun of Köln, Germany, and me, his only sister.

For those who knew him, he was a passionately genuine Assyrian enriching all the lives he touched. He was a man of great natural dignity and honesty. His kindness, sense of humor, hospitality and love of music were well known.

We the family will never forget his unconditional love and support towards us all. As we mourn his loss, may he rest in peace and may the Lord bless his soul.

- Submitted by Sweetlana Yaldaei-Jamal

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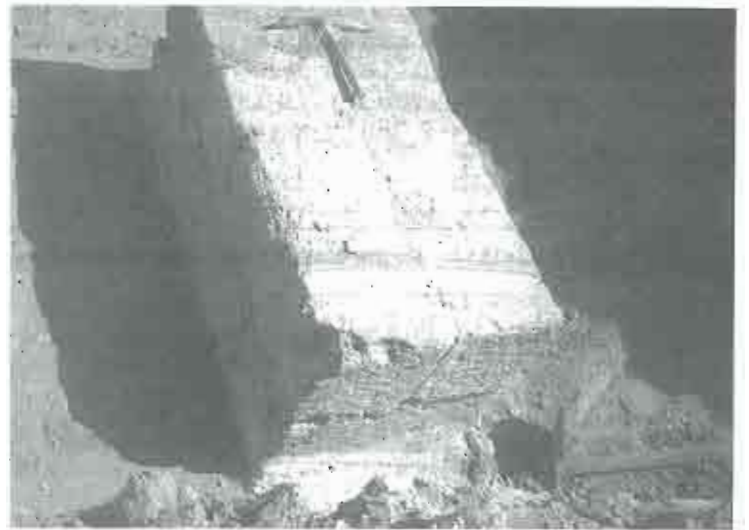
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הצהרת קבלה

בין קבוצת המעבידים לבין קבוצת המעובדים

מטרת המסמך היא להבהיר את תנאי העסקה והתחייבויות שיתקיימו בין הצדדים.

הצדדים תחת המילים:

1. לטובת \$ 10,000 יועדו לרכישת דירה חדשה, אשר תישלם ביוני 1998. מטרת ההוצאה היא להבטיח את קיומה של קבוצת המעבידים, ולסייע להם להתמודד עם אתגרים כלכליים. מטרת ההוצאה היא להבטיח את קיומה של קבוצת המעובדים, ולסייע להם להתמודד עם אתגרים כלכליים. מטרת ההוצאה היא להבטיח את קיומה של קבוצת המעבידים, ולסייע להם להתמודד עם אתגרים כלכליים.

2. לטובת \$ 2,000 יועדו לרכישת דירה חדשה, אשר תישלם ביוני 1998. מטרת ההוצאה היא להבטיח את קיומה של קבוצת המעבידים, ולסייע להם להתמודד עם אתגרים כלכליים. מטרת ההוצאה היא להבטיח את קיומה של קבוצת המעובדים, ולסייע להם להתמודד עם אתגרים כלכליים. מטרת ההוצאה היא להבטיח את קיומה של קבוצת המעבידים, ולסייע להם להתמודד עם אתגרים כלכליים.

3. מטרת המסמך היא להבהיר את תנאי העסקה והתחייבויות שיתקיימו בין הצדדים. מטרת המסמך היא להבהיר את תנאי העסקה והתחייבויות שיתקיימו בין הצדדים. מטרת המסמך היא להבהיר את תנאי העסקה והתחייבויות שיתקיימו בין הצדדים.

بِحَقِّهِ دَاوَمًا تَعُوذُ لِسُكُونِهِ
دِكْرَهُ حَقِيقًا لَوْ لَمْ يَكُنْ حَقِيقًا دَائِمًا
أَفْ لَقَاتِيكَ أَفْ لَقَاتِيكَ دَمْعُهُ
لَذُتْ - سَيْتُكَ هَلِيْمَةٌ دَمْعُهُ!
بِتَجِدُ تَلْمَحًا دَائِمًا دَمْعُهُ لِحَقِّهِ دَاوَمًا
نَهْمُهُ فَيَلْتَمِسُ مَدْبُوتَهُ أَفْ يَجْمَعُ
سَوْءًا لَيْسَ تَكْمَلُ بِلَا مَلْحَمَةٍ تَلِيْلًا دَائِمًا
بِلَقْدَمِهِ مِنْ هَوَاوِهِ حَقِيقًا أَفْ يَجْمَعُ
تَهْدِي دَائِمًا مَضَلَّكَ دَائِمًا لَيْسَ تَكْمَلُ حَقِيقًا
أَفْ هَوَاوُهُ هَوَاوُهُ دَمْعُهُ دَمْعُهُ لَذُتْ
دَمْعُهُ مَلْحَمًا سَيْتُكَ دَمْعُهُ هَوَاوُهُ
قَائِمًا تَهْدِي حَقِيقًا لَعَلَّكَ تَلْمَحًا؟
لَيْسَ لَيْسَ مَلْحَمًا بِلَا مَلْحَمَةٍ بِلَا مَلْحَمَةٍ
بِلَا مَلْحَمَةٍ هَوَاوُهُ دَائِمًا تَلْمَحًا
حَقِيقًا - ذُتْ لِحَقِّهِ مَدْبُوتَهُ 19
لِحَقِّهِ لِحَقِّهِ حَقِيقًا مَدْبُوتَهُ
أَفْ تَهْمُهُ سَوْءًا يَأْتِي حَقًّا مَدْبُوتَهُ
لِحَقِّهِ دَائِمًا هَبِيْعَةٌ لِحَقِّهِ مَدْبُوتَهُ
تَهْمُهُ حَقِيقًا دَائِمًا دَمْعُهُ هَوَاوُهُ
سَوْءًا لَيْسَ يَأْتِي حَقًّا تَهْمُهُ سَيْتُكَ!
تَكْمَلُ لِحَقِّهِ بِلَا مَلْحَمَةٍ هَبِيْعَةٌ
تَكْمَلُ لِحَقِّهِ بِلَا مَلْحَمَةٍ هَبِيْعَةٌ
قَائِمًا لَعَلَّكَ يَجْمَعُ مَدْبُوتَهُ حَقِيقًا!
نَسْفَتُهُ حَقِيقًا وَجِبْ بِلَا مَلْحَمَةٍ
حَقًّا سَيْتُكَ هَوَاوُهُ تَهْمُهُ لِحَقِّهِ تَهْمُهُ
مَدْبُوتَهُ حَقًّا تَهْمُهُ تَهْمُهُ تَلْمَحًا
دِكْرَهُ لَعَلَّكَ هَلِيْمَةٌ لَيْسَ تَكْمَلُ??
قَلْبِي يَمْتَلِئُ هَلِيْمَةٌ تَهْمُهُ
تَهْمُهُ مَدْبُوتَهُ لَعَلَّكَ حَقًّا تَهْمُهُ
مَدْبُوتَهُ تَكْمَلُ لِحَقِّهِ وَتَهْمُهُ
لَيْسَ هَوَاوُهُ حَقًّا تَهْمُهُ دَمْعُهُ

* * * * *

تکلم لبيبه

بند : مہینہ جمعہ تک ، روزہ

تکلم لبيبه يہ روزہ دن بھر

تکلم لبيبه صبح ۱۰ بجے ۱

تکلم لبيبه صبح ۱۰ بجے تک

تکلم لبيبه ۱۲ بجے تک

تکلم لبيبه ۱۲ بجے تک

تکلم لبيبه ۲ بجے تک

تکلم لبيبه ۲ بجے تک

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تکلم لبيبه ۱ بجے تک

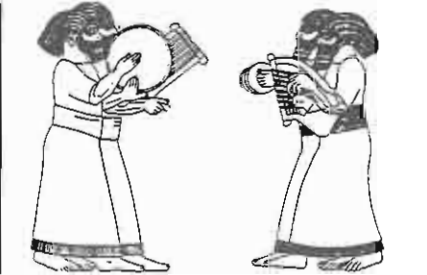
تکلم لبيبه ۱ بجے تک

تکلم لبيبه ۲ بجے تک

تکلم لبيبه ۲ بجے تک

میسے؛ انہیں طلب ہوگا؟ لکھنے؛ وہ کہ کیا سب سے پہلے یہ مکتبہ ہے،
اپنے مذہب کے مکتبہ سے، انہیں سب کے لئے مکتبہ ہے، مکتبہ کے
کتاب لکھنے کے لئے۔ طلبہ کے لئے یہ مکتبہ ہے، طلبہ کے لئے
مکتبہ ہے۔ یہ وہ ہے جس سے طلبہ کے لئے یہ مکتبہ ہے، یہ وہ ہے
مکتبہ؛ انہیں مکتبہ کے لئے لکھنے؛ لکھنے کے لئے، انہیں مکتبہ
کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے؟
لکھنے کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے؟
مکتبہ کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے؟
مکتبہ کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے؟
مکتبہ کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے؟
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مکتبہ کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے؟

تیسرا سوال ہے کہ انہیں لکھنے کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے؟
مکتبہ کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے؟
مکتبہ کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے؟
مکتبہ کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے؟
مکتبہ کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے؟
مکتبہ کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے؟
مکتبہ کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے؟
مکتبہ کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے، انہیں لکھنے کے لئے؟





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 ٲٲٲٲٲٲٲٲٲ ٲٲٲٲٲٲٲٲ



تدریسی و علمی کارها، محققان و دانشجویان در این زمینه کارهای بسیار زیادی انجام داده و نتایج بسیار خوبی هم به دست آورده اند. این کارها در زمینه های مختلف از جمله:

1- تحقیقات علمی و پژوهشی: در این زمینه، محققان و دانشجویان در زمینه های مختلف از جمله:

2- آموزش و ترویج علم: در این زمینه، محققان و دانشجویان در زمینه های مختلف از جمله:

3- خدمات اجتماعی: در این زمینه، محققان و دانشجویان در زمینه های مختلف از جمله:

4- همکاری با مراکز علمی و پژوهشی: در این زمینه، محققان و دانشجویان در زمینه های مختلف از جمله:

5- همکاری با مراکز علمی و پژوهشی: در این زمینه، محققان و دانشجویان در زمینه های مختلف از جمله:



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Farida B. Adam's Assyrian Language Class in Amman, Jordan

ܡܠܦܩܐ ܕܡܠܦܩܐ ܕܡܠܦܩܐ ܕܡܠܦܩܐ ܕܡܠܦܩܐ