(431) and Chalcedon (451) and numbered such important adversaries as Nestorius (d. 451), Eutyches (ca. 378–454), and Cyril of Alexandria (vol. 6, ch. 3) also engulfed Edessa, especially its school and director.

Eventually (471), Narsai, as a disciple of the Antiochene school of biblical interpretation and an ardent student of the thought and writings of Theodore of Mopsuestia (ch. 1), fled to the east. Barsauma (ca. 420–490), bishop of Nisibis, himself a Theodoran, prevailed on Narsai to remain in the city, where Narsai founded the celebrated school of Nisibis, from which flowed the Churchmen, scholars, and doctrines that shaped the Church of the East, whose members are sometimes called, often inaccurately, Nestorian Christians. He died about 503.

As a writer, Narsai is revered as a master of the Syriac tongue. Tradition credits him with over three hundred metrical homilies (see above, Ephrem). Intricately structured and balanced, they employ a variety of rhetorical devices, which he uses with delicacy to enrich and unify his thought. Contemporary Western interest in him originated with Alphonse Mingana's publication (1906) of forty-seven of his metrical homiles. Subsequently, publication has moved at a measured pace because of the difficulty of producing critical editions.

Two extant baptismal homilies, 21 and 22, published by Mingana in 1906, reveal that his baptismal liturgy is strikingly similar to that of Mopsuestia, save for the absence of a postbaptismal anointing, and that his commentary owes much to Theodore. The reading, however, is taken from a small, recently published collection of Narsai's festal homilies, *A Homily on the Epiphany of Our Lord,* which, like those of his predecessors, revolves around the baptism of Christ. The homily is of special value because it explicitly integrates his Christological and his baptismal thought.

For Narsai, Adam is pivotal. God created him to bear the image of the divine nature and to be the bond between the worlds of spirit and matter. Adam's distinctive characteristic, his rationality, consisted precisely in his integrated nature of body and spirit. This corporeal nature, as a concretely existing entity, constituted Adam in Paradise. When the Fall spoiled everything, God determined to send one who was the exact equal of the first Adam in nature, exceeding him only in honor and accomplishment. Such is the Second Adam, in whom dwells the Word of God. As Second Adam he is constituted of two integral, concretely existing entities, or natures: One is "Adamite," namely, Jesus, the son of Mary; the other, divine, namely, the Word, the Son of God. Both entities, or natures, are the source of personal acts, but neither is the source of the personal acts of the other. Thus, the Word cannot suffer and die, nor can Jesus create, nor, more important, re-create.

Narsai insists on the distinction between the Word and the man Jesus and on the integrity and autonomy of each nature because he is convinced that only in this way can one assure the salvation of humankind. He sharply contests any and every position which seems to merge Jesus' humanity into the Word's divinity. As Narsai sees the matter, Eutyches, who fell afoul of Chalcedon (see vol. 6, ch. 3), not only did not accord Jesus a full humanity but despoiled his humanity by merging it into divinity. So also Cyril of Alexandria, whom Narsai calls "The Egyptian" in the reading. He considers the issue at stake a matter of life and death—salvation.

Narsai insists on the unity between the Word and the man Jesus, whom the Word assumed. Unfortunately, he is unable to explain to his adversaries adequately how Jesus and the Word are one, and, in their view, he jeopardizes salvation by severing the human and the divine.

Nonetheless, Narsai's "diophysitism" is important for baptism. Because he holds that there is an equality between the two Adams, he insists that the man Jesus is truly and fully baptized, and that what happened to him in his baptism happens also to the candidate for baptism. Unlike his adversaries, he remains untroubled by Christ's apparent need for baptism: The first and Second Adams are equal in nature—both require the ever-deeper indwelling of the Word, the Spirit, and the Father.

The text and translation (abridged) are those of Frederick G. Icleod, *Narsai's Metrical Homilies on the Nativity, Epiphany, assion, and Resurrection,* PO 182 (1979) 72–105; the introduc-on contains a valuable study of Narsai's thought. See also his "Man as the Image of God: Its Meaning and Theological Sig-ficance in Narsai," TS 42 (1981) 458–468.