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Verses From
THE PEARL

(Seven Hymns on the Faith)
by St. Ephrem the Syrian

O gift that camest up without price for the diver!
Thou laidest hold upon this visible light,
That without price rises for the children of men:
A parable of the hidden One
That without price gives the hidden Dayspring!

Men stripped their clothes off and dived and drew thee out, O pearl!
It was not kings that put thee before men,
But those naked ones who were a type of the poor
And the fishers and the Galileans.
For clothed bodies were not able to come to thee;
They came that were stripped as children;
They plunged their bodies and came down to thee;
And thou didst much desire them,
And thou didst aid them who thus loved thee.
Glad tidings did they give for thee:
Their tongues before their bosoms did the poor [fishers] open,
And produced and showed the new riches among the merchants:
Upon the wrists of men they put thee as a medicine for life.

The naked ones in a type saw thy rising again by the sea-shore;
And by the side of the lake they,
The Apostles of a truth,
Saw the rising again of the Son of thy Creator.
By thee and by thy Lord the sea and the lake were beautified.
The diver came up from the sea and put on his clothing;
And from the lake too Simon Peter came up swimming on his coat;
Clad as with coats, with the love of both of you, were these two.

✦

Hymn V:1, 3, 5 Translated by J.B. Morris