

**COMING TO THE FONT  
AUGUST 15, 2021  
THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY  
THE MEANING AND ORIGINS OF PERFECTION**

**UPRIGHTNESS (RIGHTEOUSNESS) VS. PERFECTION**

- ✘ Adam and Eve's fall from Perfection
- ✘ Apparent contradictions in Jesus' commands
  - Do not associate with immoral people (1 Cor. 5:9)
  - Be all things with all people (1 Cor. 9:22)
- ✘ Old Testament vs. the New Testament
  - The Old Testament taught the ways of righteousness and the New Testament reveals the commands that lead to Perfection:
    - You have heard it said: thou shall not kill . . . but I tell you whoever is angry with his brother . . . (The sermon on the Mount)
    - The law and the prophets can be summed up in two commandments, but Jesus commanded: Love one another as I have loved you.
    - All of the Prophets were withheld from Perfection.

*Uprightness:* The love for all

*Perfection:* Emptying one's self (14.3)

Leaving behind the things of this world to become attached to the things of heaven and God above all as our companion.

Fruit of perfection: Faithfulness, abstinence, lowliness, love, hope, truthfulness, and holiness in our Lord. (2.7)

Qualities of Perfection: (6.2)

Subdued his mind night and day

Counts everyone else as better

Emptied himself of all that is possessed

Kisses the feet of his enemies

**TWO PATHS**

The book of steps uses many different analogies to describe and compare the distinction between uprightiness and perfection (a list of most of these can be found on the back of this page).

One of the main ways of describing the two is through the symbol of two paths. These two paths are close to one another, yet they are distinct. The path to perfection is also higher than the path of uprightiness. One can fall from the path of perfection to uprightiness, but also climb again to the higher path. Chapter (Memra) 19 gives several examples of how to discern the path of perfection.

\*References are to the Syriac Book of Steps (Syriac Liber Graduum). 2.7 indicates Chapter/Memra 2, Paragraph 7.

## **Uprightness**

Physical Ministry  
Lower Portion  
Intellectual Knowledge  
Minor Commandments  
Christ's Cross  
Care for Others  
Revenge on Enemies  
Eating Milk  
Upright  
Youthful  
Fast for 2 Weeks  
Pray 3 times per day  
Commands of Action  
Love of Neighbor  
Kill Sinners  
The Prophets who killed  
Becoming a Prized Chest  
Old Testament  
Servants of God  
Visible Ways

## **Perfection**

Spiritual Ministry  
Higher Portion  
Spiritual Knowledge  
Major Commandments  
Taking up your own Cross  
Emptying One's Self  
Conversion of Enemies  
Eating Meat  
Perfect  
Mature  
Fast Everyday  
Give Praise the Whole Day  
Commands of Love  
Love of Enemies  
Convert Sinners  
The Son who Raised  
Becoming a Palace that Becomes Filled  
New Testament  
Sons and Daughters of God  
Invisible Ways