



Saint Ephrem was born around the year 306, in the city of Nisibis (the modern Turkish town of Nusaybin, on the border with Syria). He was a prolific hymn writer, and many of his hymns survive to this day.

One fact that makes his writings and hymns so precious is that they were written during times of fierce persecution. Christians endured persecution, torture, death, exile and imprisonment. There was hardly a Christian during that time, who did not personally suffer persecutions, or who knew someone who did.

Today, Christians in these same regions are suffering capture, enslavement, rape and murder. Countless people have lost their homes and have had to flee, with their families, to Europe to escape. Many of the churches and artifacts that have been destroyed, are from the time of Saint Ephrem and even earlier.

Saint Ephrem's Prayer is beloved by Orthodox Christians the world over, and it is recited at the end of evening services during Great Lent. Many people end their daily prayers during Lent with this short, but meaningful and soul-healing prayer. If you visit an Orthodox Church in the evening during this Lenten season, you will be able to join a chorus of millions, experience a real and organic link to the Early Church, and pray a prayer that was forged during those times of great persecution.