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Christ in a representational manner. There is a strong suggestion of the dramatic in his renunciation of his father, when he stripped himself before the people of Assisi.' This touches a point of real importance as helping to explain the sense of incongruity which one feels between the spectacular poverty of St. Francis and the naturalness of Christian discipleship as portrayed in the Gospels.

A useful discussion on a subject of much interest to students of Comparative Religion is presented by Mr. Arthur Charles James in his *Taboo among the*

Ancient Hebrews (University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia). It carries on the work so brilliantly initiated by the late Professor W. Robertson Smith and continued by Sir J. G. Frazer. It discusses the taboo as it operates within the sphere of blood, sex, food, sacred persons (for example, king, priest, nazirite), and the herem or ban; it also shows how in certain cases the taboo may be removed. The cognate questions of cleanness, uncleanness, and holiness also come up for discussion, and the ideas governing Hebrew taboo are shown to be similar to those prevailing in other parts of the world.

How Christ Won Through.

JOHN XII. 20-32.

BY THE REVEREND A. J. GOSSIP, M.A., ABERDEEN.

WHAT lay behind this request for an interview we are not told; but the emotion it awakened in Christ's mind makes it quite clear that it was much more than mere idle curiosity. Apparently, these were big, wistful, hungry souls, who had found little to satisfy them in the faith of their boyhood, and had turned towards Judaism—they had come up to worship, so we read. But that, too, seemed failing them. And something they had seen in Jesus Christ, some word of His that had carried to them on the outskirts of the press, had stormed their very hearts. Was not this, they felt, that for which they had been seeking so long, really found at last! And, being Greeks, instinctively they turned to one with a Greek name. Can you arrange things for us, sir? they asked. 'We would see Jesus.'

And is not that the reason why some of us, at least, are here to-day? Are not we, too, trying to push our way through the jostle and crowd and surge of things to Him? For we know that beside Him much that puzzles and confuses us elsewhere grows greatly clearer; that with His eyes upon us, somehow we are bigger and better than our natural selves; that in His presence God, who in other places seems so dim and shadowy and far away, and whom our childish minds forget so easily, becomes how strangely real, how gloriously near; that Christ's calm makes our own hot, fretted,

peevish hearts grow cooler, braver, steadier; that His strength helps us also to be strong. We would see Jesus. And, be sure, He is here, not far from any one of us, the same wonderful Christ as long ago. And He is really here! If, for you, the service dribbles on tamely and prosaically, with never a thrill nor lift in it, push your way to Him for yourself. Cry to Him, keep crying, like that blind man outside Jericho that ordinary day, like any other, when he had tapped his hesitating way as usual to the accustomed begging-place, and was sitting yonder in the shadow, waiting for the long, slow hours to crawl away, till they would come to lead him home again; and suddenly round and about him there was the sound of feet, of many feet; and eager folk kept thrusting past him, crowds of them; and it was told him that the new Prophet, whose name was in everybody's mouth, was there, and all the tales that he had heard of Him kept tumbling back into his mind,—how the lepers were being cleansed, so people said with confidence, and the deaf heard, and the blind—ah, but that was impossible, of course, was too good to be true! Yet, who could tell? And with that he was on his feet, crying and struggling to get at Him, struggling desperately, madly, yet in vain, for they stood close and thrust him back, those callous folk who had no need of Christ like his; crying and crying with a piteous, eager voice, though they

turned on him angrily. 'Hush,' they said, with their hands up to their strained ears, 'hush, you can't get through to Him; and we can't hear one word that He is saying with that stupid noise of yours.' But he would not be silenced. This was his one chance. Keep you, too, crying. And as over all the sluff of so many feet, through all the hum and babble of that excited crowd, something of it carried to Christ, so now, too, He will stand still, and look in your direction, asking, 'What is that? Bring him to Me.' And, in a little, you and He will be standing together face to face; you and He all alone, as if there were nobody else in all the world; just you, just He; you with your wants, and He with His sufficiency; you with your silly blundering, sinful soul, and He your Saviour. We would see Jesus—is that not why we are here?—must see Him, because no one else will do.

But what arrests one in this passage is the emotion that was awakened in Christ's mind, the wave upon wave of feeling that went surging through His very soul. Evidently He felt that this was one of the great crises of His life. Yet to you and me it looks a commonplace event, an everyday occurrence, a trifle of small moment. Never an hour but some desperate folk were bursting in on Him, with a hot clamour that He should do this and that for them. And yet, when it was told Him, there in the street, that a few Greeks would like to talk with Him, a marvellous vision instantly rose up before His eyes. He saw, it seems, all the dim, uncountable masses of the Gentile peoples, every individual of them with a sensitive human heart that can be hurt, with a frail, stumbling, delicate soul, making their way, as best they might, through all the difficulties of this dangerous world. And were they turning to look to Him for guidance? Were these few men the first trickle of a huge inrushing tide, with the whole sea behind it? Had He been called of God to help and save all these? And with that, already He could see the whole world yellow to the harvest, and could hear the sound of hurrying multitudes all down the centuries, finding their way towards Him.

That is the difference faith makes; the richness, and the happy excitement, and the glory that it gives to life. You and I drift on through the years dully enough, because we do not believe in God, not really, and so we have no expectation. But Jesus did believe in Him, was sure He is alive and abroad in the world; that, therefore, anything

may happen any hour. And thus to Him any smallest incident was a door opening upon who could tell what possibilities! A fisherman offers Him a crude inchoate half-faith, and with that He is sure that He can found a world-wide Church that will defy the powers of evil, aye, and grind them into nothingness at last: a dying brigand, paying the just penalties of his crimes, gropes towards Him in the darkness with the vague hands of a blind man, and, founding upon that, Christ dies, quite sure that He has won: two or three Gentiles seek an interview with Him, and He sees a whole teeming world of men and women being saved.

And they came true, these dreams. Yes, even this impossible one that rose before Him in the streets that day, with the thronging people pushing past Him. Only a few years, and in the Revelation John can picture the Christian heavens as a vast city, with gates facing north and south and east and west, open by night and day. For always there is flocking into it a multitude no man can number, of every kindred and people and nation and tongue. A few years more, and a church Father cries exultantly that, like the ripples when a stone is cast into a pool, so is the faith eddying out and out, out to the very limits of the world. 'Why,' he cries, 'even in Britain they have heard of it, and are believing!' Yes, even in Britain we too turn to Jesus Christ as our one hope. The audacious, insane-looking dream came true.

And He saw other visions, and dreamed other dreams, that wonderful Dreamer. Once on a day He came on you; and, as you passed, He looked at you, and paused, and looked again, with that light on His face, that eagerness in His eyes, that were there when He chanced on Matthew or Zacchæus, came to you, and laid His hand on you, and, 'I can make you like Myself,' He said, 'can give to you My heart, My mind, My ways, can fashion these out of that soiled and twisted character of yours. I promise it,' He said. And what if that dream also some day should come true? Ah! is it not worth striving, praying, hoping for, and that for a whole lifetime, if there be any chance at all that, in the end, that also may come really true!

But, to return to Christ's emotion, Charles Reade points out in one place that it is given us to see the heroes of the world only after their minds have been made up, and they are moving resolutely forward with firm steps, and not when their uncertain hearts are hesitatingly feeling their unsure

way to a decision, adding as his opinion that, were the latter visible to us, they would not seem nearly so heroic. I am not sure of that. Nothing even in the Gospels helps me more than passages such as this in which it is vividly brought home to us that our Lord's triumph was not an instinct, but a virtue; that faith was not automatic to Him, but that every time He also had to think out what God's will for Him was, had sometimes to feel for His Father's hand to help and guide and steady Him in a gross darkness in which He Himself could not see at all; that it was our very fight He had to fight, and that our very weapons were His only weapons; that He did all He did, was all He was, just through a valiant heart, and a brave trust in God, and a bold faith that followed unafraid even where He could not understand at all, and the way looked clean lost, seemed to have died out among wild bogs and boulders. Of all which this here is a notable example.

Our Lord had known when He set out for Jerusalem it might mean doom. And the disciples felt that too. 'Let us also go that we may die with him,' said Thomas; and one loves him for that. On their arrival, indeed, there had been a roar of noisy welcome in the streets. But Christ was not deceived by that. The dry grass had caught fire, and for a little it was blazing merrily, but in a moment or two it would certainly go out, and there be only blackness. The end, He felt, was certain. And His mind was disquieted; was, for once, so He says, torn this way and that. Ought He to die, and to die now! He was not sure, and He felt that He must be sure. Oh yes, be sure! Be sure! For the salvation of a whole world hangs on Thee, and we have no other hope. If this fail, all is lost. Ought He to die, just there, just then, without one soul that as yet really understood; with nothing, as it seemed, accomplished; with the work surely not even begun. Was it God's will for Him, could it be, that He should throw away His life before the truths for which He stood had germinated in some hearts at least—even a few, yes, even one—where they could grow and sow themselves, and be broadcasted by every wind over the world? Ought He! What shall I pray? Shall it be 'Father, save Me from this hour?' Yet is it not that Father who has led Me to this hour? Have I not put Myself completely in His hands, have I not looked to Him for guidance step by step, and He has brought Me here, not,

surely, that I should shirk this, but because in some way the right road to be followed runs through this dark desolate valley, where the winds scream so eerily, and where it seems to end in a dead wall of mountainous rock that nobody can scale? He led Me here, and where He leads I follow blindly, making no conditions, holding nothing back. 'Father, glorify Thy name; and, for the rest, do with Me what Thou wilt. Here am I, a glad eager oblation offered with all My heart.'

You too, perhaps, have come to a bare wind-swept spot in life, and difficulties crowd in upon you from all sides: you too stand, like that man in Bunyan, swithering, uncertain, 'looking this way and that,' not sure there in the dark what you should do, why God has brought you there, what it all means. The waters ahead look so swollen and so rushing, can you be really meant to wade through that? the road has grown so lonely and so steep, can this be really the right path? And what are you doing about it all? Are you bursting in to God with a hot indignant heart, and a babble of clamorous protest, telling Him that the thing is ridiculous and just won't do, or with a whimper that whines and snivels that it isn't fair. Or are you learning something of the Master's quiet, and the Master's valorous spirit, and the Master's hardihood of faith? Out at the front when death was very near, so near that its cold breath blew across the heart and set it shuddering, it was not when one was at his biggest that that heart kept praying, 'Save me.' No, in one's higher moments one kept asking only 'Courage, courage, grant me that, dear God, lest the craven part of me master the better me; help me to see this through with honour; courage, courage, and for the rest, "Thy will be done."' 'Yes,' says old Bishop Wilson, 'even though that be through my own undoing.' Well, what of you and me? Are we growing less fretful, less opinionative in the planning of our lives, more biddable and like the child Christ wishes us to be, that trusts implicitly, and follows without fear? Are we learning that our own foolish hearts are not dependable, and that God is: that our insistent petitions for what we felt that we must have were often utter folly, mercifully and wisely refused? Are we winning as our settled mood this mind of Jesus Christ that can trust God even when all is very black and not a star is showing? Not otherwise can we gain peace of soul and quietness of spirit. For be sure we shall not get from life

all that we wish from it ; be sure that clouds and darkness will make some days, some long seasons, chill and shivery ; be sure we too will have to face things grim to bear and hard to understand. And unless we know God well enough to trust Him utterly, there will often be fever, and fretting, and a moan and heaving of unrest, in our poor frightened, flustered hearts.

Once on a day in France the bonniest of experiences befell me. I suppose that in the Middle Ages they would certainly have said that I saw Jesus Christ with my own very eyes. And perhaps I did. We had been weeks in that appalling desolation up towards Passchendaele, where there was never a blade of grass, nor any tree, only that empty, waesome land churned into miles and miles of shell-holes, till it looked like some grey tumbling sea. And at long last we had gone back to rest ; and it seemed heaven, for there were budding hedgerows, and a shimmer of green on living trees, and grass and flowers, glorious flowers in the first splendour of the spring. And one's dry soul lay soaking in greedily the sheer beauty of it all. And the next day news came that we were needed back in the old place of horror, to be thrown into a losing battle. It reached us on a perfect afternoon of sunshine ; and, with a heart grown hot and hard, I had turned down a lovely little lane, with a brown burn wimpling beside it, and a lush meadow, all brave sheets of golden and of purple flowers, on either side. The earth was very beautiful, and life seemed very sweet, and it was hard to go back into the old purgatory and face death again. And, with that, through a gap in a hedge there came a shepherd laddie tending his flock of some two dozen sheep. He was not driving them in our rough way with barking dogs. But he went first, and they were following him ; and if one loitered, he called it by name, and it came running to him. So they moved on, down the lane, and up a little hill, up to the brow, and over it, and so out of my life. And I stood staring after them, hearing, as if the words were spoken out aloud to me first and me only, ' And when he putteth forth his sheep, he goeth before them,' turned, and went down the lane to face what was to be, with a heart quieted and stilled. Has not God led Me here, said Christ : has not He brought Me to this hour ? And He is a good Shepherd, wise and kind and very tender, who makes no mistakes. Yea, though I walk through the valley

of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for He is with me ; His rod and His staff, they comfort me ; and with that He turned towards Calvary, unafraid, contented, grateful. If only you and I could learn to put ourselves so unreservedly into God's hands—look how it worked in Jesus Christ !

' I feel,' wrote Keats, looking across at the hills of Scotland, and preparing, he with his frail body, to set out on his tramp of some five hundred miles, ' I feel as if I were going to a tournament.' And Jesus faced the Cross as if it were a tournament ; rode into the lists, this glorious Knight of God, with His head up, and steady eyes, and an undaunted heart, and rang His lance in confident challenge against all the shields of all the powers of evil, certain He could overthrow them. What an amazing faith ! It seemed so sordid and so mean an end, that His brave dreams should fizzle out in that squalid wayside scene, there on the place of execution ; naked, helpless, despised, with that exultant group guffawing up into His face ; with not one voice raised for Him, with the city unconcernedly going about its own affairs, with busy people bustling by upon the road and hardly bothering to turn their heads. For somebody was always being crucified, and it was no affair of theirs. The authorities were there to see about these things, and doubtless they were right. A pitiful last chapter surely ! And yet Christ faced it, not simply undismayed, but with a shout of victory. ' Now is the judgment of this world : now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to me.' Since God Himself is leading Me here, it is not for nothing. Here, where He leads Me, I can serve Him best. My life may have left people unimpressed ; My teaching may have passed them by ; My kindness may have been forgotten ; well then, it must be through My death it is to come. And, knowing that, I am content to die. I have tried everything but die for them ; and that too I do gladly. And this will not fail. For I, if I be lifted up for them, will win men's hearts.

You notice, then, it was two things that brought Christ through—two things, not one. And if the first of them was His huge trust in God, the other was the utter faith in man, in you, in me. I know men, so He said, know they are big and chivalrous, that this will lay compulsion on them, that if they

see Me dying for them, they will not be able to resist Me, but will have to give their hearts to Me, will not be able to keep them away. I know it, He said confidently, and died in that happy faith, quite sure of victory, because so sure of us. And has He overestimated us? Are we meaner than He thought? What about you? Does this thing lay compulsion on you, force you to be Christ's? What would you say to testing it? It is not far, only a very little way out of the stir of ordinary life; only a step or two up this small hill; here is the place. How is it with you now? Out in the world I know we can, and do, forget about it all. But here, beside the Cross with Christ's face looking down at you, do you not feel that pull, that drawing, that compulsion? Stand here, and think it out, and judge yourself, for so Christ bids. You are not normal if you can turn upon your heel and go your way, unmoved. Yet can you, do you? 'Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by,' nothing at all? Oh! elsewhere it will fade again, and our rushed minds will fill with other things, I know. But here? Cannot you go the length of that most moving line in Shakespeare (Hutton, I see, quotes it in his latest book, and it haunts me too) in which Othello in his agony looks after Desdemona, and cries from his torn, foolish, distracted, maddened, breaking heart, 'But I do love thee, and when I love thee not, chaos is come again.' Cannot you go that length towards Christ; cannot you say to Him that, though you know you will forget Him, hurt Him, disappoint Him, break His heart, yet you do love Him, and when you love Him not, chaos is come again; and life loses its meaning and its splendour, and sinks back into a stupid business, a dull meaningless affair, petty and boring and small. Test yourself: can you? do you?

Then, that is well. Only our Lord expects more from us than a mere gush of cheap emotion. I, He says, am not doing anything unique, save in degree. This is the universal law of worthy living—that if you use life merely on yourself, to further your own foolish ends and personal interests and private comforts, then you are wasting it in a hideous prodigality; and only if you squander it for God and others, throw it away in some generous cause, live it out after Christ's own plan, can you have any idea of how rich and glorious a thing it can become. If any man will serve Me, let him follow Me, says Christ, and sets His face

towards Calvary, fully expecting we will follow there, never dreaming we shall hesitate. How splendid is His faith in us; and how His trust ennobles us! It can't be easy, He admits: it must mean pulling hard against the current, and a long steep climb. But there are two things, He declares, that I can promise you with certainty. And the first of the two is this, that if a man serve Me, him will My Father honour. Only, by that He does not mean what lesser spirits mean. In the Old Testament, for instance, many even of the saints take it for granted that you can judge of a man's spiritual standing by the state of his bank book; and can safely assume that the good man will be rich, and that the rich man must be good; must be, they felt, for God is over all, and will, no doubt, shelter and shield and heap His benefits upon His own, and put to shame those who resist Him. As an exultant Psalmist sums it up, 'Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name.' Yes, agrees the New Testament, and leads us again to that little slope, and climbs it, and stands there with awed heart in the darkness, and looking up says solemnly, Because He hath set His love on Me and known My name, I have set Him on high.

The honour that God offers us is this—that He will condescend to use us, lean upon us, call for our poor help, give us a real share in His own agony and saving of the sinful world. And Christ expects that that will, not scare us away, but thrill us, win us, lay compulsion on us, draw us irresistibly. Such faith has He in you and me.

And this too I can promise, so He adds, that if My servant follow where I am, then he will never be alone. Always I shall be there, and never shall I ask of him what I Myself have not given; and never will he be where My own footsteps, there before him, do not mark the way for him; and always he can count upon My presence and My ready help. Always it will be Christ and you together, so it seems. But, when you think it out, is not that heaven? They are with Christ, we say of the redeemed, which is far better. But you, too, are to be with Christ, if you are faithful; always to be with Christ. For where I am, there shall My servant be; in heaven, it seems, even here. For what is heaven? How do you think of it? As a snug spot where, this unpleasant tax of self-denial that is demanded of us, safely paid

and done with, we can loll at our lazy ease, and have a good time, doing as we choose at last? Ah, no! For heaven means service, means self-sacrifice, is just a settled habit of Christlikeness, and living life after God's plan, the God who never thinks about Himself at all, but gives and gives and gives till there is nothing that He has not given. Are you quite certain that you would like heaven, absolutely sure that you would not feel cosier and more at home in that comfortable selfishness that we call hell? Dare you, as you peer in at it, take heaven? Would you like it? Will you have it? Dare you? 'If not, abide without, among the cattle of the field.'

Yes, let us test ourselves by Christ's own test for us, here, upon Calvary, face to face with the hardships He offers us. And how is it with you? Out in the world the madness may return to us, and our poor foolish hearts may stray once more. But here where we are sane, here where the cloud has lifted from us, here where we have come to ourselves again, what do you say? Do not your arms leap out for Him, and is not your heart drawn to Him? Stammering, stuttering, confused, with little or no evidence to prove your case, cannot you too cry stubbornly, 'But I do love Thee, and when I love Thee not, chaos is come again.' And it is Thou, Thou, Thou, I choose!

The Social Teaching of the Apocryphal and Apocalyptic Books.¹

BY THE REVEREND C. RYDER SMITH, D.D., RICHMOND COLLEGE, SURREY.

(a) It is to-day necessary rather to define than assert the importance for Christian study of the 'Apocryphal' and Apocalyptic Books of Judaism. It is agreed that they illustrate much in the New Testament; how far were they its forerunners? The writer shares the opinion that, apart perhaps from eschatology, this literature hardly does more than illuminate the environment of Jesus. It explains His age but not Himself; it accounts for the Judaism of the First Christian century, but not for its Christianity. Or, to put the opinion in another way, while these books show that there were ideas which early Christianity shared with its age, they leave its originality unexplained. The Book of Enoch, for instance, elucidates the angelology, demonology, and eschatology of the New Testament, but not its doctrine of grace; the

Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs inherit, like the New Testament, the morality of the Hebrew Bible, but know nothing of the ethical 'dynamic' of 'faith'; the Book of Jubilees agrees with Jesus where He agreed with the Pharisees, but not where He denounced them. Again, it is true that 'Apocalyptic' has examples in the New Testament itself, but the Christian Church of history owes little to them. They do account for some of its aberrations, and to-day they are a chief study of some of its scholars, but the Christian Creed could be fully articulated without them. Their worth is that they assert the final sovereignty of God and 'the Lamb' in a unique way, and it is true that this way is borrowed from their age, yet the Old Testament had already preached the future dominion of God, while of the Christian Apocalyptic's *peculium*—the idea that a triumphant Meekness, typified in 'the Lamb,' really rules the universe—the extra-canonical Jewish books know nothing. In general the recent renewal of their study has justified once more the Church's choice of its canon. The Apocryphal and Apocalyptic literature displays the world in which Jesus lived, and accounts for the Judaism that rejected Him, but it leaves Him and the Church He founded unexplained still.

¹ Quotations from books in the 'Apocrypha' of the English Bible are from the Revisers' translation of 1895; other books are quoted from Charles' *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English* (1913). Books or parts of books whose date is so late that they could not have influenced the New Testament are not quoted; these are—2 Esdras, Baruch (except Epistle of Jeremy), the Prayer of Manasses, Sibylline Oracles except iii. 46-62 and 97-819 (interpolated), Secrets of Enoch, 2 and 3 Baruch, Pirke Aboth except chs. 1 and 2.