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JESUS' MISSION, ACCORDING TO HIS OWN TESTIMONY

(SYNOPTICS)

Under the title of "*I came': the express self-testimony of Jesus to the purpose of His sending and His coming,*" Adolf Harnack has published a study of the sayings of Jesus reported in the Synoptic Gospels, which are introduced by the words "I came" or, exceptionally, "I was sent", or their equivalents.¹ These, says he, are "programmatic" sayings, and deserve as such a separate and comprehensive study, such as has not heretofore been given to them. In his examination of them, he pursues the method of, first, gathering the relevant sayings together and subjecting them severally to a critical and exegetical scrutiny; and, then, drawing out from the whole body of them in combination Jesus' own testimony to His mission.

It goes without saying that, in his critical scrutiny of the passages, Harnack proceeds on the same presuppositions which govern his dealing with the Synoptic tradition in general; that is to say, on the presuppositions of the "Liberal" criticism, which he applies, however, here as elsewhere, with a certain independence. It goes without saying also, therefore, that the passages emerge from his hands in a very mauled condition; brought as far as it is possible to bring them, even with violence, into line with the "Liberal" view of what the mission of Jesus ought to have been. It is reassuring, however, to observe that, even so, they cannot be despoiled of their central testimony. That Jesus proclaimed Himself to have come—to have been

¹ *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, 1912, xxii, pp. 1-30.

(p. 59). Enough has been presented to show why the Chapter on "Christ" exhausts itself in less than two pages. Jesus is presented as an imitator of Gautama. Surely this book ought not fall into the hands of the uninformed. The reviewer has failed to find in these pages "The Power of Right Thinking and Righteous living."

Princeton, N. J.

CHAS. M. CANTRALL.

APOLOGETICAL THEOLOGY

Die Beicht im Zusammenhange mit der sakralen Rechtspflege in der Antike. Ein Beitrag zur näheren Kenntnis kleinasiatisch-orientalischer Kulte der Kaiserzeit. Von FRANZ STEINLEITNER, Dr. phil. Leipzig: Kommissionsverlag der Dieterich'schen Verlagsbuchhandlung, Theodor Weicher. 1913. 8vo; pp. 135.

"The following essay," says the author, "moves in the frontier region between philosophy and theology, in the field of the history of religion."

Hermann Usener and his school have led the way to the study of the problems in the history of religion presented by that period "when young Christianity entered upon its victorious course in the slippery field of the religious syncretism and theocracy of vanishing antiquity, and introduced into the history of mankind a completely new epoch of its spiritual life." Franz Cumont in his great Mithras-works and, after him, Hugo Hepding in his studies on the Attis-worship, have shown us how to illuminate dark subjects by collecting the scattered material from every quarter and subjecting it as a whole to intelligent scrutiny. The road having been opened by such competent hands, it has been diligently walked in; investigation into "the chaos of ideas and religious usages of that period of strong religious agitation" has been pushed steadily on. We need recall but such leading names as A. Dieterich, Anrich, Reitzenstein, Wendland, and the essays published in the *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft*, in the *Religionsgeschichtliche Versuchen und Vorarbeiten*, and, in part, in the *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde des Urchristentums*. As a result we understand as never before the vital contact in which the world of antiquity, which was passing away, and the rising world of Christianity stood with one another; how "the two worlds, however inimicably they envisaged one another and bitterly struggled with one another, were nevertheless inseparably bound together"; how "the Christian spirit, liberated from Judaism, formed a new body for itself out of the members of dying antiquity, and thus the spirit of Greece and the religiousness of the Orient, stamping themselves on Christian ideas and usages, won new life for themselves and lived in Christian clothing".

When we remember, however, that the earliest Christianity gained its adherents largely from the lower classes, and afterwards established itself preëminently in the region in which the old popular

religions most flourished, it will be perceived that in the investigation of the process of the Hellenization of Christianity, the study of the popular religions can least of all be neglected. "Along with the popular religion of Greece, whose usages were concentrated in the Mysteries, the Oriental religions come into consideration, and not least among them the Phrygian worship, which was spread throughout the whole of Asia-Minor, and whose inscribed and sculptured monuments are found scattered over the whole of the Roman Empire." In these circumstances it has seemed to the author eminently worth while to attempt to gain a better knowledge of the popular religious ideas and usages of the Phrygian and Lydian cults. As a contribution to that end, he has selected a particular element in their religious usages for investigation, the institution of Confession. "Whether and how far this sacrament of the church is to be considered an inheritance from old Oriental piety and beliefs may be left meanwhile out of consideration. The fact is that this cult-institution existed in the Oriental religions which strove with Christianity for the dominion of the world, and everywhere in the Roman Empire set themselves in the longest and most lasting opposition to its victory."

The material for his investigation Dr. Steinleitner finds in a considerable body of Lydian and Phrygian inscriptions of the class commonly called Votive or Expiatory Inscriptions, coming from the second and third Christian centuries, supplemented by some inscriptions from Knidos of the first or second century before Christ, and a few literary notices. This material he gathers together from all sources, reprints, and re-edits with an adequate commentary. This constitutes the first part of his work (pp. 7-74). The second part (pp. 75-123) is an essay, founded on this collected material, on "Confession in Antiquity". This essay really constitutes a very interesting exposition of the theology of the inscriptions and gives us a valuable insight into the religious ideas which ruled the minds of the people of Asia Minor near the opening of the Christian era. The first chapter treats of "the relation of man to deity in the Lydian-Phrygian religion"; the second of "sin and punishment according to the Lydian and Phrygian Expiatory-Inscriptions"; the third of "religious administration of justice in Lydia and Karia"; the fourth of "Confession in the cults of Asia Minor"; while the fifth adds a section on "a confession in the mysteries of Samothrace and the Isis-worship".

When Dr. Steinleitner comes to sum up at the end (pp. 121 ff.), the results of his discussion he naturally lays his stress on the chief object which he had in view, namely, the establishment of the existence of a regular institution of Confession in the primitive religion of Lydia and Phrygia, "in which the sinner confessed his sin before the priest as the representative of the deity in order to propitiate the deity and thus to become free from sickness and want, the consequences of the sin." Other elements of the old religion, however, interest us more: most of all its conception of deity as both all-powerful and as intimately concerned with human life in all its manifestations. "If we sum up

briefly what has been said," remarks Dr. Steinleitner at the end of the discussion of this matter, "the religion and life of the Lydian and Phrygian people in its lower strata appears as dominated by the belief that the deity is the absolute lord and owner of His worshipper, but no ruthless tyrant, like, say Baal in the Syrophoenician religion, but certainly the *τύραννος* or *κύριος* and yet also the greatest benefactor and the righteous judge, from whose hand the believer receives blessing and calamity as a child receives its mother's caresses and its father's chastisements." Dr. Steinleitner seems to consider this conception of deity one-sided in its emphasis on the power and all pervading activity of God. It seems to us a conception which does great credit to its sharers.

One of the results of it was to develop a series of epithets for the deity which expressed its power and rulership, and among these epithets *κύριος* was prominent. "The title *κύριος*, which meets us in this inscription," says Dr. Steinleitner on one occasion, "is a divine predicate, conceived in a genuinely Oriental fashion and thoroughly intelligible in the Eastern world, that occurs in Thrace, Asia Minor, Syria and Egypt, and that found also its way into the religious language of Christianity." Christianity did not derive its employment of *κύριος* as an epithet of God—or as a standing designation of Christ—from the folk-religions of the Orient: it is well to know, however, that the heathen converts to Christianity could find no difficulty in catching the high implications of the term as used by Christians.

Another result of this conception of God was the highly supernaturalistic coloring given by it to the whole view of life. "A further characteristic of the Lydian-Phrygian religiousness and of its view of the relation between God and man," writes Dr. Steinleitner, "is the belief in epiphanies of the deity in which the deity reveals its might suddenly and unexpectedly to believers, a belief, shared no doubt with the Lydians and Phrygians by other stocks of Asia Minor. The notion of the epiphany of a god or demonic being is primitive Greek, and was possessed also by other peoples. But between the idea and significance of the *ἐπιφάνεια* of the deity or of a demon in the popular belief of the Greeks and divine appearances in the belief and conception of the peoples of Asia Minor and the Orient, this difference exists—that the appearance of the deity for the pious oriental on the ground of his belief in an absolute dependence on the deity, extending to all situations in life, and of its constant care for the health of his soul, which shows itself in atonements, expiations and all kinds of asceticism, means not only a beneficent intrusion into the life of the individual or the establishment of a community, but also an *experience of religion*, in the mystical sense, in which he lives and moves." Dr. Steinleitner wishes, it is true, very illegitimately to apply this point of view at once to the conversion of Paul in a naturalistic psychological explanation of the supernatural features of the narrative. Paul was anything but a cold casuist, like his Pharasaic companions; his religiously readily excitable character, his inward faith, his vital

mysticism can at bottom find its roots only in the Anatolian inheritance of the former tent-weaver of Tarsus. We must consider also the whole mystical nature of the Apostle: he experienced other ecstatic conditions and could relate "visions and revelations of the Lord". "Out of these psychological and religious foundations, which Paul had brought with him from his Anatolian home with its old traditions of visible epiphanies of the deity, and its ever new experience of the *δυνάμεις* of gods and demons in ecstasies and visions, we may perhaps explain his experience of Christ before Damascus as an ecstatic, visionary occurrence." But even such a bizarre use of it as this does not destroy the value to the student of the New Testament of the fact here made evident that "*ἐπιφάνεια* is in this religious language the *terminus technicus* for a sudden and unexpected appearance of the deity, in order to help its worshippers in time of need and misfortune". When Paul speaks of the glorious epiphany of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, he was using language which had a perfectly determinate meaning for his readers.

It is perhaps natural that in inscriptions of this kind the only sins which are mentioned are breaches of the rules of the cult, by which breaches the deity is supposed to be offended, and it may not be quite justified to infer from this fact that the Lydian-Phrygians had no consciousness of distinctly ethical faults as sin. There is a tendency apparent to extend the responsibility for acts of sin beyond the individual who actually commits them to his group; and there is an instance of vicarious satisfaction for a fault—a brother undertaking the task for a sister. There is even an instance in which the sin appears to be carried back of the sinful act to the sinful wish. On the whole, however, we get little help to the understanding of New Testament language from this section. We note only that the word for sinning is *ἁμαρτάνω* (*ἁμαρτία* occurs, but not frequently). We lay no stress on the mention of an "unpardonable sin". And we do not find ourselves particularly interested in the treatment of sickness (*ἀσθένεια*) as the punishment of sin, or of the use of *κολάζειν* and *κόλασις* with apparent preference for the notion of punishment.

The most valuable contribution which these inscriptions make to the interpretation of the New Testament is due to the appearance in one of them—perhaps in two others—of the term *λύτρον*, to express the means by which immunity from the consequences of a fault was secured from the deity. For naturally the confession of the fault to the priest did not complete the making of satisfaction for it. The climax and completion of the expiatory process was formed rather by the erection of a tablet on which the sin and its punishments with the name of the sinner were notified, and that by requirement of the god. The ordinary expression for this command to make expiation in the Lydian inscriptions is *ἐπιζητεῖν*, although sometimes *ἀπατεῖν* also occurs. In the case of the particular inscription which we have mentioned, however, we read *λύτρον κατ' ἐπιτάγην Μηνὶ Τυράννῳ καὶ Διὶ*

Ὁ γμηνῶ καὶ τοῖς σὺν αὐτῷ θεοῖς. The interpreters have puzzled themselves over this λύτρον. Sir William Ramsay and Perdrizet take it in the sense of εὐχῇ; Buresh leaves to it its sense of "ransom" but scarcely knows what then to do with the inscription. Steinleitner with too great deference to A. Deissmann, as we think, starts with the idea of the price of emancipation for a slave, and thinks that we must assume that a man was supposed to come into bondage to the deity by sin and required to be ransomed out by this expiatory offering. We see no reason why we should travel so roundabout a pathway to so simple a conclusion. The λύτρον simply indicates the expiatory tablet as the price paid to the god for immunity for the fault committed. And thus we have before us a special use of λύτρον, parallel to the special use of it which Deissmann has so fully illustrated as the emancipation-price of slaves, in which it is used as the immunity-price of faults in the service of deity. The point of interest is that we have here a usage of λύτρον very closely akin to the sense in which it and its derivatives are employed in the New Testament—in our Lord's great saying in Mk. x. 45, Mt. xx. 28, for example, and in the Apostolic doctrine of "Redemption". When we read for example in Heb. ix. 15 of a "ransoming of transgressions" we are moving in the same circle of ideas as when we read in this inscription: "Artemidorus the son of Diodotus and Amia, together with his six kinsmen, knowing and unknowing, a ransom according to command, to Mên Tyrannus and Zeus Ogmenus and the Gods with him." This is "a ransom of sin": it is a price paid (though not of silver or gold) by means of which is obtained "the remission of sin" (Eph. i. 7, Col. i. 14).

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The History of Religions. By GEORGE FOOT MOORE, D.D., LL.D., Professor of the History of Religions in Harvard University. I. China, Japan, Egypt, Babylonia, Assyria, India, Persia, Greece, Rome. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1913. 8vo; pp. xiv. 637.

This volume is one of the latest issues of The International Theological Library, and fully sustains the standard of scholarship set by its predecessors. The work is a compendium of separate studies on the different religions in each country named on the title-page. A second volume is promised on Judaism, Christianity, and Mohammedanism. The plan of the treatise embraces the religions of civilized peoples only, and therefore the so-called primitive religions are omitted.

To write such a book as Professor Moore has given us is a large task. No one writer can have first-hand information on so many religions; he is compelled to base his statements on those of other men who are the original investigators in each individual religion. The author frankly admits this, but points out that a work of this character secures unity in the method of treatment and in the point of view better