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Box 07, Folder 30 - " A Gangster's Life of Christ"/ "Round One: A Clash With The Sadducess" (E.M.S.) [29pp]

Edwin Mortimer Standing

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There is one book I should like to write more than any other and that would be A Gangsters' Life of Christ

_____ . By a gangster
I mean children of about 8- 12 years of age who are in that period when the ^{what} psychologists call the Herd Instinct is predominant . It is the period when they are always forming themselves into gangs of one sor tor another - and they love strolies about gangs - especially when one gang fights with another . These gangs have their leaders , and the most important person is the leader of the winning gang . They are at a stage when they love to witness a fight between one gang and another . They will not stand for any bullying , and they have a very strict sense of justice and the gangs code of ethics .

In the Gospel story (as Montessori once pointed out in a lecture) there is much to offer these Junior - these Gangsters - which is in line with their particular instincts . Viewed from this angle the Gospel story shapes itself into the story of rival gangs . Our Lord is the Head of one gang - the Disciples and He and His gang are constantly opposed by organised opposition from the other gangs - especially the Pharasees and the Sadducees.

Chapter after chapter of the gospels - especially that of St Matthew - deal with the struggle between these two gangs and with their respective leaders. The book would be called

A FIGHT TO THE DEATH ---AND BEYOND

_____ ; for the whole drama comes to a climax - after the dark days of the Passion and death of Our lord - with the Resurrection -- when the whole business of the struggle of the opposing gangs begins all over agin (when peter cures the lame man in the Temple Porch)

I know from experience of telling these stories to children of that age that they are stirred to their depths by the tense and continual struggle that goes on btween the good gang

Round I Access into to Sadducees

done ✓

It was a bright sunny morning in Jerusalem

It was a bright sunny morning in the Temple of Jerusalem in the year 30 A.D. The High Priest Caiaphas, in all his magnificent robes, his morning duties done, was sitting on an ornamental seat looking over the Court of the Gentiles, one of the main courts that surrounded the Temple building itself.

He was in a good humour and surveyed the scene before him with admiring satisfaction. And well he might, for the Temple of Jerusalem was one of the seven wonders of the age - or indeed of any age.

①
If same order to place 76 - 100 years before an sun etc

It had been built by Herod the Great with lavish splendour. With its golden roofs, its golden pinnacles, its massive gateways of beaten brass (which took twenty two men to open and shut) its open courts paved with coloured marble tiles, its covered porches resting on hundreds of pillars each thirty feet high, and made of one single block and so huge that it took three men holding hands to surround it - it was the most splendid place of worship of its age. It was the centre of the Jewish religion - indeed of the Jewish nation and the temple was served by some twenty thousand priests who took turns to carry out the many functions which took place within in it - And he, Caiaphas was the undisputed head of this great institution the most important man in all Jewry.

From behind him where he sat C. could hear the sound of trumpets and the singing of sacred music around the huge altar where a dozen priest were offering up burnt offerings on behalf of thousands of persons who had come to ask them to offer sacrifices for them and their families, sacrifices which were paid for in accordance with the size and value of the animal sacrificed.

From the Court of the Gentiles in front and below him

Not that H. G. was a pious religious
man. He was to save Israel to order to
Messiah of all children of two years under
~~30 years before~~ made to kill ~~to punish~~ Messiah
to ~~lead~~ the Wise men ~~the years before~~
our day. Jesus - He also murdered

2 2

But from the Court of the Gentiles in front and below ^{him} the ears of the High Priest were assailed ^{by a mixture} with a very different sounds - with the loud and continuous lowing of oxen, the bleating of hundreds of sheep and theraucous voices of men ~~xxxxxx~~ recommending their wares to the passers by or shouting at each other as they bargained over their sales after the immemorial custom of the East.

In fact the sounds that came from the Court of the Gentiles resembled exactly those one hears ^{from} in a busy market in the centre of a city. And this was no wonder because that is exactly what it was - a busy market, but not in the centre of the city ^{rather} but in the sacred precinct of the Temple. ^{deaf.} To gain some idea of what was happening one would have to imagine a market set up in the quiet / consecrated ground of a church yard ^{close up to} next to the church itself ^{where services were being held.}

This incongruous combination of a market with a place of worship did not in the least disturb the equanimity of the High Priest ~~axxxx~~ although he was responsible for all that took place in the Temple and its Courts. On the contrary he surveyed this ~~scene with~~ its noisy hubbub, its ^{sh} shouting and confusion with an increased satisfaction.

And for this reason. As in most of the great religions of the world the offering of a sacrifice to the gods - or God - was an essential part of the ~~xxxxxxx~~ Jewish faith. But there was this important difference. For the Jew there was only one place where he could offer his sacrifice, and that was in the Temple in Jerusalem. This was the reason why hundreds and thousands of Jews came annually to Jerusalem to offer their sacrifices. They came not only from the cities and villages of Palestine but from all over the great Roman empire from places as far apart

(3)

Spain and Persia, Greece and North Africa, ~~Ephesus and Rome~~.
Rome and Babylon.

On this particular morning the feast of the Passover was
imminent and already thousands of pilgrims in their various and
colourful garments had arrived in the Holy City and hundreds of
thousands were still on their way. All these pilgrims had one
objective, the Holy Temple in Jerusalem - just as Mahomedans
today converge on Mecca and Catholics on Lourde or Fatima. Every
house in Jerusalem was packed to overflowing, and on the hills
surrounding the city were covered with tents and hastily erected
booths. In this way ~~sometimes~~ almost a million persons would
be accommodated.

It is obvious that persons coming from countries ~~xxxxxxx~~
~~xxxxxxx~~ so remote could not possibly
bring with them their own victims ^{to be} ~~for the~~ ~~xxxxx~~ sacrifices ~~they~~
wished to ~~make~~ and so it had become the ³ custom - approved of by
the authorities - that the buying and selling of the victims for
the altar took place in the huge court of the Gentiles - that is
in a part of the Temple ~~grounds~~. ^{grounds} The Highest Temple ~~authorities~~
approved of this ~~on~~ for the very practical reason that

it brought them in an immense revenue; for on each of these
transactions ~~the~~ High Priest got a ^{was} "rake off". ~~fact~~ ^{that is my}

Besides his commission on the sale of oxen, sheep and
goats the High Priest received an additional revenue from the
"Market" ^{Temple} in the Court ~~of xxxxxxx~~ in the following manner.

E. was one of the richest men in Jerusalem.

It is obvious that pilgrims coming from countries so remote could not bring with them their own animals for the sacrifice so it had become the custom - approved of by the Temple authorities - that the buying and selling of victims for the altar took place in the great Court of the Gentiles (called so because it was the only part of the temple open to ~~xxxxx~~ people who were not Jews .) The High Priest approved of this arrangement for the very practical reason that it brought in an immense revenue for the Temple of which he took a substantial share.

Besides his commission on the sale of heifer , ox , sheep or goat that was sold, the High Priest received an additional revenue from the market in the following manner . It was the rule that the purchase of animals for sacrifice could only be made through the medium of Jewish money . But the pilgrims who came from all the ~~xxx~~ countries in the Roman Empire brought their money with them in the local currencies in use where they lived . To surmount this difficulty ^{money} here and there all over the Court of the Gentiles could be seen the tables of the professional money-changers , each table with its neat piles of coins of various kinds shining in the sun . At these tables the pilgrims changed their foreign money into Jewish shekels ; and on each such change of money a certain percentage had to be set aside for the Temple - and went through the hands of the High Priest who took his "rake -off "

The Pleasant meditations of Caiaphas ~~the High Priest~~ were interrupted by the arrival of another priest - evidently ^{a personage} ~~of importance~~ because he ~~was~~ came attended by a retinue of Temple officials . Caiaphas rose to greet the new-comer with an obsequious respect ; for it was none other than Annas his famous father-in-law , the only man in Jerusalem who had a greater influence than Caiaphas .
himself.

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Annas was well known not only because he had himself occupied the post of High Priest but because, after his year was ^{complete} up he had contrived to get five of his sons (or sons -n law) elected to that distinguished office . ^{one also to other} Though an elderly man Annas still had a tremendously forceful personality ; and through his ^{full extent} these five members of his family had had been able to exercise a paramount authority in the affairs of the Temple . (here)

Dismissing his retinue Annas sat down beside his son-^{elabrar} ~~richly~~ ornated seat .

For some minutes they sat in silence watching the busy scene below them Annas enjoying the warmth of the Spring sun on his ageing shoulders . There was a complete understanding between these two men each realising how important the other one was for the fulfilment of his ^{own} plans . The son had been placed in this high position through the influence of his father in law ; and the elder leader man knew that he could still wield a great influence in the Temple affairs through his ^{relation} ~~realation~~ - without ^{which} ~~which~~ it would have been impossible .

They were both ambitious men in their way, they both enjoyed the sense of power which was theirs . Indeed looking round the temple with all its manifold ^{activities} ~~activities~~ , smoke, its gleaming towers , its milling ^{its rising columns of sacrificial} ~~corwds~~ , they could ^{together} ~~collectively~~ had said " we are monarchs of all we survey " . They were at the zenith of their power , the undisputed ^{leaders} ~~leaders~~ of the Jewish people . ^{Richest men in J.}

Little did either of these men realise that there was already closing in upon them a Power greater than theirs , a mysterious and almost intangible Power that was to shake their throne to its foundations , and set up a new Kingdom of its Own . Indeed at that very moment the first ^{indications} ~~manifestations~~ of that power were about to be manifest under their very ~~eyes~~ .

They were wealthy men and belonged to the ^{well to do} wealthy
aristocratic sect known as the Sadducees — ^{and} ~~and~~ ^{Further} ~~and~~ ^{Further}
they were ^{automatically} getting ^{richer} wealthier every day as the
commissions on the sales kept coming in — like
"penne from Heaven" as it says in

8

Business is brisk this morning " said ~~xxx~~ Annas breaking the
silence . "It will be brisker still ^{soon} " replied his son-in-law
"for I hear that all the roads leading to Jerusalem are packed with
pilgrims "

It was just at that very moment that the two priests
became aware that something unusual ^{happening} was happening down there below them
~~xxx~~ ~~something unusual and quite unexpected~~ . The vast crowd of
animals and men had begun to move slowly in one direction - towards
the western gate of the Court of the Gentiles; and already a ^{great} ~~great~~ ~~and~~
quickenning stream of cattle and sheep ^{pushing + shoving - had} began to ~~crowd~~ ^{crowd} through this
large ^{exit} ~~gate~~ into the streets of the city of Jerusalem .

DAWSON'S
HARCHEMENT
LAINEN
100% COTTON FIBER

a miracle which helped say to
the D this is a miracle.

7

Amazed and almost stupified the two ~~priests~~ High Priests- past and present - watched was going on. Mingled with their surprise was another emotion - a rising tide of anger. What person - or group of persons ^{would dare to} - could take it upon themselves to do this, - to give commands in the Temple court, which was under the sole direct and sole administration of the High Priest. And to do it ^{openly} ~~to us~~ under the very eyes of the High Priests themselves.

Annas was the stronger personality of the two, ^{as a man} and his face set hard with an expression of cold bitter determination that boded ill for the perpetrator of such an ^{unheard of} ~~outrageous~~ crime as to interfere with the Temple Programme. Acting quickly he summoned one of the Temple guards who was standing near them, and ordered him to run swiftly down into the Court of the Gentiles and bring back word what it was all about.

By the time this man returned, bringing another with him, the Court was ~~practically~~ almost empty except for the tables of the money changers, ^{used to form} and the hurdles which had ~~made~~ enclosures where the various farmers had kept the cattle.

"This man saw it all, Your Holiness, said the Guard, he was there from the beginning and saw everything." At this the priests turned to the new comer expectantly.

"Everything was going on fine," said the latter, "and just as usual, until that New Teacher from Nazareth - that Carpenter ^{wh, that man that} turned - ~~teacher~~ - who ever one is talking about, came in through the Western Gate. He was followed by a group of his disciples. He was the cause of all the trouble ^{you know.}"

"What did he do, interpose Annas at this point."

Well, as soon as He and his followers came right into the market this Jesus looked around Him with an expression of anger.

He look to him all came in at a glance.

6

8

Then acting swiftly he made a sort of whip out of some cords he found lying about and then, without more ado, he began drive the cattle and sheep before him towards the western gate. His face was stern and his eyes blazed with anger. The animals turned and fled before him - oxen sheep and goats - in an ever increasing stream, which almost became a torrent by the time it reached the western gate through which ~~they~~ ^{hundreds} thronged bearing everything before them. When He came to the ~~tables~~ ^{Chairs} where men were selling turtle doves, for those who could not ~~buy~~ ^{afford to} ~~buy~~ other animals, he turned to the dealers and said "Take these things hence and do not make my Father House a place of barter" ^{And he} ~~him~~ spoke in a voice of such authority that none dreamed of disobeying. He was less temperate when he came to the tables of the money changers. He went right up to them and then suddenly - Bang - Bang - ~~and~~ ^{this way or that way} ~~thsi~~ ^{up into tables} side and that - and ~~over~~ ^{gathering} went the ~~tables~~ their tables, and all their piles of carefully counted coins all arranged in order went scattering here and there amongst the straw and ~~falling~~ ^{near} that ~~xxxxxxx~~ everywhere covered the coloured marble tiles ~~thatxxxxxxx~~ ^{place} ~~floor~~ of the Court.

He

Then addressing a group of those who had been trafficking in the temple, He said in a voice which rang out like a judgement "Is it not written that My House shall be known among all the nations as a House of Prayer? And you have turned it into a Den of Thieves." Further more he would not allow anyone to use the Temple Courts as a short cut from one part of the city to another; and sent back those who were carrying their wares across the court ~~in this way~~ ^{with this purpose}.

The High Priest and his Father in law listened to this account without a word of comment but it was easy to see that they were both visibly affected by it - ~~wxxxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ The anger which filled their hearts was of a different nature from that which had burned in the heart of the new prophet

Meanwhile Jesus and his followers had moved on towards the far side of the Temple Court to the magnificent Solomon's Porch a double colonnade of marble pillars supporting a golden studded roof . There he was addressing a large crowd most of whom had witnessed the cleansing of the Temple .

clearly *she has been* *found*
As the High Priest in all his pontifical robes and his father-in-law Annas together with a group of temple guards approached the spot where Jesus was teaching . It was obvious that they were coming to speak to him ^{on} the cause of all the commotion that had taken place that morning . The air became suddenly tense and electric as everyone realised that an encounter was about to take place before them . The Carpenter Prophet from Galilee made no attempt to avoid them approaching party . In fact when it was quite obvious that the High Priest was coming to speak to him he quietly rose and took a few steps to meet them .

There was something about the mien of this new teacher , so calm and majestic , so sure of himself yet without a trace of ostentation that the High Priest hesitated and seemed for a moment to ~~hesitate~~ think the better of his original intention which was to arrest him and take him prisoner . And the two priests were confirmed in their hesitation when they realised how considerable was the crowds that was with Jesus ; and it was clear by their expressions that their sympathies were with him and they might rally to his defence and cause an ugly scene . The attempt but not the deed would confound him and would only make the matter worse

Instead therefore of signing to the guards to arrest Jesus the High Priest as soon as he came face to face with him said in a loud clear voice "What sign do you show us as a warrant that you do these things " and as he said so he waved his arm towards the deserted market behind him . Put in other words it meant What is your authority that you take upon yourself to act in this way .

There was a moment of intense and dramatic silence - the silence heavy with suspense expectancy ^{not too} ~~even~~ of ~~coming~~ ^{long} crisis and doom.

Then in a strong clear voice the Galilean prophet - for many thought him to be so) replied :

"Destroy this temple and in three days I will build it up again "

This was a r reply so unexpected and so extraordinary that both the High Priest and his party and the crowds behind around Jesus - that for a space again there was silence , almost as if they were stunned into silence . Annas was the first to recover from his surprise . Looking round him ^{around} ~~first to the left~~ he pointed ^{to} to the actual temple buildings in all their morning splendour and thento the various courts , and finally to the 250 enormous massive pillars that supported the Porch of Solomon ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ just above them ^{and said} ~~Annas said~~ "Six and forty years was this templ in building and will you ^{saw} raise it up again in three days "

Jesus made no att empt to elaborate ~~his statement~~ ^{+ enigmatis} ~~this~~ his remarkable ^{last remark} statement . He was completely master of the situation and it was he - bot the High Priest - who by quietly moving away indicated that the interview was at an end .

Left to t themselves a few m nutes later the two Priests discussed the incident . "What do you suppose , hemeant"said Caiaphas . "I do not know said the older man . But I know one thing : We have not seen the last of this Carpenter Prophet . :he is a dangerous fellow " !

"The man must be mad to make a remak like that said the son in law . " and byet he did not look as though he was distracted in his wits "

"Mark my words " said Annas if that man is mad there is method in his madness . I am certain that his words had a real meaning ^{remember} which will one day become more clear to us . "eanwhile

II

such madness must not go unwatched "

Then turning to one of the guards he said "Go and fetch me Amon of Bethsaida at once : you will find him operating at the far side of the big altar and tell him to come to me immediately "

About ten minutes after Amon arrived , he was also a Priest but of a lesser degree , and bowed deferentially to his superieirs .

"Amon, said Annas , I have a special work for you to do "

Yes , Your Holiness ?

"Do you know that Jesus of Nazareth that everyone is talking about ?

Yes ,Your ~~Hignx~~ Holiness , I have seen him selceral times .

" Well , I want you to give up your present work in the temple and having dressed like a layman , and ~~also~~ disguised yourself to follow him wherever he goes . And everynow and then , as occasion offers , you will send me a written report about him and his doings with special reference to his effect on the common people . I will arrange with the Temple tresurer to provide you with all that will be necessary for you expenses . But you must remember that you are going this incognito and no one is to have the slightest suspicion that you are a temple spy . Do you understand .? "

"+es , Your Exce;;ency , I understand .

Very well then , you can begin tomorrow .

.....

14 THE SUBTLE
to be able to show to my friends and hand on to my children, as a memento of this wonderful day "

By this time the Scribes and Pharisees who had been present, had ~~met~~ ^{foregathered} together in the house of Abner to discuss ~~amongst themselves~~ the mornings events and to consider whether there was sufficient evidence for them to accuse ~~Christ~~ the Nazaren Pseudo - prophet for blasphemy before the Sanhedrin ^{Sanhedrin} - the highest Jewish court of law. There was no sign that ~~any~~ ^{a single} one of them had changed his mind on this point as a result of the miracle.

But there were ~~others~~ ^{a different} others who had been present ~~xxx~~ upon whom the whole proceeding had made the most profound impression. As the three disciples - Peter, James and John, made their way back to Peter's house, where they were staying, the youngest of them - John - was strangely silent. He was still brooding

← ^{what he had seen + heard that} deeply over ~~the events~~ of the morning. Miracles he had seen Jesus work before, miracles in plenty, and it was not this new miracle in itself - as a miracle - which had made such a profound impression on him, ~~but~~ ^{It was rather} so much as some of the attending circumstances. There was one phrase especially which

had stuck in his mind. Jesus had said to the Pharisees "but to convince you that the Son of Man - while He is on earth - has power to ~~xxxx~~ forgive sins "That was a ~~very~~ strange thing to say. "while he is on earth--- what did He mean by it? It suggested a temporary state of things -- as one might say "while I was in Jericho I stayed with my uncle ~~John~~ Manassah. The phrase carried with it mysterious and suggestive overtones ~~is~~, almost as though Jesus, their beloved friend and Master, did not really belong to this earth at all, but was here - as you might say - on a temporary visit only.

Then there was that other matter - the claim to have the power

Disciple

to to forgive sins . This was something new too . As the young John meditated upon these new glimpses into the mysterious depths of his Master's personality, there came suddenly to his mind something which had happened over six months ago when he had seen Jesus for the first time . It was down by the river Jordan near the place where John himself had been babbtised the day before, by the famous new prophet John the Baptist, to whom people from all over Palestine were flocking in their hundreds and thousands .

While a little group st ~~were~~ ^{had been} standing listeneing to John the Baptist, a man had passed by . ^{And as} As he did so, John ^{Baptist} ~~The Forerunner~~ had interrupted his discourse, ^{that} and, pointing with his finger, had said "Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the Sins of the World" ^{and this the young} ~~That~~ was John's first introduction to Jesus . It was a

NP

strange remark to say about anyone and John had ~~often~~ wondered about it ~~since~~ not only at the time, but many times since, after

he had become one of Jesus' disciples . But now ^{John B. The Baptist's remark} ~~it came back~~

Came back

to his mind with an added ^{Significance for} ~~force~~ as it seemd to link itself up with this new ^{claim} ~~claim~~ to a special power, a ^{claim} ~~claim~~ implied by the

words Take courage , my son , thy sins are forgiven thee !

b

Then there was that other matter which had come to light that morning, Christ's claim to have the power to forgive sins. That was something new, something which Jesus had never mentioned before. It seemed to the young disciple that there were depths beyond depths in his Master's personality; and yet however deep one went there seemed to be always a new depth beyond waiting to be revealed. As the youngest of the disciples meditated on these things suddenly there came into his mind something which had happened more than six months before. It took place when he had gone down to the river Jordan to see and hear the new Prophet John the Baptist - the strange new preacher dressed in camels hair and a leathern girdle who had lived all his life in the desert, eating locusts and wild honey. "Along with hundreds of others John had listened to his preaching, had been deeply impressed and had been baptised by him in the waters of the Jordan."

The day after he had been baptised John and his friend and a small group of others were listening again to the desert preacher when the latter suddenly stopped his discourse, and with outstretched hand pointed to a man who was passing a few yards from them and said "Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world". It was a strange thing to say of anybody, and John and his friend were sufficiently intrigued to want to know more about this man - and besides there was something attractive about his appearance. So they left the Baptist and introduced themselves to the stranger, who invited them to to where he was staying. There they spent the rest of the day and the night. And that was how John came to know Jesus.

Not only at the time but many times since John had often wondered over that strange remark by the Baptist. And now suddenly to day it came back to him illuminated by a new significance.

ance.

cance. It seemed to link itself up with what had happened that morning when His master claimed to have the power to forgive sins. And not only made the claim but backed it up ^{had} by working so striking a miracle. As they sat down a few minutes later to the simple meal which Peter's mother - in - law had prepared for them John who sat opposite his Master regarded Him with a look in which wonder, reverence and love were blended together an expression reverence and love -- and wonder. As their eyes met and Jesus smiled at him the words of the Baptist came most vividly - almost audibly - to his mind: Behold the Lamb of God Who taketh away the sins of the World.

→ It seemed to link itself up in his mind with what had happened that morning, when His Master had made the prodigious claim to have the power to forgive sins; and had not only made the claim but had backed it up by working such a striking miracle.

As they all sat down a few minutes later to the simple meal which Peter's mother - in - law had prepared for them John happened to be sitting opposite Jesus. As John passed the salt over to His Master their eyes met. Jesus smiled at His young disciple and John had the fleeting impression ~~that~~ not for the first time - that His Master knew what was passing in His mind. In John's expression love, reverence, wonder and awe were blended together as once again the words of the Baptist re-echoed almost audibly in his mind -- Behold the Lamb of God Who takeht away the sins of the World.

to be able to show to my friends, and hand on to my children and grandchildren as a memento of this wonderful day.

After the Scribes and Pharisees had left the house they foregathered in the home of Abner to discuss the morning's events, and in particular to ~~see if~~ ^{they considered whether} there was enough evidence for them to make a formal accusation of blasphemy against Jesus to the High Priest in Jerusalem with the demand that he should be tried before the Sanhedrin ~~for this offence~~ ^{blasphemy}. There was no sign that a single one of them had changed his mind on this point as a result of the miracle which Jesus had performed.

Three of the disciples of Jesus -- Peter, James and John -- had been present in Esdras' house that morning, and had been deeply impressed by what had happened. This was especially true of John, the youngest of them. As they ~~three disciples~~ ^{the} accompanied by their Master, ~~made~~ ^{on} their way back to Peter's house, where they were staying, the young John was strangely silent. He was still brooding deeply over what he had seen and heard.

Miracles John had seen Jesus work before - miracles in plenty - and it was not ~~surprised~~ this new miracle in itself - as a miracle which had made such a profound impression on him, so much as ^{Some of} the attendant circumstances. There was one phrase especially which had stuck in his mind. Jesus had said to the Scribes and Pharisees .. "but to convince you that the Son of Man - while He is on earth - has power to forgive sins" That was a strange thing to say --- "while He is on earth," what did ~~he~~ ^{it} mean by it? It suggested something temporary and passing as one might say, "My brother - while he was in Jericho - stayed with our Uncle Jacob." The phrase as Jesus had used it, seem to carry mysterious ~~and suggestive~~ overtones, almost as if to suggest that their beloved Friend and Master did not really belong to this

world at all, but was here, as ^{one} you might say, only on a temporary visit. ^{But then} But if this earth was not His true Home - where did He come from? ^{It was all very puzzling for it was only later on,} ~~It was only later~~ that he was to hear Jesus speak of God in a special way as "MY Father"... "In my Father's House there are many mansions" ---or again (on the night of His death) "I came ^{forth} from the Father, and have come into the world. Again I leave the world and go ^{back} to the Father". ^{None the less} ~~But~~ the young disciples quick intuition had already seen in that phrase a new glimpse into the mysterious depths of His Masters personality. ^{he brooded over}

Then too ^{there was} ~~there was~~ that other matter, no less strange and mysterious - the claim to ~~have~~ the power to forgive sins. This was something new ^{too,} something which ^{Jesus had} ~~he~~ had not ^{mentioned} heard before. There seemed to be depth beyond depth in the person ^{of} the Master. ^{always} However deep you ^{ed} went into it, there seems always a new depth ^{waiting} beyond. As the young disciple meditated on these things there came suddenly to his mind something which had happened over six months ago. From all over Palestine ^{hundreds and thousands} hundreds and thousands of people - from ~~every part of Palestine~~ - were flocking to the Jordan valley to see and hear the new prophet - the hermit from the desert dressed in camels skin. The young John had joined them and had been baptised by the "Forerunner" along with ^{small} thousands of others. The next day he made one of a group that were standing listening to the preaching of the new prophet when all of a sudden the Baptist interrupted his discourse and, pointing to a man who was passing by, said BEHOLD THE Behold the Lamb of God Who taketh away the sins of the world "

That was Johns first introduction to Jesus, and he and his friend who was with him followed the man of whom such a strange thing had been said - introduced themselves and spent the rest of

day and the night with him .

John had often wondered about this strange remark of the Baptist about Jesus even after he had become one of His disc ples .And now , to-day , suddenly it came back to him with a new significance .It seemd somehow to link itself up in his mind with what had happened that morning -throwing a light on this new claim made by Jeus whixh was implied light on this new aspect in the character of Jesus - the claim ~~hazbzazazazazaz~~ implied in the words Son Thy sins are forgiven thee ,Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world .

MILLERS FALLS
EXERASE
COTTON CONTENT

world at all ,but was here - as you might say - only on a temporary visit .But if this earth was not His true Home - where did He come from ?It was only later that he was to hear Jesus speak of God in a special way as "MY Father "... "In my Father's House there are many mansions " ---or again (on the night of His death)"I came from the Father ^{forth} and have come into the world . Again I leave the world and go to the Father ". But the young disciples quick intuition had already seen in that phrase a new glimpse into the mysterious depths of His Masters personality .

Then too there was that other matter no less strange and mysterious - the claim to have the power to forgive sins . This was something new too ,something which he had not heard before .There seemed to be depth beyond depth in the person of the Master : however deep you went into it there seems always a new depth beyond . As the young disciple meditated on these things there came suddenly to his mind something which had happened over six months ago . From all over Palestine ^{hundreds and thousands} hundreds and thousands of people - from every part of Palestine - were flocking to the Jordan valley to see and hear the new prophet - the hermit from the desert dressed in camels skin . The young John had joined them and had been baptised by the "Forerunner "along with ^{small} thousands of others . The next day he made one of a group that were standing listening to the preaching of the new prophet when all of a sudden the Baptist interrupted his discourse and , pointing to a man who was passing by , said BEHOLD THE Behold the Lamb of God Who taketh away the sins of the world "

That was Johns first introduction to Jesus , and he and his friend who was with him followed the man of whom such a strange thing had been said - in roused themselves and spent the rest of

day and the night with him .

John had often wondered about this strange remark of the Baptist about Jesus even after he had become one of His disc ples .And now , to-day , suddenly it came back to him with a new significance .It seemd somehow to link itself up in his mind with what had happened that morning -throwing a light on this new claim made by Jeus whixh was implied light on this new aspect in the character of Jesus - the claim ~~bezbezabizata~~ implied in the words Son Thy sins are forgiven thee ,Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world .

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So when the shocked Pharisees and Scribes murmured amongst themselves that only God can forgive sins they were absolutely right . The only logical justification for Jesus using those words would be that he ~~wxxx~~ himself was God and the only logical alternative would be that he was either a madman or an impostor . And certainly they did not believe he was a madman :no madman could hold the crowds and speak as he did - therefore he was an impostor .In the last century before the coming of Jesus there had been ~~xxx~~ quite a number of individuals who had set themselves up as the promised "messiah and had claimed to have extraordinary powers . Anyone could say Son they sins are forgiven -but that would not necessarily mean that they were forgiven . A character in one of Shaekespeares plays says very pomposuly "I can call spirits from the vasty deep " : at which his interlocutor replies Why so can I , or so can any man But will they come when you do call for them ?".Similary anyman can say Thy sins are forgiven thee --but are they forgiven ? that is the question .

One of the major problems in the life of Jesus was how to reveal to his contemporaries who he really was . In every ordinary human personality there ^{mysterious} depths that are not too easy to fathom - how much more so in His case where there were depths reaching beyond the confines of human nature and mortality . It must be confessed that it would not be a simple and easy matter to believe that the man sitting opposite you at table is God -the God who created the stars .

Then there was that other matter which had come to light that morning, Christ's claim to have the power to forgive sins. That was something new, something which Jesus had never mentioned before. It seemed to the young disciple that there were depths beyond depths in his Master's personality, and yet however deep one went there seemed to be always a new depth beyond waiting to be revealed. As the youngest of the disciples meditated on these things suddenly there came into his mind something which had happened more than six months before. It took place when he had gone down to the river Jordan to see and hear the new Prophet John the Baptist - this strange new preacher dressed in Camel's hair and a leathern girdle who had lived all his life in the desert eating "locusts and wild honey". Along with hundreds of others John had listened to his preaching, had been deeply impressed and had been baptised by him in the waters of the Jordan.

The day after he had been baptised John and his friend and a small group of others were listening again to the desert preacher when the latter suddenly stopped his discourse, and with outstretched hand pointed to a man who was passing a few yards from them and said "Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world". It was a strange thing to say of anybody and John and his friend were sufficiently intrigued to want to know more about this man - and besides there was something attractive about his appearance - so they left the Baptist and introduced themselves to the stranger, who invited them to where he was staying. There they spent the rest of the day and the night. And that was how John came to know Jesus.

Not only at the time but many times since John had often wondered over that strange remark by the Baptist. And now suddenly to day it came back to him illuminated by a new signific-

cance . It seemed to link itself up with what had happened that morning when His master claimed to have the power to forgive sins . and not only made the claim but backed it up by working so striking a miracle .As they sat down a few minutes later to the simple meal which Peter's mother - in - law had prepared for them John who sat opposite his Master regarded Him with a look in which wonder , reverence and love were blended together an expression reverence and love -- and wonder .As their eyes met and Jesus smiled at him the words of the Baptist came most vividly - almost audibly -to his mind :Behold the Lamb of God Who taketh away the sins of the World .

It seemed to link itself up in his mind with what had happened that morning , when His Master had made the prodigious claim to have the power to forgive sins ; and had not only made the claim but had backed it up by working such a striking miracle .

As they all sat down a few minutes later to the simple meal which Peter's mother - in - law had prepared for them John happened to be sitting opposite Jesus . As John passed the salt over to His Master their eyes met . Jesus smiled at His young disciple and John had the fleeting impression ~~that~~ not for the first time - that His Master knew what was passing in His mind In John's expression love , reverence , wonder and awe were blended together -as once again the words of the Baptist re-echoed almost audibly in his mind --Behold the Lamb of God Who takeht away the sins of the World .

had been baptised himself by the Prophet in the waters of the Jordan .

The day after he had been baptised John and his friend and a small group of other pilgrims were listening again to the Preacher from the desert when the latter suddenly stopped in his discourse . Without stretched hand he pointed to a man who was approaching them on the other side of the river not many yards away and said "Behold the Lamb of God Who taketh away the sins of the world ". It was a strange thing to say of anyone and John and his friend were sufficiently intrigued to want to know more about this man. So they left the Baptist , crossed over the river, and followed the stranger . Then Jesus "turning round on seeing them following him had said to them What are you looking for ? And they had replied Rabbi where do you live ? And the stranger had said "Come and see ". So they went with him and stayed with Him for the rest of the day - and the night too . And that was how John came to be a disciple .

Not only at the time but many times since John had often pondered over that strange remark by the Baptist , And now , suddenly , to-day, it came back to him with a new significance and seemed to link itself on to and shed a light upon the events of the morning , and in particular with Jesus ' claim to have the power to forgive sins .

As they all sat down , a few minutes later , to the simple meal which Peter's mother - in-law had prepared for them John happened to be sitting opposite to Jesus . As he passed the salt across to His Master their eyes met . As Jesus smiled at his ardent young disciple " the disciple that Jesus loved " John had the ^{fleeting} feeling impression - not for the first time - that His Master knew what was passing in his mind . In John's expression love reverence loyalty wonder and a new awe were blended together were blended together

In John's expression love, reverence, loyalty and wonder were blended together, and as he gazed into His Master's face the words of the Baptist re-echoed almost audibly in his mind he was filled a deep sense of wonder and awe... Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world.

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