

Good Friday Magic

THE ORTHODOX CHURCHES are shrouded in mourning on Good Friday. With them it is a day of gloom and sorrow; to us it is a day of infinite compassion, infinite tenderness, truly *Good Friday*.

The vibrations of Easter are triumph, victory; with majestic chords the sun rises and intones the song of the risen Master.

The rhythm of Good Friday which vibrates through every blossoming tree, every green blade in the fields, every note of the bird song, is *love*. Not the joyous love of Christmas time, but a sweet, quiet love—softened by pain, mellowed by sorrow, nurtured with tears.

On the morning of Good Friday, Parsifal finds himself at the entrance gates to the Castle of the Grail, a pilgrim returned after many years of wandering and suffering in the wilderness of life. In the fierceness of struggle, the stupor of pain, he has lost track of time; the change of the seasons has been meaningless to him in the dark forest of soul-journeying from which he has just emerged. He does not know what day it is. But his sensitive heart soon responds in joyous wonderment: “I never saw the grasses, buds, and flowers so gently tender...their fragrance is a childlike loveliness, their speech all trust and sweet, safe confidence.”

“This is Good-Friday magic, Sir.” Thus explains

Gurnemanz, the aged guardian of the gate, who, in his hermit’s hut hidden at this springtime under a bower of blossoming trees, has been waiting the coming of Parsifal.

Good-Friday magic! So mysterious, yet so simply understood, if our hearts but respond to it.

Let us listen, listen with our hearts, to the rhythm of Good Friday, because on that day the per0and our Saviour is established, and reestablished every year.

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Good-Friday magic is of a peculiar kind. Its wondrous spell cannot penetrate the armor of intellect. When Parsifal returns he is clad in a black coat of mail and wears the winged helmet of Mercury. He carries shield and spear. These have served him well on his way to the cross. But when he

arrives at the cross, newly erected every Good Friday, Gurnemanz bids him “Take off thy weapons, they offend the Lord who, bare of armor, gave His sacred blood as a salvation for the sinful world.”

Parsifal obeys. He lays his armor down at the foot of the cross. He kneels at the foot of the cross. Not until then does Good-Friday magic work its wondrous spell; not until then does he see all nature smiling radiantly through tears; not until then does he hear the grasses and the flowers and the birds talking to him in sweet confidence—the voices of the Little Ones. “What you do to one of the least amongst my brethren, you do unto me,

and what you do not do to one of these Little Ones you do not do unto me.”

The sacred blood fell as quickening dew upon our planet, the Earth. It was shed for the Little Ones, our brothers of the mineral, plant, and animal world just as well as for us. But they can only sense the greatness of the love, the glory of the sacrifice, whereas we can understand it.

By force of our minds we alone are able to grasp the magnitude of the fact that the great Sun Spirit, the Christ, renounced His splendor amongst the creative hierar-

chies, His shining path through solar systems and zodiacs, for our sakes, so that our sorrowful star, whose vibrations had become dangerously low through our materialism, might be saved from the dreadful fate of crystallizing in gross matter and of losing its possibility of evolution in this cosmic cycle. Our faults, our sins, had also endangered the guiltless Little Ones of the younger kingdoms who with us are bound to the planet. All creation groaned and travailed until the suffering Earth absorbed the cleansing blood-tears from the very heart of the solar system.

And the sacrifice of Golgotha is repeated every year. Christ Jesus' blood purified the planet, the rate of vibration was raised to its intended speed. But this speed has to be maintained and increased in order to ensure the evolutionary progress of the Earth. Therefore, for a part of each year the Sun Spirit imprisons Himself in depths of the Earth. For a part of each year He takes upon himself the cross of dense matter, the untold suffering associ-



J. James Tissot, Brooklyn Museum

The Grotto of the Agony

Envisioning Christ Jesus in Gethsemane is itself a mighty redemptive force, deterring from the sin that causes the sinless One to suffer. Here he agonizes below a cloud of spiritual witnesses.

ated with earthly conditions, and will continue His sacrifice until a sufficient number of our race have developed to such a degree of high-vibrationed spirituality that the younger souls may be safely entrusted to our care, and the destiny of the Earth is secure.

Thus far we can follow the drama of Good Friday with our intellects: “This is what the Christ does for us.” But if we want Good Friday magic to weave its spell around us, if we want to establish the personal bond between ourselves and our Saviour, we must enact the Good Friday Drama in our hearts: “What can we do for the Christ?”

We all know the picture of the Christ in prayer, “Awaiting the Day of Liberation.” If we feel what that picture symbolizes, can there be any closer personal tie than this, the Christ imprisoning Himself for us and waiting for us to liberate Him! Though the great sacrifice is performed again and again in loving silence, yet He, our Saviour, longs for us to save Him. He gave us all His love; how

He waits, how He wishes for ours. Our responsibility is overwhelming. We are keeping the Master imprisoned. We know it. Why cannot we feel it? Because our hearts, cramped in by the black armor of intellect, are too small to feel bigness. Oh, these proud, miserable, self-centered intellects of ours which talk so much of self-expression and self-development and of the power within us.

One thing is needful, namely to kneel down at the foot of the cross with Parsifal, amongst the Little Ones, and to say: Master, Thou hast served and saved me; now I will serve and save Thee; and I will begin by loving all Thy Little Ones, my younger brothers in the plant and animal world which look up to me with trust and confidence, and all the younger souls amongst human kind who need me so much.

Our responsibility looms larger and larger. It is for us to liberate our Saviour. As their wards and caretakers, we are charged with ennobling our younger brothers. The plant and the animal have not developed the consciousness by the light of

which they might see the divine. They can only behold the reflection of the divine in the human. "My little god"—so the dog in Meterlinck's "Blue Bird" addressed his master. And Parsifal is told why grass and flower, bird and deer greet him so lovingly: "Our Saviour on the Cross they cannot see—thus Man, redeemed one, they look up to thee."

In the tenderness of Good Friday there is foreshadowed that Great Day when in the fullness of love we shall realize that the sacred blood was diffused through all the earth, and has nurtured the so-called poisonous weed as well as the beautiful rose, the snake as well as the faithful dog, the lowly in mind as well as the genius. Let us love, love, love. Let us no longer hurt or betray or shun or fear the Little Ones nor feel superior to them, but answer their trust with infinite care, infinite protection. Let us hasten the "Day of Liberation," the last and perfect Good Friday when of all wonders the greatest will come to pass—"Salvation for the Saviour." □

—Margaret Wolff

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