

**JESUS IN THE
EXPERIENCE
OF MEN**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649049677

Jesus in the Experience of Men by T. R. Glover

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

T. R. GLOVER

**JESUS IN THE
EXPERIENCE
OF MEN**

JESUS IN THE
EXPERIENCE OF MEN

LIBRARY
FEB 8 1934

JESUS IN THE EXPERIENCE OF MEN

T. R. GLOVER

*Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge,
and Public Orator in the University.
Author of "The Jesus of History"*

NEW  YORK
GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY

COPYRIGHT, 1921, BY
T. R. GLOVER

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

INTRODUCTION

One of the parables of Jesus turns on the ferment of leaven in a mass of meal—a vivid forecast of his own effect on the minds of men. He found a world full of established ideas, heirlooms of a great and progressive past, and the immediate effect of his coming was a struggle between inheritance and experience. "It was said to them of old time; but I say unto you." The minds of most of us are like palimpsests written over and over again; here the latest notion stands out in the newest script, but between the letters are to be found traces of ideas much older, obliterated but legible; there the old is almost untouched, but the closer observer finds hints of a "later hand." Every great thinker sets men re-writing these palimpsests, and it is long before it is completely achieved; and often by that time a new story is being superimposed on the corrected page. Jesus had the same material to work upon as every great teacher, and his work was done in the same way, on the same terms, and with the same result in the clash of old and new. He has reacted on mankind, as we all know; he has transformed their ideas, blotted out old preconceptions and convictions, and through experience brought men to a new set of principles; but the process has been long and slow.

It is not as if men had really known at first what he meant and what his principles involved or, indeed, guessed how much his personality was to signify. It is easy to talk of his disciples taking the Christian message to the world; but when we begin to consider what this meant,

the task which they undertook is progressively realized to be of the hardest. A man has an entirely new experience, and he wishes to tell other men of it, but in what language? If he uses their language, it is inadequate for the new light and joy he has found; if he uses his own, recreated by the experience, it will be unintelligible. The dilemma is real but not final. One mind goes out to meet another; the listener can make nothing of the message, but he sees that there is something to be told; the bearing, the earnestness, the character of the messenger compel attention, and gradually the story is shared. But it is changed in being communicated. A poet has an inspiration; but if he is a great poet and writes great poetry, the eventual poem may be very different from the initial inspiration, even when it is full of it and expresses it—"like, but oh! how different!" The early Christian, in telling his story to the world, had to translate it; and translation, as all bred on Greek verse composition know, is a discipline in understanding; it means long and hard wrestling with the original, till it yields its real meaning. When the early Christian began to translate the story of Jesus into Greek (to say nothing of Latin, Syriac, or Armenian), he found out the gaps in his knowledge of the Greek vernacular and in his knowledge of Jesus; and by the time he had got his message into the new speech, his experience of Jesus was a larger one, and he had to tell of a greater Christ than he had expected. The leaven had done more than it seemed to be doing.

In one region and another of experience humanity has experimented with Jesus, constantly with new and unexpected results; it has explored him with anxiety; it has enjoyed him; and by exploring and enjoying him it has found more and more in him, and it has grown in the process.

Our task in this volume is primarily historical. We have to watch the Christian apostle and the Christian community brought face to face with new issues, intellectual, spiritual, and social, and doing their best to adjust old and new, often with a belief in the permanence of the old which experience does not sustain, frequently with a good deal of fear which proves not warranted. The ancient world had had a long religious experience; and if some of its standard ideas were as yet insufficiently examined, some of its gains were real and permanent. The Christian Gospel had to be re-examined in connection with them all.

The chief questions in religion for that ancient world were these:—Is God many or one? Is he just? Can man have peace with God and be sure of it? Is man's own personality secure, and for how long? We shall in turn have to discuss these questions and the older answers to them; to review the belief in spirits, that heirloom from animistic times, the philosophic foundation of polytheism; the problem of justice which haunts Greek thinkers from Theognis to Plato and beyond, and is the inspiring motive of Jewish apocalyptic; the conception of religion as safety, and of sacrifice as the supreme mode of religion, the assurance of God's acceptance. As all these ideas had been perpetually readjusted to growing experience of the nature of morality, a fuller discussion of sin and its forgiveness will properly follow, and with it a survey of the central question of the nature of God, and then of the problem of personal immortality, which occupied antiquity more and more, and at every stage depended on the conception of God dominant in the day. Lastly in this connection we must consider the attempt made, upon the background of these beliefs and of others, to explain the place of Christ in the universe which he was remodeling.