

living as well (so Narsai); and it is improbable that he is thinking merely of the Jacobite *Book of Life*, which did not engage the attention of his younger contemporary Jacob of Edessa. When noting the fact that the diptychs spoken of by the Areopagite were of the dead only (*P. Gr.* iv 145A), and again that they were read after the salutation (the *Pax*) ὡσερ καὶ ἐν Ἀνατολίῃ (*P. Gr.* iv 136D), Maximus did not realize that these two points of difference from his own rite admitted of a very easy explanation, viz. that the Areopagite himself wrote 'in the East'.

I had already arrived at these conclusions when the following piece of evidence was brought to my notice. In the 15th chapter of his *Expositio*, in commenting on the diptychs (after the consecration), Bār Ṣalībī writes thus: 'Sed hic decet sermonem extolli ut vituperet Armenos qui non offerunt sacrificium pro vivis. Si enim in liturgia commemoraciones tres priores propter vivos sunt: . . . quare vos inscitia quadam commemorationem vivorum super altare negligitis?'

We have traced the origin of the *Book of Life*, read after the *Pax*, to the borders of Armenia: here we find a practice of commemorating the dead only among the Armenians themselves in the twelfth century.

If it is asked why George of the Arabs (if he is really the author of our first document) mentions the *Book of Life* in the seventh century, while his earlier contemporary Jacob of Edessa had not the practice of reading it in his church, I should seek an explanation in the fact that the diocese of the former lay farther east than Edessa, and was thus less liable to be influenced by the usages of Greek-speaking churches. The same is the case with Bār Kēphā. But even so, it is to be remembered that George mentions the *Book of Life* only at the end of his commentary on the liturgy, as if by an afterthought, and not in its proper place; while the author of the *Breaking of the Eucharist* and Bār Kēphā expressly state that its use was only occasional.

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### 'WOMAN, WHAT HAVE I TO DO WITH THEE?'

WE must all have listened, at some time or other, to well-meant expositions explaining that the speech of our Lord to His Mother at the Marriage in Cana of Galilee was not as harsh as it sounds in English. I venture to think that the sense of harshness persists, notwithstanding the explanations, and I desire to submit an alternative exegesis of John ii 4. Of course, so far as the vocative γύναι is concerned, the

harshness disappears in Greek; the difficulty is really with *τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί*;

The phrase is common enough, both in Greek and Aramaic. It gives us three things, viz. 'something' (*τί*), the speaker (*ἐμοί*), and the person spoken to (*σοί*); and further, it asserts the existence of a gap or disconnexion. What, as a matter of fact, the phrase does not tell us is where the gap is. It may be between *me* and *thee*, but it may equally well be between *us* and *the thing*. I venture to suggest that in John ii 4 *τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, γύναι*; means nothing more than *τί ἡμῖν, γύναι*; we might translate it 'What have I and thou to do with that?'

The nearest linguistic parallel in the N. T. is *τί γάρ μοι τοῦτο ἔξω κρίνεις*; in 1 Cor. v 12. 'What is that to us?' in Matt. xxvii 4 is *τί πρὸς ἡμᾶς*; but I submit that a simple dative might stand there, especially a phrase of more syllables like *ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί*. In the Aramaic of the older Syriac versions this linguistic difference disappears.<sup>1</sup>

As for the general meaning, that is determined by the context. In fact, this is the case whatever view we may take of the Fourth Gospel from the point of view of history or theology. The Mother of Jesus tells Him that the wine has run short: His answer encourages her to believe that He will act in the matter, for she prepares the servants for an order (*ver.* 5). She was right in this impression, for in what we read next our Lord is telling them to fill the water-pots (*ver.* 7). Obviously, therefore, the answer was in some way favourable. It seems to me difficult to believe that *τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, γύναι*; can be intended by the Evangelist to mean anything else than 'Never mind; don't be worried'. A sentence which means literally 'It is not my business' (*mā 'alēsh*) is used by the modern Egyptians, both for 'I beg your pardon!' and 'Never mind!' That is really what is required. The Evangelist adds *οὐπω ἤκει ἡ ὥρα μου*. Doubtless this is intentionally of double meaning: 'the impression left on the reader is that it is not supposed by the Evangelist to have been understood at the time' (*Abbott* 2642). The Christian is supposed to see that it may mean 'My crisis is not yet', while it seemed at the time only to say 'It is not yet the moment to act'. But in neither sense does it convey a rebuke.

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<sup>1</sup> See also Abbott *Johannine Grammar* 2229 ff, 2642 a.