

Maria Valtorta

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THE GOSPEL  
AS REVEALED  
TO ME

THE GOSPEL  
AS REVEALED  
TO ME

7 parts

*The birth and Hidden Life of Mary and Jesus*  
chapters 1-43

*The first year of the Public Life of Jesus*  
chapters 44-140

*The second year of the Public Life of Jesus*  
chapters 141-312

*The third year of the Public Life of Jesus*  
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*Preparation for the Passion of Jesus*  
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*Glorification of Jesus and Mary*  
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*Farewell to the Work*, chapter 652

10 volumes

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Maria Valtorta

THE GOSPEL  
AS REVEALED  
TO ME

VOLUME FOUR  
Chapters 226-295

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# The second year of Public Life of Jesus.

(continuation)

226. A good sign by Mary of Magdala.  
Death of the Old Israel.

22<sup>nd</sup> July 1945.

<sup>1</sup> Jesus in the company of the Zealot arrives at Lazarus' garden on a beautiful summer morning. It is still dawn and thus everything is cool and smiling. 226. 1

The gardener, who has come to receive the Master, points out to Him the hem of a white tunic disappearing behind a hedge and says: «Lazarus is going to the jasmin pergolas and has taken some rolls to read. I will call him. »

«No, I will go, by Myself. »

Jesus walks fast along a path bordered with hedges in bloom. The grass close to the hedges deadens the noise of His steps and Jesus endeavours to walk on it, to reach Lazarus unexpectedly.

He in fact surprises him, while standing, after laying the rolls on a marble table, he is praying in a loud voice: «Do not disappoint me, my Lord. Help me to grow the ray of hope which has begun to shine in my heart. Grant me what I have asked You for thousands of times with my tears, what I have asked for by my actions, by forgiving, by my wholeself. Give me it in exchange for my life. Grant me it in the name of Your Jesus, Who has promised me that peace. Can He possibly tell lies? Must I think that His promise was nothing but vain words? That His power is inferior to the sinful abyss which my sister is? Tell me, my Lord, that I may resign myself for Your sake... »

«Yes, I tell you! » says Jesus.

Lazarus turns around startled and cries: «Oh! my Lord. When did You arrive? » and he bends to kiss Jesus' tunic.

«Only a few minutes ago. »

«All alone? »

«With Simon Zealot. But I came here alone. I know that You have a great thing to tell Me. So tell Me. »

«No. Answer first the questions which I ask God. According to Your answer, I will tell You. »

«Tell Me, do tell Me, your *great* thing. You can tell Me... » and Jesus smiles stretching out His arms invitingly.

«Most High God! It is true? So You know that it is true?! » and Lazarus goes towards Jesus' arms to confide his great thing.

<sup>2</sup>«Mary asked Martha to go to Magdala. And Martha left full of anxiety as she feared some misfortune... And I was left here, with the same fear. But through the servant who accompanied her there, Martha has sent me a letter, which has filled me with hope. Look, I have it here, on my heart. I keep it here, because it is more valuable to me than a treasure. It is very short, only a few words, but I read them now and again, to make sure that they have really been written. Look... » and Lazarus takes from under his tunic a small roll tied with a violet ribbon and unfolds it. «See? Read it, read it. In a loud voice. If You read it, it will sound more certain to me. »

«Lazarus, my brother. Peace and blessing to you. I arrived in a short time safe and sound. And my heart has no longer throbbed with fear of fresh misfortunes, because I saw that Mary, our Mary, is all right and... shall I tell you? She looks less disturbed than previously. She wept on my heart. She wept bitterly... And then, during the night, in the room where she had taken me, she asked me many things about the Master. That is all for the time being. But since I see Mary's face and I hear her words, I can say that hope has been raised in my heart. Pray, my dear brother, and hope. Oh! If it were true! I will be staying here a little longer because I feel that she wants me to be close to her, as if she wished to be defended from temptations. And that she wants to learn... What? What we already know. Jesus' infinite bounty. I told her about that woman who came to Bethany... I see that she is pensive, very pensive indeed... Jesus ought to be here. Pray and hope. The Lord be with you". » Jesus folds the roll and hands it back.

«Master... »

«I will go. Is it possible for you to tell Marthe to come and meet Me at Capernaum in a fortnight's time, at the most? »

«Yes, I can do that. And what about me? »

«You will stay here. I will send Martha here as well. »

«Why? »

«Because redemptions are deeply modest. And nothing causes more shame than the eye of a parent or of a brother. I also say to you: “Pray, pray, pray”. »

Lazarus weeps on Jesus' chest... Then, when he recovers, he tells of his anxiety, of his depression... «For almost a year I have been hoping... and despairing... How long is the time taken by resurrection!... » he exclaims.

<sup>3</sup>Jesus lets him speak... until Lazarus realises he is failing in his duty of a host and he stands up to take Jesus into the house. To do so they pass near a thick jasmin hedge in full bloom, on the star-shaped corollas of which, golden bees are humming. 226.3

«Ah! I was forgetting to tell You... The old patriarch You sent me, has gone back to Abraham's bosom. Maximinus found him here, with his head leaning against this hedge, as if he had fallen asleep near the beehives which he looked after as if they were houses full of golden children. That is what he used to call the bees. He seemed to understand them and to be understood by them. And on the patriarch sleeping in the peace of a clear conscience, when Maximinus found him, there was a precious veil of little golden bodies. The bees were lying on their friend. He was so good that he probably tasted of honey... And he was so honest that he was probably like an uncontaminated corolla for the bees... It grieved me. I would have liked to have him longer in my house. He was a just man... »

«Do not mourn his death. He is in peace, and from his peace he prays for you, who made his last days happy. Where is he buried? »

«At the end of the orchard. Still close to his beehives. Come and I will show You... »

And they go through a laurel grove towards the actively buzzing beehives.

#### 227. An uncompleted event.

23<sup>rd</sup> July, at 8 o'clock.

<sup>1</sup>It is a very pale Judas who comes off the wagon with Our Lady and the women disciples, that is, the Maries, Johanna and Eliza... 227.1

... and thanks to the confusion I had in the house this morning I was not able to write while I was seeing, therefore, as it is now 6 o'clock p. m., I can only say that I understood and heard that Judas, now convalescent, is going back to Jesus, Who is at Gethsemane with Mary, Who cured him and with Johanna, who insists that the women and the convalescent should go back to Galilee in the wagon. And Jesus agrees and makes the boy get on it with them. Johanna instead is staying for a few days in Jerusalem with Eliza, then Eliza will go to Bethzur and Johanna to Bether.

I remember that Eliza said: «I have now the courage to go back there, because my life is no longer aimless. I will get my friends to love You. » And I remember that Johanna added: «And I will do that in my estate, while Chuza leaves me here. It will be serving You, although I would prefer to follow You. »

I also remember that Judas said he never felt the desire for his mother, not even in the worst hours of his disease, because «Your Mother was a real mother to me, She was kind and loving and I will never forget it» he said.

The rest of the words are confused, so I will not repeat them, because they would be my words and not those spoken by the people of the vision\*.

[... ]•

228. In the boat to Bethsaida, where  
Marjiam is entrusted to Porphirea.

24<sup>th</sup> July 1945.

228. 1 <sup>1</sup> Jesus is on the lake of Galilee with His disciples. All the disciples are with Him, including Judas, who has completely recovered and whose countenance has become more gentle after his illness and the attention he has received. There is also Marjiam, who is rather frightened as it is his first time out on the lake. He does not want it to be seen, but every time the boat pitches more vigorously, he clings with one arm to the neck of the sheep,

\* vision, on the handwritten copy by MV: This should be removed so as not to disturb those who do not want revelations... or to be left if the decision is ever made for the work to be printed in its true integrity...

which shares his fear bleating pitifully, and with the other arm he grasps whatever he can, the mast, a bench, an oar, Peter's leg, or Andrew's, or the legs of the servants who move backwards and forwards manoeuvring the boat, and he closes his eyes, fearing perhaps that his last hour has come.

Pinching the boy's cheek, Peter now and again says to him: «You are not afraid, eh? A disciple must never be afraid... » The boy shakes his head in denial, but as both the wind and the lake are rising while they approach the mouth of the river, where the Jordan flows into the lake, he closes his eyes tighter and more frequently and at last - when the boat heels over, when struck on one side by a wave - he lets out a scream of terror.

Some of the apostles laugh and some tease Peter remarking that he has become the father of a bad sailor, and some make fun of Marjiam who always says that he wants to go by sea and by land preaching Jesus, and then is afraid of sailing a few cables' lengths on the lake. But Marjiam defends himself saying: «Every man is afraid of what he does not know. I of water, Judas of death... »

<sup>228 2</sup>I thus realise that Judas must have been afraid of dying and I am surprised that he does not react to the boy's remark. On the contrary he says: «You are right. Everyone is afraid of what one does not know. But we are about to arrive at Bethsaida, which is only a short distance away. And you are sure that you will find love there. I also would like to be at a short distance from the House of the Father and be sure of finding love there! » He says so with a tired, sad expression.

«Do you not trust God? » asks Andrew who is obviously amazed.

«No, I mistrust myself. During the days of my illness, when I was surrounded by so many pure good women, I felt so backward spiritually! How much I meditated! I would say to myself: "If they still work to improve themselves and earn Heaven, what must I do? " Because they feel that they are still sinners, whereas I thought that they were already saints. And what about me?... Will I ever succeed, Master? »

«With goodwill, one can do everything. »

«But my will is very unreliable. »

«The help of God will make up for what is missing. Your pro-

sent humbleness is a result of your illness. You can thus see that God, through a painful incident, has provided for you something that you did not have. »

«That is true, Master. But those women! What perfect disciples they are! I am not speaking of Your Mother. We all know about Her. I mean the others. Oh! They have really surpassed us! I was one of their first tests for their future ministry. But, believe me, Master, You may rely entirely on them. Eliza and I were looked after by them, and she has gone back to Bethzur with a completely changed soul and mentality and I... I hope to change, too, now that they have worked on me... » Judas, who is still physically not too strong, begins to weep. Jesus, Who is sitting beside him, lays His hand on his head, nodding to the others to be silent. Peter and Andrew are busy in the last landing manoeuvres and are silent: the Zealot, Matthew, Philip and Marjiam are certainly not anxious to speak, either because they are anxiously waiting to land, or because they are wise enough not to make any remark.

228 3 <sup>3</sup>The boat sails up the Jordan and shortly afterwards grounds on the gravel bed. While the servants land to fasten the boat anchoring it to a large stone by means of a rope, and to place a board as a landing-wharf and Peter and Andrew put on their long garments, the other boat makes the same manoeuvre and the other apostles land. Also Jesus and Judas step ashore while Peter puts a little tunic on the boy and tidies him up in order to present him in a decent state to his wife. They have all now disembarked, including the sheep.

«And now let us go» says Peter. He is really excited. He takes the boy by the hand. Also Marjiam is deeply moved, and in fact he forgets the sheep and John takes care of them. In a sudden fit of fear Marjiam asks: «But will she be wanting me? And will she really love me? »

Peter reassures him, but perhaps he is affected by the same fear and he says to Jesus: «Master, will You tell Porphirea? I don't think I could explain the situation to her properly. »

Jesus smiles and promises that He will see to it.

228 4 <sup>4</sup>They soon arrive at the house following the river bank. Through the open door they can hear Porphirea doing her housework.

«Peace be with you! » says Jesus looking in at the kitchen door where the woman is tidying up her kitchenware.

«Master! Simon! » The woman runs and lays herself at the feet of Jesus and then at those of Peter. She then stands up, and while her face, which, if not beautiful, is certainly most amiable, blushes, she says: «I have been longing so much to see you! Are you all well? Come in! You must be tired... »

«No. We are coming from Nazareth, where we stayed for a few days and we stopped also at Cana. The boats were at Tiberias. You can see that we are not tired. We had a boy with us and Judas of Simon was rather weak after being ill. »

«A boy? Such a young disciple? »

«An orphan we picked up on our way. »

«Oh! dear! Come here, my darling, let me kiss you! »

The boy, who was timidly half hidden behind Jesus, allows the woman, who has knelt down to his height, to embrace and kiss him, and he shows no reluctance.

«Are You going to take him with You all the time, while he is so young? He will become tired... » The woman is so pitiful. She clasps the boy in her arms and holds her cheek against his.

«Actually I was thinking of something else. I was planning to entrust him to one of the women disciples, when we go away from Galilee from the lake area... »

«And not to me, my Lord? I never had any children of my own. But I have had many nephews and I know how to deal with children. I am the disciple who is not good at speaking, who is not so healthy as to be able to follow You, as the other women disciples do... oh! You know! I may also be cowardly, If You think so. But You know how I am tied up. Did I say: "tied up"? I am tied with two ropes each pulling me in opposite directions and I do not have the courage to cut off either one or the other... Let me be of some little service to You, by being the mother disciple of this boy. I will teach him what the others teach many other people... To love You... »

<sup>5</sup>Jesus lays His hand on her head and smiling says: «The boy <sup>228. 5</sup> was brought here because I knew he would find a mother and a father here. Here! Let us make up the family. » And Jesus puts Marjiam's hands into those of Peter, whose eyes are shining with tears, and those of Porphirea. «And bring this innocent boy up



in a holy manner. »

Peter, of course, already knew, and he only wipes off a tear with the back of his hand. But his wife, who was not expecting so much, is left in mute amazement for a few moments. She then kneels down again saying: «Oh! My Lord. You took away my husband and left me almost a widow. Now You are giving me a son. You are giving back all the roses to my life, not only the ones You took, but also the ones I never had. May You be blessed! This boy will be dearer to me than if he had been the fruit of my own womb. Because he comes to me from You. » And she kisses Jesus' tunic and the boy and takes him on her lap... She is happy...

«Let us leave her to her love effusions» says Jesus. You may remain as well, Simon. We are going to town to preach. We shall come back late this evening and ask you for food and a place to rest. »

And Jesus goes out with His disciples leaving the three in peace...

John says: «My Lord, Simon is happy today! »

«Do you want a child as well? »

«No. I would like a pair of wings to fly up to the gates of Heaven and learn the language of the Light, to repeat it to men» and he smiles.

They settle the sheep at the end of the orchard, near the large room where the nets are stored, they give them some leaves, grass and water of the well, and then go towards the town centre.

## 229. Preaching to the citizens of Bethsaida on the act of goodwill by Simon Peter.

25<sup>th</sup> July 1945.

229.1

<sup>1</sup> Jesus is speaking in Philip's house. Many people have gathered before it and Jesus is standing on the threshold which is built on two high steps.

The news of Peter's adopted son, who has come with the miniature fortune of three little sheep, seeking the great wealth of a family, has spread like a drop of oil on a piece of cloth. They all speak about it, whispering comments, which correspond to their different ways of thinking.

Those who are sincere friends of Simon and Porphirea, are glad to see them happy. Those who are malevolent say: «To make her accept him, he had to give the boy a dowry. » Good people say: «We shall all love this little boy: whom Jesus loves. » Ill-disposed people state: «Simon's generosity? Never on your life! He must have made a profit, otherwise!... »

Other greedy people comment: «I would have done that, too, if I had been given a boy with some sheep. Three sheep, do you realise that? A little flock. And they are beautiful! Supplies of milk and wool are guaranteed, and then they will have lambs to sell or to keep! It's a wealth! And the boy can serve and work... »

Others contradict them all: «Oh! What a shame! Expect payment for a good deed? Simon certainly never thought of that. As a fisherman with a modest income, we have always known him to be generous to the poor and particularly to children. It is only fair, now that he no longer earns anything by fishing and that his family is growing, that he should make a little profit in some other way. »

<sup>2</sup>While they are all making their comments, putting into words the good or the evil hidden in their hearts, Jesus is listening and speaking to a man of Capernaum\*, who has come to see Him and tell Him to go as soon as possible, because the daughter of the head of the synagogue is dying and also because a lady has been going there for some days, in the company of a handmaid, looking for Him. Jesus promises to go the following morning. His decision grieves the people of Bethsaida, who would like to have Him in their town for a few more days.

«There are other people who need Me more than you do. So let Me go. In any case, I shall be in Galilee during the summer months and I will be in Capernaum very often. So it will be easy for us to meet. A father and mother are in anguish and it is charity to help them. You approve of Simon's kindness towards the orphan. At least the good ones among you do. But only the opinions of good people are of value. You should not listen to the opinions of those who are not good, because they are always tinged with

\* **a man of Capernaum**, he *is the one who gave him hospitality in Capernaum*, as pointed out in the correction made by MV on a handwritten copy. He is Thomas (named this way in 231. 1 - 237. 5 - 355. 1 - 446. 2) intimate in the family of Jesus (as seen in 47. 10 and 48. 7) with a wife but no children (as will be seen in 449. 4). His house in Capernaum was considered the home of Jesus, as in *Matthew 4. 13*.

poison and falsehood. So, since you are good, you must approve of My goodness in going to comfort a father and a mother. And do not allow your approval to be fruitless, but let it urge you to active imitation.

229.3 <sup>3</sup>The pages of the Scriptures tell us how much good can come from a good action. Let us remember Tobit. He deserved that an angel should protect his son Tobias and should teach him how to give sight back to his father. But how many charitable deeds just Tobit had performed without any thought of personal profit, notwithstanding the reproaches of his wife and the dangers to his life! And remember the words\* \* \* of the archangel: "Prayer and fasting were good things and almsgiving is worth more than mountains of gold treasures, because almsgiving saves from death, purges every kind of sin, makes people find mercy and eternal life... When you were praying and shedding tears and burying the dead... I offered your prayers to the Lord". I solemnly tell you that My Simon will exceed by far the virtues of old Tobit. He will remain as the guardian of your souls in My Life, after I have gone. He is now beginning his paternity of a soul, so that tomorrow he will be the holy father of all the souls faithful to Me.

Therefore do not complain. But if one day you should find on your way an orphan, like a bird fallen out of its nest, pick him up. It is not the mouthful of food shared with an orphan that impoverishes the table of the true sons. On the contrary it brings the blessing of God to that house. Do that because God is the father of orphans and He presents them to you Himself, so that you may help them by rebuilding for them the nest destroyed by death. And do that because it is prescribed by the Law given by God to Moses\*\*, who is our Legislator, just because while he was a defenceless baby, in a hostile land of idols, he found a merciful heart that knelt down to save him from death, rescuing him from the river, freeing him from persecutions, because God had destined that Israel should one day have her liberator. An act of compassion thus obtained for Israel her leader. The repercussions of a good deed are like sound-waves, which spread very far from the spot of emission, or, if you prefer so, they are like gusts

\* words, in: *Tobit 12, 8-12.*

\* Moses, whose birth and infancy are discussed in: *Exodus 2, 1-10.*

of wind, which carry far away the seed blown from fertile soil.

You may go now. Peace be with you. »

<sup>4</sup>Jesus then says:

230.4

«You will put here the vision of the resurrection of Jairus' daughter, which you had on the 11th of March 1944. »

230. Healing of the woman with a haemorrhage  
and resurrection of the daughter of Giairo.

11<sup>th</sup> March 1944.

<sup>1</sup>This vision appears when I am praying, and I am tired and vexed and thus in the worst condition to think about my things. But physical and mental tiredness and vexation vanished as soon as my Jesus appeared and I write. 230.1

Jesus is walking on a sunny dusty road that runs along the lake shore. He is making His way towards the village and is surrounded by a large crowd, which was certainly waiting for Him. The people throng around Him notwithstanding the fact that the apostles push with their arms and shoulders to make way for Him and raise their voices to persuade the crowd to make room.

But Jesus is not upset by so much confusion. As He is taller by a head than those around Him, He looks and smiles kindly at the crowds pressing around Him. He replies to their greetings, He caresses a few boys who succeed in creeping through the hedge of adults and thus get close to Him. He lays His hand on the heads of babies raised by their mothers above those who are nearer Jesus, so that He may touch them. And He continues to walk, slowly, patiently, in the midst of the shouting and continual pressure that would annoy any other person.

<sup>2</sup>A man shouts: «Make way, make way. » It is a panting voice and he must be known to many as it is obviously the voice of an influential person, because the crowd opens out, albeit with some difficulty, such is the crush, to let a man of about fifty years old pass. He is wearing a long loose garment and round his head he has a kind of white handkerchief, two flaps of which hang down along his cheeks and neck. 230.2

When he arrives before Jesus, he lays himself at His feet and

says: «Oh! Master, why have You been away so long? My little girl is so ill. No one can cure her. You alone are her mother's hope and mine. Come, Master. I have been waiting for You with immense anxiety. Please come at once. My only daughter is dying... » and he weeps.

Jesus lays His hand on the head of the weeping man, who is bent and shaking with sobs, and replies to him: «Do not weep. Have faith. Your daughter will live. Let us go to her. Stand up. Let us go! » His final words sound like a command. Before He was the Comforter, now it is the Dominator who is speaking.

They set out. Jesus is walking beside the weeping father and is holding him by the hand. And when the poor man is convulsed with deeper sobs, I see Jesus look at him and press his hand harder. He does not do anything else, but how much strength must flow into a soul that is dealt with thus by Jesus!

Previously James was where the father is now. But Jesus made him move to make room for the father. Peter is on the other side. John is beside Peter and they are both endeavouring to stem the crowds, as James and the Iscariot are doing on the other side, beside the weeping father. Some of the other apostles are in front, some behind Jesus. But it is an impossible task! Particularly the three who are behind, among whom I see Matthew, cannot hold back the living wall. But when they grumble too much or they almost insult the pushing crowds, Jesus looks back and says kindly: «Leave My little ones alone!... »

230.3 <sup>3</sup>However, at a certain moment He turns around with an abrupt movement letting go of the father's hand and He stops. Not only His head has turned around, but His whole body. He looks taller, because He has taken a kingly attitude. With a severe inquisitive countenance He scans the crowd. His eyes are flashing, not harshly, but majestically: «Who touched Me? » He asks.

Nobody replies.

«Who touched Me, I repeat» insists Jesus.

«Master» reply the disciples «Do You not see how the crowds are pressing around You on all sides? They are all touching You, notwithstanding our efforts. »

Jesus, while speaking, looks three or four times at a little woman, about forty years old, very poorly dressed and emaciat-

ed, who endeavours to disappear in the crowds and vanish completely. His eyes must be burning her. She realises that she cannot escape, she comes back and throws herself at His feet, almost touching the dust of the road with her face, while her arms are stretched out not daring to touch Jesus.

«Forgive me! It was I. I was ill. I have been ill for twelve years! I was shunned by everybody. My husband deserted me. I spent everything I had so that I might not be considered a disgrace, and I might be able to live like everybody else. But no one was able to cure me. See, Master? I am old before my time. My strength has flown out of me with my incurable haemorrhage and my peace went with it. They told me that You are good. I was told by one whom You cured of leprosy and who, having been shunned himself for many years, did not loathe me. I did not dare to tell You before. Forgive me! I thought that if I only touched You, I would be cured. But I did not make You unclean\*. I hardly touched the hem of Your tunic, the hem that trails on the ground, on the dirt of the road... I am dirt myself... But now I am cured, may You be blessed! The moment I touched Your tunic, my ailment came to an end. I am like all other women. I will no longer be avoided by everybody. My husband, my children and relatives will be able to stay with me and I will be able to caress them. I shall be useful in my house. Thank You, Jesus, my good Master. May You be blessed forever! »

Jesus looks at her with infinite kindness. He smiles and says: «Go in peace, My daughter. Your faith has restored you to health. Be free from your ailment forever. Be good and happy. Go. »

<sup>4</sup>While He is still speaking a man arrives. I think he is a servant, and he addresses the father who has been waiting all the time, respectfully but anxiously, as if he were on tenterhooks. «Your daughter is dead. It is quite useless to bother the Master. Her soul departed and the women are already mourning her. Her mother has sent me to tell you and she asks you to come at once. »

The poor father utters a deep groan. He hides his face in his hands, pressing his forehead and eyes and bending his head as if he had been struck.

As Jesus is intent on listening and answering the woman,

\* **I did not make You unclean**, for the prescription of *Leviticus 15, 19, 25*.

one would think that He has seen and heard nothing, instead He turns around and laying His hand on the bent shoulders of the poor father, He says: «Man, I told you: “Have faith”. I repeat: “Have faith. Do not be afraid. Your girl will live. Let us go to her. » And He sets out, holding the dejected man close to Himself.

The crowds, seeing so much grief and being deeply affected by the recent miracle, are frightened and stop, they then part allowing Jesus and His disciples to walk fast, and they follow in the wake of the passing Grace. They walk thus for about one hundred yards, perhaps more - I am not good at estimating - proceeding towards the centre of the town.

230 5 <sup>5</sup>People are crammed in front of a respectable house, commenting in loud shrill voices on the event and replying to louder screams coming from the house through the wide open door. They are trilled piercing screams, apparently uttered monotonously by the shriller voice of a soloist, to whom a group of thin voices replies first and then is followed by another group of full voices. There is enough uproar to cause even healthy people to die.

Jesus orders His disciples to stop at the door, and He tells Peter, John and James to follow Him. He enters the house with them, holding the weeping father by the arm all the time. By holding him thus, He seems to be wishing to instil into him the certainty that He is there to make him happy. The women mourners (I would call them howlers), when they see the landlord and the Master, double their screams. They clap their hands, beat tambourines, strike triangles to accompany their lamentations.

«Be quiet» says Jesus. «There is no need to weep. The girl is not dead. She is sleeping. »

The women shout louder, some roll on the floor, some scratch themselves, and tear their hair (or they pretend to do so), to prove that she is really dead. The musicians and friends of the family shake their heads at Jesus' illusion. They think that He is deceived. But He repeats: «Be silent! » so energetically that the turmoil, while not ceasing completely, becomes a whisper. And He passes by.

230 6 <sup>6</sup>He goes into a little room. A dead girl is lying on a bed. She is thin, very pale, has already been dressed and her dark hair has

already been put in order. Her mother is weeping on the right hand side of the bed and kisses the waxen little hand of the dead girl. Jesus... how handsome He is now! I have seldom seen Him thus! He approaches the bed solicitously. He seems to be sliding or flying across the floor, so fast He approaches the little bed. The three apostles stand with their backs to the door, which they have closed in the faces of curious onlookers. The father is standing at the foot of the bed.

Jesus goes to the left hand side and with His left hand. He takes the lifeless left hand of the girl. Yes, I saw Him well. It is the left hand, both of Jesus and of the girl. He raises His right arm with an open palm, to the height of His shoulder and then lowers it in the attitude of one who swears or gives an order. He says: «Little girl, I tell you: Get up! »

There is a moment when everybody is in suspense, except Jesus and the girl. The apostles stretch their necks to see better. The father and mother look at their child with eyes full of deep sorrow. After a moment a sigh raises the breast of the girl. A light hue tinges her waxen face and its deathly pallor fades away. The hint of a smile appears on her lips before her eyes open, as if she were having a beautiful dream. Jesus is still holding her hand. She gently opens her eyes and looks around as if she were awaking. She first sees the face of Jesus, Who is looking at her with His most beautiful eyes and smiling kindly to encourage her, and she smiles at Him.

«Get up» repeats Jesus. And He pushes aside with His hand the funeral ornaments spread on the bed and around it (flowers, veils etc. etc. ) and helps her to get up and take her first steps, holding her by the hand.

«Give her something to eat, now» He commands. «She is cured. God has given her back to you. Thank Him for that. And do not tell anybody what happened. You know what happened to her. You believed and your faith deserved a miracle. The others did not have faith. It is quite useless to endeavour to convince them. God does not show Himself to those who deny a miracle. And you, My little girl, be good. Goodbye! Peace to this house. » And He goes out closing the door behind Him.

The vision ends.

¶I will tell you that the two points of it which made me joyful <sup>230 7</sup>



are those in which Jesus looks among the crowd for the person that touched Him and above all when standing near the dead little girl He takes her by the hand and tells her to get up. Peace and assurance have come into me. It is impossible for One as Merciful and Powerful as He is, not to have mercy on us and not defeat the Evil that kills us.

Jesus for the time being makes no comment, neither does He say anything about the other things. He sees that I am almost dead but does not consider that it is the case that I should feel better this evening. Let it be done as He wishes. I am already happy enough to have His vision.

231. In Capernaum Martha speaks with Jesus about the crisis that torments Mary of Magdala.

27<sup>th</sup> July 1945.

231.1 <sup>1</sup>Jesus, hot and covered with dust, goes back to the house in Capernaum with Peter and John.

He has just entered the kitchen garden and is going towards the kitchen, when the landlord calls Him familiarly saying: «Jesus, that lady of whom I spoke to You at Bethsaida, has come again looking for You. I told her to wait and I took her to the room upstairs. »

«Thank you, Thomas. I will go to her at once. If the others come tell them to wait here And Jesus goes upstairs immediately, without even taking off His mantle.

On the terrace at the top of the staircase there is Marcella, Martha's, maid. She is standing there alone. «Oh! Master. My mistress is inside. She has been waiting for You for so many days» says the woman kneeling down to worship Jesus.

«I rather thought that. I will go to her at once. May God bless you, Marcella. »

Jesus lifts the curtain protecting the room from the excessively bright sunshine, for although the sun is now setting, it is still very warm and the white houses in Capernaum seem to be ablaze in the red glare of a huge brazier. In the room, sitting near the window is Martha, wrapped in a mantle and covered with a veil. She is perhaps contemplating the part of the lake where

a woody hill protrudes into the water forming a promontory. Perhaps she is only contemplating her own thoughts. She is certainly absorbed in thought and in fact she does not hear the light shuffling of the feet of Jesus who is walking towards her. And she startles when He calls her.

«Oh! Master! » she exclaims. And she falls on her knees, with outstretched arms, as if she were imploring help and then she bends so low as to touch the floor with her forehead, and she bursts into tears.

<sup>2</sup>«What is the matter? Stand up. Why are you weeping so bitterly? Have you some misfortune to tell Me? You have? What is it? Do you know that I was at Bethany? You do? And I was told that there was good news. But now you are weeping... What happened? » and He forces her to stand up and makes her sit on a bench against the wall, while He sits in front of her. «Now, take off your veil and mantle, as I am doing. You must be suffocating under them. And I want to see the face of My dear Martha, who is so upset, so that I may disperse all the clouds perturbing it. »

231. 2

Martha obeys, still weeping, and her flushed face and swollen eyes can now be seen.

«Well? I will help you. Mary sent for you. She wept very much, she wanted to know many things about Me, and you thought that that was a good sign, so much so that you wanted Me to come to complete the miracle. And I have come. And now?... »

«Now, nothing, Master! I was mistaken. Too keen a desire makes one see what does not exist... I made You come for nothing... Mary is worse than before... No! What am I saying? I am calumniating her, I am telling lies. She is not worse, because she does not want any more men around her. She is different, but still so bad. She seems to be mad... I no longer understand her... At least before I understood her. But now! Who can understand her? » and Martha weeps desolately.

«Now, calm down and tell Me what she does. Why is she bad? So, she does not want any more men around her. So I suppose that she leads a retired life at home. Is that so? It is? Good. That is very good. The fact that she wanted you to stay with her, as if she wanted to be defended against temptations - that is what you wrote - and the fact that she wanted to avoid temptations by shunning guilty acquaintances or what might lead to such rela-

tionship, are signs of goodwills

«Do You think so, Master? Do You really think that? »

231. 3

«Of course I do. So why do you think that she is bad? <sup>3</sup>Tell Me what she does... »

«Well. » Martha, who is somewhat encouraged by Jesus' certainty speaks more calmly. «Well. Since I came here, Mary has never left the house or the garden, not even to go out on the lake in her boat. And her nurse told me that even before I came, she hardly ever went out. Apparently this change began at Passover. But before my arrival, some people used to come and see her and she did not always refuse to see them. Sometimes she gave instructions not to let anybody pass. And it appeared to be a standing order. But then she would go as far as striking the servants, motivated by unjust anger, if upon hearing the voices of visitors, she went to the hall and found out that they had already been sent away. However, she has not done that again, since I came. The first night she said to me, and that is why I was so hopeful: «Hold me back, if necessary tie me. But don't let me go out, don't let me see anybody but you and my nurse. Because I am not well and I want to recover. But those who come to me or want me to go to them, are like feverish marshes. And they make me grow worse. But their appearance is so handsome, so flowery and joyful their fruit is so pleasant looking, that I cannot resist them, because I am a poor wretch. Your sister is weak, Martha. And some people take advantage of her weakness to make her do foul things, to which a part of me does not agree. The only part which is still left to me of my poor mother... » and she wept. And I did that. I did it kindly when she was reasonable; but I acted firmly when she looked like a wild beast in a cage. She never rebelled against me. On the contrary, when the worst moments of temptation are over, she comes and weeps at my feet, resting her head on my lap and she says: "Forgive me, forgive me!" and if I ask her: "For what, sister? You have not grieved me", she replies: "Because a little while ago, or yesterday evening, when you said to me: 'You are not going out from here', I hated and cursed you in my heart and I wished you would die". Is she not to be pitied, my Lord? Is she perhaps mad? Has her vices made her mad? I think that one of her lovers has given her a philtre to make her a slave of his lust and that its poison has gone to her brains... »

«No. It is not a question of philtres or madness. It is some thing quite different. <sup>4</sup>But go on. »

«So she is respectful and obedient to me. And she has not ill-treated the servants anymore. But after the first evening, she has not asked anything else about You. And if I mention You, she changes the subject. But she sits for hours and hours on a rock where the belvedere is, looking at the lake, until she becomes dazzled, and every time a boat sails by she asks me: "Do you think it is the boat of the Galilean fishermen?" She never mentions Your Name or the names of the apostles. But I know that she thinks of You and of them in Peter's boat. And I realise that she thinks of You because sometimes in the evening, when we are walking in the garden or before going to bed, and I am doing needlework, while she does nothing, she says to me: "Is that how one must live according to the doctrine you follow?" And sometimes she weeps, sometimes she laughs sarcastically, like a mad person or a demon. On other, occasions she lets down her hair, which is always arranged so artistically, and she makes two plaits, she puts on one of my dresses and then she comes to me, with her plaits behind her back or in front of her, modest and young looking in my high-necked dress, and also because of her plaits and countenance and she says to me: "Is that what Mary should be like?" and even then sometimes she weeps kissing her wonderful plaits, which are as thick as her arms and reach down to her knees, the living gold which was my mother's pride, at times, instead, she laughs in her ghastly way or she says to me: "Look, I had rather do this and be done with it" and she ties her plaits round her neck and pulls them tight until her face becomes purple, as if she wanted to strangle herself. At times she pities or ill-treats herself, and that obviously happens when she feels the temptations of her flesh more fiercely. I have caught her striking her breast and scratching her face savagely or banging her head against a wall and when I asked her: "Why are you doing that?" she would look at me with a wild deranged expression saying: "To tear myself, my bowels, my head to pieces. Cursed harmful things must be destroyed. And I am destroying myself". And if I speak to her of God's mercy, of You - because I still speak to her of You, as if she were the most faithful of Your women disciples, and I swear to You that at times I am horrified at mentioning

Your name in her presence - she replies: "There can be no mercy for me. I have gone beyond the limit". She is then seized by a fit of despair and shouts, beating herself till she draws blood: "Why have I this monster that tears me to pieces? And it gives me no peace. And it leads me to evil deeds by means of sweet singing voices, to which it then adds the cursing voices of my father and mother, of you and Lazarus, because you and Lazarus curse me, too, and Israel curses me and it makes me hear them to drive me mad... " When she says that, I reply to her: "Why are you worried about Israel, which is only a people, and you do not think of God? But since you trampled on everything without considering what you were doing, endeavour now to overcome everything and do not worry about worldly things, but care only for God, your father and mother. If you change your life, they will not curse you, but will stretch their arms out to you... " And she listens to me, pensive, astonished as if I were telling her an unreal story, and then she weeps... But does not reply. At times, instead she orders the servants to bring her wines and drugs and she eats and drinks those artificial nourishments and explains: "I do that to forget". Now, since she found out that You are here in the lake area, every time she sees me come to You, she says: "I will come sometime, too" and laughing in that manner which is an insult to herself, she concludes: "Thus the eye of God will fall also upon manure". But I do not want her to come. And now, when I want to come, I wait until she falls asleep, when she is exhausted with being angry, with drinking and weeping... with everything. Also today I ran away like that, so that I can go back at night before she awakes. That is my life... I no longer hope... » and she resumes weeping more bitterly than previously, as her tears are no longer restrained by the effort of speaking calmly.

231. 5 <sup>5</sup>«Do you remember, Martha, what I told you once? "Mary is ill". You did not want to believe it. Now you can see it. You say that she is mad. She says herself that she is ill and suffers from a sinful fever. I say: she is ill because she is possessed by a demon. It is still a disease. And her incoherent behaviour, her fury, her tears, her affliction, her longing for Me are stages of her illness, which has come to a moment of crisis and has its most violent fluctuations. You are doing the right thing in being good to her and patient with her. You are right in speaking to her of Me. Do

not be disgusted at mentioning My Name in her presence. Poor soul of My Mary! Her soul also was created by the Father and it is in no way different from all other souls, from yours, from Lazarus', from the souls of the apostles and disciples. Her soul also was included and foreseen to be amongst the souls for whom I became flesh in order to be their Redeemer. In actual fact I have come more for her than for you, Lazarus, the apostles and disciples. Poor soul of My Mary, who is suffering so much! Of My poor Mary who has been poisoned with seven poisons besides the first universal poison! Of My imprisoned Mary! But let her come to Me! Let her breathe the air I breathe, let her hear My voice and meet My glance!... She calls herself: "Manure"... Oh! My poor dear soul in whom the demon of pride is the weakest of the seven possessing her! Only because of that she will be saved! »

<sup>6</sup>«And if she should find someone who may lead her astray once again, when she comes out? She is afraid of that herself... » 231. 6

«And she will always be afraid of that, now that she has gone so far as to loathe vice. But be not afraid. When a soul already has the desire of coming to Good, and is held back only by the diabolic Enemy, who is aware that he is going to lose his prey, and by the personal enemy of one's ego, which reasons in a human way and judges itself in a human way, ascribing to God its own judgement to prevent the soul from controlling the human ego, then that soul is already strong enough against the attacks of vice and of vicious people. It has found the Polar Star and will no longer deviate. And do not say to her again: "You have not thought of God and You are instead thinking of Israel?" It is an implicit reproach. Do not do that. She has just come out of a fire. She is one big sore. Touch her lightly only with balms of kindness, of forgiveness and hope... Leave her free to come. You must tell her when you are thinking of coming, but do not say to her: "Come with me". On the contrary if you understand that she wants to come, do not come yourself. Go back and wait for her at home. She will come back to you broken by Mercy. Because I must remove the wicked power that is holding her and for a few hours she will look like a woman whose veins have been cut or whose bones have been removed by a doctor. But later she will feel better. She will be dumbfounded. She will be in great need of caresses and silence. Assist her as if you were her second

guardian angel: without letting her perceive your presence. And if you see her weeping, let her weep. And if you hear her asking herself questions, leave her alone. And if you see her smile and then become serious, and then smile once more in a different way, with a different look, with a different countenance, do not ask her questions, do not make her feel uneasy. She is suffering more now, ascending, than she did, descending. And she must ascend by herself, as she descended by herself. She could not bear you to look at her when she was descending, because your eyes were full of reproach. And she cannot bear you to look at her now that her sense of shame has been aroused at last. Then she was strong, because Satan, her master, was with her and a wicked strength supported her and she could challenge the world, and yet she could not bear to be seen by you in her sin. Now Satan is no longer her master. He is still a guest in her, but Mary's will is holding him by the throat. And she does not have Me yet. That is why she is too weak. She cannot even bear your caressing sisterly eyes watching her confession to her Saviour. All her energy is employed and consumed in holding the septuple demon by the throat. For all the rest she is defenceless and unclothed.

<sup>231.7</sup> But I will reclothe her and fortify her. <sup>7</sup>Go in peace, Martha. And tomorrow tell her tactfully that I shall be speaking near the torrent of the Fountain, here in Capernaum, after vesper. Go in peace. I bless you. »

Martha is still perplexed.

«Do not become incredulous, Martha» says Jesus Who is watching her.

«No, my Lord. But I was thinking... Oh! Give me something that I may give Mary, to give her a little strength... She is suffering so much... and I am so afraid that she may not be able to triumph over the demon! »

«You are a little girl! Mary has Me and you. Can she possibly not succeed? However, take this. Give Me your hand, which has never sinned, and has always been kind, merciful, active and pious. It has always made gestures of love and prayer. It has never been lazy or idle or corrupt. Now, I will hold it between My hands to make it even holier. Raise it against the demon and he will not endure it. And take this belt of Mine. Never part with it. And every time you see her, say to yourself: "The power of Je-

Jesus is stronger than this belt of Jesus and by it everything can be overcome: demons and monsters as well. I must not be afraid". Are you happy now? My peace be with you. Go in peace. »

Martha worships Him and goes out.

Jesus smiles when he sees her climb on to the wagon, which Marcella has called to the gate, and depart towards Magdala.

## 232. The healing of two blind men and a dumb demoniac.

28<sup>th</sup> July 1945.

<sup>1</sup> Jesus then goes down into the kitchen, and when He sees that John is about to go to the fountain, instead of remaining in the warm smoky kitchen, He prefers to go with John. He thus leaves Peter to deal with the fish that Zebedee's servants have just brought in for the supper of the Master and His disciples. 232.1

They do not go to the spring well at the end of the village, but to the fountain in the square, the water of which still comes from the clear plentiful spring on the mountain side near the lake. In the square there are many people as is customary in Palestinian villages in the evening. Women with amphoras, boys playing, men discussing business or... local gossip. Also some Pharisees pass by, surrounded by servants or clients, on their way to their rich homes. Everybody moves aside to let them pass, paying their respect, but as soon as they have gone, many curse them wholeheartedly mentioning their most recent abuses and usury dealings.

<sup>2</sup>Matthew is haranguing his old friends in a corner of the square and that causes the Pharisee Uriah to remark scornfully in a loud voice: «The famous conversions! But attachment to sin is still there as can be seen from lasting friendships. Ah! Ah! » 232.2

Matthew turns around and replies angrily: «They last in order to convert them. »

«There is no need for that! Your Master is quite sufficient. You had better stay away, lest you might be taken ill again, presuming that you have really been cured. »

Matthew becomes purple in the effort to control himself and not give him a piece of his mind, and he simply replies: «Do not be afraid, and have no hope. »



«What? »

«Don't be afraid that I may become once again Levi the publican, and have no hope that I may imitate you in order to lose these souls. I leave to you and to your friends to keep contemptuously aloof from other people. I imitate my Master and I approach sinners to lead them to Grace. »

Uriah would like to retort, but another Pharisee, old Eli, arrives and says to him: «Do not contaminate your purity and your tongue, my friend. Come with me» and walking arm-in-arm with him he takes him towards his house.

232. 3     3In the meantime the crowd, particularly children, have gathered around Jesus. Among the children there are Toby and Johanna, the little brother and sister, who one day, a long time ago, were quarrelling over some figs. They now say to Jesus, hanging on to His tall body to draw His attention: «Listen, listen. Also today we have been good, You know? We have never cried and we have not teased each other, for Your sake. Will You give us a kiss? » «So you have been good for My sake! What joy you give Me. Here is My kiss. And be even better tomorrows

And there is James, the little fellow who used to bring Matthew's purse to Jesus every Sabbath. He now says to Jesus: «Matthew does not give me anything now for the poor of the Lord, but I have put aside all the money they give me when I am good and I will give it to You now. Will you give it to the poor on account of my grandfather? »

«Of course I will. What is the matter with your grand-dad? »

«He cannot walk anymore. He is so old and his legs will not support him. »

«Are you sorry for that? »

«Yes, I am, because he was my master when we went into the country. He told me many things. And he made me love the Lord. Also now he tells me of Job and he shows me the stars in the sky, but he does that from his chair... It was much nicer before. »

«I will come to your grand-dad tomorrow. Are you happy now? »

And James is replaced by Benjamin, not the boy from Magdala, but the one from Capernaum, the boy I saw in a vision a long time ago. When he arrives in the square with his mother and sees Jesus, he leaves his mother's hand and rushes through the crowd,

shrieking like a swallow and when he arrives in front of Jesus, he embraces His knees saying: «I want a caress, too! »

4Simon, the Pharisee, passes by at that moment and bows <sup>232. 4</sup> pompously to Jesus, Who responds to his greeting. The Pharisee stops and while the crowd draw aside as if frightened, Simon says: «And would You not caress me as well? » and he smiles lightly.

«I will caress anyone who asks Me. I congratulate you, Simon, on your very good health. I was told in Jerusalem that you were rather ill. »

«Yes, I was very ill. I wanted You, to be cured. »

«Did you believe that I could cure you? »

«I never doubted it. But I had to recover by myself, because You have been away for a long time. Where have You been? »

«In the border area of Israel. That is how I spent the days between Passover and Pentecost. »

«A very successful journey? I heard of the lepers at Hinnom and Siloam. Really wonderful. Only that? Certainly not. But we hear of You, through John, the priest. He who is not biased believes in You and is happy. »

«And what about him who does not believe because he is biased? What about him, my wise Simon? »

The Pharisee is somewhat upset... he cannot make up his mind, as while he does not wish to condemn his too many friends, who are prejudiced against Jesus, he does wish to deserve being praised by Jesus. He decides on the latter alternative and says: «He who does not want to believe in You, notwithstanding all the proofs You give, is condemned. »

«And I wish nobody were... »

«Yes, You do. But we do not return to You the same measure of goodness that You have for us. Too many do not deserve You... Jesus, I would like You to be my guest tomorrow... »

«I cannot tomorrow. Let us make it in two days' time. Do you agree? »

«I always agree with You. I will have... some friends... and You will have to put up with them if... »

«I know. I will come with John. »

«John only? »

«The others have other tasks to attend to. Here they are, they

are just coming back from the country. Peace to you, Simon. »

«God be with You, Jesus. »

232 5 The Pharisee goes away and Jesus joins His disciples.

<sup>5</sup>They go back home for supper.

But while they are eating roast fish, some blind men arrive, who had already implored Jesus along the road. They now repeat their prayer: «Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on us! »

«Go away! I told you to come tomorrow and let it be tomorrow. Let Him eat» says Peter reproachingly.

«No, Simon. Do not send them away. So much perseverance deserves a reward. You two, come forward» He then says to the blind men, who go in sounding the floor and walls with their sticks. «Do you believe that I can give your eyesight back to you? »

«Oh! Yes! Lord! We came because we are certain. »

Jesus gets up from the table, approaches them, lays His fingertips on the blind eyes, raises His head and prays: «Let it be done to you according to your faith. » He removes His hands and the eyelids, so far motionless, begin to wink, because light strikes the revived pupils of one of the men, and the eyelids of the other become unsealed, whereas before they were sealed probably by neglected ulcers, and the palpebral edges are reshaped anew without the least fault, so that he can wink freely.

The two men fall on their knees.

«You may stand up and go. And mind you, do not let anybody know what I have done to you. Take the news of the grace to your relatives and friends in your villages. It is not necessary to do so here and it would not do your souls any good. Make sure that the faith of your souls does not suffer from any injury and now that you know what it is like to be able to see, ensure that your eyes do not get injured, so that you may not become blind again. »

232 6 <sup>6</sup>The supper is over. They go up on the terrace where it is cool. The lake is shining in the moonlight.

Jesus sits on the edge of the low wall and lets His mind wander watching the silvery surface of the lake. The others are talking to one another in low voices, so as not to disturb Him. But they look at Him as if they were fascinated. In fact how handsome He is! The moon forms a halo around His head and illuminates His face, which is severe and serene at the same time, emphasising

its tiniest details. He is sitting with His head lightly tilted backwards leaning against the coarse vine branch, which climbs up there and then spreads out on the terrace. His deep blue eyes look like onyx in the night and seem to be pouring peaceful waves over everything. At times He looks up at the clear sky, strewn with stars, at times He looks down at the hills, and farther down, at the lake or He stares at a distant hazy point and His eyes seem to be smiling at something He only can see. His wavy hair is gently blown by a light breeze. He is sitting slightly sideways, touching the floor with one foot, while the other is a few inches off it, with His hands relaxing on His lap. His white robe emphasises His splendour, which becomes silvery in the moonlight, and His long white hands look more like old ivory emphasising the virile beauty of His tapering fingers. Also His face, with its high forehead, straight nose, lightly oval-shaped cheeks and its pale-copper beard, looks like old ivory without the pinkish nuance visible during the day on the upper part of His cheeks.

«Are You tired, Master?» asks Peter.

«No, I am not. »

«You look pale and pensive... »

«I was thinking. But I do not think I am paler than usual.

<sup>7</sup>Come here... The moonlight makes you all look pale as well. You will go to Korazim tomorrow and you may find some disciples there. Speak to them. And remember to be back here at vesper. I will be preaching near the torrent. »

232. 7

«How lovely! We shall tell the people of Korazim. On our way back we met Martha and Marcella. Did they come here?» asks Andrew.

«Yes, they did. »

«There was a lot of talk at Magdala about Mary, who does not go out anymore and has no more parties. We had a rest in the house of the same woman as last time. Benjamin told me that when he feels inclined to be naughty, he thinks of You and... »

«... and of me, You may as well say so, James» says the Iscariot.

«He did not say so. »

«But he meant it when he said: "I do not want to be handsome, but I want to be naughty" and he cast me a side glance. He cannot stand me... »

«A dislike of no importance, Judas. Forget about it» says Jesus.

232 8 «Yes, Master. But it is annoying that... »

8«Is the Master there? » someone shouts from the street.

«Yes, He is. But what do you want now? Is the day not long enough for you? Is this a decent hour to disturb poor pilgrims? Come back tomorrow» orders Peter.

«The trouble is that we have a dumb demoniac with us. And he escaped three times on the way. Had it not been for that, we would have arrived earlier. Be good! Before long, when the moon is high in the sky, he will begin to howl louder and will frighten the village. Look how he is struggling already?! »

Jesus goes to the other side of the terrace and leans out over the low wall. The apostles do likewise. A row of faces bending over a crowd of people looking up at them. In the middle, moving about and howling like a chained bear or a wolf, there is a man with his wrists tied together so that he may not escape. He howls while moving about restlessly, as if he were looking for something on the ground. When he looks up and meets Jesus' eyes, he utters a beastly cry, an inarticulate howl, and tries to run away.

The crowds, almost all the adults of Capernaum are there, move aside frightened.

«Come, for goodness' sake! He is starting all over again... »

«I am coming at once. » And Jesus runs downstairs and goes in front of the poor wretch who is more agitated than ever.

«Go out of him. I want it. »

The howling fades into one word: «Peace! »

«Yes, peace. Peace to you now that you are freed. »

The crowd shout for wonder seeing the sudden change from fury to calm, from being possessed to freedom, from dumbness to speech.

232 9 9«How did you know that I was here? »

«At Nazareth they said to us: "He is at Capernaum". This was confirmed at Capernaum by two men who said their eyes had been cured by You in this house. »

«That is true! It is very true! They told us as well... » many shout. And they remark: «Such things have never been seen in Israel before! »

«If He were not helped by Beelzebub He would not do them»

sneer the Pharisees of Capernaum. Simon, however, is not amongst them.

«Help or not help. I have been cured and so were the blind men. You would not be able to do it, notwithstanding your great prayers» retorts the cured dumb demoniac and he kisses Jesus' robe. The Master does not reply to the Pharisees, He simply dismisses the crowd saying: «Peace be with you» and He asks the cured man and those who accompanied him to stay, and offers them hospitality in the room upstairs so that they may rest until the following morning.

<sup>10</sup>... Jesus says: «You will put here the Parable of the lost sheep, which you had on the 12th of August 1944. » 232.10

233. The parable of the lost sheep,  
also listened to by Mary of Magdala.

[12<sup>th</sup> August 1944. ]

<sup>1</sup>Jesus is speaking to the crowds. Standing on the wooded embankment of a little torrent, He is addressing a large crowd spread in a field where the corn has already been cut and the burnt stubbles are a distressing sight. It is evening. Night is falling, but the moon is already rising. Flocks of sheep are going back to the folds and the sound of cattle-bells mingles with the loud chirping of crickets and the high-pitched drone of cicadas. Jesus takes the passing flocks as a starting point. 233. 1

He says: «Your Heavenly Father is like a solicitous shepherd. What does a good shepherd do? He looks for good pastures for his sheep, where there is no hemlock or other poisonous herbs, but there is plenty of sweet clover, aromatic mint and bitter but wholesome chicory. He looks for places where beside good grass there is the cool shade of trees and the clear water of a stream and he ensures that there are no asps among the green grass. He does not prefer the richest pastures, because he knows that snakes and harmful herbs are quite common there and thus dangerous for his sheep. He prefers, instead, mountain pastures, where the dew keeps the grass clean and fresh and the strong sunshine keeps snakes away and the breezy air is light and

healthy, not like the unhealthy air in the plains. The good shepherd watches his sheep one by one. He cures them when they are sick and if they get hurt he dresses their wounds. He reproaches the sheep that might be sick because they are too greedy for food and he calls to a different place the ones that might be harmed by staying too long in a damp spot or in the sunshine. And if one is unwilling to eat he looks for acidulous aromatic herbs suitable to whet its appetite and he feeds it with his own hands, speaking to it as if it were a friend. That is what the good Father Who is in Heaven does with His children wandering on the earth. His love is the staff that gathers them together, His voice is their guide, His Law is His pasture, Heaven His fold.

233. 2 <sup>2</sup>But one of his sheep left him. How fond of it he was! It was young, pure, white, like a cloud in an April sky. The shepherd used to look at it with so much love, thinking of how much good he could do for it and how much love he could receive from it. And it strayed. A tempter passed on the road that runs along the pasture. He does not wear a plain coat, but has on a multi-coloured robe. He does not have a leather belt with hatchet and knife hanging from it, but he wears a golden belt, from which little bells hang, as sweet-sounding as the singing of a nightingale, and phials of inebriating scents... He does not carry a shepherd's staff as the good shepherd does, to gather the sheep together and defend them and should his staff not be sufficient, he is ready to defend them with his hatchet and knife and even with his life. But the tempter who is passing by, is holding in his hands a thurible sparkling with gems and smoke rises, from it which is stench and scent at the same time, and it bewilders as the sparkling of the fake jewels dazzles. He passes by singing and drops handfuls of salt which shines on the dark road... Ninety nine sheep look and remain where they are. The hundredth, the youngest and dearest one, makes a leap and disappears behind the tempter. The shepherd calls it. But it does not come back. It runs faster than the wind to join the tempter who has just gone by, and to sustain itself while running it tastes some of the salt, which as soon as it is swallowed causes a strange burning frenzy so that the poor sheep craves for cool water in the deep green shades of forests. And following the tempter it goes into the forests, and it climbs and descends and falls... once, twice, three times. And

each time it feels round its neck the slimy embrace of reptiles, and being thirsty it drinks foul water and when it is hungry it eats herbs shining with revolting slobber.

<sup>3</sup>And in the meantime what does the good shepherd do? He leaves the ninety-nine faithful ones in a safe place and he sets out and does not stop until he finds traces of the lost sheep. Since it does not come back to him, although he calls it in a loud voice begging the wind to carry his call to it, he goes to the sheep. And he sees it from afar, intoxicated in the coils of reptiles, so intoxicated that it does not feel nostalgia for the man who loves it, on the contrary it mocks him. And he is aware that it is guilty of entering, like a thief, the abode of other people, so guilty that it dare not look at him... And yet the good shepherd does not become tired... and he goes on looking for it all the time, following its traces and weeping when he loses them: strips of fleece; traces of its soul; traces of blood; various crimes; filth; proof of its lust; but he goes on and reaches it. Ah! I found you, my beloved one. I reached you at last! How far have I walked for you, to take you back to the fold. Do not bend your dejected head. Your sin is buried in my heart. Nobody will know about it, except me, and I love you. I will defend you from the criticism of other people, I will shield you with my body to protect you against the stones of accusers. Come. Are you wounded? Oh! let me see your wounds. I know them. But I want you to show them to me with the confidence you had when you were pure, and you looked at me, your shepherd and your God with innocent eyes. There they are. They all have the same name. How deep they are! Who inflicted these very deep ones in the depth of your heart? It was the Tempter, I know. It is he who has neither staff nor hatchet, but he strikes more deeply with his poisonous bite, and after him, the false jewels of his thurible strike: the ones that seduced you by sparkling... and they were hellish sulphur brought to daylight to burn your heart. Look how many wounds! How much torn fleece, how much blood, how much bramble.

<sup>4</sup>0 my poor little disappointed soul! But tell me: If I forgive You, will you still love me? Tell me: if I stretch out my arms to you, will you come to them? Tell me: do you thirst for good love? Well: come and be born again. Come back to the holy pastures. Weep. Your tears and mine will wash the traces of your sin and



in order to nourish you, because you are worn out by the evil which has burnt you, I open my chest and my veins and I say to you: "Feed on them, and live!" Come here that I may take you in my arms. We will walk faster to the safe holy pastures. You will forget everything of this miserable hour. And your ninety-nine good sisters will rejoice at your return, because I tell you, my little lost sheep, which I have looked for coming from far away, and I reached and saved. I tell you, there is more rejoicing among the good, for one who was lost and has been found, than for ninety-nine just who never left the fold. »

233 5 <sup>5</sup>Jesus has never turned around to look at the road behind Him and on which Mary of Magdala has arrived in the dim light of the evening. She is most elegant, but at least she is dressed, and she is wearing a dark veil, which conceals her features and figure. But when Jesus continues His speech from the words: «I found you, my beloved one», Mary hides her hands under her veil and weeps, softly and continuously.

People cannot see her, because she is on this side of the embankment, which runs along the road. Only the moon, now high in the sky and Jesus' spirit can see her...

And He says to me: «The comment is in the vision itself. But I shall speak to you again about it. Rest now, because it is time. I bless you, My faithful Mary. » (referring to Valtorta)

#### 234. Commenting three episodes on the conversion of Mary of Magdala.

13<sup>th</sup> August 1944.

234 1 <sup>1</sup> Jesus says:

«As from January, when I let you see the supper in the house of Simon, the leper, you and he who guides you, have wished to know more about Mary of Magdala and the words I spoke to her. Now, after seven months, I reveal those pages of the past to you, to make you happy and to give a rule to those who must learn to bend over those women, who are lepers in their souls, and also to invite those poor wretches, who are suffocating in their sepulchres of vice, to come out of them.

234 2 <sup>2</sup>God is good. He is good to everybody. He does not measure

by means of human measures. He does not discriminate between mortal sins. Sin, whatever it may be, grieves Him. Repentance pleases Him and makes Him willing to forgive. Resistance to Grace makes Him inflexibly severe because Justice cannot forgive the unrepentant who will die as such, notwithstanding all the help given to them so that they might be converted. But the main cause of four tenths, if not half, of non-conversions is the negligence of those responsible for conversions, that is, a mistaken false zeal protecting real selfishness and pride, whereby one is happy in one's refuge, without having to descend into dirt to save a heart from it. "I am pure, I deserve respect. I will not go where there is filth and where they may fail to respect me".

But has he who speaks thus not read the Gospel where it is written that the Son of God came to call tax collectors and prostitutes beside the honest people, the only honest ones according to the old Law? Does he not think that pride is impurity of the mind, and lack of charity is impurity of the heart? Will you be despised? I was despised before you and more than you, and I was the Son of God. Will you have to wear your clean robe where there is filth? And did I not touch that filth with My hands to make it stand up and say to it: "Walk on this new way"? Do you not remember what I said to your first predecessors? "Whatever town or village you go into, ask for someone trustworthy and stay with him". So that the world may not grumble. Because the world is inclined to see evil in everything. But I added: "When you enter houses - 'houses' I said not 'house' - greet them saying: 'Peace to this house'. And if the house deserves it, peace will descend upon it, if it does not, your peace will come back to you". I said that to teach you that until there is definite proof of unrepentance, you must have the same heart for everything. And I completed My lesson by saying: "And if anyone does not welcome you and does not listen to your words, as you walk out of those houses or towns shake the dust from your feet". Sin is but dust, and God makes good souls, who have constantly loved Him, like smooth crystal cubes: it is enough to blow or shake the dust and it disappears without doing any harm.

Be *really* good. Be thoroughly united, with eternal Bounty in the middle of you, and no corruption will be able to foul you above the soles of your sandals which touch the ground. Souls

are so high up! I mean the souls of those who are good and thoroughly united to God. Such souls are in Heaven. And no dust or filth can reach up there, not even when thrown angrily at the spirit of an apostle. They may strike your flesh, that is, they may wound you physically or morally, persecuting you or offending you, because Evil hates Good. And so what? Was I not offended and wounded? Did they perhaps carve those blows and foul words into My spirit? Did they upset Me? No, they did not. Like spittle on a mirror or a stone thrown against the juicy pulp of a fruit, they skidded without penetrating, or they penetrated only superficially, without damaging the kernel enclosed in the stone: on the contrary, it fosters its germination because it is easier to sprout from a cracked core than from a whole one. Through death corn germinates and an apostle becomes active. Sometimes through physical death, or dying daily metaphorically, by crushing one's human *ego*. But that is not death: it is Life. The spirit triumphs over the death of humanity.

234 3

<sup>3</sup>She came to Me to satisfy the passing fancy of an idle woman who did not know how to while away the time, and although her ears were almost deafened by the false homage of those who lulled her singing to her sensuality in order to make her their slave, she heard the clear severe voice of Truth. Of the Truth that is not afraid of being despised or not understood and speaks looking at God. And like festive bells ringing together, all the voices mingled in the Word: voices went to sing in the open blue sky, spreading over valleys and hills, plains and lakes, to commemorate the glory of the Lord and His festivity.

Do you not remember the solemn festivity that in peace time made the day of the Lord so joyful? The big bell, with its resonant clapper, gave the first peal in the name of divine Law and seemed to be saying: "I am speaking in the name of God, Judge and King". The smaller bells then harmonised: "Who is good, merciful and patient", and the smallest bell, in a silvery angelical voice added: "Whose Love urges men to forgive and be indulgent, to teach men that forgiveness is more useful than wrath, and compassion is greater than inflexibility".

Likewise, after recalling the Law, trampled on by the sinner, I made her hear the song of forgiveness. I shook the hope of forgiveness in the darkness of sin, like a green-blue silk scarf among

dark shades, so that hope might put in its comforting words. Forgiveness! It is like dew on the parching thirst of sinners. Dew is not like hail, which strikes like a dart, bounces and without penetrating the soil kills flowers. Dew descends so lightly that even the most delicate flower does not perceive it resting on its silk petals. But it drinks its refreshing moisture. Dew settles near roots, on parched clods of earth and penetrates the soil... It is a moisture of tears, the tears of stars, the loving tears of mothers on their thirsty children, whom it nourishes together with their sweet bountiful milk. Oh! the mysteries of elements operating also when man rests or sins! Forgiveness is like such dew. It brings not only cleanliness, but also vital juices, taken not from elements but from divine hearths.

And after the promise of forgiveness Wisdom speaks saying what is legal and what is not legal, and it reproaches and shakes, not out of harshness, but out of maternal anxiety to save. How often your hardness becomes more impenetrable and unyielding to Charity bending over you!... How often you run away while Charity speaks to you!... How often you scorn it! How often you hate it!... If Charity dealt with you as you deal with it, woe to your souls! Instead, see, it is the Untiring Walker who comes looking for you. And it reaches you even if you hide in the darkest of dens.

<sup>4</sup>Why did I decide to go to that house? Why did I not work a miracle in it? To teach the apostles how to behave, defying prejudices and criticism in order to fulfil their duty, which is so high as to be free from the trifling things of the world.

234 4

Why did I say those words to Judas? The apostles were still very much men. All Christians are *very much men*, also the saints on the earth, although to a lesser degree. Some humanism survives also in perfect souls. But the apostles were not yet perfect. Their minds were pervaded with human reasoning. I lifted them up. But the weight of their humanity pulled them down again. To let them descend as little as possible I had to put something on their ascending way, which could stop their descent, something on which they could stop to meditate and rest and thus be able to ascend again to a higher level than before. I had to bring forth something capable of convincing them that I was God, that is: introspection of their souls, victory over el-

ements, miracles, transfiguration, resurrection, ubiquity. I was on the road to Emmaus when I was in the room of the Last Supper, and the time of My ubiquity, when discussed by the apostles and disciples, was one of the reasons which affected them most strongly, freeing them from their ties and urging them on to the way of Christ. Rather than to Judas, who was already brooding over death, I was speaking to the other eleven. I was compelled to make it very clear to them that I was God, not out of pride, but of necessity for their formation. I was God and Master. Those words define Me as such. I reveal Myself by means of an extra-human faculty and I teach a virtue: we must not talk evil things not even in our hearts. Because God sees, and God must see a pure heart to descend into it and dwell there.

Why did I not work the miracle in that house? To make *everybody understand* that the presence of God *calls for a pure environment*, out of respect for His sublime majesty. I did not work the miracle there, because I wanted to speak to her, not uttering words with My lips, but with a deeper word addressed to her sinful soul and say: "See, poor wretch? You are so filthy that everything near you becomes foul. So foul, that God cannot act. You are filthier than he is. Because you are repeating Eve's sin and are offering your fruit to many Adams, by tempting them and taking them away from their Duty. You are a minister of Satan". But why do I not want her to be called "satan" by his dejected mother? Because no reason can justify insult and hatred. The first essential condition to have God with us is to bear no ill will and to forgive. The second condition is to admit that we, or those who belong to us, are sinners as well. We must not see only other people's faults. The third condition is to remain grateful and faithful, after receiving grace, out of justice to the Eternal Father. Woe to those who after receiving grace are worse than dogs and do not remember their Benefactor, whereas animals do!

234 5

<sup>5</sup>I did not say one word to Mary Magdalene. I looked at her for a moment, as if she were a statue, then I left her. I went back to the "living ones" whom I wanted to save. I treated her with seeming carelessness, as if she were dead, like or more than a lifeless sculptured piece of marble. But I did not utter a word or make a gesture that did not aim mainly at her poor soul, which I wanted to redeem. And the last words: "I do not insult. Do not

insult. Pray for sinners. Nothing else”, like a garland of flowers the ends of which are joined together, are to be joined to the first words spoken upon the mountain: “Forgiveness is more useful than wrath and compassion than inflexibility”. And these have enclosed the poor wretch in a cool velvet circle, scented with goodness, making her feel how the loving service of God is different from the cruel slavery of Satan, how sweet is the heavenly perfume as compared to the stench of sin, and how relaxing it is to be loved *holily* as compared to being possessed *satanically*.

See how moderate is the will of the Lord. He does not exact immediate conversions. He does not claim the absolute from a heart. He can wait and be satisfied. And while He waits for the lost woman to find her way, for the mad woman to find reason, He is satisfied with what the dejected mother can give her. I ask her only: “Can you forgive?” How many more questions I should have asked her to make her worthy of the miracle, if I had behaved according to human standards! But I measure your strength in a *divine way*. It was already a great success if the poor deranged mother could really forgive. And that is all I asked her, at that moment. After giving her son back to her, I say to her: “Be holy and make your house holy”. But while the pangs of grief derange her mind, I ask her but to forgive the culprit. You must not exact everything from those who shortly before were in Darkness. That mother was to come later to full light, with her daughter-in-law and the children. For the time being, it was necessary to let the first dawning of Light reach her eyes blinded by tears: that is, forgiveness, the dawn of God’s day.

<sup>6</sup> Of the people present only one - I am not referring to Judas, <sup>234. 6</sup> I am speaking of the people gathered there, not of My disciples - only one was not to come to the Light. There is always someone for whom the apostle toils in vain. But you must not lose heart because of such defeats. An apostle must not pretend to achieve everything. Struggling against him there are adverse powers, with many different names, and like tentacles of an octopus they grasp again the prey that he had snatched from them. But the apostle is still meritorious. Woe to the apostle who says: “I am not going there because I know that I shall not be able to convert anyone”. He is an apostle of very little value. It is necessary to go even if only one in a thousand will be saved. His apostolic day

will be as fruitful because of that one as it would be for a thousand, because he will have done everything in his power and that is what God rewards. You must also consider that where the apostle is not able to convert, because the person to be converted is too firmly gripped by Satan and the power of the apostle is inadequate to the effort, God may intervene. And then? Who is greater than God?

234 7 <sup>7</sup>Another thing that the apostle must absolutely practise is love. *Clear* love. Not only the secret love for the hearts of brethren. That is enough for good brethren. But the apostle is a worker of God and he must not limit himself to prayer: he must act. Let him act with love, with great love. Rigour paralyses the apostle's work and hinders the motion of souls towards the Light. So: not rigour, but love. Love is the layer of asbestos that protects you against the blaze of wicked passions. Love is the saturation of preserving essences which prevent human-satanic putrefaction from entering you. To conquer a soul you must learn how to love. To conquer a soul you must reduce it to love: to love Good and disown its petty sinful loves.

I *wanted* Mary's soul. And as in your case, My little John, I did not confine Myself to speaking from the Teacher's desk. I stooped looking for her in the paths of sin. I pursued her and persecuted her by means of My love. A kind persecution! I-Purity followed her where she was - Impurity. I was not afraid of any scandal, neither with regards to Myself nor to others. I could not be scandalised, because I was Mercy; and Mercy weeps over sins but is not scandalised by them. Woe to the shepherd who is scandalised and entrenches himself behind the screen of scandal to abandon a soul! Do you not know that souls are more inclined than bodies to rise again and that the pitiful loving word saying: "Rise, sister, for your own good" often works a miracle? I was not afraid of other people's scandal. My behaviour was justified in the eyes of God, and was understood by good people. An evil-minded man fermenting with wickedness, which evaporates from a corrupt heart, is of no importance. Such man finds faults also in God, and considers only himself perfect. I therefore paid no attention to such people.

234 8 <sup>8</sup>The three phases of the salvation of a soul are:

To be thoroughly and strictly honest in order to be able to

Speak without any fear of being silenced. To be able to speak to a whole crowd so that our apostolic word, addressed to the crowds gathering round our mystical boat, may travel farther and farther, like circles of waves, until it reaches the miry shore, where those who are not interested in knowing the Truth are lying in the mud. That is the first task in order to break the hard crust of the soil and prepare it to receive the seed. It is the hardest task both for he who performs it and for he who receives it, because words, like a sharp ploughshare, must wound the listener in order to open his heart. And I solemnly tell you that the heart of a good apostle is hurt and bleeds because of the grief in having to wound in order to open. But that grief also is prolific. Through the blood and the tears of an apostle, waste land becomes fertile.

The second quality: It is necessary to act also where one, less conscious of one's mission, would flee. The apostle must break his back in the effort to extirpate darnel, couch-grass and thorns in order to clear the soil and plough it and then let the power of God and His bounty shine on it like the sun. And at the same time, like a judge and a doctor, he must be severe and merciful, and remain firm in the period of waiting to give the souls time to surmount their crises to meditate and make up their minds.

Third phase: As soon as a soul that has repented in silence, dares to come shyly towards an apostle, weeping and thinking of its faults, fearing to be driven away, the apostle's heart must be greater than the sea, more gentle than a mother's heart, more loving than a bride's, and he must open it completely to allow waves of tenderness to flow from it. If you have God, Who is Charity, within you, you will easily find charitable words to be spoken to souls. God will speak in you and on your behalf and like honey dripping from a honeycomb, like balm flowing from a phial, love will reach parched sickened lips; it will reach wounded souls and will be relief and medicine.

<sup>9</sup>You doctors of souls, make sinners love you. Let them taste the flavour of Heavenly Charity and let them become so eager for it, as to seek no other food. Let them feel in your kindness such a relief as to seek it for all their wounds. Your charity must free them from all fear, because, as the epistle\* which you have read today

234 9

\* the epistle, *1 John 4 18*



says: "To fear is to expect punishment, and anyone who is afraid is still imperfect in love". Neither is he perfect who causes people to be afraid. Do not say: "What have you done?" Do not say: "Go away". Do not say: "You cannot have relish for good love". Say, instead, in My name: "Love and I will forgive you". Say: "Come, Jesus' arms are open". Say: "Enjoy this angelical Bread and this Word and forget the pitch of hell and Satan's sneers". Bear the weakness of other people. An apostle must bear his own and other people's weakness, with his own crosses and other people's. And while coming to Me, laden with wounded sheep, encourage the poor stray souls saying: "Everything is forgotten by now"; Say: "Be not afraid of Saviour. He came from Heaven for you, just for you. I am but a bridge to carry you to Him Who is waiting for you, on the other side of the river of penitential absolution, to lead you to His holy pastures, which begin here, on the earth, and continue in Heaven, in everlasting nutritious delightful Beauty".

234 10

<sup>10</sup>Here is the comment. It is of little concern to you, sheep faithful to the Good Shepherd. But if in you, little bride, it increases confidence, in the Father it will be greater light in His light as judge, and for many it will be no incentive to come to Good. But it will be the penetrating and nourishing dew of which I have spoken and which makes withered flowers stand upright again.

Raise your heads. Heaven is high above. Go in peace, Mary. The Lord is with you. »

235. Martha is reassured by  
her sister Mary of the conversion.

29<sup>th</sup> July 1945.

235 1

<sup>1</sup>Jesus is about to embark in the boat, at the dawn of a clear summer day which is spreading roses on the wrinkled silky surface of the lake, when Martha arrives with her maidservant. «Oh! Master! Listen to me, for God's sake» she says.

Jesus goes back onto the shore and says to the apostles: «Go and wait for Me at the torrent. In the meantime prepare everything for our trip towards Magedan. The Decapolis also is waiting for the word. Go. »

And while the boat moves away and takes to the open lake,

Jesus walks beside Martha. Marcella respectfully follows them.

They thus move away from the village walking on the shore, which from a sandy stretch, strewn at lake level with sparse tufts of wild herbs, becomes completely covered with vegetation as it climbs up the hill sides, which are reflected in the lake.

<sup>2</sup>When they reach a lonely spot, Jesus asks smiling: «What do 235.2 you want to tell Me? »

«Oh! Master... Mary came home last night shortly after midnight. Oh! I was forgetting to tell You that while we were having lunch at midday, she said to me: "Would you mind lending me one of your dresses and a mantle? They may be a little short. But I will leave the dress loose and hold the mantle down..." I replied to her: "You may take whatever you wish, my dear sister". My heart was throbbing because, shortly before, speaking to Marcella in the garden I had said to her: "At vesper we must be at Capernaum, because the Master is speaking to the crowds this evening" and I saw Mary start and change colour. She became restless, moving about all alone, like a person in pain or in a flutter, on the point of making a decision... but does not know which way to decide. After lunch she went into my room and took the most dark and modest dress I had, she tried it on and asked the nurse to let the hem down, as it was too short. She tried to do it herself, but weeping she confessed: "I am no longer good at sewing. I have forgotten everything useful and good..." and she threw her arms around my neck saying: "Pray for me". She went out about sunset... How much I prayed, that she might not meet anyone who would keep her from coming here, so that she might understand Your word and succeed in definitely strangling the monster enslaving her... Look: I put on Your belt, which I tied under my own, and when I felt my waist being oppressed by the hard stiff leather, that it is not used to, I would say: "He is stronger than anything. Then Marcella and I came by wagon, as it is quicker. I do not know whether You saw us in the crowd... But what an aching pain in my heart at not seeing Mary! I would say to myself: "She must have changed her mind. She has gone back home. Or... she has run away as she could no longer stand my control, although she had asked for it". I was listening to You and weeping under my veil. Your words seemed to be spoken just for her... and she did not hear them! That is what I was thinking as

I did not see her. I went back home down-hearted. It is the truth. I disobeyed You because You had said to me: "If she comes, you stay at home and wait for her". But think of my heart, Master! It was my sister coming to You! How could I not be there to see her near You? And then... You said to me: "She will be broken" and I wanted to be near her to support her at once...

I was kneeling in my room weeping and praying and it was after midnight when she came in. She came in so softly that I heard her only when she threw herself upon me embracing me and saying: "Everything you say, my blessed sister, is true. Nay, it is much more so than you told me. His mercy is much greater. Oh! Martha! There is no further need for you to watch me! You will see that I am no longer cynical and miserable! You will no longer hear me say: 'I do not want to think!' Now I want to think. I know what to think of. Of Bounty which became flesh. You were certainly praying for me, sister. And victory is already within your grasp: Your Mary, who no longer wants to sin and who is born to a new life. Here she is. Look at her straight in the face. Because she is a new Mary, whose face has been washed by tears of hope and repentance. You can kiss me, my pure sister. There is no trace of shameful love affairs on my face. He said that He loves my soul. Because He was speaking to my soul and about my soul. I was the lost sheep. He said, listen if I am right. You know how the Saviour speaks.. and she repeated Your parable perfectly. Mary is so intelligent! Much more intelligent than I am. And she remembers. So I heard You twice; and if those words were holy and adorable on Your lips, on hers they were holy, adorable and loving because they were spoken by my sister, who had been found and had come back to the family fold. We were sitting on a mat on the floor embracing each other, as we normally did when we were little girls in my mother's room or near the loom where she wove or embroidered her wonderful cloths. And we remained thus, no longer divided by sin, and my mother also seemed to be present in her spirit. We wept without any grief, on the contrary, with so much peace! We kissed each other happily... And then Mary, who was tired after her long walk, and was exhausted with emotion and so many feelings, fell asleep in my arms and with the help of the nurse I laid her on my bed... and I left her there to come here... » and Martha, thoroughly happy, kisses Jesus' hands.

<sup>3</sup>«I also will tell you what Mary said to you: “Victory is already in your grasp”. Go and be happy. Go in peace. Let your behaviour be kind and prudent with your reborn sister. Goodbye, Martha. Let Lazarus know, as he is worried. » 235. 3

«Yes, Master. But when will Mary come with us women disciples? »

JeSus smiles and says: «The Creator created the universe in six days and rested on the seventh. »

«I understand. I must be patient... »

«Yes, patient. Do not sigh. That is a virtue as well. Peace to you, women. We shall meet soon» and Jesus leaves them and goes towards the place where the boat is waiting near the shore.


<sup>4</sup>Jesus says: «Put here the vision of the supper in the house of Simon, the Pharisee, which you saw on January 21<sup>st</sup>, 1944. » 235. 4

### 236. The dinner in the house of Simon the Pharisee and the absolution of Mary of Magdala.

21<sup>st</sup> January 1944.


<sup>1</sup>To comfort me in my complex suffering and make me forget the wickedness of men, my Jesus grants me this sweet contemplation. 236. 1

I see a sumptuous hall. A multi branched candlestick is hanging in the centre and is completely lit. The hall is hung with beautiful tapestry; there are magnificent pieces of furniture and chairs inlaid and decorated with ivory and precious metal leaves.

There is a large square table in the centre, consisting of four tables assembled together like this . The table has been laid for many guests (all men) and is covered with beautiful tablecloths and very expensive tableware. There are valuable amphorae and cups and many servants are moving round the table carrying dishes and pouring out wines. There is no one in the centre of the square. I can see the magnificent floor which reflects the lights of the oil chandelier. Around the table there are many couches, all occupied by the guests.


I appear to be in the half dark corner at the end of the hall, near a door, which is wide open, although screened by a heavy

piece of tapestry hanging from its architrave.

The landlord and the most important guests are on the opposite side, that is, the farthest side from the door here as marked . The landlord is elderly, wearing a wide white tunic tied around his waist by an embroidered belt. Round the collar, the cuffs and the hem of the tunic there are strips of embroidered work, which have been attached as if they were embroidered ribbons or strips. But I do not like his expression. It is malicious, cold, proud and greedy.

On the opposite side, facing him, there is my Jesus. I see Him sideways, almost from behind His back. He is wearing His usual white tunic, sandals, and His long hair is parted on His forehead.

I see that both He and all the guests are not sitting up to the table, as I thought one would on those couches, instead they are reclined parallelly. In the vision of the wedding at Cana I did not pay much attention to this detail. I saw that they were eating leaning on their left elbows, but they did not appear to be so reclined, probably because the couches were shorter and not so sumptuous. Those I see now are real beds, and look like modern Turkish divans.

John is near Jesus and since Jesus is leaning on His left elbow, like everybody else, so this is their position . Basically John is between the table and Jesus' body, with his elbow at the height of the Master's groin, so that he does not hinder Him while eating, but if he wishes, he can lie comfortably on His chest.

There is no woman at the table. They are all talking and the landlord now and again addresses Jesus with evident affected condescension. It is obvious that he wants to show to Him and to all those present as well, that he has greatly honoured Him, a poor and rather hot-headed prophet, as many people consider Him, by inviting Him to his wealthy house... I see Jesus reply kindly and quietly. He smiles faintly at those who ask Him questions, but His smile becomes bright when John speaks to Him or even looks at Him.

236. 2 <sup>2</sup>I see the magnificent curtain covering the door area being raised and a young woman come in. She is beautiful, sumptuously dressed and her hair is splendidly arranged. The artistically interlaced locks of her very thick blond hair form a beautiful

ornament on her head. Her hair is so bright and abundant that she seems to be wearing a golden helmet wrought in relief. If I should have to compare the dress she has on with the ones I have always seen the Blessed Virgin Mary wear, I would say that it is very unusual and complicated. There are buckles on the shoulders, jewels to hold together the pleats at the top of the breast, little gold chains to outline the breast, and the belt is adorned with studs and gems. It is a provoking dress, which emphasises the features of her beautiful body. The veil on her head is so light that... it veils nothing: it is an additional charm and nothing else. Her sandals are very expensive ones, of red leather with gold buckles and strips interlaced round her ankles.

Everybody, except Jesus turns around to look at her. John watches her for a moment, then looks at Jesus. The others stare at her with evident malicious avidity. But the woman does not look at them, neither does she pay attention to the whispering that has arisen at her entrance, or to the winking of the people present, with the exception of Jesus and His disciple. Jesus pretends He has seen nothing. He continues His conversation with the landlord.

The woman goes towards Jesus and kneels down at the feet of the Master. She lays on the floor a little vase, shaped like a potbellied amphora, takes off her veil after removing a long valuable pin, which fastened it to her hair, she removes rings from her fingers and lays everything on the couch near Jesus' feet. She then takes His feet in her hand, first the right one and then the left one, unlaces His sandals and lays them on the floor. She then kisses His feet bursting into tears, she rests her forehead on them, caresses them, while tears stream down her face like drops of rain, shining in the light of the chandelier and wetting those adorable feet.

<sup>3</sup>Jesus turns His head round very slightly and slowly, and His <sup>236</sup> <sup>3</sup> deep eyes rest for a moment on the woman's reclined head. An absolving glance. He then looks again at the centre of the hall, leaving her free in her outburst.

But the others do not: they scoff, wink and sneer. The Pharisee sits up for a moment to have a better view and his eyes express desire, vexation and irony. He desires the woman, and that feeling is evident. He is vexed because she has come in so freely,

which may cause the others to think that she is a regular guest in the house. And he is ironical with regards to Jesus...

But the woman is not aware of anything. She continues to shed torrents of tears noiselessly. She weeps and now and again she sobs. She then lets her hair down, after removing the gold hairpins, which held up her complicated hair dress and she puts also the hair-pins near the rings and the long veil-pin. Her golden locks roll down her back. She takes them with both hands, brings them in front of her and rubs them on Jesus' wet feet, until she sees that they are dry. She dips her fingers into the little vase and takes out a yellowish highly scented ointment. A sweet-smelling perfume, a mixture of lily and tuberose, spreads throughout the hall. The woman uses it profusely, she spreads it, kissing and caressing His feet at the same time.

Jesus looks at her now and again with so much loving pity. John, who looked around in amazement when she burst into tears, cannot detach his eyes from Jesus and the woman and looks at them alternately.

236. 4 The face of the Pharisee has become more and more sullen. <sup>4</sup>I now hear the well known words\* of the Gospel and I hear them uttered *in a tone and with a look*, which cause the old resentful man to lower his head.

I hear the words absolving the woman, who goes away leaving her jewels at Jesus' feet. She has tied her veil around her head, thus gathering together her dishevelled hair as best she can. Jesus, while saying to her: «Go in peace», lays His hand on her reclined head for a moment. A very gentle gesture.

236. 5 <sup>5</sup>Jesus now says to me:

«What made the Pharisee and his companions lower their heads and is not mentioned in the Gospel, are the words that My spirit, in one glance darted at him and drove into his arid avid soul. I answered him much more than has been reported, because none of the thoughts of those men were concealed from Me. And he understood My mute language, which was more meaningful and reproachful than My words.

I said to him: "No. Do not make wicked insinuations to jus-

\* words, those of *Luke 7, 40-50*.

tify yourself to yourself. I am not affected by lewdness as you are. She does not come to Me attracted by sensuality. I am not you or like those who are like you. She comes to Me because My countenance and My word, which she heard by chance, have enlightened her soul, which lust had left in utter darkness. And she comes because she wants to overcome her sensuality and she realises, poor creature, that she will never succeed by herself. She loves My spirit, nothing but My spirit, which she perceives is supernaturally good. After so much evil that she received from you all, who have taken advantage of her weakness for your own vices, rewarding her with your lashing scorn, she comes to Me, because she realises that she has found Goodness, Joy and Peace, which she sought in vain in the pomps and vanities of this wicked world. Cure the leprosy of your soul, o hypocritical Pharisee, that you may have the right view of things. Forsake pride of mind and lust of flesh. Their leprosy is much more fetid than the leprosy of your bodies. My touch can cure you of the latter, because you beg Me to cure you, but I cannot cure you of the leprosy of your Souls, because you do not wish to be cured, as you like it. But she wants to recover. And thus I cleanse her, and I free her from the chains of her slavery. The sinner is dead. She is still over there in those ornaments that she is ashamed to offer Me that I may sanctify them, using them for the needs of My disciples and Mine and for the poor, whom I help by means of the surplus of other people, because I, the Master of the universe, possess nothing now that I am the Saviour of man. She is still here, in the perfume spread on My feet, the perfume that has been humiliated like her hair, on that part of My body that you disdained to refresh with the water of your well, notwithstanding I have walked so far to bring light to you also. The sinner is dead. And Mary is reborn, as beautiful as a modest girl, through her deep sorrow and her righteous love. She washed herself in her tears. And I solemnly tell you, o Pharisee, that between this young man who loves Me in the purity of his youth, and that woman who loves Me in the sincerity of repentance of a heart reborn to Grace, I make no difference. And to the Pure young man and the Repentant woman I entrust the task of understanding My thought as no one else can, as well as the task of rendering the last honours to My Body, and the first greetings (I am not taking into account My Mother's



special greetings) when I will rise from the dead". That is what I wanted to tell the Pharisee by means of My countenance.

236 6 <sup>6</sup>But I will draw your attention to something else: for your joy and the joy of many. Also at Bethany, Mary repeated the gesture that marked the dawn of her redemption. There are personal gestures, which are repeated and are peculiar to a person like the person's style. They are unmistakable gestures. But, as it was fair, at Bethany the gesture was not humiliated so much and it was more confidential in its reverent adoration.

Mary has gone a long way since that dawn of her redemption. A very long way. Love, like a high wind, has blown her high up and far ahead. Love has burnt her like a fire, destroying her impure flesh and making a purified spirit her new master. And Mary, now different in her revived womanly dignity, as she is different in her clothing, which is now as simple as My Mother's, in her hair-style, her looks, her behaviour, her words, this new Mary has a new way to honour Me by means of the same gesture. She takes the last of her vases of perfume, which she kept for Me, and pours it on My feet and My head, without shedding any tears, with a happy countenance due to love and the certainty that she had been forgiven and saved. Mary can now touch My head and anoint Me. Repentance and love have cleansed her by means of the fire of seraphim and she is a seraph.

236 7 <sup>7</sup>Repeat that to yourself, Mary, My little "voice" and repeat it to souls. Go, tell the souls that dare not come to Me because they feel guilty. He who loves much is pardoned much. That is, He who loves Me. You, poor souls, do not know how much the Saviour loves you! Be not afraid of Me. Come. Confidently. Courageously. I open My Heart and My arms to you.

Always remember: "I make no difference between he who loves Me with his spotless purity and he who loves Me in the sincere contrition of a heart reborn to Grace". I am the Saviour. Always remember that.

Go in peace. I bless you. »

22nd January 1944.

236 8 <sup>8</sup>I have been thinking all day of Jesus' dictation of yesterday evening and of what I saw and understood, even if it was not said.

In the meantime\*, by the way, I tell you that the conversation of the commensals, as far as I could understand, that is, the part addressed to Jesus, was about daily events: the Romans, the Law opposed by them, and then the mission of Jesus as Master of a new school. But under the seeming benevolence it was clear that they asked vicious and captious questions to embarrass Him. A difficult task because Jesus, in a few words, gave the right and conclusive answer to each subject.

For instance, when they asked Him of which particular school or sect He had become the new master, He replied simply: «Of God's school. It is He Whom I follow in His holy Law and to Whose interests I devote Myself, ensuring that it may be renewed for these little ones (and He lovingly looked at John and in John at all honest hearted people) in all its essence, as it was on the day that the Lord God promulgated it on Sinai. I take men back to the Light of God. »

To the other question, as to what He thought of the abuse of power by Caesar, who had become the ruler of Palestine, He replied: «Caesar is what he is because that is what God wants. Remember the prophet Isaiah. Through divine inspiration, does he not call\*\* Asshur "the rod" of His anger? The rod that punishes the people of God, because it has become too detached from God and its outer appearance and spirit are hypocrisy? And does He not say that after using him as a punishment, He will destroy him because he will have abused his task, by becoming too proud and cruel?

Those are the two replies that impressed me most.

¶Then this evening my Jesus says to me smiling:

«I should call you as I called Daniel. You are the woman of wishes and you are dear to Me because you want your God so much. And I could continue saying to you what was said\*\*\* to Daniel by My angel: "Be not afraid, because from the first day when you applied your heart to understand and grieve in the presence of God, your prayers have been heard and they are the reason

236. 9

\* in the meantime, by the way,... with regards to the following comments (entirely in 236. 8) MV indicates in between paragraphs on a hand written copy, always referring to father Migliorini: *optional. I would remove it.* The same comment at the end of chapter 227.

\*\* call... say... in *Isaiah 10, 5-26.*

\*\*\* was said, in *Daniel 10, 12.*

why I have come". But here it is not the angel who is speaking. I am speaking to you: Jesus.

Mary, I always come when "a heart is anxious to understand". I am not a hard severe God. I am Living Mercy. And I come faster than thought to those who apply to Me. <sup>10</sup>And I went immediately to poor Mary of Magdala, so immersed in sin, with My spirit, as soon as I perceived that the desire to understand was rising in her. The desire to understand the light of God and her own state of darkness. And I became her Light.

I was speaking to many that day, but in actual fact I was speaking only for her. I saw but her who had approached us driven by the vehemence of her soul, which rebelled against the flesh enslaving it. I saw but her with her poor face in turmoil, her forced smile, which endeavoured to hide so much weeping of her heart, under the appearance of false confidence and joy, which were a challenge to the world and herself. I saw but her, more entangled in the bramble than the lost sheep of the parable and she was drowning in the disgust of her own life, a disgust brought to the surface like those deep waves that bring up the water of the bottom.

I did not say great words, neither did I touch any specific subject concerning her, a well known sinner, as I did not wish to mortify her, compelling her to run away, to be ashamed or to come to Me. I left her in peace... I let My word and My look descend into her, fermenting there to turn the impulse of a moment into her glorious holy future. I spoke by means of one of the most gentle parables: a beam of light and kindness flashing just for <sup>11</sup>her. <sup>236</sup> And that evening, while I was setting foot in the house of the proud rich Pharisee, where My word could not fermentate into future glory because it was killed by Pharisaic pride, I already knew that she would come after weeping bitterly in her room of vice and that she had already decided on her future in the light of her tears.

Both the flesh and the thoughts of the men were inflamed with lust when they saw her enter. Everybody looked at her lustfully, except the two "pure ones" present at the banquet: John and I. They all thought that she came because of one of her usual caprices, a true diabolic possession, which drove her to extemporaneous affairs. *But Satan was already defeated.* And

when they all noticed that she did not look at them, they enviously thought that she had come for Me. Man always fouls also the purest things, when he is but flesh and blood. Only the pure have the right view because there is no sin in them upsetting their thoughts.

<sup>12</sup>But there is no reason to be frightened because man does not understand, Mary. God understands. And that is enough for Heaven. The glory that comes from men does not add an ounce to the glory that is the destiny of the blessed souls in Paradise. Always remember that. Poor Mary of Magdala was always wrongly judged in her good deeds. But she was not wrongly judged in her bad deeds because they were lustful mouthfuls offered to the insatiable hunger of lewd men. She was criticised and wrongly judged at Capernaum, in the house of the Pharisee and she was Criticised and reproached at Bethany\*, in her own home.

But John, who says a great word, has the key\*\* to the last bit of criticism: "Judas... *because he was a thief*". I say: "The Pharisee and his friends *because they were lewd*". See? Lust for sensuality, greed for money raise their voices to criticise good deeds. Good people do not criticise. Never. They understand.

But, I would repeat it, the criticism of the world is of no importance. What matters is the judgement of God.

[... ]».

237. The request for labourers for the masses  
and the parable of the hidden treasure in the field.  
Mary of Magdala goes to the Holy Mary.

29<sup>th</sup> July 1945.

<sup>1</sup>Jesus is on the road that comes from lake Merom towards the lake of Galilee. He is with the Zealot and Bartholomew near a modest little brook, which nevertheless nourishes many plants, and the trio seem to be waiting for the others who are about to arrive from two different directions.

It is a very warm day, and yet many people have followed the three groups that have been preaching in the country addressing

\* at Bethany, in 586. 7.

\*\* has the key, in *John 12 6*

those who are in good health and taking the sick to the Master. Many people who have been miraculously cured form a happy group sitting among the trees, and their joy is such that they do not even feel tired notwithstanding the heat, the dust, the dazzling light, which are a great trial for everybody else.

When the group led by Judas Thaddeus first arrives near Jesus, all those forming it or following it appear to be very tired. The last group to arrive is the one led by Peter and it comprises many people from Korazim and Bethsaida.

«We have finished, Master. But there ought to be many groups... You can see Yourself. It is not possible to walk far, because of the heat. So what can we do? The more we have to do, the more the world seems to be widening out, scattering villages and increasing distances. I never realised that Galilee was so large. We are in a corner of Galilee, just a corner, and yet we cannot evangelize it, so wide it is and so large the number of those who need You and want You» sighs Peter.

«It is not the world that is growing wider. It is the knowledge of our Master that is spreading» replies Thaddeus.

«Yes, it is true. Look how many people. Many have been following us since this morning. During the warmest hours we took shelter in a copse. But even now, when it is almost evening, it is painful to walk. And these poor people are much farther from their homes than we are. If our work keeps growing like this, I do not know what we shall do... » says James of Zebedee.

«The shepherds will be coming too, in Tishri» says Andrew to encourage them.

«Yes! Shepherds, disciples, how lovely! They are only good at saying: "Jesus is the Saviour. He is over there". Nothing else» replies Peter.

«At least people will know where to find Him. Instead now...! If we come here, they rush here, and while they are coming here, we go there, and they have to run after us. Which is not very pleasant when there are children and sick people. »

237.2

<sup>2</sup>Jesus speaks: «You are right, Peter. I feel sorry as well for these souls and this people. The fact that many of them may not find Me at a certain moment, may be the cause of irreparable misfortunes. Look how tired and bewildered are those who are not yet certain of My Truth and look how hungry are those who

have already tasted My word and can no longer go without it, and no other word can satisfy them. They look like sheep without a shepherd, wandering about without finding anyone who may lead them and pasture them. I will see to them, but you must help Me, with all your spiritual, moral and physical strength. You Will no longer have to go around in large groups, but in couples. And we will send also the best disciples two by two. Because the harvest is really rich. Oh! I will prepare you in summer for this great mission. By the month of Tammuz, Isaac will join us with his best disciples. And I will prepare you. But even so you will not be enough. Because the harvest is really rich but the labourers are few. So pray the Lord of the harvest to send many labourers to His harvest. »

«Yes, my Lord. But that will not make much difference to the situation of those who seek You» says James of Alphaeus.

«Why, brother? »

«Because they are looking not only for doctrine and words of Life, but they want to be cured and to be assisted and helped in all their ailments and in the impairments that either Satan or life have brought to their inferior or Superior parts. And only You can do that, because Yours is the power. »

«Those who are one with Me will be able to do what I do and the poor will be helped in all their miseries. But you do not have as yet what is required to do that. Endeavour to overcome yourselves, to trample on your humanity and thus let your spirit triumph. Absorb not only My word, but the spirit of it, that is, sanctify yourselves through it and then you will be able to do everything. And now let us go and speak to them as they do not wish to go away unless I speak the word of God to them. Then we shall go back to Capernaum. There will be someone waiting for us there as well... »

<sup>3</sup>«Lord, is it true that Mary of Magdala asked You to forgive <sup>237 3</sup> her, in the Pharisee's house? »

«It is true, Thomas. »

«And did You forgive her? » asks Philip.

«I did. »

«You did the wrong thing. » exclaims Bartholomew.

«Why? She was sincerely repentant and deserved to be forgiven. »

«But You should not have forgiven her in *that* house, publicly... » says the Iscariot reproachingly.

«But I do not understand what I did wrong. »

«This is the point: You know who the Pharisees are, how full their heads are of cavils, how they watch You, slander and hate You. One of them in Capernaum was Your friend and that was Simon. And You called a prostitute into his house to desecrate it and cause scandal to Your friend Simon. »

«I did not call her. She came. She was not a prostitute. She repented. That throws a different light on the matter. If they were not overcome with nausea beforehand, when they approached her and desired her, also in My presence, now that she is no longer just flesh, but a soul, they should not feel disgust seeing her enter the house to kneel at My feet and accuse herself weeping, humiliating herself in humble public confession represented by her tears. Simon the Pharisee had his house sanctified by a great miracle: *the resurrection of a soul*. Five days ago in the square in Capernaum he asked Me: “Is that the only miracle You worked?” and he replied himself: “Certainly not” showing his desire to see one. And I gave it to him. I chose him to be the witness, the middleman of this engagement of a soul with Grace. He ought to be proud of it. »

«Instead he is scandalised. Perhaps You have lost a friend. »  
«I found a soul. It is worth losing a man with his friendship, the poor friendship of a man, to give a soul the friendship of God. »

«It is useless. We cannot get You to consider matters from a human point of view. We are on the earth, Master! Remember that. And the laws and the ideas of the world are in force. You act according to the method of Heaven; You live in the Heaven You have in Your heart; You see everything in the light of Heaven. Poor Master of Mine! How divinely unsuited You are to live among us wicked people! » exclaims Judas embracing Him. The apostle, who is amazed and desolate at the same time, concludes: «And I am sorry because, through too much perfection, You make enemies of too many people. »

«Do not be sorry, Judas. It is written that it must be thus. But how do you know that Simon is offended? »

«He did not say that he is offended But he made Thomas and me understand that it should not have happened. You should not

have invited her to his house, which only honest people enter»

«Well! With regard to the honesty of the people going to Simon's house, let us drop the subject says Peter.

And Matthew adds: «I could say that the perspiration of prostitutes poured several times on the floors, on the table and beyond them in the house of Simon the Pharisee. »

«But not publicly» retorts Judas.

«No. Hypocrisy concealed it. »

«So you can see that there is a differences

«There is also a difference between a prostitute who goes in to say: "I am giving up my disgraceful sinful life" and one who goes in to say: "Here I am to commit sin with you". »

«Matthew is rights they all say.

«Of course, he is right. But they do not reason the way we do. We must come to a compromise with them, and adjust ourselves to their ways to have them friendly.

«No, never, Judas. In truth, honesty, in moral behaviour there are neither adjustments nor compromises» thunders Jesus. And He concludes: «In any case I know that I acted rightly and for a good purpose. And that is enough. "Let us go and dismiss those tired people. »

And He goes towards those who are spread under the trees, looking in His direction, anxiously waiting to hear Him.

«Peace to you all who have walked for miles and in dog days to come and hear the Gospel. I solemnly tell you that you are beginning to really understand what the Kingdom of God is, how precious its possession is and how blissful it is to belong to it. And labour is no longer burdensome for you, as it is for others because you are ruled by your soul, which says to the flesh: "Rejoice because I am oppressing you. I am doing it for your own happiness. When you are joined to me again, after resurrection, you will love me for crushing you and you will see me as your second saviour". Do your souls not say that? Of course they do! You now base your actions on the teaching of the parables I spoke to you some time ago. But I will now give you further light to make you love the Kingdom more and more which awaits you and the value of which cannot be measured.

Listen: A man went by chance into a field to get some mould for his little kitchen garden and while he was digging with some



difficulty the very hard soil, he came across a vein of precious metal. What did the man do then? He covered up with earth what he had discovered. He did not mind working a little more, because the discovery justified the work. He then went home, he gathered together all his wealth consisting of money and valuables and he sold the latter to make more money. He then went to the owner of the field and said to him: "I like your field. How much do you want for it?" "I am not selling it" replied the owner. But the man offered larger and larger sums of money disproportionate to the value of the field, and at last he succeeded in convincing the owner who thought: "This man must be mad! And supposing he is, I am going to take advantage of the situation. I will accept the money he offers me. It is not a matter of money-grubbing, because he insists in offering me it. With that money I will be able to buy at least three more fields, and better ones as well". And he sold the field and was sure he had done very good business. But it was the other man who had done a wonderful deal because he gave away what could be stolen by thieves, or lost or used up, and he gained a treasure, which being real and natural, was inexhaustible. It was worth while sacrificing what he had, to make that purchase, although for some time he possessed nothing but the field, because in actual fact he possessed, and forever, the treasure hidden in it.

You have understood all that and you behave like the man of the parable. Give up transient riches in order to possess the Kingdom of Heaven. Sell them or give them to the fools in the world and let them laugh at you because the world thinks it is foolish to do that. Do that, always behave like that, and your Father Who is in Heaven will rejoice giving you one day your seat in the Kingdom.

Go back to your homes before the Sabbath comes, and on the day of the Lord meditate on the parable of the treasure, which is the heavenly Kingdom. Peace be with you. »

<sup>5</sup>The crowds slowly spread along the road and the country paths, while Jesus goes towards Capernaum as night is falling.

He arrives there at night. They noiselessly cross the silent town in the moonlight, which is the only light in the dark unevenly paved narrow streets. They silently enter the little kitchen garden near the house, as they think that everybody is in bed.

Instead a lamp is lit in the kitchen and three shadows, made mobile by the flickering flame, are thrown on the white wall of the stone oven.

«There is somebody waiting for You, Master. But it is not possible to go on like this! I will go and tell them that You are too tired. Go up on to the terrace in the meantime. »

«No, Simon. I am going into the kitchen. If Thomas kept these people here, there must be a good reason for it. »

In the meantime those inside the house have heard the whispering and Thomas, the landlord, comes to the door.

«Master, the usual lady is here. She has been waiting for you since yesterday evening, at sunset. She is with a servant» and he adds in a low voice: «She is very nervous. She weeps all the time... »

«All right. Tell her to come upstairs. Where did she sleep? »

«She did not want to sleep. Then she withdrew to my room for a few hours, at dawn. I let the servant sleep in one of your beds. »

«Very well. He can sleep there also tonight. And you will sleep in Mine. »

«No, Master. I shall sleep on some mats on the terrace. I shall sleep very well just the same. »

<sup>6</sup>Jesus goes up to the terrace. Martha follows Him.

237.6

«Peace to you, Martha. »

A sob is her reply.

«Are you still weeping? Are you not happy? »

Martha shakes her head.

«But why? »...

There is a long pause full of sobs. At last she moans: «Mary has not come back for many nights. And we cannot find her. Neither I nor Marcella nor the nurse can find her... She went out after ordering the wagon to be ready for her. She was magnificently dressed... Oh! she would not put on my dress again!... She was not half nude - she has some such dresses as well - but it was still a very provoking one... And she took jewels and perfumes... and has not come back. She dismissed the servant when they reached the first houses in Capernaum saying: "I will come back in the company of other people". But she has not come back. She deceived us! Or she felt lonely, perhaps she was tempted... or something has happened to her... She has not come back... » And

Martha falls on her knees, weeping with her head reclined on her forearm, which is resting on a pile of empty sacks.

Jesus looks at her, He says slowly and confidently like a dominator: «Do not weep. Mary came to Me three evenings ago. She anointed My feet and left at My feet all her jewels. She thus consecrated herself and forever, and has become one of My disciples. Do not disparage her in your heart. She has excelled you. »

«But where is my sister then? » exclaims Martha looking up with a troubled face. «Why has she not come back home? Has she been assailed? Has she taken a boat and drowned herself? Or has a rejected lover carried her off? Oh! Mary! My Mary! I had found her and I have lost her at once! » Martha is really beside herself. She does not consider that those downstairs can hear her. Neither does she consider that Jesus can tell where her sister is. She is in despair and does not ponder on anything.

237.7 <sup>7</sup>Jesus takes her by the wrists and compels her to be still and listen to Him, towering above her with His height and dominating her with His magnetic look. «That is enough! I want you to have faith in My words. I want you to be generous. Have you understood? » He does not let her go until Martha calms down a little. «Your sister has gone to savour her joy, and she has wrapped herself in holy solitude because she is full of the supersensitive modesty of redeemed souls. I told you in advance. She cannot bear the kind but inquisitive look of relatives on her new dress of a bride of Grace. And what I say is always true. You must believe Me. »

«Yes, my Lord, I do. But my Mary has been too long a prey to the demon, He has recaptured her at once, he... »

«He is avenging himself on you for the prey he has lost forever. Am I therefore to see that you, the strong woman, are becoming his prey through a foolish dismay for no reason whatsoever? Am I to see that because of her, who now believes in Me, you are going to lose the beautiful faith that I always saw in you? Martha! Look at Me carefully. Listen to Me. Do not listen to Satan. Do you not know that when he is compelled to give up a prey, because God has defeated him, he busies himself at once to find other victims, because he is an untiring torturer of human beings and an indefatigable thief of God's rights? Do you not know that the recovery of a soul is consolidated by the torture of an-

Other good faithful soul that resists the demon's attacks? Do you not know that nothing of what exists and happens in creation is uncontrolled, but everything follows an eternal law of subordination and consequence, whereby the deed of one person has very wide natural and supernatural repercussions? <sup>237. 8</sup> You are weeping here, you are tormented here by a horrible doubt, but you remain faithful to your Christ also in this hour of darkness.

Not far from you, but in a place unknown to you, Mary feels that her last doubt on the infinity of forgiveness received is being dissipated and her weeping changes into smiles and her shadow into light. It is your torture that guided her where there is peace, where souls are regenerated near the immaculate Mother, Who is such Life that She was granted the privilege of giving birth to the Christ, Who is the Life. Your sister is with My Mother.

Oh! she is not the first to furl sail in that peaceful harbour after the gentle ray of the living Star of Mary called her to Her loving bosom, out of silent but active love for Her Son! Your sister is at Nazareth. »

«But how did she go there if she does not know Your Mother, or Your house?.. By herself... At night... Thus... Without means... Wearing that dress... Such a long way... How? »

«How? As a tired swallow flies back to its native nest, crossing seas and mountains, through storms, fog and hostile winds. As swallows fly to hibernating places. Instinct guides them, warmth invites them, the sun calls them. She also went to the ray inviting her... to the universal Mother. And we will see her come back happily at dawn... coming out forever from darkness, with a Mother beside her, Mine, never to be an orphan again.

Can you believe that? »

«Yes, my Lord. »

Martha looks as if she were charmed. Jesus in fact has been the dominator. Tall, upright, and yet lightly bent over Martha who was kneeling, He has spoken slowly, but incisively, as if He wished to transfuse Himself into the perturbed disciple. I have seldom seen Him so powerful, to persuade by means of His word a person listening to Him. But at the end, what light, what smile is on His face! Martha's face mirrors it with a smile and a milder light.

«And now go and rest. With My peace. »

Martha kisses His hands and goes downstairs in better spirits...

238. The arrival in Capernaum of the Holy Mary with Mary of Magdala under a storm.

30<sup>th</sup> July 1945.

238 1

1 I think we are going to have a storm today, Master. Can You see those leaden clouds advancing from behind the Hermon? And look how the lake is ruffling! You can feel the gusts of the north wind alternating with wide warm Sirocco blasts. Whirlwinds: a sure sign of a storm. »

«In how long, Simon? »

«Before the first hour is over. See how the fishermen are hurrying back. They can hear the lake grumble and growl. It will soon be leaden as well, then it will become pitch-black and finally it will burst forth in all its fury. »

«But it looks so calm! » remarks Thomas as incredulously.

«You are familiar with gold, and I with water. It will be as I say. It is not even a sudden storm. It is brewing with clear signs. The surface of the water is calm, only tiny ripples, as if it were nothing. But if you were out in a boat! You would hear thousands of knuckles striking the keel and shaking the boat in a strange way. The water is already bubbling underneath. Just wait for the sign from the sky and then you will see!... Let the north wind become knotted with Sirocco! And then!... Ehi! women! Take in what you have been hanging out and shelter your domestic animals. In a short while it will be raining in buckets. »

In fact the sky is becoming greener and greener, with slate-veins caused by the continuous flowing of clouds that seem to be erupted by great Hermon. They drive dawn back to where it came from, as if the hours were falling back towards night instead of proceeding towards midday. Only sunbeam persists in shining through the barrier of dark clouds tinging the top of a hill southwest of Capernaum with an unreal yellow-green hue. The lake has changed from sky-blue to purple-blue and the foam of the first small broken waves looks white against the dark wa-

ter. There are no boats on the lake now. Fishermen hasten to beach their boats, to put away nets, baskets, sails and oars, while peasants make haste to get their harvest in, they ensure that awnings are properly fastened to poles and they close the cattle in their stables; women rush to the well before the rain starts, or they gather together the children, who got up early, and push them into the houses, like brooding hens aware of an oncoming hail-storm.

<sup>2</sup>«Simon, come with Me. Call also Martha's servant and My brother James. Get a large piece of canvas. A strong large piece. There are two women on the road and we must go and meet them. » 238.2

Peter looks at Him curiously, but he obeys without wasting any time. On the way, while they are running southwards through the village, Simon asks: «But who are they? »

«My Mother and Mary of Magdala. »

The shock is such that Peter stops for a moment as if he were nailed to the ground and he exclaims: «Your Mother and Mary of Magdala?!?! Together?!?! » He then carries on running, as neither Jesus nor James nor the servant have stopped. But he repeats: «Your Mother and Mary of Magdala! Together!... Since when? »

«Since she is Mary of Jesus. Be quick, Simon, it is beginning to rain... »

Peter strives to keep up with his companions, who are taller and faster than he is. Clouds of dust now rise from the parched road, blown by a wind, which is becoming stronger and stronger every moment, ruffling the lake and raising breakers, which pound roaring on the shore. When it is possible to see the lake it looks like a huge cauldron boiling furiously. Waves three or four feet high rise in all directions, clashing, merging, swelling, then parting in opposite directions, seeking other waves to plunge into: a foaming duel of wave crests, of swelling masses of water, of roaring billows reaching the shore and lashing the houses closest to it. When houses conceal the view of the lake, the latter discloses its presence with a roar exceeding the howl of the wind that bends trees tearing off foliage and fruit: a deafening roar exceeding the rumble of prolonged threatening thunder, preceded by flashes of lightning, which are becoming more and more frequent and powerful.

«I wonder how frightened those women must be» mumbles Peter panting.

«Not My Mother. I do not know about the other. But if we do not hurry they will certainly get drenched. »

238 3

They have left Capernaum about one hundred yards behind, proceeding through clouds of dust and very heavy rain, a real downpour, which furrows obliquely the gloomy air so violently that the rain is pulverised and thus blinds them and takes away their breath, when they see two women running and seeking shelter under a large tree.

«There they are. Let us run! »

Although Peter's love for Mary lends wings to his feet, short-legged as he is and not a very good runner, he arrives when Jesus and James have already covered the two women with a large piece of a sail.

«We cannot stop here. There is the danger of thunderbolts and in a short while the road will be a torrent. Let us go, Master. At least as far as the nearest house» says Peter out of breath.

238 4

They set out with the women in the middle of them, holding the canvas over their heads and backs. <sup>4</sup>The first word that Jesus addresses to Mary, who is still wearing the dress she had on the evening of the banquet in Simon's house, with a mantle of the Blessed Virgin on her shoulders, is: «Are you afraid Mary? »

Mary Magdalene, whose head is lowered under her veil and whose hair has become thoroughly dishevelled running in the rain, lowers her head even further, blushes and whispers: «No, my Lord. »

Also Our Lady has lost some hairpins and She looks like a little girl with her plaits hanging down her back. She smiles at Her Son Who is beside Her and speaks to him through that smile.

«You are soaking, Mary» says James of Alphaeus touching Our Lady's veil and mantle.

«It does not matter. We are not getting wet now. Is that right, Mary? He has rescued us also from the rain» says Mary kindly to the Magdalene, of whose painful embarrassment She is fully aware. Mary nods assent.

«Your sister will be happy to see you. She is at Capernaum. She was looking for you» says Jesus.

Mary looks up for a moment and stares at Jesus with her beau-

tiful eyes, while Jesus speaks to her with the simplicity He uses With the other women disciples. But she does not say anything. She is stifled by too many emotions.

Jesus concludes: «I am glad I kept her. I will let you go after I have blessed you. »

<sup>238 5</sup>  
His last words are lost in the sharp crash of a nearby thunder bolt . The Magdalene is fear struck for a moment. She covers her face with her hands, bends her hand, bends her head bursting into tears.

«Don't be afraid! » says Peter encouraging her. «It is over now. You must never be afraid when you are with Jesus. »

Also James, who is beside the Magdalene, says to her: «Do not Weep. The houses are not far now. »

«I am not crying for fear... I am weeping because He said to me that He will bless me... I... 1... » but she can say no more.

The Blessed Virgin intervenes in order to calm her saying: «Mary, you have already overcome your storm. Think no more About it. Now everything is serene and peaceful. Is that right, My Son? »

«Yes, Mother. It is all very true. Before long the sun will be shining, and everything will look more beautiful, cleaner and fresher than yesterday. It will be the same with you, Mary. »

And His Blessed Mother, pressing the Magdalene's hand continues: «I shall repeat your words to Martha. I am glad that I can see her at once and tell her how her Mary is full of goodwills

Peter, paddling in the watery mud and bearing patiently with the deluge, comes out from under the canvas and runs towards a house to ask for shelter.

«No, Simon» says Jesus. «We all prefer to go home. Is that right? » Everybody agrees and Peter goes back under the piece of sail.

<sup>238 6</sup>  
<sup>6</sup>Capernaum is like a desert. Wind, rain, thunder and lightning prevail there, together with hailstones, which are now striking houses and terraces sounding and bouncing. The lake is dreadfully impressive. The waves lash the houses near it, because the little beach has disappeared and the boats fastened near the houses seem to have sunk so full they are of water, which breakers keep pouring into them, while the water already in them overflows.



They run into the kitchen garden, which has become a huge puddle with rubbish floating on the muddy water, and then enter the kitchen where they are all gathered.

Martha gives a scream when she sees her sister held by the hand by Mary. She clasps her neck, but does not realise how wet she is, she kisses her and calls her: «Miri, Miri, my darling! » Perhaps that is the nickname by which they called the Magdalene when she was a little girl.

Mary is weeping, with her head resting on her sister's shoulder, and covers Martha's dark dress with her thick golden hair, the only shining thing in the dark kitchen where a little fire of brushwood gives some light, while a little lamp hardly sheds any.

The apostles are dumbfounded and so are the landlord and his wife, who look into the kitchen upon hearing Martha's scream, and after a moment of understandable curiosity they withdraw discreetly.

238.7 When her effusions of loves have somewhat calmed down, Martha notices Jesus and Mary and realises that it is strange that they should be all together. She thus asks her sister, Our Lady and Jesus -1 could not say whom she asks more insistently -: «But... how is it that you are all together? »

«The storm, Martha, was approaching. I went with Simon, James and your servant to meet the two pilgrims. »

Martha is so shocked that she does not consider the fact that Jesus was so certain in going to meet them and does not ask: «But... did You know? ». The question, however, is asked by Thomas, who gets no reply because Martha says to her sister: «But why were you with Mary? »

The Magdalene lowers her head.

Our Lady comes to her rescue taking her by the hand and saying: «She came to Me as a pilgrim goes to a place where she can be told which road to take to reach her destination. And she said to Me: "Teach me what I must do to belong to Jesus". And since she is animated by thorough goodwill, she understood that wisdom at once! And I found that she was ready to be taken by the hand and led to You, My Son, and to you, good Martha, and to you, brother-disciple, and say to you: "Here is Your disciple and your sister, who will give but supernatural joys to her Lord and

to her brothers". I ask you to believe Me and to love her as Jesus and I love her. »

<sup>8</sup>The apostles then gather around her greeting their new sister. There is, of course, a certain amount of curiosity... But how could that be avoided?! After all... they are still men...

238 8

It is Peter's common sense that says: «That's all very well. You have assured her assistance and holy friendship. But we ought to consider that our Mother and sister are drenched to the skin... We are soaking, as well, to tell you the truth... But they are in a worse situation. Their hair is dripping water like willow trees after a storm and their clothes are wet and muddy. Let us light a fire, and get dresses for them and prepare some warm food... »

Everybody becomes busy: Martha takes the two drenched travellers into the room, the fire is kindled and the wet garments, veils and mantles are hung in front of it. I do not know what arrangements they are making in the room... I see that Martha, who has found once again her energy of a very good housekeeper, comes and goes solicitously, carrying basins and hot water, cups of hot milk, garments lent by the landlady, to assist the two Marias...

239. The parable of the fish and the parable of the pearl.  
The treasure of ancient and new teachings.

31<sup>st</sup> July 1945.

<sup>1</sup>They are all gathered in the large room upstairs. The violent storm has turned into unceasing rain, which at times becomes a drizzle and almost stops and then suddenly changes to a downpour. The lake is certainly not blue today, it is yellowish with streaks of foam when the wind blows or it rains heavily. The hills are all very wet, and tree branches are still bent, thoroughly soaked. A few branches, broken by the wind, are hanging loose and many leaves torn off by hail stones are carried away by little streams everywhere: yellowish water which pours leaves, stones, and earth from the hillsides into the lake. The light is dim, greenish.

239 1

In the room there are the Blessed Virgin Mary, Martha and the Magdalene, sitting near a window overlooking the hills, and

there are also two women, whom I do not know. But I am under the impression that Jesus, Mary and the apostles already know them, as they are apparently at ease. They certainly are more relaxed than the Magdalene is: she is sitting still, with her head lowered, between the Virgin Mary and Martha. They are now wearing their clothes, which have been dried by the fireplace and have been brushed to remove mud stains. No I am wrong. The Blessed Virgin has put on Her dark blue woollen dress. But the Magdalene has borrowed a dress, which tall and buxom as she is, is too short and tight for her and she endeavours to make up for the deficiency by wrapping herself in her sister's mantle. She has gathered her hair into two thick plaits, which she has somehow managed to tie in a knot on the nape of her neck, because it takes more than a few hairpins picked up there and then, to support the weight of her hair. In fact I have always noticed that the Magdalene, in addition to hairpins, uses a thin straw-coloured ribbon, which looks like a fine diadema and blends with her golden hair.

Jesus, the apostles and the landlord are on the other side of the room, some are sitting on stools, some on the window-sills. Martha's servant is not there. Peter and the other fishermen are watching the weather and making forecasts for the following day. Jesus listens or replies to this one and that one.

«If I had known about this, I would have told my mother to come. It is only fair that the woman should feel at home with her companions» says James of Zebedee casting sidelong glances at the women.

239. 2 «Eh! If we had known... <sup>2</sup>But why didn't mother come with Mary?» Thaddeus asks his brother James.

«I don't know. I would like to know myself. »

«Is she perhaps not feeling well? »

«Mary would have told us. »

«I will ask Her» and Thaddeus goes towards the women.

I can hear Mary's clear voice reply: «She is well. But I did not want her to overwork herself in this heat. We ran away like two little girls, did we not, Mary? Mary came late in the evening, when it was dark and we left at dawn. I only said to Alphaeus: «Here is the key. I shall be back soon. Tell Mary". And I came away. »

239. 3 <sup>3</sup>«We shall go back together, Mother. As soon as the weather

is settled and Mary has a dress, we shall all go together through Galilee and we shall accompany our sisters to the safest road. So Porphirea, Susanna, and daughters Philip and Bartholomew, will meet them. » His expression: «Will meet them», instead of saying: «will meet Mary» is really exquisite. And it is also a strong one. It demolishes every prejudice and mental reservation of the apostles concerning the Magdalene. His words impose her, overcoming their reluctance, her shame, everything.

Martha's face shines with joy, Mary Magdalene blushes and her countenance is imploring, grateful, upset; what can I say?... The Most Holy Mother smiles kindly.

«Where shall we go first, Master? »

«To Bethsaida. Afterwards we shall go to Nazareth via Magdala, Tiberias and Cana. From Nazareth we shall proceed to Bethlehem in Galilee via Japhia and Shimron and then to Sicaminon and Caesarea... » Jesus is interrupted by an outburst of weeping of the Magdalene^ He raises His head, looks at her and then continues as nothing had happened: «At Caesarea you will find your wagon. That is the instruction I gave the servant and you will go to Bethany. We shall meet later, at the Feast of the Tabernacles. »

Mary Magdalene collects herself at once, she does not reply to her sister's questions, but she goes out of the room and probably withdraws to the kitchen for a little while.

«Jesus, Mary suffers on hearing that she has to come to certain towns. We must understand her... I am saying this more for the disciples than for You» remarks Martha humbly and worried.

«That is true, Martha. *But it must be so.* If she does not face the world at once and does not overcome public opinion, which is a dreadful torturer, her heroic conversion will be paralysed. She must do that at once and in our company. »

<sup>4</sup>«While she is with us no one will say anything to her. I can assure you, Martha, also on behalf of all my companions» promises Peter. 239 4

«Of course! We shall treat her as a sister. That is what Mary said she is and that is what she will be for us» confirms Thad-deus.

«After all!... We are all sinners and the world did not spare us

either. So we can understand her struggle» says the Zealot.

«I understand her more than anyone else. It is very meritorious to live where we sinned. People know who we are!... It is a torture. But it is justice and glory to resist there. Precisely because the power of God is clear in us, we spur others to turn, without even uttering words» says Matthew.

«You can see, Martha, that your sister is understood and loved by everybody. And she will be loved and understood more and more. She will be a reference point for so many guilty and fearful souls. She is a great strength also for good people. Because after shaking off the last fetters of her humanity Mary will be a fire burning with love. She has only given a different course to the exuberance of her feelings. She has raised her powerful faculty to love to a supernatural level. And she will work wonders there. I can assure you. She is still upset now. But you will see her become calmer and stronger in her new life as days go by. In Simon's house I said: "She is pardoned much because she loves much". I now solemnly tell you that she will be forgiven everything, because she will love her God with all her strength, her soul, her thought, her blood her flesh to the extent of holocaust. »

«She is lucky to deserve such words! I wish I deserved them, too» sighs Andrew.

239. 5 «You? But you deserve them already! <sup>5</sup>Come here, my fisherman. I want to tell you a parable that seems to have been thought up just for you. »

«Just a moment, Master. I am going to call Mary. She is so anxious to become acquainted with Your doctrine... »

While Martha goes out the others arrange their seats so as to form a semi circle around Jesus. The two sisters come back and sit once again near the Blessed Virgin.

Jesus begins to speak: «Some fishermen took to the open sea and cast their net and after due time they hauled it on board. They were doing their work with considerable difficulty according to the instructions of a master, who had entrusted them with the task of supplying his town with choice fish, and had said to them: "Do not bother to bring ashore unwholesome or inferior quality fish. Throw them back into the sea. Other fishermen will catch them and as they work for another master, they will take them to his town because they consume there what is harmful

and thus makes the town of my enemy more and more horrible. Nothing unhealthy is to enter my beautiful, bright, holy town”.

Thus, after hauling the net on board the fishermen began their selection work. It was a good catch and the fish differed in appearance, size and colour. Some looked beautiful but their flesh was full of bones and tasted unpleasant; their bellies were full of mud, worms and rotten seaweed, which highlighted the bad taste of the fish. Others instead were ugly looking, like the sinister faces of criminals or resembled nightmare monsters, but the fishermen knew that their flesh was exquisite. Others were so insignificant that no one paid any attention to them. The fisherman continued their work until the baskets were all full of choice fish and only cheap fish were left in the net. “That is enough. The baskets are full. Let us throw the rest into the sea”, said many of the fishermen.

But one of them, who had spoken very little, whilst the others had either exalted or derided every fish they happened to handle, went on searching in the net and among the cheap fish he found two or three that he placed on top of the baskets. “What are you doing?” the others asked him. “The baskets are full of beautiful fish. You are now spoiling them by placing that poor fish on top of them. You seem to consider them as the most beautiful of the lot”. “Leave me alone. I know this kind of fish and I know how delicious it is”.

That is the parable, which ends with the blessing of the master for the patient, skillful, silent fisherman who was able to select the best fish in the great mass of them. <sup>6</sup>Listen now to its application.

The master of the beautiful, bright holy town is the Lord. The city is the Kingdom of Heaven. The fishermen: My disciples. The fish of the sea: mankind, where all kinds of people are present. The good fish: the saints.

The master of the dreadful town is Satan. The horrible town: Hell. His fishermen: the world, flesh, wicked passions embodied in Satan’s servants, both spiritual, that is demons, and human, that is men, who corrupt their fellow men. The bad fish: mankind unworthy of the Kingdom of Heaven: damned souls.

Among the fishermen of souls for the City of God there will always be those who emulate the skill of the patient fisherman,

who perseveres in his search just in those layers of mankind where his less patient companions pick only what appears to be good at first sight. And unfortunately there will be also some fishermen, who, being too absent-minded and talkative - attention and silence are required for the selection work in order to hear the voices of souls and supernatural indications - will not see the good fish and will lose them. And there will be some who through excessive intolerance will reject souls because their exterior aspect is not perfect, whilst they are excellent with regards to the rest.

What does it matter, if one of the fish you catch for Me shows signs of past struggles and mutilations due to many causes, if they do not injure his spirit? What does it matter to you, if one of them was wounded in freeing himself from the Enemy and presents himself with such wounds, if his interior clearly shows his will to belong to God? Tried souls are reliable souls. More reliable than those souls that are like children protected by swaddling clothes, cradles and mothers, and sleep peacefully after being fed, or smile happily, but who later on in life, when they come of age and can reason and have to face the vicissitudes of life, may be the cause of unpleasant surprises because of their moral deviations.

239.7 <sup>7</sup>I wish to remind you of the parable of the prodigal son. And you will hear many more because I will always endeavour to teach you correct judgement in examining consciences and in selecting the best method to guide consciences, which are individual and therefore each has its own special way of feeling and reacting to temptations and to your teaching. Do not think that it is easy to select souls. Far from it! It takes a spiritual eye shining with divine light and it takes an intellect infused with divine Wisdom, and possession of virtues in heroic degree, first of all charity. It is necessary to be able to concentrate on meditation because each soul is an obscure text to be read and meditated. And continuous union with God is required, forgetting all selfish interests. One must live for souls and for God, and be able to overcome prejudices, resentments, aversion. It is necessary to be as kind as a father and as hard as a warrior. Kind to give advice and to encourage. Hard to be able to say: "That is not allowed and *you shall not do it*". Or: "It is right to do that and *you shall*

*do it*": Because you must consider this carefully - many souls will be thrown into the ponds of hell. But not only the souls of sinners. There will be also the souls of evangelical fishermen: of those who will have failed in their ministry, contributing thus to the loss of many souls.

The day will come, the last day of the earth, the first of the completed and eternal Jerusalem, when the angels, like the fishermen of the parable, will separate the just from the wicked and at the inexorable command of the Judge, the goodwill pass into Heaven and the wicked into the eternal fire. And then the truth will be made known concerning the fishermen and the fish, hypocrisy will collapse and the people of God will appear as they are, with their leaders and those saved by the leaders. We shall then see that many, who were outwardly insignificant and ill-treated, are the brightest ones in Heaven, and that the quiet patient fishermen are the ones who have done most and now shine with as many gems as the souls they saved.

I have told you the parable and explained it. »

<sup>8</sup>«And my brother?!... Oh! but... » Peter looks at him... and 239. 8 then at the Magdalene...

«No, Simon. I have no merit there. It was all the Master's work» says Andrew frankly.

«So, are the other fishermen, Satan's I mean, going to get the remnants?» asks Philip.

«They endeavour to take the best, the souls capable of the greatest prodigy of Grace, and they make use of the same men to do so, beside their own temptations. There are so many in the world who for a plate of lentils sell their birthright! »

«Master, the other day You said that there are many who allow themselves to be seduced by the allurements of the world. Are they those who fish for Satan?» asks James of Alphaeus.

«Yes, My brother. In that parable man allowed himself to be seduced by a lot of money, which could give him much pleasure, losing thus every right to the Treasury of the Kingdom. But I solemnly tell you that out of one hundred men only one third can resist the temptation of gold or other enticements, and of that one third only half can do it heroically. The world is dying suffocated because it voluntarily overburdens itself with the ties of sin. It is better to be devoid of everything rather than possess mean and



illusive riches. Endeavour to imitate wise jewellers, who, when they are informed that a very rare pearl has been found, do not bother to keep so many small jewels in their safes, but they get rid of everything to buy the wonderful pearl. »

«Why then do You say that there is a difference in the missions with which You entrust those who follow You, and You say that we have to consider those missions as a gift of God? Should we not forgo them as well, because they are but crumbs compared to the Kingdom of Heaven» says Bartholomew.

«Not crumbs: *they are means*. They would be crumbs, or better still, they would be dirty straw, if they became man's aim in life. Those who busy themselves to obtain a position with a human profit, turn that position, even if it is a holy one, into dirty straw. You must instead accept it obediently, as a joyful duty and a complete holocaust, and you will turn it into a very rare pearl. *A mission is a holocaust if fulfilled unreservedly, it is martyrdom and a glory*. It drips tears, perspiration, blood, but forms a crown of eternal royalty.

239 9     <sup>9</sup>«You can really answer all questions! »

«Have you understood? Do you understand what I say by means of comparisons taken from everyday life, but enlightened by a supernatural light that explains their eternal meaning? »

«Remember then the method to teach crowds. Because that is one of the secrets of scribes and rabbis: to remember. I solemnly tell you that each of you, imbued with the wisdom that ensures the possession of Kingdom of Heaven, is like the father of a family who takes from his treasury what is necessary for his family, making use of old and new things, for one only purpose, which is the welfare of his children. It is no longer raining. Let us leave the woman in peace and go to old Tobit who is about to open his spiritual eyes on the dawn of next life. Peace to you, women. »

240. In Bethsaida in the home of Porphirea and Marjiam who teaches the prayer of Jesus to Magdalene.

1<sup>st</sup> August 1945.

240 1     <sup>1</sup>The sky is once again clear over the Sea of Galilee. Now that the rain has washed away the dust, everything seems more beau-

tiful than before the storm. The air is perfectly clear and looking at the sky it seems as though it is higher up and lighter... a transparent veil stretched between the earth and the splendour of Paradise. The lake reflects the deep blue of the sky and its turquoise water is a quiet charming sight.

It is dawning. Jesus with His Mother, Martha and Mary Magdalene embarks in Peter's boat. In addition to Peter and Andrew, also the Zealot, Philip and Bartholomew are with Him. Matthew, Thomas Jesus' cousins, and the Iscariot are instead in the other boat with James and John. They are sailing towards Bethsaida, a short voyage favoured by a fair wind. The crossing lasts only a few minutes.

When they are about to arrive Jesus says to Bartholomew and to his inseparable companion Philip: «You will go and inform your womenfolk. I am coming to your houses today. » And He stares at them meaningfully.

«We will, Master. Are You not granting me or Philip the pleasure of having You as our guest? »

«We are staying only until sunset and I do not wish to deprive Simon Peter of the joy of Marjiam's company. »

The boat rubs against the shore and stops. They disembark and Philip and Bartholomew part from their companions to go to the village.

«Where are those two going? » Peter asks the Master Who was the first to disembark and is now beside him.

«To inform their women. »

«Then, I will go and tell Porphirea, too. »

«It is not necessary. Porphirea is so kind that it is not necessary to prepare her in any way. Her heart can give but kindness. »

Peter's face shines with joy on hearing the praise of his wife and does not say anything else.

In the meantime also the women have disembarked, on a plank placed for them as a wharf, and they go towards Simon's house.

<sup>2</sup>Marjiam, who is taking his sheep out to browse on the fresh grass on the lower hillsides of Bethsaida, is the first to see them and he announces them with a cry of joy running to embrace Jesus, Who has bent to kiss him. He then goes to Peter. Also Porphirea, whose hands are covered with flour, arrives and bows, greeting them.

240.2

«Peace to you, Porphirea. You were not expecting us so soon, were you? But I was anxious to bring My Mother to you, together with two women disciples, as well as My blessing. My Mother was anxious to see the boy again. There he is in Her arms. And the women disciples wanted to meet you... this is Simon's wife: the good and silent disciple, more active in her obedience than many others. And these are Martha and Mary from Bethany. Two sisters. Love one another. »

«Those You bring to me are dearer to me than my own blood, Master. Come. My house is more beautiful every time You set foot in it. »

Mary approaches Porphirea smiling and embraces her saying: «I see that you are really a loving mother. The boy is already much better and is happy. Thank you. »

«Oh! Woman blessed above every other woman! I know that it was because of You that I had the joy of being called mother. And You must know that I will never grieve You by not living up to that privilege. Come in, with the sisters... »

240 3

³Marjiam looks at the Magdalene curiously. Many thoughts must be crossing his mind. At last he says: «But... you were not at Bethany... »

«No, I was not. But I shall always be there from now on» says the Magdalene blushing and smiling faintly. She caresses the boy saying: «Even if we have just met, do you love me? »

«Yes, because you are good. You have wept, have you not? That is why you are good. And your name is Mary, isn't it? Also my mother's name was Mary and she was good. Every woman, whose name is Mary, is good. But» he concludes, not to offend Porphirea and Martha, «but also many of those with other names are good. What was your mother's name. »

«Eucheria... and she was so good» and two large tears stream down the face of Mary of Magdala.

«Are you weeping because she is dead? » asks the boy, and he caresses her beautiful hands, which she has crossed on her dark dress, which is obviously one of Martha's adapted for her, because its hem has been let down. And he adds: «You must not weep. You know, we are not alone. Our mothers are always near us. Jesus says so. And they are like guardian angels. Jesus says that also. And if we are good, they will come and meet us when

we die and we go up to God in our mother's arms. It is true, you know? He said so! »

Mary Magdala clasps her little consoler in her arms and kisses him saying: «Then pray that I may become good. »

«But are you not already? Only those who are good go with Jesus... And if one is not completely good, one becomes good, in order to become a disciple of Jesus. Because you cannot teach what you do not know. We cannot say: "Forgive" if we do not forgive first. Neither can we say: " You must love your neighbour" if we do not love him first <sup>2</sup> \* <sup>4</sup>Do you know Jesus' prayer? »

240. 4

«No, I don't. »

«Of course, you have been with Him only a short time. It is so beautiful, you know? It mentions all these things. Listen how beautiful it is. » And Marjiam slowly says the *Our Father* with deep sentiment and faith.

«How well you know it! » says Mary of Magdala admiringly.

«My mother taught it to me at night and Jesus' Mother by day. If you wish so, I will teach you. Do you wish to come with me? The sheep are bleating. They are hungry. I am going to take them to the pasture. Come with me. I will teach you how to pray and you will become thoroughly good» and he takes her by the hand.

«But I do not know whether the Master wants... »

«Go, by all means, Mary. You have an innocent child as a friend and some little lambs... You may go, peacefully... »

Mary of Magdala goes out with the boy and she can be seen going away preceded by the three sheep. Jesus is looking on... and the others, too.

«My poor sister! » exclaims Martha.

«Do not pity her. She is a flower straightening its stem after a storm. Can you hear her?... She is laughing... Innocence is always a consolation. »

## 241. Vocation of the daughter of Philip. The arrival in Magdala and the parable of the lost drachma.

2<sup>nd</sup> August 1945.

<sup>1</sup>The boat is sailing along the coast from Capernaum to Magdala.

241. 1

Mary of Magdala is for the first time in her normal position of a convert: she is sitting on the bottom boards at the feet of Jesus, Who, instead, is sitting sternly on a little bench. The Magdalene's face is quite different today from what it looked like yesterday; it is not yet the radiant countenance of the Magdalene running to meet her Jesus every time He goes to Bethany, but it is already free from fear and terror and her eyes, which were as downcast as they had previously been impudent, are now serious but confident, and in her dignified seriousness there is now and again a sparkle of delight when she listens to Jesus speaking to the apostles or to His Mother and Martha.

They are talking of the kindness of Porphirea, who is so simple and loving, of the hearty reception of Salome and of Bartholomew's and Philip's women. Philip says: «If my daughters were not still so young, and their mother were not so adverse to letting them wander about, they would follow You, too, Master. »

24. 2 «Let their souls follow Me. That is also holy love. <sup>2</sup>Philip, listen. Your elder daughter is about to be betrothed, is she not? »

«Yes, Master. A worthy wedding and a very good groom. Is that right, Bartholomew? »

«Yes, that is true. I can guarantee that because I know the family. I could not accept to be the man proposing the deal, but I would have done it willingly, knowing for certain that a holy family was being formed, had I not been obliged to be near the Master. »

«But the girl asked Me to tell you to forget about it. »

«Does she not like the groom? She is wrong. Young people are mad. I hope she will change her mind. There is no reason to refuse a very good match. Unless... No, it's not possible! » says Philip.

«Unless what? Go on, Philip» urges Jesus.

«Unless she loves another man. But it is not possible! She is never out of the house and at home she leads a sequestered way of life. It is not possible! »

«Philip, there are lovers who enter also the most private of houses; who know how to speak to those they love notwithstanding all the barriers and close watching; those who overcome every objection of widowhood, or youth, although well protected, or... other kinds of obstacles, and take the girls or women they

want. And there are also lovers who cannot be refused. Because they are overbearing in their desire, and alluring in overcoming every resistance, even the demon's. Your daughter loves one of those. And the most powerful one. »

«But who? One of Herod's court? »

«That is not powerful! »

«One... one of the Proconsul's household, a Roman patrician?

I will never allow that. The pure blood of Israel will have no contact with impure blood. Even if I should kill my daughter. <sup>3</sup>Don't <sup>241. 3</sup> smile, Master. I am in agony! »

«Because you are like a restive horse. You see shadows where there is nothing but light. Do not be upset. Also the Proconsul is but a servant and his patrician friends are servants and Caesar is a servant. »

«You must be joking, Master! You wanted to frighten me. There is no one greater than Caesar and there is no greater master than he is. »

«I am, Philip. »

«You? You want to marry my daughter?! »

«No. Her soul. I am the lover who enters the most secluded houses and hearts locked with seven keys. It is I Who know how to speak notwithstanding barriers and close watching. It is I Who demolish obstacles and take what I want to take: pure people and sinners, virgins and widowers, people free from vices and slaves of vices. And I give everyone a new, unique, regenerated, beatified, eternally young soul. My wedding. And no one can refuse to give Me My kind preys: no father, no mother, no children, not even Satan. Whether I speak to the soul of a young girl, like your daughter, or to the soul of a sinner immersed in sin and held by Satan with seven chains, that soul will come to Me. And no one or nothing can snatch it from Me. No wealth, power or joy of the world can give the perfect delight that those enjoy who get married to My Poverty, to My Mortification. They are bare of all poor wealth, and clad with all celestial Good. They are cheerful with the serenity of belonging to God, to God alone... They are the masters of the earth and of Heaven. They dominate the former and conquer the latter.

«But that never happened in our Law! » exclaims Bartholomew.

«Divest yourself of the old man, Nathanael. When I saw you for the first time I greeted you\* saying that you were a perfect Israelite without guile. But be now of Christ, not of Israel. And be so without deception and without ties. Clothe yourself with this new mentality. Otherwise you will not be able to understand the many beautiful aspects of the redemption that I came to bring to all mankind. »

Philip intervenes saying: «And You say that my daughter has been called by You. And what will she do now? I will certainly not oppose her. But I wish to know, also to help her, in what her call consists... »

«In bringing the lilies of a virginal love into the garden of Christ. There will be so many such virgins in future centuries!... So many!... Scented flowerbeds to counterbalance the sinks of vice. Praying souls counterbalancing blasphemers and atheists. They assist mankind in all its misfortunes and are the joy of God. »

241.4 <sup>4</sup>Mary of Magdala moves her lips to ask a question, and in doing so she still blushes, but she looks freer and easier than in past days: «And we... the ruins that You are building up, what shall we become? »

«What your virgin sisters are... »

«Oh! It cannot be! We have trampled on too much mud and... and... it is not possible »

«Mary, Mary! Jesus never forgives partially. He told you that He had forgiven you. And so it is. You, and all those who sinned like you and whom My love forgives and weds, will smell sweet, will pray, love, and comfort. As you are aware of evil and capable of curing it wherever it is, your souls are martyrs in the eyes of God. You are therefore as dear as virgins. »

«Martyrs? In what, Master? »

«Against yourselves and recollections of your past and through thirst for love and expiation. »

«Must I believe that?... » The Magdalene looks at everybody in the boat, asking them to confirm her rising hope.

«Ask Simon. I spoke\*\* of you and of sinners in general, in a starry night, in your garden. And all your brothers can tell you

\* I greeted you in 50, 6  
\*\* I spoke... in 136, 2

whether My voice has sung the wonders of Mercy and of conversion for all those who have been redeemed. »

«Also the boy has spoken to me about it, in his angelical voice. I came back from his lesson with a refreshed soul. He made me understand You better than my sister did, so much so that I felt more confident in having to face Magdala. Now, after what You told me, I feel my strength growing. I scandalised the world. But I swear to You, my Lord, that the world looking at me now will understand what Your power is like. »

Jesus lays His hand on her head for a moment, while the Most Holy Virgin smiles at her as only She can smile: heavenly.

<sup>5</sup>There is Magdala, lying on the coast of the lake, with the rising sun in front of it, and mount Arbela behind it, protecting it from winds, and the narrow wild steep rocky valley through which a little torrent flows into the lake. The steep coast extends westwards: a beautiful charming austere sight. 241. 5

«Master» shouts John from the other boat, «there is the valley of our retreat... » and his face shines as if the sun were burning within him.

«Yes, our valley. You have recognised it. »

«It is impossible to forget the places where we became acquainted with God\*» replies John.

«In that case I will always remember this lake. Because it was here that I met You. Do you know, Martha, that one morning I saw the Master here\*\*?... »

«Yes, and we nearly all went to the bottom, both you and we. Woman, I can assure you that your oarsmen were not worth a farthing» says Peter, who is manoeuvring to get ashore.

«Neither the oarsmen nor those with them were worth anything... But it was the first time we met, and that is of great value. Then I saw You upon the mountain, then at Magdala and later at Capernaum... And every time we met, so many chains were broken... But Capernaum was the best place. You freed me there... »

<sup>6</sup>They land where the others have already come off the other boat. They enter the town. 241. 6

The simple or... malicious curiosity of the Magdala people

\* where we became acquainted with God in 165. 3/4.

\*\* I saw the Master here in 9 8. 2/3.



must be a torture for the Magdalene. But she bears it heroically following the Master Who is walking ahead, among His disciples, while the women are behind them. There is much whispering and irony. All those who formerly feigned to respect Mary, for fear of reprisals, while she was the overbearing mistress of Magdala, now that they see her humble and chaste and realise she has parted for good from her powerful friends, they take the liberty of insulting and reviling her.

Martha, who is suffering as much as she is, asks her: «Do you wish to go home? »

«No, I am not leaving the Master. And I am not inviting Him to my house, until it is purified and every trace of the past has been removed. »

«But you are suffering, sister! »

«I deserved it. » And she must be really suffering. Her flushed face is beaded with sweat not due to the warm weather.

They cross the whole of Magdala going towards the poor quarters, as far as the house where they stopped\* the last time. The woman is dumbfounded when looking up from her washboard to see who is greeting her, she finds Jesus facing her along with the well known lady of Magdala, who is no longer pompously dressed and adorned with jewels. On the contrary she is wearing a light linen veil, a violet dress, which is high-necked and certainly does not belong to her, because it is too tight and has been adapted for her. She is wrapped in a heavy mantle, which must be a torture in that warm weather.

«Will you allow Me to remain in your house and speak to those who are following Me? » That is, to the whole of Magdala, because the whole population has followed the apostolic group.

«Why ask me, my Lord? My house is Yours. » And she busies herself bringing seats and benches for the women and the apostles. When passing near the Magdalene she bows like a slave.

«Peace to you, sister» replies the Magdalene. And the poor woman is so shocked that she drops the bench she was carrying. But she does not say one word. The scene makes me think that Mary of Magdala probably treated her subjects rather haughtily. The poor woman is utterly astonished when she is asked how the

**where they stopped in 184 1.**

children are, where they are, and whether her husband has had good hauls.

«They are well... They are at school or with my mother. The little one is sleeping in his cradle. My husband has had good catches of fish and will bring you the tithes due to you... »

«That is no longer necessary. Use them for the children. Can I see the baby? »

«Come... »

<sup>7</sup>People have crowded the street.

241. 7

Jesus begins to speak:

«A woman had ten drachmas in her purse. But she made a movement and the purse fell from her breast; it opened and the coins rolled on the floor. She picked them up with the help of her next door neighbours who were with her, and she counted them. They were only nine. The tenth could not be found. As it was almost evening and it was getting dark, the woman lit a lamp, placed it on the floor and she began to sweep the floor with a broom to see whether it had rolled far from the spot where it had fallen. But the drachma could not be found. Her friends left her, as they were tired of searching for it. The woman then shifted a heavy chest, a cabinet, and she removed amphoras and pitchers from a niche in the wall. But the drachma could not be found. She then began to crawl on all fours and searched in the sweepings, piled up against the door in case the drachma had rolled out of the house and become mixed with vegetable waste. And at last she found the drachma, which was soiled and almost buried under the sweepings. The jubilant woman picked it up, washed it and dried it. It was now more beautiful than beforehand. And she showed it to her neighbours whom she called again at the top of her voice, those who had gone away after helping her in the early search, and she said to them: "Here you are! See? You advised me not to bother anymore. But I insisted and I found the lost drachma. Rejoice therefore with me because I have not suffered the loss of one of my treasures".

<sup>8</sup>Also your Master, and His apostles as well, behave like the woman of the parable. He knows that a movement may cause a treasure to fall. Every soul is a treasure and Satan, who hates God, provokes false movements to make poor souls fall. There are some who in falling stop near the purse, that is they do not

241. 8

go too far from the Law of God, Who gathers them and protects them by means of His commandments. Some go farther away, that is, they go farther away from God and His Law. Some, finally, roll as far as the sweepings, dirt and mud. And they would end up by burning in the eternal fire, as rubbish is burnt in suitable places. The Master knows and He looks untiringly for lost coins. He looks for them everywhere, with love. They are His treasures. And He never tires and He loathes nothing. He rummages, searches, shifts, sweeps until He finds what He is looking for. And once He has found it, He washes the recovered souls with His forgiveness and calls all His friends: the whole Paradise and all the good people of the earth and says to them: "Rejoice with Me because I have found what was lost and it is now more beautiful than beforehand because My forgiveness has made it new. "

I solemnly tell you, there is much rejoicing among the angels of God and the good people of the earth over a repentant sinner. And I solemnly tell you that there is nothing more beautiful than tears of repentance. I solemnly tell you that only demons cannot rejoice over such a conversion, which is a triumph of God. And I tell you that the way a man welcomes the conversion of a sinner is the measure of his own goodness and his union with God.

Peace be with you. »

The crowds understand the lesson and look at the Magdalene, who has come to sit on the threshold holding the baby in her arms, perhaps to strike a posture. The crowds disperse slowly and only the landlady is left with her mother who has just arrived with the children. Benjamin is not there, he is still at school.

242. In Tiberias with Mary of Magdala.  
The Roman Crispus and the search for Truth.

3<sup>rd</sup> August 1945.

242.1

<sup>1</sup>When the boat moors in the little harbour of Tiberias, many idlers walking near the little pier come to see who has arrived. There are people of all ranks and nationalities. Thus the long multi-coloured Jewish tunics, the dark heads and imposing beards of Israelities mix with the short, sleeveless, white woolen

garments and the clean shaven short-haired heads of sturdy Romans and with the even scantier garments covering the agile effeminate bodies of Greeks. The latter seem to have absorbed the skillful art of their remote fatherland even in posing, and look like statues of gods descended upon the earth in mortal bodies wrapped as they are in white tunics, with classic faces adorned with curly scented hair and arms laden with bracelets, which their affected movements cause to shine.

Many women of pleasure are mingled with the Romans and Greeks, who do not hesitate to show off their love affairs in squares and streets, whereas Palestinians refrain from this, although many gaily indulge in free love with ladies of leisure at home. This clearly appears to be the case because courtesans call several Jews familiarly by their names, among them being a Pharisee adorned with ribbons, notwithstanding the fact that the Jews give the women dirty looks.

<sup>2</sup>Jesus moves towards that part of the town where the more <sup>242. 2</sup> elegant people gather together. These people are mainly Romans and Greeks with a few courtiers of Herod's and some rich merchants from the Phoenician coast, presumably from Sidon and Tyre, as they are talking of those towns and emporia and ships. The external porches of the Thermal baths are full of such elegant idle people who kill time discussing petty topics, such as the favourite discobolus or the most agile and smartest athlete in Greek-Roman wrestling. Or they chatter of fashion and banquets and make appointments for pleasure trips inviting to them the most beautiful courtesans or the perfumed curly haired ladies who come out from the Thermal baths or other buildings, pouring into this hall like artistic marmoreal centre of Tiberias.

The passing group is bound to rouse intense curiosity that becomes really morbid when someone recognises Jesus, having seen Him at Caesarea and there is also someone who recognises the Magdalene although she is completely wrapped in her mantle, with her veil lowered over her forehead and cheeks, so that little of her face can be seen, as she is walking with her head bent.

«It's the Nazarene Who cured Valeria's daughter» says a Roman.

«I would love to see a miracle» another Roman replies to him.

«I would like to hear Him speak. They say He is a great philosopher. Shall we ask Him to speak?» asks a Greek.

«Don't interfere, Theodate. His head is in the clouds and He talks accordingly. A tragedian would like Him for a satire» replies another Greek.

«Don't become impatient, Aristobolus. He is apparently descending from the clouds and is discussing sound arguments. See how many lovely young women He has got with Him» exclaims a Roman jokingly.

242.: 3«But that is Mary of Magdala!» shouts a Greek, who then calls: «Lucius! Cornelius! Titus! Look: Mary is over there.»

«It's not her! Mary like that? Are you drunk.»

«It is Mary, I am telling you. She cannot deceive me, even if she is so disguised.»

Romans and Greeks crowd around the apostolic group, which is crossing the square adorned with arcades and fountains. Some women join the curious men and it is a woman who goes almost under Mary's face to see her properly and is dumbfounded when she sees that it is Mary.

She asks her: «What are you doing in this guise?» and laughs mockingly.

Mary stops, straightens herself, raises one hand and uncovers her face throwing her veil back. It is Mary of Magdala, the powerful lady against whatever is despicable and mistress of her own feelings, who appears. «It is I, yes» she says in her beautiful voice while her beautiful eyes are flashing. «It is I. And I am revealing myself, so that you may not think that I am ashamed of being with these holy people.»

«Oh! Mary with holy people! Come away. Do not degrade yourself!» exclaims the woman.

«I have been degraded up till now. But not now.»

«Are you mad? Or is it a whim?» she replies.

A Roman winking and joking says: «Come with me. I am more handsome and merrier than that moustached hired mourner who mortifies life and makes a funeral of it. Life is beautiful! A triumph. A joyful orgy! Come. I will excel everybody in making you happy» and the swarthy young man whose fox-like face is rather handsome, endeavours to touch her.

«Go away! Don't touch me. You spoke the truth: the life you

lead is an orgy. And a most shameful one. I loathe it. »

«Oh! But up till recently it was your kind of life» replies the Greek.

«She is playing the virgin now! » sneers a Herodian.

«You will ruin those holy people! The Nazarene will lose His halo with you. Come with us» insists a Roman.

«You had better come with me and follow Him. Stop being animals and become at least men. »

A chorus of laughter and mockery is their reply.

Only an elderly Roman says: «Respect the woman. She is free to do what she likes. I will defend her. »

«Listen to the demagogue! Did last night's wine upset you? » asks a young man.

«No. He is hypochondriac because his back is aching» replies another.

«Go to the Nazarene and ask Him to scratch it for you. »

«I will go and ask Him to scratch off the filth I picked up being with you» replies the elder.

«Oh! Crispus has become corrupt at the age of sixty» say many laughing, while they form a circle around him.

<sup>242. 4</sup>But the man named Crispus is not worried at being scorned and he begins to walk behind the Magdalene and they reach Jesus Who has stopped in the shade of a beautiful building which occupies two sides of the square with porticoes and benches.

And Jesus has already come to grips with a scribe who reproaches Him for being in Tiberias with such company.

«And why are you here? So far with regards to Tiberias. And I tell you also that there are souls to be saved in Tiberias as well, nay, more here than anywhere else» replies Jesus.

«They cannot be saved: they are Gentiles, heathens, sinners. »

«I came for sinners. To make the True God known to everybody. To everybody. I came also for you. »

«I do not need masters or redeemers. I am pure and learned. »

«I wish you were learned enough to understand your own condition! »

«And You to know how prejudicial is to You the company of a prostitute. »

«I forgive you also on her behalf. In her humbleness she has cancelled her sin. You have doubled yours in your pride. »

«I have no sins. »

«You have the capital one. You are loveless.

The scribe says: «Raca! » and goes away.

«It is my fault, Master! » says the Magdalene, And seeing the pale face on the Blessed Virgin she moans: «Forgive me. I am causing Your Son to be insulted. I will withdraw... «No. You shall stay where you are. I want it» says Jesus in an incisive voice. His eyes flash with majesty and there is such authority emanating from His whole person that it is almost impossible to look at Him! He then adds more kindly: «Stay where you are. If anyone cannot bear being near you, let him go away, by himself.

And Jesus carries on walking towards the western part of the town.

242.5 <sup>5</sup>«Master! » calls the stout elderly Roman who defended the Magdalene.

Jesus turns around.

«They call You Master, and I call You thus as well. I was anxious to hear You speak. I am part philosopher and part worldly sinner. But perhaps You could make an honest person of me. »

Jesus stares at him saying: «I am leaving the town where basic human animality reigns and mockery is sovereign. And He carries on walking.

The man follows Him with difficulty and perspiring, because Jesus is striding and he is bulky and rather old and weighed down by vices. Peter looks back and tells Jesus.

«Let him walk. Do not bother about him. »

Shortly afterwards the Iscariot says: «But that man is following us. It is not right! »

«Why? Out of pity or is there another reason? »

«Pity him? No. Because farther back there is the scribe and other Jews following us. »

«Leave them alone. It would have been better if you had pitied him instead of pitying yourself.

«You, Master. »

«No: yourself, Judas. Be frank in acknowledging your feelings and confessing them. »

«I really pity the elder as well. It is difficult, You know, to keep up with You! » says Peter perspiring.

«It is always difficult to follow Perfection, Simon. »

«The man follows them without tiring, endeavouring to stay near the women, to whom, however, he does not speak.

<sup>6</sup>The Magdalene is weeping silently under her veil.

242. 6

«Do not weep, Mary» says Our Lady comforting her and taking her by the hand. «Later the world will respect you. The first days are the most painful ones. »

«Oh! It is not for my own sake! It is because of Him! I would never forgive myself if I were the cause of trouble for Him. Did You hear what the scribe said? I am prejudicial to Him. »

«Poor daughter! Do you not know that such words have been hissing around Him like so many snakes long before you thought of coming to Him? Simon told Me that they accused Him of that even last year, because He cured a woman leper, once a sinner, whom He saw only when He worked the miracle and never again, and was older than I am, and I am His Mother. Do you not know that He had to come away from the Clear Water because a poor sister of yours had gone there to be redeemed? How can they accuse Him if He is without sin? By telling lies. And where do they find them? In His mission among men. His good deed is used as evidence of His sin. Whatever My Son should do, they would always consider it a sin. If He retired to a hermitage, He would be guilty of neglecting the people of God. If He comes among the people, He is guilty of doing that. He is always guilty, as far as they are concerned. »

«Then, they are hatefully wicked! »

«No. They are stubbornly blind to the Light. My Jesus is the Eternal Misunderstood One. And He will be more and more so. »

«And does that not grieve You? You seem so serene to me. »

«Be quiet. I feel as if My heart were wrapped in burning thorns. And every time I breathe I am pierced by them. But He must not know! I strive to appear serene, in order to support Him by My serenity. If His Mother does not console Him, where is My Jesus going to find comfort? On which breast can He recline His head without being wounded or calumniated by doing so? It is only fair that I, forgetting the thorns that rend My heart and the tears that I drink in My hours of solitude, should lay a soft loving mantle, a smile, at any cost, to leave Him quieter... quieter, until... until the wave of hatred will be such that nothing will be of any avail. Not even the love of His Mother... » Two tears pour



down Mary's pale face.

The two sisters, deeply moved, look at I lor. «But we are here and we love Him. Then the apostles... » says Martha to comfort Her.

«Yes, you are here. And He has the apostles... They are still much inferior to their task... And My grief is deeper because I know that He is aware of everything... »

«So He knows that I am willing to obey, even to the extent of immolating myself, if necessary? » asks the Magdalene.

«He does. You are a great joy for Him on His hard way. »

«Oh! Mother! » and the Magdalene takes Mary's hand and kisses it effusively.

”Tiberias ends at the vegetable gardens of the suburbs. Beyond them there is the dusty road that leads to Cana; on one side there are orchards, on the other meadows and fields parched by the summer sun.

Jesus proceeds into an orchard to rest in the shade of thick trees. The women reach Him first and then the panting Roman arrives; he is utterly exhausted. He remains a little aside, does not speak, but watches.

«Let us take some food while we are resting» says Jesus. «There is a well over there and a peasant near it. Go and ask him to let us have some water. »

John and Thaddeus go. They come back with a pitcher dripping water, followed by the peasant who offers some wonderful figs.

«May God reward you with good health and a rich harvest. »

«May God protect You. You are the Master, are You not? »

«I am. »

«Will You be speaking here? »

«There is no one here who wants Me to speak. »

«I do, Master. I wish it more that I wish water which is so good when one is thirsty» shouts the Roman.

«Are you thirsty? »

«Yes, very. I have followed You from town. »

«Fountains of cool water are not lacking in Tiberias. »

«Do not misunderstand me, Master, or feign to misinterpret me. I followed You to hear You speak. »

«Why? »

«I do not know why or how. It happened seeing her (and he points at the Magdalene). I do not know. Something said to me: “He will tell you what you do not yet know”. And I came. »

«Give the man some water and figs. That he may refreshen his body. »

«And what about my mind? »

«Minds are refreshened by the Truth. »

«That is why I followed You. I looked for the truth in human knowledge. I found corruption. Even in the best doctrines there is something which is not good. I have become so disheartened that I am disgusted and a disgusting man without any other future but the hour I live. »

Jesus stares at him while eating the bread and figs that the apostles have brought Him.

The meal is soon over.

8Jesus, still sitting, begins to speak as if He were just giving a <sup>242. 8</sup> simple lesson to His apostles. Also the peasant remains nearby.

«Many are those who look for the Truth throughout their lives, without reaching it. They look like fools who are anxious to see and yet hold bronze blinkers before their eyes and they grope searching convulsively so that they go farther and farther away from the Truth, or they hide It by throwing on it various things that their foolish search shifts and causes to fall. Nothing but that can happen to them, because they look for the Truth where the Truth cannot be. To find the Truth you must join intellect to love and look at things not only with wise eyes, but with good eyes. Because bounty is worth more than wisdom. He who loves will always find a path leading to the Truth.

To love does not mean to take delight in the flesh or for the flesh. That is not love. It is sensuality. Love is affection from soul to soul, from superior part to superior part, so that man does not see in his companion a slave, but the mother of his children, and nothing else, that is, the half that forms with man a whole, capable of procreating life or more lives; that is, the companion who is the mother and sister and daughter of man, who is weaker than a new-born baby or stronger than a lion, according to circumstances, and who as mother, sister and daughter is to be loved with confident protective respect. Whatever is not what I say, is not love. It is vice. It does not lead upwards, but downwards: not

to the Light, but to Darkness; not to the stars, but to filth. You must love your woman to be able to love your neighbour. And <sup>242. 9</sup>you must love your neighbour to know how to love God. <sup>9</sup>And the way to the Truth is found.

That is where the Truth is, o men who are looking for it. The Truth is God. That is where the key to understanding knowledge is to be found. The faultless doctrine is God's doctrine. How can man answer all his questions if God is not with him to give him the answers? Who can disclose the mysteries of creation, only and simply those mysteries, but our Supreme Maker, Who made creation? Who can understand the living marvel, which is man, the being in whom the animal perfection is united to the immortal perfection, which is the soul, whereby we are gods, if our souls are alive, that is free from those actions which would abase a brute, and which, however, man commits and of which he is proud?

O men, searching for the Truth, I will repeat Job's words" to you: "If you would learn more, ask the cattle, seek information from the birds of the air. The creeping things of the earth will give you lessons, and the fishes of the sea will tell you all". Yes, the earth, this verdant flowery earth, the fruit swelling on trees, the proliferating birds, the winds blowing clouds, the sun that for centuries and millennia has risen unerringly, everything speaks of God, everything explains God, everything reveals and discovers God.

*If Science is not based on God, it becomes error and does not elevate but abases. Knowledge is not corruption if it is religion.* He whose knowledge is based on God will not fall, because he is conscious of his dignity and believes in his eternal future. But you must look for the real God, not for phantoms that are not gods, but mere frenzies of men still enveloped in spiritual ignorance so that there is not even the shadow of wisdom in their religions or the shadow of truth in their faith.

<sup>242. 10</sup> <sup>10</sup>Every age is capable of becoming wise. Nay, once again in Job it is written<sup>\*\*</sup>: "At dusk a noontday light will rise for you and when you think your end has come, you will rise like the morning star. You will be full of confidence because of the hope waiting for you".

\* words that are in Job 12, 78  
\*\* it is written in Job 11, 17-18

Goodwill is sufficient to find the Truth, which sooner or later will be found. But once it has been found, woe to those who do not follow it, but imitate the obstinate people of Israel, who, although already in possession of the thread to find God, that is, everything written in the Book about Me, will not surrender to the Truth, nay they hate it, amassing in their minds and hearts the barrenness of hatred and formulae. And they do not know that because of excessive weight the earth will open under their steps, which they think are the steps of triumphers, whereas they are the steps of slaves of formalism, of hatred, of selfishness. And they will be swallowed up and will be thrown headlong into the abyss where those go who are consciously guilty of a paganism that is more guilty than the heathenism that people have adopted by themselves in order to have a religion on which to base their behaviour.

As I do not reject those who repent amongst the children of Israel so I do not reject those idolaters who believe in what they were given to believe and who inwardly implore: "Give us the Truth".

<sup>11</sup>I have spoken to you. Let us rest now under these green trees, 242. 11  
if this man will allow us. We shall go to Cana in the evening. »

«Lord, I am leaving You. But is I do not wish to desecrate the wisdom that You have given me, I will leave Tiberias this evening. I am going away from this country. I will retire to the coast of Lucania with my servant. I have a house there. You have given me much. I realise that You cannot give more to the old Epicurean. But what You have given me is enough to enable me to build up my mind. And... pray Your God for old Crispus. He was Your only listener in Tiberias. Pray that I may hear You again before Libitina clasps me, so that, through the capability which I think I will be able to create within me, I may understand You and the Truth better. Hail, Master. » And he salutes in the Roman way.

When he passes near the women who are sitting a little aside, he bows to Mary of Magdala and says: «Thank you, Mary. It was a good thing that I knew you. You have given the searched for treasure to your old feast companion. If I arrive where you already are, I will owe you that. Goodbye. » And He goes away.

The Magdalene presses her hands against her heart and her face shows wonder and radiance. Then, she drags herself on her

knees before Jesus. «Oh! Lord! So it is true that I may lead people to Good? Oh! My Lord. That is too kind of You! » And bending until her face touches the grass, she kisses Jesus' feet and wets them once again with tears: the tears of gratitude of the great lover of Magdala.

243. In Cana in the house of Susanna.  
The aspects, the methods and the voice of Jesus.  
A discussion on possessions.

4<sup>th</sup> August 1945.

243.: <sup>1</sup>In the house at Cana the rejoicing for Jesus' arrival is little less than it was at the miraculous wedding. There are no players, no guests, the house is not adorned with flowers and evergreens, there are no tables laid for many guests, nor any steward near the sideboards and the stone jars, full of wine. But love excels everything and it is given in the right form and measure, that is, not to the guest, Who is probably also a distant relation, but still a man, but to the Master Guest Whose true Nature is known and acknowledged and Whose Word is venerated as something divine. The hearts in Cana, therefore, love with their whole selves the Great Friend, Who appeared in His linen tunic at the garden entrance, in the green of the garden and the red of the sunset, beautifying everything with His presence, communicating His peace not only to the hearts to whom He addresses His greeting, but also to things.

And it really seems that a veil of solemn joyful peace is laid out wherever He turns His blue eyes. Purity and peace flow from His eyes, wisdom from His lips and love from His heart. What I am about to say may seem impossible to the reader of these pages. And yet, the same place, which before Jesus' coming was an ordinary place or a busy place excluding the possibility of peace, which supposedly should be free from work bustling, is ennobled as soon as He appears there, and the bustling becomes orderly and does not bar the possibility of supernatural thoughts mingled with manual labour. I do not know whether I have made myself clear.

243. 2 <sup>2</sup>Jesus is never sullen, not even when He is more disgusted

with something that has happened, but is always majestically dignified and communicates such supernatural dignity to the place in which He moves. Jesus is never a jolly fellow or a complainer laughing coarsely or looking hypochondriac, not even in the moments of greatest delight or deepest depression. His smile is inimitable. No painter will ever be able to reproduce it. It is like a light emanating from His heart, a bright light in the hours of greatest joy because a soul has been redeemed or approaches Perfection: I would say a rosy smile, when He approves of the spontaneous deeds of His friends or disciples and enjoys their company; a blue angelical smile, to remain in the field of hues, when He bends over children to listen to them, teach them and then bless them; a smile mitigated by piety when He looks at the miseries of the flesh or the spirit; finally a divine smile, when He speaks of His Father or Mother or looks at or listens to His Most Pure Mother.

I have never seen Him hypochondriac, not even in the hours of bitter torment. During the torture of being betrayed, during the anguish when He sweated blood, and the spasm of His passion, if melancholy overwhelmed the sweet refulgence of His smile, it was not sufficient to cancel the peace, which is like a diadem shining with heavenly gems on His smooth forehead and enlightening His divine person. Neither have I ever seen Him indulge in immoderate merriment. He is not averse to a hearty laugh, when the case demands it, but He immediately resumes His noble serenity. But when He laughs, He prodigiously looks younger, to the extent of looking like a twenty year old man and the world seems to blossom through His lovely, hearty, loud, melodious laughter. Neither can I say that I have seen Him do things hurriedly. Whether He moves or speaks, He does so calmly, without, however, being sluggish or listless. It is probably because, tall as He is, He can stride, without running, to go a long way and He can likewise reach at distant things without having to stand up to do so. Even the way He moves is certainly gentlemanly and majestic.

And what about His voice? Well: I have heard Him speak for almost two years, and yet at times I lose the thread of His speech as I become so engrossed in studying His voice. And Jesus, very kindly and patiently, repeats what He said and He looks at me

with His smile of the good Master to ensure that nothing is missing in His dictation because of my delight in enjoying and listening to His voice and studying its tone and charm. But after two years I am not in a position to say precisely what the tone is. I definitely exclude the bass tone and also the light tenor tone. But I am always doubtful whether it is a powerful tenor voice or a perfect baritone voice with a very wide vocal range. I would say that it is the latter because His voice at times takes bronze like notes, mellow and so deep, particularly when He speaks to a sinner, to lead him back to Grace or He points out human deviations to crowds. But when He analyses or condemns forbidden things or He shows the hypocrisy of men, the bronze notes of His voice become clearer; and they are as sharp as the peal of thunder when He imposes the Truth or His will and they vibrate like a sheet of gold struck with a crystal hammer when He sings the praises of Mercy or exalts the work of God; but the timbre of His voice is a most loving one when He speaks to or about His Mother. Jesus' voice is then really imbued with love: the reverent love of a son, and the love of God Who praises His most perfect work. And He uses the same tone, although not so strongly, when speaking to His favourites, to converts and to children. And His voice never tires, not even in very long speeches, because it colours and completes His thoughts and words, emphasizing their power or kindness, according to the case.

And at times I remain still, with the pen in my hand, listening, and I then realise that He has gone too far ahead, and that it is impossible to catch up with Him... and I remain still, and Jesus kindly repeats the words. He does the same when I am interrupted, to teach me to patiently endure bothersome things or people, and I make Him understand how *bothersome* they are when they deprive me of the beatitude of listening to Jesus...

243. 3 <sup>3</sup>Now, at Cana, He is thanking Susanna for the hospitality granted to Aglae. They are by themselves under a pergola laden with grapes which are already ripening. All the others are in the kitchen, refreshing themselves.

«The woman was very good, Master. She certainly was not a burden to us. She helped me every time I did the washing, when we cleaned the house at Passover, as if she were a servant, and I can assure You that she worked like a slave to help me finish

our clothes for Passover. She was prudent and withdrew every time someone came to the house; and she endeavoured not to be alone even with my husband. She hardly spoke in the presence of the family and took little food. She got up every morning to tidy herself before the men woke and I always found the fire lit and the house cleaned. But when we were alone she would ask me about You and begged me to teach her the psalms of our religion. She used to say: "That I may pray as the Master prays". Has she stopped suffering now? Because she did suffer very much. She was afraid of everything and sighed and wept a great deal. Is she happy now. »

«Yes, supernaturally happy and free from fear. She is in peace. And I thank you for the good you did to her. »

«Oh! My Lord. What good? I treated her with love in Your name, because that is all I can do. She was a poor sister. I realised that. And I loved her, out of gratitude to the Most High Who has kept me in His grace. »

«And you have done more than if you had preached in the Bel Nidasc. Now you have another one here. Did you recognize her. »

«Who does not know her here? »

«Nobody, that is true. But you and the district here do not know the second Mary, the one who will always be faithful to her vocation. *Always*. I ask you to believe it. »

«You say so. You know. I believe. »

«Say also: "I love". I know that it is more difficult to pity and forgive one of our own people, who has sinned, than one who has the excuse of being a pagan. But if our regret in seeing family apostasies was keen, let our pity and forgiveness be keener. *I have forgiven Israel everything*» concludes Jesus, stressing the last words.

«And I will forgive, as far as I am concerned. Because I think a disciple should do what the Master does. »

4«You are in the truth and God rejoices because of that. Let us <sup>243. 4</sup> go with the others. It is getting dark. It will be pleasant to rest in the peace of the night. »

«Will You not speak to us, Master? »

«I do not know yet. »

They go into the kitchen where food and drinks have been prepared for supper.



Susanna moves forward and blushing slightly she says: «Will my sisters come upstairs with me? We must lay the tables because afterwards we must prepare beds for the men. I could do it by myself. But it would take me longer. »

«I am coming, too, Susanna» says the Blessed Virgin.

«No, we are enough and it will help us to become acquainted with one another, work does help to fraternise. »

They go out together while Jesus, after drinking some water flavoured with some syrup -1 do not know what it is - goes and sits with His Mother, the apostles and the men of the house, in the cool shade of the pergola, leaving the servants and the elderly landlady free to finish preparing the food.

243 5 <sup>5</sup>The voices of the three women disciples laying the tables can be heard from the room upstairs. Susanna tells of the miracle which was worked at her wedding and Mary of Magdala replies. «To change water into wine is a great thing, but to change a sinner into a woman disciple is even greater. God grant that I become like that wine: that I may be of the best. »

«Have no doubt about it. He changes everything in a perfect way. There was one here, and a heathen in addition, whose sentiments and faith He changed. Can you doubt that the same will not happen to you, who are already an Israelite? »

«One? Young? »

«Young. Beautiful. »

«And where is she now? » asks Martha.

«Only the Master knows. »

«Ah! Well, she is the one of whom I spoke to you. Jesus was with Lazarus that evening\* and he heard the words which were spoken concerning her. What a sweet scent there was in that room! Lazarus' garments were imbued with it for several days. And yet Jesus said that the heart of the convert excelled it with the perfume of her repentance. I wonder where she has gone. I think to some solitary place... »

«She is lonely, and she was a stranger. I am here, and I am known. She expiates in solitude, I... living in the world, amongst those who know me. I do not envy her destiny, as I am with the Master. But I hope I will be able to imitate her one day, by being

\* **that evening** in 200. 7.

without anything that may distract me from Him. »

«Would you leave Him? »

«No. But He says that He will go away. My soul will then follow Him. I can defy the world with Him. Without Him I would be afraid of the world. I shall put a desert between me and the world. »

«And what about Lazarus and me? What shall we do? »

«What you did in your grief. You will love each other and will love me. And without blushing... Because you will then be alone, but you will know that I am with the Lord. And I will love you in the Lord. »

«Mary is strong and well determined in her decisions» comments Peter who has heard.

And the Zealot replies: «She is a straight blade like her father. She has her mother's features, but her father's unyielding spirit. »

And the lady with the unyielding spirit is running down the stairs to tell her companions that supper is ready.

<sup>6</sup>The country fades away in the serene moonless night. Only <sup>243. 6</sup> the faint light of stars shows the dark masses of trees and the white ones of houses. Nothing else. Some night birds are fluttering silently around Susanna's house, in search of flies, skimming past the people sitting on the terrace around a lamp, which throws a faint yellowish light on the faces of those who are gathered round Jesus. Martha, who must be terrified of bats, screams every time a big noctule skims past her. Jesus instead is busy with the moths attracted by the lamp and with His long arm He endeavours to keep them away from the flame.

«They are both very stupid animals» says Thomas. The former mistake us for bluebottles, the latter mistake the flame for the sun and get burnt. They have not even got a shadow of brains. »

«They are animals. Do you expect them to reason? » asks the Iscariot.

«No. But I would like them to have instinct at least. »

«It is not possible for them to have it. I am talking of moths. Because they die after their first trial. Instinct awakes and develops through painful surprising experience» comments James of Alphaeus.

«And what about bats? They should have it because they live for years. They are stupid, that's all» retorts Thomas.

243.7 «No, Thomas. Not more than men. Many times men also look like stupid bats. They fly, or rather they flutter, like drunk men, around things that can only cause grief. <sup>7</sup>Here you are: My brother has struck one down with his mantle. Give Me it» says Jesus.

James of Zebedee, at whose feet the stunned bat has fallen and is now tossing clumsily on the floor, picks it up with two fingers by one of its membranous wings and holding it out, like a dirty rag, lays it on Jesus' lap.

«Here is the unwary animal. Let us leave it alone and you will see that it will recover, but it will not change its habits. »

«An unusual rescue, Master. I would have killed it» says the Iscariot.

«No. Why? It has a life, too, and is keen on it» replies Jesus.

«I don't think so. It either does not know it has a life or is not keen on it. It endangers it! »

«Oh! Judas! Judas! How severe you would be with sinners, with men. Also men know that they have one life and another one and they do not hesitate to endanger both one and the other. »

«Have we got two lives? »

«The life of the body and the life of the soul, you know that. »

«Ah! I thought You were referring to reincarnation. Some people believe in it. »

«There is no reincarnation. But there are two lives. And yet man endangers both of them. If you were God how would you judge men, who are gifted with reason besides instinct? »

«Severely. Unless it were a person of unsound mind. »

«Would you not take into account the circumstances that make people morally insane? »

«No, I would not. »

«So you would have no mercy on anyone who knows God and is acquainted with the Law, and yet sins. »

«I would have no mercy. Because man must be able to control himself. »

«He should be able. »

«He must, Master. It is an unpardonable disgrace that an adult should commit certain sins, particularly when nothing forces him. »

«Which sins according to you? »

«The sins of sensuality first. One degrades oneself irreparably... » Mary of Magdala lowers her head... Judas goes on: «... and one corrupts others as well, because a kind of ferment exhales from the bodies of impure people and it upsets even the pure and urges them to imitate the impure... »

«While the Magdalene lowers her head further, Peter says: 243. 8  
«Hey, there! Don't be so severe! The first to be guilty of such unpardonable disgrace was Eve, and you are not going to tell me that she was corrupted by the impure ferment exhaling from a lascivious person. In any case I would like you to know that, as far as I am concerned, I am in no way upset even if I sit near a lustful person. It's his business... »

«One is always infected by being near. If the body is not, the soul is, and that is worse. »

«You seem a Pharisee! Excuse me, in that case one should lock oneself up in a crystal tower and stay there, sealed up. »

«But do not believe, Simon, that it would help you. Temptations are more dreadful in loneliness» says the Zealot.

«Oh! Well! They, would be like dreams. No harm» replies Peter.

«No harm? Don't you know that temptations lead to cogitations, cogitations to compromise to satisfy somehow one's aroused instinct, and then compromise opens the way to refinement of sin in which sensuality is joined to thought? » asks the Iscariot.

«I know nothing about all that, my dear Judas. Perhaps because I have never cogitated, as you say, on certain things. But I think that we have gone very far from bats and that it is a good job that you are not God. Otherwise you would be all alone in Paradise, with your severity. 9What do You say, Master? » 243. 9

«I say that it is wise not to be too absolute because the angels of the Lord listen to the words of men and record them in the eternal books and it might not be pleasant one day to be told: "Let it be done to you according to your own judgement". I say that if God sent Me it means that He wants to forgive all the sins of which man repents, as He knows how weak man is, because of Satan. Judas, tell Me. do you agree that Satan may take possession of a soul so as to force coercion on It, which may diminish

the seriousness of sin in the eyes of God? »

«I do not. Satan can impair but the inferior part. »

«You are blaspheming, Judas of Simon» exclaim almost together the Zealot and Bartholomew.

«Why? In what way? »

«You are giving the lie to God and the Book. We read\* in it that Lucifer impaired also the superior part, and God, through His Word, has told us many times» Bartholomew replies.

«It is also said that man has free will. Which means that Satan cannot do violence to man's mind and feelings. Even God does not do it. »

«No, God does not, because He is Order and Loyalty. But Satan does, because he is Disorder and Hatred» insists the Zealot.

«Hatred is not the sentiment opposed to loyalty. You are wrong. »

«I am right, because if God is Loyalty and therefore does not fail to keep His word to leave man free in his actions, the demon cannot belie such word, as he never promised free will to man. But it is true that he is Hatred and therefore attacks God and man, assailing the intellectual freedom of man, in addition to his body, reducing such freedom of thought to slavery in possessed people, whereby man does things, which he would not do, If he were free from Satan» maintains the Zealot.

«I do not agree. »

«What about possessed people, then? You are denying the evidence of facts» shouts Judas Thaddeus.

«Possessed people are deaf, or dumb or insane. They are not lustful. »

«Is that the only vice you have in mind? » asks Thomas ironically.

«It is the most common one and the lowest. »

«Ah! I thought it was the one you are better acquainted with» says Thomas laughing.

Judas jumps to his feet as if he wanted to react. But he controls himself and goes downstairs and then walks away through the fields.

\* we read interpreting the text of *Genesis 3 1-15*; also said in *Sizacide 15 14* and implicitly, wherever the free choice between good and bad is discussed, starting from the previous return to the book of Genesis.

<sup>10</sup>There is silence... Then Andrew says: «His idea is not completely mistaken. In fact one would say that Satan takes possession only of senses: sight, hearing, speech and brains. But then, Master, how can certain wicked actions be explained? Are they not possessions? Doras, for example?... » 243.10

«Doras, as you say, in order not to be uncharitable towards anybody, and may God reward you for that, or Mary, as we all know, and she is the first to know, after the clear uncharitable hints by Judas, are those who are more completely possessed by Satan who extends his power over the three great powers of man. They are the most oppressive and subtle possessions, from which only those can free themselves who are so little degraded in their souls as to be still able to understand the invitation of the Light. Doras was not lustful. But even so he would not come to the Redeemer. And that is where the difference lies. That is, whilst in the case of lunatic, dumb, deaf, blind people possessed by the demon, their relatives endeavour and do the necessary to bring them to Me. In the case of those whose spirits are possessed, only their spirits can seek freedom. That is why they are forgiven as well as freed. Because it was their will to begin opposition to the demon's possession. And now let us go and rest. Mary, since you know what it is to be caught, pray for those who lend themselves intermittently to the Enemy's action, committing sin and causing grief. »

«Yes, my Master. I will. And without any ill-feeling. »

«Peace to everybody Let us drop here the cause of so much discussion. There is darkness with darkness, outside, in the night. But we are going inside to sleep under the protection of the angels. »

And He lays the bat on a bench, which makes its first attempts to fly away, and He withdraws with the apostles to the room upstairs, while the women with the landlord and landlady go downstairs.

244. John repeats a sermon by Jesus on Creation  
and on the populations that await the Light.

5<sup>th</sup> August 1945.

244. 1 <sup>1</sup>They are all climbing the cool shortcuts leading to Nazareth. The Galilean hillsides seem to have been created that very morning, because the recent storm has washed them so thoroughly and the dew keeps them shiny and fresh, so that they are all bright in the early sunshine. The air is so clear that all the details of the more or less distant mountains are visible and there is a deep sensation of freshness and liveliness.

When they reach the top of the hill they delight in admiring the sight of a lake, which is most beautiful in the pure morning light. They all admire it, as does Jesus. But Mary Magdalene soon turns her eyes in a different direction looking for something. Her eyes rest on the mountain tops lying northwest, but she does not seem to find what she is looking for.

Susanna who is beside her, asks: «What are you looking for? »

«I would like to recognize the mountain where I met\* the Master. »

«Ask Him. »

«Oh! It is not worth disturbing Him. He is speaking to Judas of Keriioth»

«What a man Judas is! » whispers Susanna. She does not say anything else, but... the rest is clearly understood.

«That mountain is certainly not along this road. But I will take you there some time, Martha. It was dawn, just like now, and there were so many flowers... And so many people... Oh! Martha! And I had the audacity to appear in front of everybody in that shameful dress and with those friends... No, you cannot be offended at Judas' words. I deserved them. I deserved every one of them. And the present suffering is my expiation. Everybody remembers and everybody is right in telling me the truth. And I must be silent. Oh! If one only pondered before sinning! Who offends me now is my best friend, because he helps me to expiate. »

«But that does not mean the he has not done wrong. Mother, is

\* where I met in 174. 11/14.

Your Son really pleased with that man? »

«We must pray very much for him. So He says. »

<sup>2</sup>John leaves the apostles to come and help the women at a difficult passage, where their sandals slip as the path is strewn with smooth stones, like reddish slates, and with glossy hard grass, which is very dangerous as the foot has no grip on it. The Zealot imitates John and the women pass over the difficult spot leaning on them. 244.2

«This is rather a difficult road. But there is no dust and no travellers on it. And it is shorter» says the Zealot.

«I know it, Simon» says Mary. «I came to that little village half way up the hill, with My nephews when Jesus was driven out of Nazareth» says the Blessed Virgin with a sigh.

«But the world is beautiful from here. There is the Tabor over there, and the Hermon, and to the north the mountains of Arbela, and over there, in the back, the great Hermon. It is a pity that the sea is not visible as it is from Tabor» says John.

«Have you been there? »

«Yes, with the Master. »

«John, through his love for the infinite, obtained a great joy for us, because on the top of the mountain Jesus spoke of God so ecstatically that we had never heard the like before. And after receiving so much, we obtained a great conversion. You will meet the man too, Mary. And your spirit will be fortified more than it already is. We found a man hardened with hatred, brutalised by remorse and Jesus turned him into a man who, I am sure, will become a great disciple. Like you, Mary. <sup>3</sup>Because, you can be sure that what I tell you is the truth, we sinners are more yielding to Good, which wraps us, because we feel the need to be forgiven even by ourselves» says the Zealot. 244.3

«That is true. But it is very kind of you to say “we sinners”. You were a poor wretch, not a sinner. »

«We are all sinners, some more some less, and he who thinks he is less a sinner, is the most likely to become one, if he is not already so. We are all sinners. But the big sinners who repent are the ones who know how to be as absolute in Good as they were in evil. »

«Your comforting words are a great relief to me. You have always been a father to the children of Theophilus. »



«And like a father I rejoice because the three of you are Jesus' friends. »

«Where did you find that disciple who was a big sinner? »

«At Endor, Mary. Simon wishes to ascribe the merit of so many beautiful things to my desire to contemplate the sea. But if John the elder came to Jesus it is no merit of the silly young John. It is the merit of Judas of Simon» says Zebedee's son smiling.

«Did he convert him?» asks Martha doubtfully.

«No. But he wanted to go to Endor and... »

«Yes, to see the cave of the sorceress... Judas of Simon is a very strange type... One must take him as he is... Of course!... And John of Endor led us to the cave and then remained with us. But, my dear son, the merit is still yours, because without your desire for the infinite we would not have gone that way and Judas would not have desired to go on that strange research. »

244. 4 <sup>4</sup>«I would like to know what Jesus said on Mount Tabor\*... as I would like to recognize the mountain where I saw Him» sighs Mary Magdalene.

«The mountain is the one where the sun seems to be rising, because of the sparkling of a pond there, which collects the spring water and herds make use of it. We were farther up where the top seems to be split like a huge two-pronged-fork attempting to pierce the clouds and take them somewhere else. With regards to Jesus' speech, I think John can repeat it for you. »

«Oh! Simon! Is it possible for a boy to repeat the words of God? »

«No, it isn't for a boy. It is for you. Try to please your sisters and me, as I love you. »

244. 5 <sup>5</sup>John blushes very much when he begins to repeat the speech of Jesus.

«He said: "Here is the infinite page on which currents write the word: I 'believe'. Think of the chaos of the Universe before the Creator decided to order the elements and arrange them into a wonderful association, which has given man the earth and what it contains and has adorned the firmament with stars and planets. Nothing existed: neither as amorphous chaos, nor as ordered system.

\* on Mount Tabor... The work makes no reference to that stop on the mount, but only the trip towards it (in 187. 5) and the return (in 188. 1).

God made it. First He made the elements. Because they are necessary, although at times they seem to be harmful. But always this: there is no small drop of dew, no matter how small it be, which does not have a good reason for existing, there is no insect, however small and insignificant it may be, which does not have its good reason for being. And likewise there is no monstrous mountain vomiting from its bowels fire and incandescent lapilli which does not have its good reason for existing. And there is no cyclone without a reason. And passing from things to people there is no event, no tear, no joy, no birth, death, sterility and prolific maternity, no long marriage life or early widowhood, no misfortune of calamities and diseases, or prosperity of wealth and health, which does not have its good reason for being, even if it does not appear as such to the short-sightedness and pride of men, who see and judge through the cataracts and fogs typical of imperfect things. But the Eye of God, the infinite Thought of God, sees and knows. The secret of living free from sterile doubts, which irritate, exhaust and poison the days on the earth, is to believe that God does everything for a good intelligent reason, that God does what He does for love, not for stolid intention of tormenting for the sake of tormenting.

<sup>244</sup> <sup>6</sup> God had created the angels. And some of them, who did not want to believe that the level of glory at which they had been placed was good, rebelled and with their minds parched by lack of faith in their Lord, they attempted to assail the unreachable throne of God. They opposed their discordant unjust pessimistic thoughts to the harmonious reasons of the faithful angels, and pessimism, which is lack of faith, changed them from spirits of light into spirits of darkness.

Blessed are those forever who both in Heaven and on the earth base all their thoughts on a presupposition of fully enlightened optimism! They will not be wrong, at least as far as their spirits are concerned, as they will continue to believe, hope and above all love God and their neighbour, and will thus remain in God until the end of centuries!

Paradise had already been freed from those proud pessimists who saw gloomy sides also in the brightest words of God, as the pessimists on the earth look on dark sides also of the clearest deeds of men and by wishing to be separated in an ivory tower,

as they consider themselves the only perfect ones, they condemn themselves to a dark dungeon, which ends in the darkness of the kingdom of hell, the kingdom of Negation. Because pessimism is also Negation.

244 7      7So God created the Universe. And as to understand the glorious mystery of Our being One and Trine one must believe and understand that the Word existed from the beginning and was with God, joined by the most perfect Love, Which can be effused only by two Who are Gods, being, however, only One; so, to see creation as it is, it is necessary to look at it with eyes of faith because in its being, as a son bears the indelible reflection of his father, so creation has within itself the indelible reflection of its Creator. We shall then see that in the beginning there was the sky and the earth and then light, which can be compared to love. Because light is delight, as love is. And light is the atmosphere of Paradise. And the incorporeal Being, Who is God, is Light and is the Father of every intellectual, affective, material, spiritual light, both in Heaven and on the earth.

In the beginning there was the sky and the earth and for them light was given and through light everything else was made. And as in the most high Heaven the spirits of light were separated from those of darkness, so in creation light was separated from darkness and Day and Night were made and that was the first day of creation, with its morning and its evening, its mid-day and midnight. And when the smile of God, that is light, came once again after night, then the hand of God, His powerful will, stretched out over the shapeless empty earth, and over the sky where the waters wandered, one of the free elements in chaos, and wanted the firmament to separate the disorderly wandering of the waters between the sky and the earth, so that it would be a velarium for paradisiac splendor, a limit to superior waters, and thus floods would not descend upon boiling metals and atoms, washing away and disjoining what God was uniting.

Order was restored in the sky. And there was order on the earth through the command given by God to the waters spread over the earth. And the sea began to exist. There it is. On it, as on the firmament it is written: 'God is'. Whatever the intellectuality of man is, or his faith or disbelief, in front of this page, in which a particle of infinity, which is God, shines, and in which there

is the evidence of His power, man is obliged to believe, because no human power and no natural settlement of elements can possibly repeat such a wonder, not even in a very small way. Man is obliged to believe not only in the Lord's power, but also in His goodness, as through that sea He gives food and ways of communication to man, He gives wholesome salts, He mitigates the heat of the sun and gives space to winds, and seed to lands remote from one another and causes it to roar like storms to call the ant, being man, to the Infinite One, his Father, and He gives man the possibility of elevating himself to higher spheres, contemplating higher visions.

<sup>8</sup>Three things speak most of God in creation, which is entirely a witness of His power: the light, the firmament and the sea. The astral and meteorological order, which is a reflection of the divine Order; the light, which only a God could create; the sea, the power which only God could confine within firm limits, after creating it, and He gave it motion and voice, without, however, damaging, as a turbulent disorderly element, the earth, which bears the sea on its surface. 244. 8

Ponder on the mystery of light, which is inexhaustible. Raise your eyes towards the firmament where stars and planets are resplendent. Look at the sea and consider it for what it is. It is not a separation but a bridge between peoples who live on other shores and although they cannot be seen and are unknown, one must believe that they exist, simply because the sea exists. God does not make anything useless. He, therefore, would not have created the seemingly infinite sea, unless it were limited by other lands beyond the horizon, which prevents us from seeing, lands which are populated with other men, who have all come from one only God, and by God's will have been carried there by storms and currents, to people continents and regions. And the sea sends remote appeals through its waves, through the voice of its waves and its tides. It is a link, not a separation.

The anxiety which causes John a sweet anguish is the appeal of remote brothers. The more the spirit dominates the flesh, the more capable it is of hearing the voices of spirits that are united even if they are divided, like branches that spring up from the same root are united even if one cannot see the other if an obstacle is interposed between them. Look at the sea with eyes full

of light. You will see lands strewn round its shores, at its limits, and other lands inside it and a cry will reach you from every one of them: 'Come. Bring us the Light that you possess. Bring us the Life given to you. Speak to our hearts the word with which we are not acquainted, but we know is the foundation of the universe: love. Teach us to read the word that we see written on the infinite pages of the firmament and of the sea: God. Enlighten us because we feel that there is a light, which is more real than the one which reddens the sky and makes the sea glitter like gems. Bring to our darkness the Light that God gave you after generating It through His love, and He gave It to you on behalf of all peoples, as He gave light to the stars so that they might give it to the earth. You are the stars, we are the dust. But form us as the Creator formed the earth with dust so that man might people it adoring Him now and forever, until the hour comes when there is no earth, but the Kingdom comes. The Kingdom of light, of love, of peace, as the living God told you it will be, because we are children of this God as well, and we ask to become acquainted with our Father'.

And learn to go along the ways of infinity. Without fear and without disdain, towards those who call you and weep. Towards those who will also grieve you because they feel God but do not know how to adore God, but they will also procure you glory, because, the more you possess love and bestow it, leading to the Truth the people who are waiting to reach it, the greater you will be".

244 9 <sup>9</sup>Jesus said so, but much better than I did. But that was at least His idea. »

«John, you have repeated exactly what the Master said. You have only omitted what He said about your capability to understand God through your generosity in giving yourself. You are good, John. The best amongst us! We have come to the end of our way without noticing it. There is Nazareth on its hill. The Master is looking at us and smiling. Let us reach Him at once to enter the village together. »

«Thank you, John» says Our Lady. «You have given a great present to your Mother. »

«I thank you, too. You have opened infinite horizons to poor Mary... »

«What were you talking so much about? » Jesus asks those who have just joined Him.

«John has repeated the speech You made on Mount Tabor. Perfectly. And we were delighted. »

«I am glad that My Mother has heard it, because the sea is related to Her name and Her charity is as vast as the sea. »

«Son, You possess such charity as the Man, and yet it is nothing as compared to Your infinite charity of the divine Word. My sweet Jesus! »

«Mother, come near Me. As You held Me by the hand when we came back from Cana or from Jerusalem, when I was a little boy. »  
And they look at each other with eyes full of love.

245. An accusation by the Nazarenes to Jesus,  
rejected with the parable of the healed leper.

6<sup>th</sup> August 1945.

<sup>1</sup>The first place where Jesus stops in Nazareth is the house of Alphaeus. He is about to enter the kitchen garden when He meets Mary of Alphaeus who is going to the fountain carrying two copper amphoras. 245.1

«Peace be with you, Mary! » says Jesus, embracing His relative, who, effusive as usual, kisses Him shouting for joy.

«This will certainly be a peaceful joyful day, my Jesus, because You have come! Oh! My dearest sons! How happy is your mother to see you! » and she kisses her big boys who were behind Jesus. «You are staying with me today, are you not? I have just lit the oven for the bread. And I was going to the fountain, because I do not want to interrupt its baking. »

«Mother, we will go» say her sons taking the amphoras.

«How kind they are, aren't they, Jesus? »

«Yes, they are so kind» confirms Jesus.

«Also to You, are they not? Because if they should love You less than they love me, they would be less dear to me. »

«Be not afraid, Mary. They are nothing but joy to Me. »

«Are You alone? Mary went away so suddenly... I would have come too. She was with a woman... A disciple? »

«Yes. Martha's sister. »

«Oh! Blessed be God! I have prayed so much for that. Where is she? »

«There she is, she is arriving with, My Mother Martha and Susanna. ».

The women in fact have just turned the corner, followed by the apostles. Mary of Alphaeus runs to meet them and she exclaims: «How happy I am to have you as my sister! I should say “daughter” because you are young and I am old. But I will call you by the name which is so dear to me since I call my Mary by it. Come, my dear, you must be tired... But you are certainly happy» and she kisses the Magdalene holding her by the hand as if she wanted her to feel more deeply that she loves her. The fresh beauty of Mary Magdalene seems more striking when she is close to the rather run down figure of good Mary of Alphaeus.

«You are all staying with me today I will not let you go away» and with a deep involuntary sigh of her soul, confession escapes her: «I am always so lonely! When my sister-in-law is not here, my days are sad and lonely. »

«Are your sons not here? » asks Martha.

Mary of Alphaeus blushes and sighs: «With their souls, yes. They are still here. To be a disciple joins and divides... But as you came, Mary, they will come too» and she wipes a tear. She looks at Jesus Who is watching her pitifully and she strives to smile and asks: «It takes a long time, doesn't it? »

«Yes, Mary. But you will see it happen. »

«I was hoping... After that Simon... But he heard of other... things and he became hesitant again. Love him just the same, Jesus! »

«Can you doubt it? »

While Mary is speaking she prepares some refreshments for the pilgrims, turning a deaf ear to the words of everybody assuring her that they need nothing.

«Let us leave the women disciples in peace» says Jesus and He concludes. «And let us have a walk through the village. »

«Are You going away? The other sons may come. »

«I am staying all day tomorrow. So we will be together. I am now going to see My friends. Peace to you, women. Goodbye, Mother. »

245.2      2Nazareth is already in a state of excitement because of Jesus'

arrival and in the company of the Magdalene. Some rush to the house of Mary of Alphaeus, some to Jesus' and since the latter is closed they all go back towards Jesus Who is crossing Nazareth going towards the centre of the village. The town is always ill-disposed to the Master. Some people are ironical, some incredulous, some are openly wicked as is obvious from certain biting remarks: they all follow the great Son of Nazareth out of curiosity, without love, and they do not understand Him. Even in the questions they ask Him there is no love, but disbelief and derision. But He feigns not to notice and replies kindly and mildly to those who speak to Him.

«You give to everybody, but You seem a son without any tie to Your fatherland, because You give it nothing. »

«I am here to give what you ask for. »

«But You prefer not to be here. Are we perhaps bigger sinners than the others? »

«There is no sinner, no matter how big he may be, whom I do not wish to convert. And you are not worse than the others. »

«However, You do not say that we are better than the others. A good son always says that his mother is better than any other mother, even if she is not so. Is perhaps Nazareth a stepmother to You? »

«I am not saying anything. When it is not possible to say that one is good, and when one does not wish to lie, to be silent is the charitable rule towards others and oneself. But you would be readily praised if you only came to My doctrine. »

«So You wish to be admired? »

«No, only listened to and believed, for the good of your souls. »

«Speak, then! We will listen to You. »

«Tell Me about what you wish Me to speak. »

A middle-aged man says: «Listen. I would like You to come with me and explain something to me. »

«I will come at once, Levi. »

And they go to the synagogue while people gather behind the Master and the head of the synagogue. The synagogue is soon crowded.

<sup>3</sup>The head of the synagogue takes a roll and reads\*: «Solomon 245. 3

\* reads in *2Chronicles 8. 11.*



brought Pharaoh's daughter from the Citadel of David up to the house he had built for her, because he said: "My wife must not live in the palace of David king of Israel, because it was sanctified when the ark of the Lord entered it." Now I would like to have Your opinion on the matter, whether You think that measure was right or not, and why.

«It was undoubtedly right, because respect for David's house, which had been sanctified when the ark of the Lord was brought into it, demanded it.»

«But since the Pharaoh's daughter was Solomon's wife, was she thereby not worthy to live in the house of David. Does the wife not become, according to Adam's word, "bone of the bone" of her husband and "flesh of his flesh"? If it is so, how could she desecrate what the husband did not desecrate?»

«In the first Book of Ezra it is written\*: "You have committed sin by marrying foreign women; you have added to the sin of Israel". And one of the causes of Solomon's idolatry was his marriages with foreign women. God had said\*\*: "Foreign women will lead your hearts astray to the extent of making you follow foreign gods" We are aware of the consequences.»

«But he was not led astray because he had married the Pharaoh's daughter, in fact he wisely judged that she was not to live in the holy house.»

«God's goodness cannot be measured by our standards. Man, after one fault, does not forgive, although he himself is always guilty. God is not inexorable after a first fault, but He does not allow man to persist with impunity in the same sin. He therefore does not punish man the first time he falls; He then speaks to his heart. But He punishes when His goodness does not serve to, convert, but is mistaken for weakness by man. He then inflicts punishment, because God is not to be derided. Although bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, the Pharaoh's daughter had laid the first germs of corruption in the heart of the Wise King, and you know that a disease breaks out not when there is only one germ in the blood but when the blood is corrupt with many germs that have multiplied from the first one. Man's fall into sin always begins with an apparently innocuous laxity. Then compliance with

\* it is written in *Ezra 10 10*

\*\* had said in *Deuteronomy 7, 3 1 1 King 11, 1-2*

evil increases. Then one becomes accustomed to conscience compromises and to neglecting one's duties and obedience to God and thus by degrees man falls into serious sins, even of idolatry in the case of Solomon, who thus provoked a schism, the consequences of which are still lasting. »

4«So You say that it is necessary to be extremely careful and to have the greatest respect for holy things? » 245. 4

«Most certainly. »

«Now explain also this to me. You say that You are the Word of God. Is it true? »

«I am. He sent Me to bring the Gospel to all men on the earth and to redeem them from all their sins. »

«So, if You really are what You say, you are greater than the Ark. Because God is not in the glory dominating the Ark, but He is within You. »

«You are right. That is the truth. »

«Why, then, do You desecrate Yourself? »

«And did you bring Me here to tell Me that? I feel sorry for you, for you and for those who urged you to speak. I ought not to justify Myself, because every justification is, deliberately misunderstood by your hatred. But I will give a justification to you who accuse Me of not loving you and of desecrating My person.

5Listen. I know what you are hinting at. But I reply to you: “You are wrong”. As I open My arms to those who are dying in order to bring them back to life and I call the dead and give their lives back to them, likewise I open My arms to those who are more truly about to die and to those who are more truly dead: sinners, to bring them to eternal Life and raise them, if they are already putrid, so that they may not die again. But I will tell you a parable. A man became a leper because of his many vices. Human society banished him from its company and the man, in dire solitude, began to ponder on his situation and his sins, which had brought him to that state. Many years passed thus and when he had given up hope he suddenly recovered his health. The Lord had mercy on him because of his many prayers and tears. What did the man then do? Could he go back home because the Lord had had mercy on him? No. He had to show himself to the priest, who after examining him for some time, had him purified and sacrificed two sparrows. And after washing his clothes not only 245. 5

once, but twice, the man went back to the priest with the prescribed spotless lambs, the ewe-lamb, flour and oil. The priest then led him to the door of the Tabernacle. And the man was finally religiously readmitted amongst the people of Israel. But tell Me: when he went to the priest the first time, why did he go? »

«To be purified the first time and thus be able to go through the great purification, which would readmit him amongst the holy people! »

«You are right. So he was not entirely purified? »

«Ehi! No. There is still a lot missing before he is; with regards both to his body and his soul. »

«How did he dare then to go near the priest the first time when he was utterly unclean, and a second time to go near the Tabernacle? »

«Because the priest is the necessary means to be readmitted amongst the living. »

«And the Tabernacle? »

«Because only God can forgive sins and it is of our faith to hold that God rests in His glory beyond the Holy Veil, dispensing His pardon from that source. »

«So the cured leper is not yet clear of sin when he approaches the priest and the Tabernacle? »

«No. Certainly not! »

«Men with twisted thoughts and insincere hearts, why do you accuse Me, if I, Priest and Tabernacle, allow spiritual lepers to approach Me? Why do you have two measures to judge? Yes, the woman who was lost is now here with Me, as well as Levi the publican, who is here with his new soul and his new office and many others as well, who came before them. They may stay because they have been readmitted amongst the people of the Lord. They were brought to Me by the will of God Who has given Me the power to judge and absolve, to cure and raise people from the dead. There would be desecration if they persisted in their idolatry as Pharaoh's daughter did, but there is no desecration because they have embraced the doctrine that I brought to the earth and through it they have risen to the Grace of the Lord.

<sup>245. 6</sup> <sup>6</sup>Men of Nazareth, who lay snares for Me as you do not think that it is possible that the true Wisdom and Justice of the Word of the Father are in Me, I say to you: "Imitate sinners". They truly

surpass you in coming to the Truth. And I also say to you: "Do not have recourse to mean snares to oppose Me". Do not do that. Ask, and I will give you the vital Word, as I give it to everyone who comes to Me. Receive Me as a son of this land of ours. I bear you no grudge. My hands are full of caresses and My heart of the desire to teach you and make you happy. I am so anxious to please you, that if you wish so, I will spend the Sabbath with you, teaching you the New Law. »

There is a conflict of opinions amongst the crowd. But curiosity or love prevails and many shout: «Yes, we will be here tomorrow and will listen to You. »

«I will pray that every obstacle oppressing your hearts may be removed during the night. So that every prejudice may vanish and with free minds you may understand the Voice of God that has come to bring the Gospel to the whole world, but it is My desire that the first place capable of receiving it may be the town where I grew up. Peace to you all. »

246. An apologue for the citizens  
of Nazareth, who are incredulous.

7<sup>th</sup> August 1945.

<sup>1</sup>We are once again in the synagogue at Nazareth, but on a <sup>246. 1</sup>Sabbath.

Jesus has read the apologue\* against Abimelech and ends with the words: «"May fire come from the thorn bush and devour the cedars of Lebanon"». He then hands the roll to the head of the synagogue.

«Are You not reading the rest? You ought to read it, so that they may understand the apologue», says the head.

«It is not necessary. The days of Abimelech are very remote. I will apply the old apologue to the present time.

Listen, people of Nazareth. You already know the moral of the apologue against Abimelech, as you have been instructed by the head of your synagogue, who in his days was instructed by a rabbi, who had learned from another rabbi and so on for ag-

\* apologue in *Judges 9, 8-15*

es, always with the same method and the same conclusions. You will hear a different moral from Me. And I ask you to make use of your intelligence and not to be like the ropes of a well pulley, which, until they are worn out, run from the pulley down to the water, and then from the water back up to the pulley, without ever changing. Man is not a rope or a mechanical device. Man has been gifted with intelligence and must make use of it on his own behalf, according to needs and circumstances. Because if the letter of the word is eternal, circumstances change. Those are poor masters who do not want the trouble or the satisfaction of extracting each time new teachings, that is the spirit that the ancient wise words always contain. They will be like echoes, which can but repeat, even dozens of times, the same word, without ever adding one word of their own.

246. 2     <sup>2</sup>Mankind - the forest in fact, where all kinds of trees, shrubs and herbs are gathered, represents mankind - feels the need to be led by someone who would take upon himself all the glory and the even greater burden of authority and responsibility for the happiness or unhappiness of his subjects: someone who would be responsible to the subjects, to neighbouring countries, and what is more dreadful, to God. Because it is true that crowns and social pre-eminence, whichever they may be, are granted by men, but they are allowed by God, without Whose condescension no human power can be imposed. Which explains the sudden unimaginable changes of dynasties, which were considered everlasting and of powers which seemed untouchable, and which, when they overstepped the limit in punishing or trying people, were overthrown by the same people, with God's permission, and became nothing but dust or, at times, sewer filth.

I said: people feel the need to elect someone who will take upon himself all responsibilities towards his subjects, towards neighbouring nations and towards God, which is the most dreadful of all. Because if the judgement of history is dreadful and the interests of people endeavour in vain to change it, because future events and people will restore it to its original terrible truth, God's justice is even more relentless, because it is not affected by any pressure whatsoever, neither is it subject to changes of humour or opinion, as men too often are, and above all it is not subject to wrong judgement. Those, therefore, who

are elected leaders of peoples and makers of history ought to act with the heroic justice of saints, in order not to become ill-famed in future centuries and be punished by God forever.

<sup>3</sup>But let us go back to Abimelech's apologue. So the trees wanted to have a king and went to the olive-tree. But the latter, being a sacred tree and consecrated to supernatural use because of its oil that burns in front of the Lord and is a predominant element in tithes and sacrifices, and forms the holy balm to anoint altars, priests and kings, and for its properties I would say it is almost thaumaturgic and as such is used both on healthy and sick bodies, the olive-tree replies: "How could I fail my holy supernatural vocation to degrade myself in worldly matters?"

246. 3

Oh! How gentle was the reply of the olive tree! Why is it not learned and repeated by all those whom God elects to a holy mission, at least by those? Because in actual fact it should be pronounced by every man as a reply to the suggestions of the demon, because every man is king and a son of God, gifted with a soul, which makes him a regal divine son, called to a supernatural destiny. His soul is an altar and a house. The altar of God, the house where the Heavenly Father descends to receive the love and reverence of His son and subject. Every man has a soul, and as each soul is an altar, every man is thereby a priest, a guardian of the altar and in Leviticus it is written\*: "The Priest shall not profane himself." Man, therefore, ought to reply to the temptations, of the Demon, of the world and of the flesh: "Can I stop being spiritual and busy myself with material sinful matters?"

<sup>4</sup>The trees went then to the fig-tree, inviting it to reign over them. But the fig-tree replied: "How can I forego my sweetness and my excellent fruit to become your king?"

246. 4

Many apply to a meek and kind man to have him as their king. Not so much because they admire his kindness, but because they hope that by being very kind he will end up by being a king they can make fun of, from whom they can obtain anything they wish and whom they can abuse as they like. But kindness is not weakness. It is goodness. It is just, intelligent, firm. Never mistake kindness for weakness. The former is virtue, the latter a fault. And because it is a virtue it gives those who possess it a right-

\* it is written, in *Leviticus 21, 1-4*

eous conscience, which enables them to resist human solicitations and allurements, aiming at bending them towards worldly interests, which are not the interests of God, remaining faithful to their destiny, at all costs. A kind minded man will never repel reproaches with bitterness, neither will he ever harshly reject those who ask his help. On the contrary, smiling sympathetically he will always say: "Leave me to my peaceful destiny. I am here to comfort you and help you, but I cannot become king, according to your expectations, because I am interested in one regality only, for the welfare of your soul and mine: spiritual regality".

246 5

<sup>5</sup>The trees went to the vine and asked it to be their king. But the vine replied: "How can I forego being mirth and strength to come and reign over you? "

To be king always leads to spiritual gloom, both because of responsibilities and of remorse, because a king who does not commit sin and does not cause himself to feel remorse is more rare than a black diamond. Power allures while it shines from afar like a lighthouse, but when one reaches it, one realises that it is not a star but only the faint light of a firefly. Furthermore, power is but a strength tied with the multitude of ropes of thousands of interests stirred up around a king: the interests of courtiers, of allies, of relatives and personal ones. How many kings swear to themselves while being anointed with oil: "I will be impartial" and later are unable to be so? Like a strong tree, which does not rebel against the first embrace of flexible or thin ivy saying: "It is so slender that it can do me no harm", on the contrary it is pleased to be decked with it and to be its protector supporting its climbing, so a king, very often, I could say always, yields to the first embrace of the interest of a courtier, of an ally, or a personal one or of a relative, who applies to him and he is pleased to be their magnificent protector. "It is such a trifle! " he says, even if his conscience warns him: "Be careful! " And he thinks that it can harm neither his power nor his good name. Also the tree believes that. But the day comes when the ivy, growing in strength and in length, more and more voracious in sucking the lap of the soil and more and more anxious to climb up and conquer the sun and light, embraces, branch after branch, the whole big tree, overwhelms it, chokes it and kills it. And it was so slender! And the tree was so strong!

The same applies to kings. A first compromise with their mission, a first shrugging of shoulders at the voices of their conscience, because praise is pleasant and it is delightful to be a sought-after protector, and the moment comes when the king no longer reigns, but the interests of other people have taken over and imprison the king, they gag him and suffocate him, and if they have become stronger than he is, they kill him when they see that he is slow in dying. Also a common man, who is still a king in his spirit, is lost if he accepts a lower regality out of pride or greed. And he loses his spiritual serenity that comes to him from his union with God. Because the Demon, the world and the flesh can give an illusory power and joy, but at the cost of the spiritual cheerfulness that comes from the union with God.

O cheerfulness and strength of the poor in spirit, you really deserve that man may say: "How can I accept to become king in the inferior part, if by forming an alliance with you, I lose my internal strength and joy, Heaven and its true royalty?" And those blessed poor in spirit, who aim at possessing only the Kingdom of Heaven and despise all other riches not pertaining to that Kingdom, can also say: "How can we fail in our mission, which is to yield ripe fortifying juices and joyful juices for brotherly mankind that lives in the arid desert of animality and whose thirst is to be quenched so that it will not die and has need to be nourished with vital juices like a child without a nurse? We are the nurses of mankind that has lost the breast of God, and wanders barren and sick and would die of despair or tortured by the darkest scepticism, if it did not find us who, with the good-humoured activity of those who are free from every earthly tie, could convince them that there is a Life, a Joy, a Freedom, a Peace. We cannot forego such Charity for the sake of an interest that is miserable".

<sup>6</sup>The trees then went to the thorn bush, which did not reject <sup>246-6</sup> them. But it imposed severe terms. "If you want me as your king, you must come *under* me. But if after electing me, you will not comply, I will make every thorn of mine a burning torture and I will devour you all, including the cedars of Lebanon".

Such is the regality that the world accepts as true! Arrogance and ferocity are mistaken by corrupt mankind for true royalty, whereas meekness and goodness are considered foolish weak



sentiments. Man will not submit to God, but he submits to EVIL. He is seduced by it and consequently he is burnt by it.

246.7 That is Abimelech's apologue. <sup>7</sup>But now I will propose another one to you. It does not refer to far away and past events. But to present things and near at hand.

The animals decided to elect a king for themselves. And since they were shrewd they thought of electing one who would not frighten them being strong or wild. So they discarded the lion and all felids. They said they did not want rostrate eagles or any other kind of bird of prey. They did not trust the horse, which with its speed could reach them and see what they were doing; and they trusted even less the donkey, which they knew to be very patient, but also subject to sudden rage and equipped with powerful hooves. They were horrified at the idea of having a monkey as their king, because monkeys are too intelligent and revengeful. Under the pretext that the snake had favoured Satan in seducing man, they said that they did not want it as their king, notwithstanding its graceful colours and its smart movements. In actual fact they did not want it because they were aware of its silent gait, its powerful muscles and the dreadful effect of its poison. Could they possibly choose as their king a bull or any other animal gifted with pointed horns? Never! "Also the devil has them" they said. But they were thinking: "Should we one day rebel, it will wipe us out with its horns".

After so much discarding, they saw a little fat white lamb hopping merrily on a green meadow, hitting his mother's round udder. He had no horns and his eyes were as meek as April. He was docile and simple. And he was satisfied with everything: with the water of the little stream where he used to drink dipping his rosy little muzzle into the water; with the multi flavoured little flowers that gratified both his eyes and palate; with the thick grass where it was pleasant to lie when he was full; with the clouds, which seemed just like many little lambs roving about the blue meadows up there, and inviting him to play running in the field as they did in the sky; and, above all, he was pleased with the caresses of his mother, as she still allowed him to suckle now and again while she licked his white fleece with her pinkish tongue; with the safe fold, which was well sheltered from winds, and with its soft fragrant litter, where it was lovely

to sleep beside his mother. "He is pleased. He has neither weapons nor poison. He is naive. Let us make him our king". And they did. And they were proud of him because he was beautiful and kind, admired by nearby people and loved by his subjects because of his patient meekness.

<sup>8</sup>The days passed and the lamb became a ram and said: "The time has now come when I must *really* reign. Now I am fully aware of my mission. The will of God, Who permitted me to be elected king, has formed me for my mission and has given me the capability to reign. It is therefore just that I should exert it in a perfect manner, also because I do not want to neglect the gifts of God". And when he saw that his subjects were doing things contrary to morality, or to charity, kindness, loyalty, moderation, obedience, respect, prudence, and so on, he raised his voice to warn them. His subjects laughed at his wise and kind bleating, which did not frighten them like the roar of felines, or the screech of vultures when they dive onto a prey, or the hiss of a snake, or the barking of a frightful dog. 246. 8

The lamb, which was now a ram, did not limit himself to bleating. He went to the culprits to bring them back to their duties. But the serpent slipped away through his legs. The eagle flew away and thus deserted him. The felines pushed him aside with their paws threatening: "For the time being our soft paws are only pushing you aside. But see what is in them? Claws". Horses and similar racers began to gallop around him, making fun of him. Strong elephants and other pachyderms pushed him about with their trunks, while monkeys threw objects at him from tree-tops.

The lamb, which had become a ram, at last was angry and said: "I did not want to use my horns or my strength. Because my neck is powerful indeed, and in fact it will be taken as a model to knock down war obstacles. I did not want to make use of it, because I prefer to use love and persuasion. But since you will not yield to such weapons, I will use force, because if you fail in your duties towards me and towards God, I do not want to fail in my duty towards God and towards you. I was elected to this position by you and by God, to guide you to Justice and Good. And I want Justice and Good, that is Order, to reign here". And he punished with his horns, but only slightly, because he was kind, an obstinate cur, which continued to molest its neighbours and later with

his most powerful neck he broke down the door of the den where a greedy selfish pig had stored up victuals to the detriment of other animals, and knocked down also the liana thicket, which two lustful monkeys had chosen for their illicit love affairs.

246.9

9“*This king has become too strong. He really wants to reign. And he wants us to live as wise animals. That is not to our liking. We must dethrone him*” they decided. But a shrewd monkey suggested: “*We must do it only under the pretext of a just reason. Otherwise we shall cut a bad figure with nearby peoples and we shall be disliked by God. Therefore let us spy on every action of the lamb, which has become a ram, so that our accusation may appear a just one*”.

“*I will see to that*” said the snake. “*And I, too*” said the monkey. So they never lost sight of the lamb, as one crawled on the grass and the other remained on tree-tops, and every evening, when he retired to rest after the fatigue of his mission and to ponder on the measures to be taken and the words to be used to put down the rebellion and overcome the sinful habits of his subjects, all the animals gathered, with the rare exception of a few honest faithful ones, to listen to the report of the two spies and traitors. Because that is what they were.

The snake would say to its king: “*I follow you because I love you and should I see you being attacked, I want to be able to defend you*”. The monkey used to say: “*How much I admire you! I want to help you. Look: from here I can see that someone is committing a sin beyond that meadow. Run there*”, and then it would say to its companions: “*Today he also took part in the banquet of some sinners. He pretended to go there to convert them, but in actual fact he was an accomplice of their orgy*”. And the snake reported: “*He even went outside the limits of his people, as he approached butterflies, blue bottles and slimy snails. He is not faithful. He deals with impure foreigners*”.

That is what they were saying behind the back of the innocent lamb, and they thought that he did not know. But the spirit of the Lord Who had formed him for his mission, enlightened him also on the plots of his subjects. The lamb could have fled indignantly, cursing them. But he was kind and humble hearted. And he was full of love. His mistake was to love. And an even greater mistake was to persevere in his mission, loving and forgiving, at

the cost of death, to accomplish God's will. Oh! What mistakes these are with men. Unforgivable! So much so that it was condemned because of them. "Let him be killed; so that we may be free from his oppression". And the snake took upon itself to kill the lamb because the snake is always the traitor...

<sup>10</sup>That is the other apologue. It is for you to understand it, people of Nazareth! Because I love you, I wish you to remain at least at the level of a hostile people, without going beyond that. The love for the land where I came when a child, and in which I grew up loving you and being loved, compels Me to say to you all: "Do not be more than hostile. Do not let history say: 'His traitor and His unjust judges came from Nazareth'". 246. 10

Goodbye. Be righteous in judging and firm in willing. The former virtue applies to you all, my fellow citizens. The latter to those among you who are not upset by dishonest thoughts. I am going... Peace be with you. »

And Jesus, sorrowfully, with His head lowered, leaves the synagogue of Nazareth, in a painful silence, broken by two or three voices only, expressing approval.

<sup>11</sup>He is followed by the apostles. Alphaeus' sons are the last ones. And their eyes do not certainly look like the meek eyes of a lamb... They glare upon the hostile crowd and Judas Thaddeus does not hesitate to stand in front of his brother Simon and say to him: «I thought my brother was more honest and of a stronger character. » 246. 11

Simon lowers his head and is silent. But the other brother, supported by other people of Nazareth, exclaims: «You ought to be ashamed of offending your eldest brother! »

«No. I am ashamed of you. Of all of you. Nazareth is not a stepmother, but a perverted stepmother to the Messiah. But listen to my prophecy. You will shed enough tears to feed a fountain, but they will not serve to wash out the true name of this town and your own from history books. Do you know what that name is? "Stupidity". Goodbye. »

James' greeting is gentler: he wishes them the light of wisdom. And they go out with Alphaeus of Sarah and two young men, who, if I am not wrong, are the two ass-drivers\* who es-

\* the two ass-drivers, in 102. 5/8.

corted the donkeys that were used to go to Johanna of Chusa, when she was about to die.

246.12

<sup>12</sup>The crowds, who have remained dumbfounded, whisper: «But where did He get so much wisdom? »

«And how can He work miracles? Because He really works miracles. The whole of Palestine talks about it. »

«Is He not the son of Joseph, the carpenter? We have all seen Him, at the bench of the carpenter of Nazareth, making tables and beds, adjusting wheels and locks. He did not even go to school and His Mother was His only teacher. »

. «A scandal which also our father criticised» says Joseph of Alphaeus.

«But your brothers also finished school with Mary of Joseph. »

«Eh! My father was weak with his wife... » replies Joseph again.

«In that case, also your father's brother? »

«Yes. »

«But is He really the carpenter's son? »

«Can't you see Him? »

«Oh! So many are like one another! I think He is one who says He is, but He is not. »

«Where is Jesus of Joseph, then? »

«Do you think that His Mother would not recognise Him? »

«His brothers and sisters are here and they all say that He is their relative. Is that right, you two? »

The two sons of Alphaeus nod assent.

«Well then, He is either mad or possessed, because what He says cannot come from a workman. »

«We should not listen to Him. His alleged doctrine is either delirium or possession. »

246.13

<sup>13</sup>Jesus is standing in the square waiting for Alphaeus of Sarah who is speaking to a man. And while He is waiting, one of the ass-drivers, who had stopped at the door of the synagogue informs Him of the slander uttered in the synagogue.

«Do not let it grieve you. A prophet generally is not honoured in his fatherland or at home. Man is so foolish that he believes that one must be almost out of this world to be a prophet. And fellow citizens and relatives all know and remember more than anybody else the human nature of their fellow citizen or relative.

But the truth is always triumphant. And now I say goodbye to you. Peace be with you. »

«Thank you, Master, for curing my mother. »

«You deserved it because you believed. My people here are inert, because there is no faith here. Let us go, My friends. We shall be leaving tomorrow at dawn. »

247. Holy Mary teaches Magdalene mental oration.

8<sup>th</sup> August 1945.

<sup>1</sup>Where shall we stop, my Lord? » asks James of Zebedee, <sup>247. 1</sup> while they are walking through a gorge between two hills, the sides of which are cultivated and green from foot to top.

«At Bethlehem in Galilee. But during the warm hours we shall stop on the mountain overlooking Meraba\*. So your brother will be delighted once again seeing the sea» and Jesus smiles. He then concludes: «We men could have gone farther, but we have the women disciples following us, and although they never complain, we must not tire them excessively. »

«They never complain. That is true. We are more inclined to complain» agrees Bartholomew.

«And yet they are less accustomed to this life... » says Peter.

«Perhaps that is why they live it willingly» says Thomas.

«No, Thomas. They do it willingly out of love. You may be sure that neither My Mother nor the other housewives, such as Mary of Alphaeus, Salome and Susanna leave their homes willingly to come along the roads of the world and among people. And Martha and Johanna, when also the latter will come, not being accustomed to such fatigue, would not do it willingly if they were not urged by love. <sup>247. 2</sup>With regards to Mary of Magdala only a mighty love can give her the strength to undergo this torture» says Jesus.

«Why did You order her to come, then, if You know it is a torture? » asks the Iscariot. «It does no good to her or to us. »

«Nothing but the clear unquestionable demonstration of her change could persuade the world. And Mary wants to persuade

\* **Meraba**, here and later on (in 247. 3) may also read *Meraba* in the original handwritten copy.

the world of that. Her separation from the past has been complete. It is complete.

«That is still to be seen. It is early to say so. When one gets used to a certain kind of life, it is difficult to part with it. Friendships and nostalgia takes us back to it» says the Iscariot.

«Are you feeling nostalgia, then, for your previous life? » asks Matthew.

«I... no. I was just saying. I am I... a man, I love the Master and... in short, I have within me the elements that help me to be steadfast in my purpose. But she is a woman, and what a woman! And even if she were very firm, it is never very pleasant to have her with us. Should we meet some rabbis, priests or important Pharisees, you may rest assured that their comments might not be pleasing. When I think of it, I blush in advance. »

«Do not contradict yourself, Judas. If you have really broken off with your past, as you say, why do you regret so much that a poor soul should follow us to complete her conversion to Good? »

«Out of love, Master. I do everything out of love, too: for You. »

«Improve your love, then. Love, to be really such, must not be exclusive. When one can love only one object, and cannot love anything else, even if one is loved by what one loves, it is clear that that is not true love. Perfect love loves, with due gradation, all mankind and also animals and vegetables, stars and water, because It sees everything in God. One loves God, as is proper, and one loves everything in God. Be careful: exclusive love is often selfishness. Endeavour therefore to love everybody else out of love. »

«Yes, Master. »

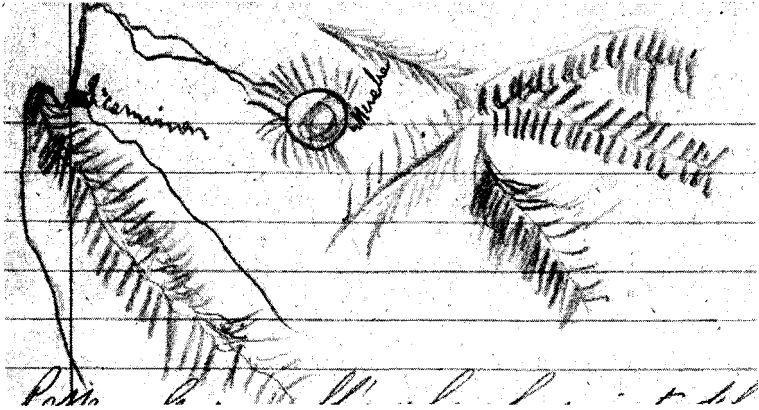
The subject of the discussion is in the meantime proceeding beside Mary with the other women, and she is unaware of being the cause of so much talk.

247. 3 <sup>3</sup>They reach and go through the village of Japhia, but none of its citizens shows any desire to follow the Master or detain Him. So they proceed and as the apostles appear to be worried about the apathy of the place, Jesus endeavours to calm them.

The valley runs in a westward direction and another village can be seen lying at the foot of another mountain. This village, which I hear being called Meraba, is also unconcerned. Only some children approach the apostles while they are drawing wa-

ter from a clear fountain leaning against a house. Jesus caresses them and asks their names, and the children ask His, who He is and where He is going. Also an old, bent, almost blind man approaches them and stretches out his hand to receive alms, which is in fact given to him.

They take to the road again, climbing a hill, the one lying across the valley, into which its little rivers flow, now reduced to a trickle of water or to stones parched by the sun. But the road is good and runs through olive-groves first and then through other trees, which intertwine their branches and form a green gallery over the road. They reach the top, which is crowned with a forest of rustling ash trees, if I am not mistaken. And they sit down there to have a rest and some food. And while eating and resting, they enjoy a delightful sight, because the view is beautiful, with the Mount Carmel chain on their left, to the west. It is a very green mountainous chain, in which all the most beautiful shades of green are present. And where the mountain ends, there is the sea, a shining, open, endless sea, stretching with its surface lightly rippled by little waves towards the north, washing the shores, which from the promontory formed by the last ramifications of Mount Carmel extend towards Ptolemais and other towns and then fade away in the mist near the Syro-Phoenician coast. It is not possible to see the sea south of the Carmel promontory, because it is hidden by the chain of mountains, which is higher than the hill where the apostolic group is gathered\*.



\* gathered. The drawing by MV follows, on which the names of *Sicaminon* and *Meraba* can be read.



Hours go by in the shade of the airy rustling wood. Some sleep, some speak in a low voice, some watch. John leaves his companions and climbs up as high as possible to have a better view. Jesus retires to a thicket to meditate and pray. The women have withdrawn behind a hedge of honeysuckle in bloom and have refreshed themselves at a tiny spring, which is reduced to a trickle and forms a pool on the ground, as the water is so scarce that it cannot flow away. The elder women, being tired, have fallen asleep, while the Blessed Virgin, Martha and Susanna talk of their faraway homes and Mary says that She would like to have the beautiful shrub in bloom to adorn Her little grotto.

247. 4 <sup>4</sup>The Magdalene, who had let her hair down, as she could not stand its weight, puts it up again and says: «I am going to John, now that he is with Simon, to look at the sea with them. »

«I am coming, too» replies the Blessed Virgin.

Martha and Susanna remain with their sleeping companions.

To reach the two apostles they have to pass near the thicket where Jesus has retired to pray.

«Prayer is My Son's rest» whispers Mary.

The Magdalene replies to Her: «I think that it is also essential for Him to be alone in order to keep His wonderful control, which the world puts to hard tests. Do You know, Mother? I have done what You told me. Every night I seclude myself for a more or less long time to restore within me the calm, which many things upset. And I feel much stronger afterwards. »

«At present you feel strong, later you will feel happy. Believe Me, Mary, both in peace and in struggle, in joy and in sorrow, our spirit needs to dive into the ocean of meditation to rebuild what the world and events demolish and to achieve fresh strength to climb higher and higher. In Israel we use and misuse vocal prayer. I do not mean that it is useless or displeasing to God. But I say that meditation, mental elevation to God is always much more useful to the soul, because by contemplating His divine perfection and our misery, or the misery of so many poor souls, not to criticise them but to be indulgent to them and understand them, and to be grateful to God Who has supported us keeping us away from sin, or has forgiven us, so that we would not be left in sin, by meditating thus, we are really successful in praying, that is in loving. Because prayer, to be really

such, must be love. Otherwise it is mumbling of lips from which the soul is absent. »

<sup>5</sup>«But is it lawful to speak to God when one's lips are still dirty with so many profane words? In my hours of meditation, which I do as You, my most sweet apostle, taught me, I do violence to my heart, which would like to say to God: "I love You"... »

247. 5

«No! Why? »

«Because I feel I would be making a sacrilegious offer by offering my heart... »

«Do not do that, My dear daughter. First of all, your heart has been reconsecrated by the Son's forgiveness, and the Father sees only that forgiveness. But even if Jesus had not yet forgiven you, and in an ignored solitude, which could be both material and moral, you should shout to God: "I love You. Father, forgive me my miseries. I am sorry for them because they grieve You", believe Me, Mary, God the Father would absolve you Himself and your cry of love would be dear to Him. Give yourself up to love. Do not do violence to it. Nay, let it become as violent as a blaze. A fire consumes everything that is material, but it does not destroy one molecule of air. Because air is incorporeal. On the contrary it purifies it from the tiny debris blown by winds and makes it lighter. Love does the same to souls. It may consume man's matter quicker, if God allows that, but it will not destroy his spirit. It will, instead, increase its vitality and will make it pure and agile to be able to ascend to God. <sup>6</sup>See John over there? He is only a boy. And yet he is an eagle. He is the strongest of all the apostles. Because he has understood the secret of strength, of spiritual formation: loving meditation. »

247. 6

«But he is pure. I... He is a boy. I... »

«Look at the Zealot, then. He is not a boy. He has lived, struggled, hated. He admits it frankly. But he has learned to meditate. And he, too, believe Me, is well high up. See? They look for each other, those two. Because they feel they are alike. They have reached the same perfect age of the spirit and by the same means: mental prayer. Through it the boy has become virile in his spirit and the man, already old and tired, has recovered a strong virility. And do you know another one, who without being an apostle will make much progress, nay, has already made much progress, because of his natural inclination to meditation, which has be-

come a spiritual necessity for him, since he is a friend of Jesus?  
Your brother. »

247.7 «My Lazarus?... <sup>7</sup>Oh! Mother! Since You know so many things because God shows them to You, tell me, how will Lazarus treat me, the first time we meet? Before he was disdainfully silent. But he did it because I would not bear being criticised. I have been very cruel to my brother and sister... I now realise it. Now that he knows that he can speak, what will he say to me? I am afraid of his frank reproach. Oh! he will certainly remind me of all the grief of which I was the cause. I would like to fly to Lazarus. But I am afraid of him. I used to go there, and not even the memories of my dead mother, her tears, which were still warm on the things she had used, tears she had shed for me, through my fault, would upset me. My heart was cynical, shameless, deaf to every voice, except to "evil". But now I no longer have the wicked strength of Evil and I tremble... What will Lazarus do to me? »

«He will open his arms to you and will call you, more with his heart than with his lips "my darling sister". He is so formed in God that he can but behave thus. Be not afraid. He will not say one word about your past. It is just as if I could see him, he is there at Bethany and his days of waiting are very long for him. He is waiting for you, to clasp you to his heart, to sate his brotherly love. All you have to do is love him as he loves you to enjoy the happiness of being born of the same womb. »

«I would love him even if he reproached me. I deserve it. »

«But he will love you only. Nothing else. »

247.8 <sup>8</sup>They have joined John and Simon who are talking of their future trips and stand up reverently when the Mother of the Lord arrives.

«We have come too, to praise the Lord for the beautiful works of His creation. »

«Have you ever seen the sea, Mother? »

«Oh! I have. And although it was then stormy, it was less agitated than My heart, and less bitter than My tears, when I was fleeing along the coast from Gaza towards the Red Sea, with My Child in My arms, and the fear of Herod behind My back. And I saw it on our way back. And then it was springtime both on the earth and in My heart. The spring season of our return home. And Jesus clapped His little hands, happy as He was seeing new

things... And Joseph and I were also happy, notwithstanding that the kindness of the Lord had made our exile at Matarea less hard, in a thousand ways. »

And their conversation goes on whilst I can no longer see or hear.

248. In Bethlehem in Galilee. Judgment of a murder  
and parable of the forests turned into stones.

9<sup>th</sup> August 1945.

<sup>1</sup>It is evening when they reach Bethlehem in Galilee. It is obvious that it is the destiny of towns with this name to lie on undulating hills, covered with green, woods, meadows where flocks graze, descending to the folds at night. The sky is still red after a glorious sunset, which is just over, and the air is full of pastoral music of bells and trembling bleatings, which are joined by the merry shouting of children and by the voices of mothers calling them. 248. 1

«Judas of Simon, go with Simon and find lodgings for us and for the women. There is an inn in the centre of the village and we shall meet you there. »

While Judas and Simon obey, Jesus turns to His Mother and says: «This time it will not be like the other Bethlehem. You will find where to rest, Mother. Few people move about at this time of the year and there is no edict. »

«In this season it would be pleasant to sleep also on meadows or amongst these shepherds and the little lambs» and Mary smiles at Her Son and at some little shepherds who are staring at Her curiously.

<sup>2</sup>She smiles in such a way that one of them touches another with his elbow and whispers to him: «It must be Her» and he comes forward, sure of himself, saying: «Hail, Mary, full of grace. Is the Lord with You? » 248. 2

Mary replies with an even sweeter smile: «There is the Lord» and She points to Jesus, Who has turned around to speak to His cousins, asking them to give alms to the poor who are approaching them with plaintive requests. And She touches Her Son lightly saying to Him: «Son, these little shepherds are looking for You

and they have recognised Me. I do not know how... »

«Isaac must have been here and left the perfume of revelation. Young man, come here. »

The little shepherd, a little swarthy fellow, about twelve to fourteen years old, strong though lean, with very dark bright eyes, and an ebony shock of hair, clad in sheep skin - and he seems to me a young copy of the Precursor - approaches Jesus smiling happily, as if he were enchanted.

«Peace to you, boy. How did you recognise Mary? »

«Because only the Mother of the Saviour could have such a smile and countenance. I was told: "The countenance of an angel, eyes like stars and a smile sweeter than the kiss of a mother, as sweet as Her name, which is Mary, so holy as to be able to bend over the new-born God". That is what I saw in Her and I greeted Her because I was looking for You. We were looking for You Lord, and... I did not dare greet You first. »

«Who spoke to you of Us? »

«Isaac, from the other Bethlehem, and he promised to take us to You in autumn. »

«Was Isaac here? »

248. 3 «He is still in this area with many disciples. And he spoke to us shepherds. And we believed in his word, <sup>3</sup>Lord: allow us to adore You as our companions did on that blessed night» and while he kneels down on the dust of the road, he utters a cry to the other shepherds who have stopped their flocks at the gate of the town (gate so to say, because it is not a walled town), where also Jesus had stopped, waiting for the women to enter the town together.

The little shepherd shouts: «Father, brothers and friends, we have found the Lord. Come and worship Him. »

And the shepherds come crowding with their flocks around Jesus and they beg Him not to go elsewhere but to accept their poor house, which is not far, as a dwelling place for Himself and His friends. «It is a wide fold» they explain «because God protects us and there are rooms and porches full of fragrant hay. The rooms are for Mother and Her sisters, because they are women. But there is one also for You. The others can sleep with us in the porches, on the hay. »

«I shall stay with you, too. And I shall rest more pleasantly

than if I slept in a king's room. But let us go and tell Judas and Simon first. »

«I will go, Master» says Peter and he goes away with James of Zebedee.

They stop on the side of the road awaiting the return of the four apostles.

<sup>4</sup>The shepherds look at Jesus as if He were already God in His glory. The younger ones are really delighted and they seem to be wishing to impress in their minds every detail of Jesus and Mary, who has bent to caress some lambs, which are rubbing their heads against Her knees and bleating. 248. 4

«There was one, in the house of My relative Elizabeth, which used to lick My plaits every time it saw Me. I called it "friend", because it was My friend, just like a child, and it came to Me every time it could. This one reminds Me of it with its eyes of two different shades. Do not kill it! Also the other was allowed to live because of its love for Me. »

«It's a ewe-lamb Woman, and we were going to sell it, because of the different shades of its eyes and I think it can see very little with one of them. But we will keep it if You wish so. »

«Oh! yes! I would not like any little lamb to be killed... They are so innocent and with their child like voices they seem to be calling their mothers. I would think I was killing a baby if I had to kill one of these. »

«But, Woman, if all the lambs were to live, there would be no room for us on the earth» says the oldest shepherd.

«I know. But I am thinking of their pain, and of the pain of their mothers. They weep so much when their little ones are taken away from them. They look like real mothers, like us. I cannot bear to see anybody suffer, but it tears My heart to see a mother tortured. It is a different grief from any other, because the shock for the loss of a son tears not only our hearts and brains, but our very wombs. We mothers are always united to our sons. And it tears us completely, when they are taken away from us. » Mary no longer smiles, but tears shine in Her blue eyes and She looks at Jesus Who is listening to Her and looks at Her, while She lays a hand on His arm, as if She were afraid He might be torn away from Her side.

<sup>5</sup>A small escort of armed men arrives from a dusty road: six 248. 5

men together with some people who are shouting. The shepherds look and whisper something to one another. They then look at Mary and Jesus.

The oldest one says: «So it was a good job that You did not go into Bethlehem this evening. »

«Why? »

«Because those people, who passed by going to town, have gone to tear a son from his mother. »

«Oh! But why? »

«To kill him. »

«Oh! no! What has he done? »

Jesus also asks the same question and the apostles have gathered to hear.

«Rich Joel was found dead on the mountain road: he had been killed. He was coming back from Sicaminon with a lot of money. But he was not killed by highwaymen, because the money was still there. The servant, who was accompanying him, said that his master had told him to run ahead and inform relatives of their return, and on the way he saw the young man, whom they are now going to kill, going towards the place where the man was murdered. And two men of the town now swear that they saw the young man attack Joel. Joel's relatives now demand his death. And if he is a murderer... »

«Do you not think he is? »

«I don't think it is possible. The young man is a little older than a boy, he is good, and is always with his mother, as he is her only son and she is a widow and a holy living person. He is well off. He does not bother with women. He is neither quarrelsome nor foolish. So why did he kill? »

«Perhaps he has some enemies. »

«Who? Joel, the dead man, or Abel, the one who is accused? »

«The latter. »

«Ah! I would not know... But... No, I would not know. »

«Be frank, man. »

«Lord, it is something I am thinking of, and Isaac told us that we must not think ill of our neighbours

«But one must have courage to speak to save an innocent persons

«If I speak, whether I am right or wrong, I shall have to flee

from here, because Aser and Jacob are powerful. »

«Speak without fear. You will not have to flee. »

«Lord, Abel's mother is young, beautiful and wise. Aser is not wise, neither is Jacob. The former likes the widow and the latter... everybody in town knows that the latter sleeps in Joel's bed. I think that... »

«I see. <sup>6</sup>Let us go, My friends. You women stay here with the shepherds. I shall be back soon. » 248. 6

«No, Son. I am coming with You. »

Jesus is already walking fast towards the centre of the town. The shepherds are uncertain as to what to do, but they leave the flocks to the younger ones, who stay with all the women, with the exception of the Blessed Virgin and Mary of Alphaeus, who follow Jesus and they go to meet the apostolic group.

At the third road crossing the main street in Bethlehem they meet the Iscariot, Simon, Peter and James, who are coming towards them gesticulating and shouting.

«What a terrible thing, Master! And how painful! » exclaims Peter who is deeply upset.

«A son torn off his mother to be killed, and she is defending him like a hyena. But she is a woman against armed men» adds Simon Zealot.

«Many parts of her body are already bleeding» says the Iscariot.

«They broke her door down because she had barricaded it» concludes James of Zebedee.

«I am going to her. »

«Oh! yes! You are the only one who can console her. »

<sup>7</sup>They turn right, then left, towards the town centre. It is now possible to see the excited tumultuous crowd pressing near Abel's house, and the heart-rending, inhuman, wild and at the same time, pitiful shouting of a woman can be heard. 248. 7

Jesus quickens His pace and arrives at a very small square, a widened curve of the street rather than a square, where the uproar is at its greatest.

The woman is still contending for her son with the guards, holding on with one hand, which is like an iron claw, to the ruin of the knocked down door, and to her son's belt with the other one and she savagely bites anyone who tries to loosen her grip,



notwithstanding they deal her many blows and pull her hair so cruelly as to throw her head back. When she does not bite she shouts: «Leave him! Murderers! He's innocent! The night Joel was killed he was in bed beside me! Murderers! Slanderers! Foul Perjurers! »

And the young man, whom the armed men are holding by the shoulders and dragging by the arms, turns around terror-stricken and shouts: «Mother, mother! Why must I die if I have not done anything? »

He is a handsome tall slender young man, with dark mild eyes, and dark wavy hair. His torn garment shows the young agile body of an adolescent.

Jesus with the help of those who accompany Him, pushes His way through the crowd, as compact as a rock, and reaches the pitiful group just at the moment when the exhausted woman is torn away from the door and dragged along the stony road, like a sack, tied to the body of her son. But that lasts for only a few yards. A more violent jerk tears the mother's hand off the young man's belt and the woman falls prone on the ground beating the road with her face, which bleeds profusely. But she gets up on her knees, stretching out her arms, while her son, who is being dragged away swiftly, as far as the crowds allow, as they open out with difficulty, frees his left arm and waves it, twisting around and shouting: «Mother! Goodbye! Remember, at least you, that I am innocent! ». The woman looks at him with staring eyes, she then faints and drops to the ground.

248. 8 <sup>8</sup>Jesus stops before the group of captors. «Stop for one moment. I order you! » His countenance allows no objection.

«Who are You? » aggressively asks a citizen in the group. «We do not know You. Move aside and let us go so that he may be killed before night. »

«I am a Rabbi. The greatest. In the name of Jehovah stop, or He will strike you by lightning». In the meantime He seems to be striking by lightning. «Who are the witnesses against this man? »

«I, him and him» replies the man who had spoken before.

«Your testimony is not valid because it is false. »

«How can You say that? We are ready to swear it. »

«Your oath is a sin. »

«We are sinning? Are we? »

«You are. As you nurse your lust and your hatred, as you are greedy for wealth, as you are murderers, so you are also perjurers. You have sold yourselves to Filth. You are capable of any filthy deeds

«Watch how You speak! I am Aser... »

«And I am Jesus. »

«You do not belong here, You are neither a priest nor a judge. You are nothing. You are a foreigner. »

«Yes, I am a Foreigner because the earth is not My Kingdom. But I am Judge and Priest. Not only of this small portion of Israel, but of the whole of Israel and of the whole world. »

«Let's go, let's go! We are dealing with a mad man» says the other witness and he gives Jesus a vigorous push to draw Him aside.

«You shall not take another step» thunders Jesus, whose majestic countenance subdues and paralyses, as it can give life and joy when He wishes. «You shall not take another step. <sup>248. 9</sup>You do not believe what I am saying? Well, look. There is no dust\* of the Temple here, or water from it, neither are there words written with ink to make the water bitter, which is judgement on jealousy and adultery. But I am here. And I will give judgements Jesus' voice is so piercing that it sounds like a blare.

People throng to see. Only the Blessed Virgin and Mary of Alphaeus have stayed to help the mother who has fainted.

«And this is My judgement. Give me a pinch of dust from the road and a drop of water in a jug. And while they are being brought to Me, you who are accusing, and you who are accused, reply to Me. Are you innocent, son? Say so frankly to Him Who is your Saviours

«I am, Lords

«Aser can you swear that you have spoken but the truth? »

«I swear it. I have no reason to lie. I swear it by the altar. May fire descend from Heaven and burn me if I am not telling the truths

«Jacob, can you swear that you are sincere in accusing and that there is no secret motive urging you to lie? »

\* *dust, etc. these are the elements to carry out the judgement of God in Numbers 5, 11-31.*

«I swear by Jehovah. Only the love for my slain friend induces me to speak. I have no personal grudge against him. »

«And you, servant, can you swear that you have told the truth. »

«I will swear it a thousand times, if necessary! My master, my poor master! » and he covers his head with his mantle.

«Good. Here is the water and here is the dust. And this is the word. “Holy Father and Most High God, pass judgement on truth through Me, so that life and honour may be given to the innocent man and to the anguished mother, and suitable punishment to those who are not innocent. But because of the grace, which I enjoy in Your eyes, let neither fire nor death, but a long expiation come to them who have committed sin”. »

He says these words stretching His hand over the pitcher, as priests do at the altar, during Mass at offertory. He then dips His right hand into the pitcher and with His wet hand He sprays the four men under judgement and makes each drink a drop of water: first the young fellow and then the others. He then folds His arms across His chest and looks at them.

248. 10 <sup>10</sup>Also the crowds look, but after a few moments they utter a cry and throw themselves down, with their faces on the ground. The four men then, who are lined up, look at one another and shout in turn: the young man out of amazement, the others out of horror because they see their faces covered with sudden leprosy, whereas the young fellow is immune from it.

The servant throws himself at the feet of Jesus, Who steps aside, like everybody else, including the soldiers, and taking young Abel by the hand draws him away as well, so that he may not become contaminated near the three lepers. And the servant shouts: «No! No! Forgive me! I- am a leper! They paid me to delay my master until evening, so that they could kill him on the desert road. They made me unshoe his mule on purpose. They instructed me how to lie saying that I had come ahead. Instead I was with them killing him. And I will also tell You why they did it. Because Joel had found out that Jacob was in love with his young wife and because Aser wanted the mother of this young man and she refused him. So they made an agreement to get rid of Joel and Abel at the same time and then have a nice time with the women. I have told You everything. Cleanse me of my lepro-

sy! Abel, you are good, pray for me! »

«Abel, go to your mother, so that when she comes round she may see your face and thus come back to life happily. And you... I should say to you: Let it be done to you what you have done». And it would be human justice. But I am entrusting you to a superhuman expiation. The leprosy, which you abhor, saves you from being seized and killed as you deserve. People of Bethlehem, step aside, open out, as the water of the sea did and let these men go to their long imprisonment. A dreadful imprisonment! More dreadful than sudden death. Divine pity has granted them the possibility to make amends, if they wish so. Go! »

The crowds throng against the walls of houses leaving the centre of the road free, and the three men, covered with leprosy as if they had been affected by the disease for years, go towards the mountain, walking one behind the other. In the silence of approaching twilight, when all birds and animals become quiet only their moaning can be heard.

«Purify the street with plenty of water, after lighting fires on it. And you, soldiers, go and report that justice has been done according to the most perfect Mosaic Law. » And Jesus is about to go where His Mother and Mary of Clopas are still assisting the woman who is coming to herself slowly, while her son is caressing and kissing her cold hands.

<sup>11</sup>But the people of Bethlehem with almost terrified respect beg Him: «Speak to us, Lord. You are really powerful. You are certainly the One mentioned by the man who came here announcing the Messiah. » 248. 11

«I will speak to you tonight, near the fold of the shepherds. I am now going to comfort Abel's mother. »

And He goes to the woman, who is sitting on the lap of Mary of Alphaeus and is recovering her senses. She looks at the loving face of Our Lady Who smiles at her, but she is not fully aware of the situation until her eyes rest on the dark haired head of her son bent over her trembling hands, and she asks: «Am I dead, too? Is this Limbo? »

«No, woman. This is the Earth. This is your son saved from death. And this is Jesus, My Son, the Saviour. »

The first reaction of the woman is simply human. She collects all her strength and leans forward to take the bent head of her

son in her hands, she sees that he is safe and sound, she kisses him frantically, weeping, laughing, repeating all possible pet names to express her joy.

«Yes, mother, yes. But now look, not at me, at Him, at Him Who saved me. Bless the Lord. »

The woman, still too weak to stand up or get up on her knees, stretches out her trembling bleeding hands and takes Jesus' hand kissing and wetting it with tears.

Jesus lays His left hand on her head saying to her: «Be happy. In peace. And be always good. And you, too, Abel. »

«No, my Lord. My son's life and mine are Yours, because You have saved them. Let him go with Your disciples, as he has been wishing to, since they were here. I offer him to You with so much joy and I beg You to allow me to follow him, to serve him and the servants of God. »

«And what about your house? »

«Oh! Lord! Can one risen from death have the same affections one had before dying? Myrtha has come back from death and out of hell through You. In this town I may go as far as hating those who tortured me through my child. And You preach love. I know. So let poor Myrtha love the Only One Who deserves love, and let her love His mission and His servants. Just now I am still exhausted and I would not be able to follow You. But allow me, my Lord, to do so as soon as I am fit. I will follow You and be with my Abel... »

«You will follow your son and Me. Be happy and in peace now. With My peace. Goodbye. »

And while the woman goes into her house supported by her son and other kind people, Jesus leaves the town with the shepherds, the apostles, His Mother and Mary of Alphaeus, and goes towards the fold, which is situated at the end of a road, in the fields.

248 12

<sup>12</sup>... A bonfire lights up the meeting. Many people sitting in semicircles are waiting for Jesus to come and speak to them. In the meantime they are talking of the events of the day. Abel is there as well and many congratulate him stating that *everybody* believed in his innocence.

The young man cannot help replying: «But you were still prepared to kill me! Even you who had greeted me at the doorstep

of my house, just at the time Joel was killed» And he adds: «But I forgive you in Jesus' name. »

Jesus is now coming from the fold towards them: tall, clad in white, surrounded by the apostles, followed by the shepherds and women.

«Peace to you all.

If My coming here has served to establish the Kingdom of God among you, blessed be the Lord. If My coming here has served to make innocence shine, blessed be the Lord. If My coming here in time to prevent a crime serves also the purpose of giving three culprits the possibility of redeeming themselves, blessed be the Lord. Of all the many things on which this day induces us to meditate, and on which we shall be meditating while night falls to wrap in its darkness the joy of two hearts and the remorse of three others - and in its darkness it hides, as in a chaste veil, the joyful tears of the former and the bitter ones of the latter, which, however God sees - there is one thing which points out that there is nothing useless in what God gave as His Law.

<sup>13</sup>The Law given by God, nominally, is strictly observed in Israel. But in actual fact it is not. The Law is analysed, dissected, hashed, to the extent of causing it to die through the torture of petty quibbles. It is there. But as a mummified body has no life, no breathing and no blood circulation, notwithstanding it looks like a body that is motionless because fast asleep, so the Law has no life, no breathing, no blood in far too many hearts. One can sit on a mummy as on a stool. One can lay things on a mummy, such as clothes, even filth, if one wishes, and the mummy will not rebel, because it has no life. Likewise too many people make a stool of the Law, a place where to lay things or discharge their filth, sure that it will not rebel in their consciences, which are dead. 248. 13

I could compare a large portion of Israel to the petrified forests that one can see strewn in the Nile Valley and in the Egyptian desert. They were woods, woods of living trees, nourished with sap, rustling in the sunshine, with beautiful leaves, flowers and fruit. They made of the spot where they came up a small earthly paradise, dear to men and to animals, who forgot the desolate aridity of the desert, the parching thirst which sand causes to man, penetrating his throat with burning dust. They forgot

the merciless sun that calcifies corpses in a short time, removing their flesh and turning it into dust, leaving clean skeletons stretched on the sand, so clean that they look as if they had been diligently polished by a workman. They forgot everything in the green rustling shade, rich in water and fruit, which refreshed and comforted them and gave them energy for new journeys.

Then, for some unknown reason, like cursed things, they withered like trees that, after dying, still serve to light fires for man, or bonfires to illuminate the night, to keep away wild animals, or disperse the dampness of the night for pilgrims far from their houses. But those did not serve as firewood. They became like stones. The silica of the soil seemed to have climbed from the roots up to the trunk, the branches and leaves, through witchcraft. The winds then broke the thinner branches, which had become like alabaster, which is hard and soft at the same time. But the stronger branches are still there, on the powerful trunks, to deceive tired caravans. In fact in the dazzling reflection of the sun or the spectral moonlight, caravans can see the shadows of the straight trunks stand out on tablelands or at the bottom of valleys, which receive water only at the time of the fertile floods, and they rush towards the phantom forests, both because they are anxious to find shelter, refreshment, water and fresh fruit, and because their tired eyes are dazzled by the sun shining on the shadeless sand. True phantoms! Illusive likeness of living bodies. Real presence of dead things.

I saw them. Although I was little older than a baby, I remember them as one of the saddest things on the Earth. That is how they appeared to Me, until I touched, experienced, and weighed the entirely sad things of the Earth, because they are completely dead things. Immaterial things, that is dead virtues and dead souls. The former are dead in souls, the latter are dead because they killed themselves.

248 14

<sup>14</sup>There is the Law in Israel. But it is there like the petrified trees in the desert that have become silica, death, deceit. They are things destined to wear away without being of any use. Nay, they are harmful, because they cause mirages that allure people diverting them from true oases and thus cause them to die of thirst, hunger and desolation. They are death, attracting others to death, as we read in certain tales of pagan myths.

You have had an example today of what a Law is when it is reduced to stone in a soul that has also become stone. It is all kinds of sins and the cause of misfortune. May this serve you to learn how to live and to let the Law live within you, in its integrity, which I enlighten with the light of mercy.

It is the dead of night. The stars are looking down at us and God is looking down at us as well. Look up to the starry sky and elevate your souls to God. And without criticising the unhappy men already punished by God, and without any pride of being free from such sins, promise to God and to yourselves that you will not fall into the aridity of the cursed trees in the Egyptian deserts and valleys.

Peace be with you. »

He blesses them and then withdraws into the large fold enclosure, surrounded by rustic porches under which the shepherds have spread much hay as beds for the servants of the Lord.

#### 249. Holy Mary teaches Judas of Iscariot on the duty of faith to God.

10<sup>th</sup> August 1945.

<sup>1</sup>The calm sunny morning helps the apostolic group to climb up some hills stretching westwards, that is towards the sea. 249. 1

«We did the right thing by arriving at the mountains early in the morning. We could not have stayed in the plain in this heat. It is shady and cool here. I feel sorry for those who are following the Roman road. It is all right in winter, of course» says Matthew.

«After these hills we shall meet the wind from the sea. It always mitigates the air» says Jesus.

«We shall eat up on the top. The other day it was so beautiful. And from here it must be even more so because we are closer to Mount Carmel and to the sea» adds James of Alphaeus.

«Our fatherland is beautiful indeed!» exclaims Andrew.

«Yes. There is really everything. Mountains covered with snow, pleasant hills, lakes and rivers, all kinds of trees, and there is also the sea. It is really the delicious country celebrated by our psalmists, prophets, our great warriors and poets» says Thaddeus.



«Repeat some of the passages, since you know so many things» asks James of Zebedee.

«"With the beauty of Paradise He formed the earth of Judas. With the smiles of His angels He adorned the land of Naphtali and with rivers of heavenly honey He flavoured the fruit of his land...

The whole creation is mirrored in you, gem of God, granted by God to His holy people.

O blissful land, your beauty is for the hearts of your children sweeter than the rich grapes maturing on your hillsides, more delicious than the milk filling the udders of your ewe lambs, more inebriating than the honey with the flavour of flowers adorning you.

The sky descended to become a river uniting two gems forming a pendant and a girdle on your green dress.

The Jordan sings, one of your seas smiles, while the other reminds men that God is full of awe and in the evening the hills seem to be dancing like merry girls on a meadow, and at angelical dawns your mountains pray or sing halleluja in the ardour of the sun, or adore Your power with the stars, Most High Lord.

You did not enclose us in narrow borders, but You gave us the open sea to tell us that the world is ours". »

«Lovely! Really beautiful! I have only been on the lake and to Jerusalem; for years and years I have seen nothing else. So far I know only Palestine. But I am sure there is nothing more beautiful in the world» says Peter full of national pride.

«Mary was telling me that also the Nile valley is beautiful» says John.

«And the man of Endor speaks of Cyprus as if it were paradise» adds Simon.

«Eh! But our land!... »

And all the apostles with the exception of the Iscariot and Thomas, who are with Jesus a little ahead of the others, go on praising the beauty of Palestine.

The women are last to come, as they cannot stop themselves from picking seeds of flowers to be sown in their gardens, also because the flowers are beautiful and will be a remembrance of their journey.

249. 2 <sup>2</sup>Some eagles, I think they are sea eagles or vultures, are fly-

ing in wide circles over the hill tops, swooping down now and again in search of prey. And two vultures begin to fight, attacking each other in swift evolutions in the air, both losing feathers at each assault: an elegant but fierce duel that ends with the flight of the defeated one, which perhaps withdraws to die on a remote mountain top. At least that is what everybody thinks, judging by its laborious flying, as if it were about to die.

«Greed did it no good» comments Thomas.

«Greed and stubbornness always cause trouble. Also those three yesterday!... Eternal mercy! What a dreadful destiny! » says Matthew.

«Will they never recover? » asks Andrew.

«Ask the Master».

When Jesus is asked, He replies: «It would be better to ask whether they will convert. Because I solemnly tell you that it is better to die a holy leper than a healthy sinner. Leprosy will remain on the Earth, in the serious. Sins last forever. »

<sup>3</sup>«I liked Your speech of yesterday evening very much» says <sup>249.3</sup> the Zealot.

«I, instead, didn't. It was too severe for too many people in Israel» says the Iscariot.

«Are you one of them? »

«No, Master. »

«Well, then. Why are you concerned? »

«Because it could be detrimental to You. »

«Should I then come to terms with sinners and be their accomplice in order to avoid possible detriment? »

«I don't say that. You could not do that. But be quiet. Do not alienate the mighty ones... »

«Silence gives consent. I do not consent to sin. Neither of common people, nor of mighty ones. »

«See what happened to the Baptist? »

«His glory. »

«His glory? I think it was his ruin. »

«Persecution and death suffered to be faithful to our duty are a glory for man. A martyr is always glorious. »

But by his death he prevents himself from being a master, and grieves disciples and relatives. He frees himself from every pain, but leaves others in greater suffering. The Baptist has no rela-

fives, that is true. But he still has duties towards his disciples. »

«Even if he had relatives, it would still be the same. Vocation is more than blood. »

«And what about the fourth commandment? »

«It comes after those concerning God. »

«You saw yesterday how a mother can suffer for her son... »

«Mother! Come here. »

Mary hastens towards Jesus and asks: «What do You want, Son? »

«Mother, Judas of Kerioth is pleading Your cause, he loves You and loves Me. »

«My cause? In regard to what? »

«He wants to persuade Me to be more prudent, so that I may not have to suffer like our relative, the Baptist. And he is telling Me that sons must have mercy on their mothers, by sparing themselves on their behalf, because that is what the fourth commandment prescribes. What do You say? You may speak, Mother, so that You may kindly instruct our Judas. »

249. 4 «I say that I would no longer love My Son as God, that I would begin to doubt whether I have always been mistaken and whether I have always been deceived concerning His Nature, if I saw Him fail in His perfection, by lowering His thought to human consideration, losing sight of superhuman considerations that is, the redemption, the effort to redeem men, for their own sake and for the glory of God, at the cost of procuring for Himself affliction and hatred. I would still love Him as a Son led astray by a wicked power, I would love Him out of pity, because He is My Son, because He would be a poor wretch, but I could not love Him with the fullness of love with which I love Him now that I see Him faithful to the Lord. »

«You mean to Himself. »

«To the Lord. Now He is the Messiah of the Lord and must be loyal to the Lord like anybody else, more than anybody else, because His mission is greater than any other that was, is or ever will be on the Earth, and He certainly has from God suitable assistance for such a great mission. »

«But if anything wrong happened to Him, would You not weep? »

«I would shed all My tears. But I would weep tears of blood if

I saw Him faithless to God. »

«That will greatly diminish the guilt of those who will persecute Him. »

«Why? »

«Because both You and He almost justify them. »

«Do not believe it. Their sins will always be the same in the eyes of God whether we judge that it is inevitable, or we deem that no man in Israel ought to be guilty towards the Messiah. »

«Man in Israel? And if they were Gentiles would it not be the same? »

«No, it would not. The Gentiles would be in the wrong only towards a fellow man. Israel knows who Jesus is. »

«Many in Israel do not know. »

«*They do not want to know.* They are deliberately incredulous. Thus they add incredulity to anticharity and they deny hope. It is not a small sin Judas to tread on the three main virtues. It is a serious sin, more serious spiritually than any material action against My Son. »

Judas, who is short of arguments, bends to lace a sandal and is left behind.

<sup>5</sup>They reach the top of the mountain, or rather a ledge almost at the top, a ledge protruding forth as if it wished to run towards the beautiful blue sea. A thick wood of holm-oaks filters a clear emerald light, pierced by soft sunbeams as thin as needles. The charming airy mountain crest opens onto the nearby sea coast, opposite the majestic Mount Carmel chain. Below, at the foot of the mountain with the ledge protruding as if it were anxious to fly up, after some little fields situated in the central part of the mountain side, there is a narrow valley with a deep torrent, which must certainly be imposingly impetuous in time of floods, but is now reduced to a tiny silvery foaming stream in the middle of its bed. The torrent flows towards the sea along the foot of Mount Carmel. A road runs along the torrent, above its right hand bank and links a town situated in the middle of the bay to other inland towns, perhaps in Samaria, if I understand my bearings correctly. 249. 5

«That town is Sicaminon» says Jesus. «We shall be there late in the evening. Let us have a rest now, because the descent is difficult, though cool and short. »

And sitting in a circle, they talk to one another and to the women, while roasting on a rustic spit a lamb, certainly a gift of the shepherds...

250. To the disciples that arrived with Isaac,  
the parable of the mud that turned into a flame.  
The sacrifice of John of Endor.

11<sup>th</sup> August 1945.

250.1

It is on the bank of the deep torrent that Jesus finds Isaac with many known and unknown disciples. The known ones include: the head of the synagogue of the Clear Water, Timoneus; Joseph of Emmaus, the one accused of incest; the young man who did not bury his father to follow Jesus; Stephen; Abel, the leper cured near Korazim with his friend Samuel; Solomon, the ferryman of Jerico, and many more, whom I recognise, but I do not remember in the least where I saw them or their names. Many faces indeed are known to me, but only as faces of disciples. And there are other people who have been converted by Isaac or by the above mentioned disciples and are following the main group hoping to find Jesus.

Their meeting is tender, joyful and respectful. Isaac's eyes are beaming with joy, when he looks at the Master and shows Him his new flock and as a reward he asks Jesus to say a few words to his people.

«Do you know any quiet place where we can gather together?»

«At the end of the bay there is a desert beach, with some hovels of fishermen, which are empty at this time of the year because they are unhealthy and because the fishing season of fish to be salted is over and the fishermen have gone to Syro-Phoenicia to fish for murices. Many of them already believe in You because they heard You speak in sea towns or because they found disciples, and they have given us the little houses to rest in. We go there after a mission. Because there is a lot to be done in this area. It is deeply corrupted by many things. I would like to go as far as Syro-Phoenicia, and I could do it by sea, because the coast is parched by the sun and it is impossible to go there on foot. But

I am a shepherd, not a sailor, and among my people there is not even one who can sail. »

Jesus, Who listens carefully, smiling lightly, lowering His head a little, as He is so tall compared with the little shepherd who, like a soldier, is reporting everything to his general, replies: «God helps you because of your humbleness. If I am known here it is due to you, My disciple, and to no one else. <sup>2</sup>We will now ask the men of the lake whether they feel they can sail the sea, and if possible, we will go to Syro-Phoenicia. » And He turns around looking for Peter, Andrew, James and John, who are talking animatedly to some disciples, while Judas is warmly congratulating Stephen, and the Zealot, Bartholomew and Philip are near the women. The other four are with Jesus.

250. 2

The four fishermen come at once. «Do you feel up to sailing the sea? » asks Jesus.

The four look at one another perplexed. Peter ruffles his hair while pondering on the matter. He then asks: «But where? Off shore? We are fresh water fish... »

«No, along the coast, as far as Sidon. »

«Hmm! I think it can be done. What do you say? »

«I think so, too. Sea or lake, it is still the same thing: water» says James.

«Nay: it will be even more beautiful and easier» exclaims John.

«I don't know how you can say that» replies his brother.

«It's his fondness for the sea. He who loves something, sees every perfection in it. If you loved a woman like that, you would be a perfect husband» says Peter jokingly shaking him affectionately.

«No, I am saying so because at Ashkelon I saw that manoeuvres are the same and navigation very smooth» replies John.

«Well, let us go, then! » exclaims Peter.

«However, it would be better to have someone from here. We have no experience with this sea and its depth contour» remarks James.

«Oh! I would not even think of that. We have Jesus with us! Before I was not yet certain, but after He calmed the lake! Let us go with the Master to Sidon. Perhaps there is some good to be done there» says Andrew.

«Well, we shall go. You will get the boats tomorrow. Ask Judas of Simon to give you the purse. »

<sup>3</sup>And all mixed together, apostles and disciples - and it is needless to say how happy many are, particularly the ones already well known to Jesus - they retrace their steps going back towards the town, and walk around the outskirts, until they reach the end of the bay, which protrudes into the sea like a bent arm. A few little houses there, spread on the narrow pebbly shore, represent the most poverty-stricken and depopulated quarter of the town, which is inhabited only at intervals.

The walls of the little cubic shaped houses are worn away by salt and age and they are all closed. When the disciples open them, they show their smoky misery and bare essential furnishings.

«Here they are. They are not beautiful, but are clean and comfortable» says Isaac, who is doing the honours of the house.

«The poor things are certainly not beautiful. The Clear Water was a royal palace in comparison. And there were some who complained!... » grumbles Peter.

«But they are a real fortune to us. »

«Of course! The all important thing is to have a roof over your head and to be fond of one another. Oh! look, there is our John! How are you? Where were you? »

But John of Endor, although smiling at Peter, runs to greet Jesus Who replies to him with very kind words.

«I did not let him come because he has not been well... I prefer him to stay here. He is so clever with citizens and with those who ask information on the Messiah... » says Isaac.

The man from Endor is indeed much thinner than before. But his countenance is serene. His emaciation ennobles his features, so that one thinks of him as a man already affected by the double martyrdom of flesh and soul.

Jesus watches him and asks: «Are you not well, John? »

«I am not any worse than I was before seeing You. And that as far as my body is concerned. With regards to my soul, I think I am recovering from my peculiar wounds. »

Jesus looks at his peaceful eyes and hollow temples but does not say anything. He lays a hand on his shoulder while entering a little house with him, into which they have brought basins of

salt water to refresh their tired feet and pitchers of cool water to quench their thirst, while outside they are laying the table on a rustic board shaded by a very poor pergola of creepers.

While twilight is falling and the sea is whispering its evening prayers with the surf rustling on the pebbly shore, it is beautiful to see Jesus having supper with the women and the apostles sitting at the coarse board, while the others, sitting on the ground, or on seats or baskets turned upside down, form a circle around the main table.

The meal is soon over and the table is cleared even sooner, because there were only very few plates, only for the more important guests. The sea has become indigo-black in the starless night. And all its majesty appears in this sad but solemn hour, typical of sea shores.

<sup>4</sup>Jesus, whose tall white figure is outstanding in the darker and darker shadows, rises from the table and comes towards the middle of the apostolic group, while the women withdraw. Isaac and another man light little fires on the beach to illuminate and keep away the clouds of mosquitoes, which probably come from nearby marshes. 250\_4

«Peace to you all.

The mercy of God has joined us before the appointed time, giving mutual joy to our hearts. I have searched all your hearts, which are morally good, as is proved by your being here, waiting for Me, formed in Me, but still spiritually imperfect as is proved by some of your reactions that show how the old man of Israel still persists in you with all his ideas and prejudices, and the new man, the man of Christ with Christ's wide, bright merciful mentality and even wider charity has not yet come out of him, like a butterfly from its larva. Do not feel mortified if I have scanned you and pried into all your secrets. A teacher must know his pupils in order to correct their faults, and believe Me, if he is a good teacher, he is not disgusted with the more faulty ones, on the contrary he pays greater attention to them, to improve them. You know that I am a good Master. And now let us consider those reactions and prejudices, let us consider together the reason why we are here, and because of the joy we experience by being together, let us bless the Lord, Who always achieves a collective welfare from an individual one.



250.5

<sup>5</sup>I have heard from your own lips how much you admire John of Endor, and your admiration is even more remarkable because he professes to be a repentant sinner and on his past and present condition he bases the argument of his preaching to those whom he wants to bring to Me. It is true: he was a sinner. Now he is a disciple. Many of you have now come to the Messiah through his merit. You can thus see that God creates the new people of God just by those means that the old man of Israel would despise.

I now ask you to refrain from misjudging the presence of a sister, whom old Israel cannot understand to be a disciple. I told the women to go and rest. I was not so anxious to let them rest as I was to be able to give you a holy careful consideration on her conversion and thus prevent you from committing a sin against love and justice, and that is why I gave that command, which has certainly disappointed them.

Mary of Magdala, the great sinner, who had no excuse for her sin, has come back to the Lord. And from whom will she expect faith and mercy but from God and the servants of God? The whole of Israel, and with Israel the foreigners who are amongst us, who know her very well and judge her very severely, criticise and deride her resurrection, now that she is no longer their accomplice in vice.

Resurrection. That is the exact word. To raise the flesh from death is not the greatest miracle. It is only a relative miracle because it is destined to be cancelled one day by death. I do not give immortality to those whose flesh I raise from death, but I give eternity to those who resuscitate in their souls. And while a man, whose body is dead, does not join his will to Mine in order to come back to life and therefore he has not merit, there is a firm will in the man who revives spiritually, nay his will is there first. And he thus has merit.

I am not saying this to justify Myself. I have to justify My actions to God only. But you are My disciples. And each of you must be another Jesus. And none of you must be ignorant or guilty of any of those deep-rooted faults, whereby so many are united to God only by name.

250.6

<sup>6</sup>Everything can become a good action. Also what seems less suitable to become so. When matter is presented to the will of God, even if it were the most inert, cold and filthy, it can become

living, blazing pure beauty.

I will give you an example taken from\* the book of the Maccabees. When Nehemiah was sent back to Jerusalem by the king of Persia, they decided to offer sacrifices on the purified altar in the rebuilt Temple. Nehemiah remembered that at the time they were captured by the Persians, the priests assigned to the cult of God used to take the fire of the altar and hide it in a secret place, at the bottom of a valley, in a deep dry well, and did it so carefully and secretly that they were the only ones who knew where the sacred fire was. As Nehemiah remembered all that, he asked the grandchildren of those priests to go to the place which the priests, before dying, had disclosed to their sons, who in turn had informed their children, handing down the secret from father to son, and to take the sacred fire to light the fire for the sacrifice. But when the grandchildren went down into the secret well, they did not find the fire, and they found instead thick water, a putrid, stinking, heavy slime, which had filtered down there from all the obstructed sewers of the devastated city of Jerusalem. And they told Nehemiah, who told them to take some of that water and bring it up to him. After laying firewood on the altar and the victims on top of it, he sprayed everything copiously with the slimy water. The people were amazed and the priests scandalised, but they watched and did everything respectfully, only because it was Nehemiah who told them. But how sad their hearts were! And how discouraged they felt! As the overcast sky made the day a sad one, so uncertainty made men melancholy. But the sun broke through the clouds and its rays descended upon the altar and the firewood sprayed with the slimy water caught fire, which soon consumed the sacrifice, while the priests were saying the prayers that Nehemiah had written, singing the most beautiful hymns of Israel, until the whole sacrifice was consumed: And in order to convince the crowds that God can work miracles also with the most unsuitable means, when they are used for a righteous purpose, Nehemiah ordered the remaining water to be sprayed on to some large stones. And as soon as the stones were sprayed, they caught fire and were burnt out in the great light coming from the altar.

<sup>7</sup>Every soul is a sacred fire laid by God on the altar of man's <sup>250. 7</sup>

\* taken from: *2 Maccabees 1, 18-36.*

heart that it may burn the sacrifice of life through love for the Creator of life. Every life is a holocaust, if spent properly, and every day is a sacrifice to be offered holily. But marauders come, the oppressors of man and of man's soul. The fire falls into the deep well, not through any holy need, but through fateful stupidity. And submerged by all the drainage of the dens of vice, it becomes heavy putrid mud, until a priest descends to that bottom and brings that mud up to daylight, laying it on the holocaust of his Own sacrifice. Because - and remember this - the heroism of the man to be converted is not sufficient: also the heroism of he who converts is required. Nay, the latter must precede the former, because souls are saved through our sacrifice. Because thus we are successful in getting mud to change into fire and God to judge perfect and pleasing to His holiness the sacrifice that is being consumed.

Then, as it is still not enough to convince the world that repentant mud burns more than common fire, even if it is consecrated fire, which common fire serves only to burn wood and victims, that is, combustible material, then the repentant mud becomes so powerful as to set on fire and burn even stones, which are incombustible material. Are you not wondering whence such property comes to that mud? Do you not know? I will tell you: because in the ardour of repentance they merge with God flame with flame; rising flame, descending flame; flame which offers itself loving, flame which gives itself, loving; the embrace of two who love and find each other, who join together forming one thing only. And since the flame of God is a greater one, it overflows, excels, penetrates, absorbs and the flame of the repentant mud is no longer a relative flame of a created thing but it is the infinite flame of the Uncreated Thing: of the Most High, Most Powerful, Infinite God.

That is what truly and wholly converted big sinners are, who have generously devoted themselves to their conversion without keeping anything of their past, burning themselves as the first thing, in their heavier part, by means of the flame rising from their mud, which has run towards Grace and has been touched by Grace. I solemnly tell you that many stones in Israel will be attacked by the fire of God because of these burning furnaces, which will blaze more and more, until the human creature is utterly consumed. And from their thrones in Heaven they will con-

tinue to burn the stones, the tepidity, uncertainty, timidity of the Earth, and as true supernatural burning glasses they will collect the One and Trine lights to converge them onto mankind and set it afire in God.

<sup>8</sup>I would repeat that I did not have to justify My actions, but I <sup>250. 8</sup> wanted you to understand, My conception and make it your own. A wrong conception, a Pharisaical suspicion of contaminating God by taking a repentant sinner to Him must never stop you from such a deed that the perfect coronation of the mission for which I destine you. Always bear in mind that I have not come to save saints, but sinners: And do likewise because a disciple is not worth more than his Master, and if I do not loathe taking by the hand the dregs of the Earth who feel the need of Heaven, who at long last feel it, and exulting I take them to God because that is My mission, and every conquered soul justifies My incarnation, which humiliated My Infinity, neither you must loathe doing so, as you are imperfect men, and you have all become more or less acquainted with imperfection, as you are of the same nature as your brother sinners, and I have elected you to the rank of saviours so that My work on the Earth may be continued forever, as if I continued to live on it in an endless life.

And such it will be, because the union of My priests will be like the vital part of the great body of My Church, of which I will be the animating Spirit, and the numberless particles of believers will assemble around this vital part to form one only body, which will be called after My Name. But if the sacerdotal part should lack vitality would the numberless particles be able to live? In actual fact, as I am in the body, I could extend My Life as far as the most remote particles, neglecting the obstructed and useless channels and cisterns, reluctant to fulfill their mission. Because rain falls wherever it wishes and the good particles, being capable by themselves of desiring life, would still live My Life But what would Christianity then be? A close assembly of souls, one near the other. One near the other and yet separated by channels and cisterns that no longer link them, distributing to each particle the vital blood coming from only one centre. But there would be dividing walls and precipices across which the particles would look at one another, and they would be humanly hostile, supernaturally anguished, saying in their spirits: "And

yet we were brothers and we still feel as such, notwithstanding they have divided us! It would be a closeness of souls, not a fusion or an organism. And My love would shine sorrowfully upon such ruin...

Further, do not think that that applies only to religious schisms. No. It applies also to all the souls that remain all alone because Priests refuse to support them, to take care of them, to love them, violating their mission, which is to say and do what I say and do, that is: "Come to Me, all of you, and I will lead you to God".

250. 9     <sup>9</sup>Go in peace, now, and God be with you. »

The crowd disperse slowly, going to their little houses. Also John of Endor stands up. He took notes while Jesus was speaking and in order to see what he was writing, he became red-hot near the fire.

But Jesus stops him saying: «Stay for a little while with your Master». And He keeps him close to Himself until they have all gone away. «Let us go as far as that rock near the water. The moon is high in the sky and we can see our way. »

John agrees without demur. They move away from the houses about two hundred metres and they sit on a huge boulder, which I do not know whether it is the ruin of a pier, or the extreme ramification of a cliff fallen into the sea, or the wreck of one of the little houses swallowed by the water that through centuries advanced on the shore. I know that whilst from the little beach it is possible to climb onto the rock, making use of the cavities and juts, which form a sort of step, on the sea side the face is a sheer cliff ending in the blue sea. Because of the tide, half of the rock is surrounded by water, which grumbles and lightly smacks the obstacle and then withdraws with the sound of a huge sigh, becomes silent for a moment, starting all over again, with regular motions and sounds of slaps, aspirations and pauses, like syncopated music. They sit on the very top of the boulder struck by the sea. The moon forms a silvery road on the water and the sea looks deep blue in the moonlight, whereas before the moon rose, it was like a large blackish expanse in the dark night.

250. 10     <sup>10</sup>«John, are you not telling your Master the reason why your body suffers? »

«You know, my Lord. But do not say: "it suffers". Say: "it is

being consumed". That is more correct, and You know, and You also know that it is being consumed with delight. Thank You, Lord. I recognised myself, too, in the mud that becomes flame. But I shall not have time to set the stones afire. I shall soon die. I have suffered too much through the hatred of the world and I exult too much because of the love of God. But I do not regret life. I might sin again here, or fail in the mission to which You destine us. I have already failed twice in my life. In my mission as a master, because I should have been able to find what was necessary to perfect myself and I did not train myself: in my mission of a husband, because I was not able to mould my wife... which was logical. As I was not able to perfect myself, I could not perfect her either. I might fail in my mission as a disciple. And I do not want to fail with You. Blessed therefore be death if it comes to take me where one can no longer sin! But if I am not destined to be a teaching disciple, I shall be a victim disciple, whose fate is more like Yours. You said that this evening: "Burning ourselves as first thing". »

«John, is it a fate, which you suffer or is it an offer you are making? »

«An offer, which I am making, if God does not disdain mud that has become fire. »

«John, you are doing much penance. »

«Saints do, You are the first. It is fair that he should do it, who has so much to pay. But do You think that mine is not pleasant to God? Are You prohibiting me from doing it? »

«I never interfere with the good yearnings of a loving soul. I have come to preach by actual facts that suffering is expiation and sorrow redemption. I cannot contradict Myself. »

«Thank You, Lord. It will be my mission. »

<sup>11</sup>«What were you writing, John? »

«Oh! Master! Sometimes old Felix emerges again with his habits of a teacher. I am thinking of Marjiam. He has a whole life to preach You, but because of his age, he is not here to hear Your sermons. I thought I should write certain instructions You have given us and which he has not heard, because he is intent on playing, or he is far away with one of us. There is so much wisdom in Your words, also in the least ones! Your familiar conversations are a lesson on matters of every day and every man, on

the least things in life, which after all are the most important, because by piling up they form a heavy burden, which requires patience, perseverance resignation to be borne holily. It is easier to accomplish one only great heroic deed than a thousand little ones for which a constant presence of virtue is required. And yet one will not attain a great deed, both in good and in evil, I know by experience with regards to evil, unless one stores up many little deeds, which seem insignificant. I began to kill when, tired of the frivolity of my wife, I looked at her scornfully for the first time. I have written Your short lessons for Marjiam. And this evening I wanted to take a note of Your great lesson. I will leave my work to the boy, so that he may remember me, the old master, and he may have what otherwise he would never have had. Your words: a wonderful treasure for him. Will you allow me? »

«Yes, John. But be in complete peace, like this sea. See? It would be too warm for you to go about in the heat of the sun and apostolic life is really hard. You have fought so much in life. Now God calls you to Himself in this placid moonlight that makes everything calm and pure. Proceed in the kindness of God. I can tell you: God is pleased with you. »

John of Endor takes Jesus' hand, kisses it and whispers: «And yet it would have been lovely to say to the world: "Come to Jesus!" »

«You will say that from Paradise, where You will be a burning glass, too. Let us go, John. I would like to read what you have written. »

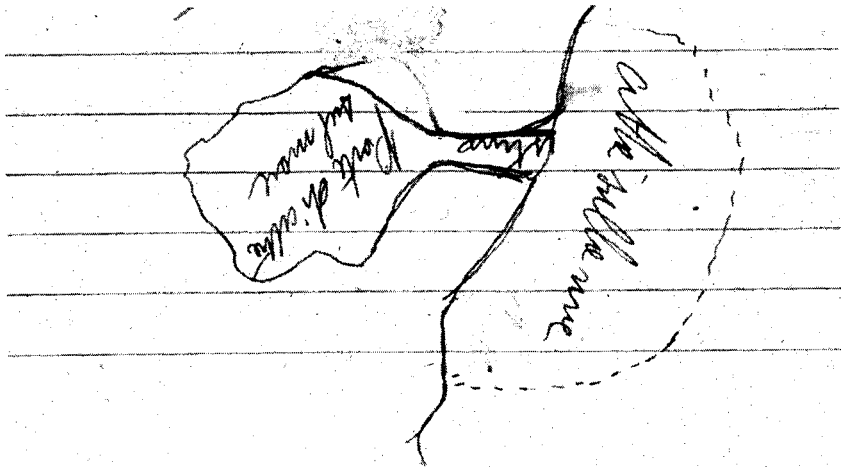
«Here it is, Lord. And tomorrow I will give You the other roll on which I wrote the other words. »

They descend from the boulder, and in a most clear moonlight, which has changed the pebbly shore into silver, they go back to the houses. They say goodbye to each other, John kneeling down, Jesus blessing him with His hand laid on his head and giving him His peace.

251. To the Siro-Phoenician fishermen the parable of the persevering miner. Ermasteus of Ashkelon.

12<sup>th</sup> August 1945.

It is early morning when Jesus arrives in front of a sea-town. 251. 1  
Four boats are following His. The town juts out strangely towards the sea, as if it were built on an isthmus. Or rather: as if a slender isthmus linked the part protruding on the sea to the part stretching along the shore\*.



It looks like a huge mushroom, as seen from the sea, with its crown lying on the waves, its roots under the shore, the isthmus being the stem. There are two harbours, one on each side: one, to the north, is wider and full of small boats; in the other, to the south, which is more sheltered, there are large ships arriving or departing.

«We must go over there» says Isaac, pointing to the harbour of the smaller boats. «That is where the fishermen are.»

They walk around the island and I can see that the isthmus is an artificial one, a kind of Cyclopean dam linking the little island to the mainland. They built lavishly in those days! I gather from this work and from the number of boats in the harbours

\* **the shore.** The drawing illustrated has been put in the same position as found in the handwritten book. It should be overturned to read the words: town on the river - isthmus - Part of the town on the sea..



that the town was wealthy and commercially very active. Behind the town, beyond a flat area, there are some pretty looking little hills, and the Great Hermon and the Lebanon chain of mountains can be seen very far behind. I also understand that this is one of the towns I could see from Lebanon.

Jesus' boat is now entering the northern harbour, the roadstead, because it does not dock, but the men row slowly backwards and forwards until Isaac sees those he is looking for and  
251. <sup>2</sup> calls them at the top of his voice. <sup>2</sup>Two beautiful fishing boats come towards them and the crew bend over the smaller boats of the disciples.

«The Master is with us, my friends. Come, if you wish to hear His word. This evening He is going back to Sicaminon» says Isaac.

«We are coming at once. Where shall we go? »

«To a quiet place. The Master is not disembarking at Tyre nor at the town on the mainland. He will speak from the boat. So choose a shaded and sheltered place. »

«Follow us towards the rock. There are some quiet shady inlets. You can also land. »

And they go to an inlet in the cliff, farther north. The very steep cliff protects from the sun. It is a lonely spot: only sea-gulls and wood pigeons live there: they fly out for their raids at sea and then fly back to their nests in the rocks, squeaking loud. Some smaller boats have joined the leading one and have thus formed a little fleet. At the end of the tiny bay there is a very small beach. It is really a sham beach: a small square strewn with stones. It can hold about one hundred people.

They land making use of a large flat rock emerging from the deep water like a small natural wharf and they gather on the little stony beach sparkling with salt. They are thin swarthy men, parched by the sun and the sea. Their short under garments leave their thin agile limbs uncovered. They are clearly a different race from the Jews of the present time, but the difference is not so striking with regard to Galileans. I would say that those Syro-Phoenicians are more like the old Philistines than their neighbouring peoples. At least those I can see.

251. <sup>3</sup> Jesus draws close to the beach and begins to speak.

«We read in the Book of Kings that the Lord ordered Elijah

to go to Zarephath of Sidonians during the drought and famine which afflicted the Earth for over three years. The Lord did not lack means to appease the prophet's hunger in any place, neither did He send him to Zarephath because that town was rich in food. On the contrary, they were already dying of starvation there. Why then did God send Elijah the Tishbite?

There was in Zarephath a woman with a righteous heart. She was a widow, a holy living woman, the mother of a boy; she was poor and lonely, yet she never rebelled against the dreadful punishment, neither was she selfish in her hunger, or disobedient. God wanted to benefit her by granting her three miracles. One for the water she took to the thirsty man, one for the little loaf of bread she baked under ashes, when she had only a handful of flour left, one for the hospitality she offered the prophet. He gave her bread and oil, the life of her son and the knowledge of the word of God.

You can see that a charitable action not only satisfies the hunger of bodies or removes grief because of a death, but it teaches the soul the wisdom of the Lord. You have given lodgings to the servants of the Lord and He gives you the word of Wisdom. A good deed has brought the word of the Lord to this land, where that word does not come. I can compare you to the only woman in Zarephath who welcomed the prophet. Because if I had gone to town, the rich and mighty people would not have welcomed Me, the busy merchants and sailors would have neglected Me and My coming here would have been of no value.

I will now leave and you will say: "But what are we? A handful of men. What do we possess? A drop of wisdom". And yet I say to you: "I entrust you with the task of announcing the hour of the Redeemer". I leave you repeating the words of Elijah, the prophet: "The jar of flour will not run out. The oil will not diminish until one comes who will give it more copiously".

You have already done that. Because there are Phoenicians here among you who have come from beyond Mount Carmel. Which means that you have spoken as you were spoken to. You can thus see that the handful of flour and the drop of oil have not run out, but have instead increased in quantity. Continue to make it grow. And if you think that it is strange that God has chosen you for this work, as you do not feel capable of carrying

it out, repeat the word of great trust: "I will do what you tell me, trusting your word". »

251. 4 4«Master, how are we to deal with the heathens here? We know these people because they are fishermen, like ourselves. We fraternise because we do the same work. But what about the others? » asks a fisherman of Israel.

«You say that you fraternise because of the same work. Well, then should the same origin not cause you to fraternise as well? God created both Israelites and Phoenicians. The people of the plain of Saron or of High Judaea are not different from the people of this shore. Paradise was made for all the sons of man. And the Son of man has come to take all men to Paradise. The purpose is to attain Heaven and give joy to the Father. Meet therefore on the same road and love one another spiritually as you love one another for reasons of your trade. »

«Isaac has told us many things. But we would like to know more. Is it possible for us to have a disciple, although we are so far out of the way? »

«Send them John of Endor, Master. He is so clever and he is accustomed to living with pagans» suggests Judas of Kerioth.

«No. John is staying with us» replies Jesus resolutely. He then turns to the shepherds: «When will the murex fishing be over? »

«At the first storms in autumn. The sea is too rough here, afterwards. »

«Will you be going back to Sicaminon then? »

«We will be going there and to Caesarea. We supply many Romans^

«You will then be able to meet the disciples. For the time being... persevere. »

251. 5 5«On board my boat there is one whom I did not want and he came here almost in Your Name. »

«Who is he? »

«A young fisherman from Ashkelon. »

«Tell him to disembark and come here. »

The man goes on board and comes back with a young fellow who seems rather embarrassed at being the centre of so much attention.

The apostle John recognises him. «He is one of those who gave us the fish, Master» and he gets up to greet him. «You have come,

Ermasteus? Are you alone here? »

«Yes, I am alone. At Capernaum I was ashamed... I stayed on the beach, hoping... »

«What? »

«To see your Master. »

«And not yours yet? My dear friend, why are you still hesitating? Come to the Light waiting for you. See how He is watching and smiling at you. »

«How will they bear with me? »

«Master, please come here for a moment. »

Jesus gets up and goes to John.

«He does not dare to come because he is a foreigners

«There are no foreigners, as far as I am concerned. And your companions? Were you not many?.. Do not be upset. You are the only one who persevered. But I am happy also because you are alone. Come with Me. »

Jesus goes back to His place with His new conquest. «We shall certainly give this young man to John of Endor» He says to the Iscariot. <sup>6</sup>He then speaks to everybody.

251. 6

«A group of diggers went down into a mine where they knew there were some treasures well hidden in the bowels of the earth... And they began to dig. But the ground was hard and the work laborious. Many became tired, threw away their picks and went away. Some made fun of the foreman and treated him almost as a fool. Some cursed their fate, the work, the ground, the metal and in a fit of anger they struck the bowels of the earth tearing the vein into useless tiny bits and when they saw that they had only caused damage without making any profit, they also went away.

Only one remained: the most persevering one. He dealt kindly with the hard layers of the soil to pierce it without damaging anything, he made various tests, he dug and went down deeper. A wonderful valuable vein was at last discovered. The perseverance of the miner was thus rewarded and with the most pure metal he had found he was able to get many work contracts, a great glory and many customers, because everybody wanted that metal, which perseverance only was able to find, whereas lazy or angry people had achieved nothing.

But once the gold has been found, it must in its turn persevere

and be available to be worked on, in order to become beautiful and ready to be used by the goldsmith. If the gold, after being dug, should refuse to undergo further treatment, however painful it might be, it would remain a coarse metal, unsuitable to be worked on. You can thus see the first enthusiasm is not enough to be successful, either as apostles, or disciples or believers. It is necessary to persevere.

Ermasteus had many companions, and in their first enthusiasm they all promised to come. He only has come. I have many disciples and their number will increase. But only a few of them will persevere until the end. Perseverance! It is the great word. For all good things.

When you cast the drag-net to catch murex shells, do you do that only once? No. Many times, for hours, for days, for months, and you are willing to go back to the same spot the following year, because your work brings bread and comfort to you and to your families. And would you behave differently for more important things, such as the interests of God and of your souls, if you are believers; your interests and your brothers', if you are disciples? I solemnly tell you that it is necessary to persevere until the end, to extract purple for eternal garments.

251. 7 <sup>7</sup>And now let us stay here as good friends until it is time for us to go back. We shall thus become better acquainted and it will be easy to recognise one another... »

And they spread out in the little rocky bay cooking mussels and crabs caught on the rocks, and little fish caught with small nets. Some sleep on dried seaweeds in caves opened in the rock by earthquakes or by the sea, while sky and sea are a dazzling blue kissing each other at the horizon. Seagulls fly backwards and forwards, from the sea to their nests in the rocks, squeaking and flapping their wings, the only noises which can be heard, together with the washing of the sea, in these sultry summer hours.

252. The return to Tyre. Miracles and  
the parable of the vine and the elm tree.

13<sup>th</sup> August 1945.

252. 1 <sup>1</sup>The people of Sicaminon, impelled by curiosity, besieged

the place where the apostles were, all day long, awaiting the return of the Master. The women disciples, in the meantime have not wasted any time but have washed the clothes covered with dust and wet with perspiration, and on the little beach there is a bright display of garments drying in the wind and sunshine. As it is evening and getting dark, the dampness of sea fog is felt, so they hasten to take in the clothes, although they are still damp. Before folding them they stretch them out in all directions and press them, so that they may look tidy to the respective owners.

«Let us take Mary's clothes to her at once» says Mary of Alphaeus. And she concludes: «She has been really suffering yesterday and today in that little stifling room!... »

I thus realise that Jesus has been absent for more than one day, during which time Mary of Magdala, who had only one dress, had to remain indoors, until her dress was dry.

Susanna replies: «Fortunately she never complains! I did not think she was so good. »

«And humble, you should say, and reserved. Poor woman! It was the devil who tormented her! Since she was freed by my Jesus, she has become herself once again, exactly as she was when a girl. »

And talking to each other, they arrive back home carrying the laundry.

In the meantime Martha is busy preparing food and the Blessed Virgin is cleaning vegetables in a copper basin and then boils them for supper.

«Here you are. Everything is dry clean and folded. And they badly needed it. Go to Mary and give her clothes» says Susanna handing the clothes to Martha.

The two sisters come back shortly afterwards. «I thank both of you. The sacrifice of wearing the same dress for days was the most painful one to me» says Mary of Magdala smiling «I now feel fresh and cool. »

«Go and sit outside, there is a lovely breeze. You certainly need it after being closed in» remarks Martha, who, being smaller than her sister and not so buxom, was able to put on a dress of Susanna's or of Mary of Alphaeus', while her clothes were being washed.

«This time we had to make the best of it. But in future we will

bring little bags, like the others, and we will not have all this trouble» says the Magdalene.

«What? Are you going to follow Him as we do? »

252.: «Of course. Unless He tells me otherwise. I am now going to the beach to see whether they are coming back. <sup>2</sup>Are they coming back this evening? »

«I hope so» replies the Most Holy Virgin. «I am worried because He has gone to Phoenicia. But I know that He is with the apostles and after all the Phoenicians may be better than many other people. When I went to the fountain, a mother stopped Me saying:

“Are You with the Galilean Master, the One they call Messiah? If so, come and see my son. Fever has been tormenting him for over a year”. I went into the little house. Poor thing! He looks like a little flower about to die. I will tell Jesus. »

«There are others as well who want to be cured. They are more anxious to be cured than to be taught» says Martha.

«It is difficult for a man to be entirely spiritual. The voice and needs of the flesh are more strongly felt» replies the Virgin.

«However, many revive spiritually after a miracle. »

«Yes, Martha. And that is one of the reasons why My Son works so many miracles. Out of love for man, but also to draw him by such means on to His Way, which, otherwise, many would not follow. »

252. 3 <sup>3</sup>John of Endor, who had not gone with Jesus, comes back home with many disciples who are going to the little houses where they live. Almost at the same time the Magdalene comes back saying: «They are arriving. They are the five boats that left yesterday at dawn. I recognised them very well. »

«They must be tired and thirsty. I will go and get some more water. The water of the fountain is very cool» and Mary of Alphaeus goes out carrying some pitchers.

«Let us go and meet Jesus. Come» says the Blessed Virgin. And She goes out with the Magdalene and John of Endor, because Martha and Susanna, both flushed and very busy preparing supper, remain near the kitchen range.

Walking along a wall they arrive at a little pier, where other fishing boats have already come in and are moored. From the end of the pier it is possible to have a very good view of the whole

bay and of the town after which it is called, and one can also see the five boats sailing fast, slightly heeled to one side, as a light northern breeze fills the sails, and is thus favourable and at the same time brings relief to the men who are tired and warm.

«See how well Simon and the others are maneuvering. They are following the pilot's boat excellently. They have now passed the breaker; they are now taking to the open sea to avoid the current which is strong over there. Good... Now everything is all right. They will soon be here» says John of Endor. The boats in fact are coming nearer and nearer and it is possible to distinguish the people in them.

<sup>4</sup>Jesus is on the first one with Isaac. He has stood up and His tall figure appears in all its magnificence until the furling sail conceals Him for a few minutes. In fact the boat veers round to approach the little pier and passes before the women standing on the point. Jesus smiles waving to them, while they begin to walk fast to reach the landing place at the same time as the boat.

«May God bless You, My Son! » says Mary greeting Jesus Who is disembarking on the quay.

«May God bless You, Mother. Have You been worrying? The man whom we were looking for was not in Sidon. We went as far as Tyre. And we found him there. Come, Ermasteus... Here, John. This man wants to be taught. I entrust him to you. »

«I shall not disappoint You in teaching him Your word. Thank You, Master! There are many people waiting for You» replies John of Endor.

«There is also a poor sick boy, Son, and his mother wants You to go there. »

«I will go to her at once. »

«I know who she is, Master. I will take You there. Ermasteus, come with us. You will begin to know the infinite goodness of our Lord» says the man from Endor.

Peter lands from the second boat, James from the third, Andrew from the fourth, John from the fifth; the four pilots followed by the other apostles or disciples who were with them all gather around Jesus and Mary.

«Go home. I shall soon be there as well. In the meantime prepare supper and tell those who are waiting that I will speak to them at the end of vesper. »



«And what if there are some sick people? »

«I will cure them first. Even before supper, so that they may go back home happily. »

They part. Jesus with John of Endor and Ermasteus goes towards the town, the others walk back along the pebbly beach, telling what they have seen or heard, as happy as children returning to their mothers.

252.5 <sup>5</sup>Also Judas of Kerieth seems happy. He shows all the offerings given to him by the murex fishermen, and above all he shows a little bundle containing the precious substance. «This is for the Master. If He does not wear it, who can possibly do so? They called me to one side saying: “We have some precious madreporas in our boat, and we have also a pearl. Imagine! A treasure. I do not know how we were so lucky. But we will give them willingly to you for the Master. Come and see them”. I went with them to please them, while the Master had withdrawn into a cave to pray. They were beautiful corals and a pearl, not a big one, but beautiful. I said to them: “Don’t deprive yourselves of these things. The Master does not wear jewels. Give me instead some of that purple to make an ornament for His tunic”. They had this little packet. They insisted in giving it all to me, at all costs. Take it, Mother, make something nice with it for our Lord, as You know how to do it. But make sure You do so. If He becomes aware of it, He will have it sold for the poor. And we like to see Him dressed as He deserves. Is that right? »

«Oh! It is true! I suffer when I see Him dressed so plainly amongst other people, while He is a king, and they are less than slaves and yet they wear gorgeous decorations and garments. And they look at Him as if He were unworthy of being near them! » says Peter.

«Ehi! Did you see how those gentlemen in Tyre were laughing when we took leave of the fishermen?! » replies his brother.

«I said to them: “You ought to be ashamed, you dogs! A single thread of His white tunic is worth all your finery”. » says James of Zebedee.

«Since Judas has been able to get it, I would like You to have it ready for the Tabernacles» says Judas Thaddeus.

«I have never spun purple. But I will try... » says the Blessed Virgin touching the light bright-coloured wool, as soft as silk.

«My nurse is an expert at that. We shall find her at Caesarea. She will let you see how to do it. You will learn at once because You do everything so well. I would put a band around the neck, the sleeves and at the hem of His tunic: purple on snow-white linen or wool, with palm or rosette decorations as we see on the marble of the Holy, and David's knot in the centre. It would look lovely» says the Magdalene who is an expert in such beautiful things.

Martha says: «Our mother made that design, because it was so beautiful, on the tunic that Lazarus wore on his journey to Syria when he took possession of our land there. I kept it because it was the last work of our mother. I will send it to You. »

«I will do it praying for your mother. »

<sup>6</sup>They have reached the houses. The apostles spread out to gather those who want the Master, particularly sick people... 252. 6

And Jesus comes back with John of Endor and Ermasteus. And He passes by greeting those who have crowded in front of the little houses. His smile is a blessing.

They bring Him the inevitable man with eye trouble, who is almost blind with ulcerous ophthalmia, and He cures him. Then it is the turn of a man sick with malaria, as emaciated and yellow as a Chinese, and He cures him. Then a woman asks for a particular miracle: milk for her breast, which has none, and she shows her baby, only a few days old, underfed and all red probably because of some inflammation. She moans: «See? We are told to obey man and to procreate. But what is the point if we see our children languish? This is my third one, and I have buried two in the serious, because of my unfruitful breast. And this one is about to die too, because he was born in this hot season, the others lived: one ten months, the other six, to make me weep even more when they died of intestine trouble. If I could give them my milk, that would not happen... »

Jesus looks at her and says: «Your child will live. Have faith. Go home and as soon as you are there offer your breast to the baby. Have faith. »

The woman goes away obediently with the poor baby, who moans like a kitten, close to his mother's heart.

«Will she have milk? »

«Of course she will. »

«I say that the baby will live, but she will never have any milk, and it is already a miracle if he lives. He is almost dead with privations. »

«Instead I say that she will have milk. »

«Of course. »

«No, she will not. »

The people present are of different opinions.

252.7

7Meanwhile Jesus withdraws to eat. When He comes out to preach, the crowd is even larger because the news of the miracle of the boy sick with fever, which Jesus worked as soon as He landed, has spread throughout the town.

«I give you My peace that it may prepare you to understand. It is not possible to hear the Voice of the Lord in a storm. Every perturbation is detrimental to Wisdom, which is peaceful, as it comes from God. Perturbations instead do not come from God, because worries, anxieties, doubts are the work of the Evil One to upset the children of man and separate them from God.

I will tell you a parable that you may understand My teaching more clearly.

A farmer had many trees in his fields and many vines which yielded much fruit, among which there was a special quality, of which he was very proud. One year that vine produced many leaves but few grapes. A friend said to the farmer: "That is because you did not prune it enough". The following year the man pruned it much more. The vine had few shoots and fewer grapes. Another friend said to him: "That is because you pruned it too much". The third year the farmer left it alone. The vine did not produce any grapes at all, only a few crumpled leaves, covered with blight. A third friend stated: "It is dying because the soil is not good. Burn it". "Why? It is the same soil that the others have and I tend to it exactly as I do with the others. Before it was doing so well! ". His friend shrugged his shoulders and went away.

An unknown wayfarer passed by and stopped to look at the farmer sadly leaning on the poor vine. "What is the matter? " he asked. "Someone dead in the family? ". "No. But this vine, of which I was so fond, is dying. It has no more sap and yields no fruit. One year little, the next one less, this year nothing. I have done everything they told me, but to no avail".

The unknown wayfarer entered the field and approached the

vine. He felt the leaves, took a lump of earth in his hand, smelt it, crumpled it with his fingers, looked at the trunk of the tree supporting the vine. "You must remove that trunk. The vine is made barren by it".

"It has been its support for years! "

"Tell me, man: when you planted this vine, what was it like, and what was that trunk like? "

"Oh! It was a lovely three year old vine-shoot. I got it from another vine of mine, and to bring it here, I dug a deep hole, so that its roots would not suffer when they were taken away from the native soil. I dug a similar hole here as well, nay a larger one, so that it should be at ease at once, and I hoed the soil around it, to make it soft, so that the roots could spread out at once, without any difficulty. I settled it carefully, laying some good manure underneath it. As you know, roots grow strong immediately if they find suitable nourishment. I did not pay so much attention to the elm-tree. It was only a little tree planted there to support the vineshoot. In fact I planted it superficially near the vine-shoot, I earthed it up and went away. They both took roots, because the soil is good. The vine grew every year, it was looked after, hoed and pruned. The elm-tree instead hardly grew. But for what it was worth!... Then it grew strong. See how lovely it is now? When I come here, from afar I can see its top standing out like a tower and it looks like the ensign of my little kingdom. Once the vine covered it up and one could not see its beautiful foliage. But look how lovely it is up there, in the sunshine! And what a trunk! Straight and strong. It could have supported this vine for many years even if it became like the ones that the explorers of Israel took near the Torrent of Grapes. Instead... "

"It has killed it. It has overwhelmed it. Everything was right for its life: the soil, its place, light, sunshine, the care you took of it. But the elm-tree killed it. It became too strong. It entangled its roots suffocating them, it took all the sap of the soil, it prevented it from breathing and receiving the necessary light. Cut down this useless powerful tree at once, and your vine will revive. And it will revive even better if you patiently dig up the ground to expose the roots of the elm-tree and then cut them, to ensure that they do not sprout. Their last ramifications will rot in the ground, and once dead they will become life, because they

will become manure, a worthy punishment for their selfishness. Burn the trunk, make thus good use of it. A useless harmful tree is good only as firewood, and it is to be removed so that all the nourishment of the soil may go to the good and useful plant. Have faith in what I am telling you and you will be happy”.

“But who are you? Tell me that I may have faith”.

“I am the Wise One. He who believes in Me will be safe” and he went away.

252.8 <sup>8</sup>The man was rather doubtful. Then he made up his mind and he got a saw. And he called his friends to help him.

“Are you mad? ” “You will lose both elm-tree and vine. ” “I would cut off only its top, in order to give air to the vine. But no more”. “It must have a support. You are going to do a useless job”. “I wonder who He was! Perhaps one who hates you, without you knowing it”. “Or a madman” and so on.

“I am going to do what he told me. I have faith in Him” and he cut the elm-tree down at its root, and not happy, he laid bare the roots of both plants in a wide circle around them, and he patiently cut the roots of the elm-tree, taking great care not to damage those of the vine. He then filled in the hole, and as the vine had no support, he placed a strong iron pole near it with the word “Faith” written on a wooden board tied to the top of the pole.

The others went away shaking their heads. Autumn and winter passed and spring came. The vine-shoots twined around the support became adorned with buds, first closed like silvery velvet cases, then half open against the emerald of the fresh leaves, then fully open, and finally producing new strong shoots from the trunk, all covered with tiny flowers that turned into grapes. There were more bunches of grapes than leaves, and the latter were large, green, strong, the size of two, three or more clusters. And each bunch was thick with pulpy, juicy, wonderful grapes.

“And now what do you say? Was the tree the cause of the withering of my vine or was it not? Was the Wise One right or not? Was I right or not in writing on that board the word: ‘Faith’? ” said the farmer to his incredulous friends.

“You were right. You are happy because you had faith and you were able to destroy the past and neglect the wrong information given to you”.

252.9 <sup>9</sup>That is the parable. <sup>9</sup>With regards to the woman with the un-

fruitful breast, there is the answer. Look towards the town. »

They all turn around and see the woman of a little while ago running towards them, and although she is running she does not detach the baby from her breast now full of milk, which the child sucks with such voracity as to almost choke himself. The woman stops only when she is at Jesus' feet, in front of Whom she detaches the baby from her nipple for a moment, shouting: «Bless him that he may live for You! »

After that moment Jesus resumes: «And you have had a reply to your various conjectures on the miracle. <sup>10</sup>But the parable has a wider meaning than the little episode of faith rewarded. And here it is. 252. 10

God had planted His vine, His people, in a suitable place, and supplied it with everything necessary to grow and bear more and more fruit, supporting it with masters so that the people might understand the Law more easily, and make it its strength. But the masters wanted to excel the Law giver, and they grew more and more until they imposed themselves more than the eternal word did. And Israel became sterile. The Lord then sent the Wise One so that those in Israel who with righteous souls are sorry for such barrenness and try this and that remedy, according to the dictates and advice of the masters, who are humanly learned but supernaturally unlearned, and thus far from knowing what is to be done to give life back to the spirit of Israel, may have true healthy advice.

But what happens? Why does Israel not recover its strength and become energetic as in the golden days of its loyalty to the Lord? Because the advice is: remove all parasites that have grown to the detriment of what is Holy: the Law of the Decalogue, as it was given, without any compromise, hesitation, hypocrisy, remove them to give air, space, nourishment to the Vine, to the People of God, and a strong, straight, inflexible, unique support, with a name as bright as the sun: Faith. But that advice is not accepted. I therefore tell you that Israel will perish, whilst it could revive and possess the Kingdom of God, if it believed and made amends and changed itself substantially.

Go in peace and the Lord be with you. »

253. Mary of Alphaeus and spiritual maternity.  
The Magdalene must calm down by suffering.

14<sup>th</sup> August 1945.

253.1 <sup>1</sup>It is still night, a beautiful night with a waning moon, when Jesus, the apostles and the women, John of Endor and Ermasteus, silently take leave of Isaac, the only one to be awake, and set out along the shore. The noise of their steps is only a slight creaking of gravel pressed by their sandals, and no one speaks until they have gone a few metres beyond the last house. The people sleeping in it, or in the ones before it, were certainly not aware of the silent departure of the Lord and His friends. There is dead silence. Only the sea speaks to the moon about to set in the west and it tells the sand the stories of its depths with the long wave at high tide, which begins leaving a narrower and narrower dry margin on the beach.

This time the women are in front, together with John, the Zealot, Judas Thaddeus and James of Alphaeus, who help them to get over small rocks spread here and there, which are damp and also slippery with the humidity of the night. The Zealot is with the Magdalene, John with Martha, while James of Alphaeus takes care of his mother and of Susanna, and Thaddeus does not surrender to anybody the honour of taking in his long strong hand - which is like Jesus' - the little hand of Mary to help Her in difficult spots. Each speaks in a low voice to his companion. They all seem to be wishing to respect the sleep of the Earth.

The Zealot is conversing intensely with Mary of Magdala and I can see that Simon stretches out his arms more than once, meaning: «it is so and there is nothing we can do about it» but I cannot hear what they are saying as they are ahead of everybody.

John speaks to his companion only now and again, pointing at the sea and Mount Carmel, the western side of which looks white in the moonlight. Perhaps he is talking of the road they took the last time, skirting Mount Carmel on the other side.

253.2 <sup>2</sup>Also James, who is between Mary of Alphaeus and Susanna, is speaking of Mount Carmel. He says to his mother: «Jesus has promised me to climb up there with me alone and to tell me alone something. »

«What does He want to tell you, son? Will you tell me, afterwards? »

«Mother, if it is a secret, I cannot tell you» replies James smiling with his smile which is so tender; his similarity to Joseph, the spouse of the Blessed Virgin, is remarkable both with regards to his features and even more to his serene kindness.

«There are no secrets for a mother. »

«In fact I have none. But if Jesus wants me up there, all alone to speak to me, it means that He does not want anyone to know what He is going to tell me. And you, mother, are my dear mother, whom I love so much, but Jesus is above you, as His will is. But, when the time comes, I will ask Him whether I may repeat His words to you. Are you happy? »

«You will forget to ask Him... »

«No, mother. I never forget you, not even when you are far from me. Every time I see or hear something beautiful, I always say: "I wish my mother were here!" »

«My dear! Give me a kiss, son. » Mary of Alphaeus is moved. But emotion does not kill curiosity. After being quiet for a few moments, she makes a fresh assault: «You said: His will. So you know that He wants to tell what His Will is. Come on, you can tell me at least that. He told you that in the presence of everybody. »

«In actual fact I was alone with Him, ahead of the others» says James smiling.

«But the others could hear you. »

«He did not tell me very much, mother. He reminded me of the words\* and the prayer of Elijah on Mount Carmel: "Of all the prophets of the Lord, I alone am left". "Hear me, that this people may acknowledge that You are the Lord God". »

«And what did He mean? »

«How many things you want to know, mother! Go to Jesus, then, and He will tell you» replies James, to parry her embarrassing questions.

«He probably meant that, since the Baptist has been captured, He is the only prophet left in Israel and that God must preserve Him for a long time, so that the people may be taught»

\* the words, in *1 King 18 22*, the prayer, in *1 King 18 37*



says Susanna.

«Hmm! I don't believe that Jesus asks to be preserved for a long time. He asks nothing for Himself... Come on, dear James! Tell your mother. »

«Curiosity is a fault, mother; it is useless, dangerous, at times it is sorrowful. Make a nice act of mortification... »

«Alas! Did He mean that your brother will be put in prison, and killed perhaps?! » asks Mary of Alphaeus, who is thoroughly upset.

«Judas is not "all the prophets", mother, even if, as far as your love is concerned, each son of yours is the whole world... »

«I am thinking also of the others... because you will certainly be among the future prophets. So... so if you are the only one to be left... If you are the only one left, it means that the others, that  
253. 3 my Judas... oh!... »<sup>3</sup>Mary of Alphaeus leaves James and Susanna, and she runs back fast, as if she were a young girl, paying no attention to the question Thaddeus asks her.

She arrives in Jesus' group like one who has been chased. «My Jesus... I was speaking to my son... about what You told him... of Mount Carmel... of Elijah... of the prophets... You said... that James will be the only one left... And what will happen to Judas? He is my son, You know? » she says panting because of her anguish and her racing.

«I know, Mary. And I also know that you are happy that he is My disciple. You see that you have all the rights of a mother, and I have them as Master and Lord. »

«That is true... it is true... but Judas is my boy!... » and Mary, foreseeing the future, bursts into tears.

«Oh! how badly shed your tears are! But the heart of a mother is forgiven everything. Come here, Mary. Do not weep. I comforted you once before\*. Also on that occasion I promised you that your grief would obtain great graces from God, for you, for your Alphaeus for your sons... » Jesus has laid His arm on the shoulder of His aunt drawing her close to Himself... He tells those who were with Him: «Move forward... » When He is alone with Mary Clopas, He carries on speaking: «And I did not tell a lie. Alphaeus died invoking Me. Thus every debt he had with

\* **once before**, in 95. 5/6.

God was cancelled. It was your grief, Mary, that obtained that conversion to his misunderstood relative, to the Messiah Whom he did not recognise before. Your present grief will get your hesitant Simon and your stubborn Joseph to imitate your Alphaeus. »

«Yes, but... What will You do to Judas, to my Judas? »

«I will love him even more than I love him now. »

«No, no. There is a threat in those words. Oh! Jesus! Oh! Jesus!.. »

<sup>4</sup>The Blessed Virgin Mary comes back to comfort Her sister-in-law, although She does not know yet the nature of her grief, and when She knows, because when Mary sees Her beside her, she weeps more and informs Her, Our Lady becomes paler than the moon. 253. 4

Mary of Alphaeus moans: «Will You tell Him, no, no, not death for my Judas... »

Our Lady, Who is deadly pale, says to her: «And can I ask that on your behalf, when I do not ask salvation from death for My own Son? Mary, say with Me: “Your will be done, Father, in Heaven, on the Earth and in the hearts of mothers”. To do the will of God through the destiny of our sons is the redeeming martyrdom of us mothers... In any case... No one said that Judas is to be killed, or killed before you die. How burdensome your present prayer, that he may live to the most long-lived age, would be for you, when in the Kingdom of Truth and Love, you will see everything in the light of God and in your spiritualised maternity. I am sure that you then, both as a blessed soul and a mother, would like your Judas to be like My Jesus in His destiny of Redeemer, and you would long to have him soon with you again, forever. Because it is a mother’s torture to be separated from her children. So great a torture, that I think it will last, as anxious love, also in Heaven, where we shall be received. »

<sup>5</sup>Mary’s crying, so loud in the silence of early dawn, has caused everybody to come back, to learn what has happened, and they thus hear the words of the Blessed Virgin and everybody is moved. 253. 5

Mary of Magdala whispers weeping: «And I gave my mother that torture even here on the Earth. »

Martha weeps saying: «To be separated is sorrowful for both mothers and children. »

Peter's eyes are shining with tears and the Zealot says to Bartholomew: «Wonderful words of wisdom to explain what the maternity of a blessed soul will be! »

«And how things will be considered by a blessed mother: in the light of God and her spiritualised maternity... It takes your breath away as If you were facing a bright mystery» replies Nathanael.

The Iscariot says to Andrew: «Maternity is divested of all sensible weight and takes wings... when described thus. We seem to be seeing our mothers already transformed into inconceivable beauty. »

«That is true. Our mother, James, will love us thus. Can you imagine how perfect her love will be? » says John to his brother and he is the only one to smile brightly, so deeply moved he is at the thought that his mother will be able to love perfectly.

<sup>6</sup>«I am sorry I caused so much sorrow» apologises James of Alphaeus. «But she apprehended more than I said... Believe me, Jesus. »

«I know, I know. But Mary is working on herself by herself, and that was a particularly hard stroke of the chisel. But it will relieve her of so much dead weight» says Jesus.

«Come on, mother, stop weeping. I am sorry that you should suffer like a poor little woman who is unaware of the certainties of the Kingdom of God. You are in no way like the mother of the Maccabean brothers\*» says Thaddeus reproaching her severely, but he embraces her at the same time and kisses her grey-haired head. «You are like a little girl who is afraid of shadows and of the tales they tell her to frighten her. And yet you know where to find me: in Jesus. What a mother! You ought to weep if you had been told that, in the future, I was to become a traitor to Jesus or one who would abandon Him, or would be a damned soul. In that

\* **the Maccabean brothers:** called in this way because their martyrdom, narrated in *2 Maccabees 7*, occurred "at the time of the Maccabeans" as mentioned in 157. 5. They were called in this way are called by their nicknames (meaning hammerers) from their main hero Judas the Maccabean, already mentioned in 72. 5. Their activities, for the achievement of religious and political freedom of the Hebrew population, are narrated in the two books by the *Maccabees*, referring to chapters and verses every time that the work mentions a specific event. Used as an excuse by Sinedrio, the combination between Judas of Iscariot and Judas of Maccabee in 588. 4, indicated by the apostle John in 600. 2. That hero is compared with Jesus in 600. 11, the cousin apostle of Judas of Alphaeus.

case I agree. You ought to weep tears of blood. But, with the help of God, I will never give you such deep sorrow, mother. I want to be with you forever and ever... »

The reproach first, and the subsequent caresses stop the tears of Mary of Alphaeus, who is now rather ashamed of her weakness.

<sup>7</sup>Light, in the transition from night to day, has faded, because the moon has set, but it is not yet daylight. It is twilight. But immediately afterwards light begins to assert itself: at first it is leaden, then greyish, then greenish, afterwards whitish with bluish traces, and finally clear, like an incorporeal silver, and it makes it easy to walk on the damp shingly shore, from which the sea has receded, while it is delightful to contemplate the sea becoming pale blue and on the point of brightening up with facets of gems. And then the air blends its silver with a darker and darker pink, until the golden pink of dawn becomes a reddish pink shower on the sea, on faces, on the country, with brighter and brighter contrasting hues, which reach the perfect climax, which I consider the most beautiful of the day, when the sun bouncing out from the eastern horizon, darts its first rays on mountains and hills, forests, meadows and the large expanses of sea and sky, emphasizing each shade, whether it is the whiteness of snow, or remote mountains of indigo changing into jasper green, or cobalt sky attenuating to mix with pink, or sapphire veined with jade and lined with sea pearls. And today the sea is a real prodigy of beauty. It is not dead in dull calm, it is not ruffled by the fury of winds, but it is majestically alive in smiling little thin waves, just marked with ripples crowned with a tiny crest of foam.

253. 7

«We shall arrive at Dora before the heat of the day. And we shall depart at sunset. Sisters, your toilsome journey will end tomorrow at Caesarea. And we shall have a rest, too. Your wagon will be certainly waiting for you. We will part... <sup>8</sup>Why are you weeping, Mary? Am I supposed to see all the Maries weep today? » says Jesus to the Magdalene.

253. 8

«She is sorry to leave You» says her sister excusing her.

«That does not mean that we shall not be meeting again and soon. »

Mary shakes her head. That is not the reason why she is weeping.

The Zealot explains: «She is afraid she will not be able to be good without being near You. She is afraid of... of being tempted too strongly, when You are not near her to keep the demon away. She was telling me a little while ago. »

«Do not be afraid for that. I never withdraw the grace I have granted. Do you want to sin? No? Then do not worry. Be watchful, of course, but be not afraid. »

«Lord... I am weeping because at Caesarea... Caesarea is full of my sins. I can see them all now... My human nature will have much to suffer... »

«I am glad of that. The more you suffer, the better. Because afterwards you will no longer suffer such useless pains. Mary of Theophilus, I remind you that you are the daughter of a strong man, that you are a strong soul and I want to make you most strong. I can bear with the weakness of the other women disciples, because they have always been meek and shy, including your sister. But I will not put up with it in your case. I will work you with fire and on the anvil. Because your character is to be dealt with thus, in order not to spoil the miracle of your will and Mine. Let that be known to you and to all those who among the people present or absent may think that, as I have loved you so much, I may become weak with you. I allow you to weep for repentance and for love. But nothing else. Is that clear? » Jesus is imposing and severe.

Mary of Magdala endeavours to swallow tears and sobs and she goes down on her knees, kisses Jesus' feet and endeavouring to steady her voice she says: «Yes, my Lord. I will do what You want. »

«Get up then and be calm. »

#### 254. The meeting with Syntyche, a Greek slave and the arrival of Cesarea Maritimee.

15<sup>th</sup> August 1945.

254. 1 I do not see the town of Dora. The sun is setting and the pilgrims are moving towards Caesarea. But I did not see the stop at Dora. Perhaps it was a simple stop, without anything special to be noted. The sea seems to be on fire, as in its calm it reflects the

red of the sky so much, so deep a red that it looks unreal. Blood seems to have been shed on the vault of heaven. It is still warm notwithstanding the sea air makes the heat bearable. They are walking along the sea all the time, to avoid the fierce heat of the dry earth, and many of them have taken off their sandals and pulled up their garments to paddle in the water.

Peter states: «If the women disciples were not here, I would strip myself and go in up to my neck. »

But he has to come out even from where he is, because the Magdalene, who was ahead with the other women, comes back and says: «Master, I am familiar with this area. Can You see that yellow strip in the blue sea over there? A river flows into the sea there, also in summer, as it is a perennial one. And one must be careful in crossing it... »

«We have crossed so many. It is surely not the Nile! We will cross this one as well» says Peter.

«It is not the Nile. But in the water and on its banks there are dangerous water animals. You cannot cross it carelessly or bare-footed, if you do not want to be wounded. »

«Oh! What are they? Leviathans\*? »

«You are right, Simon. They are in fact crocodiles. Small ones, that is true, but capable of maiming you for a while»

«How did they come to be here? »

«I think they were brought there for religious rites of the Phoenician era. And they have remained there, they have become smaller, but no less aggressive, and from the temples have passed into the sludge of the river. They are now large lizards, with vicious teeth! The Romans come here hunting and to amuse themselves in various ways. I have come with them, too. Everything helps to... occupy the time. Their skin is lovely and is used for many articles. Allow me therefore to be your guide, in view of my experience. »

«Alright. I would like to see them... » says Peter.

«We may see some, although they have almost all been destroyed, they are hunted so much. »

<sup>2</sup>They depart from the shore and turn inland, until they find a <sup>254. 2</sup>

\* Leviathans, a marine monster, symbol of the powers of evil, mentioned in *Job 3, 8; 40, 25-32; Psalm 74, 14; 104, 26; Isaiah 27, 1*. In the book by Job is identified with the crocodile, a hint of which can be found in 398. 3.

main road, half way between the hills and the sea and they soon reach an ogival bridge, thrown across a little river, the bed of which is rather wide, but the scanty water flows only in its centre. Where there is no water there are reeds and bog-grass, now almost parched by the summer heat, but in other seasons they perhaps form tiny islands in the water. The banks instead are covered with thick bushes and trees.

Although they look very carefully, they can see no animal, and many of them are disappointed. But when they are near the end of the bridge the only arch of which is very high, so that it may not be submerged by water in the period of floods - it is a very strong construction probably built by the Romans - Martha gives a very shrill scream and runs back terrified. A very big lizard, that is all it is, but with the typical head of a crocodile, is lying across the road, feigning sleep.

«Don't be afraid! » shouts the Magdalene. «When they are like that, they are not dangerous. The trouble is when they are hidden and you put your foot on them without seeing them. »

But Martha remains prudently behind. Susanna also is frightened... Mary of Alphaeus is prudent but more brave and walking close to her sons, she advances and looks. The apostles are not afraid and they look making comments on the ugly animal, which deigns to turn around its head slowly, so that its face can be seen. It then moves and seems to be wanting to come towards those who have disturbed it. Another scream from Martha who runs farther back imitated also by Susanna and Mary Clopas. But Mary of Magdala picks up a stone, throws it at the lizard which, hit on one side runs down the gravel bed and sinks into the mud.

«Come forward, you fearful woman. It's no longer here» she says to her sister. The women come together.

«It is really ugly» comments Peter.

254. 3     3«Is it true, Master, that once they fed them with human victims? » asks the Iscariot.

«It was considered a sacred animal, it represented a god, and as we offer sacrifices to our God, so the poor idolaters did it in the forms and with the errors becoming their condition. »

«But not now? » asks Susanna.

«I think that it is still possible that it might be done in idola-

trous countries» says John of Endor.

«My God! But they will give them dead, eh? »

«No. If they give them, they give them alive. Generally girls or boys. The choice of the population. At least that is what I read» replies John once again to the women who look around frightened.

«I would die of fear if I had to go near one» says Martha.

«Really? But these ones are nothing compared with real crocodiles. They are at least three times as long and large. »

«And they are famished, too. This one was certainly replete with water snakes or wild rabbits. »

«Mercy! Water snakes, too! My Lord, where have You brought us? » moans Martha, who is so frightened that she makes everybody laugh.

Ermasteus, who has always been quiet, says: «Do not be afraid. It is enough to make a lot of noise to make them flee. I know because I have been to low Egypt many times. »

They set out clapping their hands or beating tree trunks. And the dangerous spot is left behind.

Martha has gone near Jesus and she often asks Him: «Will there be anymore? »

Jesus looks at her, shakes His head, but reassures her: «The Saron plain is nothing but beauty, and we are now there. But the women disciples have really surprised me today. I do not really know why you are so fearful. »

«I do not know myself. But anything that creeps terrorizes me. I seem to feel the cold of their bodies on me, which are certainly cold and slimy. And I wonder why they exist. Are they necessary? »

«You should ask Him Who made them. But you may be sure that if He made them, it means that they are useful. At least to make Martha's heroism shine» says Jesus, eyes shining wittily.

«Oh! Lord. You are joking and You are right. But I am afraid and I will never be able to control myself. »

«We shall see about that... <sup>254. 4</sup>But what is moving in those bushes over there? » says Jesus raising His head and looking straight in front of Him, at a tangled mass of bramble and other plants with long branches climbing towards an embankment of Indian figs, growing farther back with their leaves, which are as rigid



as the climbing branches are flexible.

«Another crocodile, Lord?!... » moans Martha, who is terrorized once again.

The rustling of the branches increases and the head of a woman appears. She looks. When she sees so many men, she is uncertain whether to flee to the country or withdraw back into the wild tunnel. The former alternative prevails and she runs away screaming.

«A leper? » «A mad woman? » «A woman possessed? » they ask perplexed.

The woman comes back because a Roman wagon is arriving from Caesarea and is already near. The woman looks like a mouse in a trap. She does not know where to go, because Jesus and His group of people are near the thicket where she was sheltered, and thus she cannot go back to it, and she does not want to go towards the Roman wagon... In the evening dusk, as night falls fast after a powerful sunset, it is possible to see that she is young and pretty although her garments are torn and she is unkempt.

«Woman! Come here! » commands Jesus peremptorily.

The woman stretches out her arms imploring: «Do not hurt me! »

«Come here. Who are you? I will do you no harm» and He says so, so kindly that He persuades her.

The woman moves forward with her head lowered and she throws herself on the ground saying: «Whoever You are, have mercy on me. Kill me but do not hand me back to my master. I am a fugitive slave... »

«Who was your master? And where are you from? You are certainly not Hebrew. It is obvious from your way of speaking and from your garments. »

«I am Greek. The Greek slave of... Oh! mercy! Hide me! The wagon is about to arrive... »

They all form a group around the poor wretch curled up on the ground. Her dress torn by thorns shows her shoulders streaked with lashes and covered with scratches. The wagon passes by without any of its passengers paying attention to the group standing near the hedge.

«They have gone by, speak now. We will help you if we can» says Jesus laying the tips of His fingers on her ruffled hair.

<sup>5</sup>«I am Syntyche, the Greek slave of a noble Roman of the Pro-<sup>254</sup> consul's suite. »

«So you are the slave of Valerian! » exclaims Mary of Magdala.

«Ah! Have mercy! Don't denounce me to him» implores the unhappy woman.

«Do not be afraid. I will never speak to Valerian again» replies the Magdalene. And she informs Jesus: «He is one of the richest and filthiest Romans we have here. And he is as cruel as he is filthy. »

«Why did you run away? » asks Jesus.

«Because I have a soul. I am not merchandise... (the woman takes heart when she realises she has come across compassionate people). I am not merchandise. He bought me. That is true. But he may have bought my person to embellish his house, that I may brighten up his time by reading for him, that I may serve him. But nothing else. My soul is mine! It cannot be bought. But he wanted also that. »

«How do you know there is a soul? »

«I am not illiterate, Lord. I was a prey of war since my youth. But I was not plebeian. This was my third master and a dirty faun. But I remember the words of our philosophers. And I know that we are not made only of flesh. There is something immortal enclosed within us. Something which has no precise name for us. But I recently learned its name. One day a man came from Caesarea, he worked miracles and spoke better than Socrates and Plato. They discussed him very much, in thermal baths, in triclinia, or in gilt peristyles, contaminating his august Name by mentioning it in the halls of foul orgies. And I, just I who already felt I had something immortal that belongs only to God and cannot be purchased as merchandise at slave markets, was ordered by my master to read the works of philosophers to compare them and find out whether this unknown thing, that the Man from Caesarea had called "soul", was described in them. He made me read that! I whom he wanted to enslave to his sensuality! I thus found out that this immortal thing is the soul. And while Valerian and his like were listening to my voice, and belching and yawning he endeavoured to understand, compare and discuss. I linked their conversation, referring the words of the Unknown

Man, with the words of the philosophers and I kept them here, in my heart, and my dignity became stronger and stronger to reject his lustfulness... Some evenings ago he beat me to death because I rejected him, biting him with my teeth... and I ran away the following day... I have lived in that thicket for five days, picking blackberries and Indian figs at night. But I will end up by being caught. He is certainly looking for me. I cost a lot of money and his sensuality craves too much for me to leave me alone... Have  
254. 6 mercy on me! 6You are an Israelite and you certainly know where he is, I ask you to take me to the Unknown Man who speaks to slaves and speaks of souls. They told me that he is poor. I will starve, but I want to be near him that he may teach me and elevate me. It is brutalising to live with brutes, even if one resists them. I want to possess my moral dignity once again. »

«That man, The Unknown One, Whom you are looking for, is in front of you. »

«You? O unknown God of the Acropolis, Hail! » and she bows her forehead to the ground.

«You cannot remain here. But I am going to Caesarea... »

«Do not leave me, Lord! »

«I will not leave you... I think... »

«Master, our wagon is certainly at the appointed place, waiting for us. Send for it. She will be as safe in the wagon as she would be in our house» suggests Mary of Magdala.

«Oh! yes, Lord! Send her to us, in the place of old Ishmael. We will teach her Your doctrine. She will be torn from paganism» begs Martha.

«Do you want to come with us? » asks Jesus.

«With any of Your friends, providing I am no longer with that man. But... but a woman here said that she knows him. Will she betray me? Will any Romans go to her house? No... »

«Be not afraid. Romans do not come to Bethany, above all Romans of the kind» replies the Magdalene reassuring her.

«Simon and Simon Peter, go and look for the wagon. We shall wait for you here. We shall go to town afterwards» orders Jesus.

254. 7 7... When the noise of the hooves and of the wheels and the lamp hanging from its roof announce the arrival of the heavy closed wagon, those waiting for it come up from the river bank, where they certainly had their evening meal, and come on to the

road. The wagon comes jolting to a stop on the edge of the rough road and Peter and Simon get off it. They are immediately followed by an elderly woman who runs to embrace the Magdalene saying: «I did not want to delay one moment to tell you that I am so happy, to tell you that your mother is rejoicing with me, to tell you that you are once again the fair rose of our house, as when you used to sleep in the cradle after I had suckled you» and she kisses her many times.

Mary weeps in her arms.

«Woman I entrust this young woman to you and I ask you to make the sacrifice of waiting here all night. Tomorrow you will be able to go to the first village on the consular road and wait there. We shall come by the third hour» Jesus says to the nurse.

«Everything as You wish, may You be blessed! Just let me give Mary the clothes I brought her. » And she climbs on to the wagon with the Most Holy Virgin, Martha and Mary. When they come out the Magdalene is dressed as we shall always see her in future: a plain dress, a wide thin linen cloth as a veil and a mantle without any ornament.

«You may go peacefully, Syntyche. We shall be coming tomorrow as well. Goodbye» says Jesus greeting her. And He takes to the road again towards Caesarea...

<sup>8</sup>The sea-front is crowded with people walking in the light of 254. 8 torches or lanterns carried by slaves, breathing the air coming from the sea, which is a relief to their lungs tired of the summer sultriness. The ones walking are mainly rich Romans. The Jews are closed in their houses and enjoy the fresh air on their terraces. The sea-front looks like a very long parlour during visits. To pass there means to be examined closely in every detail. And Jesus passes just there... for the whole length of the promenade, ignoring those who watch Him, make comments or deride Him.

«Master, You are here? At this time? » asks Lydia, who is sitting on a kind of armchair, or little bed, which slaves have brought for her to the edge of the road. And she stands up.

«I am coming from Dora and I am late. I am looking for lodgings. »

«I would say to You: here is my house» and she points at a beautiful building behind her. «But I do not know whether... »

«No. Thank you. I cannot accept. I have many people with Me and two have already gone ahead of us to inform some people I know. I think they will give us hospitality. »

<sup>9</sup>Lydia's eyes rest also on the women and the disciples at whom Jesus pointed, and she immediately recognises the Magdalene.

«Mary? It's you? So it's true? »

Mary's eyes are like those of a surrounded gazelle: she is tortured. And she is justified because Lydia is not the only one she has to face, as many more look at her... But she looks also at Jesus and plucks up courage again.

«It is true. »

«So we have lost you! »

«No. You have found me. At least I hope to find you again one day, and in a better friendship, on the road that at long last I have found. Please tell all those who know me. Goodbye, Lydia. Forget all the evil you saw me do, I ask you to forgive me... »

«Mary! Why are you lowering yourself? We have led the same life, the life of rich idle people, and there is no... »

«No. No, my life was worse. But I have come out of it. And forever. »

«Goodbye, Lydia» the Lord cuts short and He moves towards His cousin Judas who is coming towards Him with Thomas.

Lydia keeps the Magdalene back for another moment. «Tell me the truth, now that we are alone: are you really convinced? »

«Not convinced: happy to be a disciple. I regret one thing only: that I did not meet the Light before and that I have been feeding on filth instead of being nourished by it. Goodbye, Lydia. »

Her reply sounds clear in the silence enveloping the two women. None of the many people present speak anymore... Mary turns around and makes haste to reach the Master.

A young man stands on her way: «Is that your last foolish action? » he says, and tries to embrace her. But half drunk as he is, he is not successful, and Mary evades him shouting: «No, it is my only wise one. » She reaches her companions who are completely covered with their veils, such is their disgust to be seen by those vicious people.

«Mary» says Martha anxiously «did you suffer much? »

«No, and He is right, I will never suffer again because of that. He is right... »

They all turn into a narrow dark street and enter a large house, certainly a hotel, for the night.

255. Ill feelings of the apostles. The departure of Martha and Mary with Syntyche.  
Application of the law of the slave.

17<sup>th</sup> August 1945.

<sup>1</sup>And they are once again on their way, going eastwards, towards the country. 255. 1

The apostles and the two disciples are now with Mary Clopas and Susanna, a few yards behind Jesus, Who is with His Mother and the two sisters of Lazarus. Jesus is engrossed in talking. The apostles instead are silent. They look tired or disheartened. Their attention is not even attracted by the beauty of the country, which is really wonderful, with gentle undulations across the plain like many green pillows under the feet of a giant king and its tiny hills spread here and there, prelude to the mountain chains of Mount Carmel and Samaria. Both the plain, which is the dominating part of the country, and the small decorated hills and undulated ground, are completely covered with blooming flowers and full of ripening fruit. It must be a well watered place, notwithstanding its position and the season, because it is also flourishing to be lacking in water. I now understand why the plain of Saron is so often mentioned enthusiastically in the Holy Scriptures. But that enthusiasm is not shared by the apostles, who look somewhat sulky, the only ones to look so, in this splendid day and in this charming country.

The consular road, which is well kept, cuts across the most fertile land like a white ribbon and in the early morning one frequently meets farmers laden with victuals and travellers going to Caesarea. One of the farmers, leading a line of donkeys laden with sacks, who catches up with the apostles and compels them to step aside to make room for the donkey caravan, asks arrogantly: «Is the Kishon here?»

«Further back» replies Thomas dryly, and mutters between his teeth: «You lout!»

«He is a Samaritan and that's enough!» replies Philip.

255. 2   <sup>2</sup>They become silent again. After a few yards, as if he were concluding an internal speech, Peter says: «For what it was worth! Was it worth going all that road?»

«Of course! Why did we go to Caesarea if He did not say even one word? I thought He intended working some wonderful miracle to convince the Romans. Instead... » says James of Zebedee.

«He exposed us to ridicule, that's all» comments Thomas.

The Iscariot aggravates the situation saying: «And He made us suffer. But He likes to be insulted and He thinks we like that as well. »

«In actual fact it was Mary of Theophilus who suffered in this case» remarks the Zealot calmly.

«Mary! Mary! Has Mary become the centre of the universe? She is the only one who suffers, the only heroine, the only one to be perfected. If I had known, I would have become a robber and a killer in order to be the object of so much care» bursts out the Iscariot.

«Actually the last time we came to Caesarea and He worked a miracle and evangelized, we vexed Him by expressing our discontent because He had done so» remarks the cousin of the Lord.

«The trouble is that we do not know what we want... If He does one thing, we grumble, if He does the opposite thing, we still grumble. We are full of faults» says John seriously.

«Oh! There is the other wise man speaking! One thing is certain: no good has been done for some time. »

«No good, Judas? What about the Greek woman, and Ermas-teus, and Abel, and Mary, but... »

«It is not with such nonentities that He will establish the Kingdom» retorts the Iscariot, who is haunted by the idea of an earthly triumph.

«Judas, please do not judge the actions of my Brother. It is a ridiculous pretence. A boy who wants to judge his master or I should say: a non entity wishing to be placed in high quarters» says Thaddeus, who has the same name and an invincible aversion for his namesake.

«Thank you for just calling me a boy. Actually, after living so long in the Temple I thought I could be considered at least of age» replies the Iscariot sarcastically.

255. 3   <sup>3</sup>«How dull these discussions are!» says Andrew with a sigh.

«True! Instead of being united, the more we live together, we are being divided. And yet at Sicaminon He told us that we must be united to the flock... How shall we ever be so, if we are not united as shepherds?» remarks Matthew.

«So we must not speak? We must never express our ideas? I don't think that we are slaves. »

«No, Judas, we are not slaves. But we are not worthy of following Him, because we do not understand Him» says the Zealot peacefully.

«I understand Him very well. »

«No. You do not understand Him, and like you, those who criticise Him, do not understand Him either... To understand means to obey without discussing, because one is convinced of the holiness of the guide» says the Zealot.

«Ah! You are talking of understanding His holiness! I was referring to His words. His holiness is undisputed and indisputable» the Iscariot hastens to say.

«Can you separate one from the others? A saint will always possess Wisdom, and his words will be wise. »

«That is true. But He does harmful things. Because of His excessive holiness. I agree. But the world is not holy, and He causes trouble for Himself. <sup>4</sup>Now, for instance, do you think that this Philistine and that Greek woman will do us any good? » 255. 4

«If I am going to be harmful, I will withdraw» says Ermas-teus, who feels mortified. «I came with the idea of honouring Him and doing the right thing. »

«You would grieve Him by going away for this reason» James of Alphaeus replies to him.

«I will pretend that I have changed my mind. I will say good-bye to Him... and I will go. »

«Surely not! You will not go away. It is not fair that the Master should lose a good disciple because of the short temper of other people» replies Peter promptly.

«If he wants to go away for so little, it means that he is not sure of his own will. So let him go» insists the Iscariot.

Peter loses his temper: «I promised Him, when He gave me Marjiam, that I would become paternal to everybody, and I am sorry to break my promise. But you force me to. Ermasteus is here and is staying here. Do you know what I must tell you? That



you are the one who upsets the will of other people and makes them feel uncertain. You are one who causes separations and disorder. That is what you are. Shame on you. »

«What are you? The protector of... »

«Yes. You are quite right. I know what you mean. I am the protector of the Veiled woman, of John of Endor, of Ermasteus, of the slave, of anyone else who has been found by Jesus and is not one of those splendid ostentatious examples of the Temple, who are formed with the sacred mortar and cobwebs of the Temple, the wicks scented with the dregs of the lamps of the Temple, those like you, in other words, to make the parable clearer, because if the Temple is much, unless I have become a fool, the Master is much more than the Temple and you are lacking... »

255. 5<sup>5</sup> He shouts so loud that the Master stops and turns around and is about to walk back, leaving the women.

«He has heard! He will be sorrowful! » says the apostle John.

«No, Master. Don't come. We were discussing... to kill the boredom of the journey» says Thomas promptly.

But Jesus remains still so that they can reach Him.

«What were you discussing? Must I tell you once again that the women disciples surpass you? » His kind reproach touches their hearts. They become silent and lower their heads. «My friends. Do not be the cause of scandal to those who are being born to the Light just now! Do you not know that an imperfection of yours is more harmful to the redemption of a heathen or a sinner, than all the errors of paganism? »

No one replies because they do not know what to say to justify themselves or to avoid accusing the others.

255. 6<sup>6</sup> «The wagon of Lazarus' sisters is near a bridge over a dry torrent. The two horses are grazing the thick grass on the banks of the torrent, which has perhaps run dry only recently and thus the banks are thick with grass. Martha's servant and another man, perhaps the driver, are also on the river-bed, whilst the women are in the closed wagon, which is completely enveloped with a heavy cover with tanned hides, which hang like heavy curtains down to the floor of the wagon. The women disciples move towards it, and the servant who is the first to see them, informs the nurse, while the other man takes the horses to the shaft.

In the meantime the servant rushes towards his mistress-

es bowing to the ground. The elderly nurse, a fine woman with an olive complexion, but pleasant, comes down from the wagon quickly and goes towards her mistresses. But Mary of Magdala says something to her and she directs her steps towards the Blessed Virgin saying: «Forgive me... But my joy in seeing her is so great that I see nobody else. Come, blessed Mother. The sun is scorching. It is cool in the wagon. »

All the women get onto it waiting for the men who are far behind. And while they are waiting and Syntyche, who is wearing the dress which the Magdalene had on yesterday, kisses the feet of her mistresses, as she insists in calling them, although they tell her that she is neither their slave nor their servant, but their guest in the name of Jesus, the Virgin Mary shows the precious little parcel of purple asking how the very short threads can be spun as they refuse to be moistened or twisted.

«That is not how to do it, Donna. They are to be reduced to powder and used as any other dye. It's the filament of the shell, not a hair. See how crumbly it is, now that it is dry? Reduce it to thin powder, sift it, to remove all long bits, which would stain the yarn or the cloth. It is better to dye the yarn in skeins. When You are sure that it is all fine powder, You dissolve it like cochineal, or saffron, or indigo powder or the powder of any other bark, root or fruit and You use it. Fasten the dye with strong vinegar the last time You rinse it. »

«Thank you, Naomi. I will do as you told Me. I have embroidered with purple threads, but they were given to Me ready to be used... <sup>7</sup>Here is Jesus. It is time to say goodbye, My daughters. I <sup>255. 7</sup> bless you all in the name of the Lord. Go in peace and take peace and joy to Lazarus. Goodbye, Mary. Remember that you wept on My breast your first happy tears. I am therefore your Mother because a baby weeps its first tears on its mother's breast. I am your Mother and will always be such. What may be burdensome for you to tell also the most kind sister, the most loving nurse, come and tell Me. I will always understand you. What you would not dare say to My Jesus because it is still stained with humanity, which He does not want in you, come and tell Me. I will always be indulgent to you. And if you should like to inform Me also of your triumphs - but I would prefer you told Him, like sweet-smelling flowers, because He is your Saviour, not I - I will rejoice with

you. Goodbye, Martha. You are now going away happily, and your supernatural happiness will last. So you need nothing else but to make progress in justice, in the peace which now nothing perturbs in you. Do it for the sake of Jesus, Who has loved you so much as to love your sister whom you love with complete love. Goodbye, Naomi. Go with the treasure you have found. As you used to satisfy her hunger with your milk, satisfy now your own, with the words that she and Martha will tell you, so that you may see in My Son much more than the exorciser who frees hearts from Evil. Goodbye, Syntyche, flower of Greece, you perceived by yourself that there is something more than flesh. Bloom now in God and be the first of the new Grecian flowers in Christ. I am very happy to leave you united thus. I bless you with My love. »

The shuffling of feet is now close at hand. They lift the heavy curtain and see Jesus Who is a few feet from the wagon. They get off in the parching sun, which is blazing down on the road.

Mary of Magdala kneels at Jesus' feet saying: «I thank You, for everything. And I thank You also very much for making me do this pilgrimage. You only possess Wisdom. I am now leaving divested of the remains of the Mary of time ago. Bless me, My Lord, to fortify me more and more. »

«Yes. I bless you. Enjoy the company of your brother and sister and with them form yourself more and more in Me. Goodbye, Mary. Goodbye, Martha. Tell Lazarus that I bless him. I entrust this woman to you. I am not giving her to you. She is My disciple. But I want you to give her the opportunity, however small, of understanding My doctrine. I will come later. Naomi, I bless you, and you two, as well. »

255. 8 <sup>8</sup>Martha and Mary have tears in their eyes. The Zealot greets them in particular handing them a letter for his servant. The others greet them all together. The wagon then sets off.

«And now let us go and look for some shady spot. May God guide them... Are you so sorry, Mary, that they have gone? » He asks Mary of Alphaeus, who is weeping silently.

«Yes. They were very good... »

«We shall be meeting them again soon. And they will have grown in numbers. You will have many sisters... or daughters, if you prefer so. It is all love, whether it is maternal or brotherly» says Jesus comforting her.

«Providing that does not cause trouble... » grumbles the Is-  
cariot.

«Trouble to love one another? »

«No. Trouble having people of different races or origin. »

«YOu mean Syntyche? »

«Yes, Master. After all she was the property of the Roman and it was wrong to take possession of her. He will be angry with us and we will draw upon ourselves the rigour of Pontius Pilate. »

«What do you think Pontius Pilate cares if one of his subordinates loses a slave? He will know what a slave is worth. And if he is generally honest, as they say he is, at least at home, he will say that the woman did the right thing to run away. If he is dishonest, he will say: "Serves him right. I may find her". Dishonest people are not sensitive to other people's sufferings. In any case, poor Pontius! With all the trouble we make for him, he has enough to worry about instead of wasting his time with the complaint of a man who let his slave run away! » says Peter. And many say that he is right and laugh at the anger of the lewd Roman.

<sup>9</sup>But Jesus discusses the matter at a higher level. «Judas are you familiar with Deuteronomy? » 255. 9

«Certainly, Master. And, I do not hesitate to say, as very few people are. »

«And what do you consider it is? »

«The spokesman of God. »

«Spokesman. So it repeats the word of God. »

«Exactly. »

«You judge it correctly. But, then, why do you not think that it is right to do what it commands? »

«I never said that. On the contrary! I find that we neglect it too much by following the new Law. »

«The New Law is the fruit of the old one, that is, it is the perfection achieved by the tree of Faith. But none of us neglect it, as far as I know, because I am the first to respect it and to prevent others from neglecting it. » Jesus is very incisive in saying these words. He resumes: «The Deuteronomy is untouchable. Also when My Kingdom will triumph, and with My Kingdom the New Law and its new codes and clauses, the Deuteronomy will always be applied to the new dictates, as the squared stones of

ancient buildings are used for new ones, because they are perfect and make very strong walls. But My Kingdom does not yet exist, and I, a faithful Israelite, do not offend or neglect the Mosaic Book. It is the basis of My behaviour and My teaching. Upon the basis of the Man and of the Master, the Son of the Father places the heavenly construction of His Nature and Wisdom. In Deuteronomy it is written\*: “You shall not hand over to his master the slave who has come to you. He shall live with you, wherever he pleases, he shall stay peacefully in one of your towns and you shall not molest him”. This decree applies in any case where a slave has been compelled to run away from a cruel master. In My case, in the case of Syntyche, the flight is not towards a limited freedom, but towards the unlimited freedom of the Son of God. And now that this skylark has escaped from the hunters’ trap, do you expect Me to put her into a net once again and hand her over to her prison to deprive her also of hope, after taking away her freedom? No, never! I bless the Lord because, as our trip to Endor brought this son back to the Father, so our visit to Caesarea has brought this woman to Me, that I may lead her to the Father. At Sicaminon I spoke to you of the power of faith. Today I will speak to you of the light of Hope. But now let us eat and rest in this orchard. Because the sun is scorching as if hell were open. »

256. With the vine-dressers, healing  
of an old man and the parable on hope.

18<sup>th</sup> August 1945.

256.1 <sup>1</sup>Some vine-dressers, who are passing through the orchard, laden with baskets of golden grapes, which seem to be made of amber, see the apostles and ask them: «Are you pilgrims or strangers? »

«We are Galilean pilgrims going towards Mount Carmel» replies James of Zebedee on behalf of everybody, who with his fishermen companions is stretching his legs to overcome fatigue. The Iscariot and Matthew are just waking up on the grass on which they had lain down, while the elder ones, being very tired,

\* it is written, in: *Deuteronomy 28, 16-17*

are still sleeping. Jesus is speaking to John of Endor and Ermas-teus, while the Blessed Virgin and Mary Clopas are nearby, but they do not speak.

The vine-dressers ask: «Have you come from afar? »

«Caesarea was our last stop. Before that we were at Sicami-non and farther away. We come from Capernaum. »

«Oh! It's a long way in this season! But why did you not come to our house? It's over there, see? We could have given you cool water to refreshen yourselves, and some food, rustic food, but good. Come now. »

«We are about to depart. May God reward you just the same. »

«Mount Carmel will not flee on a chariot of fire as its prophet did» says a peasant half seriously.

«No more chariots come from Heaven to take prophets away. There are no more prophets in Israel. They say that John is already dead» says another peasant.

«Dead? Since when? »

«That's what we were told by some people who came from beyond the Jordan. Did you venerate him? »

«We were his disciples. »

«Why did you leave him? »

«To follow the Lamb of God, the Messiah Whom he announced. Men, He is still in Israel. And much more than a chariot of fire would be required to transfer Him worthily to Heaven. <sup>2</sup>Do you not believe in the Messiah? »

256. 2

«Of course we do! We decided to go and look for Him when the harvest is over. They say that He is very zealous in obeying the Law and that He goes to the Temple on prescribed festivities. We shall soon be going for the Tabernacles and will stay in the Temple every day to see Him. And if we do not find Him, we will go looking for Him until we find Him. Since you know Him, tell us: is it true that He is at Capernaum almost all the time? Is it true that He is tall, young, pale, fair-haired and that His voice is different from every other man's, as it touches the hearts of men and even animals and trees listen to it? »

«It touches every heart, except the hearts of Pharisees, Gamala. They have become harsher. »

«They are not even animals. They are demons, including the one whose name I bear. But tell us: is it true that He is so kind

as to speak to everybody, to comfort everybody, to cure diseases and convert sinners? »

«Do you believe that? »

«Yes, we do. But we would like to be told by you who follow Him. Oh! I wish you would take us to Him! »

«But you have your vineyards to look after. »

«But we have also a soul to take care of, and it is worth more than our vineyards. Is He at Capernaum? By forced marches we could go and come back in ten days... »

256. 3 3«The One you are looking for is over there. He has rested in your orchard and is now speaking to that old man and the young one, and His Mother and the sister of His Mother are beside Him. »

«That One... Oh!... What shall we do? »

They become stiff with amazement. They are all eyes looking at Him. All their vitality is concentrated in their eyes.

«Well? You were so anxious to see Him, and now you are not moving? Have you become of salt? » says Peter prodding them.

«No... it's... But is the Messiah so simple? »

«What did you expect Him to be? Sitting on a flashing throne wearing a royal mantle? Did you think that He was a new Ahasuerus\*? »

«No. But... so simple, and He is so holy! »

«Man, He is simple just because He is holy. Well, let us do this... Master! Be patient, come here and work a miracle. There are some men here who are looking for You, but they have become petrified seeing You. Come and give them back motion and speech. »

Jesus, Who turned around when He was called, gets up smiling and comes towards the vine-dressers, whose countenance is so stupefied that they seem to be frightened.

«Peace be with you. Did you want Me? Here I am» and He makes the usual gesture with His arms, which He stretches out as if He offered Himself.

The vine-dressers fall on their knees and remain silent. «Be not afraid. Tell Me what you want. »

They offer their baskets full of grapes, without speaking.

\* Ahasuerus, a Persian king whose regal aspect is presented in *Esther 5, 1c*.

Jesus admires the beautiful grapes, and saying: «Thanks» He stretches a hand and takes a bunch and begins to eat them.

«O Most High God! He eats like us!» says with a sigh the one whose name is Gamala.

It is impossible not to laugh at such a remark. Jesus also smiles more noticeably and almost to excuse Himself, He says: «I am the Son of man!»

<sup>4</sup>His gesture has overcome their ecstatic torpor, and Gamala says: «Would You not enter our house, at least until vesper? We are many, because we are seven brothers with wives and children, and then there are the old ones who are waiting for death in peace.»

256 4

«Let us go. Call your companions and join us. Mother, come with Mary.»

And Jesus sets out behind the peasants who have got up and are walking a little sideways in order to see Him walk. The path is a narrow one and runs between trees tied to one another by vines.

They soon reach the house, or rather the houses, because there are several houses forming a square with a large common yard in the centre, where there is a well. The entrance is through a long corridor, which serves as a lobby and is closed at night with a heavy door.

«Peace to this house and to those who live in it» says Jesus entering and raising His hand to bless, and then lowers it to caress a little half-naked baby, who looks at Him ecstatically: he is lovely in his little sleeveless shirt, which has fallen off his plump shoulder; he is barefooted, with one finger in his mouth and a crust of bread, covered with oil, in the other hand.

«That's David, the son of my youngest brother» explains Gamala, while one of the other vine-dressers enters the house next door to inform the people in it, he then comes out and enters another one and so on, so that faces of every age look out and withdraw, and finally come out after a short freshening up.

<sup>5</sup>There is an old man sitting in the shade of a shed, shielded by a huge fig-tree, and he is holding a stick in his hands. He does not even raise his head, as if nothing were of interest to him.

256 5

«He is our father» explains Gamala. «He is one of the old people of the household, because Jacob's wife also brought her father



here when he was left all alone, then there is the old mother of Leah, who is the youngest wife. Our father is blind. His eyes are covered by a veil. So much sunshine in the fields! So much heat from the soil! Poor father! He is very sad. But he is very good. He is now waiting for his grandchildren, who are his only joy. »

Jesus goes towards the old man. «May God bless you, father. »

«May God give Your blessing back to You, whoever You are» replies the old man raising his head towards the voice.

«Your fate is unpleasant, is it not? » asks Jesus kindly, beckoning to the others not to say who is speaking.

«It comes from God, after so much good He has given me during my long life. As I accepted good from God I must accept also the misfortune of my sight. After all, it is not eternal. It will end on the bosom of Abraham. »

«You are right. It would be worse if your soul were blind. »

«I have always endeavoured to keep its sight perfect. »

«How did you do that? »

«You who are speaking, are young, Your voice tells me. Are You perhaps like the present-day young people who are all blind, because they are without religion, eh? Be careful, it is a great misfortune not to believe and not to do what God told us. An old man tells You, my boy. If You abandon the Law, You will be blind both on the earth and in next life. You will never see God. Because the day will come when the Redeemer Messiah will open the gates of God for us. I am too old to see that day here on the earth. But I will see it from the bosom of Abraham. That is why I do not complain of anything. Because I hope that through my darkness I will expiate anything I may have done disagreeable to God, and that I may deserve Him in eternal life. But You are young. Be faithful, son, so that You may see the Messiah. Because the time is near. The Baptist said so. You will see Him. But if Your soul is blind You will be one of those of whom Isaiah speaks\*. You will have eyes, but You will not see. »

«Would you like to see Him, father? » asks Jesus laying one hand on his white head.

«I would like to see Him. Of course. But I prefer to go without seeing Him, rather than I should see Him and my sons should not

\* speaks, in: *Isaiah 6, 9-10.*

recognise Him. I still have the ancient faith and it is enough for me. They... Oh! the world nowadays... »

«Father, see therefore the Messiah, and may the evening of your life be crowned with delight» and Jesus' hand slides from the white head down across his forehead as far as the bearded chin of the old man, as if He were caressing him, and in the meantime He bends to be at the height of his senile face.

«Oh! Most High Lord! But I can see! I see... Who are You, with this unknown face, which, however, is familiar to me, as if I had already seen You?... But... Oh! How foolish I am! You Who have given me back my eyesight are the blessed Messiah! Oh! » The old man weeps over Jesus' hands, which he has grasped, covering them with tears and kisses.

All the relatives are in turmoil.

Jesus frees His hand and He caresses the old man again saying: «Yes, it is I. Come, so that you may become acquainted with My words as well as with My face. » And He goes towards a little staircase, which leads up to a shady terrace entirely shielded by a thick pergola. Everybody follows Him.

<sup>6</sup>«I had promised My disciples to speak to them about hope and I was going to tell them a parable to explain it. This is the parable: this old Israelite. The Father of Heaven gives Me the subject to teach you all the great virtue that supports Faith and Charity, like the arms of a yoke. 256. 6

A sweet yoke. The scaffold of mankind like the arm of the cross, the throne of salvation like the support of the wholesome snake raised in the desert. Scaffold of mankind. Bridge of the soul to fly up to the Light. And it is placed in the middle, between essential Faith and most perfect Charity, because without Hope there can be no Faith and without Hope, Charity dies. Faith presupposes unfailling hope. How can one believe that one will reach God if one does not hope in His Bounty? What can support you during your lifetime if you do not hope in eternal life? How can we persist in justice if we do not entertain the hope that every good deed of ours is seen by God Who will reward us for it? Likewise how can Charity be alive in us if we have no hope? Hope precedes Charity and prepares it. Because a man needs to hope in order to love. Those who have lost all hope, cannot love. This is the staircase, made of steps and banisters: Faith

the steps, Hope the banisters; at the top there is Charity to which one climbs by means of the other two. Man hopes in order to believe, and believes in order to love.

256 7 <sup>7</sup>This man knew how to hope. He was born. A baby of Israel like everybody else. He grew up with the same teaching as everybody else. He became a son of the Law like all the others. He became a man, a husband, a father, old, always hoping in the promises made to the patriarchs and repeated by the prophets. In his old age shadows came over his eyes, but not over his heart. Hope has always been lit in it. Hope to see God. To see God in the next life. And, in the hope of that eternal vision, there was a more intimate and dearer hope: "to see the Messiah". And he said to Me, not knowing who was the young man speaking to him: "If you abandon the Law you will be blind both on the earth and in Heaven. You will not see God and you will not know the Messiah. He spoke as a wise man.

There are too many people in Israel now who are blind. They have no hope because it was killed by their rebellion to the Law, which is always a rebellion, even when veiled by sacred vestments if it is not complete acceptance of the word of God, I say of God, not of the superstructures put there by man, which being too many and completely human, are neglected by the very ones who put them there, and are fulfilled mechanically, compulsorily, wearily, unfruitfully by others. They have no more hope. But they deride the eternal truth. Therefore they no longer have Faith or Charity. The divine yoke given by God to man that he might make it his obedience and merit, the heavenly cross that God gave to man to conjure the serpents of Evil, that he might make it his health, has lost its cross arm, the one supporting the white flame and the red one: Faith and Charity, and darkness descended into the hearts of men.

The old man said to Me: "It is a great misfortune not to believe and not to do what God told us". It is true. I confirm it. It is worse than bodily blindness, which can be cured to give a just man the joy to see again the sun, meadows, the fruit of the earth the faces of his sons and grandchildren, and above all, what was the hope of his hope: "To see the Messiah of the Lord". I wish such virtue were alive in the soul of every man in Israel and above all in the souls of those who are more learned in the law. It is not sufficient

to have been to the Temple or to be of the Temple, it is not sufficient to know the words of the Book by heart. It is necessary to make them the life of our lives by means of the three divine virtues. You have an example: everything is easy to deal with where they are alive, even misfortune. Because the yoke of God is always a light one, which weighs only on the body but does not deject the spirit.

<sup>8</sup>Go in peace, you who live in this house of good Israelites. Go in peace: old father. You have the certainty that God loves you. End your just day by laying your wisdom in the hearts of the children of your own blood. I cannot stay, but My blessing remains here among these walls rich in grace like the grapes of this vineyard. » 256. 8

And Jesus would like to go away, but He has to stay at least long enough to meet this tribe of all ages, and receive what they wish to give Him, until their travelling sacks are like bulging goat skins... He can then take to the road again, along a short cut through the vineyard, shown to Him by the vine-dressers, who leave Him only when they reach the main road, in sight of a little village where Jesus and His friends can stay for the night.

257. Jesus and James of Alphaeus  
retire to mount Carmel.

19<sup>th</sup> August 1945.

<sup>1</sup>«Evangelize in the plain of Esdraelon until I come back» Jesus orders His apostles on a clear morning, while they are taking a little food, some bread and fruit, on the banks of the Kishon. 257. 1

The apostles do not appear to be very enthusiastic but Jesus comforts them, telling them how to behave, and He concludes: «In any case you have My Mother with you. She will give you good advice. Go to Johanan's peasants, and on the Sabbath endeavour to speak to Doras' peasants. Give them some assistance and console the old relative of Marjiam, giving him news of the boy and tell him that we will take him his grandson for the feast of the Tabernacles. Give those poor people very much, everything you have. Tell them everything you know, give them all the love you can, all the money we have. Do not be afraid. As

it goes, so it comes. We shall never die of starvation, even if we have to live on bread and fruit only. And if you see people needing clothes, give them some, also Mine. Nay, Mine first. We shall never be left nude. And above all if you come across poor wretches looking for Me, do not disdain them. You have no right to do that. Goodbye, Mother. May God bless you all through My lips. Go without any fear. Come, James. »

«Are You not taking Your bag? » asks Thomas seeing that the Lord is going away without picking it up.

«I do not need it. I shall walk more freely. »

James also leaves his, notwithstanding his mother had taken care to fill it with bread, cheese and fruit.

They set out following for a little while the bank of the Kishon, then they start climbing the first slopes leading up to Mount Carmel and can no longer be seen by those left behind.

«Mother, we are now in Your hands. Guide us because... we are not capable of doing anything» confesses Peter humbly.

Mary smiles reassuringly and says: «It is very simple. All you need to do is obey His orders and you will do everything very well. Let us go. »

But I do not go with them... I follow Jesus.

257.2

<sup>2</sup>Jesus is climbing with His cousin and does not speak. Neither does James. Jesus is engrossed in thought; James, who feels he is on the threshold of a revelation, is full of reverential love, of spiritual tremor and looks now and again at Jesus, Whose pensive solemn face brightens up now and again with a smile. James looks at Him as he would look at God not yet incarnate and shining in His immense majesty. The apostle's face, which resembles the countenance of Saint Joseph, a brownish visage, with, however, some red on the top points of cheeks, becomes pale with emotion. But he respects the silence of Jesus.

They climb up steep short cuts, paying no attention to the shepherds pasturing their flocks on the green meadows under holm-oaks, oaks, ash trees and other forestry, and as they climb up, they brush with their mantles glaucous juniper bushes, or golden broom ones, or emerald tufts strewn with myrtle pearls, or trembling curtains of honeysuckle and flowery clematis.

They ascend leaving behind woodsmen and shepherds until they reach, after an exhausting climb, the crest of the mountain,

or rather a small tableland close to the crest crowned with gigantic oaks, and surrounded by a veritable balustrade of forestry, whose base is formed by the tops of the other trees on the mountain side, so that the little meadow seems to be resting on a rustling support, isolated from the rest of the mountain, and is rather concealed by the branches beneath. Behind it there is the peak, with its trees rising towards the sky, with the firmament above and in front the unbroken horizon reddening in the sunset and stretching endlessly beyond the bright sea. A fissure on the earth, which does not collapse only because the roots of gigantic oaks hold it firmly in position, opens in the cliff and is barely wide enough for one man of normal build. The path is further narrowed and lengthened by some fringe undergrowth.

Jesus says: «James, My dear brother, we shall stop here tonight, and although our bodies are so tired, I ask you to pass the night in prayer. Tonight and all day tomorrow until this time. A whole day is not too much to receive what I want to give you. »

«Jesus, My Lord and Master, I will always do what You want» replies James, who became even paler when Jesus began to speak. «I know. <sup>3</sup>Let us go now and pick some blackberries and bilberries to eat and refresh ourselves at a spring that I heard below here. You may leave your mantle in the cave. No one will take it. »

257. 3

And together with His cousin He goes around the cliff and picks wild fruit off the bushes in the undergrowth, and then, a few yards further down, on the opposite side to the one they came up they fill their flasks, the only things they brought with them, at a babbling spring, which runs out from a mass of intertwined roots; and they refresh themselves because it is still very warm notwithstanding the height. They then climb back to the tableland, and while the sun is setting in the west reddens the mountain top, they eat what they have picked and drink some water, smiling at each other like two happy children or two angels. They speak only a few words: a remembrance of those left down in the plain, an exclamation admiring the infinite beauty of the day, the names of two mothers... Nothing else.

Then Jesus draws His cousin towards Himself and James takes John's habitual posture: his head resting on the upper part of Jesus' chest, one arm hanging loose, the other hand in that of

his Cousin. They remain thus, while in the dusk, birds twitter loudly in the thicket, the tinkle of cattle-bells recedes and fades in the distance, and a light breeze rustles caressingly in the tree tops cool and reviving after the heat of the day, and promising dew in the night.

They remain in this way for a long time, and I think that only their lips are silent, whilst their souls, more active than ever, are engaged in supernatural conversation.

258. The future mission of James of Alphaeus,  
taught by Jesus on mount Carmel.

20<sup>th</sup> August 1945.

258. 1 <sup>1</sup>It is the same time on the following day.

James is still in the fissure of the mountain and is sitting all curled up, with his head almost resting on his knees, which are drawn up and embraced by his arms. He is either engrossed in meditation or sleeping. I do not know which. He is certainly unaware of what is happening around him, that is, of the fight of two large birds, which for some private reason are duelling fiercely on the little meadow. I would say that they are mountain cocks, or wood-grouse or pheasants, because they are the size of a cockerel, with variegated feathers but they have no combs, but only a helmet of flesh, as red as coral, on the top of their heads and on their cheeks, and I can assure you that if their heads are small, their beaks must be like steel spikes. Feathers fly in the air and blood falls to the ground with a dreadful noise, which has caused all whistling, trilling and warbling to come to an end among branches. Perhaps the little birds are watching the wild fight. James does not hear anything.

Jesus does hear and comes down from the hill top to which He had climbed and clapping His hands He separates the two opponents, which fly away bleeding, one towards the mountain side, the other to an oak-tree on the top, where it tidies its shaggy ruffled feathers.

James does not raise his head even at the noise made by Jesus, Who takes a few more steps smiling and stops in the middle of the little meadow. His white tunic seems to become tinged with

red on the right hand side, so deep is the crimson of sunset. The sky seems to be catching fire. And yet James cannot be asleep, because as soon as Jesus whispers, He just whispers: «James, come here», he lifts his head from his knees, frees his legs from the embrace of his arms, stands up and comes towards Jesus. He stops a couple of paces before him and looks at Him.

Jesus returns the glance, seriously but encouraging him at the same time, by means of a smile, which is not formed by His lips or His eyes, and yet is visible. He stares at James, as if He wanted to read the slightest reaction and emotion of His cousin and apostle, who, feeling as on the previous day, that he is about to receive a revelation, turns pale and becomes even paler until he is as white as his linen tunic when Jesus raises His arms and lays His hands on his shoulders, and remains thus with arms stretched forth. James then looks just like a sacred host. Only his mild dark brown eyes and his brown beard give some colour to his expectant face.

<sup>2</sup>«James, My brother, do you know why I wanted you here, all by ourselves, to speak to you after hours of prayer and meditation? »<sup>258. 2</sup>

James seems to find it difficult to reply, as he is so deeply moved. But at last he replies in a low voice: «To give me a special lesson; or with regard to the future or because I am the least capable of all. I thank You from this moment, even if it is for a reproach. But, believe me, My Master and Lord, if I am slow and incapable, it is due to inborn deficiency, not to poor will. »

«It is not a reproach but a lesson for the time when I shall no longer be with you. During the last months you have pondered in your heart over what I told you\* one day, at the foot of this mountain, when I promised to come here with you, not only to speak of the prophet Elijah and to watch the infinite sea shining over there, but to speak to you of another sea, greater, more changeable and untrustworthy than this one, which today looks like the most placid of all seas, and yet in a few hours it may swallow boats and men in its voracious hunger. And you have always linked what I told you then to the idea that your coming here had some connection with your future destiny... In fact you are now

\* I told you, in 192. 1.



becoming paler and paler, as you realise that it is a serious destiny, a heritage full of such responsibility as to cause even a hero to tremble. A responsibility and a mission to be fulfilled with all the holiness that is possible in man in order not to disappoint the will of God.

Be not afraid, James. I do not want your ruin. Therefore if I destine you to it, it means that I know that you will not receive any harm from it, but only supernatural joy. Listen, James. Set your heart at rest, through a fine act of abandonment to Me so that you may be able to hear and remember My words. Never again shall we be all alone as we are now and with our souls so prepared to understand each other.

258. 3 <sup>3</sup>I will go one day, like every man who has a limited period of time to stay on the earth. My stay will come to an end in a way that is different from that of men, but it will still come to an end and you will no longer have Me with you, except through My Spirit which, I can assure you, will never desert you. I will go after giving you what is necessary to enable My Doctrine to make progress in the world, after completing the Sacrifice and obtaining Grace for you. By means of that Grace and of the sapiential septiform fire you will be able to do what you would now consider madness and presumption even to imagine. I will go and you will remain. And the world that did not understand Christ will not understand the apostles of Christ. You will therefore be persecuted and dispersed as the greatest danger to the welfare of Israel. But since you are My disciples you must be happy to suffer the same afflictions as your Master suffered.

One day in the month of Nisan I said to you: "You will be the one who is left of the prophets of the Lord". Your mother, by spiritual ministry, almost understood the meaning of those words. But before they come true for My apostles, they will be realized with regard to you. James, everybody will be dispersed, except you, and that until you are called by God to His Heaven. You Will remain in the place to which God will have elected you through the word of your brothers, you, the descendant of the royal race, in the royal city, to raise My sceptre and speak of the true King. Of the King of Israel and of the world, according to a sublime regality that no one understands except those to whom it is revealed.

They will be days when you will need strength, perseverance, patience and unlimited sagacity. You will have to be just with charity and with the pure simple faith of a child, but at the same time erudite as becoming a true master in order to support faith attacked in many hearts by so many enemies, and to confute the errors of false Christians and the doctrine quibbles of old Israel, which is blind now and will become even more blind after killing the Light and will twist the words of the prophets and even the instructions of the Father from Whom I come, to convince the world and itself, in order to give itself peace, that I was not the One of Whom patriarchs and prophets spoke. They will instead state that I was a poor man, a madman, a dreamer, according to the better ones a possessed heretic according to the worse ones of old Israel.

I beg you then to be another Myself. No, it is not impossible! It is possible. You will have to bear in mind your Jesus, His actions, His words, His deeds. You will have to become molten in Me, as if you lay in the clay mould used by those who melt metals to shape them. I will always be present, so present and alive with you, My faithful ones, that you will be able to unite yourselves to Me and form another Me, if you only wish so. But you, who have been with Me since our earliest youth and have received the food of Wisdom from the hands of Mary, even before you received it from Mine, you who are the nephew of the most just man that Israel had, you must be a perfect Christ... »

4«I cannot, I cannot, Lord! Give that task to my brother. Give it to John, to Peter Simon, to the other Simon. But not to me, my Lord! Why to me? What have I done to deserve it? Can't You see that I am a poor man capable of one thing only: that is, to love You and firmly believe what You say? » 258. 4

«Judas' character is too strong. He will do well where paganism is to be demolished. Not here, where those who are to be convinced of the Christian faith believe that they are absolutely right, as they already are the people of God. Not here, where those are to be persuaded, who although they believe in Me, will be disappointed at the course of events. They are to be convinced that My Kingdom is not of this world, but it is the entirely spiritual Kingdom of Heaven, the prelude to which is a Christian life, that is, a life in which spiritual values are the prevailing ones.

Persuasion is achieved by means of firm kindness. Woe to those who catch people by their throats to persuade them. They will say: "yes" at the moment, to be freed from the grip. But they will run away without looking back and they will refuse any further discussion, if they are not wicked, but only misguided. But if they are wicked or simply fanatics, they will run away to become armed and kill the overbearing assertor of doctrines different from theirs. And you will be surrounded by fanatics. There will be fanatics among Christians and among Israelites. The former will expect you to take strong action or will claim authority from you to take strong action themselves. Because old Israel, with its intolerance and restrictions, will still be wriggling its poisonous tail amongst them. The latter will march against you and the others, as if they were fighting a holy war to defend the old Faith, its symbols and ceremonies. And you will be in the middle of the stormy sea.

Such is the fate of leaders. And you will be the leader of all those belonging to the Jerusalem converted to Christianity by  
258. <sup>5</sup>your Jesus. <sup>5</sup>*You will have to know how to love perfectly in order to lead them holily.* You will have to oppose your heart to the weapons and anathemas of the Jews, and not offer resistance with other weapons and anathemas. Never take the liberty of imitating the Pharisees in judging the Gentiles as filth. I have come for them as well, because the humiliation of God in taking flesh liable to death would have been out of proportion if done for Israel alone. Because while it is true that My Love would have made Me become incarnate with joy for the salvation of one only soul, Justice, which is also a divine perfection, demands that the Infinite be humiliated for an infinity: for Mankind. You will have to be kind to them as well, in order not to repel them, confining yourself to being firm with regard to My doctrine, but indulging as far as other forms of life different from ours, and material matters are concerned, without any detriment to souls. But you will have to fight hard with your brothers over that, because Israel is wrapped in practices that are external only and useless, as they do not change souls. You instead must be concerned only with the spirit, and you must teach others to do the same. Do not expect Gentiles to change their habits all of a sudden. You will not change yours with one blow either. Do not re-

main anchored to your rock. Because to pick up wreckage at sea and take it to the dockyard and reshape it for a new life, it is necessary to sail and not remain still. And you must go and look for wreckage. There is some in paganism and also in Israel. Beyond the boundless sea there is God, Who opens His arms to all His creatures, whether they are rich because of their holy origin, like Israelites, or poor, because pagans. I said: "You shall love your neighbour". Your neighbour is not only your relative or countryman. Also the Hyperborean, whose face is unknown to you, is your neighbour, as well as the man who is now admiring dawn in regions of which you are unaware or the man who travels on the fabulous mountain chains covered with snow in Asia, or drinks at a river flowing in the unknown forests in central Africa. And if a worshipper of the sun, should come to you, or one whose god is the voracious crocodile, or one who believes that he is Wisdom reincarnate, who understood the Truth but did not grasp its Perfection, neither did he give it as Health to his faithful ones, or should a nauseated citizen of Rome or Athens come to you asking: "Give me knowledge of God", you cannot and must not say to them: "I reject you because it would be a profanation to take you to God". Bear in mind that they do not know whereas Israel does. And yet many people in Israel are and will be really more idolatrous and cruel than the most barbarian idolater in the world, and they will not sacrifice human victims to this or to that idol, but to themselves, to their pride, avid for blood after they have become parched with an unquenchable thirst, which will last until the end of centuries. That terrible thirst may be quenched only by drinking once again and with faith that caused it. But it will then be the end of the world, because Israel will be the last to say: "We believe that You are God and the Messiah", notwithstanding all the proof that I have given and will give of My Divinity.

<sup>6</sup>You will watch and ensure that the faith of Christians is not 258. 6 vain. It would be vain if it consisted only of words or hypocritical practices. It is the spirit that vivifies. There is no spirit in mechanical or Pharisaic practices, which are but sham faith and not true faith. What would it avail man to sing praises to God in the congregation of believers, if every action of his is an imprecation to God Who does not become the laughing-stock of such

believer, but in His paternity, always maintains His prerogatives of God and King?

Watch and ensure that nobody takes a place not belonging to him. The Light will be given by God according to your situation. God will never let you be without Light, unless Grace is extinguished in you by sin. Many will love to be called: "master". One only is your Master: He Who is speaking to you; and one only is your Mistress: the Church, which perpetuates Him. In the Church those will be masters who have been consecrated with the special appointment to teach. But among the believers there will be some who by the will of God and their own holiness, that is because of their goodwill, will be overwhelmed by the vortex of Wisdom and will speak. There will be others, who are not wise themselves but are docile instruments in the hands of artisans, and they will speak in the name of the Artisan, repeating, like good children, what the Father tells them to say, although they do not understand the full meaning of the words they speak. And finally there will be those who speak as if they were master, and their magniloquence will deceive simple people, but they will be proud, hard-hearted, jealous, irascible liars and lustful. While I tell you to receive the words of the wise in the Lord and, of the sublime children of the Holy Spirit, helping them to understand the depth of divine words, because if they are the bearers of the Divine Voice, you, My apostles, will always be the teachers of My Church, and you must assist those who are supernaturally tired of the enrapturing and serious richness that God has granted them that they may take it to their brothers, so I say to you: reject the false words of false prophets, whose lives are not in accordance with My doctrine. A holy life, mildness, purity, charity and humbleness will never be lacking in the wise and little voices of God. They will always be lacking in the others.

Watch and ensure that there are no jealousy and slander, or resentment or desire for revenge in the congregation of believers. Watch and ensure that the flesh does not overwhelm the spirit. He, whose spirit does not control his body, could not withstand persecutions.

258 7 <sup>7</sup>James, I know that you will do it, but promise your Brother that you will not disappoint Me. »

«But, my Lord! I am afraid of one thing only: that I am not ca--

pable of doing it. My Lord, I beg You, give that task to someone else. »

«No. I cannot... »

«Simon of Jonah loves You, and You love him... »

«Simon of Jonah is not James of David. »

«John! John, the learned angel, make him Your servant here. »

«No. I cannot. Neither Simon nor John possess that nothingness, which is, however, so important with men: kinship. You are a relative of Mine. After refusing to acknowledge Me, the better part of Israel will endeavour to be forgiven by God and by themselves and will make an effort to know the Lord Whom they cursed in the hour of Satan, and they will feel they have been forgiven, and will thus feel strong to come on to My Way, if one of My blood is in My place. James, great things have been accomplished upon this mountain. Here the fire of God consumed\* not only the holocaust, the wood and stones, but even the dust and the very water that was in the ditch. James, do you believe that God can repeat such a thing, burning and consuming all the materiality of the man-James to make a James-fire of God? We have been speaking while the setting sun has inflamed our tunics. Do you think that the brightness of the chariot that took Elijah away, was like this or more or less refulgent? »

«Much more refulgent because it was made of heavenly fire. »

«Consider therefore what a heart will be, when it has been turned into fire to have in itself God, because God wants it to perpetuate His Word preaching the Gospel of Salvation. »

<sup>8</sup>«But You, Word of God, eternal Word, why do You not remain? » 258. 8

«Because I am Word and Flesh. By the Word I must teach, and by the Flesh, redeem. »

«Oh! My Jesus, how will You redeem? What have You to face? »

«James, remember the prophets. »

«But are their words not allegoric? Can You, the Word of God, be manhandled by men? Do they perhaps not mean that Your divinity, Your perfection will be tormented but nothing more than that? My mother is worried about Judas and me, but I am worried about You and Mary, and also about ourselves, because we are so

\* consumed, as written in *1 King 18 38*

weak. Jesus if men should overwhelm You, do You not think that many of us would believe You to be guilty, and being disappointed, would abandon You? »

«I am sure of it. There will be confusion among all My disciples. But then peace will reign, and there will be a cohesion of all the better parts, upon which the fortifying wise Spirit: the Divine Spirit will come, after My sacrifice and My triumph. »

«Jesus, in order that I may not deviate and may not be scandalised in the dreadful hour, tell me: what will they do to You? »

«You are asking Me a great thing. »

«Tell me, my Lord. »

«It will be a torture for you to know it exactly. »

«It does not matter. For the love that has united us... »

«It is not to be known. »

«Tell me and then cancel it from my memory until the hour it is to be accomplished. Then bring it back to my memory, together with the remembrance of this hour. I will thus not be scandalized and I will not become Your enemy in the depth of my heart. »

«It will be of no avail, because you, too, will yield to the storm. »

«Tell me, my Lord! »

«I shall be accused, betrayed, captured, tortured, crucified. »

«No! » shouts James writhing as if he had been struck to death. «No! » he repeats. «If they do that to You, what will they do to us. How shall we be able to continue Your work? I cannot accept the position You have destined to me... I cannot... When You die, I will die too, having no more strength. Jesus, listen to me! Don't leave me without You. Promise me at least that! »

«I promise that I will come and guide you with My Spirit, after My glorious Resurrection has freed Me from the restrictions of matter. You and I will be again one thing only, as we are now that you are between My arms» James in fact has begun to weep on  
258. <sup>9</sup>Jesus' chest. <sup>9</sup>«Do not weep any more. Let us come out of this bright and painful hour of ecstasy, as one comes out from the shadow of death, remembering everything except the act of dying, a fright that freezes one's blood and lasts but one minute, and as an accomplished fact it lasts forever. Come I will kiss you thus, to help you forget the burden of My fate as Man. You will remember all this at the right moment, as you asked. Here, I kiss your

lips that will have to repeat My words to the people of Israel, and your heart that will have to love as I told you, and there, on your temple, where life will cease together with the last word of loving faith in Me. My beloved brother, I will come to you and be with you in the meetings of believers, in the hour of meditation, in those of danger and in the hour of your death! No one, not even your angel, will receive your spirit, because I will, with a kiss, thus... »

They remain embraced for a long time and James seems to doze off in the joy of God's kisses that make him forget his suffering. When he lifts his head, he has become once again James of Alphaeus, peaceful and kind, so much like Joseph, the spouse of Mary. He smiles at Jesus, his smile is more mature, somewhat sad, but always so sweet.

«Let us take our food, James, and then we shall sleep under the stars. At daybreak we shall go down to the valley... back to men... » and Jesus sighs... But He ends with a smile: «... and to Mary. »

«And what shall I tell my mother, Jesus? And my companions? They will ask me many questions... »

«You can tell them everything I told you\*, making you consider Elijah in his answers to Ahab, to the people on the mountain, and meditating on the power of a man loved by God to achieve what is wanted of people and all the elements, his zeal, which devours him, for the Lord, and how I made you consider that with peace and in peace one understands and serves God. You will say to them as I said to you: "Come", and as Elijah put his mantle on Elisha, so you by the mantle of charity will be able to gain for the Lord new servants of God. And to those who are always worried, say that I drew to your attention the joyful freedom from past things, which Elisha shows, when he got rid of the oxen and plough. Tell them how I reminded you that evil and no good befalls those who want miracles through Beelzebub, as it happened to Ahaziah, according to the word of Elijah. And finally tell them, how I promised you that for those who are faithful until death, the purifying fire of Love will come to burn their imperfections and take them straight to Heaven. The rest is for you only. »

\* I told you, with reference to: *1 King 18:19, 22, 52-54; 2 King 1; Sirach 48, 1-14*



259. Lesson on the Church and Sacraments  
to James of Alphaeus who performs a miracle.

21<sup>st</sup> August 1945.

259. 1 <sup>1</sup>Jesus leaves the tableland on Mount Carmel and descends along dewy paths through woods that become livelier with trills and voices in the early sunshine gilding the eastern side of the mountain. When the sun dissolves the heat haze, the beauty of the whole plain of Esdraelon is displayed with its orchards and vineyards all gathered around houses. It looks like a carpet, mostly green, with a few yellowish oases strewn with red areas, which are the fields where the corn has been cut and poppies now sparkle, a carpet enclosed by the triangular bezel of Mount Carmel, Mount Tabor and Mount Hermon (Little Hermon) and by more remote mountains the names of which I do not know, which conceal the Jordan and are linked to the south-east to the mountains of Samaria. Jesus stops and looks pensively at all that area of Palestine.

James looks at Him and says: «Are You looking at the beauty of this region? »

«Yes also at that. But more than anything else I was thinking of future pilgrimages and of the need to send disciples without any delay to do real missionary work, and not just limited work as we have done now. There are many areas where I am not yet known and I do not want to leave any place without the knowledge of Me. It is a worry constantly present in My mind: to go and do everything, while I can... »

«Now and again something happens that delays You. »

«Rather than delay Me they cause changes to My itinerary; because the trips we make are never useless. But there is still so much to be done... Also because after being absent from one place I find that many hearts have gone back to where they started from, and I have to start all over again. »

«Yes, the apathy of souls, their inconstancy and affection for evil are depressing and disgusting. »

«Depressing, yes, but do not say disgusting. The work of God is never disgusting. We must feel pity not disgust for poor souls. We must always have the heart of a father, of a good father. A good father is never disgusted at the diseases of his children. We

must never have a dislike for anyone. »

<sup>2</sup>«Jesus, may I ask You a few questions? I did not sleep last night. But I pondered very much while watching You sleep. You look so young when You are asleep. My brother! You were smiling, with Your head resting on Your folded arm, just like the posture of a little boy. I could see You very well in the clear moonlight of last night. And I pondered. And many questions came up from my heart... » 259. 2

«Tell Me. »

«I was saying: I must ask Jesus how we shall be able to set up that organized body, which You called Church, and in which there will be hierarchies, if I understood properly, considering how incapable we are. Will You tell us what we must do, or shall we have to do it by ourselves? »

«When the time comes, I will tell you who is its leader. Nothing else. While I am with you, I will inform you of its various classes with the differences between apostles, disciples and women disciples. Because they cannot be avoided. But as I want the disciples to respect and obey the apostles, so the apostles must love and be patient with the disciples. »

«And what shall we have to do? Preach You all the time and nothing else? »

«That is essential. <sup>3</sup>Then you will have to absolve in My name and bless, readmit to Grace, administer the Sacraments that I will institute... » 259. 3

«What are they? »

«They are supernatural and spiritual means, applied also through material means, which are used to convince men that the priest is really doing something. You know that man does not believe unless he sees. He always needs something to tell him that there is something. That is why, when I work miracles, I impose My hands, or I wet with saliva, or I give a morsel of soaked bread. I could work a miracle by means of a simple thought. But do you think that in that case people would say: "God has worked the miracle? " They would say: "The invalid is cured because it was time for him to be cured". And they would ascribe the merit to the doctor, or to medicines or to the physical strength of the invalid. The same will apply to sacraments: religious formalities to administer Grace, or give it again, or fortify

it in believers. John, for instance, used to immerse sinners into water to symbolize cleanliness from sin. In actual fact the mortification of confessing oneself unclean because of sins committed, was more useful than the water that washed only the body. I will have a baptism as well, My baptism, which will not be only a symbol, but will really cleanse a soul of the original sin and give back to it the spiritual state that Adam and Eve possessed before they sinned, a state, which is now improved, because it will be granted through the merits of the Man-God. »

«But... water does not descend upon the soul! A soul is spiritual. Who can touch it in a new-born baby, in an adult or in an old person? Nobody. »

«See, you admit that water is a material means, with no effect on a spiritual thing? So it will not be the water, but the word of the priest, a member of the Church of Christ, consecrated in his service, or the word of another true believer, who may replace him in exceptional cases, that will work the miracle of redeeming the baptised person from original sin. »

259. 4 4«All right. But man commits sins of his own... Who will remove the other sins? »

«It will always be the priest, James. If an adult is baptised, also the other sins will be removed with the original one. If a man has been baptised and he commits sins, the priest will absolve him in the name of God One and Trine and through the merits of the Incarnate Word, as I do with sinners. »

«But You are holy! We... »

«You must be holy because you touch holy things and you administer what belongs to God. »

«So shall we baptise the same man several times, as John does, in fact he grants immersion into water as many times as one goes to him? »

«John's baptism purifies only through the humbleness of the person who is immersed into water. I already told you. You shall not baptise again those who have already been baptised, unless a person has been baptised with a schismatic formula and not with the apostolic one, in which case a second baptism is to be administered, subject to a precise request of the person to be christened, if adult, and subject to a clear statement that the person in question wishes to become a member of the true Church. In all

other cases, to give a soul its friendship and peace with God, you will use the words of forgiveness joined to the merits of Christ, and the soul that has come to you with true repentance and a humble confession, will be absolved. »

<sup>5</sup>«And if a man cannot come because he is so ill that he cannot be moved? Will he die in sin? Will the fear for the judgement of God be added to the misery of his agony? » 259. 5

«No. The priest will go to the dying person and give absolution. In actual fact he will give the person a wider form of absolution, not a comprehensive one, but an absolution for each and every sense-organ, by means of which man generally sins. We have in Israel the Sacred Oil, a compound according to the prescriptions given\* by the Most High, with which the altar, the Pontiff, priests and kings are consecrated. Man is really an altar. And he becomes king through his election to a throne in Heaven; he can therefore be consecrated with the oil of Unction. The Holy Oil will be taken with other rites of the Israelite cult and included in My Church, but with different uses. Because not everything in Israel is evil and to be rejected. Nay, many recollections of the old stock will be in My Church. And one will be the Oil of Unction, which will be used also in the Church to consecrate altars, Pontiffs, all ecclesiastic hierarchies, kings and believers, when they become princes and heirs of the Kingdom, or when they need the greatest help to appear before God with their bodies and senses cleansed of all sins. The grace of God will assist both the soul and the body, if God so wishes for the benefit of the sick person. A body does not always react against diseases also because its peace is upset by remorse and because of the work of Satan, who through the death of the sick person hopes to gain a soul to his kingdom and cause despair to those who are left behind. The sick person passes from the satanic grip and internal emotion to a peaceful state, through the certainty of God's forgiveness, which also brings about Satan's departure. And since the gift of Grace was coupled in our first progenitors with the gift of immunity from diseases and from all forms of sorrow, the sick person who has been restored to Grace as great as the Grace of a new-born baby christened with My baptism, may get over

\* given, in: *Exodus 30 22-33*

the illness. The sick man is assisted also by the prayers of his brethren, who are obliged to have not only physical but above all spiritual pity on invalids, in order to obtain both physical and spiritual salvation for their brother. Prayer is in fact a form of miracle, James. The prayer of a just man, as you have seen in Elijah, can be very powerful. »

259. 6 «I understand only a little of what You say, but what I do understand fills me with deep respect for the sacerdotal character of Your priests. If I have understood You correctly, we shall have many points in common with You: preaching, absolution, miracles. Three sacraments, therefore. »

«No, James., Preaching and miracles are not sacraments. The Sacraments will be more: seven, like the sacred candelabrum of the Temple and the gifts of the Spirit of Love. And in fact the Sacraments are gifts and flames and are granted to man so that he may burn forever before the Lord. There will be a Sacrament also for the marriage of man. And it is already symbolised\* in the holy marriage of Sarah, the daughter of Raguel, after she was freed from the demon. The Sacrament will give the married couple all the assistance needed to live together according to the law and the wishes of God. Husband and wife also become the ministers of a rite: the rite of procreation. Husband and wife become also the priests of a small church: their family. They must therefore be consecrated in order to procreate with the blessing of God and to bring up a progeny that will bless the Most Holy Name of God. »

«And by whom will priests be consecrated? »

«By Me, before I leave you. You will, afterwards, consecrate your successors and those whom you will aggregate to yourselves to propagate the Christian faith. »

«You will teach us, will You not? »

«I and He Whom I will send to you. Also His coming will be a Sacrament. It will be granted voluntarily by the Most Holy God in His first Epiphany, and it will then be given by those who have received the fullness of Priesthood. It will be strength and intelligence, confirmation in Faith, it will be holy piety and fear, it will be assistance in advice and supernatural wisdom, and it will be possession of a justice that by its nature and power will

\* symbolised, perhaps in *Tobit 3, 16-17*

turn the child who receives it, into an adult. But you cannot for the time being understand that. But He will make you understand: the Divine Paraclete, the Eternal Love, when the moment comes for you to receive Him. And likewise, you cannot for the time being understand another Sacrament. It is so sublime that it is almost incomprehensible to angels. And yet you, simple men, will understand it by virtue of faith and love. I solemnly tell you that those who will love it and nourish their souls by it, will be able to trample on the demon with impunity. Because I will then be with them. Try to remember these things, brother. You will have to repeat them many times to your companions and to believers. You will all already know through your divine ministry, but you will be able to say: "He told me one day, coming down from Mount Carmel. He told me everything because since then I was destined to be the head of the Church of Israel". »

<sup>7</sup>«Here is another question I wanted to ask You. I was thinking about it last night. Shall I have to say to my companions: "I will be the head here?" I don't like it. I will do it if You tell me. But I do not like it. » 259.7

«Be not afraid. The Paraclete Spirit will descend upon you all and will instil holy thoughts into you. You will all have the same thoughts for the glory of God in His Church. »

«And will there be no more of those... so unpleasant discussions that we have now? Even Judas of Simon will no longer be the cause of disagreement? »

«He will no longer be, do not worry. But there will still be differences of opinion. That is why I said to you: be careful and watch, without ever tiring, doing your duty to the end. »

«Another question, my Lord. How am I to behave during persecutions? By what You say, it looks as if I am the only one of the Twelve to be left. So the others will go away to avoid persecutions. And what about me? »

«You will stay in your place. Because if it is necessary that you are not all exterminated until the Church is well consolidated, which justifies the dispersion of many disciples and of almost all the apostles, nothing would justify your desertion and your abandoning the Church of Jerusalem. Nay, the greater its danger is, the more you will have to watch over it, as if it were your dearest child about to die. Your example will strengthen

the souls of believers. And they will need it to pass the test. The weaker you see them, the more you will have to support them with pity and wisdom. If you are strong, do not be pitiless with weak people. Support them saying: "I have received everything from God to become so strong. I must admit it humbly and act charitably on behalf of those who have not been blessed with so many gifts of God", and you must share your strength through your word, your assistance, your calm and example. »

«And if among the believers there should be some wicked ones who are the cause of danger and of scandal to the others, what shall I do? »

«Be wise when you accept them, because it is better to be few and good, than many and not good. You know the old apologue of the good apples and the bad ones. Make sure it does not happen also in your church. But should you find people who betray you as well, endeavour in every way to get them to repent, using severe measures as a last resource. But if it is a matter of small individual faults, do not be so severe as to dismay people. Forgive, always... A heart is more easily redeemed by forgiveness joined to tears and loving words than by anathema. If the fault is a serious one, but is the result of a sudden attack by Satan, and is so serious that the culprit feels the need to run away from your presence, go and look for the offender. Because he is a lamb led astray, and you are the shepherd. Do not be afraid of degrading yourself by going along muddy paths, searching pools and precipices. Your forehead will then be crowned with the crown of the martyr of love, and it will be the first of the three crowns... And if you are betrayed yourself, as the Baptist was, and like many others, because every holy man has his traitor, forgive. Forgive the traitor more than you would forgive anybody else. Forgive as God forgave men and as He will forgive. Call him "son" again, who will grieve you, because that is how the Father calls you through My lips, and, truly, there is no man who has not caused deep sorrow to the Father in Heaven... »

259. 8 <sup>8</sup>There is a long period of silence while they cross pastures strewn with grazing sheep.

At last Jesus asks: «Have you no more questions to ask Me? »

«No, Jesus. And this morning I understood my tremendous mission more clearly... »

«Because you are less upset than you were yesterday. When your time comes, you will be even more calm and you will understand even better. »

«I will remember all these things... everything... except... »

«What, James? »

«Less what did not let me look at You last night without weeping. What I do not really know whether You told me, and whether I should believe it if really told by You; or whether it was a fright by the demon. How can You be so calm if... if that should really happen to You? »

«And would you be calm if I said to you: “That shepherd is dragging himself along with great difficulty because of his maimed leg. Try to cure him in the name of God”? »

«No, my Lord. I would be beside myself thinking that I was tempted to usurp Your place. »

«And if I ordered you? »

«I would do it out of obedience and I would no longer be upset because I would know that You want it, and I would not be afraid of not knowing how to do it. Because, if You sent me, You would certainly give me the strength to do what You want... »

«You say so, and you are right. You can thus see that I, by obeying the Father, am always in peace. »

James lowers his head weeping.

«Do you really want to forget? »

«As You wish, my Lord... »

«You have two options: to forget or to remember. By forgetting you will be relieved from sorrow and from the necessity of being absolutely silent with your companions, but you will be left unprepared. By remembering you will become prepared for your mission, because in order never to complain and to be strengthened spiritually seeing the whole of Christ in the brightest light, one thing only is necessary: to remember what the Son of man suffers in His earthly life. Make your choice. »

«To believe to remember, to love. That is what I would like. And to die, as soon as possible, Lord... » And James continues to weep silently. If it was not for the tears shining on his brown beard, one would not realise that he is weeping.

Jesus lets him weep... Then James asks: «And if in the future You should allude again to... to Your martyrdom, shall I say that



I know? »

«No. Be quiet. Joseph was able to be silent on his sorrow of a bridegroom when he thought his bride was unfaithful to him and on the mysteries of Her virginal conception and of My Nature. Imitate him. That was a tremendous secret as well. And it was to be kept, because if it had been disclosed, out of pride or carelessness, the whole Redemption would have been endangered. Satan is constant in watching and acting. Remember that. If you spoke now, you would damage too many people and too many things. Be silent. »

«I will... and it will be a double burden... »

Jesus does not reply. He lets James weep freely, sheltered by his linen hood.

259. 9 <sup>9</sup>They meet a man carrying an unhappy child tied to his back.

«Is he your son? » asks Jesus.

«Yes. He was born thus, and was the cause of his mother's death. Now, my mother is also dead, and when I go to my work, I take him with me to watch him. I am a woodcutter. I lay him on the grass, on my mantle, and while I cut trees down, he plays with flowers, the poor wretch! »

«It is a great misfortune. »

«Yes, it is. But we must accept peacefully what God wants. »

«Goodbye, man. Peace be with you. »

«Goodbye. Peace to You. »

The man climbs the mountain, Jesus and James continue to descend.

«How many misfortunes! I was hoping that You would cure him» says James with a sigh.

Jesus does not appear to hear.

«Master, if that man had known that You are the Messiah, perhaps he would have asked You to work a miracle... »

Jesus does not reply.

«Jesus, will You let me go back and tell him? I feel sorry for that boy. My heart is already so grieved. Give me at least the joy of seeing the little fellow cured. »

«You may go. I will wait for you here. »

<sup>10</sup>James runs back. He comes up with the man and calls him. «Man, stop, listen! The man who was with me is the Messiah. Give me your boy that I may take him to Him. You may come as

well, if you wish so, to see whether the Master will cure him. »

«Go, man. I have all this wood to cut. I am already late because of the child. And if I do not work, I get no food. I am poor, and he costs me so much. I do believe in the Messiah, but it is better if you speak to Him on my behalf. »

James bends to pick up the boy lying on the grass.

«Be careful» warns the woodcutter. «He is painful all over. »

In fact, as soon as James attempts to lift him, the boy weeps mournfully.

«Oh! How painful! » exclaims James with a sigh.

«A dreadful pain» says the woodcutter working with a saw on a hard trunk, and he adds: «Could you not cure him? »

«I am not the Messiah. I am only a disciple... »

«Well? Doctors learn from other doctors. Disciples learn from their Master. Come on, be good. Don't make him suffer. Try. If the Master wanted to come, He would have come. He sent you either because He does not want to cure him or because He wants you to cure him. »

James is undecided. He then makes up his mind. He stands up and he prays as he has seen Jesus pray. Finally he enjoins: «In the name of Jesus Christ, the Messiah of Israel and Son of God be cured» and immediately afterwards he kneels down saying: «Oh! My Lord, forgive me! I acted without Your permission! But I did it out of pity for this child of Israel. Have mercy, my God! On him and on me, a sinner! » and he sheds bitter tears bent over the boy outstretched on the grass. His tears fall on to the twisted inert legs.

<sup>11</sup> Jesus suddenly appears on the path. But no one sees Him, because the woodcutter is working, James is weeping and the boy is looking at him curiously, and then caressing him, he asks: «Why are you weeping? » and he stretches out his little hand to caress him again, and without realizing it, he sits up by himself, he stands up and embraces James to comfort him. It is James' cry that makes the woodcutter turn around and he then sees his boy standing straight on his legs, which are no longer inert or twisted. And turning around he sees Jesus.

«There He is! » he shouts pointing to the back of James who turns around and sees Jesus looking at him beaming with joy.

«Master! I do not know how it happened... pity... that man...

259. 11

this child... Forgive me! »

«Stand up. Disciples are not above their Master but they can do what the Master does, when they do it for a holy reason. Stand up and come with Me. May you two be blessed and remember that also the servants of God accomplish the deeds of the Son of God» and He goes away, dragging James who continues to say: «How could I do that? I do not understand yet. How did I work a miracle in Your name? »

«By being pitiful, James. Through your desire to make Me loved by that innocent child and by that man who believed and doubted at the same time. John worked a miracle near Jabneel out of love, curing a dying man whom he anointed while praying. You cured here by means of your tears and your pity. And with your faith in My Name. See how peaceful it is to serve the Lord when a disciple has good intentions? Now let us walk fast, because that man is following us. It is not right that your companions should be aware of this for the time being. I will soon be sending you in My name... (a deep sigh of Jesus), as Judas of Simon is anxious to work (another heavy sigh). And you will work... But it will not do everybody good. Quick, James! Your brother, Simon Peter and the others would suffer if they knew about this, as if it were favouritism. But it is not. It is to prepare someone among you twelve who may be capable of guiding the others. Let us go onto the gravel bed of the torrent that is covered with leaves. All trace of us will be lost... Are you sorry for the boy? Oh! we shall meet him again... »

260. Two parables of Peter for  
the farmers of the plain of Esdremon.

22<sup>nd</sup> August 1945.

260. 1 <sup>1</sup>«My dear friends, what are you doing near this fire? » asks Jesus when He finds His disciples around a well fed fire, which blazes in the early evening shadows at a crossroads in the plain at Esdraelon.

The apostles start, as they did not see Him come, and they forget the fire to greet the Master. They look as if they had not seen Him for a long time. They then explain: «Listen! We settled an is-

sue between two brothers from Jezreel and they were so pleased that they gave us a lamb each. We decided to cook them and give them to Doras' men. Micah of Johanan slaughtered and prepared them and we are now going to roast them. Your Mother has gone with Mary and Susanna to tell Doras' men to come here after vesper, when the steward goes home to tipple. Women do not attract attention so much... We endeavoured to see them pretending we were wayfarers passing by their fields, but we did not do much. We decided to gather here this evening and say... a little more, for their souls, and satisfy also their bodies, as You have done in the past. And now that You are here it will be even more pleasant. »

«Who was going to speak? »

«Well... A little each... informally. We are not capable of doing any more, also because John, the Zealot and Your brother do not want to speak. Judas of Simon and Bartholomew are not anxious to speak either... We even quarrelled over that... » says Peter.

«Why do those five not want to speak? »

«John and Simon because they say that it is not right that they should be the ones who always speak. Your brother because he wants me to speak and says that if I never start... Bartholomew because... because he is afraid that he may speak too masterly and that he may not succeed in convincing people. You can see that they are excuses... »

«And you, Judas of Simon, why do you not want to speak? »

«For the same reasons as the others! For all those reasons; because they are all fair... »

«Many reasons. But not one is specified. <sup>260. 2</sup>I will now decide, and My verdict will be unappealable. You, Simon of Jonah, shall speak, as Thaddeus wisely says. And you, Judas of Simon, shall also speak. Thus, one of the many reasons, the one known to God and to you, will no longer exist. »

«Master, believe me, there is nothing else... » Judas endeavours to retort.

But Peter cuts him short saying: «Oh! My Lord! How can I speak in Your presence? I shall never be able! I am afraid You may laugh at me... »

«You do not want to be alone; you do not want to be with Me... What do you want? »

«You are right. But... what shall I say? »

«There is your brother coming with the lambs. Help him, and while you are cooking them, think it over. Everything helps to find a subject. »

«Also a lamb on the spit? » asks Peter incredulously.

«Yes. So obey. »

Peter heaves a deep sigh, a really pitiful one, but does not reply. He goes towards Andrew and helps him to fix the lambs on to a sharpened stick which is used as a spit, and he watches them cooking with such a serious countenance, that he looks like a judge on the point of passing sentence.

«Judas of Simon, let us go and meet the women» orders Jesus. And He goes away through the barren fields of Doras. «Judas, a good disciple does not despise what his Master does not despise» He says after a little while without wasting words.

«Master, I do not despise. But like Bartholomew, I feel that I would not be understood, and I prefer not to speak. »

«Nathanael is afraid that he may not fulfil My desire, which is to enlighten and relieve hearts. He is at fault, too, because he lacks confidence in the Lord. But you are much more at fault, because you are not afraid of not being understood, but you disdain being understood by poor peasants, who are ignorant of everything, except virtue. They surpass many of you, in fact, as far as virtue is concerned. You have not yet understood anything, Judas. The Gospel is really the Good News brought to the poor, the sick, the afflicted and the slaves. Later it will be given also to others. But it is given just to assist and relieve those who suffer from all kinds of misfortunes. »

Judas lowers his head but does not reply.

260 3 <sup>3</sup>The Blessed Virgin, Mary of Clopas and Susanna appear coming out from a thicket.

«I greet You, Mother! Peace to you, women! »

«Son! I went to those... poor wretches. But I was given news that did not make Me suffer too much. Doras has got rid of this land and Johanan has taken it. It is not paradise... But it is no longer hell. The steward told the peasants today. He has already gone taking away on his carts all the corn to the last grain, and thus leaving everybody without anything to eat. And as Johanan's steward today has food only for his own men, Doras'

peasants were to be left with nothing to eat. Those lambs are really providential! »

«It is also providential that the men no longer belong to Doras. We saw their houses... Pigsties» says Susanna who is obviously scandalised.

«The poor people are so happy! » concludes Mary of Clopas.

«I am happy, too. They will be better off than before» replies Jesus going towards the apostles.

John of Endor joins Him carrying some pitchers of water, which he is taking along with Ermasteus. «Johanán's men gave them to us» he explains, after greeting Jesus respectfully.

They all go towards the spot where they are roasting the two lambs in a thick cloud of greasy smoke. Peter keeps turning his spit and in the meantime he broods over his thoughts. Judas Thaddeus instead, is walking backwards and forwards, engrossed in conversation holding one arm around his brother's waist. Of the other apostles some bring firewood, some... lay the table, carrying large stones to be used as seats or as a table. I do not know.

<sup>260</sup>4  
4'Doras' peasants arrive. They are thinner and more ragged than ever. But they are so happy! They are about twenty in number and there is not even a child or a woman with them. Poor men all alone.

«Peace to you all and let us bless the Lord for giving you a better master. Let us bless Him by praying for the conversion of the man who has caused you to suffer so much. Is that right? Are you happy, old father? I am glad, too. I shall be able to come more frequently with the boy. Have they told you? You are weeping for joy, are you not? Come here, be not afraid... » He says speaking to Marjiam's grandfather, who stoops kissing His hand and weeping whispers: «I beg nothing else of the Most High. He has granted me more than I asked. I would now like to die lest I should live so long that suffering may overwhelm me again. »

The peasants, who were somewhat embarrassed being with the Master, soon take heart again, and when the two lambs are laid on large leaves arranged on the stones brought previously, and the portions are made, each of which is placed on a large bread cake that serves also as a dish, they relax in their simplicity and they eat with relish, satisfying their hunger, after starv-

ing so long: they talk of the recent events.

One of them says: «I have always cursed locusts, moles and ants. But from now on they will look like messengers of the Lord to me because it is through them that we are leaving hell. » And although the comparison of ants and locusts with angelical cohorts is somewhat queer, nobody laughs because they all perceive the tragic circumstances concealed in those words.

The fire lights up the assembly, but their faces do not look at the flame, neither do they pay much attention to what is in front of them. All eyes are turned towards Jesus' face, and are diverted only for a few moments when Mary of Alphaeus, who is busy making portions, lays more meat on the flat bread-cakes of the hungry peasants, and she finishes her work by wrapping two roasted legs in some large leaves and says to Marjiam's grandfather: «Take this. You will have a morsel each also tomorrow. And Johanan's steward in the meantime will provide something. »

«But what about you... »

«We will have less to carry. Take it, man. »

Of the two lambs there is nothing left but the picked bones and the persistent smell of dripped fat still burning on the fire, which is dying out and its light is being replaced by moonlight.

260 5 <sup>5</sup>Johanan's men also join the others. It is the moment to speak to them.

Jesus' blue eyes look up in search of Judas who is sitting near a tree half hidden in the shade. And when Jesus sees that Judas pretends he does not understand, He calls in a loud voice: «Judas! » Judas is thus compelled to stand up and come forward. «Do not seclude yourself. Please evangelize in My place. I am very tired. In any case, if I had not come this evening, one of you would have had to speak! »

«Master... I do not know what to say.. At least ask me some questions. »

«It is not for Me to ask you them. Men, what do you wish to hear or to have explained to you? » He then asks the peasants.

The men look at one another... they are uncertain... At last a peasant asks: «We have become aware of the power of the Lord and of His bounty. But we know little about His doctrine. Perhaps we will now be able to learn a little more, being with Johanan. But we are really anxious to know which are the essen-

tial things we must do in order to gain the Kingdom that the Messiah promises. As we can practically do nothing, will we be able to gain it? »

Judas replies: «You are certainly in a very painful situation. Everything in you and around you conspires to drive you away from the Kingdom. The lack of freedom to come to the Master whenever you wish, your condition of servants of a master, who, if not a hyena like Doras, is, as far as we know, a Molossian hound who keeps his servants prisoners, your sufferings and dejection, are unfavourable conditions to your election to the Kingdom. Because it is difficult for you not to cherish resentment and feelings of grudge, criticism and revenge for the man who treats you so hard. And the bare essential is to love God and one's neighbour. Otherwise there is no salvation. You must be watchful to maintain your hearts passively submitted to God's will, which is revealed to you in your destiny, and bear your master patiently without ever taking the liberty of expressing a judgement that certainly could not be kind to your master, or express gratitude for your... your... In short, you must not ponder on your situation, to avoid feelings of rebellion that would kill love. And he who does not love will not reach salvation, because he infringes the first precept. But I am almost certain that you will be saved because I see that you have goodwill joined to kind souls, which give rise to hope that you will be able to refrain from hatred and desire for revenge. In any case God's mercy is so great that He will remit what is still lacking for your perfection. »

<sup>6</sup>There is silence. Jesus has lowered His head so much that His <sup>260. 6</sup> countenance cannot be seen; but the faces of the rest can be seen and their expression is certainly not happy. The peasants look more dejected than before, the apostles and the women seem surprised and almost frightened.

«We shall endeavour to repress every thought against patience and forgiveness» the old man replies humbly.

Another peasant says with a sigh: «It will certainly be difficult for us to reach the perfection of love, because it is already a great thing that we have not become the murderers of those who tortured us! A soul suffers a great deal, and even when it does not hate, it finds it difficult to love, like emaciated children who grow with difficulty... »



«No, man. I, instead, think that just because you have suffered so much without becoming murderers and revengeful, your souls love more strongly than ours. You love without even realising it» says Peter to comfort them.

260.7 <sup>7</sup>And he becomes aware that he has spoken and he stops to say: «Oh! Master!... But... You told me that I had to speak... and to find the subject even in the lambs that I was roasting. And I continued to watch them to find some good words for our brothers here, and for their situation. But, as I am stupid, I did not find anything suitable, and I do not know how, I found that I was wandering away in thoughts, which I do not know whether they are strange, in which case they are certainly mine, or holy, and if so, they have certainly come from Heaven. I will express them, exactly as they came to me, and You, Master, will explain them to me or reproach me, and you, my friends, will bear with me. I was looking first at the fire, and I thought: "Now: what is a fire made of? Of wood. But wood does not burn by itself. And if it is not dry, it will not burn at all, because water makes it heavy and prevents the tinder from lighting it. And when wood is dead, it rots and woodworms pulverise it, but it will not catch fire by itself. And yet if one arranges it in a suitable manner and holding tinder and flint close to it produces a spark and helps it to light by blowing on thin branches to increase the flame, because one always starts from the smallest things, then the flame rises and becomes beautiful and useful and sets everything on fire, also thick pieces of wood". And I said to myself: "We are like wood. We do not light up by ourselves. But we must take care not to be too impregnated with the heavy moisture of flesh and blood, to allow the tinder to be lit up by a spark. And we must desire to be burnt because if we remain inactive we may be destroyed by inclement weather and by woodworms, that is, by mankind and by the demon. Whereas if we give ourselves to the fire of love, it will begin to burn the thinner branches and will destroy them, and I considered the little branches to be imperfections, then it will grow and set on fire the bigger pieces of wood, that is the stronger passions. And we, being like wood, something material, hard, dull, even ugly, will become the beautiful, incorporeal, agile, bright thing that a flame is. And that is because we have given ourselves to love, which is the flint and tinder that turn us

poor sinners into future angels and citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven”. And that was one thought. »

<sup>8</sup>Jesus has raised His head a little and is listening with His eyes closed and the shadow of a smile on His lips. The others are looking, they are still surprised but no longer frightened.

260 8

Peter continues to speak peacefully. «Another thought came to my mind looking at the lambs that were roasting. Do not say that my thoughts are childish. The Master told me to look for them in what I was watching... And I obeyed. So I was looking at the lambs and I said: “There you are. They are two innocent meek animals. Our Holy Scriptures are full of gentle allusions\* \* to lambs, both to remember Him Who is the promised Messiah and Saviour as was symbolised in the Mosaic lamb, and to remind us that God will have mercy on us. The prophets say so. He comes to gather His flock together, to assist wounded sheep and carry those whose limbs are fractured. How much goodness! ” I was saying to myself. “We must not be afraid of a God Who promises us, poor wretches, so much mercy! But”, I still said to myself, “we must be meek, at least meek, since we are no longer innocent. We must be meek and anxious to be consumed by love. Because what would the most beautiful and pure little lamb also become, after it has been slaughtered, if it is not cooked on a fire? A putrid carrion. Fire instead turns it into wholesome blessed food”. And I concluded: “In short, all good things are achieved through love. Love relieves us of the burden of humanity, it makes us bright and useful, it enables us to be good to our brothers and grateful to God. It elevates our good natural qualities raising them to a height that bears the name of supernatural virtues. And he who is virtuous is holy, and who is holy possesses Heaven. So it is not science or fear that open the way to perfection for us, it is love. It detaches us from evil, much more than the fear of punishment, as through it we do not wish to grieve the Lord. It makes us pity our brothers and love them because they come from God. Therefore love is the salvation and the sanctification of man”. That is what I was thinking while watching my roast and obeying my Jesus. Forgive me if that is all. But those thoughts did me good. I offer them to you hoping they may do you good as well. »

\* **allusions**, for example in: *Isaiah 53 7, Jeremiah 11, 19, Mosaic lamb* written in: *Exodus 12 1-11, the prophets say so* as in: *Jeremiah 23, 3, Ezekiel 34 11-16*

260.9     <sup>9</sup>Jesus opens His eyes, which are radiant with joy. He stretches out one arm and lays His hand on Peter's shoulder: «I solemnly tell you that you have found the words that you had to find. Obedience and love made you find them and humbleness and the desire to give solace to your brothers will make of them as many stars in their dark sky. May God bless you, Simon of Jonah. »  
      «May God bless You, Master! And are You not speaking?»  
      «They will be commencing their new service tomorrow. I will bless their commencement with My word. Go now in peace and may God be with you. »

261. Exhortation to the farmer of Doras  
      passed to the employment of Joachim.

23<sup>rd</sup> August 1945.

261.1     <sup>1</sup>It is not yet daybreak. Jesus is standing in the middle of Doras' ruined orchard: rows of withered or withering trees, many of which have already been felled or uprooted. Around Him there are Doras' and Johanan's peasants and the apostles some standing, some sitting on the felled trunks.

Jesus begins to speak: «Another day and another departure. And I am not the only one who is leaving. You are departing as well, if not physically, morally, as you are going to another master. You will thus be joined to other good and pious peasants, and you will form one family, in which you will be able to speak of God and of His Word, without having to resort to subterfuges to do so. Sustain one another in your faith, help one another, bear one another's faults and edify one another.

That is love. And you heard from My apostles last night, although in different ways, that love is salvation. Simon Peter with his simple kind word made you ponder how love changes your heavy nature into a supernatural nature, how a man without love may become corrupt and corrupting, like a slaughtered animal that is not cooked, or he may become useless like wood rotten with water that will not burn in a fire, and how love makes a man live in the atmosphere of God and thus he comes out of corruption and becomes useful to his neighbour. Because, believe Me, My dear children, love is the great strength of the Universe. I

will never tire telling you. All the misfortunes on the earth come from lack of love, beginning from the death and diseases caused by the lack of love of Adam and Eve for the Most High Lord.

*Because love is obedience.* He who does not obey is a rebel. He who is a rebel does not love him against whom he rebels. Where do other general or particular misfortunes come from, such as wars or the downfall of contending families? From selfishness, which is estrangement. And the ruin of welfare through God's punishment follows the downfall of families. Because God sooner or later will strike he who lives without loving.

<sup>2</sup>I know that it is rumoured here - and because of such rumour I am hated by some, looked at with fearful hearts by others or invoked as a fresh punishment or tolerated for fear of a punishment - I know that it is rumoured here that it was My look that made these fields cursed. It was not My look: but the punished selfishness of an unjust and cruel man. If My eyes were to scorch the land of all those who hate Me, very little green would be left in Palestine! I never avenge Myself for ill will manifested towards Me, but I hand over to the Father those who stubbornly persist in their sin of selfishness towards their neighbour and sacrilegiously deride the precept of love, and the more one endeavours to persuade them to love, by means of words and suitable deeds, the more cruel they become. I am always willing to raise My hand and say to a repentant soul: "I absolve you. Go in peace". But I will not offend Love by agreeing to inconvertible harshness. Always bear that in mind, to see things in the right light and disprove tales, which are always different from the truth, whether they are told out of veneration or angry fear.

261. 2

<sup>3</sup>You are changing master, but you will not be leaving this land, to take care of which in its present state seems madness. And yet I say to you: do your duty on it. You have done it so far for fear of cruel punishment. Do it also now, although you are aware that you will not be dealt with as in the past. Nay, I say to you: the more humanely you are treated, the more diligently and cheerfully you are to work, to return humanity through your work to those who grant you humanity. Because while it is true that masters are obliged to be humane to their subordinates - remembering that we are all of one race and that every man is born nude in the same manner and dies petrifying in the

261. 3

same manner, whether he is rich or poor, and that wealth is not the work of those who possess it, but of those who either honestly or dishonestly have amassed it for them, and that one is not to be proud of it or make use of it to oppress other people, instead one should use it with love, discretion and justice in order not to be looked at with severity by the true Master, Who is God, Who cannot be bought or seduced by jewels or gold talents, but can be made our friend only through our good deeds - because while all that is true, it is also true that servants are obliged to be good to their masters.

261. 4 <sup>4</sup>Do the will of God, Who wants you in your humble condition, with simplicity and goodwill. You know the parable\* of Dives. You know that not gold, but virtue is rewarded in Heaven. Virtue and submission to the will of God, make God the friend of man. I know that it is very difficult to be able to always see God through the deeds of men. It is easy in good people. It is difficult in bad people, because your souls may be induced to think that God is not good. But you must overcome the evil done to you by men tempted by Satan, and beyond that barrier that costs so many tears, you must see the truth of sorrow and its beauty. Sorrow comes from Evil. But as God cannot abolish it, as the power of Evil exists and it is the assay of the spiritual gold of the children of God, He compels it to extract from its poison the juice of a medicine which gives eternal life. Because the pungency of sorrow inoculates good people with such reactions that spiritualize them more and more making them holy.

261. 5 <sup>5</sup>Be therefore good, respectful, submissive. Do not judge your masters. There is One Who judges them. I would like the man who commands you to become just, to make your life easier, and gain eternal life himself. But remember that the more burdensome the task to be accomplished is, the greater is the merit in the eyes of God. Do not try to defraud your master. Money or victuals obtained by fraud do not enrich or satisfy anybody's hunger. Let your hands, lips and hearts be pure. You will then keep the Sabbaths and holy days of obligation with grace in the eyes of God, even if you are compelled to work in the fields. I solemnly tell you that your labour will be worth more than the hyp-

\* parable, narrated to them in 191. 5/7.

ocritical prayer of those who go to fulfil their duty to be praised by the world, because in actual fact they infringe the precept by disobeying the Law that prescribes that each man and all the members of his family are to keep the Sabbath and festivals of Israel for their own sake. *Because prayer does not consist in actions, but in sentiments.* And if your hearts love God in a holy manner they will celebrate the rites of the Sabbath and festivals, which other people prevent you from keeping, better than they do and under every circumstance.

I bless you and I will now leave you because the sun is rising and I want to be on the hills before the heat of the day. We shall meet again soon because autumn is not far. Peace be with you all, both the new and the old servants of Johanan and may your hearts be serene. »

And Jesus sets off passing through the peasants and blessing them one by one.

<sup>261.6</sup> Behind a large withered apple-tree there is a man half-hidden. But when Jesus is about to pass by pretending He has not seen him, the man jumps out and says: «I am Johanan's steward. He said to me: "If the Rabbi of Israel should come, let Him stop in my fields and let Him speak to my servants. They will do more work for us, because He teaches only good things". And yesterday he wrote to me informing me that as from today they (and he points to Doras' men) are with me, and these fields belong to Johanan and he says: "If the Rabbi should come listen to what He says and act accordingly. Let no calamity befall us. Load Him with honours but see if you can get Him to revoke the curse on the land". Because You must know that Johanan bought it out of spite. But I think he already regrets it. It will be a great achievement if we can turn it into grazing ground... »

«Did you hear Me speak? »

«Yes, Master. »

«You know, then, how to behave, both you and your master, to have God's blessing. Tell your master. And as far as you are concerned, moderate his orders, because you know how burdensome in actual fact is the work of a man in the fields and you are well liked by your master. But it is better for you to lose his favour and your position, rather than lose your soul. Goodbye. »

«But I have to honour You. »

«I am not an idol. I do not need interested honours to grant graces. Honour Me with your soul, by practising what you have heard and you will serve God and your master at the same time. »

And Jesus, followed by the apostles and the women, and then by all the peasants, goes across the fields and directs His steps towards the hills, greeting everybody once again.

262. An undesired daughter and the role of the redeemed woman. The Iscariot asks Mary for help.

24<sup>th</sup> August 1945.

262.1

<sup>1</sup>Jesus is going back towards Nazareth along a road which winds through hills, benefiting from the shade of olive-groves and orchards spread in this fertile and well cultivated region.

But when He arrives at a crossroad, intersecting the road to Ptolemais, He stops and says: «Let us stop at that house, where I have rested before, we shall have our meal, and while the sun follows its course, let us stay together before we part again. We shall go towards Tiberias, My Mother and Mary will go to Nazareth, John and Ermasteus to Sicaminon. »

Through an olive-grove they move towards a low large house of peasants, adorned with the usual fig-tree, and decked with the festoons of a vine which climbs up an outside staircase and expands its branches over the terrace.

«Peace be with you. I am here once again. »

«Come, Master. You are always welcome. May God grant peace to You and to Your friends» replies an elderly man who was crossing the yard carrying an armful of faggots. He then shouts: «Sarah! Sarah! The Master is here with His disciples. Add more flour to your bread! »

A woman covered with flour comes out of one of the rooms: she has obviously been sieving, because she is still holding a sieve in her hands with some bran in it; she kneels in front of Jesus smiling.

«Peace to you, woman. I brought you My Mother, as I promised you. Here She is. And this is Her sister-in-law, the mother of James and Judas. Where are Dinah and Philip? »

The woman, after greeting the two Maries, replies: «Dinah

had her third baby girl yesterday. We are a little sad, because we have not yet been given a nephew. But we are happy, too, is that right, Mattathias? »

«Yes, because she is a beautiful baby and she is always our blood. We will show her to You. Philip has gone to bring back Anna and Naomi from his old parents, but he will soon be back. »

The woman goes back to her baking while the man, after putting the faggots into the oven, takes care of the guests, offering them seats and fresh milk, if they want it, or fruit and olives, if they prefer them.

<sup>2</sup>The room on the ground floor is cool and shady, large as it is and with two doors, one at the front, the other at the back, the former being shaded by the large fig-tree, the latter by a tall hedge of star-shaped flowers, which resemble sunflowers in shape, but with smaller corollas. Thus an emerald green light enters the large room, and it is of great relief to eyes tired by the strong sunshine. There are benches and tables in the room, which is perhaps the one where the women spin and weave and the men repair their agricultural tools or store their supplies of flour and fruit, as would seem by some small beams with many hooks and boards placed on consoles, besides long chests along the walls. Fluffy hurds of linen or hemp look like loose plaits hanging on the whitewashed wall, and a piece of bright red cloth stretched on an uncovered loom seems to cheer up the whole room with its pompous joyful colour. 262. 2

The landlady, who has finished her baking, comes back and asks the guests whether they wish to see the new-born baby.

Jesus replies: «I will certainly bless her. »

Mary instead stands up saying: «I will come and greet the mother. »

All the women go out.

«It is very comfortable here» says Bartholomew who is clearly very tired.

«Yes. It is quiet and shady. We shall end up by falling asleep» confirms Peter, who is already drowsy.

«In three days' time we shall be at home for a long time. You will be able to rest because you will be going evangelizing in the neighbourhood» says Jesus.

«And what about You? »



«I will stay at Capernaum most of the time, going to Bethsaida now and again. And I will evangelize those who join Me there. Then at the moon of Tishri we shall begin to go about again. In the meantime, I will instruct you in the evening... »

Jesus becomes silent because He sees that sleep makes His words useless. He shakes His head smiling, while watching the group overwhelmed by fatigue and sleeping in more or less comfortable postures. There is dead silence in the house and in the sunny country. It looks like an enchanted place. Jesus goes to the door near the hedge of flowers and through the branches He contemplates the gentle Galilean hills, covered with grey still olive-trees.

262.3 <sup>3</sup>A light shuffling is heard above His head together with the uncertain crying of a new-born baby. Jesus looks up and smiles at His Mother Who is coming down holding in Her arms a white little bundle from which three tiny red things emerge: a little head and two lively little fists.

«Look, Jesus, what a beautiful baby! She is somewhat like You when You were one day old. Your hair was so fair, that You did not seem to have any, if it had not been even then raised in light curls like a woolly cloud, and You were as red as a rose as well. And, look, look, now that she has opened her little eyes here in the shade and she is looking for her mother's breast, her eyes are dark blue, like Yours... Oh! darling! But I have no milk, My dear little one, My little rose, My little dove! » and Our Lady lulls the baby who stops crying and falls asleep, gurgling like a little dove.

«Mother, did You do that to Me also? » asks Jesus watching His Mother lull the baby, with Her cheek pressed against the little fair-haired head.

«Yes, Son. But I called You "My little lamb". She is beautiful, is she not? »

«Really beautiful and strong. Her mother can be proud of her» confirms Jesus, Who is also stooped watching the sleep of the innocent child.

«Instead she is not... Her husband is angry because all the children are girls. It is true that men are better for the fields we have. But it is no fault of our daughter... » says with a sigh the landlady who has just arrived.

«They are young. Let them love each other and they will have boys also» says the Lord confidently.

<sup>4</sup>«Here is Philip... He will become gloomy now... » moans the <sup>262.</sup> <sup>4</sup> upset woman. And in a louder voice she says: «Philip, the Rabbi of Nazareth is here. »

«I am glad to see Him. Peace to You, Master. »

«And to you, Philip. I saw your lovely baby. I am still looking at her, because she is really praiseworthy. God blesses you with beautiful, healthy and good children. You must be very grateful to Him... Are you not answering Me? You seem to be annoyed... »

«I was hoping it was a boy! »

«You are not going to tell Me that you are unfair by accusing the innocent child of being a female or that you are going to be hard on your wife? » asks Jesus severely.

«I wanted a boy! For the Lord and for myself! » exclaims Philip resentfully.

«And do you think you are going to get one through injustice and rebellion? Have you perhaps read God's thought? Are you above Him that you may say to Him: "Do that because that is just?" This woman disciple of Mine has no children, for instance. And yet she said to Me: "I bless my sterility which gives me wings to follow You". And this disciple, the mother of four sons, is anxious that all four of them may no longer belong to her. Is it true, Mary and Susanna? Do you hear them? And you, although you have been married only a few years to a fertile woman, and have been blessed with three rose-buds who seek your love, you are angry? With whom? Why? You do not want to tell Me? Well, I will tell you: because you are selfish. Pocket your ill-feeling. Open your arms to this child born of your seed and love her. Come on! Take her! » and Jesus takes the little bundle of linens and lays it in the arms of the young father. He then resumes speaking: «Go to your wife, who is weeping, and tell her that you love her. Or God really will never give you a son. I am telling you. Go!... »

The man goes up to his wife's room.

«Thank You, Master! » whispers his mother-in-law. «He has been very rude since yesterday... »

The man comes down after a few minutes and says: «I did it, my Lord. She thanks You. And she told me to ask You to name

the baby because... in my unjust hatred I had decided on a name that was too ugly... »

«Call her Mary. She has sucked bitter tears through the first drop of milk, which was also bitter because of your harshness, so she may be called Mary and Mary will love her. Is that right, Mother? »

«Of course, poor little darling. And she is so pretty. And she will certainly be good and become a little star of Heaven. »

262 5     5They go back into the large room where the apostles are fast asleep, with the exception of Judas, who seems to be on tenter-hooks.

«Did you want Me, Judas? » asks Jesus.

«No, Master, but I cannot get to sleep and I would like to go out for a little while. »

«Who stops you? I am going out as well. I am going up to that hillock. It is all in the shade... I will rest praying. Do you want to come with Me? »

«No, Master. I would disturb You because I am not in condition to pray. Perhaps... perhaps I am not feeling very well and that is upsetting me... »

«Stay here, then. I do not force anybody. Goodbye. Goodbye, women. Mother, when John of Endor wakes, send him to Me, by himself. »

«Yes, Son. Peace be with You. »

Jesus goes out, Mary and Susanna bend to watch the cloth on the loom. Mary sits down with Her hands in Her lap, slightly bent. Perhaps She is praying, too. Mary of Alphaeus soon tires of watching the work. She sits in the darkest corner and soon falls asleep. Susanna thinks it is a good idea and imitates her.

Only Mary and Judas are awake: the former deeply absorbed in Her thoughts, the latter looking at Her with wide open gaze, which never leaves Her. In the end he gets up and approaches Her slowly and noiselessly. Although he is most definitely a handsome man, he gives me the impression of a feline or snake approaching its prey, I do not know why. Probably because I dislike him, I feel that his very steps are deceitful and dangerous... He calls Her in a low voice: «Mary! »

«What do you want from Me, Judas? » Mary asks kindly looking at him with Her most loving eyes.

«I would like to speak to You... »

«Do so. I am listening. »

«Not here... I do not want anybody to hear me... Would You mind going out there for a moment? It is shady out there as well... »

«Let us go... But see. They are all sleeping... you could have spoken here as well» says the Blessed Virgin. But she gets up and goes out before him leaning against the tall flowery hedge.

«What do you want from Me, Judas? » She asks again, staring at the apostle who appears to be somewhat upset and finds it difficult to speak. «Are you not feeling well? Or have you done something wrong and you do not know how to tell? Or do you feel that you are on the point of doing something wrong and it is a burden for you to admit that you are tempted? Speak, son. As I cured your body, I will cure your soul. Tell Me what is upsetting you, and if I can I will help you. If I cannot do so by Myself, I will tell Jesus. Even if you had committed a serious sin, He will forgive you if I ask Him. Really, Jesus would forgive you at once, as well... But perhaps you are ashamed of Him, the Master. I am a mother... I do not make anyone feel ashamed... »

«No, You do not, because You are a mother and You are so good. You are peace to all of us. <sup>6</sup>I feel... very upset. I have a very bad character, Mary. I do not know what I have in my blood and in my heart... Now and again I am no longer able to control them... and then I would do the strangest... and worst things. » 262. 6

«Even with Jesus near you, can you not resist temptation? »

«Yes. And I suffer because of that, believe me. It is so. I am a poor wretch. »

«I will pray for you, Judas. »

«It is not enough. »

«I will get just people to pray for you without telling them for whom it is. »

«It is not enough. »

«I will make children pray. So many of them come to Me, to My kitchen garden, like little birds looking for corn. And My caresses and the words I speak to them are corn to them. I speak to them of God... And they, little innocent souls, prefer that to games and tales. The prayer of children is pleasing to the Lord. »

«Never as much as Yours. But it is still not enough. »

«I will tell Jesus to pray to the Father for you. »

«It is still not sufficient»

«More than that is impossible! Jesus' prayer defeats also demons... »

«Yes, but Jesus would not always pray. And I would go back to being myself... Jesus always says so, He will go away one day. I must think of the time when I shall be without Him. Jesus now wants to send us evangelizing. I am afraid to go with this enemy of mine, which is myself, to spread the word of God. I would like to be already perfected^

«But, son, if not even Jesus is successful, who can ever be so? »

«You, Mother! Let me stay a little while with You. Pagans and prostitutes have stayed with You. So I can stay as well. If You do not want me to be where You live, at night I will go and sleep at Alphaeus and Mary of Clopas', but I will spend the day with You and the children. In the past I tried to do things by myself, and I made the situation worse. If I go to Jerusalem, I have too many wicked friends and in the situation I am in now, when I feel like this, I become their laughing-stock... It is the same if I go to any other town. The temptation of the road burns me with this one which I already have. If I go to Kerioth, to my mother's, I become the slave of pride. If I withdraw to a solitary place, silence rends me with Satan's voices. But if I am staying with You, oh! I feel that it will be different!... Let me come! Tell Jesus to grant me this! Do You want me to be lost? Are You afraid of me? You are looking at me with the countenance of a wounded gazelle which has no strength left to escape its assailants. But I will not offend You. I have a mother, too... and I love You more than her. Have mercy on a sinner, Mary! Look: I am weeping at Your feet... If You reject me, it may be my spiritual death... » and Judas is really weeping at Mary's feet; She looks at him and Her eyes are full of pity and anguish mixed with fear. She is very pale.

But She takes a step forward, because She had almost sunk into the hedge to keep away from Judas who was going too close to Her, and She lays a hand on Judas' dark hair. «Be quiet, lest they should hear you! I will speak to Jesus. And if He agrees... you will come to My house. I disregard the opinion of the world. It does not injure My soul. I would be horror-struck only at being guilty towards God. Calumny leaves Me cold. No one will

speaking ill of Me because Nazareth knows that its daughter does not cause scandal to Her town. In any case, let come what may, I am anxious that you may save your soul. I am now going to Jesus. Peace to you. » And She covers Herself with Her veil, which is white like Her dress and She walks fast along the path which leads up to a hillock covered with olive-trees.

<sup>7</sup>She looks for Her Jesus and finds Him engrossed in meditation. 262.7

«Son, it is I... Listen to Me! »

«Oh! Mother! Have You come to pray with Me? What joy and relief You bring to Me! »

«What is it, Son? Is Your soul anguished? Are You sad? Tell Your Mother! »

«You have said it, anguished and tired. Not so much because of work or of the miseries I see in hearts, as for the immutability of My friends. But I do not wish to be unfair to them. One only worries Me: Judas of Simon... »

«Son, I have come to speak to You of him... »

«Has he wronged You? Has he grieved You? »

«No. But I feel sorry for him just as I would feel sorry if I saw a very infected person... Poor son! How ill his soul is! »

«And You feel sorry for him? Are You no longer afraid of Him? You were once... »

«Son, My pity is even greater than My fear. And I would like to help You and him to save his soul. You can do everything, and You do not need Me. But You say that everybody must cooperate with Christ in redeeming... and that son needs to be redeemed so badly! »

«What else can I do for him in addition to what I already do? »

«You cannot do any more. But You could let Me do. He asked Me to let him stay in our house because he thinks that he will be able to get rid of his monster there... You are shaking Your head? You do not want? I will tell him... »

«No, Mother. It is not that I do not want. I am shaking My head because I know that it is useless. Judas is like one who is drowning and although he realises that he is drowning, he rejects out of pride the rope that has been thrown to him to draw him to the shore. He has no will to come to the shore. Now and again, he is in terror of drowning and he seeks and invokes help, he clings to

the rope... and then, seized once again by pride, he refuses help, rejects it, he wants to be independent... and he becomes heavier and heavier because of the muddy water that swallows him down. But as I wish to leave no stone unturned, let that be done as well, poor Mother... Yes, poor Mother, as You are subjecting Yourself, for the love of a soul, to the pain of having near You... one who frightens You. »

«No, Jesus. Do not say that. I am a poor woman because I am still subject to antipathies. Reproach Me. I deserve it. I should not be disgusted at anybody, for Your sake. That is why I am a poor woman. Oh! I wish I could give You back Judas spiritually cured! To give You a soul is to give You a treasure. And the person who gives a treasure is not poor. Son!... Shall I go and tell Judas that it is all right, that You agree? You said once\*: "The day will come when You will say: 'How difficult it is to be the Mother of the Redeemer' "I have already said it once... for Aglae... But what is once only? Mankind is so numerous! And You are the Redeemer of all men. Son!... Son!... As I held the little baby in My arms to bring her to You to be blessed, let Me hold Judas in My arms, that I may bring him to Your blessing... »

«Mother... Mother... He does not deserve You... »

«Jesus, when You hesitated to give Marjiam to Peter, I told You that it would be beneficial to him. You cannot deny that Peter has become a new man since that moment... Let Me try with Judas. »

«Let it be done as You wish! And may You be blessed for Your loving intention towards Me and Judas! Now let us pray together, Mother. It is so pleasant to pray with You!... »...

262. 8      8... The sun is just beginning to set when I see them depart from the house that gave them hospitality.

John of Endor and Ermasteus take leave of Jesus as soon as they reach the road. Mary with the women instead proceeds with Her Son along a road through the olive-groves on the hills. They are talking of the events of the day.

Peter says: «Philip must be really crazy! He was almost going to disown his wife and daughter, if You had not been there to make him listen to reason. »

\* You said once, in 157. 7; I have already said, in 168. 9

«Let us hope that he will persevere in his repentance and he does not have another fit of bad temper against females. After all... it is due to women that the world goes on» says Thomas and many laugh at his witty remark.

«It is certainly true. But they are more unclean than we are and... » replies Bartholomew.

«Never! With regards to uncleanliness... we are not angels either! Now, I would like to know whether after Redemption it will always be the same for women. They teach us to honour mothers, and hold in great respect sisters, daughters, aunts, daughters and sisters in law and then... Anathema here, anathema there! The Temple is out of the question. Many times we are not allowed to approach them... Eve sinned? Agreed. But also Adam sinned. God punished Eve... and very severely. Is that not enough? »

«Thomas! Moses also considers women unclean. »

«And Moses, without women, would have been drowned... But, mind you, Bartholomew, although I am not so learned as you are, as I am only a gold-beater, I would remind you that Moses mentions the bodily uncleanliness of women so that we may respect them, not to anathematise them. »

<sup>9</sup>The debate is becoming livelier. Jesus, Who was ahead of <sup>262. 9</sup> them with the women and John and Judas Iscariot, stops and turning around He comes in to the discussion: «God had in front of Him people which was morally and spiritually amorphous and contaminated by connections with idolaters. He wanted to make the people physically and spiritually strong. Thus the precepts He gave were instructions beneficial to both physical strength and moral honesty. He could not do otherwise to check the lust of men and thus prevent repetition of the sins which caused the earth to be submerged\* and Sodom and Gomorrah to be burned down. But in the future the redeemed woman will not be oppressed as she is now. Prohibitions concerning physical prudence will remain, but obstacles to her coming to the Lord will be removed. I am already removing them to prepare the first female priests of the future era. »

«Oh! Will there be female priests?! » asks Philip who is almost dumb founded.

\* ~~the earth to be submerged,~~ as narrated in: *Genesis 6 5-22,7*; ~~Sodom and Gomorrah to be burned down,~~ as narrated in: *Genesis 19 1-29*



«Do not misunderstand Me. They will not be female priests like men, they will not consecrate and will not administer the gifts of God, which you are not yet capable of understanding. But they will belong to the sacerdotal class, cooperating in many ways with priests to the benefit of souls. »

«Will they preach? » asks Bartholomew incredulously.

«As My Mother already preaches. »

«Will they make apostolic pilgrimages? » asks Matthew.

«Yes, they will. They will take faith very far, and I must admit it, with greater heroism than men. »

«Will they work miracles? » asks the Iscariot laughing.

«Some will work also miracles. But do not consider miracles the essential thing. They, being holy women, will work many miracles of conversions through their prayers. »

«Bah! Will women pray to the extent of working miracles! » grumbles Nathanael.

«Do not be narrow minded like a scribe, Bartholomew. What is prayer, according to you? »

«To address God by means of the formulae known to us. »

«That and much more. Prayer is the conversation of the heart with God and it ought to be the habitual state of man. Women, because of their more retired lives than ours and because of their affective faculties that are stronger than ours, are inclined to such conversation with God more than we are. They find comfort to their sorrows in it, relief in their work, which is not only the work in the house and in procreating, but also in tolerating us men, they find what wipes their tears and brings peace and joy to their hearts. Because they know how to speak to God and they will know even better in future. Men will be giants in doctrine, women will be those who support men and the world with their prayers, because many misfortunes will be avoided through their prayers and many punishments will be withheld. They will thus work miracles, invisible in most cases and known to God only, but not less real. »

262 10

<sup>10</sup>«You also worked an invisible but real miracle today. Is that right, Master? » asks Thaddeus.

«Yes, brother. »

«It would have been better to work a visible one» remarks Philip.

«Did you want Me to change the little girl into a boy? A miracle really is the alteration of what has been destined a beneficial disorder, thus, which God grants to hear the prayer of man and thus prove to him that He loves him, or that He is He Who is. But since God is order He never violates order immoderately. The child was born a female, and a female she will remain. »

«I was so distressed this morning! » says the Blessed Virgin with a sigh.

«Why? The loveless baby was not Yours» says Susanna. And she adds: «When I see an unfortunate child I say: “Luckily for me I have none! ”»

«Do not say so, Susanna! It is not charitable. I also could say so because My only Maternity is beyond natural laws. But I do not say that, because I always think: “If God had not wanted Me to be a virgin, that seed might have fallen on Me, and I would be the mother of the unhappy child”, and thus I pity them all... Because I say: “He might have been My son” and as a mother I would like all children to be good, healthy, loved and loving, because every mother wishes that for her own children» replies Mary kindly. And Jesus seems to wrap Her in light, so radiantly He looks at Her.

«That is why You pity me... » says the Iscariot in a low voice.

«I pity everybody. Even if one were the murderer of My Son. Because I think that he would be the most in need of help... and love. Because the whole world would certainly hate him. »

«Donna, You would have to work hard defending him to give him time to repent... I would get rid of him immediately... » says Peter.

<sup>11</sup>«This is where we part, Mother, God be with You. And with you, Mary. And with you, too, Judas. » They kiss one another and Jesus adds: «Remember that I have granted you a great thing, Judas. Make it beneficial and not detrimental to you. Goodbye. »

And Jesus with the eleven apostles left and Susanna goes eastwards at a quick pace, while Mary, Her sister-in-law and the Iscariot go straight ahead.

263. The healing of a man with an atrofised arm.

26<sup>th</sup> August 1945.

263. 1 <sup>1</sup>Jesus enters the synagogue in Capernaum, which slowly becomes crowded with believers, because it is Sabbath. Everybody is greatly surprised to see Him. They all point to Him whispering and some pull the tunic of this or that apostle asking when they came back to town, because nobody knew that they were back.

«We landed at the “fig well” coming from Bethsaida, to avoid taking one step more than is prescribed, my friend» replies Peter to Uriah, the Pharisee, who, feeling offended at being called «friend» by a fisherman, goes away disdainfully and joins his peers in the first row.

«Don't tease them, Simon! » warns Andrew.

«Tease them? He asked me a question and I replied saying also that we avoided walking to respect the Sabbath. »

«They will say that we worked in the boat... »

«They will end up by saying that we worked by breathing! Fool! It's the boat, the wind and the waves that work, not us who sail in the boat. »

Andrew accepts the reprimand and turns silent.

263. 2 <sup>2</sup>After the preliminary prayers it is time to read a passage and explain it. The head of the synagogue asks Jesus to do so, but Jesus points to the Pharisees saying: «Let them do it. » But as they do not wish to comply, He is compelled to speak.

Jesus reads a passage\* from the first Book of the Kings, which tells how David was betrayed by the men of Ziph, who informed Saul that he was at Gibeah. Jesus hands the roll back and begins to speak.

«It is always evil to infringe the precepts of charity, hospitality and honesty. But man does not hesitate to do so with utmost indifference. We have here a double episode of such infringement and the consequent punishment of God. The behaviour of the men of Ziph was deceitful. Saul's was equally so. The former were mean in their intention of getting into the graces of the stronger of the two. The latter was vile in the intention of getting

\* passage, in the Neo-Vulgate is in: *1 Samuel 23, 19-28.*

rid of the Lord's anointed. They were thus united by their selfishness. And the false sinful king of Israel dares to give a reply to the base proposal mentioning the Lord: "May you be blessed by the Lord".

Derision of God's Justice! Habitual derision! Too often the Name of the Lord and His blessing are invoked as a reward or guarantee for man's wickedness. It is written: "You shall not utter the Name of God in vain". And can there be anything more vain, or rather, more wicked than uttering it to commit a crime against one's neighbour? And yet it is a sin that is more frequent than any other, committed with indifference also by those who are always the first in the meetings of the Lord, in ceremonies and teaching. Remember that it is a sin to investigate, take notice and prepare everything to damage one's neighbour. It is also a sin to make other people investigate, take notice and prepare everything so that other people may injure one's neighbour. It implies inducing others to sin by tempting them with rewards or threatening them with retaliation.

I warn you that it is a sin. I warn you that such behaviour is selfishness and hatred. And you are aware that hatred and selfishness are enemies of love. I am warning you because I am anxious about your souls. Because I love you. Because I do not want you to be in sin. Because I do not want you to be punished by God as happened to Saul, whose country was destroyed by the Philistines, while he was chasing David to capture him and kill him. I solemnly tell you that will always happen to those who harm their neighbours. Their victory will last as long as the grass of a meadow. It will come up quickly, but it will soon be dry and trodden on by the foot of indifferent passers-by. Whereas good behaviour and honest life seem to find it hard to grow and assert themselves. But once they are perfected as habits of life they become strong leafy trees, which no hurricane can uproot or dog-days parch. Really, he who is faithful to the Law, truly faithful, becomes a strong tree, which is not bent by passions nor burnt by Satan's fire.

I have finished. <sup>3</sup>If there is anyone who wishes to say something, let him do so. »

«We ask You whether You have spoken referring to us Pharisees. »

«Is the synagogue perhaps full of Pharisees? You are four, and there are hundreds of people. My word was for everybody. »

«But the allusion was clear. »

«Really, it has never been known that a man accuses himself only because suspicion is thrown on him by a parallel! But that is what you are doing. Why do you accuse yourselves if I do not accuse you? Are you aware of behaving as I said? I am not. But if you are, mend your ways. Because man is weak and may sin. And God forgives him if he sincerely repents and wants to sin no more. But to persist in evil is double sin for which there is no forgiveness. »

«We have not committed such sin. »

«Well, do not grieve over My words. »

The argument is over. And the singing of hymns fills the synagogue. The meeting seems to be on the point of winding up  
263. 4 without any further incident, 4when Joachim, the Pharisee, sees a man in the crowd and beckons to him to go to the first row. The man is about fifty years old and has an atrophic arm and as atrophy has destroyed his muscles, his hand is also affected and is smaller than the other one.

Jesus sees him, and He notices the bustle to draw His attention to him. There is a flashing but very clear sign of disgust and pity on His face. But He does not ward off the blow. On the contrary He faces the situation resolutely.

«Come here, in the middle» He orders the man. And when the man is before Him, Jesus turns to the Pharisees and says: «Why do you tempt Me? Have I not just finished speaking of snares and hatred? And have you not just now said: "We have not such sin"? Are you not replying to Me? Answer at least this: Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath? Is it lawful to save life or to kill? Are you not replying? I will reply instead of you and in the presence of all the people, who will be able to judge better than you do, because they are simple and free from hatred and pride. It is not lawful to do any work on the Sabbath. But as it is lawful to pray, so it is lawful to do good, because good is even a greater prayer than the hymns and psalms which we have sung. But neither on the Sabbath nor on any other days is it lawful to do evil. And you have done just that by intriguing to have here this man who is not even from Capernaum and was brought here two days ago, as

you knew that I was at Bethsaida and you guessed that I would be coming to My town. And you have done that to see if you can find something to use against Me. And thus you commit also the sin of killing your souls instead of saving them. But, as far as I am concerned, I forgive you and I will not disappoint the faith of this man, whom you told to come saying that I would cure him, whereas you wanted to lay a snare for Me. He is innocent because He came here with no other intention but to be cured. And be it so. Man: stretch out your hand and go in peace. »

The man obeys and his hand is cured and is like the other one. He makes use of it at once by taking the hem of Jesus' mantle to kiss it saying: «You know that I was not aware of their true intentions. Had I known, I would not have come, as I would have preferred to keep my withered hand, rather than serve against You. So have no grudge against me. »

«Go in peace, man. I know the truth and with regard to you I assure you of My goodwill. »

The crowd go out making comments, and Jesus comes out last with His eleven apostles.

#### 264. A day of Judas Iscariot in Nazareth.

27<sup>th</sup> August 1945.

<sup>1</sup>The house in Nazareth would be the most suitable for spir-  
itual elevation. There is peace, silence, order. Holiness seems to  
exude from its stones, from the trees of the kitchen garden, or to  
pour from the serene that forms a heavenly dome over it. In ac-  
tual fact it exhales from Her Who lives in it, and moves about  
quickly and silently, with Her unchanged youthful gait and light  
step, as when She entered the house as a bride, and with the same  
smile which soothes and caresses.

264. 1

The sun, in this early morning hour, is shining on the right hand side of the house, the one close to the first undulation of the hill, and only the tops of trees benefit from it, first of all the olive-trees planted near the terrace to retain the earth by means of their roots: they are the surviving olive-trees of Joachim's olive-grove, huge contorted trees with their thicker branches rising towards the sky as if they were invoking its blessing or were

praying also from that peaceful place. Once the grove consisted of many trees, which like praying pilgrims formed a long procession extending as far as the fields where olive-grove and fields became grazing ground, whereas there are only a few trees left now within Joachim's mutilated property. The next to benefit from the sunshine are the tall strong almond and apple-trees, forming sunshades over the garden with their branches, then there is a pomegranate enjoying the rays of sunlight, and last the fig-tree near the house, when the sun already caresses the well cultivated flowers and vegetables in rectangular flower-beds and along the hedges planted under pergolas laden with grapes.

Buzzing bees, like flying golden drops alight on everything that may give them sweet scented juices. A small honeysuckle shoot is attacked by them as well as a hedge of bell shaped flower bunches, the name of which I do not know, but must be night flowers, as they are about to close, and their scent is very strong. The bees hasten to suck them before they fold their petals to sleep in the corolla.

264. 2 <sup>2</sup>Mary goes quickly from the nest of the doves to the little fountain, and from there to the house, doing Her work, and yet, while doing so, She manages to admire Her flowers or the doves cooing along the paths or flying around the house and the kitchen garden.

Judas Iscariot comes back laden with plants and scions. «Hail, Mother. They gave me everything I wanted. I ran back so that they may not get injured. But I hope that they will take root as the honeysuckle did. Next year Your garden will be like a flowery basket. And You will thus remember poor Judas and his stay here» he says, carefully taking out from a bag some plants, the roots of which are wrapped in earth and damp leaves, and some scions from another bag.

«Thank you, Judas. Thank you very much, indeed. You have no idea how happy I am to have that honeysuckle near the little grotto. When I was a little girl, over there, at the end of those fields which belonged to us in those days, there was a lovely grotto, and ivy and honeysuckles adorning it with their branches and flowers, forming a kind of curtain and shelter for tiny lilies growing inside the grotto, which the delicate embroidery of maidenhair made completely green. Because there was a spring

there... In the Temple I often thought of that grotto and I tell you that when I prayed before the Veil of the Holy, as a virgin of the Temple, I did not perceive God more strongly. Nay, I must say that I dreamed there of the sweet conversations of My soul with My Lord... My Joseph prepared this one for Me, with this fine stream of water, not so much because of its utility, as to give Me the joy of a grotto like the other one... Joseph was good, and considerate of the least details... And he planted a honeysuckle and ivy, the latter is still alive, the former died during the years of our exile... He replanted it later. But it died three years ago. You have planted it once again. It has taken root, see? You are a very clever gardener. »

«Yes. When I was a child I loved plants so much and my mother taught me how to take care of them... Being with You, Mother, I feel as if I were a boy again and I discover my old skill. I do it to please You. You are so good to me!... » replies Judas, working skilfully in setting the plants in the most suitable places. Near the hedge of the night flowers he places a tangle of roots, which I do not know whether they are lilies of the valley or some other flower. «They will do well here» he says pressing with a little hoe the earth on to the buried roots. «Too much sunshine is not good for them. Eleazar's servant did not want to give me them. But I insisted so much that he gave them to me. »

«They did not want to give Joseph those Indian jasmines. But he did some work for them without asking for payment in order to get them for Me. They have flourished more and more. »

«There You are, Mother. I will now water them and they will be all right. » He waters them and then washes his hands in the fountain.

<sup>3</sup>Mary looks at him: he is so different from Her Jesus, and so <sup>264. 3</sup> different as well from the Judas of certain stormy hours; She scans him, approaches him and laying a hand on his arm She kindly asks him: «Are you feeling better, Judas? In your soul, I mean. »

«Oh! Mother! So much better! I am in peace. And You can see it. I find pleasure and salvation in humble things and in being with You. I should never leave this peace, this quietude. Here... How far is the world from this house!... » And Judas looks at the garden, the plants, the little house... He concludes: «But if I



stayed here I would never be an apostle. And I want to be one... »

«However, believe Me, it would be better for you to be a just soul rather than an unjust apostle. If you feel that contact with the world upsets you, if you realise that the praises and honours of an apostle hurt you, give it up, Judas. It is better for you to be a simple believer in My Jesus, but a holy believer, rather than be a sinful apostle. »

Judas lowers his head pensively. Mary leaves him to his meditation and goes into the house, to Her housework.

Judas remains still for some time, he then walks up and down under the pergola. His arms are folded, his head is lowered. He is engrossed in thought, then he begins to speak and gesticulate to himself. His monologue is incomprehensible. His gestures are typical of a person anguished with clashing ideas. He seems to be invoking and rejecting, or pitying, or cursing something, his inquisitive countenance becomes frightened, anguished, until his face has the expression of his worse moments... and he stops abruptly in the middle of the path, remaining still for some time with a real diabolic countenance... He covers his face with his hands and runs up the hillock of the olive-trees, away from Mary's sight, and he weeps hiding his face in his hands, until he calms down and remains seated, leaning with his back against on olive-tree as if he were bewildered...

264. 4 4... It is no longer morning, but the end of a glorious sunset. Nazareth opens the doors of its houses, which have been closed all day against the fierce summer heat of an eastern day. Women, men, children come out into the kitchen gardens or on to the roads still warm but no longer sunny, seeking cool air at the fountain, or playing or talking... waiting for supper. Men, women, children greet one another in loud voices, they chatter, laugh, shout...

Judas also goes out and turns his steps to the fountain carrying copper pitchers. He is noticed and indicated by the people of Nazareth with the nickname «the disciple of the Temple», which sounds to him like sweet music. He passes by greeting people kindly, but also with a little reserve, which if it is not yet proud haughtiness, it is very close to it.

«You are very good to Mary» a citizen with a long beard says to him.

«She deserves that and more. She really is a great woman of

Israel. You are lucky to have such a citizen. »

The praise of the woman of Nazareth delights the people who repeat to one another what Judas said.

The apostle has in the meantime reached the fountain where he waits for his turn and he is so kind as to carry the pitchers of an elderly woman, who cannot bless him enough, and he fills the jars of two women, who are hampered by the suckling each carries in her arms. Sorting their veils they whisper: «May God reward you. »

«Love for our neighbour is the first duty of a friend of Jesus» replies the Iscariot bowing. He then fills his own pitchers and goes back home.

<sup>264. 5</sup>The head of the synagogue of Nazareth and other people stop him on his way home, and invite him to speak on the following Sabbath. «You have been here with us over two weeks and you have not taught us any lesson apart from your kindness to us all» complains the head, who is with other elders of the village.

«But if the speeches of your greatest son are not pleasant to you, how can you be satisfied with the sermon of one of His disciples, who is a Judaeen over and above?» replies Judas.

«Your suspicion is an unfair one and it grieves us. Our invitation is sincere. You are a disciple and a Judaeen. That is true. But you are of the Temple. So you may speak. Because there is doctrine in the Temple. Joseph's son is only a carpenter... »

«But He is the Messiah! »

«He says so... But is it true? Or is it delirium? »

«But, people of Nazareth, what about His holiness! His holiness» Judas is scandalised at the incredulity of the Nazarenes.

«It is great. That is true. But between that and being the Messiah!... And then... Why does He speak so harshly? »

«Harsh? No. He does not seem harsh to me. Well, He is too sincere and too intolerant, that is true. He leaves no fault untouched, He does not hesitate to denounce abuses... and people do not like that. He always brings up a sore point. And that hurts. But He does it because of His holiness. Surely! That is the only reason. I have said to Him several times: "Jesus, You are damaging Your reputation". But He will not listen to me!... »

«You are very fond of Him, and learned as you are you could guide Him. »

«Oh! not learned... But practical, yes. I am of the Temple, you know!? I am familiar with customs. I have friends. Annas' son is like a brother to me. If you want something from the Sanhedrin, just tell me... But let me take the water to Mary now, as She is waiting for me for supper. »

«Come back later. It is cool on my terrace. You will be among friends and we shall be able to talk... »

264 6 «Yes, goodbye» <sup>6</sup>and Judas goes home where he apologises to Mary for being late as he was held up by the head of the synagogue and by the elders of the village. And he concludes: «They would like me to speak on Sabbath... The Master did not tell me to speak. What do You say, Mother. Guide me. »

«Speak to the head of the synagogue... or to the synagogue? »

«To both. I would not like to speak to any of them because they are against Jesus and also because it seems a sacrilege to me to speak where He is by right the only Master there. But they insisted so much! They want me after supper... I have almost promised them to go. And if You think that by speaking I may be able to mitigate their spirit of resistance to the Master, which is so unpleasant, I will go and speak to them although it is so burdensome to me. I will speak as best I can, very simply, endeavouring to be very patient in view of their stubbornness. Because I have realised that it is worse to be hard. Eh! I will not make again the mistake I made at Esdraelon! The Master was so upset about it! He did not say anything to me, but I understood. I will not do it again. But I would like to leave Nazareth after persuading the people that Jesus is the Messiah and is to be believed and loved. » Judas is speaking while sitting at the table, at Jesus' place and eating what Mary has prepared for him. And it hurts me to see Judas sitting in that place, in front of Mary Who serves him like a mother.

She now replies: «It would be a good thing if Nazareth understood the truth and accepted it. I will not hold you back, you may go. No one can say better than you whether Jesus deserves love. Consider how much He loves you and He shows it by always excusing you and satisfying you whenever possible... Let that consideration inspire you with holy words and deeds. »

The supper is soon over. Judas goes to water the flowers in the garden before it gets too dark and he then goes out, leaving Mary

on the terrace intent on folding the clothes She had hung out to dry. <sup>7</sup> And Judas, after greeting Alphaeus of Sarah and Mary of Clopas who are talking standing at the door of the latter, goes straight to the house of the head of the synagogue.

Also the Lord's two cousins are present with other six elders. After pompous greetings they all sit seriously on seats adorned with cushions and they refresh themselves drinking aniseed or mint water, which must be very cool because the metal pitcher is moist outside owing to the difference in temperature between the ice cold water and the still warm air, notwithstanding the breeze blowing from the hills to the north of Nazareth stirs the tree-tops.

«I am glad you agreed to come. You are young. A little relaxation is good for you» says the head of the synagogue who is full of attention towards Judas.

«I was afraid of bothering you if I had come earlier. I know that you are rather disdainful towards Jesus and His followers... »

«Disdainful? No. Sceptical... and we are hurt by His... let us admit it... by His too crude truth. We were under the impression that you disdained us and that is why we did not invite you. »

«I disdain you? On the contrary! I understand you very well... Of course! But I am sure that at the end peace will be made between you and Him. It suits both you and Him. It suits Him because He is in need of everybody, and it suits you because it does not pay to be considered enemies of the Messiah. »

«And do you think that He really is the Messiah? » asks Joseph of Alphaeus. There is no trace in Him of the royal figure predicted by the prophets. Perhaps it is because we remember Him as a carpenter... But... Where is the liberating king in Him? »

«David also appeared to be only a little shepherd. But you know that there has been no greater king than David. Not even Solomon in all his glory was so great. Because, after all, Solomon only continued David's work, but was never inspired like him. Whereas David! Just consider the figure of David! It is gigantic! His regality almost reaches up to Heaven. Do not doubt the royalty of the Christ, basing your judgement on His genealogy. David was king and shepherd. More truly: shepherd and then king. Jesus is king and carpenter. Or better still: carpen-

ter and later king. »

264 8 «You speak as a rabbi. One can see that you have been brought up in the Temple» says the head of the synagogue. «And could you let the Sanhedrin know, that I, the head, am in need of the help of the Temple for a private reason? »

«Of course! Certainly! With Eleazar! Just imagine. And then Joseph the Elder, you know? The wealthy man from Arimathea. And then Sadoc, the scribe... and then... All you have to do is to tell me! »

«Well be my guest tomorrow. We will talk about it. »

«Your guest? No. I cannot leave Mary, that holy and sorrowful woman. I came here especially to keep Her company... »

«What is the matter with our relative? We know that She is healthy and, although poor, She is happy» says Simon of Alphaeus.

«Yes. And we never leave Her. My mother is always with Her. And my wife and I, too. Although... Although I cannot forgive Her for being so weak with Her Son. And also for grieving my father, who because of Jesus died with only two of his sons at his bedside. And then... But family troubles are not to be proclaimed publicly» says Joseph of Alphaeus with a sigh.

«You are right. They should be whispered in a low voice and confided to a friendly heart. The same applies to many troubles. I have mine as well as a disciple... But it's better not to speak of them! »

«On the contrary, let us speak of them. What is the matter? Trouble for Jesus? We do not approve of His behaviour. But we are His relatives. And we are ready to side with Him against His enemies. Speak up! » says Joseph again.

«Trouble? No! I was just saying... The sorrows of a disciple are manifold! Not only because of the behaviour of his Master with friends and enemies, harming Himself, but also because it is grievous to see that He is not loved. I wish you all loved Him... »

«But what can we do? You said that yourself! His behaviour is such... He was not like that before leaving His Mother» says the head of the synagogue apologetically. «Is that true, what do you all say? »

They all agree solemnly, speaking highly of the silent, meek, retired Jesus of the past.

«Who could have imagined that He was to become what He is now? He was completely devoted to house and relatives. Now instead?» remarks an elderly Nazarene.

Judas exclaims with a sigh: «Poor woman!»

«Well, what do you know? Tell us, speak up!» shouts Joseph.

«Nothing more than you know. Do you think that it is pleasant for Her to be left alone?»

«If Joseph had lived as your father did, that would not have happened» states another elderly Nazarene sententiously.

«Don't believe that, man: It would have been the same. When one puts an idea into one's head!...» says Judas.

«A servant brings some lamps and lays them on the table because it is a moonless night although the sky is sparkling with stars. More drinks are brought at the same time and the head of the synagogue offers them to Judas at once.

«Thank you. I cannot stay any longer. I must go back to Mary» he says getting up.

Also Alphaeus' two sons stand up saying: «We will come with you. We are going the same way...» and they part greeting one another ceremoniously while the six elders remain with the head of the synagogue.

The streets are now deserted and silent. People can be heard talking in low serious voices on the terraced roofs. Children are already sleeping in their little beds and thus their shrill voices resembling the twittering of joyful birds are not heard. From the terraces of the wealthier houses the faint glow of oil lamps descends with the low voices of people.

Alphaeus' sons and Judas walk for a little while without speaking, then Joseph stops and taking Judas' arm he says: «Listen. I realise that you know something that you did not wish to mention in the presence of strangers. But now you must tell me. I am the oldest in the family and it is my right and my duty to know everything.»

«And I came here for the purpose of telling you and thus protect the Master, Mary, your brothers and your reputation. It is something painful to tell and to hear. Very painful to be done. Because it looks like playing the spy. But please understand me properly. It is not so. It is only love and prudence. I know many things, which you know as well. My friends of the Temple told

me. And I know that they are dangerous for Jesus and for the good name of the family. I have tried to make the Master understand. But I was not successful. On the contrary, the more I advise Him, the worse He behaves, thus causing people to criticise and hate Him more and more. The reason is that He is so holy that He cannot understand what the world is like. In short, it is sad to see a holy thing perish through the heedlessness of its founder. »

«But what is it? Tell us everything. And we will take action. Is that right, Simon? »

«Of course. But it seems impossible to me that He is imprudent and acts against His mission... »

«But if this kind young man, who loves Jesus, says so!? See what you are like. You are always like that: uncertain, hesitating. You always leave me alone at the crucial moment. The whole family is against me. You have no pity for our reputation and for our poor brother who is ruining Himself! »

«No! He is not ruining Himself! But He is injuring Himself, that's what He is doing. »

«Speak up! » insists Joseph while Simon is perplexedly silent.

«I would speak... But I would like to be certain that you will not make any mention to Jesus... Swear it. »

«We swear it on the holy Veil. Speak up. »

«And you must not relate to your mother, and least of all to your brothers what I am going to tell you. »

«You can be certain of our silence. »

«And will you say nothing to Mary? In order not to grieve Her. It's your duty to see to the peace of that poor Mother, in silence, as I do. »

«We will not say anything to anybody. We swear it. »

264 10

<sup>10</sup>«Well listen... Jesus no longer confines Himself to approaching Gentiles, publicans and prostitutes, to offending Pharisees and other important people. But He does things that are absolutely absurd... Just imagine that when in Philistia, He made us go about taking with us a black billy-goat. Now He has a Philistine among His disciples. And before that, the boy He picked up? You have no idea what comments were made. And a few days ago He took a Greek girl, a slave, who had run away from her Roman master. And His speeches are contradictory to our well known

wisdom. In short He seems to be mad. And He damages Himself. In Philistia He intruded also into a ceremony of wizards, competing face to face with them. He defeated them, but... scribes and Pharisees hate Him. But what will happen if they happen to hear about such things? You must intervene and stop... »

«That's serious very serious. But how could we know? We are here... And even now, how will we be able to find out? »

«And yet it is your duty to intervene and stop Him. His Mother is a mother, and She is too good. You must not abandon Him thus. For His own sake and for the sake of the world. Also His continuous driving away demons... It is rumoured that He is assisted by Beelzebub. You can imagine whether that can do Him any good. In any case, what kind of a king will He ever become if the crowds laugh at Him just now or are scandalised? »

«But... does He really do such things? » asks Simon incredulously.

«Ask Him yourself. He will tell You that He does. Because He even boasts about it. »

«You should let us know... »

«I certainly will! When I see something new I will send you word. But... please, never say a word to anybody! »

«We swore it. When are you leaving? »

«After the Sabbath. There is no reason why I should stay here any longer. I have done my duty. »

«And we thank you for it. Eh! I said that He had changed. And you, brother... you would not believe me... Can you now see whether I was right? » says Joseph of Alphaeus.

«I can hardly believe it. Judas and James, after all, are not fools. Why have they not told us? If such things are really happening, why have they not taken action? » says Simon of Alphaeus.

«Man, you will not disgrace me by refusing to believe my words! » answers back Judas resentfully.

«No!... but... That's enough. Forgive me if I say: I will believe when I see things myself. »

«All right. You will soon see and then you will have to say to me: "You were right". <sup>11</sup>Well. There is your house. I leave you. <sup>264. 11</sup> God be with you. »

«God be with you, Judas. And... listen. Don't speak to anyone



about that. For our reputation... »

«I will be as silent as a grave. Goodbye. »

And he goes away at a good pace. He enters the house serenely and goes up to the terrace where Mary, with Her hands in her lap, is contemplating the sky crowded with stars. In the light of the little lamp that Judas has lit to climb the steps, tears can be seen shining on Mary's cheeks.

«Why are You weeping, Mother? » asks Judas anxiously.

«Because I think that there are more snares in the world than stars in the sky. Snares for My Jesus... » Judas looks at Her attentively and he seems upset. But She concludes kindly: «But I am comforted by the love of His disciples... Love My Jesus... love Him... Do you wish to stay here, Judas? I am going down to My room. Mary of Clopas has already gone to bed after preparing the leaven for tomorrows

«Yes. I will remain up here. It is lovely here. »

«Peace be with you, Judas. »

«Peace be with You, Mary. »

## 265. Instructions to the twelve apostles who begin their ministry.

28<sup>th</sup> August 1945.

265.1

<sup>1</sup>Jesus is sitting at the table in the house in Capernaum with all His disciples, which means that Judas has joined his companions after fulfilling his task. It is evening. The light of the fading day enters from the door and the wide open windows through which it is possible to see the purple of sunset change into unreal violet-red, the borders of which fray crumpling up into a violet-slate that pales into grey. It puts me in mind of a sheet of paper thrown onto a fire: it lights up and as soon as it stops burning, its edges crumple up and become a leaden bluish shade, which fades into an almost white pearly grey.

«It's warm» states Peter, pointing at a huge cloud which tinges the west with those shades. «Warm. But no rain. That's not a cloud, it's fog. Tonight I am going to sleep in the boat, where it is cooler. »

«No. Tonight we are going to the olive-groves. I must speak to

you. Judas is now back. It is time for Me to speak to you. I know an airy spot, where we shall be comfortable. Get up and let us go. »

«Is it far? » they ask picking up their mantles.

«No. It is very near. Within a stone's throw by sling from the last house. You may leave your mantles. But take tinder and flint so that we can see our way when coming back. »

They come out of the upstairs room and go downstairs bidding good night to the landlord and his wife who are enjoying the cool air on the terrace. Jesus walks resolutely in the opposite direction from the lake and, after crossing the village, He proceeds for about two or three hundred yards into an olive-grove on the first hillock behind the village. He stops on a projection of earth that, because of its position free from obstacles, enjoys all the air possible in that sultry night.

<sup>2</sup>«Let us sit down, and pay attention to Me. The hour of evangelization has come. I am about half way through My public life preparing hearts for My Kingdom. It is now time that My apostles also take part in the preparation of this Kingdom. That is what kings do when they decide to conquer a kingdom. First they make investigations and approach people to find out their reaction and win them to the plan they are pursuing. Later they enlarge their preparatory work by means of reliable messengers sent to the country to be conquered. And they send more and more of them until all the geographical and moral details of the whole country are known. After that the king completes his work by proclaiming himself king of that country and being crowned as such. And much blood is shed to achieve that. Because victories always cost blood... »

265. 2

«We are ready to fight for You and shed our blood» promise the apostles by one consent.

«I will shed no blood but that of the Holy One and of saints. »

«Do You wish to begin Your conquest starting from the Temple, storming it at the hour of the sacrifice?... »

«Let us not stray, My friends. You will be informed of the future in due course. But do not shudder with horror. I assure you that I will not upset the ceremonies by means of a violent irruption. And yet they will be upset and there will be one evening when terror will prevent the ritual prayer. The terror of sinners. But I shall be in peace that evening. In peace with both My spirit

and My body. A total blissful peace... »

Jesus looks at His twelve apostles one by one and it is the same as if He looked at the same page twelve times and read for twelve times the one word written on it: incomprehension. He smiles and continues.

265. 3<sup>3</sup> «So I have decided to send you so that you may penetrate further ahead and more widely than I can do by Myself. But for prudential reasons I will ensure that there is a difference between your way of evangelizing and Mine, because I do not want to put you in too difficult situations, which could be too seriously dangerous for your souls and bodies, and also because I do not wish to jeopardise My own work. You are not as yet perfected to the point of being able to approach anyone without being damaged or without damaging, and least of all are you heroic to the extent of defying the world on behalf of the Idea, facing the revenge of the world. So, when you go about preaching Me, do not go among Gentiles and do not enter the towns of Samaritans, but go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. There is so much to be done amongst them, because I solemnly tell you that the crowds that you think are so numerous around Me, are the hundredth part of those who are still waiting for the Messiah in Israel and they do not know Him, neither do they know that He is living amongst them. Take faith in Me to them and the knowledge of Me. On your way preach saying: "The Kingdom of Heaven is near". Let that be your basic announcement supporting all your preaching... You have heard Me speak so much of the Kingdom! All you need to do is repeat what I told you. But man, to be attracted by and convinced of spiritual truth, needs material kindness, as if he were an eternal boy who will not study a lesson or learn a trade unless he is attracted by a sweet from his mother, or a reward from his school master, or his trade tutor. In order to let you have the means to be believed and sought after, I will grant you the gift of working miracles... »

The apostles jump to their feet, with the exception of James of Alphaeus and John, shouting, protesting, becoming excited, each reacting according to his temperament. Really, the only one strutting about at the idea of working miracles is the Iscariot, who with the foolhardiness of false and selfishly motivated interest exclaims: «It was time that we should do that to have the

least authority over the crowds! »

Jesus looks at him but does not say anything. Peter and the Zealot who were saying: «No, Lord! We are not worthy of so much! That is due to saints», contradict Judas, as the Zealot says: «Why do you take the liberty of reproaching the Master, you silly proud man? » and Peter adds: «The least authority? And what do you want to do more than work miracles? Do you want to become God as well? Have you got the same itch Lucifer had? »

«Silence! » orders Jesus. And He continues: «There is one thing that is even greater than miracles and equally convinces the crowds, but more deeply and durably: a holy life. But you are far from that, and you, Judas, are farther than the rest. But let Me speak because My instruction is a long one.

<sup>265. 4</sup>Go therefore, curing sick people, cleansing lepers, raising bodies and spirits from the dead, because bodies and spirits can be sick, leprous, dead as well. And you are already aware how a miracle is worked: through a life of penance, fervent prayer, sincere desire to glorify the power of God, deep humbleness, living charity, burning faith, and through hope that no kind of difficulty can upset. I solemnly tell you that everything is possible to those who have such virtues. Demons also will flee before the Name of the Lord pronounced by you, if you have within you what I said. That power is given to you by Me and by our Father. No money can buy it. Only our Will grants it, only a just life keeps it. As it is given to you gratuitously, so gratuitously give it to others, to the needy. Woe betide you if you depreciate the gift of God by using it to fatten your purse. It is not your power: it is the power of God. Make use of it, but do not take possession of it, saying: “It is mine”. As it is given to you, so it can be taken away from you. Simon of Jonah a little while ago said to Judas of Simon: “Have you got the same itch as Lucifer had? ” He gave a correct definition. To say: “I do what God does because I am like God” is to imitate Lucifer. And his punishment is well known. Equally known is what happened to the two progenitors who in the earthly paradise ate the forbidden fruit, through instigation of the Envious One, who wanted to imprison more unhappy souls in his Hell, besides the rebellious angels already there, but also through their own itch of perfect pride. The only fruit you are allowed to take from what you do, are the souls whom you will conquer for the

Lord by means of the miracle and who are to be given to the Lord. That is your money. Nothing else. You will enjoy your treasure in the next life.

265.5 <sup>5</sup>Go without riches. Do not take with you gold, or silver, or money in your purses, or a travel bag with two or more tunics or spare shoes, or pilgrim's staff, or weapons. Because for the time being your apostolic visits will be short ones and every Sabbath eve we shall meet and you will be able to change your sweated garments without having to take spare ones with you. No staff is required because it is more pleasant to walk without, and what is useful on hills and plains is different from what is useful in deserts and on high mountains. No weapon is needed. Weapons are useful to men who do not know what is holy poverty or divine forgiveness. You have no treasures to protect and defend from robbers. The only robber you must fear is Satan. And he is defeated by perseverance and prayer, not by swords and daggers. Forgive those who offend you. If anyone should rob you of your mantle, give him also your tunic. If you should remain completely nude because of your mildness and detachment from riches, you will not scandalise the angels of the Lord or the infinite chastity of God, because your charity would clothe your nude body with gold and your mildness would adorn you like a sash, while your forgiveness towards the robber would give you a royal mantle and crown. You would therefore be better dressed than a king: not with corruptible clothes, but with imperishable material.

Do not worry about your food. You will always have what is appropriate for your condition and your ministry, because a worker is always worthy of the food that is offered to him. And if men should not provide for the worker, God will. I have already proved to you that to live and preach it is not necessary to have your stomachs full of food. That is useful to unclean animals whose purpose in life is to grow fat and then be slaughtered to fatten men. But you must fatten your own souls and the souls of other people with the food of wisdom. And Wisdom is revealed to minds not made dull by guzzling and to hearts nourished with supernatural food. You have never been so eloquent as after the retreat on the mountain\*. And then you ate only what was nec-

\* **retreat on the mountain** for apostolic election, in chapters 164-165.

essary to survive. And yet at the end of the retreat you were as strong and cheerful as you have never been before. Is that not true?

<sup>6</sup>Whatever town or place you enter, find out who is deserving of receiving you. Not because you are Simon, or Judas, or Bartholomew, or James, or John, and so on. But because you are the messengers of the Lord. Even if you had been the dregs of society, or murderers, thieves, publicans, but now you were repentant and at My service, you would deserve respect because you are My messengers. I will say even more. I say: Woe betide you if outwardly you look like My messengers, whilst inwardly you are abject servants of Satan. Woe betide you! Hell would be too little compared to what your deceit deserves. But even if you were messengers of the Lord publicly, and at the same time the dregs of society, or publicans, thieves, murderers occultly and people in their hearts suspected or were almost certain of that, you would still be entitled to honour and respect, because you are My messengers. The eye of man must see beyond the means, and see the messenger and the final purpose, that is God and His work beyond the too often faulty means. Only in the case of serious sin, injuring the faith in hearts, I for the time being, My successors in future, will see that the bad limb is cut off. Because it is not lawful that the souls of believers should be lost through a demon priest. It will never be lawful, in order to hide the wounds affecting the apostolic body, to allow gangrenous limbs to survive in it, as their repugnant aspect drives people away and their demoniac stench is poisonous.

So you will find out which is the most righteously living family, where women know how to live in seclusion and morals are chaste. And you will enter that house and live there until you leave the place. Do not imitate drones, which after sucking a flower pass on to a more nourishing one. Whether you arrive among people with a splendid house and rich table, or you happen to go to a humble family, rich only in virtue, stay where you are. Never seek what is "better" for the perishable body. On the contrary, always give it what is worse, keeping all the rights for the spirit. And whenever possible, give your preference to the hospitality of the poor: I tell you because it is better to do so. Do so in order not to mortify them and in memory of Me, as I am

and will remain poor and I boast of being poor, and also because very often the poor are better than the rich. You will always find poor people who are just, but only rarely you will find a rich man without any fault. You have no excuse in saying: "I found goodness only amongst the rich" in order to justify your keen desire for welfare.

When entering a house greet its inhabitants with My greeting, which is the kindest there is. Say: "Peace be with you. Let peace be in this house, or Let peace come to this house". In fact, as messengers of Jesus and of the Gospel, you take peace with you and your going to one place is to make peace come to it. If the house is worthy of it, peace will come and remain in it; if it is not worthy of it, your peace will come back to you. So mind to be peaceful yourselves, in order to have God as your Father. A father always helps. And with the help of God you will do everything and everything well.

It may be, nay it will certainly happen, that a town or house will not receive you or will not listen to your words, but will drive you away or ridicule you or will chase you throwing stones at you as boring prophets. In such cases you must be more than ever peaceful, humble and mild, having acquired such virtues as a habit of life. Otherwise you will be overwhelmed by anger and you will commit sin, scandalizing and increasing the incredulity of those you wish to convert. If instead you peacefully accept the insult of being driven away, derided, chased, you will convert people by means of the most beautiful sermon: the silent sermon of true virtue. One day you will find on your way the enemies of today and they will say to you: "We have been looking for you because your behaviour has convinced us of the Truth that you announce. Please forgive us and accept us as your disciples. Because we did not know who you were, but now we know that you are saints. And if you are saints, you must be the messengers of a saint, and we now believe in Him". But when leaving the town or the house where you were not received, shake the dust off your sandals, so that the pride and harshness of that place may not stick even to your soles. I solemnly tell you: "On Doomsday Sodom and Gomorrah will be dealt with less severely".

265. 7 <sup>7</sup>Now: I am sending you like sheep among wolves. Be, therefore, as cunning as serpents and yet as harmless as doves. Be-

cause you are aware how the world, in which really there are more wolves than sheep, treats Me also, and I am the Christ. I can defend Myself by My power and I will do so until the hour of the temporary triumph of the world comes. But you do not possess that power and you need greater prudence and simplicity. Thus greater wisdom as well, to avoid being scourged and imprisoned for the time being.

In actual fact, notwithstanding your statement that you are willing to shed your blood on My behalf, you are not capable at present of putting up with an ironic or angry glance. But the time will come when you will be as strong as heroes against persecutions, even stronger than heroes and your heroism, which the world cannot conceive or explain, will be called: "madness". No, it will not be madness! It will be the identification, through love, of man with the Man-God, and you will be able to do what I have already done. To understand this heroism it will be necessary to see it, study it and judge it from a heavenly level. Because it is something supernatural that is beyond all the limitations of human nature. Kings, the kings of the spirit will be My heroes, forever kings and heroes...

In those days they will arrest you laying hands on you, they will drag you before law courts, garrison commanders and kings, to Judge and condemn you for the great sin, in the eyes of the world, of being the servants of God, the ministers and guardians of Good, the masters of virtue. And for that same reason you will be scourged and punished in many ways and even killed. And you will give testimony of Me to kings, garrison commanders, nations, confessing with your blood that you love Christ, the True Son of the True God.

When you are in their hands do not worry about what you have to reply and what you have to say. Do not grieve then for anybody, but for the judge and accusers led astray by Satan to the extent of becoming blind to the Truth. You will be given the words to be spoken at the time. Your Father will put them on your lips because it is not you who will be speaking to convert people to your Faith and profess the Truth, but it will be the Spirit of the Father Who will speak in you.

<sup>8</sup>Brother will then betray brother to death, and the father his 265. 8 child, and children will rise against their parents and have them



put to death. Do not be shocked or scandalized! Tell Me: according to you is it a greater crime to kill a father, a son, a brother, or God Himself? »

«God cannot be killed» replies sharply Judas Iscariot.

«That is true. He is an invincible Spirit» confirms Bartholomew. And the others, although they do not speak, are all of the same opinion.

«I am God and I am Flesh» says Jesus calmly.

«No one is thinking of killing You» retorts the Iscariot.

«Please, reply to My questions

«Of course, it is a more serious crime to kill God! »

«Well: God will be killed by man, in the Flesh of the Man-God and in the soul of the murderers of the Man-God. So, as they will go so far as committing that crime, without the murderers being horrified at it, so the crimes of fathers, brothers and children, against children, brothers and fathers will be committed.

265. 9 <sup>9</sup>You will be hated by all men on account of My Name. But he who stands firm until the end will be saved. And when they persecute you in one town, take refuge in the next one. Not out of cowardice, but to give time to the new-born Church of Christ to reach the age, not of a weak incapable unweaned child, but an older age in which it will be able to face life and death without being afraid of Death. Let them flee who are advised by the Spirit to flee. As I fled when a child. Truly, all the vicissitudes of earthly life will be repeated in My Church. All of them. From the mystery of its formation to the humbleness of the early times, to the perturbation and snares brought about by cruel people, to the necessity of fleeing to continue to live, from poverty and unremitting work, to many more events that I am living now, that I will suffer later, before reaching My eternal triumph. On the other hand let those remain who are advised by the Spirit to remain. Because even if they are killed they will live and be useful to the Church. Because what the Spirit of God advises, is always good.

265. 10 <sup>10</sup>I solemnly tell you that you and your successors will not have covered all the roads and all the towns in Israel before the Son of Man comes. Because on account of its dreadful sin Israel will be scattered like chaff by a whirlwind, and will be spread all over the earth and centuries and millennia will go by before it is gathered again on the threshing-floor of Araunah the Je-

busite\*. Every time Israel will try to gather together, before the predetermined hour, it will be caught once again in the whirlwind and scattered, because Israel will have to weep for its sin for as many centuries as the drops of blood that will flow from the veins of the Lamb of God sacrificed for the sins of the world. And My Church, which will be struck by Israel in Me and in My apostles and disciples, will have to open its motherly arms and endeavour to gather Israel under its mantle, as a brooding hen does with its stray chickens. When the whole of Israel will be under the mantle of the church of Christ, then I will come. <sup>285</sup>11 But that applies to the future. Let us talk of the present.

Remember that the disciple is not superior to his Teacher, nor the slave to his Master. It is enough for the disciple to be like his Teacher, which is already an undeserved honour; and for a slave to be like his Master, and it is supernatural bounty to grant you that. If they have called the Landlord Beelzebub, what will they not say of the household? And will the slaves be able to rebel, if the Landlord does not rebel, does not hate or curse, but calm in his justice he continues to work, postponing judgement to another moment, when he sees them obstinate in Evil, after he has tried everything to persuade them? No. The slaves will not be able to do what the Master does not do, but they can imitate Him, considering that they are sinners, whereas He is without sin. So, be not afraid of those who will call you “demons”. The truth will be known one day and then it will be clear who was the “demon”, whether it was you or they.

There is nothing hidden that is not to be revealed, and nothing secret that is not to be known. What I now say to you in the dark and secretly, because the world is not worthy of knowing all the words of the Word, it is not yet worthy of that and it is not yet time to tell also those who are unworthy, when the time comes when everything is to be known, tell in daylight, proclaim from the house tops what I now whisper more to your souls than to your ears. Because the world then will have been baptised in Blood and there will be such a banner against Satan that the world, if it wishes so, will be able to understand the secrets of God, while Satan will not be able to injure anyone but those who

\* **threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite** remembers the end of a flight desired by the Lord, in *2 Samuel 24-16-25; 1 Chronicles 21, 15-30*.

wish to be bitten by him and prefer his bite to My kiss. But most of the world will not wish to understand. Only a minority will be willing to know everything in order to follow all My Doctrine. It does not matter. As it is not possible to separate that minority from the unjust mass, preach My Doctrine as well from house tops, preach it from mountain tops, on the boundless seas, in the bowels of the earth. Even if men will not listen to it, birds and winds, fish and waves will pick up the divine words and the bowels of the earth will keep their echo to repeat it to underground springs, minerals and metals, and they will all rejoice over them, because they have been created by God as well to be a stool for My feet and joy to My heart.

Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul, fear him rather who can lose your soul and unite it on Dooms day to your body raised from death, to throw both into the fire of Hell. Be not afraid. Are two sparrows not sold for a penny? And yet, if your Father does not allow it, not one of them will fall to the ground notwithstanding all the snares of man. So be not afraid. The Father knows you. Every hair on your heads is known to Him. And you are worth more than many sparrows! And I tell you that if anyone acknowledges Me in the presence of men, I will acknowledge him in the presence of My Father Who is in Heaven. But the one who disowns Me in the presence of men, I will disown in the presence of My Father. To acknowledge means to follow and practice; to disown means to abandon My way out of cowardice, or treble concupiscence, or petty calculation, or attachment to a relative who opposes Me. Because that will happen.

265.12

<sup>12</sup>Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth and for the earth. My Peace is above the selfish peace treaties for every day's wrangle. It is not peace I have come to bring, but a sword. A sharp sword to cut the lianas detaining people in mud and open the way to supernatural flights. I have come to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. Because I am He Who reigns and has every right on His subjects. Because no one is greater than I am with regards to rights on affections. Because all love is centralised in Me and becomes thus sublime: I am Father, Mother, Husband, Brother Friend and I love you as such and as such I am to be loved. And when I say; "I want", no tie can

resist and that soul is Mine. I created it with the Father, I save it by Myself, so I am entitled to have it.

The real enemies of man are men, besides demons; and the enemies of the new man, of the Christian, will be his relatives at home, with their complaints, their threats or their entreaties. But from now on he who prefers his father and mother to Me, is not worthy of Me; he who prefers his son or daughter to Me, is not worthy of Me. He who does not take his cross daily, complex as it is, made of resignation, renunciation, obedience, heroism, sorrow, illness, mourning, made of anything that reveals the will of God or a test for man, and does not follow with it in My footsteps, is not worthy of Me. Anyone who appraises earthly life more than the spiritual one, will lose true Life. Anyone who loses his earthly life for My sake, will find an eternal blissful one.

<sup>13</sup>Anyone who receives you, receives Me. He who receives Me receives Him Who sent Me. Anyone who receives a prophet as a prophet, will receive a reward proportionate to the charity offered to the prophet, he who receives a just man because he is just, will receive a prize proportionate to the just man. The reason is that he who acknowledges a prophet as such, must be a prophet himself, that is, very holy because he is held in the arms of the Spirit of God; and who will acknowledge a just man as such proves that he is just as well, because like souls know one another. Thus, each will be given a reward according to justice. 265. 13

And he who has given a glass of pure water to one of My servants, even if he were the least one - and they are servants of Jesus, all those who preach Him through their holy lives, and may be kings or beggars, wise men or people who know nothing, old people and babies, because all ages and all classes can be My disciples - he who has given a disciple of Mine even a glass of water in My name and because he is My disciple, I solemnly tell you that he will not go without a reward.

<sup>14</sup>I have finished. Now let us pray and go home. You will leave at dawn as follows: Simon of Jonah with John, Simon Zealot with Judas Iscariot, Andrew with Matthew, James of Alphaeus with Thomas, Philip with James of Zebedee, My brother Judas with Bartholomew. That is for this week. I will let you have new instructions later. Let us pray. » 265. 14

And they pray in loud voices...

266. The disciples of the Baptist want to make sure that Jesus is the Messiah. Proof of the Precursor and inventive against the non repentant cities.

29<sup>th</sup> August 1945.

266 1 <sup>1</sup>Jesus is alone with Matthew, who, having hurt his foot, has not been able to go and preach with the others. Invalids and people anxious to hear the doctrine of the Gospel have crowded the terrace and the free area of the kitchen garden, to hear Jesus and receive assistance.

266 2 <sup>2</sup>Jesus stops speaking by saying: «We have meditated together on Solomon's great sentence: "The greatest strength lies in the abundance of justice" and I now exhort you to have such abundance, because it is money to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Be with My peace and may God be with you. » He then turns to the poor and the sick - in many cases the same person is both - and He kindly listens to what they tell Him, He assists with money, advises with words, cures them by imposing His hands and by His words. Matthew, who is beside Him, sees to the alms in money.

Jesus is attentively listening to a poor widow who weeping informs Him of the sudden death of her husband, a carpenter, at his work bench, only a few days before: «I ran here looking for You, and all the relatives of my dead husband accused me of being unbecoming and hard-hearted and they now curse me. But I came because I know that You can raise people from death and I also know that if I had found You, my husband would have risen again. But You were not here... He has now been buried for two weeks... and I am here with five children... Our relatives hate me and do not help me. I have some olive-tree and vines. They are only a few, but they would give me bread for the winter months, if I could only keep them until harvest time. But I have no money, because my husband was ill for some time and worked very little and he ate and drank even too much to support himself. He used to say that wine did him good... but it brought about double trouble as it killed him and used up all our savings, which were already scanty because of his work. He was just finishing a cart and a chest and he had orders for two beds, some tables and shelves. But now... They are not finished and my boy is not yet eight years old. I shall lose the money... I shall have to sell the

tools and the wood. I cannot sell the cart and the chest as such, although they are almost finished, and I shall have to give them as firewood. And the money will not be enough, because I, my old mother, who is also ill, and five children are seven all together... I will sell the vineyard and the olive-trees... But You know what the world is like... They fleece you when they know that you are in need. Tell me, what shall I do? I wanted to keep the bench and tools for my son, who is already capable of doing some work with wood... and I wanted to keep the land to live on and as a dowry for my daughters... »

Jesus is listening to all that when the confusion of the crowd warns Him that something is happening. He turns around and sees three men who are elbowing their way through the crowd. He turns around to the widow again to ask her: «Where do you live? »

«At Korazim, near the road to the Warm fountain. A low house between two fig trees. »

«Very well. I will come and finish the cart and the chest and you will sell them to those who ordered them. Wait for Me tomorrow at dawn. »

«What? You are going to work for me! » the woman is choking with amazement.

«I will resume My work and bring you peace. And in the meantime I will give a lesson on charity to the heartless people of Korazim. »

«Yes! They have no hearts! If only old Isaac were there! He would not have let me die of starvation. But he has gone back to Abraham... »

«Do not weep. Do not worry. Here is what you need for today. I will come tomorrow. Go in peace. »

The woman stoops to kiss His tunic and she is somewhat relieved when she goes away.

<sup>3</sup>«Three times holy Master, may I greet You? » asks one of the three men who have just arrived and have stopped respectfully behind Jesus, waiting for Him to dismiss the woman, and have thus heard Jesus' promise. The man who has greeted Jesus is Manaen.

Jesus turns around and smiling says: «Peace to you, Manaen! So you remember Me? »

266 3

«Always, Master. And I had planned to come to see You in Lazarus' house or at the Garden of Gethsemane and stay with You. But the Baptist was captured before Passover. He was recaptured by treachery and I was afraid that Herodias might order the holy man to be killed during the absence of Herod, who had come to Jerusalem for Passover. She refused to go to Zion for the Festivity saying that she was not well. It is true, she was ill... of hatred and lust... I was at Machaerus to control the situation and check the wicked woman who is capable of killing with her own hand... And she does not do so because she is afraid of losing Herod's favour who... either because he is afraid or he is convinced, defends John, confining his action to keeping him in prison. Herodias has now escaped from the oppressing heat at Machaerus and she has gone to a castle of her own property. So I came with these friends of mine and disciples of John. He sent them that they may ask You some questions. And I joined them. »

266 4

4When the crowd heard the man speak of Herod and they understand who is speaking, they press curiously around the little group of Jesus and the three men.

«What did you want to ask Me? » asks Jesus after exchanging greetings with the two austere individuals.

«You had better speak, Manaen, since you know everything and you are more friendly» says one of the two.

«Well, Master. You must be indulgent if out of excess of love these disciples look suspiciously at Him Whom they believe to be the antagonist or the supplanter of their master. Your disciples do so as well as John's. It is an understandable jealousy that proves all the love of the disciples for their masters... I am... impartial, and these who are with me can confirm it, because I know You and John and I love you both with justice, so much so that, although I love You for what You are, I preferred to sacrifice myself and stay with John, because I respect him as well for what he is, and at the present moment, because he is in greater danger than You are. Now, because of their love, which the Pharisees are instigating with their hatred, they have come to doubt that You are the Messiah. And they told John thinking that they would fill him with joy by saying: "As far as we are concerned you are the Messiah. There cannot be anyone holier than you are". But John reproached them calling them first of all

blasphemers, and then, after rebuking them, he more kindly explained the various facts that prove that You are the true Messiah. Finally, when he realised that they were still not convinced, he took two of them, these ones here, and said: "Go to Him and say to Him in my name: Are You the One Who is to come, or shall we wait for another one? ". He did not send the shepherd disciples, because they believe and it would have been of no avail to send them. But he chose amongst those who are doubtful to let them approach You, so that their word may dispel the doubts' of their companions. I brought them here so that I could see You as well. That is all. I beg You to dispel their doubt. »

<sup>5</sup>«But do not think that we are hostile to You, Master! Manaen's words might make You think so. We... We have known the Baptist for years and we have always seen him to be holy, penitent, inspired. You... we know You only through the words of other people. And You know what the words of man are worth... They build up and destroy fame and praises in the contrast between those who exalt and those who demolish, as a cloud is formed and dissolved by contrasting winds. » 266 5

«I know. I read in your souls and your eyes can read the truth in what surrounds you, just as your ears heard My conversation with the widow. That should be enough to convince you. But I say to you: look at those who are around Me. There are no rich, or jolly or scandalous people here; but only poor, sick, honest Israelites who are anxious to know the Word of God. Nothing else. This man, that one, this woman, and that little girl, that old man, were ill when they came here, and now they are sound and healthy. Ask them and they will tell you what was wrong with them, how I cured them and how they are feeling now. Do so. And in the meantime I will speak to Manaen» and Jesus is about to withdraw.

«No, Master. We do not doubt Your words. Just give us a reply to take back to John, that he may know that we came here, and on the strength of it he may convince our companions. »

«Go and report this to John: "The deaf hear; this girl was deaf and dumb. The dumb speak; and that man was dumb since his birth. The blind see". <sup>6</sup>Man, come here. Tell these men what was wrong with you» says Jesus taking a miraculously cured man by the arm. 266 6



The man says: «I am a mason and a pail full of quicklime fell on my face. It burnt my eyes. I was in the dark four years. The Messiah wetted my dry eyes with His saliva and they have become fresher than when I was twenty years old. May He be blessed for it. »

Jesus resumes: «And with the blind, the deaf, the dumb who have been cured, the lame walk straight, the cripple run. Over there is that old man, a short while ago he was contracted, now he is as straight as a palm tree in the desert, and as agile as a gazelle. The most serious diseases are cured. Woman, what was the matter with you? »

«I had trouble with my breast for giving too much milk to voracious mouths. And my illness ate not only into my breast but also into my life. Look now» and opening her dress she shows her wholesome breasts and adds: «They were one big sore, as you can see from my tunic which is still soaked with pus. I am now going home to put on a clean dress and I feel strong and am happy. Whilst only yesterday I was dying and I was brought here by compassionate friends, and I was so unhappy... because of my children who were about to be left motherless. Eternal praise to the Saviour! »

«Do you hear? And you can ask the head of the synagogue of this town with regard to the resurrection of his daughter, and on your way back to Jericho, go to Naim, and ask for the young man who rose again in the presence of the whole town when they were going to put him into his serious. You will thus be able to report that dead people rise again from the dead. You will be able to find out in many places in Israel that a large number of lepers have been cured, but if you wish to go to Sicaminon you will find many among the disciples, if you look for them. Tell John, therefore, that lepers are cleansed. And tell him, as you can see, that the Gospel is announced to the poor. And blessed are those who

266.7 will not be scandalised in Me. <sup>7</sup>Tell John that. And tell him that I bless him with all My love. »

«Thank You, Master. Bless us as well, before our departures

«You cannot leave in this warm hour. Stay here, therefore, as My guests, until evening. You will live for one day the life of this Master Who is not John, but loves John because He knows who he is. Come into the house. It is cool and it will restore you.

Goodbye, My listeners. Peace be with you» and after dismissing the crowd He enters the house with the three guests...

<sup>8</sup>... What they have said to one another during those sweltering hours I do not know. What I now see is the preparation for the departure to Jericho of the two disciples. Manaen is apparently staying, because they have not brought his horse with the two strong donkeys to the opening in the wall of the yard. The two messengers of John, after bowing several times to the Master and Manaen, mount their donkeys and look back saluting until they disappear round a corner. 266.8

Many people of Capernaum have gathered together to see the departure because the news of the visit of John's disciples and of Jesus' reply to them had spread through the village and I think it reached nearby towns as well. I see people from Bethsaida and Korazim, who introduced themselves to John's messengers, asking after him and to be remembered to him - they are perhaps ex-disciples of the Baptist - who are now chatting together with the people of Capernaum, making their comments. Jesus is about to enter the house while speaking to Manaen who is beside Him. But people press around Him, anxious to see Herod's foster-brother and his respectful manners to Jesus, and to speak to Jesus at the same time.

<sup>9</sup>There is also Jairus, the head of the synagogue. But, thanks <sup>266 9</sup> be to God, there are no Pharisees. And it is Jairus who remarks: «John will be glad! You have sent him not only an exhaustive answer, but, by keeping them here, You have also been able to teach them and show them a miracle. »

«And it was not a little one, either! » exclaims a man.

«I deliberately brought my little daughter here today, that they might see her. She has never been so well and it is a great joy for her to come to the Master. And did you hear her reply? "I do not remember what death is. But I remember that an angel called me and he took me through a brighter and brighter light at the end of which there was Jesus. And I do not see him now as I saw Him then with my soul that was coming back to me. You and I now see the Man. But my soul saw the God Who is closed in the Man". And how good she has become since then! She was good, But now she is a real angel. Ah! they can say what they like, but as far as I am concerned, no one is holy but You! »

«But John is holy, too» says a man of Bethsaida.

«Yes. But he is too severe. »

«Not more with others than he is with himself. »

«But he does not work miracles and they say that he fasts to be like a magician. »

«And yet he is a saint» and the petty quarrel spreads among the crowd.

266 10 <sup>10</sup>Jesus raises His hand stretching it out in His usual gesture asking for silence and attention when He wants to speak. The crowd become silent at once.

Jesus says: «John is holy and great. Do not consider his way of behaving or the lack of miracles. I solemnly tell you: “He is a great one in the Kingdom of God”. He will appear there in all his grandeur.

Many complain that he was and still is so severe as to appear rude. I tell you solemnly that he has worked like a giant to prepare the ways of the Lord. And he who works like that has no time for softness. Did he not repeat, when he was along the Jordan, the words\* of Isaiah, by which he and the Messiah are prophesied: “Let every valley be filled in, every mountain and hill be laid low, let every cliff become a plain, and the ridges a valley” in order to prepare the ways to the Lord and King? He really did more than the whole of Israel to prepare My way! And he who has to lay mountains low and fill in valleys and straighten roads and make ridges become plains can but work rudely, because he was the Precursor and he preceded Me by only a few months and everything was to be done before the Sun was high on the day of Redemption. And this is the time, the Sun is rising to shine on Zion and thence on the whole world. John has prepared the way as he had to do.

What did you go to see in the wilderness? A reed swaying in every direction in the breeze? But what did you go to see? A man clad in fine soft clothes? But those live in the palaces of kings, wearing fine clothes and respected by many servants and courtiers, and they are courtiers themselves of a poor man. There is one here. Ask him whether he is not disgusted with the life at Court and whether he admires the solitary rugged rock that is struck

\* **words**, which are in: *Isaiah 40, 4.*

in vain by thunderbolts and scourged by hailstones, and against which silly winds struggle endeavouring to demolish it, while it stands firm, thrusting its whole being towards the sky, with its top proclaiming the joy of altitude, straight as it is and sharp like a rising flame. That is John. That is how Manaen sees him, because he has understood the truth of life and death and he can see grandeur where it really is, even if it be hidden under a wild appearance.

And what did you see in John when you went to see him? A prophet? A saint? I will tell you: He is more than a prophet. He is more than many saints, because he is the one of whom it is written\*: “Look, I am going to send my angel to prepare Your way before You”. <sup>11</sup> *Angel*. Consider this. You know that the angels are pure spirits created by God to His spiritual likeness and placed as a link between man, the perfection of the visible and material creation, and God, the Perfection of Heaven and Earth, Creator of the spiritual Kingdom and of the animal kingdom. Even in the holiest man there is always flesh and blood forming an abyss between him and God. And the abyss subsides under the weight of sin that weighs down also what is spiritual in man. So God created the angels, creatures reaching the summit of the creation scale, just as minerals lie at its base, minerals being the dust forming the earth and inorganic materials in general. They are clear mirrors of the Thought of God, willing flames operating out of love, ready to understand, quick in acting, free in willing as we are, but their entirely holy will ignores the rebellion and incentive of sin. That is what the angels adoring God are, His messengers to men, our protectors, who grant us the Light that shines on them and the Fire that they gather worshipping. 266 11

John is called “angel” by the prophetic word. And I say to you: “Of all the children born of women, a greater one than John the Baptist has never been seen”. Yet the least in the Kingdom of Heaven will be greater than John-man. Because one of the Kingdom of Heaven is a son of God and not of woman. Endeavour therefore to become citizens of the Kingdom.

<sup>12</sup>What are you asking one another? » 266 12

\* it is written, in: *Malachi 3 1*.

«We were saying: “But will John be in the Kingdom? And how will he be there?”»

«He is already in the Kingdom in his spirit and he will be there after his death as one of the most splendid suns of the eternal Jerusalem. And that because of the Grace that is in him without any flaw and through his own will. Because he was and is violent also against himself for a holy purpose. From the Baptist onwards the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to those who are capable of conquering it through strength opposed to Evil, and the violent will conquer it. Because now it is known what is to be done and everything has been given for such conquest. It is no longer the time when the Law and the Prophets only spoke. They spoke down to the time of John. Now the Word of God speaks and He does not hide an iota of what is to be known for this conquest. Thus, if you believe in Me you must see him as the Elijah who is to come\*. If anyone has ears to hear, let him listen. What description can I find for this generation? It is like children shouting to their companions as they sit in the market place: “We have played the pipes for you and you would not dance, we sang dirges and you would not weep”. For John came and he neither ate nor drank and this generation says: “He can do that because the demon assists him”. The Son of man came, eating and drinking and they say: “Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of publicans and sinners”. Thus her children do justice to Wisdom!

266 13 <sup>13</sup>I tell you solemnly that only children are capable of discerning the truth, because there is no malice in them. »

«You are right, Master» says the head of the synagogue. «That is why my daughter, who is still without malice, can see You as we are not able to see You. And yet this town and the neighbouring ones are overflowing with Your power, wisdom and kindness, and, I must admit it, they are making progress only in wickedness towards You. They will not mend their ways. And the good You do them ferments into hatred against You. »

«What are you saying, Jairus? You are calumniating us. We are here because we are faithful to the Christ» says one from Bethsaida.

\* the Elijah who is to come, as is said in *Malachi 3, 23*. John the Baptist is compared with Elijah in *St. 5* (“He is equal to Elijah in his mission..”) and in the note in *349, 8*.

«Yes. We are. But how many are we? Less than one hundred out of three towns that ought to be at Jesus' feet. Of those who are absent, I am talking of the men, half are hostile, a quarter are indifferent, I will grant that the rest cannot come. Is that not a sin in the eyes of God? And will such hatred and obstinacy in evil not be punished? Speak, Master, because You know, and if You are silent it is out of kindness, not because You do not know. You are patient, and that is mistaken for ignorance and weakness. Speak, therefore and may Your words stir at least those who are indifferent, as the wicked will not repent, but they become more and more wicked. »

«Yes, it is a sin. And it will be punished. *Because the gift of God must never be despised or used to do wrong.* Woe betide you, Korazim, woe betide you, Bethsaida, who misuse the gifts of God. If the miracles worked in you had taken place in Tyre and Sidon, their inhabitants would have done penance and come to Me a long time ago wearing sackcloths and sprinkled with ashes. I therefore say that Tyre and Sidon will be dealt with more mercifully than you will on Doomsday. And you, Capernaum, do you think that you will be exalted to Heaven only because you gave Me hospitality? You will descend to hell. Because if the miracles I gave you had been worked in Sodom, it would still be flourishing, as it would have believed in Me and turned. Therefore greater mercifulness will be shown to Sodom on the Day of Judgment, because they did not know the Saviour and His word, and thus their sin is not so serious, than will be shown to you as you knew the Messiah and heard His word but you did not mend your ways. But, since God is just, those of Capernaum, Bethsaida and Korazim who believed and are becoming holy obeying My word, will be treated with great mercifulness. Because it is not fair for the just to be involved in the ruin of sinners. <sup>14</sup>With regard to your daughter, Jairus, and yours, Simon, and your boy Zacharias, and your grandchildren, Benjamin, I tell you that they already see God, because they are without malice. And you can see how their faith is pure and active, joined to celestial wisdom and charitable yearning, which adults do not possess. »

And Jesus, looking at the sky, which is becoming dark at dusk, exclaims: «I thank You, Father of Heaven and Earth, because You have concealed these things from wise and learned

people and You have disclosed them to the humble. Because that is what pleases You. Everything has been trusted to Me by My Father, and nobody knows Him but the Son and those to whom the Son has revealed it. And I have revealed it to the little ones, to the humble, the pure, because God gives Himself to them, and the truth descends like seed on free soil and the Father pours His light on it that it may take root and grow. Truly, the Father prepares these souls of children by age or children by will, that they may know the truth and I may rejoice in their faith. »

267. In Korazim Jesus works as a carpenter for a widow.

31<sup>st</sup> August 1945.

267.1 <sup>1</sup>Jesus is working diligently in a carpenter's workshop. He is finishing a wheel. A delicate sad child helps Him handing this or that tool to Him. Manaen, although an idle witness, admires Him sitting on a bench near a wall.

Jesus has taken off His beautiful linen tunic and has put on a dark one, which is obviously not His own as it reaches only half way down His shins. It is an overall, clean although patched, which probably belonged to the deceased carpenter.

Jesus encourages the boy with smiles and kind words, teaching him what he must do to prepare the glue properly and polish the sides of the chest.

«It did not take You long to finish it, Master» says Manaen standing up and running a finger on the mouldings of the finished chest that the boy is polishing with a liquid.

«It was almost finished!... »

«I wish I had this work of Yours. But the buyer has already come and he seems to have acquired some rights... You have disappointed him. He was hoping to be able to take everything to make up for the little money he had lent. Now he has to take his articles and nothing else. If he were one who believed in You... they would be of infinite value to him. But did You hear?... »

267.2 «Leave him. <sup>2</sup>On the other hand there is some wood here, and the woman will be happy to make use of it and have some profit. Give an order for a chest and I will make it for you... »

«Really, Master? Do you intend to go on working? »

«Until there is no more wood left. I am a conscientious worker» He says smiling more frankly.

«A chest made by You! Oh! What a relic! But what shall I put in it? »

«Anything you like, Manaen. It will only be a chest. »

«But made by You! »

«So? The Father also made man, He made all men. And what did man put in himself, what do men put in themselves? » Jesus speaks while working, moving about looking for the necessary tools, tightening vices, drilling, planing, turning, according to what is needed.

«We have put sins in ourselves. That's true. »

«See! And you may rest assured that man created by God is worth much more than a chest made by Me. Never confuse objects and actions. Of My chest just make a relic for your soul. »

«That is? »

«Give your spirit the teaching you get from what I do. »

«Your charity, humbleness, activity, then... These virtues, is that right? »

«Yes. And do likewise yourself in future. »

«Yes, Master. But will You make me a chest? »

«Yes, I will. But since you still consider it a relic, I will make you pay for it as such. Thus they will be able to say that at least once I have been greedy for money... But you know for whom the money is... For these little orphans... »

«Ask me whatever You want. I will give it to You. At least it will justify my idling while You, the Son of God, are workings

<sup>3</sup>«Agreed: "With sweat on your brow, you shall eat your <sup>267. 3</sup> bread". »

«But that was said for the guilty man. Not for You! »

«Oh! One day I shall be the Guilty One and I shall have on Me all the sins of the world. I will take them away with Me, on My first departure. »

«And do You think that the world will not sin anymore? »

«It should not. But it will always sin. That is why the burden I shall have on Me will be such as to break My heart. Because I will have to bear the sins committed from the time of Adam down to that hour, and those from that hour until the end of the world. I will expiate everything on behalf of man. »



«And yet man will not understand You and will not love. You... Do You think that Korazim will turn to You because of this holy silent lesson You are giving by this work You are doing to help a family? »

«No, they will not. They will say: "He preferred to work to kill the time and keep the money for Himself". I had no more money. I had given it all. I always give everything I have, to the last little coin, and I have worked to give the money away. »

«And what about food for Yourself and Matthew? »

«God would have provided it. »

«But You gave us to eat. »

«Of course. »

«How did You do that? »

«Ask the landlord. »

«I will, as soon as we go back to Capernaum. »

Jesus smiles mildly into His fair beard.

267.4 <sup>4</sup>In the silence that follows one can hear only the squeaking of the vice tightened on two pieces of a wheel.

Then Manaen asks: «What are You thinking of doing before the Sabbath? »

«I will go to Capernaum and wait for the apostles. We decided to meet every Sabbath eve and spend the Sabbath all together. Then I will give them instructions, and if Matthew is well there will be six couples going out to evangelize. If not... Do you wish to go with them? »

«I would rather stay with You, Master... But may I give You a piece of advice? »

«Tell Me. I will accept it if it is just. »

«Never be all by Yourself. You have many enemies, Master. »

«I know. But do you think that the apostles would be of much help, in case of danger? »

«They love You, I think. »

«Of course. But that would not help. If My enemies are thinking of capturing Me, they would come with greater forces than the apostles'. »

«It does not matter. Do not be alone. »

«In two weeks' time many disciples will join Me. I am going to prepare them to send them to evangelize as well. I will no longer be alone. Do not worry. »

While they are talking thus, many curious people of Korazim come to eye them and then go away without speaking.

«They are astonished seeing You work. »

«Yes. But they are not so humble as to say: “That is how He teaches us”. The best ones I had here are with the disciples, with the exception of an old man who died. It does not matter. A lesson is always a lesson. »

«What will the apostles say when they know you have been working? »

«They are eleven, because Matthew has already said what he thinks. There will be eleven different opinions. And most of them will oppose Me. But it will help Me to teach them. »

«Will You let me attend the lesson? »

«If you wish to stay... »

«But I am a disciple, they are apostles. »

«What is good for apostles will be good also for a disciple. »

«They may resent being reminded of what justice is, in my presences

«It will do their humbleness good. Stay, Manaen. I keep you willingly with Me. »

«And I remain willing with You. »

<sup>5</sup>The woman shows herself and says: «Your meal is ready, Master. But You are working too much... » 267.5

«I am earning My bread, woman. And... Here is another customer. He wants a chest as well. And he will pay a good price for it. The place where you keep the wood will be empty» says Jesus taking off the worn out apron He had on, and going out of the room to wash Himself in a basin the woman brought Him into the kitchen garden.

And with one of the uncertain smiles that reappear after a long period of deep sorrow, she says: «The place for the wood is empty, the house full of Your presence and my heart in peace. I am no longer afraid of tomorrow, Master. And You... be not afraid that we may ever forget You. »

They enter the kitchen and it all ends.

268. The lesson on charity with the parables  
of the stones. Jesus' yoke is light.

1<sup>st</sup> September 1945.

268 1

<sup>1</sup>Jesus with Manaen beside Him comes out of the widow's house saying: «Peace to you and to your family. We will meet again after the Sabbath. Goodbye, little Joseph. You can play and rest tomorrow, and then you will help Me again. Why are you weeping? »

«I am afraid that You will not come back again... »

«I always speak the truth. But are you so sorry that I am going away? »

The boy nods assent.

Jesus caresses him saying: «A day will soon pass. You will be with your mother and brothers tomorrow. And I will be with My apostles and I will be speaking to them. During the past few days I spoke to you to teach you how to work, I am now going to them to teach them how to preach and to be good. You would not enjoy yourself with Me, the only boy among so many men. »

«Oh! I would enjoy myself because I would be with You. »

«I see, woman! Your son is like many, and they are the best. He does not want to leave Me. Can you trust him with Me until the day after tomorrow? »

«Oh! Lord! I would give You them all! They are as safe with You as they would be in Heaven... And this boy, who used to stay with his father more than the rest of them, has suffered too much. He was with his father at the moment... See?... He does nothing but weep and pine. Don't weep, son. Ask the Lord if what I say is true. Master, to comfort him I always say to him that his father is not lost, but has only gone far away from us temporarily. »

«Which is the truth. It is exactly as your mother says, little Josephs

«But I'll not be able to find him again until I die. And I am only a boy. If I am to become as old as Isaac, how long will I have to wait? »

«Poor boy! But time flies. »

«No, Lord. My father has been dead three weeks, and it seems such a long time to me... I cannot go on without him... » and he weeps silently but most pitifully.

«See? He is always like that. Particularly when he is not busy with something that interests him. The Sabbath is a torture. I am afraid he will die... »

«No. I have another boy who is orphan of father and mother. He was emaciated and sad. Now, staying with a good woman at Bethsaida and being sure that he is not separated from his parents, he has flourished again both in his body and soul. The same will happen to your son, both because of what I will tell him, and because time is a great healer, and also because he will calm down, too, when he sees that you are no longer worried about your daily bread. <sup>2</sup>Goodbye, woman. The sun is setting and I must go. Come, Joseph. Say goodbye to your mother, your little brothers and then run to catch up with Me. » 268. 2

And Jesus goes away.

«And what will You tell the apostles now? »

«That I have an old disciple and a new one. »

They walk through Korazim that is becoming animated with people.

A group of men stops Jesus: «Are You going away? Are You not staying for the Sabbath? »

«No. I am going to Capernaum. »

«You have not spoken one word during the whole week. Are we not worthy of Your word? »

«Have I not given you for six days the best word? »

«When? To whom? »

«To everybody. From the carpenter's bench. For days I have been preaching that our neighbour is to be loved and helped in every possible way, particularly when our neighbour is weak, as in the case of widows and orphans. Goodbye, people of Korazim. Ponder on this lesson of Mine on the Sabbath. » And Jesus sets out again, leaving the citizens perplexed. But the boy, who has reached Jesus running, arouses the curiosity of the people who stop the Master again asking: «Are You taking away the widow's son? Why? »

«To teach him to believe that God is a Father and that in God he will find his lost father. And also that there might be one here who believes, in the place of old Isaac. »

«There are three men from Korazim with Your disciples. »

«With My disciples. Not here. This one will be here. Good-

bye. » And with the child between Him and Manaen He walks fast through the country towards Capernaum, talking to Manaen.

268 3

<sup>3</sup>They reach Capernaum after the apostles had arrived. They are sitting on the terrace in the shade of the pergola, around Matthew, whose wound is not yet healed, informing him of their feats. They turn round at the light shuffling of sandals on the little staircase and they see Jesus' fair head emerge more and more from the little wall of the terrace. They rush towards Him, Who is smiling... and they are dumbfounded seeing a poor boy behind Jesus. Manaen climbs the steps in his pompous pure white linen tunic, which is made even more beautiful by a precious belt, by the bright red dyed linen tunic, which is so shiny as to seem silk, hanging from his shoulders like a train, and by his byssus head-dress fastened by a thin gold diadem, an engraved thin plate, which divides his wide forehead in two halves and gives him almost the air of an Egyptian king. His presence prevents an avalanche of questions which, however, are clearly expressed by the apostles' eyes. After greeting one another, while sitting near Jesus, the apostles ask: «And who is this one?» pointing at the boy. This is My last conquest. Little Joseph, a carpenter like the great Joseph, who was My father. And thus most dear to Me, as I am to him. Is that right, little boy? Come here that I may introduce you to these friends of Mine of whom you have heard Me speak so much. This is Simon Peter: the kindest man to children there is. And this is John: a big boy who will speak to you of God also when playing. And this is James his brother, serious and good like an elder brother. And this is Andrew, Simon's brother: you will get along well at once with him, because he is as meek as a lamb. And this is Simon the Zealot: he loves fatherless children so much that I think he would go round the whole world looking for them, if he were not with Me. Then here is Judas of Simon and with him there is Philip of Bethsaida and Nathanael. See how they look at you? They have children as well and they love children. And there are My brothers James and Judas. They love everything I love and so they will love you. Now let us go to Matthew, who is suffering agonies with his foot, and yet he is not angry with the boy who playing recklessly hit him with a sharp flint stone. Is that right, Matthew?»

«Oh! no, Master. Is he the widow's son? »

«Yes, he is. He is very clever, but he has become very sad. »

«Oh! poor boy! I will get you to call little James and you will play with him» and Matthew caresses him drawing him close to himself with one hand.

Jesus ends the introductions with Thomas, who, practical as he is, completes it by offering the boy a bunch of grapes he has picked off the pergola.

«Now you are friends» concludes Jesus, sitting down again while the child eats his grapes replying to Matthew who keeps him close to himself.

<sup>4</sup>«But where have You been all alone for a whole week? »

268. 4

«At Korazim, Simon of Jonah. »

«I know. But what did You do? Did You go to Isaac? »

«Isaac the Elder is dead. »

«So? »

«Did Matthew not tell you? »

«No. He only said that You were at Korazim since the day after our departure. »

«Matthew is more clever than you are. He can keep quiet but you cannot check your curiosity. »

«Not only mine. Everybody's. »

«Well: I went to Korazim to preach factual charity. »

«Factual charity? What do You mean? » ask many.

«There is a widow at Korazim with five children and an old sick woman. Her husband died suddenly at his work bench, leaving behind him poverty and unfinished jobs. Korazim did not find a tiny bit of pity for this unhappy family. I went to finish the work and... »

There is pandemonium. Some ask questions, some object, some reproach Matthew for allowing it, some admire and some criticise. Unfortunately the majority object or criticise.

Jesus lets the storm calm down just as it started and as a reply He says: «I am going back the day after tomorrow. And I will do so until I finish. And I hope that you at least will understand.

<sup>5</sup>Korazim is a closed fruit stone without its germ. You at least ought to be stones with germs.

268. 5

Boy, give Me the walnut that Simon gave you and listen to Me as well.

See this nut? I am taking this one because I have no other fruit-shells available, but to understand the parable, think, for instance, of the seeds of pines or palms, the hardest ones, or the stones of olives... They are very hard containers, completely closed, without cracks, of solid wood. They look like magic coffers, which can be opened only by means of violence. And yet if one of them is thrown on to the ground by chance and a passer-by buries it in the earth treading on it, what happens? The coffer opens and takes root and comes into leaf. How does that happen by itself? We have to strike it hard with a hammer to open it, instead without any blow it opens by itself. Is the seed a magic one? No. It contains a pulp. Oh! a feeble thing compared to the hard shell. And yet it nourishes an even smaller thing: the germ. And that is the lever that forces, opens it and produces a plant with roots and leaves. As an experiment, bury some fruit stones and wait. You will see that some strike root, others do not. Pull out the ones that did not sprout. Open them with a hammer and you will see that they are empty seeds. So it is not the dampness of the ground or its heat that makes the stone open. But it is its pulp, or rather, the soul of the pulp: the germ, which swelling, acts as a lever and opens it.

268. 6

<sup>6</sup>That is the parable. Now let us apply it to ourselves.

What did I do that should not have been done? Have we understood one another so little that we have not understood that hypocrisy is a sin and that words are just like wind if they are not corroborated by action? What have I always told you? "Love one another. Love is the precept and the secret of glory". And I, Who preach, should I be without charity? Should I thus set the example of an untruthful master? No, never!

My dear friends! Our body is like a hard stone, in which pulp is enclosed: our soul, and in it there is the germ that I laid. It is made of many elements, the main one being charity. It acts as a lever to open the stone and free the spirit from the constrictions of matter and reunite it to God, Who is Charity.

Charity does not consist only in giving alms or comforting by means of words. Charity is accomplished through charity alone. Do not think that this is a pun. I had no money and words were not sufficient for this case. There were seven people on the threshold of starvation and anguish. Despair was already

putting forth its black claws to grasp and strangle. The world was withdrawing harshly and selfishly before this misfortune. The world was proving that it had not understood the words of the Master. The Master evangelized through deeds. I was capable and free to do it. And it was My duty, on behalf of the whole world, to love those poor wretches whom the world did not love. That is what I did.

Can you still criticise Me? Or should I criticise you, in the presence of a disciple who did not hesitate to come among sawdust and shavings in order not to leave the Master and who, I am sure, became more convinced of Me seeing Me bent over a piece of wood, than he would have been persuaded if he had seen Me on a throne, and in the presence of a boy, who perceived Me to be what I am, notwithstanding his ignorance, the misfortune that blunts his mind and the fact that he was in no way acquainted with the Messiah as He really is. Are you not saying anything? Do not feel humiliated only while I raise My voice to correct wrong ideas. I do it out of love. But strive to have within you the germ that sanctifies and opens the stone. Or you will always be useless beings. You must be prepared to do what I have done.

No work must be burdensome to you for the sake of your neighbour, or to take a soul to God. Work, whatever it may be, is never humiliating. Whereas base action, falseness, untrue denunciations, harshness, abuse of power, usury, slander, lust are humiliating. They do humiliate man. And yet they are done unashamedly by those also who say they are perfect and who were certainly scandalised seeing Me work with saw and hammer. Oh! A hammer! The worthless hammer, if used to drive nails into wood to make a piece of furniture that will earn food for orphans, how noble it becomes! The hammer\*, although ignoble, if it is in My hands for a holy purpose will not longer appear as such and how it will be craved for by all those who gladly shout that they are scandalised because of it!

Oh! man: you ought to be light and truth, how dark and false

\* **the hammer, ignoble...** to understand this sentence, it must be completed with all of the elements that are hidden within it: *the hammer* (that you, taken by the spirit of the world, judge for yourselves), *ignoble if in My hands and (in any case) for holy reasons, as it will never appear again as such* (in the world, when the hammer will be used to crucify Me) *and as all of those should have it who shout out their scandal* (as you are doing, judge according to your own spirit)!



you are! But you, at least, endeavour to understand what Goodness is! What Charity is. What Obedience is. I solemnly tell you that great is the number of Pharisees. And they are even present among those who surround Me. »

«No, Master. Don't say that! We... it is because we love You that we do not want certain things!... »

268. 7 «It is because you have not yet understood anything. <sup>7</sup>I have spoken to you of Faith\* and Hope and I did not think that any new word was required to speak to you of Charity, because so much emanates from Me that you should be saturated with it. But I see that you know it only by name, without being aware of its nature and form. Just as you know the moon.

Do you remember when I told you that Hope is like the cross-bar of the kind yoke supporting Faith and Charity, and it is the scaffold of mankind and the throne of salvation? You do? But you have not understood My words in their true meaning. And why did you not ask for a clarification? I will give it to you. It is a yoke because it compels man to lower his silly pride under the weight of eternal truths. And it is the scaffold of such pride. The man who hopes in God his Lord unavoidably mortifies his pride that would like him to be proclaimed his “god” and acknowledges that he is nothing and God is everything, that he can do nothing and God can do everything, that he (man) is transient dust and God is eternity elevating to a higher degree and rewarding man with eternity. Man nails himself to his holy cross to reach Life. The flames of Faith and Charity nail him to his cross, but Hope, which is between the former and the latter, elevate towards Heaven. But, remember the lesson: if charity is lacking, the throne is without light and the body, unnailed on one side, hangs towards mud and no longer sees Heaven. It thus cancels the wholesome effects of Hope and ends up by making sterile also Faith, because when one is detached from two of the three theological virtues, one falls into languor and deadly chill.

Do not reject God even in the least things. And to refuse to assist one's neighbour through heathen pride is to reject God.

268. 8 <sup>8</sup>My Doctrine is a yoke that bends guilty mankind; it is a mallet that breaks the hard bark to free its spirit. It is a yoke and

\* I have spoken to you of Faith in 252. 7/10; and Hope in 256. 6/7.

a hammer indeed. And yet he who accepts it does not feel the tiredness that all other doctrines and all other human things give. And he who allows himself to be struck by it does not feel the pain of being crushed in his human ego, but feels a sensation of liberation.

Why do you endeavour to get rid of it to replace it with what is lead and pain? You all have your sorrows and your difficulties. All mankind has sorrows and difficulties, which at times are beyond human strength. From children like this one, who is already carrying on his little shoulders a heavy weight, which bends him and prevents his lips from smiling childishly and removes all thoughtlessness from his mind, which, from a human point of view, has never been childish, to the old man who is declining towards his sepulchre with all the disappointments, troubles, burdens and wounds of his long life. But in My Doctrine and in My Faith there is the relief from all such overwhelming burdens. That is why it is called the "Gospel". And he who accepts it and obeys will be blessed on the earth also because he will have God to comfort him and Virtues to make his way easy and bright, as if they were good sisters who, holding him by the hand with lit lamps, illuminate his way and his life and sing the eternal promises of God to him, until, yielding in peace his tired body to the earth, he awakes in Paradise.

Why, men, do you wish to be fatigued, desolate, tired, disgusted, desperate, when you can be relieved and consoled? Why do you wish, too, My apostles, to feel the fatigue, the difficulty, the severity of your mission, whereas with the reliance of a child you could have cheerful zeal, bright aptitude to accomplish it and realise and perceive that it is severe only for the unrepentant who do not know God, whilst for its believers it is like a mother who supports her child on his way, pointing out to his uncertain steps stones and thorns, nests of snakes and ditches, that he may identify them and thus avoid danger?

<sup>9</sup>You are now desolate. Your desolation had a really miserable beginning! You are desolate first of all because of My humbleness, as if it were a crime against Myself. And you are now distressed because you have understood that you have grieved Me and that you are still so far from perfection. But only in a few this latter desolation is devoid of pride: of the pride hurt by

268.9

the ascertainment that you are still nothing, whilst out of pride you would like to be perfect. Be only humbly willing to accept a reproach and to confess that you are wrong, promising in your hearts that you want perfection for a superhuman purpose. And then come to Me. I correct you, but I understand and I am indulgent.

Come to Me, you apostles, and come to Me, you all men, who suffer through material, moral, spiritual sorrows. These last ones are caused by the fact that you cannot sanctify yourselves as you would like for the love of God, with promptitude and without returning to Evil. The way of sanctification is long and mysterious, and sometimes it is covered unknown to the walker, who proceeds through darkness, with the taste of poison in his mouth and thinks that he is not proceeding and is not drinking a celestial liquid, and does not realise that such spiritual blindness is an of perfection.

Blessed, three times blessed are those who continue to proceed without enjoyment of light and kindness and that do not surrender because they see or hear nothing, and they do not stop saying: "I will not proceed until God grants me some delight". I tell you: the darkest road will suddenly become the best lighted one, opening on to celestial landscapes. And the poison after removing all relish for human things will change into heavenly sweetness for those brave believers, who quite astonished will exclaim: "Why all this? Why so much kindness and joy to me? ". Because they have persevered and God will let them enjoy on the earth what Heaven is.

But, in the meantime, come to Me you all who are fatigued and tired, you, apostles, and with you all the men who seek God who weep because of the sorrows of the world, who have become exhausted in their loneliness, and I will restore you. Take My yoke upon you. It is not heavy. It is a support. Embrace My Doctrine as you would embrace a beloved bride. Imitate your Master Who does not confine Himself to bless it, but does what it teaches. Learn from Me Who am meek and humble hearted... You will find rest for your souls, because meekness and humbleness grant the kingdom both on the earth and in Heaven. I have already told you that the true triumphers among men are those who conquer them by love, and love is always meek and humble. I

would never ask you to do things that are beyond your strength, because I love you and I want you with Me in My Kingdom. Take therefore My insignia and My uniform and strive to be like Me and as My Doctrine teaches. Do not be afraid because My yoke is sweet and its weight is light, whereas the glory that you will enjoy if you are faithful to Me is infinitely powerful. Infinite and eternal...

<sup>10</sup>I will leave you for some time. I am going to the lake with the 268. 10 boy. He will find some friends... Later we shall eat our bread together. Come, Joseph. I will introduce you to the little ones who love Me. »

269. The dispute with scribes and pharisees in Capernaum.  
The arrival of the Mother and brothers.

2<sup>nd</sup> September 1945.

<sup>1</sup>The scene is the same as in the last vision. Jesus is taking 269. 1 leave of the widow, holding little Joseph by the hand and He says to the woman: «Nobody will come before I come back, unless they are Gentiles. But keep here until the day after tomorrow whoever should come, saying that I shall definitely be here. »

«I will, Master: And if there are any sick people, I will give them hospitality as You taught me. »

«Goodbye, then, and peace be with you. Come, Manaen. »

From this brief conversation I understand that sick and unhappy people in general have come to the Master at Korazim and that Jesus has been evangelizing not only working but also through miracles. And if Korazim is still indifferent, it really means that it is a wild untillable soil. And yet Jesus walks through it, exchanging greetings with those who greet Him, as if nothing were the matter and then resuming His conversation with Manaen, who is uncertain whether he should leave again for Machaerus or remain another week.

<sup>2</sup>... In the meantime in the house at Capernaum they are pre- 269.2 paring for the Sabbath. Matthew still limping a little welcomes his companions, offers them water and fresh fruit, inquiring about their mission.

Peter turns up his nose seeing that some Pharisees are al-

ready sauntering near the house: «They want to poison our Sabbath. I almost feel like going to meet the Master to tell Him to go to Bethsaida and thus frustrate their plans. »

«And do you think that the Master would do it? » asks his brother.

«Then there is that poor wretch waiting for Him in the room on the ground floor» remarks Matthew.

«We could take him to Bethsaida by boat, and I, or someone else, could go and meet the Master» says Peter.

«It's not a bad idea... » says Philip, who would willingly go to Bethsaida where his family is.

«All the more that, take note, their guardianship has been reinforced with scribes. Let us go immediately. You will take the sick man, go through the kitchen garden and away through the back of the house. I will take the boat to the "fig well" and James will do likewise. Simon Zealot and Jesus' brothers will go to meet the Master. »

«I am not going away with the possessed man» proclaims the Iscariot.

«Why not? Are you afraid the demon might cling to you? »

«Don't bother me, Simon of Jonah. I said that I am not going and I will not go. »

«Go with the cousins to meet Jesus. »

«No. »

«Ugh! Come by boat. »

«No. »

«Well, what is it you want? You are always a hindrance... »

«I want to stay here, where I am. I am not afraid of anybody and I am not running away. In any case the Master would not be happy with the trick. And there would be another sermon reproaching us, and I have no intention of getting it through your fault. You may go. I will stay here to report... »

«Definitely no! Either everybody or nobody» shouts Peter.

«Then nobody, because the Master is here. Here He is coming» says the Zealot seriously, looking down the road.

Peter, who is obviously dissatisfied, grumbles into his beard.  
<sup>269.</sup> <sup>3</sup>But he goes to meet Jesus with the others. <sup>3</sup>After greeting Him, they inform Him of a blind and dumb man possessed, who has been waiting for several hours with his relatives for Him.

Matthew explains: «He is like an inert body. He threw himself on some empty sacks and has not moved since. His relatives hope in You. Come and refresh Yourself and You will assist him later. »

«No. I am going to him at once. Where is he? »

«In the room on the ground floor, near the oven. I put him in there with his relatives, because there are many Pharisees and scribes, who seem to be lying in wait... »

«Yes, and it would be better not to make them happy» grumbles Peter.

«Is Judas of Simon not here? » asks Jesus.

«He stayed in the house. He must do the opposite of what others do» grumbles Peter again.

Jesus looks at him but does not reproach him. He goes quickly towards the house, entrusting the boy just to Peter, who caresses him taking out at once from his wide sash a whistle saying: «One for you and one for my son. I will take you to see him tomorrow evening. I got a shepherd to make them for me after I had spoken to him of Jesus. »

Jesus enters the house, He greets Judas who seems to be busy sorting out the kitchenware, and He then goes straight to a kind of low dark store-room beside the oven.

«Get the sick man to come out» orders Jesus.

A Pharisee who is not from Capernaum, but whose stand-offishness is even worse than that of the local Pharisees, says: «He is not sick, he is possessed. »

«That is still a disease of the spirit... »

«But his eyes and tongue are bound... »

«It is always a disease of the spirit that expands to limbs and organs. If you had allowed Me to finish you would have realized that is what I wanted to say. Fever is in the blood when one is ill, but after the blood it attacks this or that part of the body. »

The Pharisee does not know what to retort and becomes silent.

<sup>4</sup>The possessed man has been led before Jesus. He is motionless. Matthew was quite right. He is greatly impeded by the demon.

269. 4

People are gathering in the meantime. It is incredible how, particularly during the hours that I would call of relaxation, people were so quick in gathering where there was something to

be seen. The notables of Capernaum are now there, and among them there are four Pharisees. Jairus is also there, and, in a corner, with the excuse of supervising order, there is the Roman Centurion, and citizens from other towns are with him.

«In the name of God, depart from the eyes and the tongue of this man! I want it! Set him free! You are no longer permitted to have him. Go away! » shouts Jesus stretching out His hands while giving the order.

The miracle begins with a howl of rage from the demon and ends with a cry of joy of the cured man who shouts: «Son of David! Son of David! Holy and King! »

269.5 <sup>5</sup>«How can this man know that it was He Who cured him? » asks a scribe.

«It's all a farce! These people are paid to do that! » says a Pharisee shrugging his shoulders.

«By whom? If you do not mind me asking you» asks Jairus.

«By you, too. »

«And for what purpose? »

«To make Capernaum famous. »

«Do not mortify your intelligence by talking nonsense and your tongue by making it foul with lies. You know that it is not true, and you ought to realize that you are talking nonsense. What has happened here has happened in many parts of Israel. So there must be someone paying everywhere? I did not really know that the common people in Israel were very rich! Because you, and with you all the mighty ones, do not certainly pay for that. So it is the common people who pay, being the only ones who love the Master. »

«You are the head of the synagogue and you love Him. There is Manaen. At Bethany there is Lazarus of Theophilus. They are not common people. »

«But they are honest, and I am honest, too. And we do not cheat anybody, in no way. Much less in matters of faith. We do not take the liberty of doing that, because we fear God and we have understood what is pleasant to God: honesty. »

The Pharisees turn their back on Jairus and they attack the relatives of the cured man: «Who told you to come here? »

«Who? Many people, who had already been cured, or their relatives. »

«But what did they give you? »

«Give? The assurance that He would cure him. »

«Was he really ill? »

«Oh! Sly minds! Do you think that all this is feigned? If you do not believe it, go to Gadara and inquire about the misfortune of the family of Anna of Ismael. »

The irritated people of Capernaum are in tumult, while some Galileans, who have come from near Nazareth say: «And yet He is the son of Joseph, the carpenter! »

The citizens of Capernaum, being faithful to Jesus, shout: «No. He is what He said and what the cured man has just said: “Son of God and Son of David”. »

«Do not increase the excitement of the population with your statements! » says a scribe contemptuously. «And what is He, then, according to you? »

«A Beelzebub! »

«Ugh! Tongues of vipers. Blasphemers! You are possessed! Heartless men! You are our ruin. Do you want to deprive us also of the joy of the Messiah? Usurers! Arid stones! » A real uproar!

Jesus, Who had gone into the kitchen to drink some water, appears on the threshold in time to hear once again the stale and stupid accusation of the Pharisees: «He is a Beelzebub because demons obey Him. The great Beelzebub, who is His father, helps Him and He drives out demons only through the assistance of Beelzebub, the prince of demons. »

<sup>6</sup>Jesus descends the two little steps of the threshold and comes forward. He stops erect, severe and calm in front of the group of scribes and Pharisees and staring at them with keen eyes He says to them: 269. 6

«Also on the earth we see that a kingdom divided into opposed parties becomes weak internally and can be easily attacked and laid waste by nearby countries that make it their slave. Also on the earth we see that a town divided into conflicting parts does not flourish and the same applies to a family, the members of which are divided by mutual hatred. It falls to pieces and becomes a useless nibble, which is of no use to anybody, and the laughing stock of fellow citizens. Harmony is shrewdness besides being necessary. Because it keeps people independent, strong and loving. Patriots, citizens, relatives ought to ponder on that when



for the caprice of an individual advantage they are tempted to have separations or commit abuses, which are always dangerous because they are alternative in parties and they destroy love. And such shrewdness is practised by those who are the masters of the world. Consider Rome in its undeniable power, so painful to us. Rome rules the world. But they are united by one mind and one will: "to rule". Even amongst them there must be differences, aversions, rebellions. But they lie at the bottom. On the surface they are one block, without cracks or perturbations. They all want the same thing and they are successful because of that. And they will be successful as long as they want the same thing.

Consider that example of human cohesive shrewdness and say: if the children of this world are like that, what will Satan be like? The Romans are demons, as far as we are concerned. But their heathen satanism is nothing compared to the perfect satanism of Satan and his demons. In their eternal kingdom, without time, without end, with no limits to cunning and wickedness, where they rejoice in being detrimental to God and men, and to be harmful is their very life and their only cruel painful enjoyment, they have attained with cursed perfection the fusion of their spirits in one will: "to be harmful". Now if, as you state, to insinuate doubt about My power, Satan is the one who helps Me because I am a minor Beelzebub, does it not follow that Satan is divided against himself and his demons, if he drives them out of the people possessed by him? And if he is at variance with his followers, can his kingdom last? No, it is not so. Satan is very shrewd and does not damage himself in the hearts of men. The aim of his life is "to steal - to damage - to lie - to offend - to upset". To steal the souls of God and the peace of men. To damage the children of the Father grieving Him. To lie in order to mislead. To offend in order to rejoice. To upset because he is disorder and cannot change. He is eternal in his being and in his methods.

269. 7 <sup>7</sup>But answer this question: if I drive out demons in the name of Beelzebub, in whose name do your sons drive them out? Are you willing to admit that they are Beelzebub as well? If you say that, they will consider you slanderers. And if their holiness is such that they will not react to your accusation, you will condemn yourselves confessing that you think that you have many demons in Israel, and God will judge you in the name of the chil-

dren of Israel accused by you of being demons. Therefore whoever may pass judgement, in actual fact they will be your judges, where judgement is not suborned by human pressure.

If, instead, as it is true, I expel demons through the Spirit of God, that would be evidence that the Kingdom of God and the King of that Kingdom have come to you. Which King has such power that no adverse force can resist Him. Thus I bind and compel the usurpers of the children of My Kingdom to depart from the place they have occupied and give Me back the prey so that I may take possession of it. Is that not what is done by one who wants to enter a house inhabited by a powerful man, to take his property, rightly or wrongly acquired? It is. He enters and ties him, and then he can plunder the house. I tie the dark angel who has taken what is Mine, and I take away from him the good property he has stolen of Me. And I am the only one who can do it, because I alone am the Strong One, the Father of the future century, the Prince of Peace. »

<sup>8</sup>«Clarify for us what You mean by saying: “Father of the future century”. Do You think that You will live until the new century and, still more foolishly, do You think that You, a poor man will create time? Time belongs to God» asks a scribe. 269. 8

«And are you, a scribe, asking Me? Do you not know that there will be a century that will have a beginning but no end and that it will be Mine? I shall triumph in it gathering its children around Me and they will live forever like the century that I shall have created and I am already creating it, giving the spirit its true value above the flesh, the world, and above the infernal angels whom I expel because I can do everything. That is why I say that those who are not with Me are against Me, and those who do not gather with Me, scatter. Because I am He Who I am. And he who does not believe that, which was already prophesied, sins against the Holy Spirit, whose word was announced by the prophets, and it is neither false nor wrong, and must be believed without resistance.

And I tell you: men will be forgiven everything, all their sins and their blasphemy. Because God knows that man is not only spirit, but also flesh and his flesh, when tempted, is subject to sudden weakness. But blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. He who has spoken against the Son of man will still be forgiven, because the weight of the flesh enveloping My Person

and the man who speaks against Me, can still mislead. But he who has spoken against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this or in future life, because the Truth is what it is: clear, holy, undeniable and manifested to the spirit in such a way that it cannot mislead. Only those who err deliberately want to err. To deny the Truth spoken by the Holy Spirit is to deny the Word of God and the Love given by that word for the sake of men. And the sin against Love is not forgiven.

269. 9 <sup>9</sup>Every tree bears its fruit. You bear yours, but your fruit is not good. If you give a good tree to have it planted in the orchard, it will give good fruit; but if you give a bad tree, the fruit it will yield will be bad and everybody will say: "This is not a good tree". Because a tree is known by its fruit. And how can you think that you are able to speak well, since you are bad? Because a mouth speaks of what fills its heart. Because it is out of the superabundance of what is within us, that we act and speak. A good man takes good things out of his good treasure; a wicked man takes wicked things out of his evil one and he speaks and behaves according to what is within him.

I tell you solemnly that idleness is sinful. But it is better to be idle than accomplish wicked deeds. And I also tell you that it is better to be silent than speak idly and wickedly. Even if to be silent is to be idle, do that rather than sin with your tongues. I assure you that on Doomsday justification will be requested for every word spoken idly to men, and that men will be justified by the words they have spoken, and by their words they will be condemned. Be careful, therefore, because you speak many words that are more than idle, as they are not only idle but also harmful, and are spoken to drive hearts away from the Truth speaking to you. »

269. 10 <sup>10</sup>The Pharisees and scribes consult one another and afterwards, pretending to be kind, they ask: «Master, it is easier to believe what one sees. Give us, therefore, a sign so that we may believe that You are what You say You are. »

«You can see that there is in you the sin against the Holy Spirit, Who several times has pointed Me out to you as the Word Incarnate. Word and Saviour, Who has come in the predicted time, preceded and followed by the signs prophesied, and operating what the Spirit says. »

They reply: «We believe in the Spirit, but how can we believe in You unless we see a sign with our own eyes? »

«How can you believe in the Spirit whose actions are spiritual, if you do not believe in Mine that are perceptible by your eyes? My life is full of them. Are they not enough? No, they are not. I say so Myself. They are not enough. One sign only will be given\* to this adulterous wicked generation that seeks a sign: that of the prophet Jonah. In fact as Jonah was in the belly of the whale for three days, so the Son of man will be for three days in the bowels of the earth. I tell you solemnly that the Ninevites will rise on the Day of Judgement like all men, and they will rebel against this generation and condemn it. Because they did penance upon Jonah's preaching, but you do not. And there is One here who is greater than Jonah. And so the Queen of the South will rise and stand up against you and will condemn you, because she came\*\* from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon. And there is One greater than Solomon here

»«Why do you say that this generation is adulterous and wicked? It is not any worse than the others. There are the same saints in it as in the others. The structure of Israel has not changed. You offend us. »

269.11

«You offend yourselves by injuring your souls, because you remove them from the Truth, and therefore from Salvation. But I will reply to you just the same. This generation is holy only in garments and outward appearance. It is not holy inwardly. There are in Israel the same names meaning the same things. But there is no reality of things. There are the same habits, garments and rites. But their spirit is missing. You are adulterers because you rejected the supernatural marriage with the Divine Law and you have married, in a second adulterous union, the law of Satan. You are circumcised only in a frail member. Your hearts are no longer circumcised. And you are wicked because you have sold yourselves to the Evil one. I have spoken. »

«You offend us too seriously. But, if it is so, why do You not free Israel from its demon so that it may become holy? »

\* **One sign only will be given**, the episode of *Jonah 2* (as mentioned in 176. 3); **did penance** as narrated in *Jonah 3*. The promise of the sign of Jonah will be repeated in 342. 7 and once again in 291. 5, 344. 6, 503. 8, 525. 16, 546. 5, 547. 7, 548. 14, 592. 20, 610. 11, 625. 7, 632. 25.

\*\* **she came**, as narrated in: *1 King 10, 1-13*. Same quote in 344. 6.

«Is Israel willing to do that? No. Those poor people who come here to be freed from the demon are willing, because they feel it like a burden and a shame. But you do not feel that. And you would be freed quite uselessly, because as you are not anxious to be relieved, you would be caught again at once and in a stronger way. Because when an unclean spirit goes out of a man it wanders through arid country looking for a place to rest and cannot find one. The country is not materially arid, mind you. It is arid because it is hostile to him as it will not receive him, just as arid soil is hostile to seed. He then says: "I will go back to the house from which I was expelled by force and against his will. And I am sure that he will welcome me and let me rest". In fact he goes back to the one he possessed, and many times finds him willing to welcome him, because I solemnly tell you that man feels nostalgia more for Satan than for God and if Satan does not oppress his body, he does not complain of being possessed. He thus goes back and finds the house empty, swept, tidied, smelling of purity. He then goes off and collects seven other spirits, because he does not want to lose it again, and with these seven spirits more evil than himself he enters the house and they all settle in there. And the present state of a man who was converted once and is perverted a second time is worse than it was before. Because the demon now knows exactly how much that man loves Satan and is ungrateful to God and also because God will not go back where they tread on His graces, and where people, after the first experience of possession, open their arms to a greater one. A relapse into satanism is worse than a relapse into lethal phthisis already cured once. It cannot improve or recover. The same will apply to this generation, which although converted by the Baptist wanted to return to sin because it loves the Evil one and does not love Me. »

269. 12 <sup>12</sup>A whispering, which is neither of approval nor of protest, runs through the crowd which has become so large that not only the kitchen garden and terrace are full, but also the street. People are sitting astride the low wall, many have climbed up the fig-tree and the trees of the neighbouring orchards, because everybody wants to listen to the dispute between Jesus and His enemies. The whispering, like a wave that from the open sea arrives at the shore from mouth to mouth reaches the apostles who are closer to Jesus: that is Peter, John, the Zealot and Alphaeus' sons.

Some of the other apostles are on the terrace, some in the kitchen, except Judas who is in the street, among the crowds.

Peter, John, the Zealot, Alphaeus' sons pick up the whispering and say to Jesus: «Master, Your Mother is here with Your brothers. They are out there, in the street, and they are looking for You because they want to speak to You. Tell the crowds to move away, so that they may come to You, because a serious reason has certainly brought them here looking for You. »

Jesus raises His head and at the end of the crowd He sees the anguished face of His Mother, Who strives not to weep, while Joseph of Alphaeus is speaking to Her excitedly, and He sees, Her repeated emphatic gestures of denial notwithstanding Joseph's insistency. He sees also the embarrassed face of Simon,, who is openly grieved and disgusted... But He does not smile, neither does He give any order. He leaves the Sorrowful One in Her grief and His cousins where they are.

He lowers His head and looks at the crowd, and replying to the apostles near Him, He replies also to those who are far away and are endeavouring to make blood have more weight than one's duty. «Who is My Mother? Who are My brothers? » He looks around with severe countenance, as His face becomes pale as a result of the violent effort He has to make against Himself to set duty above family ties and blood, and to disavow His tie to His Mother in order to serve His Father, and pointing with a large gesture to the crowd pressing around Him in the red light of torches and in the silvery light of the almost full moon, He says: «This is My Mother and these are My brothers. Those who do the will of God are My brothers and sisters, they are My Mother. I have nobody else. And My relatives will be such if they are the first to do the will of God with greater perfection than anybody else to the extent of completely sacrificing every other will or the call of blood or of affection. »

The crowds whisper in louder voices, like a sea made rough by sudden gusts of wind.

The scribes begin to withdraw saying: «He is a demon! He repudiates His own blood! »

His relatives come forward saying: «He is crazy! He tortures His very Mother! »

The apostles say: «His word is really full of heroism! »

The crowds comment: «How much He loves us! »

269. 13 <sup>13</sup>Mary, Joseph and Simon elbow their way through the crowd with difficulty. While Mary is thoroughly kind, Joseph is very angry and Simon is utterly embarrassed. They arrive near Jesus.

Joseph attacks Him at once: «You are crazy! You are offending everybody. You do not respect even Your Mother. But I am here now and I will stop You. Is it true that You are wandering about as a workman? If it is true, why do You not work in Your own shop, and thus provide for Your Mother? Why do You lie saying that Your task is to preach, You idle and ungrateful man when You work for money with other people? I think that You are really possessed by a demon misleading You. Reply to me! »

Jesus turns around and takes little Joseph by the hand, He draws him close to Himself and holding him up by his armpits He says: «I worked to provide food for this innocent child and his relatives and persuade them that God is good. It was a sermon on humbleness and charity for Korazim. And not only for Korazim. But also for you, Joseph, My unfair brother. But I forgive you because I know that you have been bitten by snakes. And I forgive you, too, Simon, who are so changeable. I have nothing to forgive My Mother or be forgiven by Her, because Her judgement is just. Let the world do what it wants. I do what God wants. And with the blessing of My Father and Mother I am happier than I would be if the whole world hailed Me king according to the world. Come, Mother. Do not weep. They do not know what they are doing. Forgive them. »

«Oh! Son! I know. You know. There is nothing else to be said... »

«There is nothing else to be said except say to the people: “Go in peace”. »

And Jesus blesses the crowd, and holding Mary with His right hand and Joseph with His left one, He goes towards the staircase and is the first to climb it.

270. News of the killing of John the Baptist.

4<sup>th</sup> September 1945.

270.1 <sup>1</sup> Jesus is curing some sick people; Manaen only is present.

They are in the house in Capernaum, in the shady kitchen garden, early in the morning. Manaen is no longer wearing his precious belt or the thin plate on his forehead. His tunic is held tight by a woolen cord and his headgear by a thin strip of cloth. Jesus is bareheaded, as He always is, when at home.

After curing and comforting the sick people, Jesus goes upstairs with Manaen and they both sit on the window-sill of the window facing the mountain, because the sun is shining on the other side of the house and it is very warm, although it is no longer the height of summer.

«Vintage will be starting soon» says Manaen.

«Yes. Then it will be the feast of the Tabernacles... and it will soon be winter. When are you thinking of going away? »

«H'm... I would never leave... But I am thinking of the Baptist. Herod is weak. If one knows how to influence him to do good, if he does not become good, he remains at least... not bloodthirsty. But only few people advise him wisely. And that woman!... That woman!... But I would like to stay here until Your apostles come back. Not that I rely much on myself... but I still have some weight... although the favour I enjoyed previously has diminished much since they have realized that I now follow the way of Good. But it does not matter. <sup>270. 2</sup>I would like to have enough courage to be able to abandon everything and follow You completely, like the disciples whom You are expecting. But shall I ever succeed? We who are not of the common people find it more difficult to follow You. Why? »

«Because the tentacles of your poor wealth hold you back. »

«However, I know some people who are not exactly rich, but are learned or about to be so, and they do not come either. »

«They also have the tentacles of poor riches holding them back. One is not rich only in money. There is the wealth of knowledge. Few can confess with Solomon: "Vanity of vanities. All is vanity", which confession is resumed and enlarged not so much materially but deeply in Qoheleth\*. Do you remember it? Human science is vanity because to increase human knowledge only "is anguish and affliction of the spirit and he who multiplies science multiplies such anguish". I solemnly tell you that it is so. And I

\* in Qoheleth, in *Ecclesiastes 1, 2*



also tell you that it would not be so if human science were supported and bridled by supernatural wisdom and the holy love of God. Pleasure is vanity, because it does not last, but quickly fades away after burning, leaving ashes and emptiness. Wealth stored up by means of various industries is vanity for the man who dies, as he leaves it to other people and cannot repel death by means of it. Woman is vanity, when she is considered a female and desired as such. So we conclude that the only thing which is not vanity is the holy fear of God and obedience to His commandments, that is the wisdom of man, who is not only flesh, but has a second nature: the spiritual one. Who can reason thus and is willing, is able to break off from every tentacle of poor wealth and move freely towards the Sun. »

«I want to remember those words. How much You have given me during the past days! I can now go back to that ugly Court which seems bright only to fools, and seems powerful and free, whereas it is misery, prison and darkness, and I will be able to go back with a treasure that will enable me to live better waiting for the best. But will I ever reach that best, which is to be entirely Yours? »

«Yes, you will. »

«When? Next year? Later? Or when old age will make me wise? »

«You will reach it in a few hours by becoming spiritually mature and perfect in will. »

Manaen looks at Him thoughtfully, inquisitively... But he does not ask any other question.

There is silence. Then Jesus says: «Have you ever approached Lazarus of Bethany? »

«No, Master. I can say no. If we met on few occasions I cannot say it was out of friendship. You know... I was with Herod and Herod was against him... So... »

«Lazarus would now see you in God, beyond such things. You must endeavour to approach him, as a fellow disciple. »

«I will do it, if You wish so... »

270 3 <sup>3</sup>Excited voices are heard in the garden. They are anxiously asking: «The Master! The Master! Is He here? »

The harmonious voice of the landlady replies: «He is upstairs. Who are you? Sick people? »

«No. Disciples of John and we want Jesus of Nazareth. »

Jesus looks out of the window saying: «Peace be with you...  
Oh! It is you. Come in! »

They are the three shepherds John, Matthias and Simeon.  
«Oh! Master! » they say looking up and showing their sorrowful  
faces. Not even the sight of Jesus cheers them up.

Jesus leaves the room and goes out to meet them on the terrace.  
Manaen follows Him. They meet where the staircase leads on to the sunny terrace.

The three men kneel down kissing the floor. Then John says on behalf of them all: «Receive us now, Lord, because we are Your inheritance» and tears stream down the faces of the disciple and his companions.

Jesus and Manaen utter one only cry: «John!? »

«He has been killed... »

The word drops like a loud dull noise, which drowns every other noise in the world. And yet it was uttered in a low voice. But it petrifies both him who speaks and those who listen. And the earth, upon hearing it and being horrified, seems to interrupt every noise, such is the period of deep silence and complete immobility in animals, in leafy branches, in the air. Doves stop cooing, blackbirds interrupt their musical songs, the choir of sparrows is struck dumb, and a chirping cicada suddenly becomes silent, as if its contrivance had broken down unexpectedly, while the wind, which was caressing the leaves of vines and trees, making them rustle like silk and causing poles to squeak, drops completely.

<sup>4</sup>Jesus becomes as pale as ivory while His eyes dilate glazing <sup>270. 4</sup> over. He opens His arms saying, and His voice is deep in the effort to make it steady: «Peace to the martyr of justice and to My Precursors He folds His arms, collects His thoughts in prayer, communicating with the Spirit of God and of the Baptist.

Manaen does not dare to make a gesture. Contrary to Jesus, he blushes vehemently and has an impulsion of anger. Then he becomes stiff and his excitement is revealed by the mechanical movement of his right hand rumpling the cord of his tunic, and of the left one which unintentionally searches for his dagger... and Manaen shakes his head pitying his weak mind that does not remember that he had renounced weapons in order to be «the

disciple of the Meek Master, near the Meek Messiah. »

Jesus opens His mouth and eyes again. His countenance, His eyes, His voice have resumed the divine majesty habitual to Him. Only a deep melancholy tempered with peace hovers about Him. «Come and tell Me. As from today you will be Mine. » And He takes them into the room, closing the door and half drawing the curtains, to have a subdued light and an atmosphere of concentration around the sorrow and the beauty of the Baptist's death, and to form a partition between such perfection of life and the corrupt world. «Speak» He tells them.

Manaen is still petrified. He is near the group but does not utter one word.

270. 5 <sup>5</sup>«It was the evening of the feast... The event was unforeseeable... Only two hours before Herod had consulted with John and had dismissed him very kindly... And shortly before the... murder, the martyrdom, the crime, the glorification, Herod had sent a servant with icy fruit and rare wines for the prisoner. John had distributed everything to us... he never changed his austerity... We were the only ones to be there, thanks to Manaen, we were in the palace as kitchen servants and stable grooms. And that was a grace because we could always see our John... John and I were in the kitchen, while Simeon supervised in the stables ensuring that the grooms looked after the mounts of guests properly... The palace was full of important people, military commanders and gentlemen from Galilee. Herodias had locked herself in her rooms after a violent quarrel in the morning with Herod... »

Manaen interferes: «But when did the hyena come? »

«Two days before. Unexpectedly... saying to the monarch that she could not live away from him and be absent on the day of his feast. Viper and sorceress as she had always been, she had made a laughing-stock of him... But that morning, although he was already full of wine and lust, Herod refused to give the woman what she asked for with loud cries... But nobody thought it was John's life!... She remained disdainfully in her rooms. She sent back the royal dishes that Herod sent to her on precious trays. She kept only a precious one full of fruit, exchanging the gift with an amphora of drugged wine for Herod... Drugged... Ah! Her vicious intoxicated nature was sufficient to drug him for the crime! From the servants waiting at the table we learned that af-

ter the dance of the mimers, nay half way through it, Salome had rushed dancing into the banquet hall. And the mimers, in the presence of the royal girl, had withdrawn against the walls. We were told that her dance was perfect. Lewd and perfect. Worthy of the guests... Herod... Oh! perhaps a new desire of incest was fermenting in his heart!... Herod, at the end of the dance, said enthusiastically to Salome: "You have danced very well! I swear that you deserve a prize. I swear that I will give it to you. I swear that I will give anything you may ask me for. I swear it in the presence of everybody. And the word of a king is loyal also without swearing. Ask what you want". And Salome, simulating perplexity, innocence and modesty, enveloping herself in her veils with bashful gesture after so much impudicity, said: "Allow me, great king, to ponder for a moment. I will withdraw and I will come back later because your grace has moved me"... and she left going to her mother. Selma told me that she went in laughing, saying: "Mother, you have won! Give me the tray". And Herodias with a cry of triumph ordered the slave to give the girl the tray that she had kept previously, saying: "Go, and come back with the hated head and I will clothe you with pearls and gold". And Selma was struck with horror and obeyed... Salome re-entered the hall dancing and went to prostrate herself at the king's feet saying: "Here. On this tray that you sent to my mother as a token that you love her and you love me, I want the head of John. And I will dance again, if it pleases you so much. I will dance the dance of victory. Because I have won! I have beaten you, king! I have defeated life and I am happy! " That is what she said, and her words were repeated to us by a friendly cup-bearer. And Herod was embarrassed, being caught by two desires: to abide by his promise, to be just. But he could not be just, because he is unjust. He nodded to the headsman who was standing behind the royal seat, and he took from Salome's raised hands the tray and from the banquet hall went down to the lower rooms. John and I saw him cross the yard... and shortly afterwards we heard Simeon's cry: "Murderers! " and then we saw the headsman pass again with the head on the tray... John, Your Precursor, is dead... »

<sup>6</sup>«Simeon, can you tell Me how he died? » asks Jesus after <sup>270</sup> 6 some time.

«Yes, he was praying... He had previously said to me: "The

two messengers will be back before long, and those who do not believe, will believe. But remember, should I be no longer alive when they come back, I, on the point of dying, say to you: 'Jesus of Nazareth is the true Messiah' so that you may repeat it to the others". He was always thinking of You... The headsman entered. I uttered a cry. John looked up and saw him. He stood up and said: "You can take only my life. But the lasting truth is that it is not legal to do wrong". And he was about to say something to me when the headsman swung his heavy sword, while John was standing and the head fell from the bust in a stream of blood that reddened the goatskin while his thin face blanched, but his open eyes were still alive and accusing. The head rolled at my feet... I fell at the same time as his body, as I fainted with grief... After... After Herodias had disfigured it, the head was thrown to the dogs. But we picked it up at once and we tied it in a precious veil together with the trunk and during the night we recomposed the body and carried it out of Machaerus. We embalmed it at daybreak in a nearby acacia thicket with the help of other disciples... But it was taken from us again to be slashed... Because she cannot destroy it and cannot forgive him... And her slaves, fearing death, were more ferocious than jackals in taking  
270-7 the head from us. <sup>7</sup>If you had been there, Manaen!... »

«Had I been there... But that head is her malediction... Nothing is taken from the glory of the Precursor, even if the body is mutilated. Is that right, Master? »

«That is true. Even if the dogs had destroyed it, his glory would not change. »

«Neither has his word changed, Master. His eyes, although disfigured, under a large wound, still say: "You are not allowed". But we have lost him! » says Matthias.

«And we are now Your disciples, because that is what he said, and he told us that You already know. »

«Yes you have been Mine for months. How did you come? »

«On foot; by stages. It was a long painful journey, in the heat of sands and of the sun, made even more painful by grief. We have been walking for almost twenty days... »

«You will rest now. »

Manaen asks: «Was Herod not surprised at my absence? »

«Yes, at first he was annoyed, then he became furious. But

when his rage calmed down, he said: "One judge less". That is what our friend, the cup-bearer, told us. »

Jesus says: «One judge less! He has God as a judge and that is enough. Let us go to where we sleep. You are tired and covered with dust. You will find the garments and sandals of your companions. Take them, refresh yourselves. What belongs to one, belongs to everybody. Matthias, since you are tall, you can take one of My tunics. We will provide later. My apostles will be coming before night, because this is the Sabbath eve. Isaac will be coming next week with the disciples, and later Benjamin and Daniel will come; Elias, Joseph and Levi will be here after the Tabernacles. It is time for others to join the Twelve. Go and rest now. »

<sup>8</sup>Manaen takes them in and then comes back. Jesus remains with Manaen. He sits down pensively, and is clearly sad, with His head reclined on a hand, His elbow resting on His knee as a support. Manaen is sitting near the table and does not move. He is sullen. His face is a storm. 270. 8

After a long time, Jesus raises His head, looks at him and asks: «And what are you going to do now? »

«I do not know yet... There is no purpose in staying any longer at Machaerus. But I would like to remain at the court to find out... to protect You according to what I learn. »

«You had better follow Me without any delay. But I will not force you. You will come, when the old Manaen has been destroyed bit by bit. »

«I would also like to take that head away from that woman. She is not worthy to have it... »

Jesus has a pale hint of a smile and says frankly: «And you are not yet dead to human wealth. But you are dear to Me just the same. I know that I shall not lose you even if I have to wait. I know how to wait... »

«Master, I would like to give You my generosity to comfort You,.. Because You are suffering. I can see it. »

«It is true. I am suffering. Very much! »

«Only because of John? I do not think so. You know that he is in peace. »

«I know that he is in peace and I perceive him close to Me. »

«Well, then? »

«Then!... Manaen, what does dawn precede? »

«The day, Master. Why do You ask me? »

«Because the death of John precedes the day when I will be the Redeemer. And the human part in Me trembles at the idea... Manaen, I am going up the mountain. You stay here to receive whoever should come and to assist those who have already come. Stay until I come back. Then... you will do whatever you wish. Goodbye. »

And Jesus leaves the room. He goes slowly down the steps, crosses the kitchen garden and at the back of it He takes a little path along ruffled gardens, olive-groves, orchards of apple and fig-trees and vineyards and He climbs the slope of a little hill where He disappears from my sight.

271. Departure for Tarichea with the apostles  
that returned from Capernaum.

5<sup>th</sup> September 1945.

271. 1 <sup>1</sup> Jesus goes back to the house in the dead of night. He enters the kitchen garden silently. He looks for a moment into the dark kitchen. He looks into the two rooms where are the mats and beds. They are empty also. Only the changed clothes, piled on the floor, tell that the apostles have come back. The house is so silent that it seems uninhabited.

Jesus, making less noise than a shadow, goes up the little steps, immaculate white in the whiteness of the full moon, and arrives on the terrace. He walks along it. He seems a ghost moving about silently, a bright ghost. In the white incandescence of the moon, He looks thinner and taller. He lifts with one hand the curtain at the door of the upper room. It had been left down since John's disciples had entered with Jesus. Inside there are the apostles, sitting here and there, in groups or alone, with John's disciples and Manaen; there is also Marjiam sleeping with his head on Peter's knees. The moon illuminates the room entering with its fluorescent rays through the wide open windows. No one is speaking. And no one is sleeping, with the exception of the boy, who is sitting on a mat on the floor.

271. 2 <sup>2</sup> Jesus enters quietly and Thomas is the first to see Him. «Oh! Master! » he exclaims starting.

All the others arouse themselves. Peter in his excitement, is on the point of jumping to his feet, but he remembers the child and he stands up gently, laying Marjiam's dark-haired head on his seat, and thus is the last to arrive at Jesus, while the Master, with the tired voice of one who has suffered very much, is replying to John, James and Andrew, who are expressing their sorrow to Him: «I understand. But only he who does not believe can feel desolate because of death. Not we, who know and believe. John is no longer separated from us. He was before. Nay, he separated us. Either with Me, or with him. No longer so. Where he is, I am. He is near Me. »

Peter pushes his grey-haired head among the younger ones and Jesus sees him: «You have been weeping, too, Simon of Jonah? » And Peter with a voice hoarser than usual: «Yes, Lord. Because I was a disciple of John, as well. And then... Last Sabbath eve I was complaining that the presence of Pharisees was going to embitter our Sabbath! This is really a bitter Sabbath! I brought the boy, to have a more enjoyable Sabbath... Instead... »

«Do not lose heart, Simon of Jonah. John is not lost. I am repeating that to you, too. And in exchange we have three perfected disciples. Where is the boy? »

«Over there, Master. He is sleeping... »

«Let him sleep» says Jesus stopping over the dark little head which is sleeping peacefully. And He asks again: «Have you had your supper? »

«No, Master. We were waiting for You and we were worried because of Your delay, as we did not know where to look for You... and we seemed to have lost You as well. »

«We have still plenty time to be together. Well, prepare the supper, because afterwards we shall go to another place. I need to be alone among friends, and if we are here tomorrow, we shall always be surrounded by people. »

«And I swear to You that I would not put up with them, particularly with those snakes of Pharisaic souls. And it would be most unfortunate if a smile escaped them concerning us in the synagogue! »

«Be good, Simon!... I have thought of that as well. That is why I came back to take you with Me. »

The excitement on their faces can be better seen in the light



of the little lamps that have been lit at the two ends of the table. Only Jesus is majestically solemn and Marjiam smiles in his sleep.

«The boy has already had his meal» explains Peter.

«It is better to let him sleep, then» says Jesus.

And in the middle of His disciples He offers and hands out the frugal food, which is taken without appetite. And the supper is soon over.

271.3 <sup>3</sup>«Tell Me now what you have done... » says Jesus encouragingly.

«I went with Philip into the country at Bethsaida and we evangelized and cured a sick boy» says Peter.

«In actual fact it was Simon who cured him» says Philip, who does not wish to ascribe to himself a glory not belonging to him.

«Oh! Lord! I do not know how I did it. I prayed hard, with all my heart, because I felt sorry for the little sick boy. I then anointed him with oil, I rubbed him with my coarse hands... and he was cured. When I saw him colour up and open his eyes, that is, when I saw him revive, I was almost afraid. »

Jesus lays a hand on his head without speaking.

«John amazed people by expelling a demon. But I had to speak» says Thomas.

«Your brother Judas also did it» states Matthew.

«Andrew, too» says James of Alphaeus.

«Simon the Zealot, instead, cured a leper. Oh! he was not afraid of touching him! And he said to me: “Be not afraid. By the will of God, no physical disease will affect us”» says Bartholomew.

«You are right, Simon. And what about you two? » Jesus asks James of Zebedee and the Iscariot, who are a little farther away, the former talking to the three disciples of John, the latter being all alone and sulky.

«Oh! I did nothing» says James. But Judas worked three wonderful miracles: a blind man, a paralytic, a possessed man. He looked like a lunatic to me. But that is what people said... »

«And you are pulling a long face, when God has assisted you so much? » exclaims Peter.

«I can be humble as well» replies the Iscariot.

«And we were the guests of a Pharisee. I was rather embar-

rassed. But Judas knows how to deal with them and he really appeased the Pharisee. On the first day he was standoffish, but later... Is that right, Judas? »

Judas nods without speaking.

«Very well. And you will do better and better. We shall be all together next week. In the meantime... Simon, go and prepare the boats. You, too, James. »

«For everybody, Master? They will not hold us. »

«Can you not get another one? »

«Yes, if I ask my brother-in-law. I will go. »

«Go. And come back as soon as you are ready. And do not tell them too much. »

The four fishermen leave. The others go downstairs to get their sacks and mantles. <sup>4</sup>Manaen stays with Jesus. The boy continues to sleep. 271.4

«Master, are You going far? »

«I do not know yet... They are tired and depressed. I am, too. I am thinking of going to Tarichea, into the country, to be alone in peace... »

«I have my horse, Master. But, if You will allow me, I will come following the lake. Will You be there for long? »

«Perhaps the whole week, but not longer. »

«In that case, I will come. Master, bless me in this first departure. And relieve my heart of a burden. »

«Which, Manaen? »

«I feel remorse for leaving John. Perhaps if I had been there... »

«No. It was his hour. And he was certainly pleased to see you come to Me. Do not let that upset you. Nay, endeavour to get rid quickly and properly of the only burden you have: the gusto of being man. Become spiritual, Manaen. You can. You are capable of being so. Goodbye, Manaen. My peace be with you. We shall soon meet in Judaea. »

Manaen kneels down and Jesus blesses him. He then raises him and kisses him.

The others come back in and exchange greetings, both the apostles and John's disciples. The fishermen are the last to come.

«We are ready, Master. We can go. »

«Good. Say goodbye to Manaen Who is staying here until to-

morrow evening. Assemble the foodstuffs, take some water and let us go. Make as little noise as possible. »

Peter stoops to awake Marjiam.

«No, leave him. He might cry. I will pick him up» says Jesus and He gently lifts the boy who whimpers a little, but instinctively makes himself comfortable in Jesus' arms.

27. 5 <sup>5</sup>They put the lamps out. They go out closing the door. They go downstairs and on the threshold they say goodbye once again to Manaen, and then, in single file, along the moonlit street they go to the lake: a huge silvery mirror under the moon at its zenith. The three little lamps on the prows, which are already in the water, look like three red drops on the quiet mirror. They go on board, settling themselves in the boats, the fishermen being the last to embark. Peter and a servant are in the boat where Jesus is, John and Andrew in the second, James and a servant in the third one.

«Where are we going, Master? » asks Peter.

«To Tarichea. Where we landed\* after the miracle of the Gadarenes. It will not be boggy now. And it will be quiet. »

Peter sets sail and the other two boats sail in his wake. Nobody speaks. Only when they are in the open lake and Capernaum disappears in the moonlight and things present a uniform appearance in its silvery dust, Peter says, as if he were speaking to the tiller: «And I am glad. They will be looking for us, my dear, and thanks to you they will not find us. »

«To whom are you speaking, Simon? » asks Bartholomew.

«To my boat. Don't you know that she is like a bride for a fisherman? How much I have talked to her! More than to Porphirea. Master!... Is the boy well covered? It's damp on the lake at night... »

«Yes, he is. Listen. Simon. Come here. I want to speak to you. »

Peter entrusts the tiller to the ship boy and comes to Jesus.

«I said Tarichea. But it will be quite all right to be there after the Sabbath to say goodbye once again to Manaen. Could you not find a place nearby where we may stay in peace? »

«Oh! Master! In peace for us or also for the boats? For the boats we must go to Tarichea or to some harbour on the other

\* **we landed**, in 187. 1.

shore. But if You are referring to us, it is enough to go into the woods beyond the Jordan, where only wild animals will find You... and perhaps an odd fisherman who is watching nets. We can leave the boats at Tarichea. We shall be there at dawn and we will go away quickly beyond the ford. It is easy to wade it at this time of the year. »

«Very well. We will do that... »

«The world is disgusting You as well, eh? You prefer fish and mosquitoes, eh? You are right. »

«It does not disgust Me. One must not be disgusted. But I do not want you to stir up a scandal and I wish to find comfort in you on the Sabbath. »

«My Master!... » Peter kisses Jesus' forehead and goes away wiping a large tear that insisted in dropping out and streaming down to his beard. He goes back to his rudder heading south resolutely, while the moonlight fades as the planet sets behind a hill, concealing its huge face from the sight of men, but still making the sky white with its light and the lake silvery on the eastern coast. The rest is dark-indigo hardly distinguishable in the light of the prow lamp.

272. Reincarnation and eternal life  
in the dialogue with a scribe.

6<sup>th</sup> September 1945.

<sup>1</sup>When Jesus sets foot on the right bank of the Jordan, a good <sup>272</sup> 1 mile, probably more, from the little peninsula of Tarichea, where there is nothing but beautiful green country, because the ground, which is now dry, but moist in its depths, keeps also the weakest plants alive, He finds a large crowd waiting for Him.

His cousins come to meet Him with Simon Zealot: «Master, the boats have given us away... Perhaps Manaen also was a hint... »

«Master» says Manaen apologetically «I left at night so that no one could see me and I have not spoken to anyone. Believe me. Many of them asked me where You were. And my reply to everybody was: "He left". But I think the trouble was brought about by a fisherman who said that he had given You his boat... »

«That fool of my brother-in-law! » thunders Peter. «And I told him to keep his mouth shut! And I also said to him that we were going to Bethsaida! And I told him that if he said one word I would tear his beard off! And I will do it! I will, indeed. And what are we going to do now? That's the end of our peace, solitude and rest! »

«Be good, Simon, be good. We have already had our peaceful days. In any case I have attained part of what I intended: teach you, comfort and calm you to prevent offences and contrasts between you and the Pharisees of Capernaum. Now let us go to these people who are waiting for us, and reward their faith and love. Is their love not a relief, too? Hatred grieves us. But there is love here, so it is joy. »

Peter calms down like a wind that drops suddenly. And Jesus goes towards the crowd of sick people, who are waiting for Him so anxiously, that their desire seems engraved on their faces, and He heals them, one after the other, kindly, patiently. He goes also to a scribe who shows his little sick son to Him.

272. 2 <sup>2</sup>And it is the scribe who says to Him: «See? You are running away. But it is useless. Hatred and love are shrewd in finding. In this case, love has found You, as it is written\* in the Song of Songs. You are like the Beloved of the Songs. And they come to You as the maid of Shulam goes to her bridegroom, facing patrol guards and Amminadib's quadrigae. »

«Why do you say that? »

«Because it is true. It is dangerous to come because You are hated. Do You not know that Rome is watching out for You and the Temple hates You? »

«Why are you tempting Me, man? Your words are insidious, to take My answers back to Rome and to the Temple. I did not cure your son by deceit... »

The scribe, who has been reproached so gently, lowers his head confusedly and confesses: «I see that You can really read the hearts of men. Forgive me. I now see that You are truly holy. Forgive me, Yes, it is true, I came and the yeast that others put into my heart was fermenting within me... »

«And it had found in you the necessary heat to ferment. »

\* **is written**, especially in *The Song of Songs* 3, 1-4 (in 7, 1 the name of *Shulam* given to the bride is indicated).

«Yes, it is true... But now I am going away without any such yeast. That is, with a new leaven. »

«I know. I bear no grudge. Many are at fault through their own will, many through the will of other people. God, Who is just will judge them with different measures. Scribe, be just and do not corrupt in future as you were corrupted. When the pressure of the world will be urging you, look at the living grace, which is your son, who was rescued from death, and be grateful to God. »

«To You. »

«To God. All glory and praise to Him. I am His Messiah and I am the first to praise and glorify Him. And the first to obey Him. Because man does not degrade himself by honouring and serving God in truth, but he lowers himself by serving sin. »

«You are right. Do You always speak thus? To everybody? »

«Yes, to everybody. If I spoke to Annas, or to Gamaliel, or to a begging leper on a country path, the words would be the same because one is the Truth. »

«Speak, then, because everybody here is begging for a word or a grace of Yours. »

«I will. So that nobody may say that I am biased against those who are honest in their convictions. »

«Those I had are now dead. But it is true. I was honest in mine. I believed that I was serving God by fighting You. »

«You are sincere. And that is why you deserve to understand God, Who is never falsehood. But your convictions are not yet dead. I am telling you. They are like burned couch-grass. They seem to be dead superficially and have in fact received a hard blow that has exhausted them. But the roots are alive and the soil nourishes them. And the dew invites them to strike new rhizomes, which will emit fresh shoots. You must watch that that does not happen, otherwise you will be invaded once again by couch-grass. <sup>3</sup>Israel is a die-hard! »

«So Israel must die? Is it a wicked plant? »

«It must die to rise again. »

«A spiritual reincarnation? »

«A spiritual evolution. There is no reincarnation of any kind. »

«Some believe in it. »

«They are wrong. »

«Hellenism has spread such beliefs also among us. And learned people feed on them and are proud of them as if they were a most noble nourishment

«An absurd contradiction in those who cry anathema when one of the minor six hundred and thirteen precepts is neglected. »

«It is true. But that is how things are. People like to imitate even what they hates

«Well, imitate Me, seeing that you hate Me. And it would be better for you.

The scribe cannot help laughing at Jesus' witty remark. The people are listening open-mouthed and those who are farther away ask those who are near Jesus and the scribe to repeat their words.

«But, in confidence, what do You think of reincarnation? »

«That it is an error. I told you.

«There are some who maintain that the living originate from the dead and the dead from the living, because what exists cannot be destroyed.

«In fact, what is eternal cannot be destroyed. But tell Me. According to you, has the Creator limitations to Himself? »

«No, Master. To think that would be an abatement

«You are right. Can, then, one think that He allows a spirit to reincarnate because no more than so many spirits can exist? »

«One should not think so. Yet there are some who believe its

«And what is worse, Israel believes it. The thought of the immortality of the spirit, which is already a great one, even if it is joined to the error of a wrong evaluation by a pagan as to how such immortality takes place, ought to be perfect in an Israelite. Instead it becomes a small, low, guilty thought in those who believe in it in the terms of the heathen thesis. It is not the glory of a thought, which proves itself worthy of admiration by coming close to the Truth by itself and which therefore testifies to the composite nature of man, as it is in heathens, because of their intuition of an eternal life of the mysterious thing that is called soul and distinguishes us from brutes. But it is a degradation of the thought, which being acquainted with Divine Wisdom and the True God, becomes materialistic even in so highly a spiritual  
272. <sup>4</sup> thing. <sup>4</sup>A spirit transmigrates only from the Creator to the being and from the being to the Creator, to Whom it presents itself

after this life to receive a sentence of life or of death. That is the truth. And it remains forever where it is sent. »

«Do You not admit Purgatory\*?»

«Yes, I do. Why do you ask Me?»

«Because You say: "It remains where it is sent". Purgatory is temporary. »

«That is why in My thought I assimilate it to eternal Life. Purgatory is already "life". Stunned, tied, but always vital. After the temporary stay in Purgatory, the spirit reaches perfect Life, without any limitation or ties. Two things will remain: Heaven - the Abyss. Paradise - Hell. Two categories: the blessed - the damned. But from those three kingdoms\*\* that now exist, no spirit will ever come to clothe itself with flesh. And that until the final resurrection, which will end forever the incarnation of spirits in flesh, of the immortal in the mortal. »

«Not of the eternal?»

«God is Eternal. Eternity is to have no beginning and no end. And that is God. Immortality is to continue to live since when life began. And that is the spirit of man. That is the differences

«You say: "Eternal Life". »

«Yes. From the moment man is created to live, because of his spirit, through Grace and his own will, he can reach eternal Life. Not eternity. Life implies a beginning. We do not say "the Life of God", because God had no beginnings

«And what about Yourself?»

«I will live because I am also flesh and to My divine spirit I joined the soul of the Christ in the flesh of mans

«God is called\*\*\* the "Living God". »

«In fact He does not know death. He is Life. The endless Life. Not Life of God. Just Life. Only that. They are nuances, O scribe. But Wisdom and Truth clothe themselves in nuances.

<sup>5</sup>«Do You speak thus to Gentiles?»

272. 5

«No. They would not understand. I show them the Sun. But as

\* **Purgatory.** This word was unknown at that time, but it was known as a concept in *2 Maccabees 12, 45* (Vulgate: *12, 45-46*), therefore the Christian doctrine should be considered as the translation of that concept in modern language of the work by Valtorta. "Purification" of the soul as "preparation for joy" Jesus is still speaking in 524. 9.

\*\* **three kingdoms** that now exist, reflect triple awaiting in *limbo*, already mentioned in 223. 7.

\*\*\* **called**, for example in *Jeremiah 10, 10*.



I would show it to a boy, so far blind and silly, who had miraculously recovered sight and intelligence. Thus: like a star. Without going into the details of its composition. But you people of Israel are neither blind nor fools. For ages the finger of God has opened your eyes and cleared your minds... »

«That is true, Master. And yet we are blind and foolish. »

«You have made yourselves such. And you do not want the miracle of Him Who loves you. »

«Master... »

«It is the truth, scribe. »

The man lowers his head and is silent. Jesus leaves him and passes by and while doing so He caresses Marjiam and the scribe's little boy, who are playing with multi-coloured pebbles. Rather than preach He talks to this or that group. But He is continuously preaching as He resolves doubts, clarifies ideas, He sums up or expands on things already said or concepts only partly remembered by someone. And the hours go by thus...

### 273. The first multiplication of bread.

7<sup>th</sup> September 1945.

273 1

<sup>1</sup>The place is still the same. But the sun no longer shines from the east filtering through the undergrowth along the Jordan in this wild place where the water of the lake flows into the river bed. It shines, equally obliquely, from the west, while setting in a glorious red sky, streaked by its last rays. Under the thick foliage the light is quite moderate, tending to the peaceful evening hues. The birds, exhilarated by the sunshine they enjoyed all day and by the plentiful food they picked in the neighbouring country, are making an uproar of trills and songs on tree-tops. Evening is approaching with the final pomp of the day.

The apostles point it out to Jesus, Who always teaches according to the subjects presented to Him. «Master, evening is approaching. This is a desert place, far from houses and villages, it is shady and damp. In a short while it will not be possible to see or walk here. The moon rises late. Dismiss the people so that they may go to Tarichea or other villages along the Jordan to buy food and find lodgings. »

«They need not go. Give them something to eat. They can sleep here as they did when waiting for Me. »

«Master, You know that there are only five loaves left and two fish. »

«Bring them to Me. »

«Andrew, go and look for the boy. He is looking after the bag. A little while ago he was with the scribe's son and two more boys, intent on making garlands of flowers and playing at kings. »

<sup>2</sup>Andrew goes away at once. John and Philip also look for Marjiam among the crowds, who continuously change place. They find him almost simultaneously, with the bag of victuals across his back, a large shoot of clematis around his head and a belt of clematis from which an offshoot hangs, as a sword, the top being the hilt and the long stem its blade. There are seven boys with him, all wearing the same decorations, paying court to the scribe's son, a very thin child, with the serious countenance of one who has suffered very much, who is adorned with flowers more than the others and plays the king. 273. 2

«Come, Marjiam. The Master wants you! »

Marjiam leaves his friends and runs away without taking off his... floral insignia. But the other boys follow him and Jesus is soon surrounded by a circle of children wreathed with flowers. He caresses them while Philip takes a parcel out of the bag containing some loaves, which are wrapped together with two big fish: two kilograms of fish, or little more. They would not suffice for the seventeen people, nay eighteen, including Manaen, of Jesus' group. <sup>3</sup>They take the food to the Master.

«Very well. Now bring Me some baskets. Seventeen, as many as you are. Marjiam will hand the food to the children... » Jesus stares at the scribe who has always been near Him and asks: «Will you give food to the hungry people, too? » 273. 3

«I would like to. But I have none myself. »

«Give Mine. I will let you have it. »

«But... are You going to satisfy five thousand men, besides women and children, with those two fish and the five loaves? »

«Undoubtedly. Do not be incredulous. Those who believe will see the miracle being accomplished. »

«Oh! In that case I want to hand out the food, too! »

«Then, get someone to give you a basket as well. »

The apostles come back with baskets and hand-baskets, some of which are low and wide, others are deep and narrow. The scribe comes back with a rather small one. Obviously his faith or his incredulity made him pick that one as the largest required.

«Good. Leave everything here. Now get the crowds to sit in an orderly way, in rows, as far as possible»

And while they do that Jesus raises the loaves with the fish on top of them, offers them, prays and blesses them. The scribe does not take his eyes off Him for a moment. Jesus breaks the five loaves into eighteen parts; He makes also eighteen parts of the two fish, and puts a bit of fish: a tiny bit indeed, into each basket. He then breaks each of the eighteen bits of bread into morsels: each bit into many morsels. Relatively many; about twenty, not more. He then puts each bit which He has broken into morsels, into a basket, with the bit of fish.

273. 4 «Now take them and hand the food out to satiety. 4Go. Marjiam, hand the food out to your companions. »

«Ah! How heavy it is! » says Marjiam lifting his basket. He goes at once towards his little friends, walking like one who carries a heavy weight.

The apostles, disciples, Manaen, the scribe watch him go incredulously... They then pick up their baskets and shaking their heads they say to one another: «The boy is joking! They are the same weight as before. » And the scribe looks inside his basket, puts his hand into it searching for the bottom, because it is getting dark in the thicket where Jesus is, whereas farther away, in the glade, it is clear. However, notwithstanding their remarks, they go towards the people and begin to hand the food out. And they distribute... Now and again they look back at Jesus thoroughly astonished, as they move farther and farther away, and the Master leaning against a tree with folded arms, smiles subtly at their astonishment.

The distribution takes a long time and is plentiful... the only one who shows no surprise is Marjiam, who smiles and is happy to be able to fill the laps of so many poor children with bread and fish. He is also the first to go back to Jesus saying: «I have given out so much, so much!... because I know what it is to be hungry... » and he raises his little face, which is no longer emaciated, but, remembering, it blanches with wide open eyes... But Jesus

caresses him and a bright smile appears on his face, while he leans trustfully against Jesus, His Master and Protector.

The apostles and disciples come back slowly, dumbfounded with amazement. Last is the scribe who says nothing. But he makes a gesture that is more than a sermon. He kneels down and kisses the hem of Jesus' tunic.

«Take your share and give Me some. Let us eat the food of God. »

They eat, in fact, bread and fish, each according to his need...

<sup>5</sup>In the meantime the people, who are now sated, exchange their impressions. Also those around Jesus make their comments watching Marjiam, who finishes his food and plays with other children. 273. 5

«Master» asks the scribe, «why did the boy feel the weight at once, and we did not? I searched also inside. There were still the few morsels of bread and the only bit of fish. I began to feel the weight when I moved towards the crowd. But if it had weighed for what I gave out, it would have taken a pair of mules to carry it, not a basket, but a wagon packed with food. At the beginning I was dealing it out sparingly... but later I gave and gave... and as I did not want to be unfair, I went back to the first ones and gave them more, because I had given them little at first. And yet it was enough. »

«I also felt the basket was getting heavy when I set out, and I gave plenty at once because I realized that You had worked a miracle» says John.

«I, instead, stopped, I sat down and poured everything on my lap to see... And I saw loaves and loaves. I then went on» says Manaen.

«I even counted them, because I did not want to cut a bad figure. There were fifty small loaves. So I said: I will give them to fifty people and then I will go back». And I counted. But when I got to fifty, the weight was still the same. I looked inside. They were so many: I went on and I handed out hundreds of them. They never diminished» says Bartholomew.

«I, I must admit it, I did not believe, and I took the morsels of bread and the bit of fish in my hand and I looked at them saying: "What's the use of them? Jesus must have been joking!.. " and I looked at them over and over again, hiding behind a tree,

hoping and despairing to see them grow. But they were always the same. I was about to come back, when Matthew passed by saying: "Have you noticed how beautiful they are? ". "What? " I asked him. "The loaves and fish!... ". "Are you mad? I can only see morsels of bread". "Go and hand them out with faith, and you will see". I threw back into the basket the few morsels and I went reluctantly... And then... Forgive me, Jesus, because I am a sinner! » says Thomas.

«No. You are a worldly spirit. You reason according to the world. »

«I as well, Lord. So much so that I was thinking of giving a coin with the bread and I said to myself: "They will eat somewhere else"» says the Iscariot. «I was hoping to help You cut a finer figure. So what am I? Like Thomas or more? »

«You are much more "worldly" than Thomas. »

«And yet I was thinking of giving alms to be "heavenly"! It was my own personal money... »

«Alms to yourself, to your pride. And alms to God. But the latter does not need them and it is a sin to give alms to your pride, not a merit. »

Judas lowers his head and becomes silent.

«I, instead, thought that I had to crumble the morsel of fish and the morsel of bread, so that they would suffice. I did not doubt they would be sufficient, both with regard to numbers and nourishment. A drop of water given by You can be more nourishing than a banquet» says Simon Zealot.

«And what did you think? » Peter asks Jesus' cousins.

«We remembered Cana... and did not doubt» replies Judas seriously.

«And you, James, My dear brother, were you only thinking of that? »

«No, I thought it was a sacrament, as You told me\*... Is it so or am I wrong? »

Jesus smiles: «It is and it is not. Your thought of a remote figure is to be added to the truth concerning the power of nourishment in a drop of water, mentioned by Simon. But it is not yet a sacrament. »

\* told me, in 259. 3/6

<sup>6</sup>The scribe is holding a crumb in his hand.

«What are you going to do with it?»

«A... souvenir.»

«I will keep one too. I will put it around Marjiam's neck in a little bag» says Peter.

«And I will take it to our mother» says John.

«And what about us? We have eaten it all... » say the others sorrowfully.

«Stand up. Go round again with the baskets and collect the scraps remaining, select the poorest people and bring them here with the baskets. And then, you, My disciples, will go to the boats and set sail going to the plain of Gennesaret. I will dismiss the crowds after assisting the poorer people and I will join you later.»

The apostles obey... and they come back with twelve baskets full of remnants of food and followed by about thirty beggars or very poor people.

«Very well. You may go now.»

The apostles and John's disciples say goodbye to Manaen and go away leaving Jesus rather reluctantly. But they obey. Manaen stays with Jesus until the crowd, in the last light of the day, set out towards villages or look for a place where to sleep among the tall dry bog grass. He then takes leave of the Master. The scribe has gone before him, in fact he was one of the first, as he left with his son following the apostles.

<sup>7</sup>When they have all gone or fallen asleep, Jesus stands up, <sup>273. 7</sup> blesses the sleepers, and walking with slow steps He goes towards the lake, to the little peninsula of Tarichea, a few yards above the lake, like an indented hill protruding on it. And when He reaches the foot of it, without entering the town, but going round it, He climbs the hill, and stops on a crest, praying in front of the blue lake and in the peace of the serene moonlit night.

<sup>8</sup>Jesus says: "You will put here the vision dated March 4th <sup>273. 8</sup> 1944: Jesus walks on the water.»

274. Jesus walks on water. His rapidity  
in assisting those who invoke Him.

4<sup>th</sup> March 1944.

274. 1 <sup>1</sup>It is late in the evening, almost night, because I can hardly see on the path that climbs up a hillock studded with trees, things which I think are olives. But the light is so faint that I am not sure. The trees are not tall, but they are leafy and twisted, characteristically olive.

Jesus is alone. He is wearing a white tunic and a dark blue mantle. He climbs and enters the grove. He is striding resolutely. He is not walking fast, but as He strides, He goes a long way without rushing. He walks until He reaches a kind of natural balcony overlooking the lake, which is peaceful and quiet in the light of the stars already crowding the sky like bright eyes. Silence surrounds Jesus with its restful embrace. It detaches Him from the crowds and from the earth, making Him forget them and uniting Him to the sky, which seems to descend to worship the Word of God and caress Him with the light of its stars.

He is praying in His usual posture: standing with His arms stretched out crosswise. There is an olive-tree behind Him and He seems to be already crucified to its dark trunk. Tall as He is, the leafy branches are only a little above Him and they replace the inscription on the Cross with a word consonant to the Christ. There: *King of the Jews*. Here: *Prince of Peace*. The peaceful olive-tree speaks the truth to those who can understand it. He prays for a long time. He then sits at the foot of the tree, on a thick protruding root, and assumes His usual position with His hands interlocked and His elbows resting on His knees. He meditates. I wonder into which conversation He falls with His Father and the Spirit, now that He is alone and can be entirely of God. God with God!

I think that many hours go by thus because I see that stars have changed their position and many have already set in the west.

274 2 <sup>2</sup>Just when the appearance of light, or rather of luminosity, because it cannot be called light as yet, becomes visible on the remote eastern horizon, a puff of wind shakes the olive-tree. It calms down. It carries on blowing and is stronger and becomes

more and more violent at short intervals. The light of dawn, which has just begun, finds it difficult to make its way because of a mass of dark clouds, which have invaded the sky, driven by stronger and stronger gusts of wind. The lake is no longer calm either. I think it is preparing a storm like the one\* I already saw in the vision of the tempest. The noise of the leafy branches and the roar of the water now fill the air, which a little while ago was so calm.

Jesus is aroused from His meditation. He stands up and looks at the lake. He scans it in the light of the remaining stars and of the poor sickly dawn and sees the boat of Peter, which is striving hard to reach the opposite shore, but cannot make it. Jesus pulls His mantle tight around Himself, lifting over His head, as if it were a hood, the hanging hem, which would hinder His descent, and runs down, not the road He came up, but a very steep path, which leads straight to the lake. He runs so fast that He seems to be flying.

When He reaches the shore lashed by the waves, which leave on the shingle an edge of fluffy rustling foam, He continues to walk fast, as if He were treading not on a restlessly tossing liquid element, but on the smoothest most solid pavement on the earth. He now becomes light. All the faint light that still comes from the few dying stars and the stormy dawn seems to converge on Him gathering like phosphorescence around His slender body. He flies over the waves, the foamy crests and the dark folds between the waves, with His arms stretched forward, while His mantle swells around His cheeks and flaps as much as possible, tight as it is around His body, like a wing.

<sup>3</sup>The apostles see Him and utter a cry of fear, which the wind carries towards Jesus. 274 3

«Be not afraid. It is I.» Jesus' voice, although the wind is against Him, is carried clearly over the lake.

«Is it really You, Master?» asks Peter. «If it is You, tell me to come and meet You, walking on the water like You.»

Jesus smiles: «Come» He says simply, as if to indicate that to walk on the water were the most natural thing in the world.

And Peter, half naked as he is, wearing only a short sleeveless

\* like the one, described in 185. 3.



tunic, jumps overboard and walks towards Jesus.

But when he is about fifty yards from the boat and as many from Jesus, he is seized with fear. So far his love impetus supported him. Now his human nature overwhelms him and... he fears for his own skin. Like one who is on a slippery ground, or better still, on quicksand, he begins to stagger, to grope, to sink. And the more he gropes and fears, the more he sinks

274. 4 <sup>4</sup>Jesus has stopped and looks at him. He is serious and waits. But He does not stretch out even one hand; His arms are folded and He does not take one step or utter one word.

Peter is sinking. His malleoli, shins, knees disappear. The water reaches up to his inguen, rises above it, up to his waist. Terror is on his face. Terror also paralyses his thoughts. He is nothing but flesh afraid of sinking. He does not even think of swimming. Nothing. He is hebetated by fear.

At last he decides to look at Jesus. And as soon as he looks at Him, his mind begins to reason and see where salvation is. «Master, my Lord, save me. »

Jesus opens His arms and as if He were carried by the wind or by the waves, He rushes towards the apostle and holds out His hand saying: «Oh! what a man of little faith. Why did you doubt Me? Why did you want to do it by yourself? »

Peter who had clutched convulsively at Jesus' hand, does not reply. He looks at Him only to ascertain whether He is angry, with a mixture of remaining fear and rising repentance.

But Jesus smiles at him and holds him firmly by the wrist, until they reach the boat and step overboard into it. Then Jesus orders: «Go to the shore. He is soaked through. » And He smiles looking at the mortified disciple.

The waves smooth down making it easy to land and the town seen in the past from the height of a hill now looms beyond the shore.

The vision ends here.

274 5 <sup>5</sup>Jesus says:

«Many times I do not even wait to be called, when I see My children in danger. And many times I rush to help a son who is ungrateful to Me.

You are asleep or you are seized by the worries and anxieties

of life. I watch and pray for you. I am the Angel of all men and I look after you and nothing grieves Me more than the impossibility of interference because you refuse My intervention, because you prefer to act on your own, or, worse still, you ask the Evil one to help you. Like a father who hears his son say to him: "I do not love you. I do not want you. Go out of my house", I am mortified and I suffer more than I did because of My wounds. But if you do not say to Me: "Go away", and you are absent-minded only because of the worries of life, then I am the Eternal Watchman ready to come even before he is called. And if I wait for you to say a word, as I sometimes do, it is only to hear you call Me.

How pleasant, how sweet it is to hear men call Me. To hear that they remember that I am the "Saviour". I will not mention the infinite joy that pervades and exalts Me when there is someone who loves Me and calls Me without being in need. He calls Me because he loves Me more than he loves anybody else in the world and is filled with joy, as I am, only by calling: "Jesus, Jesus", as children call: "Mummy, mummy" and they taste the sweetness of honey on their lips, because the simple word "mummy" has in itself the taste of motherly kisses.

<sup>6</sup>The apostles were rowing obeying My order to go and wait 274. 6 for Me at Capernaum. And I, after the miracle of the loaves, went away from the crowds, all alone, not because I disdained them or because I was tired. I never disdained men, not even when they were bad to Me. I became indignant only when I saw the Law trampled on or the house of God desecrated. But then the interests of the Father were involved, not I. And I was on the earth as the first of the servants of God, to serve the Father of Heaven. I was never tired in devoting Myself to the crowds, even when I saw them so dull, sluggish and human as to dishearten even those who had most confidence in their mission. Nay, just because they were so deficient I multiplied My lesson infinitely, I treated them exactly as backward pupils and I guided their spirits in the most elementary discoveries and initiations, just as a patient master guides the inexpert hands of pupils to form the first letters and thus enable them to understand and write. How much love have I given to crowds! I took them by the flesh to lead them to the spirit. I began from the flesh as well. But while Satan through it leads to Hell, I lead to Heaven.

I wanted to be all alone to thank the Father for the miracle of the loaves. Thousands of people had been fed. And I exhorted them to say: "Thanks" to the Lord. But once a man has been  
274. 7 helped, he forgets to say "thanks". I said it on their behalf. 7And afterwards... And afterwards I had merged with My Father, for Whose love I was infinitely sick. I was on the earth, but like a lifeless hide. My soul was thrust towards My Father, Whom I felt leaning on His Word, and I said to Him: "I love You, Holy Father! ". It was a joy to Me to say to Him: "I love You". To say so as a Man besides as God. I humiliated My feelings as Man, as I offered Him My palpitation as God. I seemed to be the magnet that attracted all the love of men, of men capable of loving God a little and that I gathered all such love and offered it from the bottom of My Heart. I seemed to be the only one to exist: I, the Man, that is the human race, conversing once again with God, in the cool of the evening, as on the innocent days.

But although My blessedness was complete, because it was a blessedness of love, it did not abstract Me from the needs of men. And I became aware of the danger of My children on the lake, And I left Love for the sake of love. *Charity must be speedy.*

They confused Me with a ghost. Oh! how often, My poor children, you with ghost, for a frightening object! If you always thought of Me, you would know Me at once. But you have other ghosts in your hearts, and that makes you dizzy. But I make Myself known. Oh! if you only listened to Me!

274. 8 <sup>8</sup>Why was Peter sinking after walking so far? You said it: *because his human nature overwhelmed his spirit.*

Peter was very much a "man". Had it been John, he would not have dared immoderately, neither would he have changed his mind. Purity grants prudence and strength. But Peter was "man" in the full meaning of the word. He was anxious to excel, to show that "nobody" loves the Master as he does, he wanted to impose himself, and only because he was one of Mine, he thought he was above the weakness of the flesh. Instead, poor Simon, his results, when he was tested, were far from being sublime. But it was necessary, that he might be later the one who was to perpetuate the mercy of the Master in the dawning Church.

Peter is not only overwhelmed by fear for his endangered life, but, as you said, he becomes nothing but "trembling flesh". He no

longer thinks, he no longer looks at Me. You all do the same. The more impending is the danger, the more you want to do things by yourselves. As if you were able to do things! You never go away from Me, or your hearts to Me or even curse Me, as in the hours when you ought to hope in Me and call Me. Peter does not curse Me. But he forgets Me and I have to impose My will to call his spirit to Me, so that he may look at his Master and Saviour.

I absolve him beforehand of his sin of doubt, because I love him, as this impulsive man, once he is confirmed in grace, will be able to proceed without any further perturbation or tiredness as far as martyrdom, and will be indefatigable in casting his mystical net to take souls to his Master. And when he invokes Me, I do not walk, I fly to help him and I hold him tight to lead him to salvation. My reproach is a mild one because I understand the extenuating circumstances of Peter. I am the best advocate and judge there is and there has ever been. On behalf of everybody.

<sup>9</sup>I understand you, My poor children! And even when I say a word of reproach, My smile mitigates it. I love you. That is all. I want you to have faith. And if you do have it, I will come and take you out of danger. Oh! if the Earth could say: "Master, Lord, save me! ". One cry, of the whole Earth, would be enough, and Satan and his sectarians would be immediately defeated. But you do not know how to have faith. I am multiplying the means to lead you to faith. But they fall into your slime as a stone falls into the slime of a marsh and are buried there. 274. 9

You do not want to purify the water of your souls, you prefer to be putrid filth. It does not matter. I do My duty as the Eternal Saviour. And even if I cannot save the world because the world does not want to be saved, I will save from the world those who in order to love Me, as I am to be loved, are no longer of the world. »

[...]

275. Four new disciples. Discussions  
on the works of bodily and spiritual mercy.

8<sup>th</sup> September 1945.

<sup>1</sup>Jesus is in the Korazim plain, along the upper Jordan valley, between the lakes of Gennesaret and Merom. The country is cov- 275. 1

ered with vineyards and it is already vintage time.

He must have been there for some days, because the disciples who were at Sicaminon have joined Him this morning, and among them there is Stephen with Hermas. Isaac apologises for not coming earlier, because, he says, the new disciples and his uncertainty whether he should bring them or not caused the delay. «But» he says «I thought that the way to Heaven is open to all those of goodwill and these two, although they are pupils of Gamaliel, seem to be so. »

«You are right and you have done the right thing. Bring them here. »

Isaac goes away and comes back with the two disciples.

«Peace to you. Has the apostolic word seemed so true to you that you have decided to join it? »

«Yes, and Yours above all. Do not send us away, Master. »

«Why should I? »

«Because we are disciples of Gamaliels

«So what? I honour the great Gamaliel and I would like him to be with Me, because he is worthy of it. That is all he lacks to make his wisdom perfect. What did he say to you when you left him? Because you certainly said goodbye to him. »

«Yes, he said to us: “You are lucky that you can believe. Pray that I may forget in order to remember”. »

The apostles who have gathered around Jesus inquisitively, look at one another and ask whispering: «What does he mean? What does he want? To forget in order to remember? »

Jesus hears their whispering and explains: «He wants to forget his wisdom to take on Mine. He wants to forget that he is rabbi Gamaliel, to remember that he is a son of Israel awaiting the Christ. He wants to forget himself, to remember the Truth. »

«Gamaliel is not untruthful, Master» replies Hermas apologetically.

«No, he is not. But it is the medley of poor human words which is untruthful. Words taking the place of the Word. You must forget them, divesting yourselves of them and come to the Truth as pure as virgins in order to be re clothed and fecundated. Humbleness is required for that. The difficulty... »

«Then, we must forget as well? »

«Undoubtedly. You must forget everything pertaining to man.

And remember what pertains to God. Come. You can do it. »

«We *want* to do it» confirms Hermas.

«Have you already lived as disciples? »

«Yes, we have. Since the day we heard the Baptist had been killed. The news spread very rapidly in Jerusalem, where it was brought by Herod's courtiers and commanders. His death aroused us from our torpidity» replies Stephen.

«The blood of martyrs is always a new life for torpid people, Stephen. Remember that. »

«Yes, Master. <sup>2</sup>Will You speak today? I hunger for Your word. » 275. 2

«I have already spoken. But I will speak again, and very much, to you disciples. Your companions, the apostles, have already begun their mission, after due preparation. But they are not sufficient for the needs of the world. And everything is to be done in good time. I am like one who has an expiry date and must do everything within that date. I ask you all to help Me, and in the name of God I promise you help and a glorious future. »

Jesus' keen eyes discovers a man completely wrapped in a linen mantle: «Are you not John, the priest? »

«Yes, Master. The hearts of the Jews are more arid than the cursed large valley: I ran away looking for You. »

«And your priesthood? »

«Leprosy expelled me from it the first time. Men, the second time, because I love You. Your Grace draws me to itself: to You. It expels me as well, from a desecrated place to a pure one. You have purified me, Master, both in my body and in my soul. And what is pure cannot and must not approach what is impure. It would be an offence to Him, Who purified. »

«Your judgement is severe, but not unfair. »

«Master, unpleasant family matters are known to those who live in the family and should be mentioned only to righteous-minded people. You are so, and in any case You know. I would not tell anybody else. Here we are: You, the apostles, I and two who know as well as You and I do. So... »

«A11 right. But... Oh! You are here, too? Peace be with you. Have you come to hand out more food? »

«No, I came to have some of Your food. »

«Have your crops been spoiled? »

«Oh! no. They have never been so plentiful. But, my Master, I

am looking for another bread and a different crop: Yours. And I brought with me the leper whom You cured in my fields. He came back to his master. But both he and I have a master to follow and serve: You. »

«Come: one, two, three, four... A good harvest! But have you taken into consideration your position at the Temple? You know, and I know... and I will say no more. »

«I am a free man and I go with whoever I wish» says John the priest.

«So am I» says the last arrival: John, the scribe, who dealt out the food\* at the foot of the Mount of Beatitudes on the Sabbath.

«And we are free, too» state Hermas and Stephen.

And Stephen adds: «Speak to us, Lord. We do not know what our mission exactly consists in. Give us the least necessary to enable us to serve You at once. The rest will come as we follow You. »

«Yes. On the mountain You spoke of the beatitudes. And that was a lesson for us. But what are we to do with regards to other people, in our second love, the love for our neighbour? » asks John, the scribe.

<sup>3</sup>«Where is John of Endor? » is Jesus' only answer.

275.3

«He is over there, Master, with the people who have been cured. »

«Let him come here. »

John of Endor goes at once. Jesus lays His hand on John's shoulder as a special greeting and says: «Here you are. I will now speak. But I want you, who bear a holy name, to be in front of Me. You, My apostle; you, a priest; you, a scribe; You, John of the Baptist; and finally, you, to complete the sequence of graces granted by God. And if you are the last one to be mentioned by Me, you know that you are not the last one in My heart. One day I promised you this speech. You will now have it. »

And Jesus, as He is wont, climbs a little mound, so that everybody may see Him, and the five Johns are in the first row in front of Him. Behind them there is a group of disciples mingled with the crowds who have come from every part of Palestine seeking health or doctrine.

\* the food, as narrated in 175. 4/5.

<sup>4</sup>«May peace be with you all and wisdom upon you.

275. 4

Listen. One day, a long time ago, a man asked Me whether and to what extent is God merciful towards sinners. It was a sinner who asked that question, and although he had been forgiven he could not believe that God had forgiven him completely.

And I soothed his anxiety by means of parables, I assured and promised him that for his sake I would always speak of mercy, so that his repentant heart, which wept within him like a lost child, should feel sure of being already in the possession of his Father in Heaven.

God is Mercy because God is Love. A servant of God must be merciful to imitate God.

God makes use of mercy to attract to Himself His children led astray. A servant of God must make use of mercy as a means of taking misguided men back to God.

The precept of love is compulsory for everybody. But it must be three times so in the servants of God. No one will conquer Heaven if one does not love. That is all that is necessary to say to believers. But to the servants of God I say: "You cannot make believers conquer Heaven if you do not love them with perfect love". And who are you, who are crowding here around Me? Most of you are children of God aiming at perfect life, at the blessed, hard, bright life of the servant of God and minister of the Christ.

And which are your duties in such lives of servants and ministers? Complete love for God and complete love for your neighbour. Your aim is to serve. How? Taking back to God those whom the world, flesh, the demon have stolen from God. By which means? By love. Love, which can be active in a thousand ways, and has but one purpose: to make people love.

<sup>5</sup>Let us consider our beautiful Jordan. How imposing it is at Jericho! But was it like that at its sources? No. It was just a trickle of water and would have remained such if it had always been alone. Instead from the mountains and hills on both sides of its valley, thousands of tributaries, either alone or made up by many rivulets, flow into its bed, and it grows more and more from the little silvery blue stream so pleasant and joyful in its infancy until it becomes the large solemn placid river, flowing like a sky-blue ribbon between its fertile emerald banks.

275. 5

Such is love. It is initially a tiny stream among the infants on



the Way of Life, who can just avoid serious sins for fear of punishment, but subsequently, as they proceed on the way to perfection, many brooks of this main virtue, by will of love, appear from the rugged, arid, proud, harsh mountains of mankind and everything helps to make it rise and gush out: sorrows and joy, just as upon the mountains the frozen snow and the sun melting it, form rivers. Everything helps to open the way for them: humbleness as well as repentance. Everything serves to convey them to the initial river. Because a soul, thrust onto that Way, loves to have its *ego* destroyed, and aspires to rise again drawn by the Sun-God, after becoming a beautiful, mighty, beneficial river.

The brooks that nourish the embryonic stream of awesome love, are, besides virtues, the deeds that virtues teach men to accomplish: deeds, which being streams of love, are deeds of mercy. Let us consider them together. Some were already known to Israel, some will be made known to you by Me, because My law is the perfection of love.

275. 6 <sup>6</sup>To *feed the hungry*.

It is a duty of gratitude and love. And a duty of imitation. Children are grateful to their father for the bread he procures for them. And when they are grown into men, they imitate him by procuring with their work bread for their own sons and for their father, by now unable to work, because of his age, an affectionate fair return of the good received. The fourth commandment states: "Honour your father and mother". One honours their old age by ensuring they do not have to beg for bread of others. But the first commandment comes before the fourth: "Love God with your whole being" and the second: "Love your neighbours as you love yourself". To love God in Himself and to love Him in one's neighbour is to be perfect. One loves Him by giving bread to those who are hungry, remembering how many times He appeased man's hunger through miracles.

But without taking into account the gifts of manna and quails, let us consider the continuous miracle of corn, which germinates through the bounty of God Who gave men lands suitable to be cultivated and He adjusts and control winds, rain, heat, seasons, so that the seed may become an ear of wheat and the wheat bread. And was it not a miracle of His mercy the fact that by supernatural light He taught His guilty child that the tall

slender grass, ending in golden ears of seed smelling of the warm sun, enclosed in a hard cover of thorny scales, was food, which man had to pick, hull, pulverise, knead and bake? God taught man all that. And He taught him how to pick it, husk it, pound it, knead and bake it. He placed stones near the ears and water near the stone and by means of the reflection of water and sun He lit the first fire on the earth and the wind blew onto the fire some grains of wheat which were roasted smelling pleasantly, so that man might understand that wheat is better when toasted by fire, than as it is in the ear, as birds eat it, or soaked in water, after being pulverised, as a sticky mash. Now that you eat the good bread baked in the family oven, do you not consider how much mercy is shown by the achievement of so much perfection in baking, and how much progress human knowledge has made from the first ear chewed as horses do, to the bread of today? And by whom? By the Giver of bread. And the same applies to all kinds of food, which man, through beneficial enlightenment, has been able to single out among the plants and animals, which the Creator spread over the earth, a place of fatherly punishment for His guilty child.

Thus, to give something to eat to the hungry is a prayer of gratitude to the Lord and Father, Who satisfies our hunger, and it is imitating the Father, Whose likeness was gratuitously granted to us, and which we must continuously increase by imitating His action.

*7To give drink to the thirsty.*

275. 7

Have you ever thought what would happen if the Father did not let rain fall on the earth? And if He said: "Because of your harsh unkindness towards the thirsty I will stop clouds from descending upon the earth" could we protest and curse? Water, more than wheat, belongs to God. Because wheat is cultivated by man, but only God cultivates the fields of clouds, which descend as rain or dew, fog or snow, nourishing fields and cisterns, filling rivers and lakes, giving shelter to fish, which appease man's hunger with other animals. If someone asks you: "Give me a drink" can you say to him: "No. This water is mine and I will not let you have it"? Liars! Which of you made a snowflake or one single drop of rain? Which of you evaporated a dew-diamond with his astral heat? No one. It is God Who does that. And if water de-

scends from the sky and re ascends there, it is only because God controls that part of creation as He controls the rest.

Give, therefore, the good cool water of the springs of the earth, or the pure water of your well, or the water that filled your cisterns to those who are thirsty. It is the water of God. And it is for everybody. Give it to the thirsty. For such a small deed, which costs you no money and involves no work except the handing of a cup or a jug, I tell you that you will receive a reward in Heaven. Because, not the water, but the charitable action is great in the eyes and judgement of God.

275. 8 *8To clothe the poor.*

Nude, shameful, pitiful miseries pass along the roads of the earth: forlorn old people, people disabled by disease or misfortune, lepers coming back to life through the Lord's bounty, widows laden with children, people deprived of every comfort by mishaps and innocent little orphans. If My eyes scan the vast earth, I can see everywhere people who are naked or covered with rags, which hardly protect their decency but do not shelter them from the cold. And all those poor people look with downcast eyes at the wealthy people who pass by wearing soft garments and comfortable shoes. Downcast eyes and kindness in good people, downcast eyes and hatred in those who are not so good. Why do you not assist their dejection, making the good ones better, by means of your love, and destroying hatred in those who are less good?

Do not say: "I have only enough for myself". As in the case of bread, there is always something more than what is necessary on the tables and in the wardrobes of people who are not entirely forsaken. Among those who are now listening to Me, there is more than one who from a cast-off garment made clothes for an orphan or a poor boy and out of an old bed sheet made swaddling-bands for an innocent baby who had none and there is one, a beggar, who for years shared the bread begged for with so much difficulty, with a leper who could not go and beg for it at the doorstep of rich people. And I solemnly tell you that such merciful people are not found among the wealthy, but among the poor humble classes who know by their own experience how painful is poverty.

Here again, as for water and bread, consider that wool and

linen with which you dress yourselves, come from animals and plants, which the Father created not only for the rich, but for all men. Because God gave man only one wealth: His Grace, health and intelligence. Not the filthy wealth, which is gold, elevated by you to a useless nobility, whilst as a metal it is not more beautiful than any other and it is much more useless than iron, with which you make spades and ploughs, harrows and sickles, chisels, hammers, saws and planes, the holy tools for holy work. And you elevated it to false nobility through the instigation of Satan who has made you, the children of God, as wild as beasts. God had given you the riches of what is holy to make you more and more holy! Not this murderous wealth, which sheds so much blood and so many tears.

And give as it was given to you. Give in the name of the Lord without being afraid of remaining naked. It would be better to die of cold, after stripping yourselves in favour of a beggar, than chill your hearts, even if clad in soft garments, through lack of charity. The warmth of a good action accomplished is more pleasant than the comfort of a mantle of pure wool and the clad bodies of poor people speak to God saying: "Bless those who have clothed us".

<sup>275. 9</sup> If to satisfy people's hunger and quench their thirst and clothe the poor joins holy temperance and blessed justice to most holy charity, so that the destiny of our unhappy brothers is modified through our holiness, when we give what we abound in, with God's leave, on behalf of those who are deprived of it through the wickedness of man or through diseases, to give hospitality to pilgrims joins charity to confidence and to the esteem of our neighbour. And that is a virtue, too, you know. A virtue that denotes honesty, besides charity, in those who possess it. Because he who is honest acts righteously, and as we generally think that other people act as we do, so the confidence and simplicity believing that the words of other people are true, show that he who listens to them is one who speaks the truth in important and small matters and does not distrust what other people tell him.

Why should one think of the pilgrim who is asking for shelter: "And what about if he is a thief or a murderer? ". Are you so attached to your wealth, as to be afraid, because of it, of every stranger who arrives at your house? Are you so attached to your

lives as to shudder with horror at the thought of being deprived of them? What? Do you think that God cannot defend you from robbers? What? Are you afraid that a passer-by may be a robber, and you are not afraid of the evil guest who robs you of what cannot be replaced? How many give hospitality to the demon in their hearts! I could say: everybody shelters capital sin, yet nobody fears that. Are wealth and life the only valuable things? Is perhaps eternity not more valuable since you allow sin to rob you of it and kill it? O poor souls, robbed of their treasure and handed over to killers, as if they were trifles, whilst houses are locked and bolted, protecting with dogs and safes things that we cannot take with us when we die!

Why should we see a robber in every pilgrim? We are all brothers. Houses should be open to brothers passing by. Is a pilgrim not of our same blood? Of course he is! He is of the blood of Adam and Eve. Is he not our brother? Why not? The Father is one only: God, Who has given each of us an identical soul, as the father only gives the children of the same marriage the same blood. Is he poor? Ensure that your spirit, deprived of the Lord's friendship, may not be poorer than he is. Are his clothes torn? Ensure that your soul may not be more torn by sin. Are his feet covered with mud or dust? Ensure that your ego may not be more worn by vices, than his dirty sandal has been worn by so much walking. Is his appearance unpleasant? Make sure that yours is not more unpleasant in the eyes of God. Does he speak a foreign language? Make sure that the language of your hearts is not incomprehensible in the city of God.

You must see a brother in each pilgrim. We are all pilgrims going towards Heaven and we all knock at the doors along the way to Heaven. And the doors are the patriarchs, the just, the angels and archangels, whom we implore to help and protect us, so that we may reach our goal, without becoming exhausted and dropping into the darkness of night, into the rigours of ice-cold weather, the preys of insidious wolves and jackals, of wicked passions and demons. As we want angels and saints to show us their love by giving us shelter and strength to proceed on our way, so let us do likewise to the pilgrims of the earth. And each time we open our homes and our arms, greeting a stranger with the sweet word of brother, and thinking of God, Who knows him,

I tell you that we will have gone many miles along the way leading to Heaven.

*<sup>10</sup>To visit the sick.*

275. 10

Truly, as men are pilgrims, so they are sick. And the sickness of the soul is the most serious, it is invisible and lethal. And yet people are not disgusted by it. A moral sore is not disgusting. The stench of vice is not nauseating. Demoniac frenzy is not frightening. The gangrene of a spiritual leper does not make anyone sick. The sepulchre full of rotteness of a man whose soul is dead and putrefied does not make anybody run away. He who approaches such impurities is not anathematised. How poor and narrow is the thought of man! But tell Me: which is worth more, the spirit, or blood and flesh? Can matter corrupt what is immaterial simply by being close to it? No, I tell you it cannot. The value of the spirit is infinite as compared to flesh and blood, that is true; but the flesh is not more powerful than the spirit. And the spirit can be corrupted by spiritual things, not by material ones. If a man takes care of a leper, his spirit does not become leprous; on the contrary, because of his charity practised heroically, to the extent of segregating himself in the valley of death out of pity for his brother, every stain of sin will be removed from him. Because charity is absolution from sin and the first purification.

Always bear in mind the following principle: "What would I like done to me, if I were like him? ". And act as you would like other people to act on your behalf. Israel still has its ancient laws. But the day will come, and its dawn is no longer very far, when men will worship, as the symbol of absolute beauty, the image of One, Who will be the material repetition of the Man of sorrows of Isaiah and the Tortured Victim of David's psalm, Who will become the Redeemer of mankind, because He made Himself similar to a leper, and all those who are parched with thirst, ill, exhausted, weeping on the earth will hasten towards His wounds as deer rush to springs of water. And He will quench their thirst, will cure them, restore them, will comfort their souls and bodies, and the best believers will yearn to be like Him, covered with wounds, shedding their blood, beaten, crowned with thorns, crucified for the sake of men to be redeemed, continuing as the work of the King of kings and Redeemer of the world.

You, who are still Israel, but are already putting on wings to

fly to the Kingdom of Heaven, begin to consider, as from this moment, this new conception and evaluation of sickness, and while blessing God for keeping you in good health, bend over those who are suffering and dying. One of My apostles said one day to one of his brothers: "Do not be afraid to touch lepers. No disease will attack us by God's will". He was right. God protects His servants. But even if you were infected when curing sick people, you would be placed, in the next life, among the martyrs of love.

275. 11 *11 To visit prisoners.*

Do you think that there are only criminals on galleys? One eye of human justice is blind and the other suffers from sight trouble, so that it mistakes camels for clouds and a snake for a flowery branch. It judges erroneously. Even more so because those who preside over it often deliberately stir up clouds of smoke, so that it may see more erroneously. But even if prisoners were all robbers or killers, it would be wrong for us to become robbers and murderers by depriving them of the hope of forgiveness through our scorn.

Poor prisoners! They dare not raise their eyes to God, laden as they are with their crimes. Their fetters really hurt their souls more than their feet. Woe to them if they despair of God! To the crime against their neighbour they would add the sin of despairing of forgiveness. The galley is expiation, just as dying on the scaffold. But it is not sufficient to pay what is due to human society for the crime committed. It is necessary to pay also and above all what is due to God, in order to expiate and have eternal life. But he who, rebels and despairs, expiates only with regards to society. Let the convict or prisoner have the love of his brothers. It will be light in the dark. It will be a voice. A hand pointing upwards while the voice says: "May my love tell you that God also loves you, as He put in my heart this love for you, my unfortunate brother" and light enables men to see God, their merciful Father.

Let your charity go with greater reason to comfort the martyrs of human injustice: both those utterly innocent and those who have been led to kill by a cruel force. Do not judge what has already been judged. You do not know why man was driven to kill. You do not realize that many times the man who kills is nothing but a dead person, an automaton devoid of reason, because a bloodless murder has deprived him of reason with cruel coward-

ly betrayal. God knows. That is enough. In the next life many galley-slaves, murderers and robbers will be seen in Heaven whereas many, who seemed to have been robbed and killed, will be seen in Hell, because in actual fact the pseudo victims were the true robbers of the peace, honesty and trust of other people and the true murderers of hearts. They were victims only because they were the last to be struck, after they had been striking covertly for years. Murder and theft are sins. But between one who kills and robs because he is led to such crimes by others and later repents, and one who induces others to sin and does not repent, the latter will be punished more severely, because he persuades others to commit sin and does not feel remorse.

Thus, by not passing judgement on them, be compassionate to prisoners. Always bear in mind that if all the murders and thefts of men were to be punished, few men and women would not die in galleys and on the scaffold. What shall we call those mothers who conceive but do not wish to give birth to the fruit of their wombs? Oh! Do not let us pun! Let us call them frankly by their name: "Murderers". What shall we say about those men who steal other people's reputation and positions? Simply what they are: "Thieves". What is the name for those men and women, who are adulterous or torture their relatives to the extent of driving them to homicide or suicide, and for the mighty ones of the earth who drive their subjects to desperation and through desperation to violence? Here it is: "Murderers". Well? Is no one running away? So you can see that we live without any worry among criminals, who have evaded justice, who crowd houses and towns, rub against us in streets, sleep in the same hotels as we do, and share food with us. And yet, who is without sin? If God's finger should write on the wall of the room wherein the thoughts of man germinate, that is on man's forehead, words describing one as one was, is, or will be, very few would bear the word: "Innocent" written in bright letters. The other foreheads would bear the words: "Adulterers" "Murderers" "Thieves" "Killers" in letters as green as envy, or as black as treason, or as red as crime.

So, without being proud, be merciful to your brothers, who from a human point of view have been less fortunate than you are, and are now on galleys expiating what you do not expiate, although guilty of the same crime. Your humbleness will im-



prove by doing so.

275. 12 <sup>12</sup>To *bury the dead*.

The contemplation of death is a lesson for life. I would like to take you all before death and say to you: "Endeavour to live as saints in order to have but this death: a temporary separation of the body from the soul, to rise thereafter triumphantly forever, all gathered together in utter happiness".

We were all born naked. We all die and our mortal remains are destined to putrefaction. Whether kings or beggars, as we were born so we die. And if the pomp of kings allows their corpses to be preserved for a longer period of time, decomposition is still the fate of dead flesh. What are mummies? Flesh? No. They are matter fossilized by resins, lignified matter. It is not a prey to worms, as it has been altered and burned by essences, but it is a prey to woodworms, just like old wood.

But dust becomes dust once again, because God said so. And yet only because that dust enveloped the spirit and was vivified by it, like something that touched the glory of God - such is the soul of man - we must conclude that it is sanctified dust not unlike the objects that have been in contact with the Tabernacle. There was at least one moment when a soul was perfect: while God was creating it. And if Sin disfigured it, depriving it of its perfection, because of its Origin it still confers beauty to matter and because of the beauty that comes from God, a body is embellished and deserves respect. We are temples and as such we deserve to be honoured, as the places where the Tabernacle stopped were always honoured.

Grant, therefore, the dead the charity of an honourable rest while awaiting resurrection, and in the wonderful harmony of the human body contemplate the divine mind and hand that conceived and modelled it so perfectly, and venerate the work of the Lord also in its remains.

275. 13 <sup>13</sup>But man is not only flesh and blood. He is also soul and mind. The latter suffer as well, and are to be assisted mercifully.

There are *ignorant* people who do wrong only because they do not know good. How many do not know or know wrongly the things of God and even moral laws! They languish like famishing people because no one satisfies their hunger and fall into marasmus through lack of nourishing truth. Go and teach them

because that is why I have gathered you and I am sending you. Give the bread of the spirit to the hunger of spirits. To *teach the ignorant* corresponds, in the spiritual field, to *appeasing the hunger* of those who are starving. And if a reward is granted for a piece of bread offered to languishing body, so that it may not die, what reward will be given to him who satisfies a spirit with eternal truth and gives it eternal life? Do not be avaricious of what you know. It was given to you without any expense or limit. Give it without avarice, because it belongs to God, like the water of the sky and it is to be given as it was given to us.

Be not avaricious or proud of what you know. But give with humble generosity. <sup>275. 14</sup> And give the limpid charitable relief of *prayer to the living and to the dead* who thirst for graces. Water is not to be refused to parched throats. What is therefore to be given to the hearts of anguished living people, and what to the expiating souls of the dead? Prayers, prayers that are prolific because they are full of love and spirit of mortification.

Prayer must be true, not mechanical like the noise of a wheel on the road. Is it the noise or the wheel that makes a cart proceed? It is the wheel that wears itself out to move the cart forward. The same applies to vocal mechanical prayer and to active prayer. The former is sound and nothing else. The latter is work, in which strength wears out and suffering increases, but it achieves its goal. Pray more by means of mortification than with your lips and you will give relief to the living and the dead, fulfilling the second work of spiritual mercy. The world will be saved more by the prayers of those who know how to pray, than by useless rumbling deadly battles.

<sup>275. 15</sup> Many people in the world believe. But they do not believe firmly. They waver as if they were drawn in opposite directions, and without proceeding by one step only, they wear their strength out unsuccessfully. They are the doubtful ones. Those who hesitate saying: "but", "if", "and then". Those who ask: "Will it really be thus? ", "And if it were not so? ", "Shall I be able? ", "And if I am not successful? " and so on. They are like bearbines, which do not climb up unless they find something to cling to, and even when they do find it, they dangle to and fro, and it is not only necessary to find a support for them, but one must guide them onto it at each turn every day.

Oh! They really try one's patience and charity more than a backward child! But in the name of the Lord, do not abandon them! Give bright faith, ardent strength to those prisoners of themselves and of their hazy disease. Guide them towards the sun and the sky. Be masters and fathers to those dubious minds without tiring or losing your patience. They discourage you? Very well. How often you discourage Me and even more the Father Who is in Heaven and Who must often think that the Word seems to have become Flesh in vain, since men still hesitate even now that they hear the Word of God speak.

You will not presume that you are of greater worth than God is or I am! So open the prisons of these prisoners of "but" and "if". Relieve them from their chains of: "Shall I be able? ", "If I am not successful? ". Convince them that it is enough to do one's best and God is satisfied. And if you see them fall off their support, do not pass by ignoring them, but lift them up once again. Like mothers, who do not pass by if their child falls, but they stop, pick him up, clean him, comfort him and hold him until he is no longer afraid of falling again. And they do so for months and years if the boy's legs are weak.

275. 16 <sup>16</sup> *Clothe those who are naked spiritually* by forgiving those who offend you:

Offences are against charity. Lack of charity divests one of God. So he who offends becomes naked and only the forgiveness of the offended person can put clothes back on such nudity. Because he brings God back to it. God waits for the offended person to forgive before He forgives both the person offended by man, and the offender of man and of God. Because - let us admit it - there is no one who has not given offence to his Lord. But God forgives us if we forgive our neighbour, and forgives our neighbour if the person offended forgives. It will be done to you as you do to others. Forgive, therefore, if you wish to be forgiven and you will rejoice in Heaven for your charitable behaviour, as if a mantle studded with stars were placed on your holy shoulders.

275. 17 <sup>17</sup>*Be merciful to those who are weeping.* They have been wounded by life and their hearts are grieved in their affections.

Do not lock yourselves up in your serenity as in a stronghold. Weep with those who are weeping, comfort who is distressed, console the loneliness of those who have been deprived of a rela-

tive by death. Be fathers to orphans, sons to parents, brothers to one another.

Love. Why love only those who are happy? They already have their share of sunshine. Love the weeping. They are the least amiable for the world. But the world is not aware of the value of tears. You are. Love, therefore, those who are weeping. Love them if they are resigned in their grief. Love them even more if they rebel against their sorrow. Do not reproach them but kindly convince them of the truth of grief and the utility of sorrow. Through the veil of tears they may see the face of God deformed, and His countenance full of revengeful arrogance. No. Do not be scandalized! It is only a hallucination brought about by the fever of grief. Assist them so that their temperature may abate.

Let your fresh faith be like ice applied to a delirious patient. And when the raging fever drops and is followed by the seediness and torpid hebetude typical of those who come out of a trauma, then speak to them once again of God, as of something new, kindly and patiently, as you would deal with children who have become backward through disease... Oh! a lovely tale, told to amuse man, the eternal child! And then be quiet. Do not impose... A soul works by itself. Assist it with caresses and prayer. And when it asks: "So it was not God? ", reply: "No. He did not want to hurt you, because He loves you, also on behalf of those who no longer love you because of death or other reasons". And when the soul says: "But I accused him", say: "He has forgotten it, because it was your fever". And when it says: "I would like to have Him", say: "Here He is! At the door of your heart, waiting for you to open it to Him".

<sup>18</sup>*Bear bothersome persons.* They come in to upset the little <sup>275. 18</sup> house of our ego, just as pilgrims come in to upset the house in which we live. But as I told you to welcome pilgrims, so I tell you to welcome these persons.

Are they bothersome? But if you do not love them, because of the trouble they cause you, they love you, more or less righteously. Welcome them for such love. And even if they came inquiring, hating, insulting you, be patient and charitable. You can improve them through your patience. But you may scandalize them through your lack of charity. Be sorry because they sin; but be more sorry to make them sin and to sin yourselves. Receive them

in My name, if you cannot receive them with your own love. And God will reward you, by coming Himself, later, to return the visit and cancel the unpleasant memory by His supernatural caresses.

275. 19 <sup>19</sup>Finally endeavour *to bury sinners in order to prepare the return to the Life of Grace*. Do you know when you do that? When you admonish them with paternal, patient, loving insistence. It is as if you were burying little by little the ugly part of the body before delivering it to its sepulchre awaiting the command of God: "Rise and come to Me".

Do the Jews not purify the dead out of respect for the body, which is to rise again? *To admonish sinners* is like purifying their limbs, the first operation for burial. The Grace of the Lord will do the rest. Purify them through charity, tears and sacrifices. Be heroes to snatch a soul from corruption. Be heroes.

You will not be left without reward. Because if a reward is given for a cup of water given to a thirsty body, what will be given to him who relieves a soul from infernal thirst?

I have finished. Those are the deeds of corporal and spiritual mercy that increase love. Go and practise them. And may the peace of God and Mine be with you now and ever. » Note: Start of Volume Three of Maria Valtorta's Poem of the Man God.

276. The avid man and the parable of the rich.  
The anxieties and vigilance in the servants of God.

10<sup>th</sup> September 1945.

276. 1 <sup>1</sup>Jesus is on one of the hills on the western coast of the lake. The towns and villages spread on both shores are displayed under His eyes. Directly under the hill are Magdala and Tiberias, the former with its luxurious district strewn with gardens, clearly separated from the poor houses of fishermen, peasants and common people by a little torrent now completely dry; the latter magnificent in every quarter, a town unaware of misery and decay, looking beautiful and fresh in the sunshine before the lake. Between the two towns there are a few, but well kept, vegetable-gardens on the short plain, while olive-trees climb the hill conquering it. From this hill top one can see behind Jesus the saddles of the Mount of Beatitudes, at the foot of which there is

the main road which goes from the Mediterranean Sea to Tiberias. Perhaps Jesus has chosen this place because it is so close to a very busy road, and thus people can come here from many towns both on the lake and in the inland of Galilee, and then go back home in the evening or find hospitality in many of the towns. The climate is also mild because of the height and also because the tall trees on the upper slopes have replaced the olive-trees.

There are in fact many people besides the apostles and disciples. People who need Jesus for health reasons, or for advice, people who have come out of curiosity, or led by friends or in a spirit of imitation. In brief, there is a large crowd. The season, which is no longer hot but tends to the languid pleasantness of autumn, encourages pilgrims to come in search of the Master.

<sup>2</sup>Jesus has cured sick people and has spoken to the crowd on the subject of wealth unjustly attained and detachment therefrom, as is necessary in everyone who wishes to gain Heaven and is essential in those who want to be His disciples. He is now replying to the questions of this or that rich disciple, who is somewhat upset by such requirement. 276. 2

John, the scribe, says: «Must I destroy what I have, thus depriving my family of what is due to them? »

«No. God gave you some property. Let it be useful to Justice and make just use of it. That is, assist your family by means of it, which is your duty; treat your servants humanely, and that is charity; help the poor, and the poor disciples in need. Your wealth thus will not be a hindrance, but an aid. »

Then addressing the crowds He says: «I solemnly tell you that also the poorest disciple can be in the same danger of losing Heaven through attachment to riches, if he acts against justice by coming to terms with rich people, after he has become a priest of Mine. A rich or wicked man will often endeavour to seduce you with gifts to make you agreeable to his way of living and to his sin. And among My ministers there will be some who will yield to the temptation of presents. That must not happen. Follow the Baptist's example. Although he was not a judge or a magistrate, he possessed the perfection of judge and magistrate as pointed out\* in Deuteronomy: "You must be impartial, you must

\* pointed out, in *Deuteronomy 16, 19.*

take no bribes, for a bribe blinds wise men's eyes and jeopardises the cause of the just". Too often man allows the edge of the sword of justice to be blunted by the gold which a sinner rubs on it. No, that must not happen. Learn how to be poor, how to die, but never come to terms with sin. Not even with the excuse of using that gold for the poor. It is cursed gold and would bear no good. It is the gold of a disgraceful compromise. You have been appointed masters that you may be masters, doctors and redeemers. What would you be, if your own interest led you to agree to wickedness? Masters of evil science, doctors who kill their patients, not redeemers but parties to the ruin of hearts. »

276 3

<sup>3</sup>One of the crowd comes forward and says: «I am not a disciple. But I do admire You. Answer this question of mine: "Is it lawful to keep the money of another person?" »

«No, man. It is larceny, like robbing the purse of a passer-by. »

«Even if it is family money? »

«Of course. It is not right that one should take possession of the money belonging to all the others. »

«Then come to Abelmaim, Master, on the road to Damascus, and order my brother to share with me the inheritance of our father who died without leaving a written will. He took everything for himself. And remember that we are twins, born at the first and only birth. So I have the same rights as he has. »

Jesus looks at him and says: «It is a painful situation and your brother is certainly not behaving righteously. But all I can do is to pray for you and for him, that he may change, and I can come to your village and evangelize and thus touch his heart. The road is no burden to Me if I can bring about peace between you. »

The man becomes furious and bursts out: «What's the use of Your words? It takes much more than that in this case! »

«Did you not tell Me to order your brother to... »

«To order is not to evangelize. An order is always joined to a threat. Threaten to strike his person, if he does not give me what is due to me. You can do that. As You give health You can give a disease. »

«Man, I came to convert, not to strike. But if you have faith in My words, you will have peace. »

«Which words? »

«I told you that I will pray for you and for your brother, that

you may be comforted and he may be converted. »

«Nonsense! I am not such a fool as to believe that. Come and order. »

<sup>4</sup>Jesus, Who has been meek and patient, becomes impressive and severe. He straightens up - before He was bending over the little stout angry man - and He says: «Man, who appointed Me judge or arbitrator between you? Nobody. But to avoid a rupture between two brothers I was willing to come and practise My mission of conciliator and redeemer, and if you had believed My words, on going back to Abelmaim you would have found your brother already changed. But you will not believe. And you will have no miracle. If you had been able to get hold of the treasure before your brother, you would have kept it, depriving your brother of it, because as it is true that you were born twins, it is also true that you have twin passions and both you and your brother have but one love: gold, and one faith: gold. Be therefore with your faith. Goodbye. » <sup>276\_4</sup>

The man goes away cursing Jesus while all the people present are scandalised and would like to punish him.

But Jesus objects saying: «Let him go. Why dirty your hands striking a brute? I forgive him because he is possessed and led astray by the demon of gold. Forgive him as well. Let us rather pray for the unhappy man so that he may become humane again with a beautiful free soul. »

«That is true. Even his countenance was dreadful because of his greed. Did you notice it? » the disciples and those who were close to the miser ask one another.

«It is true, indeed! He did not look the same person as before. »

«Yes. And when he rejected the Master, he almost struck Him while cursing Him, and his countenance was demoniac. »

«A tempting demon. He wanted to lead the Master to wickedness... »

<sup>5</sup>«Listen» says Jesus. «It is true that the alterations of the spirit are reflected on one's face. It is as if the demon appeared on the surface of his possession. Only few people who are demons, either in deeds or appearance, do not disclose what they are. And those few are perfect in evil and perfectly possessed. The countenance of a just man, instead, is always beautiful, even if his face is materially disfigured, because of a supernatural beauty, <sup>276\_5</sup>



which from the interior exudes exteriorly. And it is not just a saying, but a real fact, that we notice a bodily freshness as well in those who are free from vices. The soul within us envelops our whole being. The stench of a corrupt soul affects also the body, whereas the scent of a pure soul preserves it. A corrupt soul drives the flesh to obscene sins, which age and disfigure the body. A pure soul incites the body to a pure life, which grants a fresh complexion and imparts majesty.

Endeavour to keep your youth spiritually pure, or to revive it, if you have already lost it, and beware of greed, both for sensual pleasures and for power. The life of man does not depend on the abundance of his wealth, neither in present life and much less in the next one, eternal life. It depends instead on his way of living, as well as his happiness, both on the earth and in Heaven. Because a vicious man is never really happy. On the contrary, a virtuous man is always happy with a celestial joy, even if he is poor and alone. Not even death upsets him. Because he has no sins or remorse making him fear to meet God, neither does he regret what he leaves on the earth. He knows that his treasure is in Heaven and like a man who goes to take the inheritance due to him, a holy inheritance, he goes happily and solicitously towards death, which opens to him the gate of the Kingdom where is his treasure.

Store up your treasure at once. Begin in your youth, you young people; work incessantly, you older people, who are closer to death because of your age. But since the date of death is unknown, and a child often dies before a venerable old man, do not postpone the work of storing up your treasure of virtues and good deeds for the next life, lest death should reach you before you have placed a treasure of merits in Heaven. Many people say: "Oh! I am young and strong! I will enjoy myself for the time being on the earth, and I will turn later". A big mistake!

276. 6 <sup>6</sup>Listen to this parable. A rich man's estate had yielded a good harvest. A really miraculous harvest. He looks happily at so much abundance piling up in his fields and threshing-floors and which is to be stored in provisional sheds and even in the rooms of his house, since his barns cannot hold it all, and says: "I have worked like a slave but I have not been disappointed by my fields. I have worked as much as for ten harvests, and I am go-

ing to rest just as long. What shall I do to put away all this crop? I do not want to sell it otherwise I would be compelled to work to have a new crop next year. This is what I will do: I will knock down my granaries and build larger ones, capable of holding all my crops and my goods. And then I will say to my soul: 'Oh, my soul! You have aside goods for many years. Rest, therefore, eat, drink and have a good time' ". The man, like many more people, mistook his soul for his body and mixed the sacred and the profane, because in actual fact a soul does not rejoice in revelries and idleness, but languishes. And the man, like many, after the first good harvest in the fields of virtue, stopped, as he thought he had done everything.

But do you not know that once you have laid your hand on the plough you must persevere for one, ten, one hundred years, as long as your life lasts, because to stop is a crime against oneself, as one denies oneself a greater glory, and it is a regression, because generally he who stops not only does not proceed further, but turns back? The treasure of Heaven must increase year by year to be good. Because if Mercy is benign to those also who had few years to store it up, it will not be an accomplice of lazy people who in a long life do little. It is a treasure increasing continuously. Otherwise it is no longer a fruit bearing treasure, but an unfruitful one, which is detrimental to the readily available peace of Heaven.

God said to the foolish man: "Fool! You mistake body and wealth of the earth for what is spirit and you turn the grace of God into evil. This very night the demand will be made for your soul, and it will be taken away and your body will lie lifeless. And this hoard of yours, whose will it be then? Will you take it with you? No. You will come to My presence despoiled of earthly crops and spiritual works and you will be poor in the next life. It would have been better if you had used your crops for works of mercy on behalf of your neighbour and yourself. Because if you had been merciful towards others, you would have been merciful to your own soul. And instead of fostering idle thoughts, you could have plied a trade which would have given an honest profit for your body and great merit for your soul until I called you". And the man died that night and was severely judged. I tell you solemnly that that happens to those who store up treasure for

themselves but do not grow rich in the eyes of God.

Go now and avail yourselves of the doctrine explained to you. Peace be with you. »

276. 7 And Jesus blesses and withdraws into a thicket with His apostles and disciples to take some food and rest. 7And while eating He continues to speak on the same lesson, repeating a subject already explained\* several times to the apostles and which I think will never be clarified enough, because man is too easily seized with foolish fears.

«You must believe» He says, «that man should worry only about making himself rich in virtue. But mind you: you must not worry anxiously or painfully. Good is the enemy of anxiety, of fears, of haste, which still show too many traces of avarice, jealousy and human mistrust. Let your work be constant, confident, peaceful, without rough starts and stops, as onagers do. But no one makes use of them, unless one is mad, to go on a safe journey. Be peaceful in victory and peaceful in defeat. Also tears shed for an error you made and which grieves you because by it you have displeased God, must be peaceful, comforted by humbleness and trust. Prostration, anger against oneself are always a symptom of pride and lack of confidence. He who is humble knows that he is a poor man subject to the miseries of the flesh, which at times triumphs. He who is humble puts his trust not so much in himself as in God, and is serene also when defeated and says: “Forgive me, Father. I know that You are aware of my weakness which overwhelms me at times. I will believe that You pity me. I am fully confident that You will help me in future even more than before, notwithstanding I please You so little”. Do not be indifferent or avaricious with regards to the gifts of God. Give generously what you possess of wisdom and virtue.

276. 8 Be active in spiritual matters as men are with regards to their bodies. 8And as far as your bodies are concerned do not imitate the people of the world who always tremble for their future, fearing they may lack what is superfluous, that they may be taken ill, or die, that enemies may be harmful, and so on. God knows what you are in need of. Therefore be not afraid for your future. Be free from tears, which are heavier than the chains of galley-

\* already explained, for example in chapter 173.

slaves. Do not be anxious about the necessities of life: what you will eat, or drink and how you will clothe yourself. The life of the spirit is worth more than the life of the body and the body is worth more than clothes, because you live with your bodies and not with your clothes and through the mortification of your bodies you help your souls to attain eternal life. God knows how long He will leave your souls in your bodies, and He will give you what is necessary until that hour. He gives it to crows, impure birds which feed on corpses and the reason for their being is just to remove putrefying corpses. And will He not give you what is necessary? Crows have neither larders nor granaries and God feeds them just the same. You are men, not crows. At present you are the cream of men because you are the disciples of the Master, the evangelizers of the world, the servants of God. And can you possibly think that God may neglect you, even for what concerns your clothes, since He takes care of the lilies of the valleys and makes them grow and clothes them with such beautiful robes that Solomon never possessed the like, and yet they do no work but scent worshipping God? It is true that by yourselves you cannot add one tooth to a toothless mouth, or lengthen by one inch a contracted leg, or make dimmed eyes bright. And if you cannot do such things, can you think you may be able to repel misery and diseases and turn dust into food? You cannot. But do not be of little faith. You will always have what you need. Do not worry like the people of the world who strive to satisfy their pleasures. You have your Father Who knows what you need. All you must seek, and it must be your first care, is the Kingdom of God and His justice, and all the rest will be given to you as well.

<sup>9</sup>Be not afraid, My little flock. My Father was pleased to call <sup>276. 9</sup> you to the Kingdom, that you may have His Kingdom. You may, therefore, aspire to it and assist the Father through your goodwill and holy activity. Sell your property and give the money to charity, if you are alone. Give your relatives means of subsistence as compensation for your abandoning the house to follow Me, because it is unfair to deprive children and wife of their daily bread. And if you cannot sacrifice money, sacrifice the wealth of your affections. They are money which God evaluates for what they are: gold which is purer than any other gold; pearls which are more precious than those taken from the sea, and ru-

bies which are rarer than those found in the bowels of the earth. Because to renounce one's family for My sake is love which is more perfect than the purest gold, it is a pearl made of tears, a ruby made of blood wailing from the wound of one's heart, torn to pieces by the separation from father and mother, wife and children. But such purses never wear out, such treasures never fail. Thieves cannot break into Heaven. Wood worms cannot eat what is deposited there. And have Heaven in your hearts and your hearts in Heaven near your treasures. Because a heart, whether good or bad, is with what you consider your dear treasure. So as a heart is there where its treasure is (in Heaven), so the treasure is there where the heart is (within you), nay, the treasure is within the heart and with the treasure of saints, in the heart there is the Heaven of saints.

276. 10 <sup>10</sup>Be always ready like those who are about to depart or are waiting for their master. You are the servants of the Master-God. He can call you where He is any moment, or come where you are. Be, therefore, always ready to go, or to pay Him homage, with work or travelling belt around your waists and lamps lit in your hands. Coming out of a wedding party with one who has preceded you in Heaven and in being consecrated to God on the earth, God may remember that you are waiting and may say: "Let us go to Stephen or to John, or to James and to Peter". And God is fast in coming or saying: "Come". So be ready to open the door to Him when He arrives or to leave, should He call you.

Blessed are those servants whom the Master finds vigilant on His arrival. I tell you solemnly that to reward them for their faithful waiting, He will gird His waist, make them sit at the table and serve them. He may come at the first, or second or third watch. You do not know, so be always vigilant. And you will be happy if you are so and the Master finds you thus! Do not flatter yourselves by saying: "There is time. He will not come tonight". Evil would befall you. You do not know. If one knew when a thief is going to come, one would not leave the house unguarded so that a robber may force the door and coffers. Be prepared as well, because when you least expect Him, the Son of man will come saying: "It is time". »

276. 11 <sup>11</sup>Peter, who has even forgotten to finish his food, to listen to the Lord, when he sees that Jesus is silent, asks: «What You said,

is it for us or for everybody? »

«It is for you and for everybody. But it is primarily for you, because you are like stewards put by the Master at the head of the servants and it is your duty to be twice as vigilant, both as stewards, and as simple believers. What must a steward be like, once he has been put by his master at the head of the servants, so that he may give each his fair portion at the right moment? He must be shrewd and loyal, in order to fulfil his own duty and make his subordinates fulfil theirs. Otherwise the interests of the master would suffer a loss, whereas he pays so that the steward may act on his behalf and safeguard his interests while he is away.

Happy is the servant whom the master finds acting loyally, diligently and honestly, on his returning home. I tell you solemnly that he will appoint his steward over other estates, over all his estates, and will relax and rejoice in his heart because of the reliability of his servant. But if the servant says: "Well! My master is very far away and has written to me that he will be delayed in coming back home. So I can do what I like and I will do the necessary when I think he is about to come". And he begins to eat and drink until he gets drunk and gives crazy orders and, as the good servants under him refuse to carry them out not to cause damage to their master, he beats servants and maids until they are taken ill and decline. And thinking that he is happy he says: "At last I relish being the master and feared by everybody". But what will happen to him? It will happen that the master will arrive when he least expects him, catching him perhaps in the very act of pocketing money or bribing some of the most unreliable servants. Then, I tell you, the master will throw him out, depriving him of his position as steward, and refusing to keep him among his servants, because it is not right to keep unfaithful traitors among honest people. And the more the master previously loved and instructed him, the more he will be punished.

Because the more one is aware of the will and mind of the master, the more one is obliged to fulfil it accurately. If one does not act as the master explained in so great detail that nobody else was told so clearly, one will be severely beaten, whereas an inferior servant, who knows little and does wrong while he thinks he is doing right, will receive a less severe punishment. Much will be requested of him who was given much, and he who has much in

his care, will have to return much, because My stewards will be asked to give an account also of the soul of a baby one hour old.

276. 12 <sup>12</sup>My election is not a cool relaxation in a flowery little wood. I came to bring fire on the earth; and what can I wish for but that it may light up? That is why I tire Myself and I want you to tire yourselves until you die and until the whole earth is a celestial bonfire. I am to be baptised with a baptism. And how distressed I will be until it is accomplished! Are you not asking why? Because through it I will be able to make you Fire bearers, agitators who will act in every and against every social stratum, to make it one thing only: the flock of Christ.

Do you think that I have come to bring peace to the earth? And according to the way of thinking of the earth? No. On the contrary, I came to bring discord and separation. Because from now on, and until the whole world becomes one only flock, of five people in one house two will be against three, and the father will be against his son, and the son against the father, the mother against her daughters and the daughters against the mother and mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law will have a further reason not to understand each other, because a new language will be spoken by some lips, and it will be like Babel, because a deep disturbance will agitate the reign of human and superhuman affections. Then the time will come when everything will be unified in a new language, spoken by all those who have been saved by the Nazarene, and feelings will be filtered like water, as the dross will sink to the bottom, while the limpid waves of celestial lakes will shine on the surface.

Truly, it is not restful to serve Me, according to the meaning man attaches to that word. Heroism and lack of fatigue are required. But I tell you that at the end it will be Jesus, still and always Jesus, Who will gird His waist to serve you, and will sit with you at an eternal banquet and all labour and sorrow will be forgotten.

276. 13 <sup>13</sup>Now, since no one has been looking for us, let us go to the lake. We shall rest at Magdala. In the gardens of Mary of Lazarus there is room for everybody and she has put her house at the disposal of the Pilgrim and His friends. There is no need for Me to tell you that Mary of Magdala died with her sin and she has risen again from her repentance as Mary of Lazarus, the

woman disciple of Jesus of Nazareth. You are already aware of that because the news spread like the fury of the wind in a forest. But I will tell you something you do not know: all the personal wealth of Mary is for the servants of God and the poor people of Christ. Let us go... »

277. In Magdala in Mary's gardens.  
Love and correction among brothers.

16<sup>th</sup> September 1945.

[...]

<sup>1</sup>Jesus is no longer where He was during the last vision. He is <sup>277. 1</sup> in a large garden which extends as far as the lake, and in the middle of which there is a house surrounded by the garden, which at the rear of the house is at least three times as large as on the front and sides. There are flowers, but above all trees, thickets and green nooks, some around fountain basins of precious marbles, some like bowers around tables and stone seats. And there must have been statues here and there, both along the paths and in the centre of the basins. Only the pedestals of the statues are now left as a reminder, near laurel and box shrubs or reflected in the basins full of limpid water.

The presence of Jesus with His disciples and of people from Magdala, among whom there is little Benjamin who dared to tell the Iscariot that he was a bad man, makes me think that they are the gardens of the Magdalene's house... which have been conveniently altered for a new function by removing what might have disgusted or scandalised or reminded one of the past.

The lake is a grey-blue crepe reflecting the sky, where clouds are sailing swiftly, laden with the first autumn rain. But it is beautiful even so, in the still placid light of a day which is not clear but not entirely rainy. Its shores are no longer covered with flowers, they are however painted by the great painter which is autumn and they show ochre and purple hues and the exhausted pallor of the withering leaves of trees and vineyards, which change colour before yielding to the earth their living clothing. In the garden of a villa overlooking the lake like this one, there is a spot which has turned red, as if it poured blood into the wa-



ter, due to the presence of a hedge of flexible branches, which autumn has coloured with a blazing copper hue, while the willow trees spread along the shore, not far from the garden, seem to be trembling, as their slender silver green leaves quiver and look paler than usual before dying.

277. 2 <sup>2</sup>Jesus is not looking at what I am watching. He is looking at some poor sick people whom He cures. He is looking at some old beggars to whom He gives some money. He is looking at some children offered to Him by their mothers that He may bless them. And He is looking pitifully at a group of sisters, who are informing Him of the behaviour of their only brother, who has caused their mother to die of a broken heart and has brought about their ruin, and the poor women beg Him to give them some advice and to pray for them.

«I will certainly pray for you. I will ask God to give you peace and I will pray for him, that he may turn and remember that you are his sisters, giving you what is fair and above all that he may love you once again. Because if he does that, he will do everything else. But do you love him, or have you a grudge against him? Do you forgive him wholeheartedly or is there anger in your tears? Because he is unhappy, too. More than you are. And notwithstanding his riches, he is poorer than you are, and you must pity him. He no longer loves and is without the love of God. See how unhappy he is? The sad life he made you lead will end in happiness for you and first of all for your mother. But not for him. On the contrary, from the false present enjoyment he would pass to an eternal dreadful torture. Come with Me. By speaking to you I will speak to everybody. »

And Jesus goes towards the centre of a meadow, where once there must have been a statue and the site is now strewn with groups of flowers. Only the pedestal is now left and it is surrounded by a low hedge of myrtle and miniature roses. 277. 3 <sup>3</sup>Jesus goes towards that hedge and begins to speak. The people become silent and crowd around Him.

«Peace be with you. Listen.

It is written\*: "Love your neighbour as you love yourself". But who is our neighbour? The whole of mankind, in a gener-

**It is written**, in *Leviticus 19, 17-18* that includes the following Quotation in 277. 4

al meaning. In a narrower sense all our countrymen; in an even more narrower sense, all our fellow citizens; then in a more and more narrow meaning, all our relatives; finally, the last circle of this crown of love closed like the petals of a rose round the heart of the flower, the love for our full brothers: our first neighbour. God is the centre of the heart of the flower of love, so love for Him is the first to be had. Around His centre there is the love for our parents, the second to be had, because father and mother are really the little "God" on the earth, as they procreated us and cooperated with God to our creation, besides taking care of us with untiring love. The various love rings press round that ovary which shines with pistils and exhales the perfume of the most choice love. The first is the love for our brothers born of the same womb and same blood as ourselves.

How is our brother to be loved? Only because his flesh and blood are the same as ours? Even the little birds which are together in one nest can do that. In fact, this is all they have in common: they were born in the same brood and have on their tongues the flavour of their father's and mother's saliva. We men are worth more than birds. We have more than flesh and blood. We have the Father besides having a father and mother. We have a soul and we have God, the Father of all men. So we must love our brother as a brother, because of our father and mother who gave birth to us, and as a brother because of God Who is the universal Father.

We must love him, therefore, spiritually not only corporeally. We must love him not only because of his body and blood, but because of the spirit which we have in common. And we must love, as it is to be loved, the spirit of our brother more than his body. Because the spirit is more important than the body. Because the Father God is more important than the man father. Because the spirit is worth more than the flesh. Because our brother would be much more unhappy if he lost the Father God than he would be if he lost his man father. It is heart-rending to be deprived of the man father, but it is only half an orphanhood. It is detrimental only to what is earthly, that is to our need for help and caresses. But the spirit, if it can believe, is not damaged by the death of the father. On the contrary, in order to join the just father where he is, the spirit of the son rises as if it were attracted by a loving

force. And I tell you solemnly that that is love, love for God and for the father, who has ascended with his soul to the place of wisdom. He ascends to the place where he is closer to God and acts with greater rectitude, because he does not lack true help, that is the prayers of the father whom he now loves perfectly, neither does he lack restraint due both to the certainty that the father does now see the deeds of his son, better than he did in his lifetime, and to the desire to be able to join him through a holy life.

That is why one must take greater care of the spirit than of the body of the brother. It would certainly be a very poor love if it took care of what is perishable, neglecting what is not perishable and which, if neglected, may lose eternal joy. Too many people tire themselves with useless things and worry themselves about what is of comparative merit, losing sight of what is really necessary. Good sisters and brothers must not worry only about keeping clothes tidy and having meals ready, or helping their brothers with their work. But they must bend over their spirits and listen to their voices, perceive their faults, and with loving patience busy themselves to give them a wholesome holy spirit, if in those voices and faults they see a danger for their eternal lives. And if their brother has sinned against them, they must forgive him and get God to forgive him, through his return to love, without which God will not forgive.

277.4 <sup>4</sup>It is written in Leviticus: "You must not bear hatred for your brother in your heart, you must openly tell him of his offence, this way you will not take a sin upon yourself because of him". But there is an abyss between not hating and loving. You may think that aversion, detachment, indifference are not sins, because they are not hatred. No. I have come to bring new light to love, and consequently, to hatred, because what makes the former shine in every detail, makes every detail of the latter shine as well. The very elevation to high spheres of the former, brings out, as a consequence, a greater detachment from the latter, because the higher love ascends, the lower hatred seems to sink.

My doctrine is perfection. It is refinement of feelings and judgement. It is truth without metaphors and paraphrases. And I tell you that aversion, detachment and indifference are already hatred. Simply because they are not love. Hatred is the opposite of love. Can you find another name for aversion? For being de-

tached from a being? For indifference? He who loves has a liking for the person loved. So if he dislikes him, he no longer loves him. He who loves, even if he is separated materially from the person he loves, continues to be near him with his spirit. So if one is detached with one's spirit from the other, one no longer loves the other. He who loves is never indifferent towards the person he loves, on the contrary he is interested in everything concerning that person. So if one is indifferent towards another, it means that one does not love the other. You can thus see that those three attitudes are branches of one plant: hatred. <sup>277.5</sup>Now what happens when we are offended by one whom we love? In ninety per cent of cases, if hatred does not arise, aversion, detachment or indifference will result. No. Do not do that. Do not freeze your hearts by means of those three forms of hatred. Love.

But you are asking yourselves: "How can we? ". I reply to you: "As God can, as He loves those who offend Him. A sorrowful but still good love". You say: "How do we do that? ". I am giving a new law on the relationship with a guilty brother, and I say: "If your brother offends you, do not humiliate him by reproaching him in public, but urge your love to cover up your brother's fault in the eyes of the world". Because great will be your merit in the eyes of God, by barring, out of love, every satisfaction to your pride.

Oh! How man loves to let people know that he was offended and grieved thereby! Like a foolish beggar he does not go to a king asking for alms in gold, but he goes to other foolish beggars like himself asking for handfuls of ash and manure and mouthfuls of burning poison. That is what the world gives to the offended person who goes complaining and begging for comfort. God, the King, gives pure gold to him, who, being offended, goes without any grudge to weep only at His feet and ask Him, Love and Wisdom, for comfort of love and how to behave in the sorrowful circumstance. Therefore, if you want comfort, go to God and act with love.

I say to you, correcting the old law: "If your brother has sinned against you, go and correct him by yourself. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother once again. And at the same time you have gained many blessings from God. If your brother does not listen to you, but he rejects you persisting in his fault, take with you two or three serious, clever, reliable witnesses, so

that no one may say that you are agreeable to his fault or indifferent to the welfare of his soul, and go back to your brother with them, and kindly repeat your remarks in their presence, so that the witnesses may be able to repeat that you have done everything in your power to correct your brother in a holy way. Because that is the duty of a good brother, since the sin committed by him against you is detrimental to his soul, and you must take care of his soul. If that is of no avail, inform the synagogue, so that he may be called to order in the name of God. If even so he does not make amends and he rejects the synagogue or the Temple as he rejected you, consider him as a publican and a Gentile”.

277. 6 <sup>6</sup>Do that both with your full brothers and with the people you love. Because also with your remote neighbour you must behave with holiness, generosity, flexibility and love. And when it is a law suit and it is necessary to go to court and you go with your adversary, I tell you, o man, who often find yourself in greater evils through your own fault, to do everything in your power, while you are on the way, to make your peace with him, whether you are right or wrong. Because human justice is always imperfect and a shrewd man generally defeats justice and the offender might be considered innocent, whilst you, who are innocent, might be found guilty. And then not only your right would not be acknowledged, but you would lose the case and from being innocent you would be found guilty of slander and so the judge would hand you over to the law executor who would not let you free until you had paid down to the last penny.

Be conciliating. Does your pride suffer by it? Very well. Is money squeezed out of you? Better still. Providing your holiness increases. Do not feel nostalgia for gold. Do not crave for praises. Let God praise you. Ensure that you have your purse in Heaven. And pray for those who offend you. That they may make amends. If that happens, they themselves will give you back honour and goods. If they do not, God will.

Go, now, because it is time for your meal. Let only the beggars stay and sit at the apostolic table. Peace be with you. »

278. Forgiveness and the parable of the iniquitous servant.  
The mandate to seventy two disciples.

17<sup>th</sup> September 1945.

<sup>1</sup>After the meal Jesus dismisses the poor guests and remains <sup>278. 1</sup> with His apostles and disciples in the garden of Mary of Magdala. They sit at the very end of it, near the calm water of the lake, on which some sailing boats are fishing.

«They will have a good catch» comments Peter who is watching them.

«You will have a good catch, too, Simon of Jonah. »

«Me, my Lord? When? Do You want me to go out and fish for our food for tomorrow? I will go at once and... »

«We do not need any food in this house. You will have a good catch in future, in the spiritual field. And most of these will be very good fishermen like you. »

«Not everyone, Master? » asks Matthew.

«Not everyone. But those who will persevere and become My priests will have good catches. »

«Conversions? » asks James of Zebedee.

«They will convert, forgive, lead back to God. Oh! so many things. »

<sup>2</sup>«Listen, Master. You said before that if a man does not even <sup>278. 2</sup> listen to his brother in the presence of witnesses, the synagogue is to admonish him. Now, if I have understood correctly what You have been telling us since we met, I think that the synagogue will be replaced by the Church, the thing that You want to found. If so, where will we go to have our pig-headed brothers admonished? »

«You will do that yourselves, because you will be My Church. So believers will come to you, for advice for themselves or for advice for other people. I will tell you more. You will not be able only to give advice. You will be able to absolve in My Name. You will be able to release people from the chains of sin and you will be able to join two people who love each other so that they become one body. And what you do will be valid in the eyes of God, as if God Himself had done it. I tell you solemnly that whatever you bind on the earth will be bound in Heaven and whatever you absolve on the earth will be absolved in Heaven. And I say to you

also, to make you understand the power of My Name, of brotherly love and prayer, that if two disciples of Mine, and I mean as such all those who will believe in the Christ, will gather together to ask for any just thing in My Name, that thing will be granted to them by My Father. Because prayer is a great power, brotherly union is a great power, My Name is a very great infinite power and so is My presence among you. And where two or three people are gathered in My Name, I shall be in the midst of them, and I will pray with them and the Father will not refuse anything to those who pray with Me. Many do not get what they ask for, because they pray by themselves, or they ask for what is illicit, or they pray with pride or sin in their hearts. Make your hearts pure, so that I can be with you, then pray and you will be heard. »

Peter is thoughtful. Jesus notices it and asks him why. And Peter replies: «I am thinking of the great duty to which we are destined. And I am afraid of it. I am afraid I cannot accomplish it properly. »

«In fact Simon of Jonah or James of Alphaeus or Philip, and so on, would not do it properly. But Peter the priest, James the priest, Philip the priest or Thomas will do very well because they will be acting together with Divine Wisdom. »

278. 3 <sup>3</sup>«And... how many times will we have to forgive our brethren? How many times if they sin against the priests; and how many if they sin against God? Because, if things will happen then, as they do now, they will certainly sin against us, since they sin against You so many times. Tell me whether I have to forgive always or a number of times. For instance, seven times, or more? »

«I will not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven. An endless number. Because also the Father of Heaven will forgive you many times, a great number of times, and you ought to be perfect. So do as He does with you, because you will represent God on the earth. Nay, listen. I will tell you a parable which will help everybody. »

And Jesus, Who was surrounded by the apostles only, in a box thicket, goes towards the disciples who are respectfully gathered in a open space adorned with a fountain basin full of clear water. Jesus' smile is a like a sign that He is going to speak. And while He walks with long slow steps, so that in a few moments

He covers a good distance without rushing, they are all delighted and press around Him as children gather around those who make them happy. It is a circle of keen faces, until Jesus leans against a tall tree and begins to speak.

<sup>4</sup>«What I said before to the people is to be completed for you <sup>278. 4</sup> who have been chosen from the people. The apostle Simon of Jonah asked Me: “How many times must I forgive? Whom? Why? ”. I replied to him privately and I will now repeat My reply as it is fair that you should know now as well.

Listen how many times, how and why you have to forgive. You must forgive as God forgives, Who forgives a thousand times, if one sins a thousand times and repents. Providing He sees that in man there is no will to sin, no pursuit of what makes one sin and that sin is only the result of man's weakness. In the case of voluntary persistence in sin there can be no forgiveness for sins against the Law. But with regard to the grief such sins cause you individually, you are to forgive them. Always forgive those who harm you. Forgive, so that you may be forgiven, because you have sinned also against God and your brothers. Forgiveness opens the Kingdom of Heaven both to him who is forgiven and to him who forgives. It is like what happened to a king and his servants.

A king wanted to draw up the accounts with his servants. He called them one by one, beginning with those who were in the highest positions. There was one who owed the king ten thousand talents. But the servant could not pay back the advance the king had given him to build his house and purchase all kinds of goods, because in actual fact, for many more or less justified reasons, he had not made a very diligent use of the money lent to him for that purpose. The king and master was angry at his sloth and breaking of his word, and ordered him, his wife, children and all his possessions to be sold until he settled his debt. But the servant threw himself at the king's feet and weeping implored him: “Let me go. Have a little more patience and I will give you back everything I owe you to the last penny”. The king was moved by so much distress - he was a good king - and not only agreed to his request, but when he heard that diseases had been the cause of his lack of diligence and failure to pay, he also remitted his debt.

The servant went away happily. But on his way out he ran into another servant, a poor fellow to whom he had lent one hundred



denarii taken from the ten thousand talents received from the king. As he felt sure of the king's protection he thought everything was permissible to him and he seized the unhappy fellow by the throat saying: "Give me what you owe me". In vain the man stooped weeping to kiss his feet imploring: "Have mercy on me as I have had much bad luck. Have a little patience and I will pay everything back to you to the last penny". The cruel servant sent for militiamen and had the poor wreck taken to prison so that he would make up his mind and pay him, or lose his freedom or his very life.

The friends of the unhappy man came to know about it, and being very upset, they went and told the king and master, who, upon hearing the news, ordered the pitiless servant to be brought before him and looking at him severely said: "You wicked servant, I helped you the first time, that you might become merciful, that you might become a rich man, then I helped you by remitting your debt when you implored me to have patience. You did not have pity on your fellow servant, whilst I, a king, had so much pity on you. Why did you not treat your fellow servant as I treated you? ". And in his anger he handed him over to the jailors to be kept by them until he paid everything back, saying: "As he did not have pity on one who owed him very little, while he had so much pity from me who am a king, so I will no longer have pity on him".

278. 5 <sup>5</sup>And that is how My Father will deal with you if you are pitiless towards your brothers, if you are more guilty than a believer, after receiving so much from God. Remember that it is your duty to be more faultless than anybody else. Remember that God gives you a great treasure in advance, but He wants you to render an account of it. Remember that no one must be able to grant love and forgiveness like you.

Do not be servants exacting much for yourselves and giving nothing to those who ask you for help. As you do to others, it will be done to you. And you will be asked to give an account of how other people behave, if they have been led to good or to evil by your examples. Oh! If you have sanctified people, your glory in Heaven will be really great! But, likewise, if you have been corrupters or only sluggish in sanctifying, you will be severely punished.

I say to you once again: if any of you does not feel like being the victim of his own mission, let him go away. But let him not fall in it. I mean: let him not fail in what is pernicious to his own and other people's perfection. And let him have God as his friend, always forgiving your weak brothers from your hearts. Then each of you, who will thus forgive, will be forgiven by God the Father.

<sup>6</sup>Our stay has come to an end. The time of Tabernacles is close at hand. Those to whom I spoke separately this morning, as from tomorrow will go ahead of Me announcing Me to the people. Those who are staying must not lose heart. I have kept some of them for prudential reasons, not because I disdain them. They will be staying with Me and I will soon send them as I am now sending the first seventy two disciples. 278. 6

The harvest is rich, but the labourers are too few compared to what is needed. So there will be work for everyone. But that is not sufficient. So, without being jealous, ask the Lord of the harvest to send new labourers to His harvest. In the meantime, you may go. During the past days, the apostles and I have completed your instructions on the work you have to do, and I have repeated\* to you what I told the Twelve before sending them.

One of you asked Me: "How will I cure in Your Name? ". Always cure the spirit first. Promise the sick people the Kingdom of God if they can believe in Me, and once you have ascertained their faith, order the disease to depart and it will go away. And do likewise with those whose souls are ill. Stimulate their faith first of all. By means of sound words inspire them with Hope. I will then come to grant them Divine Charity, as I put it into your hearts after you believed in Me and hoped for Mercy. And be not afraid of men or of demons. They will not hurt you. The only things you are to fear are: sensuality, pride, avarice. Through them you would hand yourselves over to Satan and devilish men, who also exist.

\* repeated (see Luke 10, 2-12) to you what I told (see *Matthew 10, 5-43*). Therefore the two evangelical texts do not belong to the same episode: that of Matthew corresponds to chapter 265 and refers to the instructions of Jesus to the twelve apostles, the words by Luke correspond with this chapter 278 and includes verses repeated for all seventy two disciples. It is one of the cases in which Valtorta does not consider the episodes indicated by several Evangelists. Other examples can be found in note 464. 17 and 596. 51.

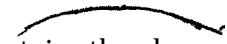

Go therefore, preceding Me along the roads of the Jordan. And when you arrive in Jerusalem go and join the shepherds in the valley of Bethlehem, and come with them to Me, in the place you know, and we will celebrate together the holy feast, and we will then go back to our ministry more invigorated than ever.

Go in peace. I bless you in the holy Name of the Lord. »

### 279. Meeting with Lazarus in the field of the Galileans.

18<sup>th</sup> September 1945.

279. 1 <sup>1</sup>The famous Field of the Galileans - I think that is the meaning of the word used by Jesus to point out the meeting place with the SEVENTY-TWO disciples sent ahead of Him - is part of the Mount of Olives, towards the road to Bethany, which actually passes there. And it is precisely in this place that in a vision of long ago, I saw\* Joachim and Anne camp with Alphaeus, then a little boy, near other tents made with branches, at the Feast of the Tabernacles, which preceded the conception of the Blessed Virgin.

The summit of the Mount of Olives is smooth:  everything is smooth and pleasant on that mountain: the slopes, the view, the summit. It really inspires peace, clad as it is with olive-trees and silence. But not now. Because it is swarming with people intent on making their tents. But generally it is a place of tranquillity and meditation. On the left hand side, with respect to those facing north, there is a light depression, and then another summit which is even  smoother than the previous one:

And it is on this plateau that the Galileans camp. I do not know whether it is an age-old religious custom or whether they do so by order of the Romans to avoid conflicts with Judaeans and peoples of other regions, who are never very kind to Galileans. I do not know. I know that I can see many Galileans, amongst them Alphaeus of Sarah from Nazareth; Judas, the old land owner from Merom; Jairus, the head of the synagogue and other people from Bethsaida, Capernaum and other towns in Galilee, but whose names I do not know.

\* I saw, in 3 2/4

Jesus points out the place where they should put up their tents, on the eastern edge of the Field of the Galileans. And the apostles, together with some disciples, among whom there is John the priest and John the scribe, Timoneus, the head of the synagogue, Stephen, Ermasteus, Joseph of Emmaus, Abel of Bethlehem in Galilee, begin to make their tents with branches.

<sup>2</sup>While they do so, Jesus speaks to some children from Capernaum, who have pressed around Him asking Him dozens of questions and confiding to Him as many pieces of information, when Lazarus arrives from the Bethany road with Maximinus, his inseparable companion. Jesus is facing the opposite direction and cannot see him. But the Iscariot does and he informs the Master, Who leaves the children and goes towards His friend smiling. Maximinus stops a few steps behind, to leave the two completely free in their first approach. And Lazarus covers the last few yards, as fast as he can, walking more painfully than ever, with a smile which trembles with pain on his lips and shines with tears in his eyes. Jesus opens His arms and Lazarus falls on to His heart, bursting into tears.

«What, My dear friend? Are you still weeping?... » asks Jesus, kissing his temple. He is so much taller than Lazarus, from His shoulders upwards, and looks even taller, as Lazarus is bent in his embrace of love and respect.

At last Lazarus looks up and says: «Yes, I am weeping. Last year I gave You the pearls of my sad tears, it is therefore fair that I give You the pearls of my tears of joy. Oh! Master, my Master! I think that there is nothing more humble and holy than good tears... And I give them to You, to say: "Thank You" for my Mary who is now a kind, happy, serene, pure good girl... Oh, much better than when she was a little girl. And I, I who felt that I was much above her, in my pride of an Israelite faithful to the Law, now I feel I am so tiny, so... nothing, as compared to her, who is no longer a woman, but a flame. A sanctifying flame. I... I cannot understand where she finds the wisdom, the words, the actions, which edify the whole household. I look at her as one looks at a mystery. But how could so much fire, such a jewel be hidden under so much rottenness and be there comfortably? Neither I nor Martha can ascend where she ascends. But how can she, if her wings were broken by vice? I do not understand... »

«And there is no need for you to understand. It is enough that I understand. But I tell you that Mary has turned the powerful energy of her being towards Good. She has bent her character towards Perfection. And since her character is of powerful absolutism, she thrusts herself unreservedly on that way. She makes use of her experience in evil to be as powerful in good as she was in evil and using the same method of giving herself entirely, as she did in evil, she has given herself entirely to God. She has understood the law\* of “love God with your whole being, with your body, your soul and with all your strength”. If Israel were made of Maries, if the world were made of Maries, we would have the Kingdom on God on the earth, as it will be in the most high Heaven. »

«Oh! Master! And it is Mary of Magdala who deserves such words!... »

279. 3<sup>3</sup>«It is Mary of Lazarus. The great friend, the sister of My great friend. How did you know that I was here, if My Mother has not yet come to Bethany? »

«The steward of the Clear Water has come to me, by forced marches, and told me that You were coming. Every day I sent a servant here. A little while ago he came saying: “He has arrived and is at the Field of the Galileans”. I left immediately... »

«But you are suffering... »

«So much, Master! My legs... »

«And you came. I would have come, soon... »

«My anxiety to tell You my joy was tormenting me. I have had it in my heart for months. A letter! How can a letter say such things? I could not wait any longer... Will You come to Bethany? »

«Of course. Immediately after the Feast. »

«You are anxiously awaited... That Greek girl... What a mind! I speak very much with her, anxious as she is to learn about God. But she is very well educated... and I succumb, because I do not know certain things very well. We need You. »

«And I will come. Now let us go to Maximinus, and then I beg You to be My guest. My Mother will be happy to see you and you will be able to rest. She will soon be here with the boy. »

And they go to Maximinus who kneels down greeting Him...

\* law, in *Deuteronomy 6, 5*.

280. The return of the seventy two.  
Prophecy on future mystics.

19<sup>th</sup> September 1945.

<sup>1</sup>The seventy two disciples come back at the long twilight of a clear October day with Elias, Joseph and Levi. They are tired and covered with dust, but so happy! The three shepherds are happy that they are now free to serve the Master. They are happy also because, after so many years of separation, they are with their companions of long ago. The seventy two are happy because they have accomplished their first mission satisfactorily. Their faces shine more than the little lamps which light up the little tents built for the large group of pilgrims. 280.1

Jesus' tent is in the middle and under it there is the Blessed Virgin with Marjiam who helps Her to prepare supper. Around it there are the tents of the apostles. Mary of Alphaeus is in the tent of James and Judas; Mary Salome and her husband are in John and James'; in the one near it there is Susanna with her husband, who is not an apostle or disciple... officially,... but he must have made a claim to stay there, since he granted his wife permission to be entirely of Jesus. Then, around them, there are the tents of the disciples, some of whom are with their families, some without. And those who are alone, as most of them are, have joined one or more companions. John of Endor has taken in the solitary Ermasteus, but he has endeavoured to be as close as possible to Jesus' tent, so that Marjiam often goes to him, taking one thing or another and cheering him up with the words of an intelligent child who is happy to be with Jesus, Mary and Peter, and at a feast as well.

<sup>2</sup>After supper Jesus goes towards the slopes of the olive grove and the disciples follow Him all together. 280.2

When they are far from the babel and the crowd, after praying together, they report to Jesus in greater detail than they were able to do before, among those going and coming. And they are amazed and happy when they say: «Do You know, Master, that not only diseases but also demons obeyed us because of the power of Your Name? What a wonderful thing, Master! We poor men were able to release a man from the dreadful power of a demon, only because You had sent us!... » and they tell of many

cases which happened here or there. Only of one possessed they say: «His relatives, or rather his mother and neighbours brought him to us by force. But the demon scoffed at us saying: "I have come back here by his will after the Nazarene had driven me out and I will not leave him again because he loves me more than he loves your Master and he looked for me" and with indomitable strength he suddenly tore the man away from those who were holding him and hurled him down a precipice. We ran to see whether he had been dashed to pieces. He had not! He was running like a young gazelle repeating curses and quips not really of this world... We felt sorry for his mother... But he!... Oh! can the demon do all that? »

«All that and much more» says Jesus sadly.

«Perhaps if You had been there... »

«No. I admonished him: "Go and do not relapse into your sin". But he did. He knew he wanted evil and he agreed. He is lost. There is a difference between a man who is possessed the first time through his ignorance and a man who wants to be possessed knowing that by doing so he sells himself again to the demon. But do not speak of him. He is a member cut off without hope. He is a volunteer of Evil. Let us rather praise the Lord for the victories He granted you. I know the name of the culprit and the names of those who have been saved. I could see Satan fall from heaven like a thunderbolt through your merits joined to My Name. Because I saw also your sacrifices, your prayers, the love with which you went towards unhappy people to do what I had told you to do. You have acted with love and God blessed you. Others will do what you do, but they will do it without love. And they will not get conversions... But do not rejoice because you have subdued spirits, but rejoice because your names are written in Heaven. Never remove them from there... »

280.3    3«Master, when will those come who will not get conversions? Perhaps when You are no longer with us? » asks one of the disciples whose name I do not know.

«No, Agapo. Any time. »

«What? Also when You teach and love us? »

«Yes. I will always love you, also when you are far from Me. My love will always come to you and you will perceive it. »

«Oh! that is true. I perceived it one evening when I was vexed

because I did not know how to reply to one who was asking me questions. I was on the point of running away shamefully. But I remembered Your words: "Be not afraid. You will be given at the right moment the words to be spoken" and I invoked You in my spirit. I said: "Jesus certainly loves me. I am calling His love to assist me" and Your love came to me. Like a fire, a light... a strength... The man before me was watching me sneering ironically and winking at his friends. He was sure to win the argument. I opened my mouth and it was like a river of words which flowed out joyfully from my silly mouth. Master, did You really come, or was it an illusion? I do not know. I know that at the end the man - he was a young scribe - threw his arms around my neck saying: "You are blessed and blessed is He who has led you to such wisdom" and he seemed anxious to find You. Will he come? »

«Man's thoughts are as labile as words written on water, and his will is as restless as the wing of a swallow flying about for its last meal of the day. But pray for him... Yes. I did come to you. And Matthias and Timoneus, and John of Endor and Simon and Samuel and Jonah: they all had Me. Some were conscious of My presence, some were not. But I was with you. And I shall be with those who serve Me with love and truth forever and ever. »

4«Master, You have not yet told us whether among those who are present there will be someone without love... » 280. 4

«It is not necessary to know that. It would be lack of love on My part to instigate indignation towards a companion who is not capable of loving. »

«But are there any? You can tell us that... »

«Yes, there are. Love is the simplest, sweetest and rarest thing there is, and even when it is sown, it does not always take root. »

«But if we do not love You, who can? » There is almost anger among the apostles and disciples who are upset by suspicion and sorrow.

Jesus closes His eyes. He conceals them that they may give no hint. But He makes a resigned, kind, sad gesture with His hands, which He stretches out with open palms, His gesture of resigned confession and admission and He says: «That is how it should be. But it is not so. Many do not know themselves yet. But I know them. And I pity them. »

«Oh! Master! Is it I perhaps? » asks Peter going close to Jesus,



squeezing poor Marjiam between himself and the Master and throwing his short muscular arms towards the shoulders of Jesus Whom he grasps and shakes, looking mad with the terror of being one who does not love Jesus.

Jesus opens His bright but sad eyes and looking at Peter's inquisitive and frightened face, He says to him: «No, Simon of Jonah. Not you. You know how to love and you will love more and more. You are My Stone, Simon of Jonah. A good stone. I will lay on it the things dearest to Me and I am sure that you will support them without any disturbances

«And I? », «I? », «I? ». The question is being repeated like an echo from mouth to mouth.

«Peace! Peace! Be calm and endeavour, all of you, to possess loves

280. 5 <sup>5</sup>«But which of us knows how to love most? »

Jesus looks around at everyone: a smiling caress... He then lowers His eyes and looks at Marjiam still squeezed between Himself and Peter and pushing Peter aside a little, He turns the boy around with his face towards the little crowd and says: «Here is he who knows how to love most among you. The boy. But you, whose cheeks are covered with beards and whose hair is grey, must not tremble with fear. Whoever is born again in Me becomes "a child". Oh! go in peace! Praise God Who called you, because you really see with your eyes the wonders of the Lord. Blessed are those who will also see what you see. Because I assure you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, but they did not see it, and many patriarchs would have liked to know what you know, but they did not know, and many just people would have liked to hear what you hear but they were not able to hear it. But from now on those who love Me, will know everything. »

«And after? When You have gone, as You say? »

«Afterwards you will speak on My behalf. And later... Oh! large groups, not by number but by grace, of those who will see, know and hear what you now see, know and hear! Oh! large beloved multitudes of My "little-big" ones! Eternal eyes, eternal minds, eternal ears! How can I explain to you, who are around Me, what this eternal living will be, rather than eternal, endless living of those who will love Me and whom I will love to the

extent of abolishing time, and they will be “the citizens of Israel” even if they live when Israel will be simply the reminder of a nation, and they will be the contemporaries of Jesus living in Israel. And they will be with Me and in Me, until they learn what time has cancelled and pride has confused. What name shall I give them? You apostles, you disciples, the believers will be called “Christians”. And those? What name will they have? A name known only in Heaven. What reward will they receive from the earth? My kiss, My voice, the warmth of My body. All Myself. I, they. They, I. Utter communion... Go. I will stay to delight My spirit in the contemplation of those who in future will know and love Me in an absolute manner. Peace be with you. »

281. In the Temple for the feast of the Tabernacles.  
The conditions to follow Jesus, the parable  
of talents and the parable of the good Samaritan.

20<sup>th</sup> September 1945.

<sup>1</sup>Jesus is going to the Temple. The male disciples precede Him <sup>281. 1</sup> in groups, the women disciples follow Him, also in groups, that is, His Mother, Mary of Clopas, Mary Salome, Susanna, Johanna of Chuza, Eliza of Bethzur, Annaleah of Jerusalem, Martha and Marcella. The Magdalene is not there. The twelve apostles and Marjiam are around Jesus.

Jerusalem is in the pomp of its solemn festivities. There are people in every street and from every country. Singing, talking, whispering of prayers, the cursing of ass-drivers, the weeping of children can be heard everywhere. And above all the confusion there is the clear sky visible between houses and a pleasant sunshine which brightens up the colours of garments and enlivens the dying shades of pergolas and trees, glimpses of which can be caught here and there, beyond the walls of closed gardens and terraces.

Jesus at times meets acquaintances and their greetings are more or less respectful according to the mood of the person He meets. Gamaliel in fact bows deeply but superciliously and stares at Stephen, who smiles at him from the group of disciples and whom Gamaliel calls aside, after bowing to Jesus, and says a

few words to him. Stephen then goes back to his group. The salutation of Cleopas of Emmaus, the old head of the synagogue, is revering; he is on his way to the Temple with his fellow citizens. As harsh as a curse is the reply of the Pharisees of Capernaum to  
281. 2 Jesus' greeting. <sup>2</sup>Johanah's peasants, led by their steward, greet Jesus by throwing themselves on the ground and kissing His feet in the dust of the road.

The crowds are amazed and stop to watch the group of men who at a cross-roads prostrate themselves with a cry at the feet of a young man, who is neither, a Pharisee nor a famous scribe, who is neither a satrap nor a powerful courtier, and some ask who he is and a whisper spreads: «He is the Rabbi of Nazareth, the one who is said to be the Messiah. » Proselytes and Gentiles then crowd inquisitively, pressing the group against the wall, causing obstruction in the little square, until a group of as-drivers scatters them shouting imprecations. But the crowd soon gathers again, separating women from men, in a harsh demanding manner which is also a manifestation of faith. Everybody wishes to touch Jesus' garments, say a word to Him, ask Him questions. Their efforts are quite futile, because in their haste, in their anxiety and restlessness to move forward, they push one another so that no one is successful and even questions, and answers become muddled in the babel.

The only one who disregards the scene is Marjiam's grandfather, who replied with a shout to his grandson's shout, and immediately after revering the Master has clasped the boy to his heart and remaining thus, sitting back on his heels, his knees on the ground, is holding him on his lap, admiring and caressing him with tears and joyful kisses, asking him questions and listening to him. The old man is already in Paradise, so happy as he is.

The Roman troops rush to the spot thinking there is a brawl and they push through the crowd. But when they see Jesus they smile and withdraw calmly and merely advise the people present to clear out of the important cross-roads. Jesus obeys at once, taking advantage of the space made by the Romans, who are walking a few steps ahead of Him, as if they were making way for Him, whereas in actual fact they are going back to their outpost; the Roman guard has in fact been reinforced, as if Pilate

were aware of the ill-feeling of the crowds and were afraid of an insurrection when Jerusalem is full of Jews from all over. And it is beautiful to see Him go, preceded by the Roman squad, like a king, to whom they make way, while he goes to his possessions.

When passing by, He says to the boy and the old man: «Remain together and follow Me» and to the steward: «Please leave your men with Me. They will be My guests until this evening. »

The steward replies respectfully: «Everything will be done as You wish» and he goes away after bowing deeply.

<sup>3</sup>The Temple is now close at hand and the swarming of the <sup>281. 3</sup> crowds, just like ants near the ant nest, is even denser, when one of Johanah's peasants shouts: «There is our master! » and falls on his knees to greet him, imitated by all the others.

Jesus remains standing in the middle of a group of people prostrated, because the peasants had gathered around Him. He turns around looking towards the place pointed out by the peasant, and meets the glance of a Pharisee pompously dressed, whom I have already seen, but I do not know where.

Johanah, the Pharisee, is with other people of his caste: a heap of precious clothes of fringes, buckles, sashes, phylacteries, all larger than common ones. Johanah looks at Jesus attentively: a glance of mere curiosity, but not disrespectful. Nay, his salutation is a stiff one: just a slight inclination of the head. But it is a greeting to which Jesus replies respectfully. Two or three more Pharisees greet Him, whilst others look scornfully or pretend to be looking elsewhere, only one hurls an insult and the people near Jesus start, and even Johanah turns around immediately, fulminating with his eyes the offender, a man younger than he is, with hard conspicuous features.

Once they have gone by and the peasants dare to speak, one of them says: «That is Doras, Master”, the one who cursed You. »

«Never mind. I have you who bless Me» replies Jesus calmly.

Leaning against an archivolt there is Manaen with other people, and as soon as he sees Jesus, he raises his arms with a cry of joy: «This is surely a joyous day, as I found You! » and he moves towards Jesus, followed by those who are with him. He reveres Jesus under the shady archivolt, where voices resound like under a dome.

While Manaen is greeting Jesus, His cousins Simon and Jo-

seph pass near the apostolic group with other Nazarenes... but they do not even say hello... Jesus looks at them sadly but does not say anything. Judas and James speak to each other excitedly, Judas quivers with rage and runs away, resisting restraint by his brother. But Jesus calls him with such a commanding voice: «Judas, come here! » that Alphaeus' vexed son comes back... «Leave them alone. They are like seed which has not yet felt springtime. Leave them in the dark of the insensitive sod. I will penetrate it just the same, even if the sod should become jasper closed round the seed. I will do it in due time. »

But the weeping of Mary of Alphaeus, who is desolate, resounds louder than the answer of Judas of Alphaeus. The long weeping of a distressed person... But Jesus does not turn around to comfort her although her groaning is very clearly heard under the archivolt resounding with echoes.

He continues to speak to Manaen who says to Him: «These are disciples of John's and have come with me. Like me, they want to be Yours. »

«Peace be with good disciples. Over there are Matthias, John and Simeon, who are now with Me for good. I welcome you as I welcomed them, because everything that comes from the holy Precursor is dear to Me. »

281. 4 <sup>4</sup>They have now reached the enclosure of the Temple. Jesus gives instructions to the Iscariot and Simon Zealot for the ritual purchases and offerings. He then calls John, the priest, and says to him: «Since you come from this place, make arrangements to invite some Levites whom you know to be worthy of becoming acquainted with the Truth. Because this year I can really celebrate a joyful feast. Never again will the day be so pleasant... »

«Why, my Lord? » asks John, the scribe.

«Because I have you around Me, all of you, either with your visible presence or with your souls. »

«But we shall always be! And many more with us» states the apostle John emphatically. And everybody echoes him.

Jesus smiles, but remains silent, while John, the priest, goes away, to the Temple, together with Stephen, to carry out the order. Jesus shouts after him: «Join us at the Porch of the Pagans. »

They enter and almost immediately they meet Nicodemus, who bows deeply, but does not approach Jesus. But he exchanges

with Jesus a meaningful smile full of peace.

While the women stop where they are allowed, Jesus goes with the men to the place of Jews, to pray, and after accomplishing the rite, He comes back to join those who are waiting for Him at the Porch of the Pagans.

The very large and high porches are crowded with people listening to the lessons of the rabbis. Jesus directs His steps to the spot where the two apostles and the two disciples sent ahead are standing waiting for Him. He is soon surrounded by people, as many people, spread in the crowded marble court, join the apostles and disciples. Curiosity is such that some disciples of rabbis also approach the circle around Jesus, but I do not know whether they do so spontaneously or because their masters have sent them.

<sup>5</sup>Jesus asks point blank: «Why are you pressing around Me? 281. 5 Tell Me. You have well known rabbis, who are well liked by everybody. I am the Unknown and Disliked One. So why do you come to Me? »

«Because we love You» reply some, some say: «Because Your words are different from the words of the others», some: «To see Your miracles» or: «Because we have heard people talk about You» or: «Because You alone have words of eternal life and deeds corresponding to Your words», and finally some say: «Because we want to join Your disciples. »

Jesus looks at the people while they speak, as if He wanted to pierce them with His eyes and read their most hidden thoughts, and some of them, who cannot resist His glance, go away or hide behind a column or behind people taller than they are.

Jesus resumes: «But do you know what it means and what it is to follow Me? I am replying to those words only, because curiosity does not deserve a reply and because those who hunger for My words obviously love Me and wish to join Me. So, those who have spoken form two groups: curious people whom I disregard, and volunteers, whom I wish to acquaint with the severity of that vocation.

<sup>6</sup>To follow Me as a disciple means renouncing all affections 281. 6 for *one only* love: Mine. The selfish love for oneself, the guilty love for riches, sensuality or power, the honest love for one's wife, the holy love for one's father and mother, the deep love for and of

children and brothers, must all yield to My love, if one wishes to be Mine. I tell you solemnly that My disciples must be more free than birds flying in the sky, more free than winds blowing across the firmament without anyone or anything holding them back. They must be free, with no heavy chains, with no ties of material love, without even the thin cobwebs of the slightest barrier. The spirit is a delicate butterfly enclosed in the heavy cocoon of the flesh and even the iridescent impalpable web of a spider can slow down its flight or stop it all together: the spider of sensuality, of the lack of generosity in sacrifice. I want everything, unreservedly. The spirit needs such freedom and generosity in giving, to be sure that it is not entangled in the cobwebs of affections, habits, considerations, fears, stretched out like as many threads by the monstrous spider which is Satan, the robber of souls.

If one wants to come to Me and does not hate in a holy manner father, mother, wife, children, brothers and sisters, and one's very life, one cannot be My disciple. I said: "hate in a holy manner". Within your hearts you are saying: "Hatred, as He taught us, is never holy. So He is contradicting Himself". No. I am not contradicting Myself. I say that you must hate the heaviness of love, the sensual passion of love for your father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, and for your very life, on the contrary I order you to love relatives and life with the light freedom of spirits. Love them in God and for God, never postponing God to them, endeavouring and taking care to lead them where the disciple has already arrived, that is to God, the Truth. You will thus love God and relatives in a holy manner, safeguarding each love, so that family ties will not be a burden but wings, not a fault, but justice. You must be prepared to hate even your lives in order to follow Me. He hates his life who without fear of losing it or making it sad from a human point of view, uses it to serve Me. But it is only an appearance of hatred. A feeling erroneously called "hatred" by man who cannot elevate himself, as he is entirely earthly, by little superior to brutes.

In actual fact such apparent hatred, which consists in denying sensual satisfaction to one's life in order to give a more and more intense life to the spirit, is love. It is love, of the highest degree and the most blessed. To deny oneself basic satisfactions, to reject sensual affections, to risk unfair reproaches, criticism

and punishment, being rejected, cursed and perhaps persecuted, all that is a sequence of grief. But it is necessary to embrace such grief and take it upon yourselves, like a cross, a scaffold on which all past faults are expiated to be justified by God, from Whom you can obtain every true, mighty, holy grace for those whom we love. He who does not carry his cross and does not follow Me, he who cannot do that cannot be My disciple.

<sup>7</sup>Therefore, you who say: "We have come because we want to <sup>281. 7</sup> join Your disciples" must ponder on that very carefully. It is not a shame, but it is wisdom to weigh and judge oneself and admit both to oneself and others: "I am not the stuff of which disciples are made". What? The heathens have as a basis of one of their doctrines the necessity of "knowing oneself", and could you Israelites not do that to gain Heaven?

Because, remember this, blessed are those who will come to Me. But rather than come to betray Me and Him Who sent Me, it is better not to come at all, and remain children of the Law, as you have been so far. Woe betide those who, after saying: "I will come", cause damage to the Christ by being the betrayers of the Christian idea, the scandalisers of little ones and of good people! Woe betide them! And yet there will always be some of them!

You ought therefore to imitate him who wants to build a tower. First he carefully works out the necessary expenses and counts his money to ensure that he has enough to complete the work, lest, after laying the foundation, he may have to stop building through lack of money. In which case he would lose what he had previously and would be left without tower and without talents and over and above he would be scoffed at by people saying: "He began to build but was not able to finish the job. He can now stuff his stomach with the ruins of his unfinished building".

Imitate the kings of the earth also, by letting the poor events of the world be useful for supernatural teaching. When they want to go to war with another king, they calmly and carefully examine everything, the advantages and the disadvantages, they consider whether the benefit of the conquest is worth the lives of the subjects, they study whether it is possible to conquer the place, whether their forces, which are half those of their enemy, but more pugnacious, can win; and as they rightly think, that it is unlikely that ten thousand can beat twenty thousand



soldiers, before clashing with the enemy, they send ambassadors with rich gifts for the other king, and thus soothe him, as his suspicions had already been aroused by the military movements of the other, they disarm him with some proof of friendship, they dispel his doubts and fears and make a treaty of peace with him, which is always more advantageous than a war, both from the human and spiritual point of view.

That is what you must do before beginning a new life and fighting the world. Because to be My disciples implies going against the stormy and violent trend of the world, of flesh and of Satan. And if you feel that you do not have the courage to renounce everything for My sake, do not come to Me, because you cannot be My disciples. »

281.8     <sup>8</sup>«All right. What You say is true» agrees a scribe who has mingled with the crowd. «But if we divest ourselves of everything, with what shall we serve You? The Law contains commandments which are like money which God has given man so that by making use of it he may buy eternal life. You say: “Renounce everything” and You mention father, mother, riches, honours. God has given us those things also, and through Moses He has told us to use them in a holy way in order to appear just in the eyes of God. If You take everything away from us, what will You give us? »

«True love, as I said, rabbi. I give you My doctrine which does not take one iota away from the old Law, but perfects it. »

«So we are all disciples alike, because we all have the same things. »

«We all have them according to the Mosaic Law. But not everybody has them according to the Law perfected by Me according to Love. Not everyone achieves in it the same amount of merits. Even among My disciples not everybody will have the same amount of merits and some not only will not have an amount, but will lose also the only coin they have: their souls. »

«What? Who was given more will be left with more. Your disciples, or rather Your apostles, are following You in Your mission and are aware of Your ways of behaving, and have had very much, Your real disciples have received much, those who are disciples only by name have received less, and those who like me listen to You only by accident receive nothing. It is obvious that

Your apostles will have very much in Heaven, Your real disciples much, Your disciples by name less, those like me nothing. »

«It is obvious from a human point of view, but even from a human point of view it is wrong. Because not everybody is capable of making the goods received yield a profit. Listen to this parable and forgive Me if My lesson is too long. But I am a swallow of passage, and I stop in the House of the Father only for a little while, as I came for the whole world, and also because this little world, which is the Temple of Jerusalem, will not allow Me to interrupt My flight and remain where the glory of the Lord calls Me. »

«Why do You say that? »

«Because it is the truth. »

The scribe looks around and lowers his head. He can see that it is the truth as it is written on the faces of many members of the Sanhedrin, of rabbis and Pharisees who have been enlarging the crowd around Jesus. Faces green with bile, or purple with wrath, looks equivalent to words of curse and spittle of poison, ill-feeling fomenting everywhere, desire to ill-treat the Christ, which remains a mere desire only because of fear of the many people surrounding the Master with affection and who are ready for anything in order to defend Him, and perhaps because of fear of punishment by Rome, benign towards the meek Galilean Master.

<sup>9</sup>Jesus calmly resumes clarifying His thought by means of a parable: «A man, who was about to set out on a long journey, and thus be away for a long time, called all his servants and committed all his wealth to them. He gave some of them five silver talents, some two silver talents, some only one gold talent: each according to his position and capability. And then he left. Now the servant who had received five silver talents, negotiated them diligently and after some time they brought him five more. The servant who had received two silver talents, did the same and doubled the amount received. But the servant to whom the master had given most, one talent of pure gold, was seized with fear that he might not be successful, with the fear of thieves and of many fanciful conceptions and above all with laziness, and he dug a deep hole in the ground and hid his master's money in it.

Many months went by and the master came back. He immediately called his servants to give back the money committed to

them. The one who had received five silver talents came and said: "Here, my Lord. You gave me five. As I thought it was wrong not to make what you had given me yield some profit, I did my best and I gained five more talents. I was not able to do more... ". "Well, very well, my good faithful servant. You have been faithful, willing and honest in little. I will give you authority over much. Come and join in your master's happiness". Next came the man of two talents and said: "I have taken the liberty of making use of your money to your own profit. Here is the account of how I used your money. See? There were two talents, now there are four. Are you glad, my lord? ". And the master gave the good servant the same reply given to the first one.

Last came the one who enjoyed the greatest confidence of the master and had received a gold talent from him. He took it out of the casket and said: "You gave me the greatest value because you know that I am wise and loyal, as I know that you are uncompromising and exacting and will not tolerate loss of your money, but if misfortune befalls you, you make it up with those who are close to you. In actual fact you reap where you have not sown and you harvest where you have not scattered seed and you do not remit a penny to your banker or to your steward for any reason whatever. Your money must be as much as you say. Now, as I was afraid of reducing the value of this treasure, I took it and hid it. I trusted nobody, not even myself. I have now dug it up and I give it back to you. Here is your talent".

"O unjust lazy servant! Really, you have not loved me, because you have not known me and you have not loved my welfare, because you left it inactive. You have betrayed the confidence I had in you and you believe, accuse and condemn yourself by yourself. You knew that I reap where I have not sown and I harvest where I have scattered no seed. Why, then, did you not ensure that I could reap and harvest? Is that how you come up to my confidence? Is that how you know me? Why did you not take the money to a banker, so that I might draw it on my return with its interest? I diligently instructed you how to do that and you, silly lazy servant, took no heed of what I told you. Your talent and everything else will be taken off you and given to the man of the ten talents".

"But he already has ten, while this man is deprived of it... " they objected.

“And that is right. He who has and works with what he has, will be given more and even in excess. But he who has nothing, because he did not want anything, will be deprived also of what was given to him. With regard to the useless servant who betrayed my confidence and left inactive the gifts I had given him, throw him out of my property and let him go and weep and eat his heart out”.

That is the parable. As you see, rabbi, he who had most was left with less, because he did not deserve to keep the gift of God. And it is not necessarily true that one of those whom you call a disciple only by name, having thus little to negotiate, or even one of those who listen to me only by accident, as you say, and have only their souls as money, cannot be successful in getting the gold talent and the interest of it, which will be taken from one who had been given most. The surprises of the Lord are endless because the reactions of man are endless. You will see Gentiles reaching eternal life and Samaritans possessing Heaven, and you will see pure Israelites and followers of Mine losing Heaven and eternal Life. »

<sup>10</sup>Jesus becomes silent as if He wished to put an end to the de- 281.10  
bate and He turns towards the enclosure of the Temple.

But a doctor of the Law, who had sat down listening gravely under the porch, gets up and standing in His way, asks Him: «Master, what must I do to gain eternal life? You have replied to others, please reply to me as well. »

«Why do you want to tempt Me? Why do you want to lie? Are you hoping that I may say something different from the Law because I add brighter and more perfect ideas to it? What is written in the Law? Tell Me! What is the first commandment of the Law? »

«“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, with all your intelligence. You shall love your neighbour as yourself “. »

«Your reply is correct. Do that and you will have eternal life. »

«And who is my neighbour? The world is full of good and of wicked people, known and unknown, friendly and hostile to Israel. Which is my neighbour? »

«A man going from Jerusalem down to Jericho through the mountain gorges, ran into highwaymen, who after wounding

him severely, despoiled him of all his belongings and his very clothes and left him more dead than alive on the edge of the road.

A priest, who had finished his turn at the Temple, travelled down the same road. Oh! He was still smelling of the incense of the Holy! And his soul should have been scented with supernatural kindness and love, after being in the House of God, almost in touch with the Most High. The priest was in a hurry to get back home. So he looked at the wounded man but did not stop. He passed by hurriedly leaving the poor man on the edge of the road.

A Levite passed by. Should he become contaminated who must serve in the Temple? Never! He gathered his tunic so that it might not get stained with blood, he cast a glance over the man moaning in his blood and quickened his pace towards Jerusalem, towards the Temple.

Third came a Samaritan, who was travelling from Samaria towards the ford. He noticed the blood, he stopped, saw the wounded man in the deepening twilight, he dismounted and approached the wounded man, whom he gave a sip of strong and generous wine, he then tore his mantle to make bandages, and gently dressed the man's wounds after bathing them with vinegar and applying oil to them. He mounted the man on his horse and carefully led the animal, supporting the man at the same time, comforting him with kind words, without worrying about all the trouble or being annoyed because the man was of Jewish nationality. When he arrived in town, he took him to an inn, watched over him during the night and at dawn, seeing that he was better, he entrusted him to the innkeeper, paying him in advance with some denarii and saying: "Look after him as you would look after me. On my way back I will make good any extra expense you have, with a good measure, if you do everything well". And he went away.

Tell Me now, doctor of the Law. Which of these three was a "neighbour" for the man who had run into highwaymen? The priest perhaps? Or the Levite perhaps? Or was it not the Samaritan who did not ask who the wounded man was, why he was wounded, whether he was doing the wrong thing by assisting him, wasting time and money and running the risk of being taken for his rounder? »

The doctor of the Law replies: «The last one, who took pity on him, was his “neighbour”. »

«Do the same yourself and you will love your neighbour and God in your neighbour and you will deserve eternal life. »

<sup>11</sup>Nobody dare speak and Jesus takes advantage of the situa- 281.11  
tion to join the women waiting for Him near the enclosure and return to town with them. A couple of priests have now joined the disciples, or rather: a priest and a Levite, a venerable old man the former, a very young one the latter.

Jesus is now speaking to His Mother, with Marjiam in the middle, between Himself and Her. And He asks Her: «Did You hear Me, Mother? »

«Yes, Son, and My sadness has been added to Mary of Clopas’. She wept a little before entering the Temple... »

«I know, Mother. And I know why. But she must not weep, but pray. »

«Oh! She prays so much! In the past nights, in her tent, while her sons were sleeping, she prayed and wept. I could hear her through the thin partition of the branches. To see Joseph and Simon only a few steps away, so close, and yet so divided...! And she is not the only one to weep. Johanna, who seems so tranquil, has been weeping with Me... »

«Why, Mother? »

«Because Chuza... is behaving... very oddly. At times he seconds her in everything. At times he opposes her in everything. If they are alone where no one can see them, he is the usual exemplary husband. But if there are other people, of the Court naturally, with him, then he becomes dictatorial and disdainful of his meek wife. She does not understand why... »

«I can tell You. Chuza is Herod’s servant. Understand Me, Mother. “Servant”. I will not tell Johanna, not to hurt her. But that is what he is. When he is not afraid of being blamed or jeered at by his sovereign, he is good Chuza. But when he fears that, he is no longer so. »

«It is because Herod is very angry because of Manaen and... »

«It is because Herod is mad with tardy remorse for yielding to Herodias. But Johanna already has so much happiness in life. Under her coronet, she must wear her cilice. »

«Annaleah also weeps... »

«Why? »

«Because her fiance is going astray... against You. »

«Tell her not to weep. It is a solution. A grace of God. Her sacrifice will bring Samuel back to Good. For the time being she will be left free from any pressure for marriage. I promised her to take her with Me. She will precede Me in death... »

«Son!... » Mary presses Jesus' hand, while Her face becomes deadly pale.

«Dear Mother! It is for the sake of men. You know. It is for the love of men. Let us drink our chalice with goodwill. Is that right? »

Mary stifles Her tears and replies: «Yes». A tortured heart-rending «yes».

281. 12 <sup>12</sup>Marjiam looks up and says to Jesus: «Why do You say these dreadful things which grieve Mother? I will not let You die. I will defend You as I defended the lambs. »

Jesus caresses him and to raise the spirits of the two distressed ones, He asks the boy: «What will your little sheep be doing now? Do you not miss them? »

«Oh! I am with You! But I always think of them and I wonder: "Will Porphirea have led them to pasture? and will she watch that Foam does not go to the lake? ". Foam is so lively, you know? Her mother calls her repeatedly... without avail! She does what she likes. And Snow, she is so greedy that she eats until she is sick. Do You know, Master? I know what it is to be a priest in Your Name. I understand better than the others. They (and he points at the apostles who are coming behind) they say so many big words, they make so many plans... for the future. I say: "I will be a shepherd for men, as I am for sheep. And that will be enough". My Mummy and Yours told me yesterday such a lovely passage of the prophets... and She said to me: "Our Jesus is just like that". And in my heart I said: "I will be like that, too". Then I said to our Mother: "For the time being I am a lamb, later I will be a shepherd. Jesus instead is at present the Shepherd and He is also the Lamb. But You are always a ewe-Lamb, our dear, white, beautiful ewe-Lamb, Whose words are sweeter than milk. That is why Jesus is such a lamb: because He was born of You, the Little Lamb of the Lord". »

Jesus stoops and kisses him fondly. He then asks him: «So you

really want to be a priest? »

«Of course, my Lord! That is why I try to become good and learn so much. I always go to John of Endor. He treats me as a man and so kindly. I want to be the shepherd of the sheep both misled and not misled, and the doctor-shepherd of those which are wounded or suffer from fractures, as the Prophet says\*. Oh! How lovely! » and the boy takes a jump clapping his hands.

«What has this blackcap got that he is so happy? » asks Peter coming forward.

«He sees his way. Very clearly. Until the end. And I consecrate his vision with My approvals

<sup>13</sup>They stop before a high building, which, if I am not mistaken, is near the Ophel district, but in a more refined spot. 281. 13

«Are we stopping here? »

«This is the house which Lazarus offered Me for our joyful banquet. Mary is already here. »

«Why did she not come with us? For fear of being jeered at? »

«Oh! No! I told her. »

«Why, Lord? »

«Because the Temple is more sensitive than a pregnant wife. As long as I can, and not out of cowardice, I do not want to collide with it. »

«It will be of no use to You, Master. If I were You, I would not only collide with it, but I would hurl it down from Moriah with all those who are in it. »

«You are a sinner, Simon. One must pray for one's fellow creatures, not kill them. »

«I am a sinner. But You are not... and... You ought to do it. »

«There is who will do it. After the measure of sin has been filled. »

«Which measure? »

«A measure that will fill the whole temple, overflowing in Jerusalem. You cannot understand... Oh! Martha! Open your house to the Pilgrim! »

Martha makes herself known and opens the door. They all go into a long hall ending in a paved yard with a single tree in each of the four corners. There is a large hall above the ground floor

\* says in *Ezekiel 34, 16*.



and from its open windows it is possible to see the whole town with its hills and slopes. I thus realise that the house is in the south or south-east side of the town.

The table has been laid for many guests. Many tables are set in parallel rows. About one hundred people can comfortably have a meal. Mary Magdalene, who was busy in the store room, arrives and prostrates herself before Jesus. Then Lazarus comes in with a happy smile on his drawn face. The guests enter little by little, some seem rather embarrassed, some are more sure of themselves. But the kindness of the women soon makes them all feel at home.

281. 14 <sup>14</sup>John, the priest, introduces to Jesus the two he has brought from the Temple. «Master, my good friend Jonathan and my young friend Zacharias. They are true Israelites without malice or ill will.

«Peace be with you. I am happy to have you. The rite must be kept also in these pleasant customs. And it is lovely that the ancient Faith gives a friendly hand to the new Faith which has come from the same origin. Sit beside Me while we wait for dinner time. »

The patriarchal Jonathan speaks, while the young Levite looks around curiously, and seems amazed and somewhat shy. I think he wants to give himself easy manners, but in actual fact he is like a fish out of water. Fortunately Stephen comes to his aid and brings him, one after the other, the apostles and the main disciples.

The old priest says caressing his white beard: «When John came to me, his master, to show me that he had been cured, I wanted to meet You. But, Master, I hardly ever leave my enclosure. I am old... But I was hoping to see You before dying. And Jehovah has heard me. May He be praised! Today I heard You in the Temple. You excel the old wise Hillel. I do not want to doubt, nay, I cannot doubt that You are what my heart is expecting. But do You know what it is to have imbibed for almost eighty years the faith of Israel as it has become through centuries of... human handling? It has become our blood. And I am so old! To hear You is like hearing the water that gushes out of a cool spring. Oh! yes! A virgin water! But I... I am full of the tired water which comes from so far away... and has been made heavy by so many things.

How can I get rid of that saturation and enjoy You? »

«By believing and loving Me. Nothing else is required for just Jonathans

«But I will die soon! Shall I have time to believe everything You say? I shall not even be able to follow all Your words or learn them from other people. Then? »

«You will learn them in Heaven. Only a damned soul dies to Wisdom. But he who dies in the grace of God draws life and lives in Wisdom. Whom do you think I am? »

«You can but be the Expected One, Whom the son of my friend Zacharias foreran. Did You meet him? »

«He was a relative of Mine. »

«Oh! So You are a relative of the Baptist? »

«Yes, priest. »

«He is dead... and I cannot say: "Poor man! ". Because he died faithful to justice, after accomplishing his mission and because... Oh! The dreadful times we live in! Is it not better to go back to Abraham? »

«Yes. But more dreadful times will come, priest. »

«Do You think so? Rome, eh? »

«Not only Rome. Guilty Israel will be the first cause. »

«It is true. God is striking us. We deserve it. But also Rome...

<sup>15</sup>Have You heard of the Galileans killed by Pilate while they were offering a sacrifice? Their blood mingled with the victim's. Close to the very altar! » 281. 15

«Yes, I heard about it. »

All the Galileans begin to riot because of that act of tyranny. They shout: «It is true that he was a false Messiah. But why kill his followers after striking him? And why at that moment? Were they bigger sinners perhaps? ».

Jesus brings about peace and then says: «You are asking whether they were bigger sinners than many other Galileans and whether that is why they were killed? No, they were not. I tell you solemnly that they paid and many more will pay if you do not turn to the Lord. If you do not do penance, you will all perish alike, both in Galilee and elsewhere. God is indignant with His people. I tell you. You must not think that those who have been struck are the worst. Each of you should examine and judge himself, and no one else. Also the eighteen people on whom the tower

of Siloam fell and killed them, were not the most guilty in Jerusalem. I tell you. Do penance if you do not want to be crushed as  
281. 16 they were, also in your souls. <sup>16</sup>Come, priest of Israel. The meal is ready. It is your duty to offer and bless the food, because a priest is always to be honoured for the idea which he represents and calls to our minds, and it is your duty because you are a patriarch among us, and we are all younger than you are. »

«No, Master! No! I cannot do that in Your presence! You are the Son of God! »

«You do offer incense before the altar! And do you perhaps not believe that God is there? »

«Yes, I do believe that! With all my strengths

«Well, then? If you are not afraid of offering in the presence of the Most Holy Glory of the Most High, why should you be afraid in the presence of the Merciful One, Who took upon Himself human flesh to bring to you also the blessing of God before night comes to you? Oh! You people of Israel do not know that I covered with the veil of flesh My unendurable Divinity, so that man might approach God and not die thereof. Come, believe and be happy. I revere in you all the holy priests, from Aaron down to him who will be the last priest of Israel with Justice, you, perhaps, because priestly holiness really is languishing among us, like a forsaken plant. »

## 282. Betrayal at Sanhedrim with regards to Ermasteus, John of Endor and Syntyche.

21<sup>st</sup> September 1945.

282. 1 <sup>1</sup>Jesus is on His way to Bethany with the apostles and disciples and is speaking to the disciples, whom He orders to part, so that the Judaeans will go through Judaea and the Galileans up Trans-Jordan announcing the Messiah.

The instruction raises some objections. I get the impression that Trans-Jordan did not enjoy a very good reputation among Israelites. They talk of it as if it were a pagan region. And that offends the disciples from that area, among whom the most influential is the head of the synagogue of the Clear Water and then a young man, whose name I do not know, and both vigor-

ously defend their towns and fellow citizens.

Timoneus says: «Come, my Lord, to Aera, and You will see how they respect You there. You will not find as much faith in Judaea, as there is there. Nay, I do not want to go there. Let me stay with You and send a Judaeon and a Galilean to my town. They will see how they believed in You on my word only. »

And the young man says: «I believed without even seeing You. And I looked for You after my mother had forgiven me. But I am happy to go back there, although that means being mocked by wicked citizens as I was once, and being reproached by good people for my behaviour in the past. But it does not matter. I will preach You through my example. »

«You are right. You will do as you said. And then I will come. And you, Timoneus, are right, too. So Hermas will go with Abel of Bethlehem in Galilee to announce Me at Aera, while you, Timoneus, will stay with Me. But I do not want such disputes. You no longer are Judaeans or Galileans: you are disciples. That is enough. That name and your mission make you all equal with regard to birthplace, rank, everything. In one thing only you may differ: in holiness. That will be individual and in the measure which each of you will be able to attain. But I would like you all to have the same measure: the perfect one. See the apostles? They were divided like you by race and other things. Now, after a little over a year of instruction, they are simply the apostles. Do the same, and as among you, priests are together with old sinners and rich people with former beggars, and young men with old venerable people, cancel likewise divisions brought about by belonging to this or that region. By now you have one Fatherland only: Heaven. Because you have set off on the way to Heaven each of his own free will. Never give My enemies the impression that you are hostile to one another. Sin is your enemy, nothing else. »

<sup>2</sup>They proceed in silence for some time. Then Stephen approaches the Master and says: «I have something to tell You. I was hoping that You would ask me, but You did not. Yesterday Gamaliel spoke to me... »

«I saw him. »

«Are You not asking me what he told me? »

«I am waiting for you to tell Me, because a good disciple has no secrets from his Master. »

282. 2

«Gamaliel... Master, come a little ahead with me... »

«Well... let us go. But you could have spoken in the presence of everybody... »

They move away a few yards. Stephen blushing says: «I must give You a piece of advice, Master. Forgive me... »

«If it is good, I will accept it. Tell Me. »

«In the Sanhedrin, they know everything sooner or later. It is an institution with a thousand eyes and one hundred ramifications. They penetrate everywhere, see everything and hear everything. It has more informers than there are bricks in the walls of the Temple. Many live thus... »

«Spying. You may say so. It is the truth and I know. So? What has been said, more or less true, at the Sanhedrin? »

«Everything... has been said. I do not know how they can find out certain things. Neither do I know whether they are true... But I will tell You literally what Gamaliel told me: "Tell the Master to have Ermasteus circumcised or to send him away for good. It is not necessary to say anything else". »

«In fact it is not necessary to say anything else. First of all because I am going to Bethany just for that and I will remain there until Ermasteus is fit to travel again. Secondly because no justification could demolish the prejudice and... standoffishness of Gamaliel, who is scandalised because I have with Me a man who is not circumcised in a member of his body. Oh! if he looked around and within himself! How many uncircumcised people in Israel! »

«But Gamaliel... »

«He is the perfect representative of old Israel. He is not wicked, but... Look at this pebble. I could split it, but I could not make it malleable. He is like that. He will have to be crushed in order to be recomposed. And I will do that! »

«Do You want to oppose Gamaliel? Be careful! He is powerful^

«Oppose? As if he were an enemy? No. Instead of fighting against him, I will love him, satisfying one of his desires for his mummified brains and spreading on him a balm which will dissolve him to recompose him. »

«I will pray also that that may happen, because I am fond of him. Am I wrong? »

«No. You must love him by praying for him. And you will do that. I am sure you will. Nay, you will help Me to prepare the balm... However, you will tell Gamaliel, to calm him, that I had already provided for Ermasteus and that I am grateful to him for his advice. <sup>3</sup>Here we are at Bethany. Let us stop so that I may bless you all, because this is where we part. » And after joining the large group of apostles mingled with disciples, He blesses and dismisses them all, with the exception of Ermasteus, John of Endor and Timoneus. Then with the disciples left Jesus walks at a good pace the short distance to Lazarus' gate, which is already wide open to receive Him, He enters the garden raising His hand to bless the hospitable house, in the large park of which are the owners of the house and the pious women, who are laughing at Marjiam running along the paths adorned with the latest roses. And with the owners and the women, also Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus come out of a path, when they hear the women shout; they also are guests of Lazarus, to be in peace with the Master. And they all make haste towards the Master; Mary with Her kind smile, and Mary of Magdala with her cry of love: «Rabboni! », and Lazarus limping, the two serious members of the Sanhedrin, and last, the pious women of Jerusalem and of Galilee: wrinkle furrowed faces and smooth faces of young women and, as gentle as the face of an angel, the virginal face of Anna-leah, who blushes in greeting the Master.

«Is Syntyche not here? » asks Jesus after the first greeting.

«She is with Sarah, Marcella and Naomi laying the tables. But here they are coming. »

And they come, in fact, with old Esther of Johanna, two faces marked by age and by sorrow, between two serene faces and the serious yet bright peaceful face of the Greek girl, different by race and by something which distinguishes her.

And I could not say that she is a real and true beauty. And yet her dark eyes softened by a nuance of very deep indigo, under a high and very noble forehead, are more impressive than her body, which is definitely more beautiful than her face. A slender but not meagre body, which is well proportioned and has a graceful gait and carriage. But it is her expression that is striking. An intelligent, frank, deep look, which seems to inhale the whole world, selecting it, keeping what is useful, holy, good, and

rejecting what is evil; a look which allows its very depths to be searched and from which her soul looks out to scan those approaching her. If it is true that it is possible to know an individual through his eyes, I say that Syntyche is a woman with unerring judgement and firm honest thoughts. She kneels also with the other women and waits to stand up until the Master tells her.

282. 4 <sup>4</sup>Jesus proceeds along the green garden as far as the porch before the house and then enters a hall where the servants are ready to serve refreshments and assist guests in the ablutions before meals. While all the women withdraw Jesus remains with the apostles in the hall, and John of Endor and Ermasteus go to the house of Simon Zealot to leave the bags they are carrying.

«Is the young fellow who has gone with John, the one-eyed man, the Philistine whom You have accepted? » asks Joseph.

«Yes, Joseph, he is. How do you know? »

«Master... Nicodemus and I have been wondering for some days how we know and how, unfortunately, the others of the Temple know about it. The fact is that we do know. Before the Tabernacles, in the meeting which is always held before such festivities, some Pharisees said that they knew for certain that among Your disciples, beside... - forgive me, Lazarus - known and unknown prostitutes and publicans - forgive me, Matthew of Alphaeus - and former galley-slaves, there were an uncircumcised Philistine and a heathen girl. With regard to the heathen girl, who is certainly Syntyche, one can understand how it became known, or at least guess so. The Roman made a great fuss about her and he became the laughing stock of his people and of the Jews, also because he searched for his runaway everywhere, complaining and threatening, and he even troubled Herod saying that she was hiding in Johanna's house and that the Tetrarch should order his steward to hand her back to her master. But it is strange, very strange that it should be known that among the many men who follow You, there is an uncircumcised Philistine, and a former galley-slave!... Do You not think so? »

282. 5 «It is and it is not strange. <sup>5</sup>I will provide for Syntyche and the former galley-slave. »

«Yes, do. Above all You ought to send John away. Your group of apostles is not a place for him. »

«Joseph, have you perhaps become a Pharisee? » asks Jesus severely.

«No... but... »

«And should I humiliate a soul which has been regenerated, because of the silly scruple of the worst Pharisaism? No, I will not! I will provide for his tranquillity. *His*, not Mine, I will watch over *his* perfecting as I watch over innocent Marjiam's. Really there is no difference in their spiritual ignorance! One speaks for the first time words of wisdom, because God has forgiven him, because he is reborn in God, because God has embraced the sinner. The other speaks the same words, passing from a forlorn childhood to a boyhood, watched over by the love of man beside the love of God, and opens his soul to the sun like a corolla and the Sun enlightens him with Himself. *His* Sun: God. And one is about to speak his last words... Can your eyes not see that he is wearing himself out with penance and love? Oh! I would really like to have many Johns of Endor in Israel and among My servants. I would like you, too, Joseph and you, Nicodemus, to have hearts like his and above all I wish his informer had it, the vile snake that hides under the appearance of a friend and is acting as a spy before becoming an assassin. The snake that envies the bird its wings, and lays snares for it to tear them off and enthrall it. No! The bird is about to change into an angel. And even if it could tear them off, which it will never be able to do, once they were put on to its slimy body, they would change into wings of a devil. Every spy is already a devil. »

<sup>6</sup>«But where can such a rogue be? Tell me so that I may go at <sup>282. 6</sup> once and tear his tongue out» exclaims Peter.

«You had better pull his poisonous teeth out» says Judas of Alphaeus.

«No! It's better to strangle him! So he will not be able to hurt in any way. Such people can always be harmful» remarks the Iscariot firmly.

Jesus stares at him and concludes: «... and can always lie. But no one must do anything against him. It is not worth while letting the bird perish, to deal with the snake. With regards to Ermasteus, I am staying here, in Lazarus' house, just for the circumcision of Ermasteus himself, who is embracing the holy religion of our people for My sake and to avoid the persecution of



narrow-minded Jews. It is the passage from dark to Light. But it is not necessary to make Light come to a heart. But I have agreed to calm down the susceptibility of Israel and to show the true will of the Philistine to come to God. But I tell you, in the times of Christ, that is not necessary to belong to God. Will, love, and a righteous conscience are sufficient. And how can we circumcise the Greek woman? In which part of her spirit, if she was able to perceive God better than many people in Israel? It is true that among the people present many are in darkness as compared to those who are despised by you for being in darkness. In any case, both the informer and you, members of the Sanhedrin, can tell the people concerned that the scandal has been removed as from today. »

«With regards to whom? To all three? »

«No, Judas of Simon. With regards to Ermasteus. I will see to the other two. Have you anything else to ask Me? »

«No, Master. »

282.7 7«Neither have I anything else to tell you. But I ask you to tell Me, if you know, what has happened to Syntyche's master. »

«Pilate shipped him back to Italy by the first boat available, to avoid having trouble with Herod and the Jews in general. Pilate is in a tight corner at present... and has enough worries» says Nicodemus.

«Is the news certain? »

«I can check on it, if You wish so, Master» says Lazarus.

«Yes. Do so. And then let Me know the true situations

«But in my house Syntyche is safe just the same. »

«I know. Israel also protects\* a slave who has run away from a foreign cruel master. But I want to know

«And I would like to know who is the spy, the informer, the pretty spy of the Pharisees... and I want to know, and this can be found out, who are the denouncing Pharisees. Let us have the names of the Pharisees and of their towns. I mean of the Pharisees who have done the lovely work of informing, following the betrayal of one of us, because we, old and new disciples, are the only ones to know things; a fine piece of work indeed it was to

\* protects, as mentioned in 255. 9. The laws on slavery and behaviour towards slaves are in *Exodus 21, 1-11, 20-21, 26-27, 32; Leviticus 25, 39-55; Deuteronomy 15, 12-18, 16, 11; 23, 16-17; Jeremiah 34, 8-22*

inform the Sanhedrin of the deeds of the Master, which are thoroughly honest, and who says or thinks the contrary is a devil and... »

«And that is enough, Simon of Jonah. It is an order. »

«And I obey, even if the veins of my heart should burst because of the effort. In the meantime the beauty of the day has gone... »

«No. Why? Has anything changed among us? So? O My Simon! Come here beside Me and let us talk of what is good... »

«They have come to tell us that dinner is ready, Master» says Lazarus.

«Let us go, then... »

### 283. Syntyche speaks of his encounter with the Truth.

22<sup>nd</sup> September 1945.

<sup>1</sup> Jesus is sitting in the porched courtyard, which is inside the house in Bethany, the courtyard which I saw crowded with disciples on the morning of Christ's Resurrection. Sitting on a marble seat covered with cushions, leaning with His back against the wall of the house, surrounded by the owners of the house, by the apostles and the disciples John and Timoneus, together with Joseph and Nicodemus, and by the pious women, He is listening to Syntyche, who standing in front of Him, seems to be replying to a question of His. All the people present are more or less interested and are listening in various postures, some sitting on benches, some on the floor, some standing or leaning against the columns or the wall. 283. 1

«... it was necessary. In order not to feel all the burden of my situation. It was necessary not to be convinced, to refuse to be convinced that I was all alone, a slave banished from my fatherland. It was necessary to think that my father, mother, brothers and the so fond and kind Ismene were not lost forever. And that, even if the whole world persisted in separating us, just as Rome had divided and sold us like baggage animals, although we were free citizens, a place would gather us all together again in the next life.

I had to think that our life is not only matter to be chained.

On the contrary it has a free power that no chain can bind, except the voluntary one to live in moral disorder and in material revel. You call that "sin". Those who were my light in my night as a slave, give it a different definition. But they also agree that a soul nailed to a body by wicked corporal passions will not reach what you call the Kingdom of God, and we call living together with the gods in Hades. It is therefore necessary to abstain from falling into materialism and strive to achieve freedom from the body, procuring for oneself a heritage of virtue in order to possess a happy immortality and be reunited to those whom one loves.

And I could but think that the souls of the dead are not prevented from helping the souls of the living, so that a daughter could feel her mother's soul close to her and see her face and hear her voice speaking to the daughter, who could reply: "Yes, mother. So that I may come to you. Yes, not to upset you. Yes, not to make you weep. Yes, in order not to darken Hades where you are in peace. For all that I will keep my soul free. It is the only thing which I possess and which nobody can take away from me. And I want to preserve it pure so that I may reason according to virtue". It was freedom and joy to think thus. And that is what I wanted to think. And act accordingly. Because it is only a half and sham philosophy to think one way and then act in a different one.

To think thus was to rebuild a fatherland also in exile. An intimate fatherland, with its altars, faith, teaching, affections in one's ego... A great mysterious fatherland, yet not even so, because of the mystery of the soul which is consciously aware of the next world, even if at present it knows it only as a sailor at sea can see the details of the seacoast in a misty morning: vaguely, in a rough draft, with only a few spots clearly outlined and which are enough for the tired seaman tortured by storms to say: "There is the harbour, peace is over there". The fatherland of souls, the place of our origin... the place of Life.

283. 2 Because life is generated by death... <sup>2</sup>Oh! I could understand only half of that until I heard one of Your words. Later it was as if a sunbeam struck the diamond of my thought. Everything became enlightened and I understood to what extent the Greek masters were right and how later they became confused, as they

lacked one datum, only one, to solve the theorem of Life and Death. The datum was: The True God, the Lord and Creator of everything existing!

May I mention Him with my heathen lips? Of course I may. Because I come from Him, like everybody else. Because He gifted the minds of all men with intelligence, and the wiser ones with a superior intelligence, whereby they seem demigods with a superhuman power. Because He made them write the truths which are already religion, if not a divine religion like Yours, a moral one, capable of keeping souls “alive”, not only for the period of time we remain here, on the earth, but forever.

Later I understood the meaning of: “Life is generated by death”. He who said that was like one not completely drunk, whose intelligence had already become dullish. He spoke a sublime word, but did not understand it fully. I, forgive me my pride, Lord, I understood more than he did and I have been happy since that moment. »

«What did you understand? »

«That our present life is but the embryonal beginning of life and that true Life begins when death gives birth to us... to Hades, as a heathen, to eternal Life, as a believer in You. Am I wrong? »

«You are right, woman» approves Jesus.

<sup>3</sup>Nicodemus interrupts: «But how did you hear of the Master's words? » 283. 3

«He who is hungry, seeks food, sir. I was looking for my food. I was a reader, and as I was learned with a good voice and pronunciation, I was in a position to read much in the libraries of my masters. But I was not yet satisfied. I could feel that there was something else beyond the walls decorated with human science, and as a prisoner looking for gold, I hammered with my knuckles, I forced doors open to get out, to find... When I came to Palestine with my last master I was afraid I was going to fall into darkness... I was going instead towards the Light. The words of the servant at Caesarea were like as many blows with a pick which demolished the walls making wider and wider breaches through which Your Word came in. And I picked up those words and the news. And like a child stringing beads, I lined them up and adorned myself with them, drawing strength to become

more and more purified in order to receive the Truth. I felt that by purifying myself I would find it. Even on this earth. At the cost of my life I wanted to be pure to meet the Truth, Wisdom, Divinity. My Lord, I am speaking foolish words. They are looking at me as if they were thoroughly confused. But You asked me... »

«Speak. Go on speaking. It is necessary. »

«I resisted external pressure with strength and moderation. I could have been free and, happy, according to the world, if I had wanted. But I would not barter knowledge for pleasure. Because it is of no avail to have other virtues without wisdom. He, the philosopher, said: "Justice, moderation and strength separated from knowledge are like painted scenery, virtues befitting slaves, without anything firm and real". I wanted to have real things. The master, an imbecile, used to speak of You in my presence. Then the walls seemed to become a veil. It was enough to want to tear the veil and join the Truth. I did it. »

283<sup>4</sup> 4«You did not know what you were going to find» says the Iscariot.

«I knew how to believe that the god rewards virtue. I did not want gold, or honours, or physical freedom, no, not even that. But I wanted the truth. I asked God for that or to die. I wanted to be spared the humiliation of becoming an "object", and even more, of agreeing to become one. Renouncing everything which is corporal in looking for You, O Lord, because a research through senses is never perfect - as You noticed when seeing You I ran away, deceived as I was by my eyes - I abandoned myself to God Who is above us and within us and informs souls of Himself. And I found You because my soul led me to You. »

«Yours is a heathen soul» remarks once again the Iscariot.

«But a soul always has something divine within itself, particularly when it has striven to be preserved from error... It therefore tends to things of its own nature. »

«Are you comparing yourself to God? »

«No. »

«Why do you say that, then? »

«What? Are you, a disciple of the Master, asking me? Me, a Greek woman and only recently freed? Do you not listen to Him when He, speaks? Or is the ferment in your body such that it

blunts your mind? Does He not always say that we are the children of God? So we are gods if we are the children of the Father, of His and our Father, of Whom He always speaks to us. You may reproach me for not being humble, but not for not believing or not paying attention. »

«So you think that you are worth more than I am? Do you think that you have learned everything from your Greek books? »

«No, neither one nor the other. But the books of wise men, wherever they come from, have given me the minimum necessary to support myself. I do not doubt that an Israelite is worth more than I am. But I am happy with the destiny which comes to me from God. What else could I wish for? <sup>5</sup>In finding the Master I found everything. And I think that was my destiny, because I really see a Power watch over me and it has fixed a great destiny for me and I have done nothing but comply with it, as I feel it is a good one. » 283. 5

«Good? You have been a slave, and of cruel masters... If the last one, for instance, had recaptured you, how could you have complied with your destiny, you very wise woman? »

«Your name is Judas, is it not? »

«Yes, and so? »

«And so... nothing. I want to remember your name besides your irony. Bear in mind that irony is not advisable even in virtuous people... How would I have complied with my destiny? Perhaps I would have killed myself. Because in certain cases it is better to die than to live, although the philosopher says that that is not right and it is impious to procure welfare by oneself because only the gods have the right to call us to stay with them. And this waiting for a sign of the gods to do it, has always kept me from doing it, even in the chains of my sad fate. But now, in being recaptured by my filthy master, I would have seen the supreme sign. And I would have preferred to die rather than live, I, too, have my dignity, man. »

«And if he recaptured you now? You would still be in the same situation... »

«Now I would not kill myself. Now I know that violence against the flesh does not injure the spirit that does not consent. I would now resist until I were bent by force and killed by violence. Because I would take that as a sign from God that through

such violence He would call me to Himself. And I would now die tranquilly, knowing that I would be only losing what is perishables

«You have replied very well, woman» says Lazarus and Nicodemus gives his approval as well.

«Suicide is never allowed» says the Iscariot.

«Many are the things which are forbidden, but the prohibition is not complied with. But, Syntyche, you must consider that as God has always guided you, so He would have prevented you  
283. 6 from doing violence to yourself. 6Go now. I will be grateful to you if you look for the boy and bring him here» says Jesus kindly.

The woman bows to the ground and goes away. They all follow her with their eyes.

Lazarus whispers: «She is always like that! I fail to understand how what in her has been “life” is instead “death” for us Israelites. If You still have the chance of examining her again, You will see that whilst Hellenism corrupted us, though we already possessed Wisdom, it saved her. Why? »

«Because the ways of the Lord are wonderful. And He opens them to whoever deserves it. And now, My friends, I will dismiss you because night is falling. I am happy that you all have heard the Greek woman speak. As you have ascertained that God reveals Himself to the best people, you must conclude that it is hideous and dangerous to exclude all those who are not Israelites from the people of God. Bear that in mind for the future... Do not grumble, Judas of Simon. And you, Joseph, do not have unjustified scruples. None of you are contaminated for approaching a Greek woman. Make absolutely sure that you do not approach or give hospitality to the devil. Goodbye, Joseph; goodbye, Nicodemus. Will I be able to meet you again, while I am here? Here is Marjiam... Come, boy, say goodbye to the heads of the Sanhedrin. What do you say to them? »

«Peace be with you... and I say also: pray for me at the hour of incense. »

«You have no need for that, child. But why just at that hour? »

«Because the first time I entered the Temple with Jesus, He spoke to me\* of the evening prayer... Oh! It is so beautiful!... »

\* spoke to me, in 197. 5.

«And will you pray for us? When? »

«I will pray... in the morning and in the evening. That God may preserve you from sin during the day and the night. »

«And what will you say, my child? »

«I will say: "Most High Lord, let Joseph and Nicodemus be true friends of Jesus". And that will be enough, because he who is a true friend, does not grieve his friend. And he who does not grieve Jesus is sure to possess Heaven. »

«May God preserve you thus, child! » say the two members of the Sanhedrin caressing him. They then greet the Master, the Blessed Virgin and Lazarus individually and all the others in a body and go away.

284. The house donated by Solomon.  
Four apostles will remain in Judaea.

23<sup>rd</sup> September 1945.

<sup>1</sup>Jesus is on His way back from an apostolic trip in the neighbourhood of Bethany. It must have been a short trip, because they are not carrying any food bags. 284. 1

They are speaking to one another saying: «The idea of Solomon, the boatman, was a good one, Master, wasn't it? »

«Yes, it was. »

The Iscariot, of course, disagrees with the others: «I do not see much good in it. He gave us what is no longer of any use to him as a disciple. There is no reason why he should be praised... »

«A house is always useful» says the Zealot seriously.

«Yes, if it were like yours. But what is his house? An unhealthy shanty. »

«It is all Solomon has» retorts the Zealot.

«And as he grew old in it without aches and pains, we shall be able to stay there now and again. What do you expect? All the houses to be like Lazarus'? » adds Peter.

«! I do not expect anything. <sup>1</sup> cannot see the necessity of that gift. Once you are there you can be in Jericho just as well. There are only a few stadia between the two places. And what are a few stadia for the like of us, who are compelled to wander about all the time, like persecuted people? »



Jesus intervenes before the others lose all patience as clear signs indicate is about to happen: «Solomon, in proportion to his riches, has given more than anybody else. Because he has given everything. He gave it out of love. He gave it to let us have a shelter in case we are caught in the rain, or in a flood, in that not very hospitable area and above all in case the Judaeen ill-will should become so strong as to advise us to stay on the other side of the river. And that is with regards to the gift. That a humble, coarse but so faithful and willing disciple has been able to be so generous, which is clear evidence of his firm will to be a disciple of Mine for good, fills Me with great joy. I can truly see that many disciples, with the few lessons which they have received from Me, have excelled you who have received so many. You cannot sacrifice, particularly you, Judas, even what costs nothing: your personal opinions. You maintain yours stubbornly, unyieldingly. »

«You said that the struggle against oneself is the hardest... »

«And thus you want to tell Me that I am wrong when I say that it costs nothing. Is that right? But you have understood perfectly well what I mean! According to men, and you really are a true and proper man, only what is marketable is valuable. One's ego cannot be sold for money. Except... when a man sells himself to someone hoping to make a profit. An illicit trade like the one stipulated by a soul with Satan, even worse. Because it involves not only the soul but also man's thoughts, or judgement or freedom, you may call it as you like. There are some wretched people like that... But for the time being, let us forget about them. I praised Solomon because I see how good his deed is. And that is enough. »

284. 2 <sup>2</sup>There is silence, then Jesus resumes speaking: «In a few days' time Ermasteus will be able to walk without any trouble. And I will go back to Galilee. But you will not all come with Me. Some will remain in Judaea and will come up later with the Judaeen disciples, so that we shall all be reunited for the feast of the Dedications

«Such a long time? Oh dear! Whose turn will it be? » the apostles ask one another.

Jesus hears their whispering and replies: «It will be the turn of Judas of Simon, of Thomas, Bartholomew and Philip. But I did not say that you will have to be in Judaea until the feast of the

Dedication. On the contrary I want you to gather the disciples and inform them to be there for the feast of the Dedication. So you will now go and look for them, gather them together and tell them; in the meantime you will watch over them and assist them and later you will come up after Me, bringing with you those you have found, and leaving instructions for the others to come. We have now friends in the main places in Judaea and they will do us the favour of informing the disciples. And on your way up to Galilee through Trans-Jordan, remember that I will be going through Gerasa, Bozrah, Arbela, as far as Aera, and collect also those who did not dare to come to Me asking for a miracle or doctrine, and later have regretted not doing so. Bring them to Me. I will stay in Aera until you arrive. »

<sup>3</sup>«In that case we had better go at once» says the Iscariot.

284. 3

«No, you will leave the evening before My departure and will stay with Jonah at Gethsemane until the following day, and then you will set out for Judaea. You will thus be able to see your mother and help her just now that she is selling her farm producer

«She learned to do that by herself years ago. »

«Don't you remember that last year she could not do without you at vintage time? » asks Peter rather slyly.

Judas becomes as red as a poppy and looks ugly in his anger and shame. But Jesus provides against any possible reply by saying: «A son is always of help and comfort to his mother. She will not see you again until Passover and after Passover. So go and do as I tell you. »

Judas does not reply to Peter, but he gives vent to his anger against Jesus: «Master, do You know what I must tell You? That I am under the impression that You want to get rid of me, or at least keep me away from You, because You suspect me and You wrongly think that I am guilty of something, because You lack charity towards me, because... »

«Judas! That is enough! I could tell you many words. But I say only: "Obey! "» Jesus is majestic in saying so. Tall as He is, with shining eyes and severe countenance, He strikes everybody with fear...

And Judas trembles. He goes behind all the apostles, while Jesus, all alone, walks ahead of them. The speechless apostolic group is thus between them.

285. Lazarus offers John of Endor and Syntyche a refuge.  
A happy trip towards Jericho without the Iscariot.

24<sup>th</sup> September 1945.

285.1

«Lazarus, My dear friend, I ask you to come with Me» says Jesus appearing at the door of the hall where Lazarus is reading a roll, half reclining on a little bed.

«I will come at once, Master. Where are we going? » asks Lazarus getting up immediately.

«Into the country. I need to be all alone with you. »

Lazarus looks at Him with a worried expression and asks: «Have You sad news to give me secretly? Or... No, I do not even want to think of that... »

«No, I only wish to seek advice from you and not even the air must be aware of what we shall say. Order a wagon, because I do not want you to get tired. When we are out in the open country I will speak to you. »

«In that case I will drive it myself. So no servant will know what we say. »

«Yes, do that. »

«I am going at once, Master. I'll soon be ready» and he goes out.

Jesus also goes out after standing somewhat pensive in the middle of the magnificent hall. While engrossed in thought, He mechanically moves two or three objects and picks up a roll which had fallen onto the floor, and when putting it in its place in a cabinet, because of His inborn instinct for order, which is so deeply rooted in Jesus, He remains with His arm raised, looking at the strange art of some objects lined up in the cabinet, which are different from the current art in Palestine. By the embossed work and design imitating the ornaments of the temples of ancient Greece and of funeral urns, they appear to be very old amphoras and cups. What He sees beyond the articles themselves, I do not know... He leaves the hall and goes into the inner yard, where the apostles are.

«Where are we going, Master? » they ask when they see Jesus tidy His mantle.

«Nowhere. I am going with Lazarus. You will stay here and wait for Me. I shall soon be back. »

The Twelve look at one another. They are not very happy...

Peter says: «Are You going alone? Be careful... »

«Do not be afraid. While waiting, do not be idle. Teach Er-masteus, that he may have a better knowledge of the Law and be good company to one another, without arguments or rudeness. Bear with and love one another. »

He sets out towards the garden and they all follow Him. A closed cart soon arrives with Lazarus in it.

«Are You going in that cart? »

«Yes, so that Lazarus may not tire his legs. Goodbye, Marji-am. Be good. Peace to you all. »

He climbs into the cart, which grinding the pebbles of the avenue leaves the garden and turns into the main road.

«Are You going to the Clear Water, Master? » Thomas shouts after Him.

«No, I am not. Once again I tell you to be good. »

<sup>2</sup>The horse starts at a steady trot. The road going from Betha-ny to Jericho runs through the country, which is becoming bare. The more they descend towards the plain, the more the fading of the greenery in the fields becomes noticeable.

285. 2

Jesus is pensive. Lazarus is silent and intent only on driving the cart. When they are down in the plain, a fertile plain, which is ready to nourish the seed of future corn, and where all the vineyards seem to be asleep, like a woman who has recently given birth to her fruit and is resting after her pleasant labour, Jesus beckons Lazarus to stop. Lazarus stops at once and leads the horse into a side road, which takes to houses far away... and he explains: «We shall be safer here than on the main road. These trees will conceal us from the eyes of many people. » In fact a thicket of low trees acts as a screen against the curiosity of passers-by. Lazarus is standing before Jesus, waiting.

«Lazarus, I must send away John of Endor and Syntyche. You can see that both prudence and charity advise Me to do so. It would be a dangerous test and useless grief for both of them to be aware of the persecutions set in motion against them... and which, for at least one of them, could bring about most grievous surprises. »

«In my house... »

«No. Not even in your house. Perhaps they would not be trou-

bled materially. But they would be humiliated morally. The world is cruel. It crushes its victims. I do not want those two beautiful and powerful souls to get lost like that. So, as one day I joined Ishmael to Sarah, I will now join My poor John to Syntyche. I want him to die in peace, I do not want him to be left alone, and he must go away feeling that he is being sent elsewhere, not because he was formerly a galley man, but because he is the proselyte disciple who can be sent away to announce the Master. And Syntyche will help him... She is a beautiful soul and will be a great strength in the future Church and for the future Church.

285. <sup>33</sup>Can you advise Me where to send them? I do not want them to stay in Judaea or in Galilee and not even in the Decapolis, where I go with My apostles and disciples. Nor in the heathen world. So, where? Where, so that they may be safe and useful? »

«Master... I... how can I give You advice! »

«No, tell Me. You love Me, you do not betray Me, you love those whom I love, you are not narrow-minded like the others. »

«I... well... I would advise You to send them where I have some friends. To Cyprus or to Syria. Make Your choice. I have trustworthy people in Cyprus. And even more in Syria!... I have also a little house, watched over by a manager, who is as faithful as a pet lamb. Our old Philip! He will do for my sake anything I tell him. And, if You do not mind, those who are persecuted by Israel and are dear to You, will be my guests as from now on, and will be safe in the house... Oh! It is not a palace! It is a house where Philip lives alone with a nephew, who looks after the gardens at Antigonium. The beloved gardens of my mother. We have kept them as a remembrance of her. She had taken there the plants of her Judaeian gardens... plants of rare essences... Mother!... How much good she did to the poor with them... It was her secret domain... My mother... Master, I will soon be going to say to her: "Rejoice, my good mother. The Saviour is on the earth". She was expecting You... » Tears stream down Lazarus' drawn face. Jesus looks at him and smiles.

285. <sup>4</sup>Lazarus recovers his strength: «But let us speak of You. Do You think it is a good place? »

«I think it is. And I thank you once again, also on their behalf. You have relieved Me of a heavy burden... »

«When will they leave? I am asking so that I may prepare a

letter for Philip. I will say that they are two friends of mine, from here, in need of peace. And that will suffice. »

«Yes, that is enough. But, I beg you, not even the air is to be aware of this. You can see that yourself. They are spying upon Me... »

«I know. I will not mention it even to my sisters. But how will You take them there? You have the apostles with You... »

«I will now go up as far as Aera without Judas of Simon, Thomas, Philip and Bartholomew. In the meantime I will teach Syntyche and John thoroughly, so that they may go with large provisions of Truth. I will then go down to lake Merom and later to Capernaum. And when I am there, I will send the four apostles away once again, on some other mission, and in the meantime I will send the two off to Antioch. That is what they are compelling Me to do... »

«To be afraid of Your own people. You are right... Master, it grieves me to see You worried... »

«But your kind friendship is of great comfort to Me... Lazarus, I thank you... I am leaving the day after tomorrow and I will be taking your sisters away. I need many women disciples to conceal Syntyche amongst them. Johanna of Chuza also is coming. From Merom she will go to Tiberias, where she will be spending the winter months. Her husband has decided so to have her close to him, because Herod is going back to Tiberias for some time. »

«It will be done as You wish. My sisters are Yours, as I am, as my houses, servants and belongings are. Everything is Yours, Master. Make use of it to do good. I will prepare Your letter for Philip. It is better if I give it to You personally. »

«Thank you, Lazarus. »

«That is all I can do... If I were well... Cure me, Master, and I will come. »

«No, My dear friend... I need you as you are. »

«Even if I do not do anything? »

«Yes, even so. Oh! My Lazarus! » and Jesus embraces and kisses him.

<sup>5</sup>They get on the cart and go back.

285.5

Lazarus is now silent and engrossed in thought, and Jesus asks him why.

«I was thinking that I am going to lose Syntyche. I was attracted by her science and goodness... »

«Jesus will gain her... »

«That is very true. When shall I see You again, Master? »

«In spring. »

«Shall I not see You again until spring? Last year You were here with me for the feast of the Dedications

«This year I will satisfy the apostles. But next year I will be with you quite a lot. It is a promises

Bethany appears in the October sunshine. They are about to arrive when Lazarus stops the horse to say: «Master, You are right in sending away the man from Kerioth. I am afraid of him. He does not love You. I do not like him. I never liked him. He is sensual and greedy. And thus he may commit any sin. Master, it was he who denounced You.

«Have you any proof? »

«No, I have not.

«Well, in that case, do not judge. You are not very clever at judging. Remember that you considered your Mary as inexorably lost... Do not say that it was My merit. She sought Me firsts

«That is true, too. However, beware of Judas. »

Shortly afterwards they enter the garden, where the apostles are curiously awaiting them.

285. 6   <sup>6</sup>The absence of four apostles, and above all of Judas, makes the remaining group more intimate and happy. The group which leaves Bethany on a clear October morning on its way to Jericho, to cross to the other side of the Jordan, is just like a family, the heads of which are Jesus and Mary. The women are gathered around Mary, only Annaleah is absent from the group of the women disciples, which comprises the three Maries, Johanna, Susanna, Eliza, Marcella, Sarah and Syntyche. Peter, Andrew, James and Judas of Alphaeus, Matthew, John and James of Zebedee, Simon Zealot, John of Endor, Ermasteus and Timoneus, are grouped around Jesus, while Marjiam jumping about like a little kid, goes to and fro from one group to the other, which are only a short distance apart. Although laden with heavy bags, they proceed joyfully in the mild sunshine, through the country so solemn in its rest.

<sup>7</sup>John of Endor proceeds with some difficulty under the weight hanging from his shoulders. 285. 7

Peter notices it and says: «Give your useless load to me since you have decided to carry it round. Were you missing it?»

«The Master told me to bring it. »

«Did He? How lovely! Why?»

«I don't know. Yesterday evening He said to me: "Pack your books again and follow Me with them". »

«Lovely indeed!... But if He told you, it must be for a good reason. Perhaps it is for that woman. How accomplished she is! Are you as learned?»

«Almost as much as she is. She is very clever. »

«But you are not going to follow us with this load all the time, eh?»

«Oh! I don't think so. I don't know. But I can carry it myself. »

«No, my dear friend. I don't want you to be taken ill. You are looking very poorly, you know?»

«I know. I feel as if I were dying. »

«Don't be silly! At least wait until We arrive in Capernaum. It is so lovely now that we are by ourselves without that... Curse my tongue! I have failed once again in my promise to the Master!... <sup>8</sup>Master? Master?» 285. 8

«What do you want, Simon?»

«I have spoken ill of Judas, and I had promised You that I would not do it anymore. Forgive me. »

«Yes, I do. But try not to do it again. »

«I still have 489 times to be forgiven by You... »

«What are you talking about, brother?» asks Andrew who is obviously utterly amazed.

And Peter, whose placid countenance is humorously bright, twisting his neck under the weight of John of Endor's bag, exclaims: «Don't you remember that He said that we have to forgive seventy times seven. So I am still to be forgiven 489 times and I must keep an accurate account of them... »

They all laugh; Jesus cannot help smiling either. But He replies: «You had better keep count of all the times you are capable of being good, you big boy. »

Peter approaches Him and embracing with his right arm' Jesus' waist he says: «My dear Master! How happy I am to be with



You without... Come on, admit it! You are happy, too... And You know what I mean. We are all friendly here. Your Mother is here. There is also the boy. We are going towards Capernaum. The season is beautiful... Five good reasons to be happy. Oh! And it is beautiful to travel with You! Where are we staying tonight? »

«At Jericho. »

«Last year we met the Veiled woman there. I wonder what has happened to her... I am rather curious to know... And we found also the man of the vineyards... » Peter's laughter is so loud that it is contagious. They all laugh remembering the scene of the meeting with Judas of Kerioth.

«You are really terrible, Simon! » remarks Jesus reproachingly-

«I did not say anything, Master. But I had to laugh remembering his countenance when he found us there... in his vineyards... » Peter laughs so wholeheartedly that he is compelled to stop, while the others carry on laughing against their will.

285. 9 <sup>9</sup>Peter is joined by the women. Mary asks him kindly: «What is the matter with you, Simon? »

«Ah! I cannot tell You or I will be lacking in charity once more. But, Mother, tell me, since You are so wise. If I throw out innuendos against someone, or worse still, if I utter slander about someone, I obviously commit a sin. But if I laugh at something, at an event, which is known to everybody, something which makes people laugh, for instance, if we remember the surprise, the embarrassment and excuses of a liar when he was found out and we laugh again as we did in the past, is that still wrong? »

«It is an imperfection against charity. It is not a sin like backbiting, or slander or innuendo, but it is still lack of charity. It is like a thread pulled out of a piece of cloth. It does not tear or wear the cloth out, but it affects the firmness and beauty of the fabric and makes it subject to tears and holes. Do you not think so? »

Peter rubs his forehead and feeling rather humiliated he replies: «I do. I had never thought of that. »

«Think about it now and do not do it anymore. Laughter may be more offensive to charity than slaps in the face. Has someone made a mistake? We have found someone guilty of lying or of other faults? So? Why remember it? Why remind other peo-

pie? Let us cover with a veil the faults of our brother, saying: "If I were the culprit, would I like another person to remember my fault or remind other people of it? ". There are people who blush in their inmost heart, Simon, and suffer so much because of it. Do not shake your head. I know what you want to say. But, believe Me, also guilty people may blush thus. You must always think: "Would I like that done to me? ". You will then see that you will no longer sin against charity. And you will always have so much peace in your heart. Look how happily Marjiam is jumping and singing, because his heart is not worried. He does not have to think about itineraries, expenses or what to say. He knows that someone else takes care of all that on his behalf. Do the same yourself. Abandon everything to God. Also judgement on other people. As long as you can be like a child led by God, why take upon yourself the burden of deciding and judging? The day will come when you must be judge and arbitrator and then you will say: "Oh! How easier and less dangerous it was formerly" and you will say that you were foolish in burdening yourself before the time with so much responsibility. How difficult it is to judge other people! Did you hear what Syntyche said some days ago? "A research through senses is never perfect". She is quite right. We very often judge according to the reactions of our senses. That is, with the utmost imperfection. Give up judging... »

«Yes, Mary. I sincerely promise You. <sup>10</sup>But I do not know all the beautiful things which Syntyche knows! » 285. 10

«And are you worried about that, man? Do you not know that I want to get rid of all that, in order to have only what you know? »

«Do you? Why? »

«Because science may support you on the earth, but through wisdom you gain Heaven. Mine is science, yours is wisdom. »

«But by means of your science, you were able to come to Jesus! So it is a good thing. »

«It is mixed with so many errors, that I would like to divest myself of it and clothe myself with wisdom only. I do not want ornate vain dresses. Let the severe inconspicuous dress of Wisdom be mine, as it clothes like an everlasting garment not what is corruptible, but what is immortal. The flame of Science flickers and quivers, The flame of Wisdom shines unvaryingly and steadily and is like the Divinity from which it originates. »

Jesus has slackened His pace in order to hear. He turns around and says to the Greek woman: «You must not yearn to divest yourself of everything you know. But you must select from your knowledge what is a particle of eternal Intelligence conquered by minds of undeniable value. »

«Have, therefore, those minds repeated within themselves the myth of the fire stolen from the gods? »

«Yes, woman. But it was not stolen in this case. They were able to pick it when the Divinity grazed them with its fire, caressing them as specimens, spread among decayed mankind, of what man is, gifted with reason. »

«Master, You should tell me what I must keep and what I must leave. I would not be a good judge. And then You ought to fill with the light of Your Wisdom, the spaces left empty. »

«That is what I intend doing. I shall point out to you to what extent is wise what you know and I will develop it from that point to the end of the true idea. So that you may know for certain. And that will be useful also to those who are destined to have many contacts with the Gentiles in future. »

«We shall not understand anything, my Lord» moans James of Zebedee.

«You will understand little, for the time being, but one day you will understand both the present lessons and their necessity. And you, Syntyche, will expound to Me those points which are most obscure to you. And I will clarify them when we stop to rest. »

«Yes, my Lord. It is the desire of my soul which merges in Your desire. I am the disciple of the Truth, You the Master. It is the dream of all my life: to possess the Truth. »

286. In Ramoth with the merchant Alexander Misace.  
Lesson in Syntyche on the memory of souls.

25<sup>th</sup> September 1945.

286.1

<sup>1</sup>After walking a long way across a fertile plain on the other side of the Jordan - and it is pleasant to walk in the serene mild season as it is now the end of October - and after resting in a little village lying at the foot of the lower slopes of a rather bulky

chain of mountains, some summits of which can really be called mountains, Jesus sets out once again, following a long caravan of many quadrupeds and well armed men, to whom He had previously spoken while they were watering their animals at the fountains in the square. They are mostly tall swarthy men, with typical Asian features. The head of the caravan is riding a very strong mule and is armed to the teeth and weapons are hanging from his saddle. And yet he had great respect for Jesus.

The apostles ask Jesus: «Who is he? »

«A rich merchant from the other side of the Euphrates. I asked him where he was going and he replied politely. He will be passing through the towns where I intend to go. Which is providential in these mountains, when we have the women with us. »

«Are You afraid of something? »

«I am not afraid of being robbed, as we possess nothing. But it would be enough to frighten the women. A handful of robbers will never attack so strong a caravan, which will be most useful to us because we shall also find out the best passes and shall be able to cross over the difficult ones. He asked Me: “Are You the Messiah? ” and when he heard that I was, he said: “I was in the Courtyard of the Heathens some days ago and I heard You more than I could see You, because I am a small man. Well, I will protect You and You will protect me. I have a very valuable load”. »

«Is he a proselyte? »

«I do not think so. But perhaps he is of our extraction. »

The caravan proceeds slowly, as if they did not want to exhaust the strength of the quadrupeds by going too far. It is therefore easy to follow them and sometimes it is necessary to stop as the drivers let the laden animals pass one by one holding them by their halters in the most difficult spots.

Although a true and proper mountainous area, it is fertile and well cultivated. Perhaps the high mountains to the north act as a protection against the cold northern winds or the harmful eastern ones and that helps cultivation. The caravan marches along a stream which flows into the Jordan and is rich in water which comes down from I wonder which top. The view is beautiful and becomes more and more beautiful as one climbs up, stretching westwards across the plain of the Jordan and reaching, beyond it, the graceful hills and mountains of northern Judaea, while to

the east and north the view changes continuously, stretching far out and wide, or showing overlapping rounded hills and green or rocky mountain tops, which seem to obstruct the road like the sudden wall of a labyrinth.

286. 2

<sup>2</sup>The sun is about to set behind the mountains of Judaea, colouring sky and slopes with a deep red, when the rich merchant, who has stopped to let the caravan pass, says to Jesus: «We must reach the village before night. But many of Your people look tired. This is a long hard leg. Let them mount the spare mules. They are quiet animals. In any case they will be resting all night and the weight of a woman is no burden to them. »

Jesus agrees and the man orders the caravan to stop to let the women mount the mules. Jesus makes John of Endor get on horseback as well. And those on foot, including Jesus, hold the reins to make the women feel safer. Marjiam wants to be... a man, and although he is exhausted, he refuses to go on horseback with anyone and he takes one of the reins of the Blessed Virgin's mule, Who is thus between Jesus and the boy, and he walks bravely.

The merchant has remained near Jesus and he says to Mary: «See that village, Donna? That is Ramoth. We will stop there. I am well known at the hotel because I come this way twice a year, and I go along the coast, also twice a year to purchase and sell. My life is a hard one. But I have twelve children and they are all young. I got married late. The last one was nine days old when I left him. And he will have cut his first teeth when I see him. »

«A lovely family... » comments Mary, and She adds: «May Heaven preserve it for you. »

«As a matter of fact I cannot complain of its help although I do not really deserve it. »

286. 3

<sup>3</sup>Jesus asks him: «Are you at least a proselyte? »

«I should be... My ancestors were true Israelites. Then... we became acclimatised there... »

«A soul becomes acclimatised in one atmosphere only: in Heaven's. »

«You are right. But You know... My great grandfather married a woman who was not an Israelite. His children became less faithful... The sons of his children once again married women who were not from Israel and their children were respectful only of their Jewish names; because we are of Jewish extraction. Now

I, a grandson of grandsons... I am nothing. Being in touch with everybody I have taken after everyone, with the result that I belong to no one. »

«That is not a good reason and I can prove it to you. If going along this road, which you know to be a good one, you should meet five or six people who said to you: “No, don’t go this way!”, “Go back”, “Stop”, “Go eastwards”, “Turn westwards”, what would you do? »

«I would say: “I know that this is the right road and the shortest, and I am not going to leave it”. »

«Likewise: if you are negotiating some business and you know the best way to do it, would you listen to those who either through boasts or interested cunning advised you to act differently? »

«No. I would follow the method which my experience tells me is the best. »

«Very well. Millennia of faith are behind you, a descendant of Israel. You are neither stupid nor uneducated. So why are you influenced by contacts with everybody in matters of faith, whereas you reject them when money or road safety is concerned? Do you not think it is dishonourable also from a human point of view? To place God after money and the road... »

«I do not postpone God. But I have lost sight of Him... »

«Because business, money, your life are your gods. But it is still God Who allows you to have such things... <sup>4</sup>Then, why did you go to the Temple? » 286. 4

«Out of curiosity. Coming out of a house where I had negotiated some goods, I saw a group of men pay their respects to You and I remembered the words I had heard at Ashkelon from a woman who made carpets. I asked who You were, as I suspected You might be the One of Whom the woman had spoken to me. And when I found out that it was You, I followed You. I had done my business for that day... Then I lost sight of You. I saw You once again at Jericho. But only for a moment. Now I have found You again... That’s it... »

«So God has joined and interlaced our ways. I have no gifts to offer you to thank you for your kindness. But before leaving you I hope to be able to give you a present, unless you leave Me beforehand... »

«No, I will not. Alexander Misace does not take back what he

offers! Here we are. The village begins after that turn. I will go ahead. We will meet at the hotel» and he spurs his mule leaving almost at a gallop on the edge of the road.

«He is an honest unhappy man, Son» says Mary.

«And You would like him to be happy according to Wisdom, would You not? »

And they smile kindly at each other in the first shadows of the evening.

286. 5 ... The pilgrims are all gathered in a large hall of the hotel, waiting to go to bed, in the long October evening. The merchant is in a corner, all by himself, intent on his accounts. Jesus, with His group, is in the opposite corner. There are no other guests. Braying, neighing and bleating can be heard coming from the stables, which makes one assume that there are other people in the hotel. Perhaps they are already in bed.

Marjiam has fallen asleep in Our Lady's arms, forgetting all of a sudden that he was «a man». Peter is dozing and is not the only one. Also the whispering elderly women are half asleep and are silent. Jesus, Mary, Lazarus' sisters, Syntyche, Simon Zealot, John and Judas are well awake.

Syntyche is searching John of Endor's bag looking for something. But she prefers to come close to the others and listen to Judas of Alphaeus who is speaking of the consequences of the exile in Babylon\* and concludes: «... and perhaps that man is still a consequence of that. Every exile is a ruin... ». Syntyche nods unintentionally but does not say anything and Judas of Alphaeus concludes: «However, it is strange that one can so easily divest oneself of what has been a treasure for centuries to become entirely new, particularly in matters of religion, and a religion like ours... »

Jesus replies: «You must not be surprised if you see Samaria in the lap of Israel. »

286. 6 <sup>6</sup>There is silence... Syntyche's dark eyes are staring at Jesus' serene profile. She looks at Him intensely, but does not speak. Jesus perceives her glance and turns around to look at her.

«Have you not found anything to your liking? »

\* **exile in Babylon**, narrated in: *2 King 24-25, 2 Chronicles 36*

«No, my Lord. I have got to the point that I am no longer able to reconcile the past with the present, former ideas with present ones. And I feel as if it were a defection because my former ideas have helped me to have the present ones. Your apostle spoke the truth... But my ruin is a happy one. »

«What is your ruin? »

«All my faith in heathen Olympus, my Lord. But I am somewhat upset because on reading Your Scriptures - John gave me them and I read them because there is no possession without knowledge - I found out that also in your history... of the beginning, shall I say, there are events which do not differ much from ours. Now, I would like to know... »

«I have already told you: ask Me and I will answer your questions. »

«Is everything wrong in the religion of the gods? »

«Yes, woman. There is but one God, Who does not originate from anybody else and is not subject to human passions and needs: one Only, Eternal, Perfect God, the Creator of everything. »

«I believe that. But I want to be able to reply to the questions which other heathens may ask me not in a way which does not admit any discussion, but by discussing in order to be convinced. I, by myself and by virtue of beneficent paternal God, have given myself informal answers, but sufficient to give peace to my spirit. But I was willing to reach the Truth. Others may be less anxious than I am in that respect. But everybody ought to be keen in such research. I do not want to be inactive with souls. I would like to give what I have received. But I must know in order to be able to give. Grant me knowledge and I will serve You in the name of love. Today, on the way, while I was watching the mountains and certain views reminded me of the chains of Hellas and of the history of my Country, by association of ideas the myths of Prometheus and Deucalion crossed my mind... You have something similar in the fulmination of Lucifer, in the infusion of life into clay, in the Flood of Noah. Light concomitances, yet they are a remembrance... Now tell me: how could we be aware of them if there was no contact between you and us, if you certainly had them before we did, and although we had them, we do not know how we got them? We still ignore one another, in many things. So



how could we, thousands of years ago, have legends which are remembrances of Your Truth? »

«Woman, you ought to be the last one to ask Me. Because you have read works which could answer your questions by themselves. <sup>286. 7</sup>Today, by association of ideas, from the remembrance of your native mountains you have gone on to the remembrance of native myths and comparisons. Is that right. Why? »

«Because my awakened thought remembered. »

«Very well. Also the souls of the very ancient people who gave a religion to your land remembered. Vaguely, as someone who is imperfect can do, someone separated from the revealed religion. But they have always remembered. There are many religions in the world. Now, if we had here in a clear picture all their details, we would see that there is something like a golden thread, lost in much mud, a thread with many knots in which fragments of the real Truth are enclosed. »

«But do we not all come of the same stock? You say so. So why were the very ancient ones, who came of the original stock, why were they not able to bring the Truth with them? Was it not unjust to deprive them of it? »

«You have read Genesis, have you not? What have you found\*? A complex sin at the beginning, a sin embracing the three states of man: matter, thought, spirit. Then a fratricide. Then a double homicide to counterbalance the work of Enoch to keep light in hearts, then corruption, when the sons of God, out of lust, married the daughters of man. And notwithstanding the purification by the Deluge and the remaking of the race from good seed, not from stones as your myths state, likewise the first clay modelled by God to His image and in the shape of man was endowed with life through the work of God by the infusion of vital Fire, and not through the theft of vital fire by man, there was a fresh outburst of pride, an insult to God: "Let us touch the sky" and the divine curse: "Let them be scattered and let them no longer understand one another"... And the only stock became divided, like water clashing against a rock is divided into little streams and does not come together again, and the race was divided into races. Mankind driven away by its sin and by divine punishment

\* you found, in: *Genesis 3:11.*

was scattered and never came together again, carrying with itself the confusion created by pride. But souls remember. There is always something left within them. And the most virtuous and wise see a light indistinctly, a feeble light in the dark of myths: the light of Truth. It is the remembrance of the Light seen before life, which inspires them with some truth, in which are fragments of the revealed Truth. Is that clear to you? »

«Only partially. But I will think about it. Night is the friend of those who meditate and collect their thoughts. »

«Well, let us go and collect our thoughts. Let us go, My friends. Peace to you, women. Peace to you, My disciples. Peace to you, Alexander Misace. »

«Goodbye, my Lord. God be with You» replies the merchant bowing..

287. From Ramoth to Geresa with the merchants caravan.

26<sup>th</sup> September 1945.

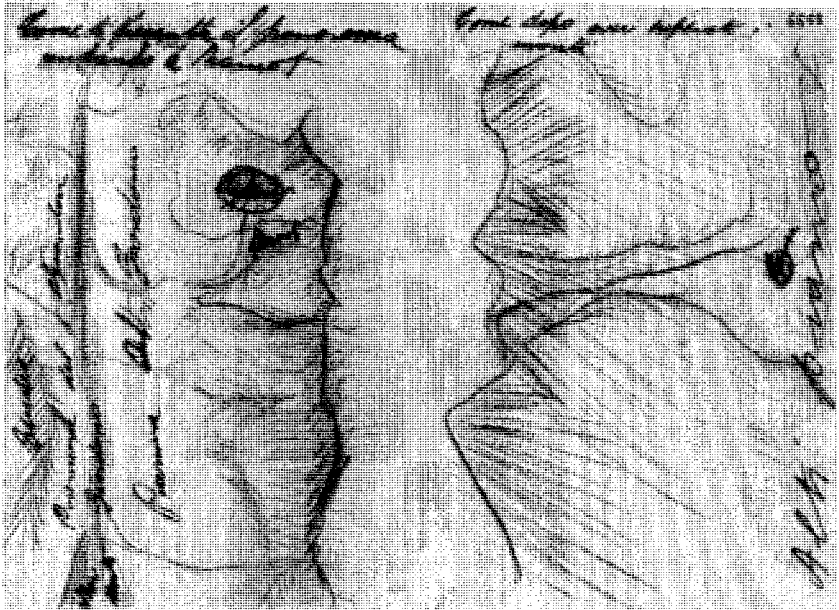
<sup>1</sup>The peculiarity of this village lying on a raised rocky platform in the middle of a crown of mountain tops, some of which are higher, some lower than it, appears in all its typical beauty in the rather hard light of a somewhat windy morning. It looks like a huge granite tray with buildings, little houses, bridges, fountains lying on it, for the amusement of a gigantic child.

287. 1

The houses seem to be engraved in calcareous rock which is the basic matter in the area\*. They are square shaped and built with blocks laid one upon another, some are not plastered, the blocks of some are still in their rough natural state, they really look like the little houses decorating a Christmas crib built with cubes by a big clever boy.

And around the little village one can contemplate its fertile country, covered with trees, variously cultivated, so that from

\* **the area**, of which MV has done two drawings inside a folded sheet of paper, sewn in between the pages of the book. We have illustrated here alongside. The drawing on the left indicates: *the setting on the road to Ramoth - Judea - the Jordan plain - the Dead Sea - Jordan - the Plain beyond Jordan - Galaad - Ramoth*. The drawing on the right indicates: *after having passed the mounds - Geresa - the high plains*. On the external side of the sheet MV has written: *drawing such well composed mountains is not easy, and I am not very good at it. But the drawing needs to give an idea together with the help of the description*



above it looks like a carpet of squares, trapezia, triangles, some of which are brown owing to the recently hoed earth, some emerald green because of the grass grown after autumn rain, some reddish because of the last leaves of vineyards and orchards, some grey-green because of poplars or willows, or enamel green because of oaks and carobs, or bronze-green owing to cypresses and conifers. Beautiful, really beautiful!

And one can see roads which, like ribbons parting from a knot, run from the village to the remote plain, or towards the high mountains and dive under woods or divide with a grey line the green meadows or brown ploughed fields.

And there is a pleasant stream of water, which is silvery beyond the village towards its spring, and blue fading to jade on the other side, where it flows down to the valley between gorges and slopes, and it appears and disappears playfully, and it grows stronger and stronger and bluer and bluer as its water increases, thus preventing the reeds and grass, which have grown in its bed during the droughty months, from tinging it green and it thus reflects the sky, after burying the stalks in its deep water.

The sky is unreal blue: a precious scale of deep enamel blue, without the least impure flaw in its wonderful texture.

<sup>2</sup>And the caravan sets off again, with the women still on horseback, because, as the merchant says, the road is very difficult after the village and it is necessary to walk fast in order to get to Gerasa before night. They are all muffled up and they proceed swiftly, as they are well rested, along a road which climbs up through wonderful woods, skimming the highest slopes of a solitary mountain, which rises like a huge block resting on the shoulders of the other mountains under it. A real giant as one can see in the highest parts of our Apennines. 287. 2

«Galaad» says the merchant, pointing at it; he has remained near Jesus Who is leading the Virgin's little mule holding its reins. And the merchant adds: «After this the road is much better. Have You ever been here? »

«No, never. I wanted to come here in springtime. But I was rejected at Galgala. »

«You rejected? How dreadful! »

Jesus looks at him and is silent.

The merchant has taken Marjiam up on his saddle, as the boy with his short legs was finding it difficult to keep up with the quick pace of the horses. And Peter is well aware that it is a quick pace! He is plodding along with all his might, imitated by the others, but he is always out distanced by the caravan. He is perspiring, but is happy because he can hear Marjiam laugh, he sees that Our Lady is resting and the Lord is happy. He puffs and blows while speaking to Matthew and his brother Andrew, who are left behind with him, and he makes them laugh saying that if in addition to his legs, he had wings, he would be happy that morning. He got rid of all loads, like the rest, tying the bags to the saddles of the women's mounts, but the road is really frightful, the stone being slippery with dew. The two Jameses with John and Thaddeus are more clever as they are keeping up with the pace of the women's mules. Simon Zealot is speaking to John of Endor. Timoneus and Ermasteus are also leading mules.

<sup>3</sup>At last the worst of the road is over and an entirely different scenery is displayed to their amazed eyes. The Jordan valley has definitely disappeared. To the east one's eyes rove over an imposingly wide plateau, where only a ripple of hills attempt to rise in order to interrupt the evenness of the landscape. I would never have thought there could be any such thing in Palestine. It seems 287. 3

that after the rocky storm of mountains, the storm itself has calmed down and become petrified in a huge billow which has been left hanging between the bottom level and the sky, with only one remembrance of its original fury in the tiny lines of hills, the foam of the crests solidified here and there, whilst the water of the billow has spread out over a wonderful and magnificent plain surface. And one reaches this bright peaceful area through a last gorge, as wild as the abyss between two clashing billows, the last two waves of a sea storm, in the depths of which there is a fresh foaming torrent flowing westwards and coming from the east, in a tormented enraged way between rocks and waterfalls in dire contrast with the remote peace of the huge plateau.

«The road will be good now. If You do not mind I will give the order to stop» says the merchant.

«I am being guided by you, man. You know that. »

They all dismount and spread out along the slopes in search of wood to cook the food, and of water for their tired feet and parched throats. The animals, once relieved of their loads, graze the thick grass or go down to the limpid torrent to water. The smell of resins and roast meat rises from the little fires lit to cook some lambs.

The apostles have lit a fire of their own on which they heat some salt fish after washing it in the cool water of the torrent. But the merchant sees them and he comes bringing a little skinned lamb, or a little kid, whichever it may be, and makes them accept it. And Peter gets ready to roast it after stuffing it with fresh mint.

287.4 The meal is soon prepared and is soon over. <sup>4</sup>And under the perpendicular midday sunshine they resume marching along a better road, which follows the torrent north-eastwards in a wonderfully fertile and well cultivated area, rich in sheep and swine herds, which run away grunting before the caravan.

«That walled town is Gerasa, my Lord. A town with a great future. It is now developing, and I don't think I am wrong in saying that it will soon be competing with Joppa, Ashkelon, with Tyre and many more towns, in beauty, trade and wealth. The Romans have realised its importance, on this road which from the Red Sea, that is, from Egypt goes to the Euxine Sea through Damascus. And they are helping the Gerasenes to build... They are

sharp sighted and have a good nose. For the time being it only has a very good trade, but later!... Oh! It will be beautiful and rich! A little Rome, with temples, piscinae, circuses, thermal baths. I only traded with them. But now I have bought much ground, to build emporia, which I will sell later at a high price, and perhaps I will build a real gentleman's house there, where I can stay in my old days, when Balthazar, Nabor, Felix and Sydmia will be able to look after and manage respectively the emporia at Sinope, Tyre, Joppa and Alexandria on the mouth of the Nile. In the meantime the other three boys will grow up and I will give them the emporia at Gerasa, Ashkelon and perhaps at Jerusalem. And the rich and beautiful girls will be sought-after and they will make very good matches and give me many grandchildren... » the merchant has golden and rosy day-dreams for the future.

<sup>5</sup>Jesus asks him calmly: «And then? »

287.5

The merchant arouses himself, looks at Him perplexedly and then says: «And then? That is all. Then death will come... It is sad. But that is it. »

«And will you leave all business? Your emporia? Your affections? »

«My Lord! I would not like to. But as I was born I must also die. And I shall have to leave everything» and he heaves such a long sigh as to push the caravan forward with it...

«But who told you that once you are dead you leave everything? »

«Who? The facts of life! Once you are dead... that is all. You have no hands, no eyes, no ears... »

«You are not only hands, eyes and ears. »

«I am a man. I know. I have other things. But they all end with death. It is like the setting of the sun. Its setting destroys it... »

«But dawn creates it once more, or rather it presents it again. You are a man, you said so. You are not an animal like the one you are riding. An animal, once it is dead, is really finished. Not you. You have a soul. Do you not know? Do you not even know that any more? »

The merchant hears the sad reproach, a sad but kind reproach, and he lowers his head whispering: «I still know that... »

«So? Do you not know that the soul survives? »

«I know. »

«Well, then? Do you not know that it still has an activity in the next life? A holy activity if it is holy. A wicked one if it is wicked. And it has its sentiments. Oh! It has them indeed! Loving ones, if it is holy. Hateful ones, if it is damned. Hateful against whom? Against the causes of its damnation. In your case: your business, the emporia, your exclusively human affections. Loving affections for whom? For the same things. And what blessings can a soul bring upon its children and their activity when it is in the peace of the Lord! »

The man is pensive. He says: «It is late. I am old, now. » And he stops his mule.

Jesus smiles and replies: «I will not force you. I advise you» and He turns around to look at the apostles, who in the halt before entering the town are helping the women to dismount and are picking up their bags.

287. 6 <sup>6</sup>The caravan sets out again and soon enters the busy town through the gate watched over by towers.

The merchant goes back to Jesus: «Do You want to remain with me? »

«If you do not drive Me away, why should I not want to? »

«Because of what I said to You. I must make You, the Holy One, sick. »

«Oh! no! I have come for people like you, whom I love because you are the most needy. You do not know Me as yet. But I am the Love who passes by begging for love. »

«So You do not hate me? »

«I love you. »

Tears shine in the man's deep eyes. But he says smiling: «In that case we shall stay together. I am stopping at Gerasa on business for three days. I leave the mules here and take camels. I have a caravan stage in the major halting places and a servant looks after the animals I leave in each place. And what will You do? »

«I will evangelize on the Sabbath. I would have left you, if you had not stopped, because the Sabbath is sacred to the Lord. »

The man knits his brows, is pensive and with some difficulty he agrees: «... Of course... It is true. It is sacred to the God of Israel. It is sacred... it is indeed... » He looks at Jesus: «If You allow me, I will consecrate it to You. »

«To God. Not to His Servant. »

«To God and to You, by listening to You. I will do my business today and tomorrow morning. And then I will listen to You. Are You coming to the hotel now? »

«I have no option. I have the women and I am not known here. »

«Here it is, it is mine. It is mine because my stables are here year after year. I have large rooms for the goods. If You wish... »

«May God reward you. Let us *go*. »

288. Discussions with the citizens of Gerasa  
and praise by a woman to the Mother of Jesus.

27<sup>th</sup> September 1945.

<sup>1</sup>He thought He was unknown! When He sets foot outside Alexander's building the following morning, He finds people already waiting for Him. Jesus is with the apostles only. The women and disciples are still in the house, resting. The people greet Him gathering around Him and they say that they know Him because a man He had freed from demons has spoken to them about Him. The man is not there now because he has gone on with two disciples, who passed by some days ago.

288. 1

Jesus listens kindly to what they say and at the same time He walks through the town in some areas of which the noise of building yards is dreadfully loud. Masons, diggers, stone-cutters, blacksmiths, carpenters are working building, levelling, filling gaps, chiselling stones for walls, working iron for various purposes, sawing, planing, making poles out of strong trunks. Jesus passes by watching, He crosses a bridge on a babbling torrent flowing in the middle of the town, with a row of houses on each side pretending to form a riverside. He goes up to the higher part of the town, which is built on a rising ground so that the south east side is higher than the northern one, but they are both higher than the town centre, which is divided by the little stream.

The view from the point where Jesus has stopped is beautiful. The whole town is displayed before the onlooker, and behind it, on the eastern, southern, western sides there is a horse-shoe shaped chain of low green hills, whereas to the north the



eye roves over a wide open plain, with a ground elevation on the horizon, so tiny that it cannot even be called a hill, but it is beautifully golden in the morning sunshine, which tinges with a yellowish hue the leaves of the vines which cover the ground, as if it intended to mitigate the melancholy of the withering leaves with the splendour of a touch of gold.

288.2 <sup>2</sup>Jesus is admiring the view and the people of Gerasa are looking at Him. He wins the regard of the people by saying to them:

«This town is really beautiful. Make it beautiful also in justice and holiness. The hills, the stream, the green plain were given to you by God. Rome is now helping you to have homes and beautiful buildings. But it is up to you only to have your town called holy and just. A town is what its citizens make it. Because a town is a part of society closed within its walls, but it is the citizens that make the town. A town in itself does not commit sin. The stream, the bridge, the houses, the towers cannot sin. They are matter, not souls. But those who are within the town walls, in houses, shops, those who cross the bridge or bathe in the stream they can all sin. If a town is factious and ruthless, people say: "It is a very bad town". But that is wrong. It is not the town, it is the citizens who are very bad. Those individuals by joining together become one complex thing, as well as one thing only, which is called "town".

Now listen. If in a town ten thousand inhabitants are good, and only one thousand are not good, can we say that that town is wicked? No, we cannot. Likewise: if in a town of ten thousand inhabitants there are many parties and each struggles to favour his own, can we say that that town is still united? No, we cannot. And do you think that that town will thrive? No, it will not.

You people of Gerasa are now all united striving to make your town great. And you will succeed because you all want the same thing and you vie with one another in achieving your purpose. But if tomorrow opposed parties should arise among you and one said: "No, it is better to expand eastwards" and another party said: "Not at all. We will build in the north where the plain is", and a third one should say: "Neither here nor there. We all want to live close together in the centre, near the river", what would happen? It would happen that the work you have started would stop, those who have lent capitals would withdraw them,

those who intended to settle here would go to another town with more agreeable people, and what you have already done would go to rack and ruin, as it would be exposed to the inclemency of the weather, before being completed, as a result of the quarrels of citizens. Is that right or not? You say it is, and you are right. So the harmony of the citizens is required for the welfare of the town, and consequently of the citizens themselves, because the welfare of a society is the welfare of its members.

<sup>3</sup>But there is not only the society of which you are thinking, the society of citizens, of fellow-countrymen, or the little dear family society. There is a vaster society, an infinite one: the society of spirits.

288 3

Each living man has a soul. The soul does not die with the body, but survives forever. The idea of God, the Creator, who gave each man his soul, was that all the souls of men should be gathered in one place only, in Heaven, forming the Kingdom of Heaven, whose monarch is God and whose blissful subjects were to be all men, after a holy life and a placid limbo of expectancy. Satan came to divide and upset, destroy and grieve God and spirits. And he set sin in the hearts of men and with sin he brought death to the body at the end of its existence, hoping to give death to spirits as well. But the death of spirits is their damnation, which is still existence, but devoid of what is true life and eternal joy, that is, devoid of the beatific vision of God and of His eternal possession in eternal light. And Mankind became divided in its desires, like a town divided by opposed parties. And it was thus brought to ruin. I said\* elsewhere to those who were accusing Me of expelling demons with the assistance of Be- elzebub: "Every kingdom divided in itself will be brought to ru- in". In fact if Satan expelled himself, he and his gloomy kingdom would be ruined.

I have come, for the love that God has for mankind created by Him, to remind people that one Kingdom only is holy: the King- dom of Heaven. And I have come to preach it, so that the bet- ter people may go towards it. Oh! I would like everybody, even the worst ones, to come to it, becoming converted, freeing them- selves from the demon who keeps them enslaved, either openly,

\* I said, in 269. 6

through corporal and spiritual possession, or secretly through a mere spiritual one. That is why I move about curing sick people, expelling demons from possessed people, converting sinners, forgiving in the name of the Lord, preaching the Kingdom, working miracles to convince you of My power and prove that God is with Me. Because no one can work a miracle unless God is his friend. So if I expel demons with the power of God, and I cure sick people, I cleanse lepers, convert sinners, announce and preach the Kingdom and I call people to it in the name of God, and God's compliance with Me is clear and indisputable, so that only disloyal enemies may assert the contrary, it is a sign that the Kingdom of God is among you and must be established because the hour of its foundation has come.

288. 4 <sup>4</sup>How is the Kingdom of God established in the world and in hearts? By going back to the Mosaic Law or by becoming acquainted with it if one is ignorant of it and, above all, by abiding by it absolutely, in every event and moment of our life. Which is that Law? Something so severe as to be impracticable? No. It is a set of ten holy easy precepts, which even a really morally good man feels he must respect, even if he lives in the most impervious forest of mysterious Africa. It says:

“I am the Lord Your God, you shall have no gods except Me.

You shall not utter the name of God in vain.

You shall keep the Sabbath according to the commandment of God and to the needs of the human body.

Honour your father and mother so that you may have a long life and be blessed both on the earth and in Heaven.

You shall not kill.

You shall not steal.

You shall not commit adultery.

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.

You shall not covet your neighbour's wife.

You shall not covet your neighbour's goods”.

Which good natured soul, contemplating what is around him, even if he is a savage, will not say: “All this was not formed by itself. Therefore there must be One, more powerful than nature and man himself, who made this”? And he worships the Powerful One Whose Most Holy Name he may or may not know, but he feels He must exist. And he has such reverence before Him,

that when he utters the name which he has given Him or has been taught to utter to name Him, he trembles with respect and he feels that he prays when uttering it reverently. In fact it is a prayer to utter the Name of God with the intention of worshipping Him or making Him known to those who do not know Him.

Likewise, out of moral prudence alone every man feels that he must grant some rest to his limbs, so that they may resist as long as his life lasts. By deeper reason, a man who knows the God of Israel, the Creator and Lord of the Universe, feels that he must consecrate his bodily rest to the Lord, so that he may not be like a beast of burden which rests, when tired, on litter crushing fodder with its strong teeth.

Blood also calls for love for those from whom we originate, as we can see in that colt that is now running braying towards its mother which is coming from the market. It was playing in the herd, it saw its mother, it remembers it was fed by her and licked with loving care, defended and warmed by its mother, and see? It rubs her neck with its tender nostrils and jumps joyfully rubbing its young crupper against the sides that carried it. It is a duty and a pleasure to love one's parents. And there is no animal which does not love the mother which gave birth to it. What? Will man be more vile than worms living in mud?

A morally good man does not kill. He has a strong dislike of violence. He feels that it is not lawful to take anybody's life, and that God only, Who gave it, has the right to take it. He abhors homicide.

Likewise, he who is morally sound does not take advantage of other people's property. He prefers to eat plain bread with a clear conscience near a silvery fountain, rather than have a rich roast which is the fruit of a theft. He prefers to sleep on the ground with his head on a stone and friendly stars above him, pouring peace and comfort on his honest conscience, rather than toss about in a stolen bed.

And if he is morally sound, he is not eager for more women, who are not his, and he will not cowardly disgrace the nuptial bed of his neighbour. And he will consider his friend's wife as a sister and will not cast lustful glances at her, as no one does at a sister.

A man with a righteous soul, even if only naturally righteous,

with no other knowledge of Good but what comes to him from his honest conscience, will never take the liberty of giving false witness, as he would consider that the same as homicide and theft, which it is. But his lips are as honest as his heart, and his glances are honest, so he does not desire his neighbour's wife. He does not crave for anything, as he knows that that is the first incentive to sin. And he is not envious. Because he is good. A good man is never envious. He is happy in his lot.

288.5

<sup>5</sup>Do you think that this law is so exacting as to be impracticable? Do not wrong yourselves! I am sure that you will not do that. And if you do not, you will establish the Kingdom of God within yourselves and in your town. And you will be happily joined one day to those whom you loved and who like you have gained the eternal Kingdom in the everlasting joy of Heaven.

But we have within us passions, which are like citizens closed within the circle of town walls. It is necessary for all the passions of men to want the same thing: that is, holiness. Otherwise some will tend to Heaven in vain, if others leave the doors unguarded and let the seducer enter or counteract the actions of part of the spiritual citizens through disputes or laziness, making the interior part of the town perish and abandoning it to nettles, poison, couch-grass, snakes, scorpions, mice and jackals, and owls, that is, to wicked passions and to Satan's angels. You must be unceasingly vigilant, like sentries placed at the walls, to prevent the Evil one from entering where we want to build the Kingdom of God.

I solemnly tell you that as long as the strong man watches in arms the hall of his house, he is sure of everything which is in it. But if one stronger than he is comes, or if he leaves the door unguarded, then the stronger man will defeat him and disarm him, and when he is deprived of the weapons on which he relied, he loses heart and surrenders and the stronger man makes him a prisoner and takes his spoils. But if man lives in God, through loyalty to the Law and justice practised holily, God is with him, I am with him, and no harm can befall him. Union with God is the weapon which no strong man can overcome. Union with Me is certainty of victory and of abundance of eternal virtues through which he will be given an eternal seat in the Kingdom of God. But he who turns his back on Me or becomes My enemy, rejects

thereby the weapons and certainty of My Word. He who rejects the Word, rejects God. He who rejects God invokes Satan. He who invokes Satan destroys what he had to conquer the Kingdom.

Therefore, he who is not with Me is against Me. And he who does not cultivate what I have sown, will reap what the Enemy has sown. He who does not harvest with Me, dissipates and will be poor and nude when he comes to the Supreme Judge, Who will send him to the master to whom he sold himself by preferring Beelzebub to Christ.

Citizens of Gerasa: build the Kingdom of God within yourselves and in your town. »

<sup>6</sup>The trilling voice of a woman is clearly heard like the song of a skylark above the whispering of the admiring crowd, and it sings a new beatitude, that is the glory of Mary: «Blessed be the womb that bore You and the breast that suckled You. » 288. 6

Jesus turns towards the woman who extolled His Mother admiring Her Son. He smiles, because He is pleased with the praise for His Mother. But He then says: «More blessed are those who listen to the word of God and practise it. Do that, woman. »

He then blesses the crowds and goes towards the country, followed by the apostles who ask Him: «Why did You say that? »

«Because I tell you solemnly that in Heaven they do not use the same measure as are used on the earth. And My Mother will be blessed not so much because of Her immaculate soul as for listening to the word of God and practising it through obedience. It was a prodigy of the Creator “that Mary’s soul was immaculate”. And He is to be praised for that. But the “let what you have said be done to Me” is a prodigy of My Mother. Her merit therefore is great. So great that the Saviour of the world came only because of Her capability of listening to God, speaking through Gabriel’s lips, and because of Her will to practise the word of God, without weighing the difficulties and the immediate and future sorrows connected with Her assent. You can thus see that She is My blessed Mother not only because She bore and suckled Me, but because She listened to the word of God and practised it through obedience. <sup>7</sup>But let us go home now. My Mother knew that I was going to be out for a short while and She may be worried because of My delay. We are in a half-pagan country. But in actual fact it is better than others. But let us go. And let us go around 288. 7

the walls to avoid the crowds which would keep Me back. Come down quick behind this thicket... »

289. The Sabbath in Gerasa. The amusement of Marjiam and the question asked by Syntyche on the salvation of the pagans.

28<sup>th</sup> September 1945.

289. 1 <sup>1</sup>The hours of the day are long when one does not know what to do. And those who are with Jesus do not know what to do on that Sabbath, in a town where they have no acquaintances, in a house where they do not feel at home because of different languages and habits, without taking into account the Jewish prejudices which keep them apart from Alexander Misace's camel-drivers and servants. Many, therefore, have stayed in bed or are dozing in the sun that makes the large square yard of the house comfortably warm. It is a yard suited to receive caravans, as it is fitted with basins and rings fixed to the walls or columns of a rustic porch, which runs along the four sides, with many stables and lofts for hay and straw on three sides. The women are in their rooms. I do not see even one of them.

Marjiam amuses himself also in the closed yard, watching the work of the stable-men, who curry mules, change litters, examine hoofs, fasten loose horse shoes, or, what is of greater interest to him because it is something entirely new, he is spellbound watching how the cameleers deal with the camels, preparing in advance the load for each animal, in proportion to each one of them, balancing it, and how they make a camel kneel down and rise in order to load and unload it, rewarding each one with a handful of dry vegetables, which I think are broad beans, and at the end they gave them carobs, which the men also chew with relish.

Marjiam is utterly amazed and he looks around to find someone with whom he may share his amazement. But he is disappointed because adults are not interested in camels. They are either speaking to one another or dozing. He goes to Peter who is sleeping blissfully with his head resting on soft hay, and shakes his arm. Peter half opens his eyes and asks: «What is it? Who wants me? »

«I do. Come and see the camels. »

«Let me sleep. I have seen so many of them... Ugly animals. »

The boy then goes to Matthew, who is checking his accounts, as he is the treasurer during this trip: «You know, I have been to see the camels. They eat like sheep, did you know? And they kneel down like men and they look like boats moving up and down. Have you seen them? »

Matthew, who has lost his count owing to the interruption, replies sharply: «Yes» and resumes counting his money.

Another disappointment... Marjiam looks around... There is Simon Zealot speaking to Judas Thaddeus... «How lovely camels are! And how good! They loaded and unloaded them and they lay down on the ground so that the cameleer should not have to work too hard. And they eat carobs. The men also were eating them. I would like... But I cannot make myself understood. Come with me... » and he takes Simon by the hand.

Simon, who is engrossed in peaceful conversation with Thaddeus, replies absent-mindedly: «Yes, dear... Go... and watch that you do not hurt yourself. »

Marjiam is astonished... Simon has not replied to the point. The boy is almost weeping. He goes away downheartedly and leans against a column...

<sup>2</sup>Jesus comes out of a room and sees that he is sulky and alone. <sup>289. 2</sup> He goes towards the boy and lays a hand on his head. «What are you doing all alone and so sad? »

«No one will listen to me... »

«What did you want from them? »

«Nothing. I was speaking of the camels... They are lovely... I like them. It must be like being on a boat to be up there... And they eat carobs; the men also eat them... »

«And you want to go up there and eat carobs. Come, let us go to the camels» and Jesus takes him by the hand and goes to the end of the yard with the child, who has become cheerful once again.

He goes straight to a cameleer and greets him with a smile. The man bows to Him and continues examining his animal, adjusting its halter and reins.

«Man, do you understand Me? »

«Yes, Lord. I have known Your people for twenty years. »



«This boy has a big desire: to climb up on a camel... And a little one: to eat a carob» and Jesus smiles once again more lively.

«Your son? »

«No, I have no children. I am not married. »

«You, so handsome, so strong, You have not found a woman? »

«I have not looked for one. »

«You have never felt the desire of a woman? »

«No. Never. »

The man looks at Him and is spellbound. He then says: «I have nine children at Ischilo... I go: one son. I go: another son. Always. »

«Do you love your children? »

«They are of my blood! But my work is hard. I am here, my children are there. We are far apart... But I do it for their bread. Do you understand? »

«I do. So you can understand the boy who would like to mount a camel and eat carobs. »

«Yes. Come. Are you afraid? No? Good. Lovely boy! I have one, too, like you. Dark like you. Here. Take and hold it tight» and he puts into Marjiam's hand the strange handle which is in the front part of the saddle. «Hold it. I will come on now. And the camel will stand up. You are not afraid, eh? » And the man climbs up on the high saddle, he makes himself comfortable and spurs the camel, which stands up obediently with a heavy pitch.

Marjiam laughs happily. And he is all the more happy because the cameleer has put a delicious carob into his mouth. The camel ambles along the yard, then the driver puts it into a trot, finally, seeing that Marjiam is not afraid, he shouts something to one of his companions, who opens the very wide door at the rear of the yard and the cameleer disappears with his load in the green country.

289. 3 <sup>3</sup>Jesus goes back towards the house and enters a large room where the women are. He smiles so happily that Mary asks Him: «What has happened, Son, that You are so happy? »

«I am as happy as Marjiam who is galloping on a camel. Come out so that we may see him coming back. »

They all go out into the yard and sit on the low wall near the basins. The apostles who are not sleeping approach them. Those who are at the windows in the rooms upstairs, look down, they

see the group and go down to join them. Their shrill youthful voices, they are in fact the voices of John and of the two Jameses, awake also Peter and Andrew and arouse Matthew. They are now all together because John of Endor and the two disciples have also joined the group.

«But where is Marjiam? I don't see him» asks Peter.

«He has gone for a run on a camel. None of you would listen to him... I saw that he was so sad and I took care of him. »

Peter, Simon and Matthew remember: «Of course! He was talking about camels... and carobs. But I was sleepy! »; «I had to check my accounts as I wanted to inform You of what I had received from the Gerasenes and what I had given to the poor»; «And I was speaking of faith with Your brother. »

«It does not matter. I saw to it. But, incidentally, I tell you that to take care of children's games is also love... But now let us talk of something else. The town is full of merriment. The only remembrance of our Sabbath is general mirth. So it is better to stay indoors. So much so because if they want, they can find us as they know where we are. <sup>4</sup>There is Alexander inspecting his camels. I will now tell him that one is missing through My fault. » And Jesus hastens towards the merchant and speaks to him.

289. 4

They come back together. The merchant says: «Very well. He will enjoy himself and a run out in the sun will do him good. You may rest assured that the man will treat him well. Calipius is a clever man. In exchange for the run, I ask You to tell me something. Last night I was thinking of Your words... those I heard at Ramoth, which You exchanged with the woman, and those You spoke yesterday. And I thought I was climbing up a high mountain, like those where I live, the tops of which reach up to the clouds. You were carrying me higher and higher. I was under the impression of being caught by an eagle, one of those eagles of our highest mountain, the first to emerge from the Deluge. I saw entirely new things, of which I had never thought before, all made of a light... And I understood them. Then I became confused. Tell me more. »

«What shall I tell you? »

«I don't know... Everything was so beautiful. What You said about meeting again in Heaven... I understood that we will love

there in a different way, and yet it will be the same. For instance: we shall not be worried as we are now, it will be as if we were one family only: one for all and all for one. Am I wrong? »

«No. On the contrary! We shall be one family also with the living. Souls are not separated by death. I am speaking of the just. They form one large family. Just imagine a large temple in which some worship and pray, and some work. The former pray also for those who are working, the latter work for those who are praying. The same applies to souls. We work on the earth. They help us with their prayers. But we must offer our sufferings for their peace. It is a chain which does not break. It is Love that ties those who were to those who are. And those who are must be good to be able to join those who were and want us to be with them. »

289. 5 <sup>5</sup>Syntyche makes an involuntary gesture, which she soon cheeks. But Jesus notices it and invites her to come out of her habitual self-restraint.

«I was thinking... I have been thinking about it for some days, and if I must tell the truth, I am worried, because I feel that if I believe in Your Paradise, I will lose my mother and sisters forever... » a sob breaks the voice of Syntyche, who stops to stifle tears.

«What thought worries you so much? »

«I now believe in You. I can only think of my mother as a heathen. She was good... Oh! very good! And my sisters, too. Little Ismene was the best daughter there ever was on the earth. But they were heathens... Now, when I was like them, I thought of Hades and I used to say: "We will meet there again". Now Hades no longer exists. There is Your Paradise, the Kingdom of Heaven for those who have served the True God in justice. And what about those poor souls? It is no fault of theirs if they were born in Greece! None of the priests in Israel ever came to say: "Our God is the True God". So? Are their virtues and sufferings worth nothing? Will they be in eternal darkness and separated from me forever? I tell You: it is a torture! I seem to have almost disowned them. Forgive me, my Lord... I am weeping... » and she falls on her knees weeping disconsolately.

Alexander Misace says: «There You are! I also was wondering whether, if I become a just man, I will ever find my father, moth-

er, my brothers and friends... »

<sup>6</sup>Jesus lays His fingers on Syntyche's brown-haired head and says: «One is at fault when one knows the Truth, but persists in Error. Not when one is convinced of being in the Truth, and no voice has ever come to say: "The Truth is what I am bringing you. Forsake your chimeras for this True God and you will gain Heaven". God is just. Can you believe that He will not reward virtue which was perfected all by itself in the corruption of the heathen world? Do not worry, My daughter. » 289. 6

«What about the original sin? And their nefarious cult? And... » More objections would come from the Israelites to grieve Syntyche's already desolate soul, if Jesus with a gesture did not impose silence.

He says: «The original sin is common to everybody, whether one is from Israel or not. It is not a peculiarity of heathens. The pagan cult will be sinful after the Law of Christ has been spread throughout the world. Virtue will always be virtue in the eyes of God. And in virtue of My union with the Father I say, and I say this in His name, translating His Most Holy Thought into words, that the ways of God's merciful power are manifold, and they are so intent on giving joy to virtuous people that they will remove barriers between souls, and peace will be given to those who deserve peace. Not only, but I say that in future those who follow the religion of their ancestors with justice and holiness, convinced of being in the Truth, will not be disliked and punished by God. Wickedness, bad will, deliberate refusal of the known Truth, above all refusal of the revealed Truth and opposition to it, vicious living will really separate forever the souls of the just from those of sinners. Take heart, Syntyche. Such dejection is an assault of hell due to Satan's wrath against you, as you are a prey he has lost forever. There is no Hades. There is My Paradise. But it is not the cause of grief, but of joy. Nothing of the Truth is to be the cause of dejection or doubt, on the contrary it must give you strength for a greater faith and cheerful certainty. Always inform Me of your anxieties. I want the light in you to be as certain and steady as the light of the sun. »

Syntyche, still kneeling, takes His hand and kisses it...

<sup>7</sup>The *cry* of the cameleer makes the group understand that the camel is about to come back, at a slow pace, without making any 289. 7

noise on the thick grass outside the rear door, which a servant opens at once. And Marjiam comes back, he is happy and his face is flushed after the run. He is a tiny little man hoisted onto the high back of the camel, and he laughs waving his arms, while the camel kneels down and he slides down from the odd saddle, caressing the swarthy cameleer. He then runs towards Jesus shouting: «How lovely! Did the Wise men come from the East on those animals to worship You? I will go on them to preach You all over the world! The world seems larger when seen from up there and it says: “Come, you who know the Gospel! ”. Oh! Do You know?... That man also is in need of it... And you, too, merchant, and all your servants... How many people are waiting and die without receiving it... More people than the sand in the river... They are all without You, Jesus! Oh! Make haste and announce it to everybody^ and he clings to Jesus’ sides looking up at Him.

And Jesus bends kissing him and promising: «You will see the Kingdom of God evangelized as far as the most remote borders of Rome. Are you happy? »

«I am. And then I will come and say to You: “This, that, and that other Country... they all know You”. I will then know the names of those remote Countries. And what will You say to me? »

«I will say: “Come, little Marjiam. Have a crown for every country in which you have preached Me and then come here beside Me, as on that day at Gerasa, and rest after all your work, because you have been a faithful servant and it is right that you should be happy in My Kingdom”. »

290. The man with the ulcered eyes. Stop at the  
“fountain of the Cameleer”. The reminder of souls.

29<sup>th</sup> September 1945.

290. 1 <sup>1</sup>The caravan leaves Alexander’s large courtyard, in perfect order as if it were on a military parade. Jesus is at the rear with all His group. The camels are proceeding, their heavy loads swaying rhythmically and their heads, on their arched necks, seem to be asking at each step: «Why? Why? » in their silent but familiar gait, like the movement of doves, which at each step seem to be saying: «Yes, Yes» to everything they see. The car-

avan has to cross the town and it does so in the clear morning air. Everyone is all wrapped up because it is cool. The harness-bells of the camels, the cries of the camel-drivers, the screech of a camel regretting the idle stable inform the Gerasenes of Jesus' departure.

The news spreads as fast as lightning and some Gerasenes rush to greet Him offering fruit and other foodstuffs. There is also a man with a sick little boy. «Bless him, that he may recover. Have mercy on us! »

Jesus raises His hand and blesses the child saying: «Go and do not worry. Have faith. »

And the man says «yes» so trustfully, that a woman asks: «Would You cure my husband whose eyes are ulcered? »

«I will, if you can believe. »

«Well, I will go and bring him here. Wait for me, Lord» and she runs away as fast as a swallow.

Wait! Easier said than done! The camels are moving on. Alexander, at the head of the caravan, does not know what is wanted at its rear. The only thing to be done is to send word to the man.

«Run, Marjiam. Go and tell the merchant to stop before going out of the walls» says Jesus. And Marjiam dashes away to fulfil his mission.

The caravan stops and the merchant comes towards Jesus. «What is the matter? »

«Stay here and you will see. »

<sup>2</sup>The woman of Gerasa is soon back with her husband whose eyes are diseased. It is much worse than ulcers! His eyes are two holes full of suppuration. They look dimmed, reddened, half blind in the centre of the holes, among repulsive dripping tears. As soon as the man lifts the dark bandage dimming the light, tears flow more copiously as the light increases the pain of the diseased eyes. 290. 2

The man moans: «Have mercy! I suffer so much! »

«You have also sinned very much. Are you not complaining of that? Are you only grieved at the possibility of losing the poor sight of the world? Do you know nothing about God? Are you not afraid of eternal darkness? Why did you sin? »

The man is weeping and he bends without speaking. His wife is also weeping and she moans: «I have forgiven... »

«And I will forgive him as well, if he swears to Me that he will not relapse into his sin. »

«Yes, I do! Forgive me. I now know the consequences of sin. Forgive me. Forgive me as my wife did. You are the Good One. »

«I forgive you. Go to that stream, wash your face in the water and you will be cured. »

«Cold water will make him worse, Lord» moans the woman.

But the man is not concerned with anything else and he begins to grope until the apostle John pitifully takes him by the hand and leads him by himself at first, until the wife supports him by the other hand. The man goes down as far as the edge of the ice cold water babbling among stones, he bends. He takes some water cupping his hands and washes his face. He does not show any sign of pain. On the contrary, he appears to be relieved.

He then climbs up the bank, with his face still wet, and goes back to Jesus, Who asks him: «Well? Are you cured? »

«No, Lord. Not yet. But You said so and I will be cured. »

«Well, remain in your hope. Goodbye. »

The woman collapses weeping... She is disappointed. Jesus beckons to the merchant that they can go on. And the merchant, who is also disappointed, passes the word on. The camels march off again with their motion resembling a boat which raises and lowers its prow with its cut-water on the waves; they go out of the walls and take to the wide dusty caravan route south-westwards.

The last couple of the apostolic group, that is, John of Endor and Simon Zealot, have just left the walls a few yards behind, when a shrill cry is heard in the silent air. It seems to spread all over the world, and is repeated in a higher and higher pitch, singing hosannas happily: «I can see! My blessed Jesus! I can see! I believed. I see! Jesus! Jesus! My blessed Jesus! » and the man, whose face is completely cured, with two beautiful eyes: two carbuncles full of light and life, rushes to Jesus' feet and falls almost under the camel of the merchant, who manages to move his mount away from the prostrated man just in time.

The man kisses Jesus' garment repeating: «I believed! I believed and I can see! My blessed Jesus! »

«Stand up and be happy. And, above all, be good. Tell your wife to believe unreservedly. Goodbye. » And Jesus frees Him-

self from the grasp of the miraculously cured man and carries on along His way.

<sup>3</sup>The merchant strokes his beard pensively... At last he asks: 200. 3  
«And if he had not persisted in believing, after his disappointment in washing? »

«He would have remained as he was. »

«Why do You exact so much faith to work a miracle? »

«Because faith witnesses the presence of hope and love of God. »

«And why did You want repentance first? »

«Because repentance makes God friendly. »

«Since I have no disease, what should I do to testify that I have faith? »

«You should come to the Truth. »

«And could I come without God's friendship? »

«You could not come without God's goodness. God allows those who look for Him to find Him, even if they are not yet repentant; because man generally repents when he knows God, either consciously or even with a faint consciousness of what his soul wants. Before he is like a blockhead led only by instinct. Have you ever felt the need to believe? »

«Many a time. Well, I was not satisfied with what I had. I felt there was something else. Something stronger than money, than my children, my hope... But I did not bother to try to find out what I was unknowingly seeking. »

«Your soul was seeking God. God's kindness has let you find God. Repentance for your remote idle past will give you the friendship of God. »

«So... in order to have the miracle of seeing the Truth with my soul, I should repent of my past? »

«Certainly. You ought to repent and decide to change your life completely... »

The man begins to stroke his beard once again and he stares so intently that he seems to be studying and counting the hairs on his camel's neck. He unintentionally strikes with his heel the camel which takes the stroke as a spur to quicken its step and it obeys taking the merchant towards the head of the caravan.

<sup>4</sup>Jesus does not keep him back. On the contrary He stops thus 290. 4 allowing the women and apostles to overtake Him, until Simon



Zealot and John of Endor reach Him. Jesus joins them.

«Of what are you speaking? » He asks.

«We were speaking of the depression that those must feel who do not believe in anything or have lost the faith they had. Syn-tyche was really dejected yesterday, although she has come to a perfect faith» replies the Zealot.

«I was saying to Simon that if it is grievous to pass from Good to Evil, it is also disconcerting to pass from Evil to Good. In the former case one is tortured by one's reproaching conscience. In the latter case one is... tormented... Like one who is taken to a completely unknown foreign country... Or it is the dismay of a man, who being a poor unlearned wretch, should find himself at a king's Court, among learned people and gentlemen. It is a pain... I know... Such a long suffering... One cannot believe that it is true, that it can last... that one can deserve it particularly when one's soul is stained... as mine was... »

«And now, John? » asks Jesus.

And John of Endor's worn out sad face brightens with a smile which makes it look less emaciated. He says: «Now, it is no longer so. Only gratitude to the Lord remains, nay, it increases. This the Lord wanted. There is still the memory of the past to keep me humble. But there is certainty. I feel acclimatised, I am no longer a foreigner in this kind world of forgiveness and love which is Yours. And I am serene, happy and in peace. »

«Do you consider your experience a good one? »

«Yes, I do. If I were not sorry for having sinned, because I grieved God through my sin, I would say that I feel that my past was a good thing. It can help me considerably to support willing but mislaid souls, in the first stages of their new belief. »

«Simon, go and tell the boy not to jump about so much. He will be exhausted this evening. »

Simon looks at Jesus, but he understands the truth behind the order. He smiles intelligently and goes away leaving the two all alone.

290. 5 <sup>5</sup>«Now that we are alone, John, listen to this desire of Mine. For a number of reasons, none of My followers have the breadth of judgement and thought which you have. And your culture is wider than the average learning of Israelites. So I ask you to help Me... »

«Am I to help You? How? »

«On behalf of Syntyche. You are such a clever teacher! Marjiam learns quickly and well with you. So much so that I am thinking of leaving you together for some months, because I want Marjiam to have a wider knowledge than that of the little world of Israel. And it gives you pleasure to take care of him. And I rejoice seeing you together, you teaching, him learning; you growing young again, him maturing in learning. But you should take care of Syntyche as well, as if she were a lost sister. You said it yourself: one feels lost... Help her to become acclimatised in My atmosphere. Will you do Me this favour? »

«It is a grace for me to do it, my Lord! I did not approach her because I considered myself superfluous. But if You wish so... She reads my rolls. There are some which are sacred, some are only cultural: rolls from Rome and Athens. I see that she goes through them and meditates... But I never intervened in order to assist her. If You want... »

«Yes, I do. I want you to be friends. Like Marjiam and you, she will be staying in Nazareth for some time. It will be lovely: My Mother and you the teachers of two souls opening to God. My Mother: the angelical Teacher of the Science of God; you: the experienced master of human knowledge, which you can now explain with supernatural references. It will be lovely and useful. »

«Yes, my blessed Lord! Too beautiful for poor John!... » and the man smiles at the thought of the oncoming peaceful days with Mary, in Jesus' house...

<sup>6</sup>And the road winds along a beautiful country, which is now <sup>290. 6</sup> completely flat after skirting a few little hills just out of Gerasa, in the mild sunshine which is becoming warmer and warmer. It is a well kept road on which it is comfortable to travel and to take to it again after the midday rest.

It is almost evening when I hear Syntyche laugh wholeheartedly for the first time; Marjiam in fact has said something to her which makes all the women laugh. I see the Greek woman bend to caress the boy and kiss him lightly on his forehead. The boy then resumes jumping about as if he did not feel at all tired.

But all the others are tired and are glad for the decision to spend the night at the Fountain of the Cameleer. The merchant says: «I always stop here overnight. The leg from Gerasa to Boz-

rah, is too long both for men and animals. »

«The merchant is humane» remark the apostles, comparing him to Doras...

The «Fountain of the Cameleer» is only a handful of houses around several wells. It is a kind of oasis, not in the arid desert, because there is no aridity here, but an oasis in the vast uninhabited fields and orchards which follow one another for miles and which, as the October evening draws on, give the same sad sensation as the sea at twilight. Thus, the sight of houses, the noise of voices, of crying children, the smell of smoking chimneys and the first lights to be lit are as pleasant as one's arrival at home.

While the cameleers stop to water the camels for the first time, the apostles and the women follow Jesus and the merchant who enter... the rather prehistoric inn which will shelter them during the night...

290. 7 7... They are all gathered near a very large fireplace which takes up the whole of the narrow wall of a large smoky room where they have eaten their meal, and where the men will sleep and servants are already preparing straw beds on mats. The fire is on because it is a cold damp evening.

«Let us hope that it will not start raining» says Peter with a sigh.

The merchant reassures him: «The bad weather will not begin until this lunation is over. It is always like this in the evening here. But it will be sunshine tomorrows

«It's for the women, you know? Not for me. I am a fisherman and I live in water. And I can assure you that I prefer water to mountains and dust. »

Jesus is speaking to the women and His two cousins. John of Endor and the Zealot are also listening to Him. Instead Timoneus and Ermasteus are reading one of John's rolls and the two Israelites are explaining to Ermasteus the Bible passages which are more obscure to him.

Marjiam is listening spellbound, but he looks sleepy. Mary of Alphaeus notices it and says: «That child is tired. Come, dear, let us go to bed. Come, Eliza, come Salome. Old people and children are better in bed. And you had all better go as well. You are tired. »

But besides the elder ones, with the exception of Marcella and

Johanna of Chuza, no one moves.

After they have gone, after being blessed, Matthew whispers: «Who would have told these women, only a short while ago, that they were to sleep on straw beds, so far from their homes! »

«I have never slept so well» states Mary of Magdala resolutely. And Martha confirms her statement.

But Peter admits that his companion is right: «Matthew is right. And I wonder why the Master has brought you here, something I fail to understand. »

«Because we are His disciples! »

«Well, if He went where... lions are, would you go? »

«Of course, Simon Peter! What an effort to go for a little walk! And with Him! »

«Well: in actual fact it is a long walk. And for women who are not used to it... »

But the women protest and Peter shrugs his shoulders and becomes silent.

James of Alphaeus, on looking up, sees such a bright smile on Jesus' face, that he asks Him: «Will You tell us, privately, the real purpose of this journey, with the women... and with so little fruit, as compared to its fatigue? »

«Could you expect to see now the fruit of the seed buried in the fields which we have crossed? »

«I could not. I will see it in springtime. »

«I also say to you: "You will see it in due time". »

The apostles do not reply.

<sup>290. 8</sup> The silvery voice of Mary is heard: «Son, we were talking today of what You said at Ramoth. And each of us had different impressions and reflections. Would You tell us Your thought? I said that it was better to call You at once. But You were speaking to John of Endor. »

«In actual fact I raised the question. Because I am a poor heathen and I do not have the splendid light of your faith. You must sympathise with me. »

«I would like to have your soul, my dear sister! » says the Magdalene impulsively. And exuberant as she is, she embraces Syn-tyche clasp- ing her with one arm. Her wonderful beauty seems to give light by itself to the miserable dwelling and to decorate it with the wealth of her sumptuous house. The Greek woman,

who is entirely different and yet has such a singular personality while embraced by the Magdalene, adds a meditative note to the cry of love which seems to be always bursting forth from passionate Mary, meanwhile the Blessed Virgin, sitting with Her gentle face raised towards Her Son, Her hands clasped as if She were praying, Her most pure profile outstanding against the black wall, is the perpetual Adorer.

Susanna is dozing in the shadow of a corner, while Martha, who is active notwithstanding her weariness and the pressure of the others, takes advantage of the light of the fireplace to fasten some buckles on Marjiam's garment.

Jesus says to Syntyche: «But it was not a grievous thought. I heard you laugh. »

«Yes, because of the boy, who solved the question easily, saying: "I do not want to come back unless Jesus does. But if you want to know everything, go to the next world, then come back and tell us whether you remember". »

They all laugh again and say that Syntyche was asking Mary for a clarification on the explanation, which she had not understood properly, of the remembrance which souls have and which explains a certain possibility for heathens to have vague recollections of the Truth.

«I was saying: "Does that perhaps confirm the theory of re-incarnation in which many heathens believe? " and Your Mother was telling me that what You say is something entirely different. Will You explain also this to me, my Lord? »

290. 9    9«Listen. You must not believe that the fact that souls have spontaneous recollections of Truth proves that we live several lives. By now you have already learned enough to be aware of how man was created, how he sinned and was punished. You have also been told that God incorporated a single soul in each man. That soul is created from time to time and is never again used for subsequent incarnations. This certainty would seem to cancel My statement concerning the recollections of souls. It should cancel it with regard to any other being with the exception of man, who is gifted with a soul made by God. Animals cannot remember anything, as they are born once only. But man can remember, although he is born once only. He remembers with his better part: his soul. Where do souls come from? The

soul of each man? From God. Who is God? The most intelligent, powerful, perfect Spirit. This wonderful thing which is a soul, a thing created by God to give man His image and likeness as an unquestionable sign of His Most Holy Paternity, shows signs of the qualities characteristic of Him Who creates it. It is therefore intelligent, spiritual, free, immortal, like the Father Who created it. It is perfect when it originates from the divine thought and in the instant of its creation it is identical, for a thousandth of instant, with the soul of the first man: a perfection which understands the Truth through free gift. A thousandth of an instant. Then, once it is formed, it is stained by original sin. To make it clearer for you I will say that it is as if God were pregnant with the soul which He creates and the creature, in being born, were wounded by an indelible mark. Do you understand Me? »

«Yes, I do. While it is thought it is perfect. The creating thought lasts a thousandth of an instant. The thought then becomes actual fact and the fact is subject to the law brought about by Sin. »

«Your reply is correct. A soul becomes thus incarnate in a human body, bringing with it the memory of the Creator, that is of the Truth, as a secret gem in the mystery of its spiritual being. A baby is born. It may become good, very good or wicked. It may become anything because it is endowed with free will. The angelical ministry throws light on its “memories” and the tempter darkness. If man craves after light and thus for a greater and greater virtue, making his soul the master of his being, the faculty of remembering increases in the soul, as if virtue made the wall interposed between soul and God thinner and thinner. That is why virtuous people in every country perceive the Truth, not in a perfect way, as they are dulled by contrasting doctrines or by lethal ignorance, but in a sufficient manner to give pages of moral perfection to the peoples to whom they belong. Have you understood? Are you convinced? »

«Yes. In conclusion, the religion of virtue practised heroically predisposes the soul to the true Religion and to the knowledge of God. »

«Exactly. And now go and rest and may you be blessed. And You, too, Mother, and you sisters and disciples. May you rest in the peace of God. »

291. Marjiam discovers why Jesus  
prays every day at the ninth hour.

30<sup>th</sup> September 1945.

291. 1 <sup>1</sup>The merchant was right. October could not have granted the pilgrims a lovelier day. After the sun had dispelled the haze which veiled the country, as if nature had laid a veil over the sleeping plants at night, the country appears in its solemn stretch of cultivated fields warmed by the sun. The fog seems to have gathered together on remote mountain tops decorating them with a transparent foam, thus softening them even more against the serene sky.

«What are those? Mountains we have to climb? » asks Peter anxiously.

«No. They are the Hauran mountains. We shall be on the plain, on this side of the mountains. Before evening we shall be at Bozrah in Hauran. A beautiful and good town. Much trade» says the merchant encouraging Peter and praising the town, considering, as usual, commercial prosperity as the basis of the beauty of a place.

291. 2 <sup>2</sup>Jesus is all alone, in the rear, as He is wont to do at times when He so wishes. Marjiam turns around several times looking at Him. When he can resist no longer, he leaves Peter and James of Zebedee, he sits on the edge of the road, on a stone which must be a Roman military landmark, and waits. When Jesus is at his level, the boy stands up and without speaking he goes beside Jesus, remaining a little behind Him so as not to annoy Him, and, he watches Him...

And he continues watching until Jesus comes out of His meditation and turns around on hearing the light footstep behind Him and He smiles stretching His hand out to the boy and saying: «Oh! Marjiam! What are you doing here all alone? »

«I was looking at You. I have been looking at You for days. Everybody has eyes but not everybody sees the same things. I have noticed that now and again You want to remain all alone... On the first days I thought You were hurt by something. Then I noticed that You do it always at the same time and that Mother, Who always comforts You when You are sad, does not say anything to You when Your countenance is like that. On the contra-

ry, if She happens to be speaking, She becomes quiet and concentrates on meditation. I notice things, You know? Because I always look at You and Her, in order to do what You do. I asked the apostles what You do, because You certainly do something. They said to me: "He prays". And I asked them: "What does He say? ". No one replied, because they do not know. They have been with You for years, and they do not know. Today I followed You every time I noticed that countenance and I watched You while You were praying. But Your countenance is not always the same. This morning, at dawn, You looked like a bright angel. You looked at things with such bright eyes that I think they dispelled darkness more than the sun did. And You looked at things and people like that. And then You looked at the sky and Your face was the same as when You offer the bread at table. Later, when we were crossing that little village, You remained alone, in the rear, and You seemed to me a father, as You were so anxious to say kind words to the poor people of the village, while passing by. You said to one: "Endure your suffering with patience, because I will soon relieve you and others like you". He was the slave of that bad man who set his dogs on us. Then, while the food was being prepared, You looked at us with eyes full of kind love. You looked like a mother... But Your countenance was now sorrowful... What do You think, Jesus, when You are always like that?... But also in the evening, at times, if I am not asleep, I see that You are very serious. <sup>3</sup>Will You tell me how You pray, why You pray? »

291. 3

«Of course, I will tell you. So that you can pray with Me. The day is given to us by God. The whole day: the bright one and the dark one: day and night. It is a gift to live and have light. Our way of living is a means of sanctification. Is that right? So we must sanctify the moments of the whole day, to persevere in holiness and have the Most High and His bounty present in our hearts, and at the same time, keep the Demon away. Watch the little birds. They sing at sunrise. They bless the light. We must bless the light as well, because it is a gift of God, and we must bless God Who grants it to us and Who is the Light. We must crave for God as from daybreak to put a seal, a note of light on the whole oncoming day, that it may be entirely bright and holy. And we must join the whole creation in praising the Creator. Then' as the hours go by, and going by they make us aware of how much



sorrow and ignorance there is in the world, we must pray again that sorrow may be relieved and ignorance may vanish and God may be known, loved and prayed to by all men, who, if they knew God, would be comforted in their sufferings. And at the sixth hour we must pray out of love for our family, to enjoy the gift of being united to those who love us. That is also a gift of God. And we must pray that our eating, instead of being useful, may not become an occasion of sin. And at sunset we pray remembering that death is the inevitable end waiting for all of us. And we must pray that our end, be it today or later, may take place with our souls in grace. And when the lights are lit, we must pray to thank for the day which is over and to ask for protection and forgiveness, so that we may go to sleep without any fear of a sudden judgement or assaults of the demon. And, finally, we must pray at night - but this applies only to adults - to make amends for the sins of the night, to keep Satan away from weak people, and that culprits may ponder, repent and make good resolutions which will become facts at sunrise. That is how and why a just person prays during the whole day. »

291. 4      4«But You have not told me why You are so absorbed, so serious and imposing at the ninth hour... »

«Because... I say: “Through the Sacrifice of this hour, let Your Kingdom come to the world and may all those who believe in Your Word be redeemed”. Say the same yourself... »

«What sacrifice is it? You said\* that incense is offered in the morning and evening, and the victims at the same hour, every day, on the altar of the Temple. And that the victims for vows and expiation are offered at any hour. There is no indication of a special rite for the ninth hour. »

Jesus stops and takes the boy with both hands, and lifts him holding him in front of Himself, and as if He were saying a psalm, with His face raised, He says: «“And between the sixth and ninth hour, He Who has come as Saviour and Redeemer, He of Whom the prophets speak, will consume His Sacrifice after eating the bitter bread of betrayal and after giving the sweet Bread of Life, after crushing Himself like grapes in a vat and quenching with His whole being the thirst of men and plants, and making for

\* You said, in 197. 5.

Himself a Royal purple with His own blood, and putting on a crown and seizing the sceptre, and taking His throne on the high place, so that Zion and Israel and the world might see it. Lifted up in the purple garment of His numberless wounds, in the dark to give Light, in death to give Life, He will die at the ninth hour and the world will be redeemed". »

<sup>5</sup>Marjiam is frightened and pale and looks at Him with dismayed eyes and trembling lips on the point of bursting into tears. With faltering voice he says: «But You are the Saviour! So will You be dying at that hour? » Tears begin to stream down his cheeks and his little mouth sips them, while he awaits a denial. 291. 5

But Jesus says: «I will, My little disciple. For you, too. » And as the child bursts into convulsive sobs, He presses him to His heart and says: «Are you sorry that I die? »

«Oh! My only joy! I do not want that! I... Let me die in Your place... »

«You are to preach Me all over the world. That is settled. But listen. I will die happily because I know that you love Me. Then I will rise from the dead. Do you remember Jonah? He was more handsome when he came out of the belly of the whale well rested and strong. So will I, and I will come to you at once and I will say to you: "Little Marjiam, your tears quenched My thirst. Your love kept Me company in the Sepulchre. I have now come to say to you: 'Be My priest' " and I will kiss you with the scent of Paradise still on Me. »

«But where will I be? Will I not be with Peter or Mother? »

«I will save you from the evil waves of those days. I will save the most weak and innocent ones. Except one... Marjiam, little apostle, will you help me to pray for that hour? »

«Oh! Yes, I will, Lord! And the others? »

«That is a secret between you and Me. A great secret. Because God loves to be revealed to the little ones... Do not weep any more. Smile at the thought that afterwards I will suffer no more and I will only remember all the love of men, and yours first.

<sup>6</sup>Come. Look how far the others are. Let us run and join them» 291. 6  
and He puts him down and holding him by the hand they start running until they reach the group.

«Master, what have You done? »

«I was explaining the hours of the day to Marjiam. »

«And has the boy wept? He must have been naughty, and You are excusing him out of kindness» says Peter.

«No, Simon. He watched Me praying. You have not done that. He asked Me why. I told him. The boy was moved by My words. Now leave him alone. Go to My Mother, Marjiam. And you all, listen to Me. The lesson will do no harm to you either. »

And Jesus explains once again the usefulness of prayer at the main hours of the day, leaving out the explanation of the ninth hour and concluding: «Union to God is to have Him present every moment to praise and invoke Him. Do so and you will make progress in the life of the spirit. »

Bozrah is now close at hand. Stretched out on the plain it looks a large beautiful town with walls and towers. The evening which is drawing on, tones down the shades of houses and country into a greyish languid lilac, in which all contours become vague, while grunting pigs and bleating sheep in the enclosures outside the walls, break the silence of the country. The silence comes to an end as soon as the caravan goes through the gate entering a labyrinth of narrow streets which disappoint those who from the outside thought the town was beautiful. Voices, smells and... stench stagnate in the twisted lanes and accompany the pilgrims as far as a square, the market square, where the inn is.

They thus arrive at Bozrah.

292. In Bozrah, the envy of the scribes and pharisees.

1<sup>st</sup> October 1945.

292. 1 <sup>1</sup>Bozrah looks very dull in the morning mist, both because of the season and because the town is closed in its narrow streets. It looks dull and dirty. The apostles, who have come back from their shopping at the market, are talking about it. Hotel practice in those days and in such places is so utterly antiquated, that one has to see to one's victuals. Innkeepers obviously do not want to lose any money, so they only cook what customers bring them, and let us hope that they do not steal any of that. Or at the most they buy food for customers or sell them what they have in stock, working as butchers, if necessary, preparing poor lambs to be roasted.

Peter does not like buying from the innkeeper and is now squabbling with him. The man, with a rather roguish face, goes to the point of insulting the apostle, calling him «Galilean», while Peter answers back, pointing to a little pig, which the host has just slaughtered for some guests: «I am a Galilean, and you are a pig, you pagan. I would not stay in your stinking inn for one hour, if it depended on me. You thief and... (and he adds here a very clear epithet... which I leave in my pen). » I realize that between the people of Bozrah and the Galileans there is one of the many regional or religious incompatibilities, of which Israel, or rather Palestine was full.

The host shouts louder: «If you were not with the Nazarene, and I were not better than your filthy Pharisees who hate Him without any good reason, I would wash your face with the blood of the pig, so you would have to get out of here and rush to purify yourself. But I respect Him, Whose power is known. And I tell you, that notwithstanding all your fuss, you are sinners. We are better than you are. We do not lay snares neither do we betray. You, faugh! You are a lot of unfair traitors and rascals and you do not even respect the few holy people among you. »

«Who are you calling traitors? Us? Ah! In God's truth I... » Peter is furious and is about to break upon the man, when his brother and James hold him back, and Simon Zealot intervenes with Matthew.

<sup>2</sup>But Peter's wrath is abated not so much by their intervention as by the voice of Jesus Who appears at one of the doors and says: «You now, Simon, will be quiet. And you, too, man. »

«Lord, this man was the first to insinuate and threatens

«Nazarene, I was offended first. »

I, he. He and I. The two culprits cast blame on each other.

Jesus comes forward seriously and calmly. «You are both wrong. And you, Simon, more than he is. Because you know the doctrine of love, of forgiveness, of meekness, of patience and brotherhood. In order not to be ill-treated as a Galilean, you must make yourself respected as a saint. And you, man, bless the Lord if you feel that you are better than others and endeavour to be worthy of becoming better and better. And above all, do not foul your soul with false charges. My disciples neither betray nor lay snares. »

«Are You sure, Nazarene? Well, then, why did those four come and ask me whether You had come, with whom You were and so many more questions? »

«What? Who are they? Where are they? » The apostles gather around him, forgetting that they are drawing close to a person still wet with the blood of a pig, which struck them with horror shortly before and kept them away.

«Go and mind your own business. You may stay, Misace. »

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<sup>3</sup>The apostles go into the room from which Jesus came out, and only Jesus and the innkeeper are left in the yard, one facing the other. The merchant is a few steps from Jesus and is watching the scene spellbound.

«Tell Me the truth, man. And forgive if blood made one of My disciples furious. Who are those four and what did they say? »

«I do not know exactly who they are. They are certainly scribes and Pharisees from the other side. I do not know who brought them here. I have never seen them. But they are well informed of You. They know from where You have come, where You are going, with whom You are. But they wanted confirmation from me. No. I may be a rascal. But I know my business. I know nobody and I see nothing. I know nothing. With regard to others, of course. As far as I am concerned, I know everything. But why should I tell others, particularly those hypocrites, what I know? Am I a rascal? Yes. If necessary I side also with robbers. In any case, You know... But I could not steal or try to steal Your freedom, honour and life. And those - I am no longer Phara of Ptolemy if what I say is not true - and those are lying in wait for You, to do You harm. And who sent them? Perhaps someone from Perea or the Decapolis? Or someone from Trachonitis or Gaulanitis or Hauran? No. We either do not know You, or if we have heard of You, we respect You as a just man, if we do not believe in You as a saint. So, who sent them? Someone on Your side and perhaps one of Your friends, because they know too many things... »

«It is easy to be informed of my caravan... » says Misace.

«No, merchant. Not of you, but of the others who are with Jesus. I do not know and I do not want to know. I do not see and I do not want to see. But I say to You: if You are guilty, make amends, if You know that You have been betrayed, take the necessary actions

«I am neither guilty, man, nor betrayed. The only trouble is that Israel does not understand Me. <sup>4</sup>But how do you know about Me? » 292. 4

«Through a boy. A mischievous boy who had a bad reputation at Bozrah and Arbela, Here, because he came here to commit his sins, there because he dishonoured his family. Then he became converted and more honest than a just man. And he passed by with Your disciples, a disciple himself, and is waiting for You at Arbela, to honour You with his father and mother. And he tells everybody that You changed his heart through his mother's prayers. If this region ever becomes a holy one, Philip of James will have the merit of having sanctified it. And if there is anyone who believes in You in Bozrah, it is due to him. »

«Where are the scribes now, who came here? »

«I don't know. They went away because I told them that I had no rooms for them. I had them, but I did not want to give hospitality to snakes and thus have them close to the dove. They are certainly in this area. Be careful. »

«Thank you, man, What is your name? »

«Phara. I did my duty. Remember me. »

«Yes. And you must remember God. And forgive My Simon. The great love he has for Me at times blinds him. »

«No harm. I offended him as well... But it hurts to be insulted. You do not insult... »

Jesus sighs... He then says: «Will you help the Nazarene? »

«If I can... »

«I would be glad to speak from this yard... »

«And I will let You speak. When? »

«Between the sixth and ninth hour. »

«Go wherever You want and do not worry. Bozrah will know that You are going to speak. I will see to it. »

«May God reward you for it» and Jesus smiles at him, a smile which is already a reward. He then goes to the room where He was before.

Alexander Misace says: «Master, will You smile at me as well, like that?... I am also going to tell the citizens to come and listen to the Bounty Which is speaking. I know many. Goodbye. »

«May God reward you, too» and Jesus smiles at him.

<sup>5</sup>He enters the room. The women are around Mary, Whose

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face is sorrowful and She gets up at once and goes towards Her Son. She does not speak. Her whole attitude is uncertainty. Jesus smiles at Her and He replies to Her saying to everybody: «Be free by the sixth hour. I will speak here to many people. In the meantime go, everybody, with the exception of Simon Peter, John and Ermasteus. Go and announce Me and give plentiful alms. »

The apostles go away.

Peter slowly approaches Jesus Who is near the women and asks: «Why did You not send me as well? »

«When one is too impulsive, one stays at home. Simon, Simon! When will you learn to be charitable to your neighbour? For the time being it is a burning flame, but only for Me, it is a straight and stiff blade, but only for Me. Be mild, Simon of Jonah. »

«You are right, Master. Your Mother has already reproached me, as She knows how to, but without hurting. But it penetrated right into me. But... reproach me as well, but do not look at me so sadly. »

292. 6 «Be good... 6Syntyche, I would like to speak to you privately. Come up to the terrace. Will you come, as well, Mother... »

And on the rustic terrace, which covers one wing of the building, in the sunshine which warms the air, walking slowly between Mary and the Greek woman, Jesus says: «Tomorrow we will part for a little while. When near Arbela, you women with John of Endor, will go towards the Sea of Galilee and will continue together as far as Nazareth. But as I do not want to send you by yourselves with an almost disabled man, I will get My brothers and Simon Peter to accompany you. I can foresee that there will be some reluctance to separate. But obedience is the virtue of the just. When you go through the country over which Chuza watches in Herod's name, Johanna can find some more people to escort you on the rest of the way. You will then send back Alphaeus' sons and Simon Peter. But the reason why I asked you to come up here is as follows. I want to tell you, Syntyche, that I have decided for you to stay for some time in My Mother's house. She already knows. John of Endor and Marjiam will be staying with you. Stay there willingly, perfecting yourself more and more in Wisdom. I want you to take great care of poor John. I am not saying this to My Mother because She does not need any advice. You can understand John and sympathise with him, and

he can do you much good because he is an experienced master. I will come later. Oh! Quite soon! And we will often meet. I hope to find you wiser and wiser in the Truth. I bless you particularly, Syntyche. This is My farewell from you, for this time. You will find love and hatred in Nazareth as anywhere else. But in My house you will find peace. Always. »

«Nazareth will ignore me and I will ignore Nazareth. I will live nourishing myself with the Truth and the world will be nothing to me, Lord. »

«Very well. You may go, Syntyche. And do not mention it to anybody, for the time being. Mother, You know... I trust these dearest pearls of Mine to You. While we are in peace, among ourselves, Mother, let Your Jesus refresh Himself in Your caresses... »

«How much hatred, Son! »

«How much love! »

«How much bitterness, My dear Jesus! »

«How much sweetness! »

«How much incomprehension, My Son! »

«How much comprehension, Mother! »

«Oh! My darling, My Dear Son! »

«Mother! Joy of God and Mine! Mother! »

They kiss each other and remain together, on the stone bench against the low terrace wall: Jesus embracing His Mother, a loving protector, Mary reclining Her head on Her Son's shoulder, Her hands in His: happy... The world is so distant... buried in the waves of love and faithfulness...

293. The discussions and the miracles at Bozrah  
after the eruption of two pharisees.  
The gift of faith to Alexander Misace.

2<sup>nd</sup> October 1945.

∴... And the world is so close with its waves of hatred, betrayal, sorrow, need, curiosity. And the waves come, like those of the sea in a harbour, to die here, in the yard of the inn at Bozrah, which the respectful host, whose heart is better than his face makes one suppose, has cleaned of excrement and dirt. There is a large

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crowd of people, both local and strangers, but of the same region. And there are people whose conversation leads me to understand that they come from very far, from the lake area or beyond the lake. I catch the names of villages, and parts of sorrowful stories in the conversation of the people awaiting Jesus. Gadara, Hippo, Gerghesa, Gamala, Aphek, Nain, Endor, Jezreel, Magdala and Korazim, are mentioned by many people together with the stories of the reasons why they have come from so far.

«When I heard that He had come through Trans-Jordan, I was discouraged. But some disciples came when I was about to go back to Jezreel and they said to us, who were waiting at Capernaum: “He is certainly beyond Gerasa by now. Waste no time, go to Bozrah or Arbela” and I came with these people... »

«I instead, saw some Pharisees pass through Gadara. They were asking where was Jesus of Nazareth, Whom they knew to be in the area. My wife is ill. I joined them. Then yesterday at Arbela I heard that He was coming to Bozrah first, so I came here. »

«I have come from Gadara for this boy. He was gored by a furious cow. He has been left in that state... » and he shows his son who is utterly shrivelled and unable to move his arms.

«I could not bring mine. I come from Megiddo. What do you think? Will He cure him from here also? » moans a woman whose face is red with weeping.

«No, the sick person must be present. »

«No It is enough to have faith. »

«No. Unless He imposes His hands, one is not cured. His disciples also do that. »

«You have come a long way for nothing, woman. »

The woman begins to weep saying: «Poor me! I left him when he was almost dying, hoping... He will not cure him, and I will not comfort him in his death... »

Another woman consoles her: «Don't believe that, woman. I have come to thank Him because He worked a great miracle for me, without leaving the mountain on which He was speaking. »

«What was the matter with your son? »

«It was not my son. It was my husband who had become mad... » and the two women continue speaking in low voices.

«It is true. Also a mother at Arbela had her son redeemed without the Master seeing him» says a man from Arbela and he

goes on speaking to some people near him...

«Make way, for pity's sake! Make way! » shout some bearers of a litter which is completely covered.

The crowds open out and the litter goes by with its sorrowful load, and stops at the end of the yard, almost behind a rick of straw. Is it a man or a woman lying on the litter? Who knows!

<sup>2</sup>Two Pharisees come in: they are vainglorious and well preserved and more proud than ever. They assault the poor host as if they were mad, shouting: «You cursed liar! Why did you tell us that He was not here? Are you His accomplice? How dare you despise us, the holy ones in Israel, to favour... Whom, after all? How do you know who He is? What is He to you? » 293.2

«What is He? What you are not. But I did not lie. He came a few hours after you had left. He did not hide Himself, neither do I hide Him. But as I am the boss here, I tell you at once: "Get out of my house! ". You do not insult the Nazarene here. Do you understand? And if you do not understand my words, I can speak to you in a more factual way, you jackals! »

The robust innkeeper seems so decided to come to blows that the two Pharisees change tone and become like creeping pups menaced by lash. «But we are looking for Him to revere Him! What are you thinking of? The thought that we might not see Him through your fault made us furious. We know Who He is. The holy and blessed Messiah, to Whom we are not worthy to raise our eyes. We are dust, He is the glory of Israel. Take us to Him. Our souls are yearning to hear His words. »

The host imitates their voices and gestures in a wonderful way: «Oh! Of course! And how could I ever suspect it was not so, since I am so well aware of the fame of Pharisees' justice?! Of course! You have come to worship Him! You are yearning for that! I will go and tell Him! I am going... No, by Satan! You shall not follow me! Neither will you, or I will strike you so much, you poisonous mummies, that I will make one knock into the other. Stay here. You stay here, where I am putting you. And you here. And I am sorry I cannot knock you into the ground up to your necks and use you as pegs to tie the pigs to be slaughtered» and he passes from words to deeds by seizing the leaner Pharisee by his armpits, lifting him up and dropping him so violently on the ground, that if it were not very hard the poor fellow would

have sunk into it up to his ankles. But the ground is hard and the Pharisee remains standing like a puppet, after being tossed about so much. Then the host gets hold of the other man, and although he is rather fat, the innkeeper raises and drops him with the same fury, and as the Pharisee reacts wriggling, he knocks him down and makes him sit: a bundle of flesh and cloth... He then goes away uttering a nasty word which is lost among the moans of the two and the laughter of many more.

He goes through a corridor into a small yard, he climbs a little staircase, reaches a porched gallery and enters a large room in which Jesus and His group are about to finish their meal with the merchant.

«Two of the four Pharisees have come. You had better see what You must do. For the time being I have seen to them. They wanted to come with me. But I did not want them. They are now down in the yard with many sick people and many others. »

«I will come at once. Thank you, Phara, You may *go*. »

293. 3 <sup>3</sup>They all get up. Jesus orders His disciples and the women to stay where they are, with the exception of His Mother, Mary Clopas, Susanna and Salome. But seeing the sad countenance of those who have been excluded, He says: «Go up to the terrace. You will hear Me just the same. »

He goes out with the apostles and the four women. He goes back the same way as the host came and enters the large yard. The crowds crane their necks to see, and those who are sly climb up on to straw stacks, on carts standing on one side, or on the edge of reservoirs...

The two Pharisees go and meet Him ceremoniously. Jesus greets them with His usual greeting as if they were His most faithful friends. But He does not stop to reply to their unctuous questions: «Are you so few? And without disciples? So they have left You? »

Jesus continuing to walk replies seriously: «No one left Me. You have come from Arbela where you met those who precede Me, and in Judaea you met Judas of Simon, Thomas, Nathanael and Philip. »

The stout Pharisee no longer dare follow Him and he stops all of a sudden blushing. The other, who is more barefaced, insists: «That is true. But as we knew that You were with faithful disci-

pies and with some women, we were surprised at seeing You with so few people. We wanted to see Your new conquests and congratulate You» and he gives a false smile.

«My new conquests? There they are! » and Jesus makes a wide semicircular gesture, pointing at the crowds, which are mainly from the region beyond the Jordan, that is from this region where Bozrah is. And without giving the Pharisee time to retort, He begins to speak.

<sup>4</sup>«Those who previously did not inquire about Me, have been <sup>293.</sup> <sup>4</sup> looking for Me\*. And those who previously did not look for Me have found Me. And I said: “Here I am” to a nation which did not invoke My Name. Glory be to the Lord Who speaks the truth through the lips of the prophets! Looking at this crowd which has gathered round Me I really rejoice in the Lord because I see that the promises, which the Eternal Father made to Me when He sent Me to the world, have been fulfilled. Those promises which I Myself, with the Father and the Paraclete, put in the thoughts, on the lips and in the hearts of the prophets, the promises of which I was aware before becoming Flesh and which encouraged Me to be made flesh. And they encourage Me. Yes, they encourage Me against hatred, malice, mistrust and falsehood. Those who previously did not inquire about Me, have been looking for Me. And those who did not look for Me, have found Me. How come, if I was instead rejected by those to whom I had stretched out My hands saying: “Here I am”? And yet they knew Me, whereas these people here did not know Me. So?

Here is the key to the mystery. It is not a fault to ignore, but it is a fault to deny. And too many of those who know Me and to whom I stretched My hands, have denied Me as if I were illegitimate or a thief, a corrupting demon, because their pride has extinguished their faith and they have gone astray along bad, twisted sinful ways, leaving the way which My voice points out to them. Sin is in the heart, on the table, in the beds, in the hearts, in the minds of this people which rejects Me and which, seeing its own filth reflected everywhere, sees it on Me also, and its bitterness piles it up more and more, and it says to Me: “Go away, because You are unclean”.

\* **looking for Me...** a quote by *Isaiah 65. 1*. But the following discussion also refers to subsequent verses and *Isaiah 63*.

So what will He say, Who is coming with His robe dyed red, handsome in His garment, and is walking in the power of His strength? Will He accomplish already what Isaiah says, and will He not be quiet, but will He pour on their laps what they deserve? No, He will not. First He has to tread the winepress alone, abandoned by everybody, to make the wine of Redemption. The wine that exhilarates the just and makes them blessed, the wine that exhilarates the guilty of the great sin, to crush their sacrilegious power into crumbs. Yes, My wine, which is maturing hour by hour in the sun of Eternal Love, will be the ruin and salvation of many, as it is stated in a prophecy not yet written, but deposited in the un-split rock from which the Vine giving the Wine of eternal Life sprang up.

293. 5 <sup>5</sup>Do you understand? No, you doctors of Israel do not understand. But it does not matter whether you understand. The darkness of which Isaiah speaks\* is descending upon you: "They have eyes and do not see. They have ears and do not hear". You shield the Light with your hatred, so that one can say that the Light was repelled by darkness and the world refused to know it.

But exult, you who were in the dark and believed in the Light which was announced to you, and you desired it, sought it and found it. Exult, O faithful people who have come to Salvation crossing mountains, valleys and lakes without considering the burden of the long journey. The same applies to the other spiritual journey which will take you, O people of Bozrah, from the darkness of ignorance to the light of Wisdom.

Exult, O people of Hauran! Exult in the joy of knowledge. Truly it refers also to you and to your neighbouring peoples, when the Prophet sings that your camels and dromedaries will crowd the streets of Naphtali and Zebulun to worship the true God, and to be His servants in the holy mild law, which does not impose anything in order to give divine paternity and eternal happiness but compliance with the ten commandments of the Lord: to love the true God with one's whole being, to love one's neighbour as oneself, to keep the Sabbath without desecrating it, to honour one's parents, not to kill, not to steal, not to commit adultery, not to bear false witness, not to covet the wife or prop-

\* of which Isaiah speaks in: *Isaiah 6, 9-10*

erty of other people. Oh! you are blessed, if coming from farther away you will go beyond those who belonged to the house of the Lord and went out of it, urged by the ten commandments of Satan: dislike of God, love of oneself, corruption of cult, harshness towards parents, murderous desire, attempt to steal other people's holiness, fornication with Satan, false witness, envy of the nature and mission of the Word, and the horrible sin which ferments and matures in the depth of hearts, *of too many hearts*.

<sup>6</sup>Exult, you who are thirsty! Exult, you who are hungry! Exult, you who are afflicted! Were you rejected? Were you proscribed? Were you despised? Were you strangers? Come! Exult! It is no longer so. I give you homes, wealth, paternity and fatherland. I give you Heaven. Follow Me, because I am the Saviour! Follow Me, because I am the Redeemer! Follow Me, because I am the Life! Follow Me, because I am He to Whom the Father refuses no grace! Exult in My love! Exult! And that you may realise that I love you, you who have sought Me in your sorrows, you who have believed in Me even before knowing Me, that this may be a day of true exultation, I pray thus: "Father, Holy Father! On all the wounds, diseases, sores of bodies, on the grief, tortures, remorse of hearts, on all the faithful who are springing up, on those who are vacillating, on those who are strengthening, let health, grace, peace descend! Peace in My Name! Grace in Your Name! Health through Our mutual love! Bless them, O Most Holy Father! Gather and form one fold with these lost children of Yours and Mine! Let them be where I will be, one with You, Holy Father, with You, with Me and with the Most Divine Spirit". »

Jesus, with His arms stretched out crosswise, His palms upwards towards the sky, His face raised, His voice blaring like a silver tuba, is overwhelming in His speech... He remains thus, silent, for some moments. Then His sapphire eyes stop looking at the sky to look at the large yard crowded with people who are sighing deeply moved or are quivering with hope; He joins His hands moving them forward and with a smile which transfigures Him, He utters a final cry: «Exult, you who believe and hope! People of sufferers, rise and love the Lord your God! »

<sup>7</sup>The healing of the diseased is simultaneous and general. Trilling voices and roaring shouts praise the Saviour. A woman squeezes through the crowd, from the far end of the yard, drag-

ging the sheet that had covered her and collapses at the feet of the Lord. This time the terrified crowds utter a different shout: «Mary, the leprous wife of Joachim! » and they run in all directions.

«Be not afraid! She is cured. Contact with her can do you no harm» says Jesus reassuring them. And He says to the prostrated female: «Stand up, woman. You have been rewarded for your great hope and you are forgiven for neglecting prudence towards your brothers. Go back home after the salutary ablutions. »

The woman, who is young and quite beautiful, stands up weeping. Jesus shows her to the crowds who have come back and admire the miracle shouting out of astonishment.

«Her husband, who adored her, had built a shelter for her at the end of his fields and went to its border every evening and gave her some food weeping... »

«She became infected through her pity, taking care of a beggar who did not say that he was a leper. »

«But how did Mary, the good woman, come here? »

«On that stretcher. How did we not notice Joachim's two servants? »

«They ran the risk of being stoned for that. »

«Their mistress! They love her, she is so kind that they love her more than themselves... »

Jesus makes a gesture and they all become silent: «You can see that love and goodness bring miracles and joy. So, be good. Go, woman. No one will do you any harm. Peace be with you and with your households

The woman, followed by the servants who have burnt the stretcher in the middle of the yard, goes out and many people follow her.

293. 8 <sup>8</sup>Jesus dismisses the crowd after listening to some people and He retires to the house followed by those who were with Him.

«What words, Master! »

«How transfigured You were! »

«What a voice! »

«And what miracles! »

«Did you see the Pharisees flee? »

«They went away like two creeping lizards immediately after the first words. »

«The people of Bozrah and of all the villages here have a wonderful recollection of You... »

«Mother, what do You say? »

«I bless You, Son, on their behalf and Mine. »

«Well, Your blessing will follow Me until we meet again. »

«Why do You say that, Lord? Are the women leaving us? »

«Yes, Simon, <sup>9</sup>Tomorrow at daybreak Alexander is leaving for Aera. We will go with him as far as the road to Arbela and we will then leave him. And with regret, believe Me, Alexander, because you have been a kind guide for the Pilgrim. I will always remember you, Alexander. » 293. 9

The old man is moved. He is standing with his arms folded on his chest, in the deep eastern greeting, bending a little in front of Jesus. But when he hears His words, he says: «Above all, remember me when You are in Your Kingdom. »

«Do you wish that, Misace? »

«Yes, my Lord. »

«I also wish something of you. »

«Which, Lord? If I can I will give it to You, even if it were the most precious thing I possess. »

It is the most precious. I want your soul. Come to Me. I told you, at the beginning of our journey, that I hoped to give you a gift at the end of it. My gift is Faith. Do you believe in Me, Misace? »

«I do believe, Lord. »

«Then sanctify your soul so that faith may not be for you not only an inert but also a harmful gift. »

«My soul is old. But I will endeavour to make it new. Lord, I am an old sinner. Absolve me and bless me, because as from this moment I am beginning a new life. I will take Your blessing with me as the best escort in my journey towards Your Kingdom... Shall we ever meet again, Lord? »

«Not on this earth. But you will hear of Me and you will believe even more because I will not leave you without evangelization. Goodbye, Misace. We shall not have much time tomorrow to say goodbye to each other. Let us do so now, before taking our food together for the last time. » He embraces and kisses him.

The apostles and disciples also do so. The women greet him all together.



But Misace kneels down almost in front of Mary saying:  
«May Your light of a pure morning star shine in my mind until my death.»

«Until Life, Alexander. Love My Son and you will love Me, and I will love you.»

293.10

<sup>10</sup>Simon Peter asks: «But shall we be going from Arbela to Aera? I am afraid we may be caught in bad weather. There is so much fog... We have had it for three days at dawn and sunset...»

«That is because we have been coming down here. Do you not think that we have come down a good deal? It is so. Tomorrow you will be climbing towards the mountains of the Decapolis and there will be no more fog there» explains Misace.

«Come down? When? It was a flat road...»

«Yes, but in continuous descent. Oh! so slowly that one does not notice it. But in many miles...»

«How long shall we be staying at Arbela?»

«You, James and Judas, not even one hour» replies Jesus resolutely.

«James and Judas... I... not even one hour? And where am I going if I am not staying with you all?»

«You are going away. As far as the land in the guardianship of Chuza. You will take My Mother and the women there, with the others. They will then proceed by themselves with Johanna's servants and you will come back and join Me at Aera.»

«Oh! Lord! You are angry with me and You are punishing me... How much You grieve me, Lord!»

«Simon, he feels that he is punished who knows that he is guilty. Being guilty must grieve you, not the punishment in itself. But I do not think that it is a punishment to accompany My Mother and the women disciples on their way back home.»

«But would it not be better if You came with us? Never mind Aera and these places and come with us.»

«I promised to go and I will go.»

«Then I will come, too.»

«You will obey without complaining, as My brothers do.»

«And if You meet some Pharisees?»

«You are certainly not the most suitable to convert them. It is just because I will meet some that I want you, James and Judas to go away with the women and with John of Endor and Marjiam

before Arbela. »

«Ah!... I see! All right. »

Jesus turns around to the women and blesses them one by one, giving each of them suitable advice.

The Magdalene on bending to kiss the feet of her Saviour asks: «Shall I see You again before I go back to Bethany? »

«Most certainly, Mary. In the month of Ethanim I will be on the lake. »

294. The rich pouch left by the merchant.  
Farewell by the Mother and the disciples.

3<sup>rd</sup> October 1945.

<sup>1</sup>The reverential respect of Misace is shown the following <sup>294. 1</sup> morning, when he makes the pilgrims go the first miles on the camels after adjusting their loads, turning them into comfortable cradles for the inexperienced riders. And it is quite funny to see dark or fair-haired heads emerging from bundles and cases, with long hair reaching down to the men's ears, or tresses showing through the women's veils. As the camels are moving very fast, the wind now and again blows back the veils and the bright golden hair of Mary Magdalene or the milder fair hair of the Blessed Virgin shines in the sunshine, while the dark or brown-haired heads of Johanna, Syntyche, Martha, Marcella, Susanna and Sarah show indigo or dark bronze reflections, and the grey-haired heads of Eliza, Salome and Mary Clopas seem to be sprayed with silver dust in the clear warm sun. The men are proceeding bravely on the new means of transport and Marjiam is laughing happily.

They realise that the merchant's statement is true, when, turning around, they see Bozrah down in the valley, with its towers and high houses in the labyrinth of the narrow streets. Low hills appear to the north-west. The road to Aera runs at their feet; the caravan stops to let the pilgrims dismount and part. The camels kneel down with remarkable pitching which makes more than one woman scream. I now see that wisely the women had been fastened to the saddles with belts. The women are somewhat stunned with so much rolling, but they are well rested.

Misace dismounts as well; he had taken Marjiam up on his saddle, and while the cameleers resettle the loads in the usual way, he approaches Jesus to bid Him goodbye once again.

«Thank you, Misace. You have saved us a lot of fatigue and time. »

«Yes. We have covered twenty miles in a short time. The camels have long legs, even if they do not amble smoothly. I do hope that the women have not suffered too much because of that. »

All the women reassure him that they are well rested and have not suffered.

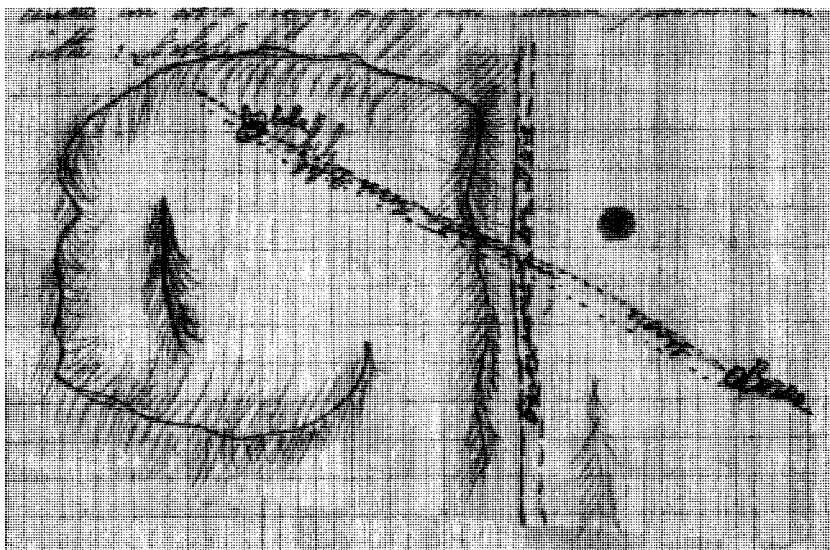
«You are now six miles from Arbela. May Heaven accompany you and make your journey smooth. Goodbye, my Lord. Allow me to kiss Your holy feet. I am happy to have met You, Lord. Remember me. » Misace kisses Jesus' feet, he mounts again and his *cry* makes the camels rise... And the caravan leaves at a gallop on the flat road, in a cloud of dust.

«A good man! I am all bruised, but in compensation, my feet have had a rest. But how much knocking! A north wind storm on the lake is nothing in comparison! Are you laughing? But I did not have the cushions the women had. Long live my boat! It is still the cleanest and safest thing. <sup>2</sup>And now let us pick up our bags and move on. »

They compete with one another in loading themselves. The winners are those who will be staying with Jesus, that is, Matthew, the Zealot, James and John, Ermasteus and Timoneus, who take everything to spare the three who will be going with the women, or rather the four, because there is also John of Endor, whose help must be very relative, owing to the poorly state he is in.

They walk fast for a few miles. When they reach the top of a low hill which acted as a screen to the west, a fertile plain appears, surrounded by a ring of hills, which are higher than the one they met previously, and in the middle of the plain there is a long isolated hill. There is a town in the plain: Arbela\*. They descend and are soon in the plain.

Arbela. The drawing by MV on the front of the page follows. In the transversal line that unites *Bozrah* (to the South East) to *Arbela* (to the North West) the main road *Bozrah-Arbela* can be found, crossing the vertical *Caravan area for Aera*



They proceed for a little while, then Jesus stops saying: «This is where we part. Let us take our food together and then we shall part. This is the cross-road to Gadara. You will take that road. It is the shortest one and before evening you will be in the territory watched over by Chuza. »

There is not much enthusiasm... But they obey.

<sup>3</sup>While taking their food Marjiam says: «Well, it is also the moment to give You this pouch. The merchant gave it to me when I was in the saddle with him. He said to me: "You will give it to Jesus before parting from Him and you will tell Him to love me as He loves you". Here it is. It was heavy here, in my tunic. It seems to be full of stones. »

294 3

«Let us see! Money is heavy! » They are all curious.

Jesus undoes the thin twisted leather strips which fasten the pouch made with gazelle leather, I think, because it looks like chamois leather, and empties its contents on His lap. Some coins roll out. But they are the least. Many small bags of very fine byssus roll out as well: little bundles tied with a thread. Beautiful hues shine through the very light linen tissue and the sun seems to light a tiny fire in each little bundle, as if they were embers under a thin veil of ash.

«What is it? Undo them, Master. »

They are all bending over Jesus Who calmly unties the knot of a little bundle shining with golden reflections: topazes of various sizes, still unrefined, sparkle freely in the sun. Another little bundle: rubies, drops of coagulated blood. Another one: a precious delightful display of green emerald chips. Another one: bits of sky in pure sapphires. Another one: languid amethysts. Another: violet indigo of beryls. Another: wonderful black onyxes... And so on for twelve little bundles. In the last one, the heaviest, a golden sparkling of chrysolites, there is a small parchment: «For Your Rational of true Pontiff and King».

Jesus' lap is a little meadow strewn with bright stripped petals... The apostles plunge their hands into that light which has become multi-coloured matter. They are bewildered...

Peter whispers: «If Judas of Kerioth were here!... »

294. 4 «Be quiet! It is better that he is not» says Thaddeus resolutely.

4 Jesus asks for a piece of cloth to make one parcel only of the stones and He is pensive while the others continue commenting.

The apostles say: «That man was rich indeed! » and Peter makes everybody laugh exclaiming: «We have been trotting on a throne of gems. I did not think I was sitting on such splendour. I wish it had been softer! What will You do with it now? »

«I will sell it for the poor. » He looks up at the women smiling.

«And where will You find a jeweller here, who can buy those things? »

«Where? Here. Johanna, Martha, Mary, will you buy My treasure? »

The three women, without even consulting with one another, say: «Yes» impulsively. But Martha adds: «We have little money here. »

«You will let Me have it at Magdala at the new moon. »

«How much do You want, Lord? »

«For Myself, nothing. For My poor, very much. »

«Give it to me. You will have very much» says the Magdalene, and she takes the purse and conceals it in her breast.

Jesus keeps only the money. He stands up. He kisses His Mother, His aunt His cousins and then he kisses Peter, John of Endor and Marjiam. He blesses the women and dismisses them. And they go away, looking back now and again, until they disappear around a bend.

Jesus goes with the rest towards Arbela. It is only a small group now, only eight people in all. They walk fast without speaking towards the town which is becoming closer and closer.

[...]

295. The discussions and the miracles in Arbela:  
already evangelised by Philip of Jacob.

4<sup>th</sup> October 1945.

<sup>1</sup>The very first person they approach when inquiring about 295. 1 Philip of Jacob makes them realise how much work the young disciple has done. The person they asked is a little old wrinkled woman, who is carrying with difficulty a jug full of water. Gazing with her little deep set eyes at the handsome face of John who asked her the question, after greeting her «Peace be with you» so gently as to enrapture her, she says: «Are you the Messiah? »

«No. But I am His disciple. He is coming, He is over there. »

The old woman puts her jug on the ground and hobbles in the direction pointed out to her and kneels down in front of Jesus.

John, who has remained with Simon near the pitcher which has turned over spilling half of its contents, says to his companion smiling: «We had better pick up this jug and join the old woman. » He does so while his companion adds: «We can use it to drink. We are all thirsty. »

When they reach the old woman - who not knowing what to say exactly continues to repeat: «Lovely, holy Son of the most holy Mother» still on her knees and drinking in with her eyes the figure of Jesus, Who smiles at her repeating in His turn: «Stand up, mother» - when they reach her, John says to her: «We have taken your jug. But it overturned and there is little water left in it. If you give it to us, we will drink this water and then we will fill the jug for you. ».

«Yes, my sons, of course. And I am sorry that I have but water for you. I wish I had milk in my breast as when I fed my Judas, in order to give you the sweetest thing there is on the earth: the milk of a mother. I would like to have wine, choice wide, to strengthen you. But Marianne of Elisha is old and poor... »

«Your water is wine and milk to Me, mother, because it is given with love» replies Jesus and He is the first to drink out of the jug handed to Him by John. Then the others drink.

The old woman, who has at last stood up, looks at them as if she were looking at Paradise and when, after they have all drunk, she sees that they are about to throw away the water left in the jug, to fill it at the fountain gurgling at the end of the street, she rushes forward, defending her jug and saying: «No, don't. This water is more holy than lustral water, as He drank out of it. I will keep it carefully so that I may be cleansed with it when I die. » And she seizes her jug saying: «I will take it home. I have some more and I will fill them. <sup>2</sup>But come first, O Holy One, that I may show You Philip's house» and she trots along swiftly, all bent, with a smile on her wrinkled face and her little eyes shining with joy. She trots along holding the hem of Jesus' mantle in her hand, as if she were afraid He might run away from her, and she defends her jug from the insistent apostles, who do not want her to carry that weight. She trots along blissfully, looking at the street and the houses in Arbela, the former deserted, the latter already closed as it is getting dark, and she looks like a conqueror, happy in her victory.

Finally, they pass from the side street into a more central one, where there are people hastening home - and the people watch her spellbound, pointing at her and questioning her - and, after waiting to have a circle of people around her, she shouts: «I have here Philip's Messiah. Run and tell everybody and first of all Jacob's household. So that they may be ready to honour the Saint. » She shouts at the top of her voice. She can make herself obeyed. It is the moment of authority of a poor, lonely, unknown little old woman of the people. And she sees the whole town deeply moved by her command.

Jesus, so much taller than she is, smiles at her when she looks at Him now and again and He lays His hand on her venerable head, in a filial caress which overwhelms her with happiness.

<sup>3</sup>Jacob's house is in a central street. It is open and lit up and through the door one can see a long hall in which there are people holding lights, and they rush out joyfully as soon as Jesus appears in the street: the young disciple Philip, his father and mother, relatives, servants and friends.

Jesus stops and replies seriously to Jacob's deep bow, He then bends over Philip's mother who has knelt down to revere Him, and He makes her stand up blessing her and saying: «Be always happy because of your faith. » He then greets the disciple who has come with the other man who was with him, and whom Jesus greets as well.

Old Marianne, however, does not leave the hem of the mantle or her place beside Jesus until they are about to enter the entrance hall. She then whispers: «Bless me that I may be happy! You will now stay here... I am going to my poor house and... and this beautiful thing is all over! » How much regret there is in her ageing voice!

Jacob, to whom his wife has spoken in a low voice, says: «No, Marianne of Elisha. Stay in my house as if you were a disciple. Stay as long as the Master will be with us and be thus happy. »

«May God bless you, man. You know what charity is. »

«Master... she brought You to my house. You have brought me grace and love. I am only giving back, and in a poor way, what I have received from You and from her so abundantly. Come in, and let my house welcome You. »

The crowds outside in the street see them go in and shout: «And what about us? We want to hear His word. »

Jesus turns around: «It is night and you are tired. Prepare your souls through a holy rest and tomorrow you will hear the Voice of God. For the time being, peace and blessings be with you. » And the front door closes on the happiness of this house.

James of Zebedee watches the Lord during the purification after the journey: «Perhaps it was better to speak at once and depart at dawn. There are some Pharisees in town. Philip told me. They will vex You. »

«Those who might have been vexed by them are far away. The trouble they may cause Me is of no importance. There is love that will cancel it... »

295.4 <sup>4</sup>The following morning... Jesus goes out among the joyful relatives of Philip and the apostles. The old woman follows them. He meets the people of Arbela who are patiently waiting for Him. He goes to the main square where He begins to speak.

«We read in the eighth chapter of the second book of Ezra, what I will now repeat to you: "When the seventh month came... »



(Jesus says to me: "Do not write anything else. I will repeat the words of the book\* in full").

When does a person return to his country? When it goes back to the land of its ancestors. I have come to take you back to the land of your Father, to the Kingdom of the Father. And I can do that because I was sent for that. So I have come to take You to the Kingdom of God and it is therefore fair to compare you to those who repatriated with Zorobabel to Jerusalem, the city of the Lord, and it is fair to do with you what Ezra the scribe did with the people gathered once again within the sacred walls. Because it is incomparable foolishness to rebuild a town dedicating it to the Lord, without restoring souls, which are like as many little towns of God.

How can these little spiritual towns, dilapidated by so many events, be restored? Which materials should be used to make them solid, beautiful, lasting? The materials are in the precepts of the Lord: the ten commandments, of which you are aware, because Philip, a son of your town and My disciple, has reminded you of them. The two most holy of the holy precepts are: "Love God with your whole being. Love your neighbour as yourself". They sum up the Law. And I preach them because through them you are certain to conquer the Kingdom of God. In love you find the strength of persevering in holiness or becoming holy, the strength of forgiveness, the strength of heroism in virtue. Everything can be found in love. Fear does not save: the fear of the judgement of God, the fear of human sanctions, the fear of diseases. Fear is never constructive. It shakes, shatters, throws into disorder, it crushes. Fear leads to despair, it leads only to crafty concealment of evil-doing, it makes one fear when fear is useless, because evil is already within us.

Who thinks of behaving wisely, for the sake of his body, when one is healthy? No one. But as soon as the first shiver of fever runs through our veins or a stain makes us think of unclean diseases, then fear becomes an added torture to the disease and it becomes a disintegrating strength in a body already broken down by illness. Love instead is constructive. It builds, solidifies, unites and preserves. Love brings hope in God. Love removes from evil-do-

\* the words of the book, are the ones in *Nehemiah* & according to the Neo-Vulgate.

ing. Love makes man deal wisely with his own person, which is not the centre of the universe, as egotists believe and make it, the false lovers of themselves, because they love one part only: the less noble one, to the detriment of the immortal and holy part; but which it is our duty to preserve healthy, as long as God so wishes, in order to be useful to ourselves, to our relatives, to our town and to the whole country.

<sup>5</sup>Diseases inevitably come. It is not true that every disease is the consequence of vice or punishment. There are holy diseases sent by the Lord to His just people, so that in the world, which considers itself the end and the means of pleasure, there may be holy people who are like war hostages for the safety of others, and they pay personally expiating through their suffering, the portion of guilt which the world daily accumulates and which would end by crashing on Mankind, burying it under its malediction.

295. 5

Do you remember\* old Moses praying while Joshua was fighting in the name of the Lord? You must consider that those who suffer holily, give the greatest battle to the fiercest warrior there is in the world, concealed under the appearances of men and peoples, to Satan, the Torturer, the Origin of all evils, and they fight on behalf of all men. But how much difference there is between such holy diseases sent by God, and those caused by vice through a sinful love of senses! The former are a proof of God's merciful will; the latter are a proof of diabolical corruption. It is therefore necessary to love, in order to be holy, because love creates, preserves and sanctifies.

<sup>6</sup>Like Nehemiah and Ezra, I also, announcing this truth, say to you: "This day is sacred to the Lord our God. Do not be mournful, do not weep". Because all mourning ends, when one lives the day of the Lord. The harshness of death comes to an end, because the loss of a son, of a husband, a father, mother or brother becomes a temporary and limited separation. Temporary because it ends with our death. Limited because it is confined to the body and sense. Our soul does not lose anything when a relative of ours dies. Its freedom is limited in one party only, in us, as survivors with our souls still enclosed in the flesh, while the other

295. 6

\* remember, as narrated in the *Exodus 17, 8-16*

party, the one who has passed to second life, enjoys the liberty and power to watch over us and obtain for us much more than when it loved us from the prison of its body.

Like Nehemiah and Ezra I say to you: "Go, eat the fat meat, drink the sweet wine and send a portion to the man who has none, for this day is sacred to the Lord, and therefore nobody must suffer during it. Do not be sad, because the joy of the Lord Who is among you, is the stronghold of those who receive the grace of the Most High Lord within their walls and in their hearts".

You can no longer erect Tabernacles. Their time is over. But erect spiritual ones in your hearts. Climb the mountain, that is, rise towards Perfection. Gather branches of olive, myrtle, palm, oak, hyssop and of every beautiful tree. Branches of the virtues of peace, purity, heroism, mortification, strength, hope, justice, of all virtues. Adorn your souls celebrating the feast of the Lord. His Tabernacles are awaiting you. His. And they are beautiful, holy, eternal, open to all those who live in the Lord. And together with Me, decide today to do penance for the past and to begin a new life.

Do not be afraid of the Lord. He calls you because He loves you. Be not afraid. You are His children like everybody in Israel. Also for you He created the Universe and Heaven, He sent Abraham and Moses, He opened the sea, He created the guiding cloud, He descended from Heaven to give the Law, and He opened the clouds that they might rain manna, and He made the rocks fruitful that they might give water. And now for you also He is sending the living Bread of Heaven to satisfy your hunger and the true Vine and the Fountain of eternal Life to quench your thirst. And through My lips He says to you: "Enter and possess the Land over which I have raised My hand to give it to you". My spiritual Land: the Kingdom of Heaven. »

295.7 <sup>7</sup>The crowds exchange enthusiastic words... Then it is the turn of sick people. There are so many. Jesus has them lined up in two rows, and while this is being done, He asks Philip of Arbela: «Why did you not cure them? »

«That they might have what I had: to be cured by You. »

Jesus passes blessing the sick people one by one and the usual prodigy is repeated: the blind see, the deaf hear, the dumb speak, cripples stand straight, fever and weakness cease.

<sup>8</sup>The healing is over. At the end, after the last sick person, there are the two Pharisees who went to Bozrah together with two more. «Peace to You, Master. Are You not saying anything to us? »

«I spoke to everybody. »

«But we do not need those words. We are the saints of Israel. »

«To you, who are masters, I say: comment upon the subsequent chapter, the ninth of the second book of Ezra\*, remembering how many times so far God has had mercy on you, and repeat the end of the chapter, as if it were a prayer, beating your chests. »

«Quite right, Master, quite right. And do Your disciples do it? »

«They do. It is the first thing I exact of them. »

«All of them? Also the murderers who are in Your group? »

«Does blood smell bad to you? »

«It is a voice crying to Heaven. »

«Then do not imitate those who shed it. »

«We are not assassins! »

Jesus gazes at them piercing them with His eyes. They dare not add one word for some time. But they follow the group which goes back to the house of Philip, who feels bound to invite them to enter and join in the banquet.

«With great pleasure! We will stay longer with the Master» they say bowing very low.

But once in the house they behave like bloodhounds... They watch, they peek, they ask the servants astute questions, and they approach even the old woman, who seems to be attracted by Jesus as iron is by a magnet. But she replies promptly: «Yesterday I saw these only. You must be dreaming. I brought them here, and there was only one John: that fair-haired boy who is as good as an angel. »

They fulminate against the old woman and turn elsewhere. But a servant, without replying to them directly, bends over Jesus, Who is sitting speaking to the landlord, and asks Him: «Where is John of Endor? This gentleman is looking for him. »

The Pharisee casts a withering glance at the servant and stig-

\* the ninth [chapter] of the second book of Ezra, corresponds to *Nehemiah 9*

matises him as a «fool». But Jesus is now aware of their intentions and it is necessary to remedy in the best possible manner. The Pharisee says: «It was to congratulate You, Master, on this wonder of Your doctrine and honour You through the converts

«John is far away for good and he will be farther and farther away. »

«Has he relapsed into sin? »

«No. He is ascending towards Heaven. Imitate him, and you will find him in the next life. »

The four do not know what to say and they wisely change the subject. The servants announce that the meal is ready and they all go into the dining-room.

[... ].