

Maria Valtorta



THE GOSPEL  
AS REVEALED  
TO ME

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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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Maria Valtorta

THE GOSPEL  
AS REVEALED  
TO ME

VOLUME SEVEN  
Chapters 433-500

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*(the "third year" continues in the eight volume)*

# The third year of public Life of Jesus.

(continuation)

433. Arrival in Nazareth. Praise  
to the Virgin. The healing of Aurea.

9<sup>th</sup> May 1946.

'Coming from the Sephoris countryside one enters Nazareth <sup>433. 1</sup> on the north-eastern side, that is, on the highest and rockiest side. The entire amphitheatre, on the terraces of which Nazareth is spread, appears when one reaches the top of the hill, which is the last one coming from Sephoris and which slopes down rather steeply through ravines towards the town. If I remember correctly, because a long time has passed and many mountain places are alike, the spot where Jesus is, is the precise one\* where his fellow-citizens tried to stone Him, but He stopped them with his power by walking through them.

Jesus stops to look at His dear yet hostile town, and a smile of happiness brightens His face. What a blessing, ignored and undeserved by the Nazarenes, is His divine smile, which certainly pours and spreads graces on the land which received Him when He was a child, which saw Him grow up and where His Mother was born and She became the Spouse of God and the Mother of God! Also the two cousins look at their town with evident joy, but Thaddeus' happiness is tempered by austere reserved gravity, whereas James' is more open and kind, more like Jesus'.

Although it is not his town, Thomas' face shines brightly with joy, and pointing at Mary's little house, from the stone oven of which rings of smoke are rising, he says: «The Mother is at home and She is baking bread... » and he utters these simple words with such fervent love, that he seems to be speaking of his mother with all the affection of a son.

The Zealot, more calm because of his age and upbringing,

\* the precise one is that of the text 106. 4. At the end of the period, MV adds to the original manuscript: (*Luke chapter IV*).

smiles saying: «Yes, and Her peace is already arriving in our hearts.»

«Let us go down quickly» says James. «We will go down this path and it is unlikely that any of the Nazarenes will see us arrive. They would delay us...»

«But you will be going away from your home... Your mother also is anxious to see you.»

«Oh! You may be sure, Simon, that our mother is with Mary. She is almost always there... And she will be there because they are baking and because of the sick girl.»

«Yes, let us go this way. We will pass at the rear of Alphaeus' kitchen garden and we will arrive at the hedge of ours» says Jesus.

They go down quickly along a path which at first is very steep, then it becomes more gentle near the town. They go through olive-groves and small fields bare of crops. They pass near the first kitchen gardens in town. And the tall leafy hedges around the gardens and over which hang branches of trees laden with fruit, or the little dry-stone walls all covered with branches hanging outside from orchards, prevent their passing from being noticed by housewives moving about the gardens, or doing the washing or spreading it on the patches of grass near the houses...

433. 2 <sup>2</sup>The hedge bordering one side of Mary's kitchen garden, which is a tangle of thorns in winter, then thick with leaves in summer, after the hawthorn blooms in spring or the little fruits become ruby-colour in autumn, is now adorned with a luxuriant jasmine and with the undulating calyces of a flower, the name of which I do not know, and which from the inside of the garden throw their branches onto the hedge making it thicker and more beautiful. A blackcap is singing in the thick of the hedge and the cooing of doves is heard from inside the garden.

«The fence also is protected and entirely covered with branches in bloom» says James who has run ahead to look at the rustic gate at the rear of the garden, the one which, after not being used\* for years, was opened to let Peter's cart go in and out for John and Syntyche.

«We will go along the lane and will knock at the door. My

---

\* being used, in 313. 6.

Mother would suffer seeing this protection destroyed» replies Jesus.

«Her enclosed garden\*! » exclaims Judas of Alphaeus.

«Yes. And She is its rose» says Thomas.

«As a lily among the thistles» says James.

«The sealed fountain» says the Zealot.

«Better: the well of living water which gushing impetuously from the beautiful mountain gives the Water of Life to the Earth and spurts towards Heaven with its scented beauty» says Jesus.

«She will soon be delighted to see You» says James.

<sup>3</sup>«Tell me, Brother, something which I have been longing to know for some time. How do You see Mary? As a Mother or as a subject? She is Your Mother, but She is a woman and You are God... » asks Thaddeus. 433. 3

«As sister and as bride, as delight and rest of God and as comfort of Man. I see everything and I have everything in Mary, as God and as Man. She Who was the Delight of the Second Person of the Trinity in Heaven, Delight of the Word as well as of the Father and of the Spirit, is the Delight of the God Incarnate, and She will be the Delight of the Man God Glorified. »

«What a mystery! So God has deprived Himself twice of His delights? In You and in Mary and He gave You to the Earth... » meditates the Zealot.

«What love! You ought to say. Love induced the Trinity to give Mary and Jesus to the Earth» says James.

«And, not with regards to You, Who are God, but with regards to His Rose, was He not afraid to entrust Her to men, who are all unworthy of protecting Her? » asks Thomas.

«Thomas, the Song of Songs replies to you: “The Peaceful One had a vineyard and he entrusted it to vine-dressers who, being profaners instigated by the Desecrator, would have paid large amounts to have it, that is, all allurements to seduce it, but the beautiful Vineyard of the Lord looked after itself by itself, and would not give its fruits to anybody but to the Lord and it unbosomed itself to Him generating the priceless Treasure: the Saviour”. »

<sup>4</sup>They have now arrived at the door of the house, While Je-

433. 4

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\* enclosed garden and the other images that, in this chapter, are applied to Holy Mary are taken from: *The Song of Songs* 2, 2; 4, 9-12. 15; 5, 1-2; 8, 11-12.

sus knocks, Judas of Alphaeus comments: «It would be the case to say: “Open, my sister, my spouse, my beloved immaculate dove”... »

But when the door opens, and the sweet face of the Virgin appears, Jesus utters the sweetest word, stretching out His arms to receive Her: «Mother! »

«Oh! Son! Blessed! Come in and may peace and love be with You»

«And with My Mother and the house and those in it» says Jesus entering, followed by the others.

«Your mother is in there, and the two women disciples are busy baking and doing the washing... » explains Mary after exchanging greetings with the apostles and Her nephews, who discreetly withdraw leaving Mother and Son alone.

«Here I am with You, Mother. We will be together for some time... How sweet it is to come back... the house and You above all, Mother, after so much travelling amongst men... »

«And men become more and more acquainted with You and through such knowledge of You they become divided into two groups: those who love You... and those who hate You... And the latter group is the bigger... »

«Evil perceives that it is about to be defeated and it is furious... and makes people furious... <sup>5</sup>How is the girl? »

«A little better... But she was on the point of death... And her words, now that she is not delirious correspond, although they are more reserved, to those which she spoke while raving. It would be a lie to say that we have not reconstructed her history... Poor girl!... »

«Yes, but Providence watched over her. »

«And now?... »

«Now I do not know. Aurea does not belong to Me as a creature. Her soul is Mine, her body belongs to Valeria. For the time being, she will stay here, to forget... »

«Myrtha would like to have her. »

«I know... But I am not entitled to do anything without permission of the Roman lady. I do not even know whether they purchased her with money or simply used the weapon of promises... When the Roman lady will claim her... »

«I will go in Your place, Son. It is not right that You should

go... Let Your Mother see to it... We women... the least beings for Israel, are not noticed so much if we go and speak to Gentiles. And Your Mother is so unknown to the world! No one will notice the Jewess of the common people going through the streets in Tiberias, wrapped in her mantle, and knocking at the door of a Roman lady... »

«You could go to Johanna's... and speak to the lady there... »

«I will do that, Son. May Your heart be relieved, Jesus!... You are so distressed... I understand... and I would like to do so much for You... »

«And You do so much, Mother. Thank You for everything You do... »

«Oh! I am a very poor help, Son! Because I am not successful in making You loved, in giving You... joy... as long as You are allowed to enjoy some... So what am I? A poor disciple, indeed... »

«Mother! Mother! Do not say that! My strength comes to Me through Your prayers. My mind rests thinking of You, and, see, My heart finds comfort thus, with My head against Your blessed heart... Mother of Mine!... » Jesus has drawn His Mother to Himself, as She was standing in front of Him, while He was sitting on the chest against the wall, and He leans His forehead on the breast of Mary, Who gently caresses His hair... A pause of love.

<sup>6</sup>Jesus then raises His head, stands up and says: «Let us go to the others and to the girl» and He goes out with His Mother into the kitchen garden.

433. 6

The three women disciples, standing at the door of the room where the sick girl is, are talking to the apostles. But when they see Jesus, they become quiet and kneel down.

«Peace to you, Mary of Alphaeus, and to you, Myrtha and Naomi. Is the girl sleeping? »

«Yes, she is. She is still feverish and her temperature stupefies and consumes her. If it persists like this, she will die. Her frail body will not resist the disease and her mind is upset by remembrances» says Mary of Alphaeus.

«Yes... and she does not react because she says that she wants to die, so that she may not see any more Romans... » confirms Myrtha.

«And that grieves us because we are already fond of her... » says Naomi.

«Be not afraid! » replies Jesus going as far as the threshold of the little room and lifting the curtain...

On the little bed against the wall, facing the door, appears the little thin face of the girl, bright red at the cheek-bones, while all the rest is snow-white, buried in the mass of her long golden hair. She is sleeping restlessly, muttering incomprehensible words through her teeth and with her hand abandoned on the blankets she now and then makes a gesture as if she were rejecting something.

Jesus does not enter. He looks at her with pitiful eyes. He then calls her in a loud voice: «Aurea! Come! Your Saviour is here. »

All of a sudden the girl sits up in her bed, she sees Jesus and with a cry she gets up and runs barefooted in her long loose tunic towards Him, and kneels at His feet saying: «Lord! Now You have really freed me! »

«She is cured. See? She could not die because she must become acquainted with the Truth first. » And to the girl who is kissing His feet He says: «Rise and live in peace» and He lays His hand on the no longer feverish head.

Aurea, in her long linen dress, perhaps one of the Virgin's, so long as to form a train, her loose hair falling over her slender figure like a mantle, her grey-blue eyes still bright because of the temperature which has just dropped and of the joy which has just filled her, looks like an angel.

«Goodbye! We are withdrawing into the workshop while you look after the girl and the house... » says the Master and followed by His four apostles he goes into Joseph's old workshop and they sit on the benches no longer used...

#### 434. Manual works in Nazareth and the parable of the painted wood.

10<sup>th</sup> May 1946.

434. 1 <sup>1</sup>The rustic workshop fireplace has been lit after not being used for such a long time, and the smell of glue boiling in a can mingles with the characteristic smell of sawdust and fresh shavings, which are just piling up at the foot of a bench.

Jesus is working with zest to transform some timber, with the

help of saw and plane, into legs for chairs, drawers and so forth. Some pieces of furniture, the modest furniture of the little house in Nazareth, have been taken into the workshop to be repaired: the kneading trough, one of Mary's looms, two stools, a garden ladder, a little chest and the door of the stone oven, the lower part of which I think has been perhaps gnawed away by mice. Jesus is working to repair what usage and old age have consumed.

Thomas, instead, with a complete outfit of a goldsmith's tiny tools, which he must have taken out of his sack lying on his little bed placed against the wall like the Zealot's, is working with a light hand at some thin silver plates. And the tapping of his little hammer on the burin, giving a silvery sound, mingles with the loud noise of the working tools used by Jesus.

Now and again they exchange a few words, and Thomas is so happy to be there with the Master and at his work of goldsmith - and in fact he says so - that in the intervals of conversation he whistles softly. Now and again he raises his eyes and thinks, and absorbed in thought he stares at the smoky wall of the large room.

Jesus notices that and asks: «Are you drawing your inspiration from that black wall, Tom? It is true that it was the long work of a just man that made it so, but I do not think that it can inspire a goldsmith... »

«No, Master, a goldsmith in fact cannot reproduce with rich metals the poetry of holy poverty... But with his metal he can imitate the beautiful things in nature and thus ennoble gold and silver reproducing with them the flowers and leaves which are in creation. I think of those flowers and leaves, and to remember their details precisely I become fixed thus, with my eyes on the wall, but in actual fact I see the woods and meadows of our Fatherland, the light leaves, the flowers resembling chalices or stars, the bearing of stalks and leafy branches... »

«You are a poet, then, a poet singing in metal what another person sings with ink on parchment. »

«Yes. A goldsmith in fact is a poet who writes on metal the beautiful things of nature. But our work, artistic and beautiful, is not worth Yours, which is humble and holy, because ours serves the vanity of rich people, whereas Yours serves the sanctity of the house and the usefulness of the poor. »



«What you say is right, Thomas» says the Zealot, who has appeared at the door opening on to the kitchen garden, with his tunic tucked up, his sleeves rolled up, with an old apron in front of him and a tin of paint in his hand.

Jesus and Thomas turn around looking at him and they smile. And Thomas replies: «Yes, what I say is right. But I want that once in a while the work of a goldsmith may serve to adorn a... good holy thing... »

«What? »

«It's a secret of mine. I have had this idea for a long time, and since we were at Ramah I have been carrying a goldsmith's little outfit, waiting for this moment... <sup>2</sup>And what about your work, Simon? »

«Oh! I am not a perfect craftsman like you, Tom. It is the first time that I have held a brush in my hand and what I paint is uneven, notwithstanding all my goodwill. That is why I began from the... most simple things... to acquire skill... and I can assure you that my inexperience made the girl laugh heartily. But I am glad! She is reviving hourly to a serene life, and that is what is required to cancel her past and renew her for You, Master. »

«H'm! perhaps Valeria will not give her up... » says Thomas.

«Oh! what do you think it matters to Valeria to have her or not? If she had kept her, it would have been only to prevent her from being left forlorn in the world. It would certainly be a good thing if the girl were safe forever and in everything, above all in her spirit. Is that right, Master? »

«That is true. We must pray hard for that. The girl is really simple and good, and if she were brought up in the Truth, she could yield much. She is instinctively inclined to the Light. »

«I quite believe it! She has no consolation on the Earth... and she seeks it in Heaven, poor soul! I think that when Your Gospel is announced all over the world, the first and the most numerous to receive it will be the slaves, those who have no human comfort and who will take shelter in Your promises to have some... And I say that if the honour of preaching You falls to me, I will love those poor wretches with a special love... »

«And you will do the right thing, Tom» says Jesus.

«Yes. But how will you approach them? »

«Oh! I will be a goldsmith for the ladies and... a master of

their slaves. A goldsmith calls at houses or the servants of rich people come to his... and I will work... Two metals: those of the Earth for the rich... those of the spirit for slaves. »

«May God bless you for your good intentions, Tom. Persevere in them... »

«Yes, Master, I will. »

3«Well, now that You have replied to Thomas, please come with me, Master... to see my work and to tell me what I must paint now. Simple things again, because I am a very incapable apprentice. » 434. 3

«Let us go, Simon... » and Jesus lays down His tools and goes out with the Zealot...

They come back after some time and Jesus points at the garden ladder. «Paint that. Paint makes wood impenetrable and preserves it longer, in addition to making it more beautiful. It is like the defence and ornament of virtues on a human heart. It may be rough, coarse... But as soon as virtues clothe it, it becomes beautiful and pleasant. See, to have a beautiful paint which serves its purpose, one must take care of many things. First of all: you have to choose carefully what is necessary to make it. That is, a clean can free from mould and residues of old paints, good oils and good colours, and then you have to mix them patiently, working on them to make a liquid which is neither too thick nor too thin. And you must not tire working until the least clot is dissolved. When that is done, you have to take a brush the bristles of which do not come off, and they must be neither too hard nor too soft; the brush is to be cleaned of any previous paint, and before applying the paint, you have to remove from the wood all roughness, the peelings of old paints, dirt, everything, and then neatly, with a steady hand and much patience, you spread the paint, working in the same direction all the time. Because on the same board you meet different resistances. On knots, for instance, the paints remains smoother, that is true, but it does not cover them well, as if the wood rejected it. Vice versa, the paint sticks well on the soft parts of the wood, but the soft parts are generally not very smooth and thus blisters or stripes form... One then must remedy the defect by spreading the paint with a steady hand. Then in old pieces of furniture there are new parts, like this rung, for instance. And in order not to

show that the poor ladder has been botched, but is very old, one must get the new rung and the old ones to be alike... There you are, like that! » Jesus bent at the foot of the ladder is working and speaking at the same time...

434. 4     4Thomas, who has left his burins to come near Jesus and see, asks: «Why did You begin from the bottom and not from the top? Was it not better the other way round? »

«It would appear to be better, but is not. Because the lower part is more worn out and will wear out more because it rests on the ground. So you must paint it several times. A first coat, a second and a third one if necessary... and not to waste time waiting for the lower part to dry and thus be ready for a new coat, you paint the top and then the central parts of the ladder. »

«But in doing so, one might stain one's clothes and spoil what was painted previously. »

«If you are careful you do not stain your clothes and you do not spoil anything. See? This is how you do it. You gather your clothes and stand apart. Not out of disgust for the paint, but not to spoil the paint which, being fresh, is delicate» and Jesus with His arms raised up paints the top of the ladder.

And He continues to speak:

«And you do the same with souls. At the beginning I told you that paint is like the ornament of virtues on human hearts. It adorns and protects wood from wood-worm, from rain, from the sun. Woe to the landlord who does not take care of painted fittings and allows them to deteriorate! When one sees that the wood is losing its paint, one must not waste time, but fresh paint is to be put on. Paints must be refreshed... Also virtues acquired in a first fit of enthusiasm towards justice may grow feeble or fade away completely if the landlord does not watch, and body and soul, laid bare, at the mercy of inclement weather and of parasites, that is, of passions and dissipations, can be attacked and lose the garment which adorns them, and end by being... good only for the fire. Therefore, with regards both to ourselves and to those whom we love as our disciples, when we notice that the virtues which serve to defend our egos are being shattered or are fading away, we must provide at once with diligent patient work until the end of our lives, so that we may go to sleep, when we die, with body and soul worthy of a glorious resurrection. And in or-

der to ensure that your virtues are true and good, you must begin with pure courageous intentions, which remove all rubbish and mould, and you must work not to leave any imperfection in the building up of virtues, and then take an attitude, which is neither too hard nor too lenient, because both intolerance and excessive indulgence are harmful. And the brush: your will. Let it be free from pre-existent human inclinations which might veer the spiritual hue with material disfigurements, and prepare yourselves or other people, with suitable operations, which are laborious, it is true, but necessary, to cleanse the old ego from any ancient leprosy, so that it may be pure to receive virtue. Because you cannot mix what is new with what is old.

You then begin to work: in good order, with consideration. You must not jump here and there without a good reason. You must not work a little in one direction and then a little in another. One would get less tired, that is true. But the paint would be uneven. As happens in disorderly souls. They display perfect points, then close to them there are deformities, different shades... One must insist on the spots resisting the paint, on the knots: confusion of matter or of dissolute passions, which, of course, have been mortified by will, which like a plane has laboriously smoothed them, but they remain to offer resistance like a knot amputated but not destroyed. And they deceive at times, as they appear to be well clad with virtue, whereas it is but a light veil which soon falls off. Beware of the knots of concupiscence. Ensure that virtue covers them over and over again, so that they may not flourish again disfiguring the new ego. And cover the soft parts, which receive the paint too easily, but they do so to their own liking: if there are blisters and stripes you must insist with isinglass, smoothing and smoothing in order to give one or more coats of paint, so that such parts may become as glossy as hardened enamel. And watch that you do not overload. To exact too much from virtue makes the creature rebel, boil over and blister at the first impact. No. Neither too much nor too little. Be fair when working on yourselves and on creatures made of flesh and soul.

<sup>5</sup>And if, as in most cases - because girls like Aurea are an exception, not the rule - there are new parts mixed with old ones, as Israelites have, passing from Moses to the Christ, as well as heathens with their mosaic of beliefs which cannot be cancelled

434.5

all of a sudden and will surface with nostalgic memories, at least in the most pure matters, then one must be more vigilant and tactful and insist until the old part is homogeneous with the new one making use of pre-existent situations to complete the new virtues. For instance, the Romans hold in high esteem patriotism and manlike courage. They are both considered almost as myths. Well, do not destroy them but inculcate a new spirit on patriotism, that is, the spirit of making Rome great also spiritually as the Centre of Christendom and make use of Roman manliness to strengthen in Faith those who are strong in battle. Another instance: Aurea. Her disgust at a brutal revelation urges her to love what is pure and to hate what is impure. Well, make use of both feelings to lead her to perfect purity hating corruptness, as if it were the brutal Roman.

Do you understand Me? And use habits as means of penetration. Do not destroy brutally. You would not dispose at once of what is needed to build. But slowly replace what *must not* remain in a convert, with charity, patience and tenacity. And since matter overwhelms people, heathens in particular as, even if they are converts, they are always in touch with the heathen world, in which they live, you must insist on the necessity of shunning sensual pleasures. All the rest comes in after sensuality. Watch the exasperated sensuality of heathens and which, let us admit it, is very strong also among us, and when you notice that the contact with the world spoils the preservative paint, do not continue to paint the top, but go back to the lower part, balancing spirit and flesh, top and bottom. But always start from the flesh, from material vice, to prepare the soul to receive the Guest Who does not cohabit in impure bodies or with spirits stinking with carnal corruption... Do you understand me?

And do not be afraid of becoming corrupted if you touch with your garment the lower parts, that is the material ones, of those whose spirits you are curing. Act wisely, so that at all times you may reconstruct rather than bring about ruin. Live engrossed in your ego nourished with God, enveloped with virtue, proceed gently particularly when you have to take care of the most sensitive spiritual ego of other people, and you will certainly succeed in changing even the most despicable beings into creatures worthy of Heaven. »

<sup>6</sup>«What a beautiful parable You have told us! I want to write it for Marjiam! » says the Zealot. 434. 6

«And for me, as all of me is to be made beautiful for the Lord» says slowly trying to find the words, Aurea who, barefooted, has been standing for some time at the door of the kitchen garden.

«Oh! Aurea! Were you listening to us? » asks Jesus.

«I was listening to You. It is so beautiful! Have I done wrong? »

«No, girl. Have you been here long? »

«No. And I am sorry because I do not know what You said previously. Your Mother has sent me to tell You that the meal will be ready shortly. The bread is about to be taken out of the oven. I have learned how to bake it... How lovely! And I have learned to bleach linen, and Your Mother has told me two parables concerning bread and linen. »

«Has She? What did She say? »

«That I am like flour still in the sieve, that Your goodness purifies me, Your grace works in me, Your apostolate perfects me, Your love cooks me and from coarse flour mixed with so much bran I will end up, if I allow myself to be worked on by You, by being flour for hosts, flour and bread of sacrifice, good for the Altar. And on the linen, which was dark, oily and coarse, and which after so much borit grass\* and so many blows of mortification has become clean and soft, the sun will now shine, and it will become white... And She said that that is what the Sun of God will do with me, if I always remain in the Sun and I accept to be cleansed and mortified to become worthy of the King of kings, of You, my Lord. <sup>7</sup>What lovely things I am learning... I seem to be dreaming... Lovely! Everything is beautiful here... Do not send me away, Lord! » 434. 7

«Would you not like to go with Myrtha and Naomi? »

«I would prefer to stay here... But... also with them. But not with Romans, no, Lord... »

«Pray, child! » says Jesus laying His hand on her honey-blond hair. «Have you learned the prayer? »

«Oh! yes! It is so lovely to say: “My Father! ” and think of Heaven... But the will of God frightens me a little... because I do not know whether God wants what I want... »

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\* borit grass, soapwort mentioned in: *Jeremiah 2, 22.*

«God wants your welfare. ^

«Does He? You say so?! In that case I am no longer afraid... I feel that I will remain in Israel... to become more and more acquainted with this Father of mine... And... to be the first disciple of Gaul, my Lord! »

«Your faith will be satisfied because it is good. Let us go... »

And they all go out towards the basin under the spring of water to wash themselves, while Aurea runs to Mary and their two feminine voices are heard: Mary's, which is fluent in speaking, whereas the other is uncertain, of a person trying to find words. And one can hear their shrill voices laughing when a language error is made and which Mary corrects kindly...

«The girl is learning well and quickly» remarks Thomas.

«Yes. She is good and willing. »

«And then! With Your Mother as teacher!... Not even Satan could resist Her!... » says the Zealot.

Jesus sighs without speaking...

«Why are You sighing thus, Master? Was I not right? »

«Yes, quite right. But there are men more resistant than Satan, who at least runs away from Mary's presence. There are men who are close to Her and who, although taught by Her, do not improve... »

«But not us, eh? » says Thomas.

«No, not you... Let us go... »

They go into the house and it all ends.

#### 435. The start of the third Sabbath in Nazareth and the arrival of Peter with other apostles.

13<sup>th</sup> May 1946.

435. 1 <sup>1</sup>The Sabbath is a day of rest. That is already known. And men rest as well as having tools covered up or neatly arranged in their places.

Now that the red sunset of a summer Friday is almost over, Mary, Who is sitting at her smaller loom in the shade of the huge apple-tree, stands up, covers it and with the help of Thomas, She carries it back to its place in the house. And She asks Aurea, who is sitting on a little stool at her feet sewing with a still unskil-

ful hand the dresses given to her by the Roman ladies and fitted on her by Mary, to fold her work tidily and put it on the shelf in her little room. And while Aurea is doing so, the Mother with Thomas goes into the workshop where Jesus and the Zealot are busy putting straight saws, planes, screwdrivers, hammers, tins of paint and glue and sweeping away sawdust and shavings from benches and the floor. Of all the work done so far only two small planks of wood remain, gripped in a vice, at an angle, so that the glue may dry up at the joints (it might be a drawer), and a stool, half painted, besides the strong smell of fresh paint.

<sup>2</sup>Aurea also goes in and she bends over Thomas's burin work, which she admires and asks, somewhat curious and instinctively coquettish, what it is for and whether it would suit her. 435. 2

«It would suit you fine, but it suits you better to be good. These ornaments embellish the body only, but are of no use to the spirit. Nay, by cherishing coquetry, they are harmful to the spirit. »

«Why do you make them, then? » asks the logical girl. «Do you want to harm a spirit? »

Thomas, who is always kind-hearted, smiles at the remark and says: «What is superfluous is harmful to a weak spirit. But in the case of a strong spirit, an ornament remains exactly what it is: a brooch to hold a garment in place. »

«For whom are you making it? For your bride? »

«I have no bride and will never have one. »

«For your sister, then. >>

«She has more than she needs. »

«For your mother, then. »

«Poor old soul! What would she do with it? »

«But it is for a woman... »

«Yes, but it is not you. »

«Oh! I would not even think of it... And, now that you have said that those things there are harmful to the spirit, I would not like to have it. And I will take the fringes off my dresses. I do not want to do any harm to what belongs to my Saviour! »

«Clever girl! See, with your goodwill you have done a nicer work than mine. »

«Oh! You are saying so because you are kind!... »

«I am saying it because it is true. <sup>3</sup>See: I took this piece of



silver, I reduced it to thin plates as I needed them, then with a tool, or rather with many tools, I folded it thus. But I still have to do the most important work: join the parts together in a natural manner. At present, only these two tiny leaves joined to their little flower are complete» and Thomas with his big fingers lifts a graceful stem of a lily of the valley joined to a leaf which is a perfect imitation of a natural one. It is impressive to see the trinket shining with the brilliancy of pure silver held by the strong dark fingers of the goldsmith.

«Oh! lovely! There were many on the island and we were allowed to pick them before sunrise. Because we fair girls should never be exposed to the sun, so that we might be more valuable. They compelled brunettes instead to stay out in the sun, until they felt sick, to become darker. They... What do you say when one sells something saying that it is one thing, whereas it is another?... »

«Who knows!... Deceit... swindle... I don't know. »

«See, they deceived them saying that they were Arabs or that they came from the Upper Nile, where it rises. They sold one girl saying that she was a descendant of the Queen of Sheba. »

«Fancy that! They did not deceive the girls, but the purchasers. So you say: they cheated. What a race! A wonderful surprise for the purchaser when he saw... the false Ethiopian grow lighter! Did You hear that, Master? How many things we do not know!... »

«Yes, I heard. But the sad side is not the cheating of the purchasers... it is the destiny of the girls... »

«That is true. Souls desecrated forever. Lost... »

«No. God can always intervene... »

«He did on my behalf. You saved me!... » says Aurea turning her clear serene eyes towards the Lord. And she concludes: «And I am so happy! » and as she cannot go and embrace Jesus, she clasps Mary with one arm bending her fair-haired head on the Virgin's shoulder in a gesture of confident love. The two fair-haired heads stand out, in their different shades, against the dark wall. A most gentle group.

But Mary has to see to the supper. They part and go away.

435.4 4«May I come in? » says the rather hoarse voice of Peter at the workshop door which opens onto the road.

«Simon! Open the door! »

«Simon! He could not stay away! » exclaims Thomas laughing while he runs to open.

«Simon! This was to be expected... » says the Zealot smiling.

But it is not only Peter's face which appears at the door. All the apostles from the lake are there, with the exception of Bartholomew and the Iscariot. And Judas and James of Alphaeus have already joined them.

«Peace to you! But why did you come in this heat? »

«Because... we could not stay away any longer. It's two and a half weeks, You know? Do You understand? We have not seen You for two and a half weeks! » and Peter seems to be saying: «Two hundred years! An enormity! »

«But I told you to wait for Judas on every Sabbath. »

«Yes, but he did not come on the last two Sabbaths... and we have come here on the third one. Nathanael remained there because he is not too well. And he will receive Judas, if he goes there... But he will not go... Passing through Tiberias to come to us, before going to the Great Hermon, Benjamin and Daniel told us that they had seen him at Tiberias and... Of course. I will tell You later... » says Peter who has stopped speaking because of a tug at his tunic by his brother.

«All right. You will tell Me... But you were all so anxious to have a rest, and now that you had a chance you have been running about like this! When did you leave? »

«Yesterday evening. The lake was like a mirror. We landed at Tarichea to avoid Tiberias... so that we would not meet Judas... »

«Why? »

«Because, Master, we wanted to enjoy Your company in peace. »

«You are selfish! »

«No. He already has his joys... Well! I don't know who gives him so much money to enjoy it with... Yes, I have understood, Andrew. But don't pull my tunic so violently. You know that it is the only one I have. Do you want me to go back in rags? »

Andrew blushes. The others laugh. Jesus smiles.

«Well. We landed at Tarichea also because, well, don't reproach me... It may be the heat, it may be that I become wicked when I am far away from You, it may be the thought that he left

you to join... Listen, stop tearing at my sleeve! You see that I can stop in time!... So, Master, it may be for many reasons... I did not want to commit a sin and if I had seen him I would have committed one. So I went straight to Tarichea. And at dawn we set off. »

«Did you pass through Cana? »

«No. We did not want to come the long way round... But it was a long way all the same. And the fish was beginning to go bad... We gave it to the people in a house, to have shelter for a few hours... the warm hours. And we left after the ninth hour, about the middle of the following hour... It was like an oven!... »

«You could have saved yourselves the trouble. I was coming soon... »

«When? »

«When the sun comes out of Leo. »

«And do You think we could stay so long without You? We will defy a thousand of such hot days and we will come to see You. Our Master! Our adored Master! » and Peter embraces his lost Treasure.

«And yet, when we are together you do nothing but complain of the weather, of the length of journeys... »

«Because we are foolish. Because, while we are together we do not really understand what You are for us... But here we are. We are all already settled. Some will stay with Mary of Alphaeus, some with Simon of Alphaeus, some with Ishmael, some with As-er and some here, nearby, with Alphaeus. We will rest now and tomorrow evening we will leave, and we will be more happy. »

435. 5 «On last Sabbath we had Myrtha and Naomi here, they came to see the girl again» says Thomas.

«You can see that whoever can manage to do so, comes here! »

«Yes, Peter. And what have you done during these days? »

«We have fished... painted the boats... mended the nets... Marjiam often goes fishing with the servants, which reduces the insults of my mother-in-law against "the sluggard who lets his wife die of starvation after bringing an illegitimate son to her". And yet Porphirea has never been so well as now that she has Marjiam for her heart... and for everything else. The sheep from three have become five and will soon be more... It is a great help for a little family like ours! And Marjiam by fishing makes up for what I do not do, except very rarely. But that woman has

the tongue of a viper, whereas her daughter has the tongue of a dove... But I see that You have been working as well... »

«Yes, Simon. *We have* worked. All of us. My brothers in their house, these apostles and I in Mine. To make our mothers happy and let them rest. »

«Well, we have been working, too» say the sons of Zebedee.

«My wife and I have worked at the beehives and in the vineyard» says Philip.

«And what about you, Matthew? »

«I have no one to make happy... so I made myself happy by writing down the things that I like to remember... »

«Oh! in that case we will tell you the parable of the paint. I, a very inexperienced painter, was the cause of it... » says the Zealot.

«But you soon learned the trade. Look how smooth he made this seat! » says Thaddeus...

They are in perfect harmony. And Jesus, Who looks more rested since He has been at home, is bright with joy at having His dear apostles with Him.

<sup>6</sup> Aurea comes and remains on the threshold surprised.

435.6

«Oh! here she is! Look how well she is! She looks like a true little Hebrew, dressed like that! »

Aurea blushes and does not know what to say. But Peter is so good natured and fatherly, that she soon recovers and says: «I am striving to become one... and with the help of my Teacher I hope to be one soon... Master, I am going to tell Your Mother that these people are here... » and she goes away quickly.

«She is a good girl» states the Zealot.

«Yes. I would like her to remain with us in Israel. Bartholomew lost a good chance and much joy by refusing her... » says Thomas.

«Bartholomew is very respectful of... formulae» says Philip excusing him.

«His only fault» remarks Jesus.

Mary comes in...

«Peace to You, Mary» say those who came from Capernaum.

«Peace to you... I did not know that you were here. I will provide at once... Come in the meantime... »

«Our mother is coming from our house with some provisions,

and Salome is coming as well. Do not worry, Mary» says James of Alphaeus.

«Let us go into the kitchen garden... The evening breeze is rising and it is pleasant in there... » says Jesus.

And they go into the kitchen garden and sit here and there, conversing fraternally, while the doves coo competing for the last meal which Aurea is spreading on the ground... It is then time to water the flower-beds and the beautiful vegetables so useful to man. And the apostles want to do it cheerfully, while Mary of Alphaeus, who has just arrived, and Aurea and the Virgin prepare a meal for the guests. And the smell of sizzling food mingles with that of the moist earth, as the chirping of birds competing cheekily for a good spot among the thick leaves above the garden, mingles with the deep or shrill voices of the apostles...

436. The cost of Redemption is revealed to the apostles and disciples in the kitchen garden of Nazareth.

14<sup>th</sup> May 1946.

436.1

<sup>4</sup>And the Sabbath wears on. It is the true Sabbath. On the wonderful morning, when the air is still fresh and cool, it is beautiful to sit in a brotherly peaceful gathering under the shady pergola, or where the apple-tree, close to the fig and almond-trees, forms with them patches of shade extending that of the pergola on which grapes are ripening. And it is nice to walk up and down the paths between the flower-beds going from the beehives to the dove-cot and then to the little grotto, and, passing behind the women - Mary, Mary of Clopas, the daughter-in-law of the latter: Salome of Simon, Aurea - going towards the few olive-trees which from the cliff hang over the peaceful kitchen garden. And that is what Jesus and His disciples, Mary and the other women are doing. And Jesus teaches unintentionally, and so does Mary. And the apostles of the Former and the women disciples of the Latter are carefully listening to the words of the two Teachers.

Aurea, sat on her usual little stool at Mary's feet, almost in a squatting posture, is embracing her knees with joined hands, her face is raised and her wide-open eyes are staring at Mary's face. She looks like a little girl who is listening to a wonderful tale.

But it is not a tale. It is a beautiful truth. Mary is telling the little heathen of yesterday the ancient stories of Israel and the other women, although they already know them, are listening attentively. Because it is pleasant to hear the story of Rachel, that of the daughter of Jephthah\*, that of Hannah of Elkanah, flowing from Her lips!

<sup>2</sup>Judas of Alphaeus comes near slowly and listens smiling. He is behind Mary Who therefore cannot see him. But the smiling look of Mary of Clopas at her Judas tells Mary that someone is behind Her and She turns around: «Oh! Judas? Have you left Jesus to hear Me, a poor woman? » 436.2

«Yes. I left You to go to Jesus, because You were my first teacher. But at times it is pleasant for me to leave Him and come to You, and become again a boy as when I was your pupil\*\*. Go on, please... »

«Aurea wants her reward each Sabbath. And the reward consists in telling her what impressed her most in our History, a little of which I explain to her every day while working. »

The others also have come near... Thaddeus asks: «And what do you like, child? »

«So much, I could say everything... But Rachel very much, and Hannah of Elkanah, then Ruth... then... ah! beautiful! Tobit and Tobias with the Angel, and then the bride who prays\*\*\* to be freed... »

«And Moses, no? »

«He frightens me... Too great... And of the prophets I like Daniel who defends Susanna\*\*\*\*. » She looks around and then whispers: «I also was defended by my Daniel» and she looks at Jesus.

«But also Moses' books are beautiful! »

«Yes. Where they teach not to do what is bad. And where they speak of that star which will be born of Jacob. I know its name now. I knew nothing before. And I am more fortunate than that prophet because I can see it and close by. She told me everything and I know as well» she concludes with an air of triumph.

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\* daughter of Jephthah as narrated in: *Judges 11, 29-40.*

\*\* when I was Your pupil, in 38. 8/9.

\*\*\* the bride who prays, in: *Tobias 3, 7-17.*

\*\*\*\*Susanna, in: *Daniel 13.*

«And do you not like Passover? »

«Yes... but... also the children of other people are the sons of mothers. Why kill them? I prefer the God Who saves to the God Who kills... »

436. 3 «You are right... <sup>3</sup>Mary, have You not told her anything yet of His Birth? » asks James pointing at the Lord Who is listening in silence.

«Not yet. I want her to know the past well before the present. She will thus understand the present which has in the past its reason for being. When she knows it, she will see that the God Who frightens her, the God of Sinai, is but a God of severe love, but still a God of love. »

«Oh! Mother! Tell me now! It will be less difficult for me to understand the past when I know the present, which, as far as I know, is so beautiful and makes one love God without fear. *I need not to be afraid!* »

«The girl is right. You must remember that truth when you will be evangelizing. Souls need not be afraid in order to go to God with full confidence. It is what I am striving to do, all the more when people, either through ignorance or because of their faults, are likely to be much afraid of God. But God, also the God Who struck the Egyptians and Who frightens you, Aurea, is always good. See: when He killed the sons of the cruel Egyptians, He had mercy on the sons, who did not grow up and did not become sinners like their fathers and He gave their parents time to repent of their evil doings. So it was severe goodness. One must

436. 4 be able to tell true goodness from loose upbringing. <sup>4</sup>Also when I was a little baby, many little children were killed on the very laps of their mothers. And the world cried with horror. But when Time exists no more for individuals or for all Mankind, for a first time and for a second time you will realise that those were fortunate, blessed in Israel, in the Israel of the times of Christ, who slaughtered in their infancy, were preserved from the biggest sin, that of being accomplices in the death of the Saviour. »

«Jesus! » shouts Mary of Alphaeus springing to her feet, frightened, looking around as if she were afraid to see deicides appear from behind hedges and trunks of trees. «Jesus! » she repeats looking at him painfully.

«What? Do you perhaps not know the Scriptures, since you

are so surprised at what I say? » asks Jesus.

«But... But... It is not possible... You must not allow that... Your Mother... »

«She is a Saviour like Me, and She knows. Look at Her. And imitate Her. »

Mary is in fact austere, regal in Her deep pallor. She is motionless, with Her hands in Her lap clasped as if in prayer, Her head straight, looking into space...

5Mary of Alphaeus looks at Her. She then addresses Jesus again: «All the same, You must not mention that horrible future! You are piercing Her heart with a sword. » 436. 5

«That sword has been in Her heart for thirty-two years. »

«No! It's not possible! Mary... always so serene... Mary... »

«Ask Her, if you do not believe what I say. »

«I will ask Her! Is it true, Mary? You know?... »

And Mary in a gentle but firm voice says: «It is true. He was forty days old and I was told by a holy man... But also previously... Oh! When the Angel told Me that while remaining the Virgin I would conceive a Son, Who would be called the Son of God and is such because of His divine conception, when I was told that, and that in the barren womb of Elizabeth a fruit had been formed by a miracle of the Eternal Father, I had no difficulty in remembering the words of Isaiah: "The Virgin will give birth to a son and they will call Him the Immanuel"... All, all Isaiah! And where he speaks of the Precursor... And where he speaks of the Man of sorrows, stained with blood, unrecognizable... a leper... for our sins... The sword has been in My heart since then and everything has served to drive it in more deeply: the song of the angels and the words of Simeon and the visit of the Kings from the East, and everything... »

«But which other everything, Mary? Jesus is triumphing, Jesus works miracles, Jesus is followed by larger and larger crowds... Is that not the truth? » says Mary of Alphaeus.

And Mary, always in the same posture replies to each question: «Yes... » without anguish, without joy, only a quiet assent, because it is so...

«Well then? Which other everything is piercing Your heart with a sword? »

«Oh!... Everything... »



436. 6      6«And You are so calm? So serene? Always the same as when You arrived here, a young bride, thirty-three years ago, and I remember it so well that it seems like yesterday to me... But how can You?... I... I would be mad... I would do... I don't know what I would do... I... No! It is not possible for a mother to know that and to be calm! »

«Before being a Mother, I am a daughter and servant of God... Where do I find My tranquillity? In doing the will of God. From where does My serenity come? From doing that will. If I had to do the will of a man, I might be upset, because a man, even the wisest, can always impose a wrong will. But the will of God! If He wanted Me to be the Mother of His Christ, have I perhaps to think that that is cruel, and in that thought lose My serenity? Am I to be upset by the thought of what Redemption will be to Him and to Me, also to Me, and how I will be able to overcome that hour? Oh! it will be dreadful... » Mary gives an involuntary start, She suddenly shudders and clenches Her hands to prevent them from trembling, as if She wanted to pray more fervently, while Her face grows even paler and Her delicate eyelids close on Her kind sky-blue eyes with an expression full of anguish. But She steadies Her voice after a deep sigh of anxiety and She concludes: «But He, Who imposed His will on Me and Whom I serve with confident love, will grant Me His assistance for that hour. He will grant it to Me, to Him... Because the Father cannot impose a will that exceeds the strength of man... and He succours... always... And He will succour us, My Son... He will succour us... and there is no one but He, with His infinite means, who can succour us... »

«Yes, Mother. Love will succour us, and in love we will succour each other. And in love we will redeem... » Jesus has gone beside His Mother and lays His hand on Her shoulder and She raises Her face to look at Him, at Her handsome healthy Jesus destined to be disfigured by torture, killed with a thousand wounds, and She says: «In love and in sorrow... Yes. And together... »

436. 7      7No one speaks any more... Standing around the two chief Protagonists of the future tragedy of Golgotha, the apostles and women disciples look like pensive statues...

Aurea, on her little stool, is petrified... But she is the first to

collect herself and without standing up she slides on her knees and thus finds herself facing Mary. She embraces Her knees and bends her head on Her lap saying: «All that also for me!... How much I cost You and how much I love You for what I cost! Oh! Mother of my God, bless me, that my cost may not be fruitless... »

«Yes, My daughter. Be not afraid. God will help you as well, if you always accept His will. » She caresses her hair and cheeks and feels them wet with tears. «Do not weep! The first thing of the Christ with which you have become acquainted is His sorrowful destiny, the end of His mission as Man. It is not fair, having learned that, that you should be unacquainted with the first hour of His life in the world. Listen... Everybody will be pleased to come out of the dark bitter contemplation by recalling the sweet hour, full of light, of songs, of hosannas, of His Birth... Listen... » and Mary, explaining the reason for Her journey to Bethlehem in Judah, the town predicted to be the birthplace of the Saviour, in a soft gentle voice tells the story of the night of Christ's Nativity.

#### 437. Jesus and His Mother converse.

15<sup>th</sup> May 1946.

I do not know whether it is the evening of the same Sabbath. I <sup>437. 1</sup> know that I see Jesus and Mary, sitting on the stone seat against the house, near the door of the dining-room, from which comes the faint light of an oil lamp placed close to the door. The little flame palpitates in the air, rising and sinking, as if it were breathing. It is the only light in the moonless night: a faint light visible in the kitchen garden where it illuminates the small strip of ground before the door and dies on the first rose-bush in the flower-bed. But the feeble light is sufficient to illuminate the profiles of the Two engaged in intimate talk in the calm night full of the scent of jasmines and other summer flowers.

They are speaking of their relatives... of Joseph of Alphaeus persistently stubborn, of Simon not very brave in his profession of faith, overwhelmed as he is by his eldest brother, who is as overbearing and obstinate in his ideas as his father was. It is the great sorrow of Mary Who would like all Her nephews to be dis-

ciples of Her Jesus.

Jesus comforts Her and to excuse His cousin He points out his strong Israelitic faith: «An obstacle, You know? A real obstacle. Because all the formulae and precepts form a barrier against the acceptance of the Messianic idea in its truth. <sup>2</sup>It is easier to convert a heathen, provided his spirit is not completely corrupt. A heathen ponders and sees the good difference between *his* Olympus and *My* Kingdom. But Israel... the more learned part of Israel... finds it difficult to follow the new concept!... »

«And yet it is always that concept! »

«Yes. It is always that Decalogue, those prophecies. But their nature has been perverted by man. He has taken them, and from the supernatural spheres where they were, and has brought them down to the level of the Earth, in the atmosphere of the world, he has handled them with his humanity altering them... The Messiah, the spiritual King of the great Kingdom - which is called Kingdom of Israel, because the Messiah is born of the throne of Israel, but it would be more correct to call it: the Kingdom of Christ, because Christ centralises the better part of Israel, both past and present, and sublimates it in His perfection of God-Man - according to them the Messiah, cannot be the meek poor man, without yearning after power and riches, obedient to those who rule over us by divine punishment, because obedience is holiness when it does not invalidate the great Law. We can therefore say <sup>437. 3</sup> that their faith works against the true Faith. <sup>3</sup>Of such stubborn people convinced that they are right, there are many... in every class... and even among My relatives and apostles. Believe, Mother, that their dullness in believing in My Passion lies in that. Their errors in evaluation originate from that... Also their obstinate aversion to consider Gentiles and idolaters, not looking at man, but at the spirit of man, that spirit which has only *one* Origin and to which God would like to give only *one* Destiny: Heaven. Take Bartholomew... He is an example. Very good, wise, willing to do everything to honour and comfort Me... But before, I will not say an Aglae or a Syntyche, who is already a flower compared with poor Aglae, whom penance only restores from filth to a flower, but not even before a child, a poor child whose lot excites pity and whose instinctive modesty draws admiration, does his disgust for the Gentiles vanish, neither does

My example convince him, nor My words that I have come for everybody. »

«You are right. Nay, Bartholomew and Judas of Kerioth, the two most learned, or at least: the learned Bartholomew, and Judas of Kerioth, who I do not know to which class he belongs exactly, but who is imbued and saturated with the air of the Temple, are the most resistant. But... Bartholomew is good and his resistance can still be excused. Judas... no. You heard what Matthew, who went to Tiberias on purpose, said... And Matthew is a man of experience, particularly of *that* life... And the remark of James of Zebedee is correct: "Who is it that gives so much money to Judas?". Because that life costs... Poor Mary of Simon! »

Jesus makes His gesture with His hands, to say: «It is so... » and He sighs. <sup>4</sup>He then says: «Did You hear that? The Roman ladies are at Tiberias... Valeria has not told Me anything. But I must know before I resume My journey. Mother, I want You to come to Capernaum with Me for some time... You will then come back here, I will go towards the Syro-Phoenician border, and I will come back to say goodbye to You before going down towards Judaea, the obstinate sheep of Israel... »

437. 4

«Son, I will go tomorrow evening... I will take Mary of Alphaeus with Me. Aurea will stay with Simon of Alphaeus, because her staying here with You for several days would certainly be criticised... Such is the world... And I will go... To Cana as first stage, then at dawn I will leave and stop at the house of the mother of Salome of Simon. Then I will set out again at sunset and we will arrive at Tiberias in daylight. I will stay in the house of Joseph, the disciple, because I want to go personally to Valeria's house, and if I went to Johanna's, she would want to go... No. I, the Mother of the Saviour, will appear in her eyes, different from the disciple of the Saviour... and she will not say no to Me. Do not be afraid, Son! »

«I am not afraid. But I am sorry for all Your trouble. »

«Oh! to save a soul! What are twenty miles in a good season? »

«It will also be a moral strain. To beg... perhaps to be humiliated... »

«A passing trifle. But a soul remains! »

«You will be like a lost swallow in corrupt Tiberias... Take Simon with You. »

«No, Son. Just the two of us, two poor women... But two mothers and two disciples. That is, two great moral strengths... I will not be long. Let Me go... Just bless Me. »

«Yes, Mother. With all My heart as Son, and with all My power as God. Go and may the angels escort you along the way. »

437. 5 «Thank You, Jesus. <sup>5</sup>Well, let us go in. I will have to get up at dawn to prepare everything for those who leave and for those who are staying. Say the prayer, Son... »

Both Jesus and Mary stand up and they say together the Our Father... They then go back into the house, they close the door... the light disappears and human voices are heard no more. Only the rustling of the breeze among the leaves can be heard and the soft gurgling of the water in the fountain basin...

438. Holy Mary with Mary of Alphaeus in Tiberias to have Aurea relinquished. An encounter with Judas Iscariot.

16<sup>th</sup> May 1946.

438. 1 <sup>1</sup>Uiberias is already in sight when the two tired pilgrims are proceeding in the darkening twilight.

«It will soon be dark... And we are still in the middle of the country... Two women alone... And near a large town full of... Ugh! what people! Beelzebub! Beelzebub mostly... » says Mary of Alphaeus looking around frightened.

«Be not afraid, Mary. Beelzebub will do us no harm. He harms only those who receive him in their hearts... »

«These pagans have him!... »

«Not only pagans are in Tiberias. And also among the heathens there are just people. »

«What? They have not our God!... »

Mary does not reply because She understands that it would be useless. Her good sister-in-law is but one of the many Israelites who believe that they are the only depositaries of virtue... simply because they are Israelites.

They are silent: only the shuffling of the sandals on their tired dusty feet can be heard.

«It was better to take the usual road... We knew that one... it is more beaten by people... This one... among vegetable gardens,

solitary... unknown... I am afraid, that's all! »

«No, Mary. Look. The town is over there, a few steps from here. And here are peaceful kitchen gardens of the cultivators of Tiberias, and over there is the shore, only a few steps from here.

1 )o you want to go to the shore? We will find fishermen there... We have only to go across these vegetable gardens. »

«No! We would be going away from town again! And then... The boatmen are almost all Greeks, Cretans, Egyptians, Romans... » and it seems as if she were mentioning infernal classes. The Blessed Virgin cannot help smiling in the shadow of Her veil.

They go on. The road becomes an avenue, and thus darker... and Mary of Alphaeus is more frightened than ever and she invokes Jehovah at every step, while they proceed slower and slower.

«Come on, take heart! Make haste, if you are afraid! » says Mary urging her after replying: «Maran Atha! » at each invocation.

<sup>2</sup>But Mary of Alphaeus stops and asks: «But why did You want to come here? To speak perhaps to the Iscariot? » 438. 2

«No, Mary. Or at least that is not exactly the reason. I have come to speak to Valeria, the Roman lady... »

«Goodness gracious! Are we going to her house? Ah! no! Mary! Don't do that! I... I am not coming with You! But why are You going there? To those... those... anathemas!... »

The kind smile of the Blessed Virgin becomes a severe expression while She asks: «And do you not remember that Aurea is to be saved? My Son began her liberation. I will complete it. Is that how you practise love for souls? »

«But she is not from Israel... »

«Truly, you have not understood one word of the Gospel! You are a very imperfect disciple... You do not work for your Master and you grieve Me so deeply. »

Mary of Alphaeus lowers her head... But her heart, full of the prejudices of Israel but congenitally kind, gets the upper hand and bursting into tears she embraces Mary and says: «Forgive me! Don't say that I grieve You and I do not serve my Jesus! Yes! I am very imperfect and I deserve to be reproached... But I will not do it again... I will come! Even to Hell if You should go there to save a soul and give it to Jesus... Give me a kiss, Mary, to tell

me that You forgive me... »

Mary kisses her and they resume their journey, walking fast, cheered up by love...

438. 3     <sup>3</sup>They are now in Tiberias, near the little harbour of the fishermen. They look for the little house of Joseph, the fisherman disciple... They find it and knock at the door...

«The Mother of my Master! Come in, o Donna! And may God be with You and with me, who am giving You hospitality. And you, come in, too, and peace be with you, the mother of apostles. »

They go in while the wife and young daughter come to greet them followed by a little group of younger children...

The frugal meal is soon over and Mary of Clopas, being tired, withdraws with the children. On the high terrace, from which the lake can be seen - it can be *heard* lapping the bank, rather than be seen, because there is no moonlight as yet - are the Blessed Virgin, the boatman and his wife, who endeavours to be good company, but in actual fact is nodding...

«She is tired!... » says Joseph excusing her.

438. 4     «Poor woman! <sup>4</sup>Housewives are always tired in the evening. »

«Yes, they do work. They are not like those there, who lead a gay life! » says the boatman disdainfully, pointing at some illuminated boats departing from the shore among songs and music. «They are going out now! They begin to work at this time, when honest people go to sleep! And they do harm to workers, because they go to the best spots, pretending that they are fishing, and they drive away us, who earn our living on the lake... »

«Who are they? »

«Roman women and the like. And among the latter you can count Herodias and her lustful daughter and some Jewesses as well... Because we have many Maries of Magdala... I mean Maries before repentance... »

«They are poor wretches... »

«Poor wretches? We are poor wretches because we do not stone them to rid Israel of those who have become corrupted and bring down on us the curses of God. »

In the meantime other boats have left and the lake reddens with the lights of the revellers' boats.

«Can you smell resin burning? First they become intoxicated with smoke, and they do the rest in the course of banquets. They

are quite capable of going to the hot springs on the other side... In those Thermal baths... Infernal things take place! They will come back at daybreak, at dawn, perhaps later... drunk, lying one on top of the other, men and women, just like sacks, and their slaves will carry them home, to sleep it off... All the beautiful boats are going out this evening! Look! Look!... But I am more angry with the Jews who mix with them. With regards to them... we know! Shameless animals. But we!... <sup>5</sup>Donna, do You know that Judas, the apostle is here? »

«I know. »

«He is not setting a good example, You know? »

«Why? Does he go with those people?... »

«No... but... with bad companions... and a woman... I have not seen him... None of us has seen him in such company. But some Pharisees have sneered at us saying: “Your apostle has changed master. Now he has a woman and he is in the good company of publicans”. »

«Do not judge, Joseph, what you have only heard people say. You know that the Pharisees do not love you and they do not even praise the Master. »

«That is true... But the rumour is spreading... and is harmful... »

«As it rose, so it will fall. Do not sin against your brother. Where does he live? Do you know? »

«Yes, with a friend, I think. One who has a warehouse of wines and spices. The third warehouse on the eastern side of the market, after the fountain... »

<sup>6</sup>«Are all the Roman women alike? »

«Oh! more or less!... They do wrong, even if they do not let people see it. »

«Which are the ones that do not let people see? »

«The ones who came to Lazarus' at Passover. They are more retired... I mean... they do not always go to banquets. But they go so often that people can say that they are impure. »

«Are you saying so because you are sure, or is it your Jewish prejudice that makes you say so? Think it over carefully... »

«Well... really... I don't know... I have not seen them anymore in the boats of the filthy ones... But they go out on the lake at night. »



«You go out, too. »

«Certainly! If I want to go out fishing! »

«It is very warm! Only out on the lake is there relief at night. You said so yourself while we were having supper. »

«That is true. »

«So, why not consider that they go on the lake for that? »

The man is silent... He then says: «It is late. The stars say that it is the second watch. I am withdrawing, Donna. Are You not coming? »

«No. I will stay here and pray. I will go out early. Do not be surprised if you do not see Me at dawn. »

«You are free to do as You like. Anne! Come on! Let us go to bed! » and he shakes his wife who is fast asleep. They go away.

438. 7 <sup>7</sup>Mary remains alone... She kneels down and prays... but She never loses sight of the boats sailing on the lake, the boats of rich people, all bright with lights,, with flowers, singing and smell of incense... Many sail eastwards, they become very small in the distance, their singing is no longer heard. A splendid solitary boat remains out on the lake in a sheet of water upon which the moon, setting in front of Tiberias, is shining brightly. It sails slowly up and down... Mary watches it until She sees it steer towards the shore.

Mary then stands up saying: «Lord, help Me! Let it be... » She then goes downstairs nimbly, She enters a room the door of which is half open... In the moonlight it is possible to see a little bed. Mary bends over it and calls: «Mary! Wake up! Let us go! »

Mary of Alphaeus wakes up and, overwhelmed with sleep, rubbing her eyes she asks: «Is it already time to go? Is it already daylight? » She is so sleepy that she does not realise that it is not the light of dawn but moonlight the feeble phosphorescence which enters through the open door. She becomes aware of it when she is outside, on the small piece of cultivated ground in front of the boatman's house.

«But it's night-time! » she exclaims.

«Yes. But we will finish sooner and we will get out of this town sooner... at least I hope so. Come! This way, along the shore. Quick! Before the boat sets ashore... »

«The boat? Which boat? » asks Mary. But she runs after the Virgin, Who is walking very fast on the deserted shore, towards

the little pier, where the boat is heading.

They arrive panting a few moments before it... Mary is watching carefully. She exclaims: «Praised be the Lord! It is they! Follow Me now... because we must go where they go... I do not know where they live... »

«But Mary... for pity's sake!... They will think that we are prostitutes!... »

The Most Pure Mother shakes Her head and whispers: «The important thing is not to be one. Come! » and She draws her into the shadow of a house.

<sup>8</sup>The boat lands and while it is manoeuvring, a litter, which was waiting nearby, is brought forward towards it. Two women get on it, while two remain outside and walk beside it, when it leaves carried by four Numidians walking in step and wearing very short sleeveless tunics, which hardly cover their trunks... 438. 8

Mary follows it, notwithstanding that Mary of Alphaeus protests in a low voice: «Two women alone!... Behind those men! They are half-naked... Oh!... »

After a few metres the litter stops. A woman gets off while the leader knocks at a portal.

«Goodbye, Lydia! »

«Goodbye, Valeria! A caress to Faustina from me. Tomorrow evening we will read again in peace, while the others revel... »

The portal is opened and Valeria, with her slave or freedwoman, is about to go in.

<sup>9</sup>Mary goes forward and says: «Domina! A word! » 438. 9

Valeria looks at the two women wrapped in very plain Jewish mantles lowered over their faces, and thinks that they are beggars. She orders: «Barbara, give them offerings! »

«No, domina. I am not asking for money. I am the Mother of Jesus of Nazareth and this is a relative of mine. I have come in his Name to ask a favour of you. »

«Domina! Your Son is perhaps... persecuted... »

«Not more than usually. But He would like... »

«Come in, Domina. It does not become You to remain here in the street like a beggar. »

«No. A few words will suffice if you can listen to me in secret... »

«Go away, all of you! » Valeria orders her slave or freedwoman

an, whatever she may be, and the doorkeepers. «We are alone. What does the Master want? I did not come because I did not want to harm Him in His town. He did not come in order not to harm me, perhaps, with my husband? »

«No. I advised Him not to come. My Son is hated, domina. »

«I know. »

«And He finds comfort only in His mission. »

«I know. »

«He does not seek honours, or armies; He does not aspire to kingdoms or riches. But He asserts His rights on souls. »

«I know. »

«Domina... He should hand that girl back to you... But do not be offended if I tell you, she could not perfect her soul for Jesus here. You are better than the others... But around you... there is too much filth of the world. »

«That is true. So? »

«You are a mother... My Son has the feelings of a father for every soul. Would you allow your daughter to be brought up among people who can ruin her?... »

«No. I understand... Well... Say these words to Your Son: "In memory of Faustina, saved in her body, Valeria gives You Aurea that You may save her soul". It is true! We are too corrupt... to assure a saint... Domina, pray for me! » and she withdraws quickly, before Mary can thank her. She withdraws, I would say, weeping...

Mary of Alphaeus is dumbfounded.

«Let us go, Mary... We will leave during the night and tomorrow evening we will be in Nazareth... »

«Let us go... She gave her up... as if she were an object... »

«She is an object to them. To us she is a soul. Come. Look... It is already dawning over there. One can say that there is no night-time in this month... »

438.10

<sup>10</sup>They go along a road which is no longer semi-dark and which opens in front of them, instead of taking the shore. It is a road behind a row of modest houses... When they are half way along it, Judas springs out from a corner, manifestly drunk. A Judas returning from who knows what party, with dishevelled hair, crumpled clothes, his face beaten.

«Judas! You? In this state? »

Judas does not have time to feign that he does not know Her and he cannot run away... Surprise clears his thoughts and keeps him fixed where he is, immobile.

Mary approaches him, overcoming the repulsion which the sight of the apostle stirs in Her, and She says to him: «Judas, wretched son, what are you doing? Are you not thinking of God? Of your soul? Of your mother? What are you doing, Judas? Why do you want to be a sinner? Look at Me, Judas! You have no right to kill your soul... » and She touches him trying to take his hand.

«Leave me alone. I am a man after all. And... I am free to do what everybody does. Tell Him, Who has sent You to spy on me, that I am not yet all spirit, and I am young! »

«You are not free to ruin yourself, Judas! Have pity on yourself... If you behave like that you will never be a happy spirit... Judas... He did not send Me to spy on you. He prays for you. Only that, and I pray with Him. In the name of your mother... »

«Leave me alone» says Judas rudely. Then realising that he has been rude, he rectifies himself: «I do not deserve Your pity... Goodbye... » and he runs away...

«What a demon!... I will tell Jesus» exclaims Mary of Al-phaeus.

«My Judas is right! »

«You will not say anything to anybody. You will pray for him. Yes... »

«Are You weeping? Weeping for him? Oh!... »

«I am weeping... I was happy having saved Aurea... I am now weeping because Judas is a sinner. But to Jesus, Who is distressed, we will take only the good news. And we will snatch the sinner from Satan by penance and prayers... As if he were our son, Mary! As if he were our son!... You are a mother, too, and you know... For that unhappy mother, for this soul of a sinner, for our Jesus... »

«Yes, I will pray... But I do not think that he deserves it... »

«Mary, do not say that!... »

«I will not say it... But it is so. Are we not going to Johanna's? »

«No. We will come back soon, with Jesus... »

439. Holy Mary speaks about her mission in Tiberias.  
Aurea learns to do the will of God.

20<sup>th</sup> May 1946.

439. 1 1The Virgin is very tired when She sets foot again in Her little house. But She is very happy. And She looks at once for Her Jesus, Who is still working, in the last light of the dying day, at the stone oven door, which He is repairing. Simon opens the door to Her, and after greeting Her, he wisely withdraws into the workshop. I do not see Thomas. Perhaps he is out.

Jesus lays down His tools as soon as He sees His Mother, and goes towards Her cleaning His greasy hands (He is oiling hinges and latches to make them run smoothly) on His apron. Their reciprocal smiles seem to brighten up the kitchen garden where it is growing dark.

«Peace to You, Mother. »

«Peace to You, Son. »

«How tired You are! You have not rested... »

«I did, from dawn to sunset in Joseph's house... But if it had not been so warm, I would have left at once to come and tell You that Aurea is Yours. »

«Yes?! » The joyful surprise makes Jesus' face look even younger. It seems the face of a man about twenty years old, and as joy rids Him of the gravity which is generally on his face and in his gestures, He resembles even more his Mother, Who is always such a serene girl in her deportment and looks.

«Yes, Jesus. And I achieved that without any effort. The lady agreed at once. She was moved admitting that she and her friends are too corrupt to educate a creature for God. Such a humble, sincere, true avowal! It is not easy to find people who admit they are faulty without being forced to do so. »

«No, it is not. Many in Israel are not capable. They are beautiful souls buried under a crust of filth. But when the filth falls off... »

«Will that happen, Son? »

«I am sure it will. They tend instinctively to Good. They will end up by adhering to it. What did she say? »

«Oh! Only a few words... We understood each other at once.

439. 2 2But we had better have Aurea here at once. I want to tell her

t his, but only if You wish so, Son. »

«Yes, Mother. We will send Simon» and in a loud voice He calls Simon who comes immediately.

«Simon, go to Simon of Alphaeus' house and tell him that My Mother is back, then come here with the girl and Thomas, who must be there finishing the little job which Salome asked him to do. »

Simon bows and goes away at once.

«Tell Me, Mother... Your journey... your conversation... Poor Mother, how tired You are because of Me! »

«Oh! no, Jesus! It is no trouble when You are happy... » and Mary tells Him about Her journey and Mary of Alphaeus' fears, their rest in the house of the boatman, the meeting with Valeria, and She concludes: «I preferred to see her at that time, since I leaven allowed it. She was freer, I was freer, and Mary of Clopas was comforted sooner, because she was terrified at the idea of two women being all alone in Tiberias and only her love for You and the thought of serving You overcame her terror... » and Mary smiles remembering Her sister-in-law's anxiety...

And Jesus smiles saying: «Poor woman! She is the true woman of Israel, the ancient woman, reserved, wholly devoted to her family, the *strong* woman\* according to Proverbs. But in the new Religion women will not be *strong* only at home... Many will exceed Judith and Jael, being gifted with the same heroism as the mother of the Maccabees... And our Mary will be such. But for the time being... she is what she is... <sup>3</sup>Did You see Johanna? »

439. 3

Mary smiles no longer. She is perhaps afraid of a question about Judas. And She replies quickly: «I did not want to cause more worries to Mary. We remained in the house until half the time between the ninth hour and evening, resting, and then we left... I thought that we shall soon be seeing her on the lake... »

«You did the right thing. You have given Me proof of the feeling of the Roman ladies with regards to Me. If Johanna had intervened, we could have thought that they were yielding to their friend. We will now wait until the Sabbath and if Myrtha does not come we will go to her with Aurea. »

«Son, I would like to stay here... »

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\* the woman, praised in *Proverbs 31, 10-31*, is "strong" in the literal translation of the vulgate, "perfect" in that of the neo-vulgate.

«I can see that You are very tired. »

«No, not because of that... I think that Judas may come here... As it is right that someone should always be in Capernaum to wait for him and give him a friendly welcome, it is equally right that someone should be here to receive him with love. »

«Thank You, Mother. You are the only one who understands what can still save him... »

They both sigh thinking of the disciple who causes grief...

439. 4

4Simon and Thomas come back with Aurea who runs towards Mary. Jesus leaves her with His Mother and goes into the house with His apostles.

«You have prayed very much, My daughter, and the good God has listened to you... » begins Mary.

But the girl interrupts Her with a cry of joy: «I am staying with You! » and she throws her arms around the Virgin's neck, kissing Her.

Mary returns the kiss and holding Aurea in Her arms all the time She says: «When one does a great favour, it is necessary to reciprocate it, is that right? »

«Oh! Yes! And I will repay You with so much love. »

«Yes, My dear. But above Me there is God. It is He Who did you this great favour, this immeasurable grace of receiving you among the members of His people and making you a disciple of the Master Saviour. I have been but the instrument of the grace, but He, the Most High, granted the grace. What will you, therefore, give the Most High to tell Him that you thank Him? »

«Well... I don't know... Tell me, Mother... »

«Love, that is certain. But love, to be really such, is to be united to sacrifice, because a thing has more value if it costs, has it not? »

«Yes, Mother. »

«Then, I would say that, with the same joy with which you shouted: "I am staying with You! ", you should shout: "Yes, o Lord" when I, His poor servant, tell you the will of the Lord concerning you. »

«Tell me, Mother» says Aurea whose countenance becomes serious.

«The will of God entrusts you to two good mothers, Naomi and Myrtha... »

Two big tears shine in the clear eyes of the girl, and stream down her rosy cheeks.

«They are good women. They are dear to Jesus and to Me. Jesus saved\* the son of one of them, I suckled\*\* the baby of the other one. And you have seen that they are good... »

«Yes... but I was hoping to stay with You... »

«My daughter, it is not possible to have everything! <sup>5</sup>You see that I am not always with My Jesus. I have given Him to you all, and I am far, so far from Him, when He goes about Palestine preaching, curing and saving girls... »

«That is true... »

«If I had wanted Him all for Myself, you would not have been saved... If I had wanted Him all for Myself, your souls would not be saved. Consider how great is My sacrifice. I am giving you a Son to be sacrificed for your souls. In any case, you and I will always be united, because women disciples are and will always be united around Christ, forming a large family united by our love for Him. »

«That is true. And then... I will come here again, will I not? And we will meet again? »

«Certainly. As long as God wants... »

«And You will always pray for me... »

«And I will always pray for you. »

«And when we are together, will You still teach me? »

«Yes, My dear... »

«Ah! I wanted to become like You. Will I ever be able? To know, in order to be good... »

«Naomi is the mother of a head of a synagogue and a disciple of the Lord. Myrtha is the mother of a son who deserved the grace of a miracle and is a good disciple. And the two women are good and wise, besides being so full of love. »

«Can You assure me? »

«Yes, My daughter. »

«Then... bless me and may the will of the Lord be done... as Jesus' prayer says. I have said it so many times... It is only right that now I should do what I said to obtain the grace of not going any more among the Romans... »

\* saved, in 248. 5/11.

\*\* I suckled, as revealed in 365. 8.



«You are a good girl. And God will always help you. Come, let us go and tell Jesus that the youngest woman disciple knows how to do the will of God... » and holding her by the hand Mary goes back into the house with the girl.

440. Another Sabbath at Nazareth.  
The obstinacy of Joseph of Alphaeus.

21<sup>st</sup> May 1946.

440.1 Another Sabbath at Nazareth. That is, another beginning of a Sabbath, because Myrtha and Naomi arrive with young Abel, just when the sunset of Friday is beginning. They dismount from their little donkeys, which Abel takes away, obviously to a stable, probably to that of the two friendly ass-drivers of Nazareth, who have become disciples. The women go in through the workshop door, which has been left open to ventilate the large room, where up to a short time before, the heat of the coarse fireplace has joined the intense summer heat.

Thomas is putting away his tools, Simon is sweeping the sawdust, while Jesus is cleaning pots of glue and paint.

«Peace to You, Master, and to you, disciples» greet the two women, bowing low as soon as they enter and then, after walking across the workshop, prostrating themselves at Jesus' feet.

«Peace to you. You are very faithful, to come in this heat! »

«Oh! nothing! One feels so well here, that one forgets everything. Where is Your Mother? »

«She is in there, finishing a dress for Aurea. You may go in. »

The two women walk away with their knapsacks and one can hear their clear voices, which are rather deep, blend with the shrill rather strident voice of Aurea and with the silvery voice of Mary.

«They will be happy now! » says Thomas.

«Yes. They are good women» replies Jesus.

«Master, Myrtha has not only kept the son she had, but she got another child. And in little more than one year... » says the Zealot.

«Yes! In little more than one year! It is already over a year since Mary of Lazarus was converted. How time flies! It seems

like yesterday... How many things last year! The lovely retreat before the election! Then John of Endor! Then Marjiam! Then Daniel of Nain, then Mary of Lazarus and then Syntyche... But where is Syntyche? I often think about her and I cannot understand why... » Thomas stops speaking to himself, because Jesus and Simon do not reply to him, on the contrary they go out into the kitchen garden to wash themselves and then join the women disciples.

[...]

<sup>2</sup>Abel of Bethlehem in Galilee comes back and finds Thomas who is still pensive, in front of the place where he generally works, moving, lost in thought, his tiny masterpieces in gold-work. 440. 2

«Have you found work? » asks the disciple bending over the tiny objects.

«Oh! I have made all the women in Nazareth happy. I would never have thought that there were so many buckles, bracelets, necklaces and lilies to be repaired. I had to ask Matthew to bring me some metal from Tiberias. I have more customers... ha! ha! (he laughs happily) than my father has. It is true that I do not ask for money... »

«You lose. Everything? »

«No. I charge only the value of the metal. My work is a presents

«You are generous. »

«No. I am wise. I am not idle. I set an example of industriousness and detachment from money and... I preach... Be quiet! I think that I have preached more by doing so, without telling a parable, without saying a word in the synagogue, than I would have done if I had spoken incessantly. And then... I do a bit of training. I have promised myself to propagate our faith with my work when I will have to go and preach Jesus among the infidels. And I am training myself. »

«You are wise both as a goldsmith and as an apostles

«I strive to be so for Jesus' sake. <sup>3</sup>So you have acquired a sister. Treat her well, you know? She is like a little dove in its nest. I am telling you, because in my trade I am accustomed to dealing with women. She is a candid dove who was scared to death by a hawk, and who is looking for motherly and brotherly wings 440. 3

to defend her. If your mother had not wanted her, I would have asked to have her for my twin sister. One child more, one less! My sister is so good, you know? »

«Also my mother. She lost a little daughter when she remained a widow. Perhaps her milk had gone bad, grieved as she was over the death of her husband... I can hardly remember my little sister... and perhaps I would not remember her at all if my mother did not mourn her death so often, and if every poor girl in Bethlehem were not entitled to some food and clothing in our house, in memory of the dead baby... But as I was brought up in the company of my mother only, I have ended up by loving little girls very much myself... I realise that this one is not a little girl... but I will consider her such, because of her heart, if she is as my mother, Naomi and you say... »

«You can be sure. Let us go into the other room. »

440. 4     <sup>4</sup>In the other room, that is, in the dining room, are the women, Jesus and the Zealot. And Myrtha, who came full of hope, is winning over Aurea by fitting for her a linen dress which she made for the girl.

«It fits you really well» she says taking it off her and caressing her while she adjusts her dress which had become crumpled when putting on the new one. «It really fits well. And everything will be all right. You will see, my dear daughter... Oh! here is my Abel. Come here, son. Here is Aurea. She will be a member of our family now, you know? »

«I know, mother, and I am happy with you. » He looks at the girl... he studies her... his dark eyes stare at and get lost in her large pale blue ones. He is satisfied with his examination. He smiles at her. He says to her: «We will love each other in the Lord Who saved us and we will love Him and have Him loved. And I will be a brother to you in spirit and in affection. I promise it in the presence of the Master and of my mother» and with a beautiful limpid smile of a pure youth, well advanced in high spirituality, he holds out his strong tanned hand to her.

Aurea hesitates and then, blushing, she puts her left hand into the right hand offered to her and says: «We will do that. In the Lord. »

The adults smile...

440. 5     <sup>5</sup>«One can enter here without knocking at the doors... »

«Here is Simon of Jonah! This time he could not resist temptation... » says Thomas laughing, while he runs out.

«Yes! I did not resist... Peace to You, Master! » He kisses Jesus and is kissed by Him. «Who can resist? » He sees Mary and bows greetings, he then resumes: «But, to satisfy our consciences, we came by Tiberias and we looked for Judas. Because... we are all here, eh?! The others are coming. Including Marjiam... So I was saying that we came by Tiberias. H'm! Yes! to look for Judas in the event that... he should think of coming to Capernaum, at least on the fourth. Sabbath... It would not be nice if we were all away... And we found him... yes! Nay, Isaac found him, as he had gone to see Jonathan... Because Isaac ended up by coming to Capernaum waiting for You with I don't know how many more, who have remained there to become more learned under the good guidance of Hermas and Stephen, of your son, Naomi, and of John, the priest... But Isaac came with us, because he, too, will die if he does not see You... Poor Isaac! he was not made welcome by Judas. But Isaac, during his long sickness, must have destroyed all feelings of impatience, grudge and anger... He never reacts! Even if they box his ears, he smiles... What a peaceful man! Well. He said to us: "I saw Judas. He is not coming. Do not insist". I understood. I asked him: "Did he answer you insolently? Tell me. I am the chief and I must know... ". "Oh! no" he replied. "He did not answer insolently, but his insolence did. He is to be pitied... " Well, let us pity him... Well, we are here. And happy too... <sup>6</sup>Here are the others... »

440. 6

And with the others there are Judas and James of Alphaeus with their mother and the disciples of Nazareth: Aser, Ishmael and Simon of Alphaeus, and, a rarity, also Joseph of Alphaeus.

They unburden themselves of their bags. Nathanael has brought some apples and Philip a basketful of grapes as golden as Aurea's hair. Peter and Zebedee's sons some pickled fish. Matthew, who has no home cared for by women and thus has nothing good, has brought a jar full of earth with inside it a slender trunk, which judging by its foliage, I would say is a lemon or orange-tree or another citrus-tree and he explains: «It's a rarity... Only those who go to Cyrene can get them, and I know a man who was at Cyrene, one of the revenue authorities like me once. He has now retired at Ippo. I went to him to get the plant because

it must be planted out at the new moon. The fruit is beautiful and good, its flower is sweet-smelling and looks like a waxen star, a star like Your name... Here» and he offers the plant to Mary.

«But what a trouble for you, Matthew, all this weight! I am grateful to you. My garden is becoming more and more beautiful, thanks to you all. Porphirea's camphor, Johanna's roses, your rare plant, Matthew, the other flower plants brought by Judas of Kerieth... How many beautiful things, how kind you all are to Jesus' Mother! »

All the apostles are moved; they only cast sidelong glances at each other when Mary mentions Judas' name.

440. 7 <sup>7</sup>«Yes. They love You. But we love You, too» says gravely and stiffly Joseph of Alphaeus.

«Of course! You are the dear children of My dear relative Alphaeus and of Mary, who is so good. And You love Me. It is natural. We are relatives... These instead are not our blood, and yet they are like sons to Me, like brothers to Jesus, as they love Him so much and follow Him... »

Joseph takes the hint immediately, he clears his throat, searching for words... He finds them... He says: «Of course! But if I am not yet with them, it is because I think also of the consequences for Him, for You... and... and... Well! I love You, too, You especially, poor woman, as You are left all by Yourself too long... And I have come to tell Jesus that I am glad that He has remembered also the needs of His Mother and has done what was necessary here... » and, satisfied with being the «head» of the kindred and thus in a position to praise and admonish, he deigns to commend Jesus for all the work of carpentry, painting and other jobs done in that month: «That is how it should be done! One can now see that this woman has a son! And I am happy to be able to say that I have found again my wise Jesus of Joseph. Bravo! »

And the wise Jesus of Joseph, the most wise Divine Word humiliated in our flesh, meek and humble, accepts the praises mixed with... the authoritative advice of His cousin Joseph, smiling so kindly, that it helps to check any untimely reaction of the apostles in His favour.

And Joseph, having set off, seeing that they listen to him, does not stop, but he continues: «I do hope that from now on Nazareth will no longer see a poor woman forlorn, while Her Son unwisely

leaves the trodden path to beat paths which are uncertain, both with regards to their ends and their consequences. I will speak to my friends, to the head of the synagogue... We will forgive You... Oh! Nazareth will be happy to open out her arms to You, as to a son who has come back... as an example of virtue to all the citizens. Tomorrow I will take You to the synagogue myself and... »

<sup>8</sup>Jesus raises His hand imposing silence and calmly but *very* <sup>440. 8</sup> resolutely, He says: «I will certainly come to the synagogue, as a believer, exactly as I went there on the other Sabbaths. But it is not necessary for you to plead in My favour. Because one hour after sunset I will set out again to evangelize, as it is My duty to obey the Most High. »

A bad let-down for Joseph!... A very bad one!... All his good nature is shattered and his hostile intolerance comes to light again: «All right! But do not look for me in the hour of need. I have done my duty and Your certain misfortunes will not fall on me. Goodbye. I am one too many here because I cannot understand you, and you cannot understand me. I am going away, with no grudge, but very sad... May the Lord protect You as He protects all those who... are simple-minded, incomplete... Goodbye, Mary! Take heart, poor Mother! »

«Goodbye, Joseph. But I must take heart for you, not for Him. Because you are the one who is out of the path of God and you grieve Me» says Mary calmly but sure of Herself.

«You are a fool, that's what you are! And if you were not the head of the family I would give you a thrashing, as you are a creature of my blood but not of my spirit... » shouts Mary of Alphaeus. And she would have said more, but Mary implores her: «Be quiet! For My sake. »

«I'll be quiet. Yes. But... tell me if I have to see a rascal like him among my sons!... »

The rascal in the meantime has gone away, while good Mary of Alphaeus unburdens her soul with regards to that stubborn son. And she ends giving vent to her feelings by bursting into tears, and sobbing she expresses her greatest pain: «And I will not have him with me in Heaven, I will not have him! I will see him in torments! Oh! Jesus! It's for You to work the miracle! »

«Yes, Mary! Do not weep! His hour will come, too. The elev-

enth perhaps. But it will come. I can assure you. Do not weep... » says Jesus comforting her... And when her weeping is over He says to the apostles and disciples: «Let us go into the olive grove while the women prepare their things. We will speak among ourselves. »

441. A gift of Thomas to the Virgin and departure from Nazareth. The miracle of the fire that becomes the theme of two parables.

22<sup>nd</sup> May 1946.

441.1

It is the evening of the true Sabbath and life begins again after the Sabbatical rest. Here, in the little house in Nazareth, it begins, after the rest, with the preparations for departure. Provisions are packed, clothes are crammed in knapsacks, the straps of which are fastened tightly, sandals are examined to ensure that the leather laces and buckles are in good condition, and the little donkeys are watered and fed near the hedge of the kitchen garden... and greetings and tears shed among smiles and blessings, and promises to meet again soon... And the unexpected offer of Thomas to Mary: a buckle, we could call it a brooch, to keep a dress closed at the neck. It is made of three thin, airy, perfect stems of lily of the valley, enclosed in two leaves, so like real ones, as the metal has been wrought by a master-hand.

«I know, Mary, that You will never wear it, but please accept it just the same. I have been anxious to make it since the day when my Lord spoke of You\* comparing You with the lilies of the valley... I have done nothing for Your house... but I made this for You, so that the praise of Your Son may be expressed in a symbol for You Who deserve it more than any other woman. And if I have not been able to give the stem the softness of a living one and the sweet scent of the flower, may my sincere respectful love for You soften it like a caress and put on it the scent of my devotion for You, Mother of my Lord. »

«Oh! Thomas! It is true. I never wear jewels, as they seem vain things to Me. But this one is not so. This is love of My Jesus and

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\* spoke of You, in 412. 2/3.

of His apostle, and it is dear to Me. I will look at it every day and think of good Thomas who loves his Master so much, that he remembers not only His Doctrine, but also His most humble words about the most humble thing and the most humble insignificant people. Thank you, Thomas. Not for its value, but for your love, thanks! »

Everybody admires the perfect work and Thomas, beaming with joy, pulls out a smaller piece of work: three tiny jasmine stars with a tiny leaf bound in a thin circle, and gives it to Aurea. «Because you did not behave coquettishly to have it, because you were here when the jasmine bloomed, and so that these little stars may remind you of our Star. But mind! With your virtues you must perfume flowers and be a flower yourself, a candid, beautiful pure flower scenting towards Heaven. If you do not do that, I will take my brooch back. Come on, do not weep... everything passes... and we will soon come back to Mary's or She will come to us... and... » But Thomas, seeing that Aurea is shedding more and more tears, feels that it is better not to continue and he goes out, mortified, saying to Peter: «If I had known that... it was going to make her weep more, I would not have given it to her... I made that brooch just to comfort her in this hour... I guessed wrongly... »

<sup>3</sup>And Peter, in the confusion of the moment, does not control himself and says: «It is always like that when parting... You should have seen Syntyche... » and he realises that he has spoken, he wants to correct himself, he becomes purple... but... it is done...

Thomas understands, and kindly throws his arm around Peter's neck saying: «Don't be distressed, Peter. I know how to be quiet. And I understand why you have not said anything... Because of Judas of Simon. On the God of our fathers I swear to you that what I have learned involuntarily is forgotten. Do not be upset, Simon!... »

«It's because the Master did not want... »

«He certainly had good reasons for that. I don't take offence. »

«I know. But what will He say? »

«Nothing, because He will not know. You can trust me. »

«Ah! No! I will not resort to subterfuges with the Master. I made a mistake. I deserve to be reproached. And at once. I will



)  
not have peace unless I confess my error to Him. Thomas, be good. Go and call Him... I am going into the workshop. Go, and come back with Him. I am too upset to go and the others would notice me. »

Thomas looks at him with compassion full of admiration and goes back into the house to call Jesus: «Master, please come here for a moment. I have something to tell You. »

Jesus, Who was saying goodbye to Mary of Alphaeus, follows him at once. «What do you want? » He asks while walking beside him.

«I, nothing. Simon wants to speak to You. There he is... »

«Simon! What is the matter, why are you so upset? »

Peter throws himself at Jesus' feet moaning: «I have sinned! Absolve me! »

«Sinned? How? You were there with us, happy and peaceful... »

«Ah! Master, I disobeyed You. I told Thomas about Syntyche... I was upset because of the tears and he was more upset than I was; he thought that he had increased them... to comfort him I said: "It is always like that when parting... If you had seen Syntyche... " and he understood!... » Peter raises his troubled face, he looks mortified and desolate.

«Praised be God, My Simon! I thought you had done something much more serious than that. And your sincerity cancels even that. You spoke without malice, you spoke to one of your companions. Thomas is good and will not divulge the news... »

«He swore it to me, in fact... But see? Now I am afraid that I am too foolish and that I cannot keep a secret. »

«You have kept it so far. »

«Yes, but just consider! Never one word to Philip and Nathanael! And now... »

«Come on, stand up! Man is always imperfect. But when he is so without malice, he commits no sin. Be careful, but do not distress yourself any more. Your Jesus can but kiss you. Thomas, come here. » Thomas approaches Him. «You have certainly understood the reasons for being silent. »

«Yes, Master. And I swore to respect them as far as I am concerned and capable. I have already told Simon... »

«The foolish Simon» says Peter with a sigh.

«No, my friend. You have edified me through your perfect humbleness and sincerity. You have taught me a *great* lesson, which I will never forget. For prudential reasons I shall not be able to make it known, and that grieves me, because only a few among us are or would be as just as you have been...<sup>4414</sup> But they are calling us! Let us go. »

Many in fact are already in the street and the three women - Naomi, Myrtha and Aurea - have already mounted their little donkeys. Mary and Her sister-in-law are near Aurea, and they kiss her again, and when they see Jesus approaching, they kiss the two women disciples and they greet Jesus last and are blessed by Him, before He sets out...

And the Blessed Virgin and Mary of Clopas go back into the house... where, in remembrance of what was there a short while before, there are chairs out of place, kitchenware lying about... the disorder which takes place at every departure.

Mary, lost in thought, caresses the little loom on which She taught Aurea to work... Her eyes are shining with tears She has restrained.

«You are suffering, Mary! » says Mary of Clopas who is weeping without any effort to hold back her tears. «You have grown fond of her!... They come here... then they go away... and we suffer... »

«It is our life of women disciples. You heard what Jesus said today: "That is what you will do in future; you will be hospitable, supernaturally hospitable, seeing in every creature a brotherly soul, considering yourselves pilgrims and welcoming your guests as pilgrims. You will give them help, comfort, advice, and then you will let your brothers go to their destiny, without holding them back with jealous love, sure as you are that you will meet them after your death. Persecutions will come and many will leave you to go towards martyrdom. Do not be cowardly and do not advise cowardice to anybody. Remain in your empty house praying to support the courage of martyrs, unperturbed to fortify the weaker ones, strong in order to be ready to imitate heroes. Get accustomed to separations, to heroism, to the apostolate of brotherly charity, as from now... ". And we do so. Suffering... certainly! We are creatures made of flesh... But the spirit rejoices with a supernatural happiness which is to do the will of

the Lord and cooperate to His glory. On the other hand... I am the Mother of everybody... and I must not be the Mother of one only. I am not even the Mother of Jesus exclusively... You see how I let Him go away without holding Him back... I would like to be with Him, that is true. But He deems that I must stay here until He will say: "Come". And I am staying. His days of rest here? My joys of a mother. My peregrinations with Him? My joys of a disciple. My solitude here? My joys of a believer who does the will of Her Lord. »

«That Lord, Mary, is Your Son... »

441. 5 «Yes. But He is still My Lord... <sup>5</sup>Are you staying with Me, Mary? »

«Yes, if You will allow me... My house is so sad during the first hours, when my sons go away!... Tomorrow it will be different... And this time, I would weep even more... »

«Why, Mary? »

«Because I have been weeping my heart out since yesterday... I am like a cistern... A cistern in the rainy season. »

«But why, My dear? »

«Because of Joseph... yesterday... Oh! I don't know whether I should go and reprimand him severely, because after all he is my son, because I carried him in my womb and I suckled him at my breast and no first-born son is above his mother,... or whether I should not speak any more to that rascal who was born of me and offends my Jesus and You and... »

«You will do nothing of the kind. You will always be his "mother". The mother who pities her stubborn, sick, perverted son and soothes him with her kindness, and leads him to God with prayers and patience... Cheer up, do not weep!... Come with Me. We will pray for him in My room, and for those who are travelling, for the girl, that she may not suffer too much and she may grow in holiness... Come, Mary» and She takes her away...

441. 6 <sup>6</sup>The pilgrims in the meantime are going their way south-westwards. The women are in front, on their donkeys, which, being well fed and rested, are trotting lively, compelling Marjiam and Abel, who for prudential motives are at either side of Aurea, as she is in the saddle for the first time, to proceed almost at a running pace. But although it is tiring, it helps to take the girl's

mind off the sorrowful separation from Mary. Now and again, to let the two young men take breath, Myrtha reins in her donkey and makes a halt. And she resumes going only when the apostolic group joins them. And during such pauses, Aurea becomes sad again, as she is not distracted by the adventures of horseback riding...

Marjiam, who is experienced in the misfortunes of a little orphan taken in, out of charity, by an adoptive mother after he had known Mary, comforts her telling her how one becomes attached to the adoptive mother «exactly as if she were one's own mother^ and mentions his own impressions and relates how happy are Mary and Matthias with Johanna, and Anastasica with Eliza.

Aurea listens to the stories, and when Marjiam concludes by saying: «Believe me, the women disciples are *all* good, and Jesus knows to whom we poor wretches should be entrusted», and Abel corroborates saying: «And you must trust my mother who is so happy to have you and has prayed so much during these days to have you from God», Aurea replies: «I believe it. And I love her... But Mary is Mary... and you must bear with me... »

«Yes. But we are sorry to see you sad... »

«Oh! but I am not so sad as I was in the house of the Roman or during the first hours after my liberation... I am only... lost. For years I have never received a caress... Only Mary caressed me after I had been subjected to masters for many years... »

«My darling! But I am here to caress you! I will be another Mary for you. Come here, near me... If you were a little girl, I would take you in the saddle with me, as I used to do with my Abel when he was a little boy... But you are already a woman... » says Myrtha approaching her and taking her by the hand. «You are my little woman and I will teach you many things, and when Abel goes away evangelizing, you and I will receive pilgrims as the Lord says, and we will do much good in His Name. You are young and you will help me... »

<sup>7</sup>«But look at that light over there, beyond that hill! » exclaims James of Zebedee, who has come up to the women. 441. 7

«Is it a wood on fire? »

«Or a village? »

«Let us run up there and see... »

No one is tired any longer, because curiosity overwhelms all

sensations. Jesus follows them benevolently, leaving the road to take a path which climbs up a hillock. They soon reach the top...

But it is neither a wood nor a village which is on fire, but a large hollow moor all covered with heather, lying between two hills. The heather, parched by the summer heat, has caught fire perhaps because of a spark which escaped the woodmen working higher up cutting trees, and is now burning: a carpet of low but bright flames which move around seeking new heather to burn, after having consumed where they had been burning previously. The woodcutters try to fight the fire by striking the flames. But in vain. They are too few and if they work on one side, the fire spreads on another.

«If it reaches the wood, it will be a disaster. There are resin trees there» says Philip.

441.8     <sup>8</sup>Jesus, with folded arms, standing on the extreme edge of the hillock, looks and smiles... thinking...

The contrast between the white moonlight to the east and the red glow of the flames to the west, is strong and the backs of the onlookers are white in the moon-beams, whereas their faces are red in the reverberation of the flames. And the flames spread unceasingly, like water which rises, overflows and floods... The fire is now only a few metres from the wood and it is already lighting up the piles of wood placed at its borders, while the light, which is becoming brighter and brighter, shows the little houses of a village on the top of the hill where the fire is climbing.

«Poor people! They will lose everything! » say many. And they look at Jesus, Who is smiling, but does not speak...

Then... He unfolds His arms and cries: «Stop! Die down! I want it. »

And suddenly, as if a huge bank of earth had fallen to suffocate the flames, the fire goes out prodigiously, the lively nimble dance of the flames changes into red flameless embers, then the red becomes violet, grey-red... an occasional flash quivers among the ashes... and then only the silvery moonlight shines on the forests.

In the clear light the woodcutters are seen while they gather gesticulating, looking around, above... for the angel of the miracle...

«Let us go down. I will work on those souls through the un-

foreseen opportunity given to Me and we will stop in the village instead of resting in the town. We will leave at dawn. They will certainly have room for the women. The wood is quite enough for us» says Jesus and He goes down quickly followed by the others.

«But why were You laughing? You looked very happy! » asks Peter.

«You will find out from My words. »

9They are already where the fallow ground is covered with ashes still warm and creaking under their sandals. They go across it. When they are in the middle, where the moon shines fully, they are seen by the woodcutters. 441. 9

«Oh! I told you! He is the only one who could do that! Let us run and venerate Him» shouts a woodman and he does so by throwing himself on the ashes at Jesus' feet.

«What makes you think that I could do it? »

«Because only the Messiah can do that. »

«And how do you know that I am the Messiah? Do you know Me, perhaps? »

«No. But only the Good One Who loves the poor can have had pity, and only the Holy One of God can have given an order to the fire and be obeyed. Blessed be the Most High Who sent us His Messiah! And blessed be the Messiah Who came in time to save our homes! »

«You ought to be more anxious to save your souls. »

«We save them by believing in You and endeavouring to do what You teach. But You realise, Lord, that the distress of being deprived of everything can weaken our already weak souls... and lead us to doubt Providence. »

«Who informed you of Me? »

«Some of Your disciples... Here are our families... We had them woken because we were afraid that the whole hill would catch fire... Come here... Then we sent another man to inform them that a miracle had been worked and to come and see. Here they are, Lord. Mine. Jacob's, this one is Jonathan's, this one Mark's, this is the family of my brother Tobias, this one is of my brother-in-law Melkia, this is Philip's and this is Eleazar's. The others are the families of the shepherds who are now at the pastures up in the high mountains... »

It is a group of about two hundred and fifty people at the most,

including the little ones, sucking infants or babies just weaned, whimpering half asleep, or sleeping unaware of the danger in which they had been.

«Peace to you all. The angel of God has saved you. Let us praise the Lord together. »

«You saved us! You are always present where faithful people believe in You! » say many women... And the men nod solemnly.

441.10

«Yes. <sup>10</sup>Providence is present where there is faith in Me. But one must act with constant circumspection both in spiritual matters and in material ones. What set fire to the moor? Probably a spark from one of your fires or a little branch which one of the boys wanted to light on the fire to play with it, waving it and throwing it down the slope with the thoughtlessness of his age. It is in fact pleasant to see an arrow of fire furrow the air at dusk. But you can see what an imprudent act may cause! It can cause serious damage. A spark or a little branch which fell on the dry heather was enough to set a valley on fire, and if the Eternal Father had not sent Me, the whole wood would have become a bonfire, which in the grip of fire would have consumed your goods and your lives.

The same applies to matters of the spirit. You must pay continual prudent attention to ensure that no arrow of fire or spark may cling to your faith and destroy it, after smouldering unnoticed in your hearts, by means of arson wanted by those who hate Me and committed to deprive Me of believers. Since the fire was stopped here in time, from malefic it became beneficent, destroying the useless heath which you allowed to flourish in the valley, and preparing, by such destruction and the fertilizing ashes, a ground which you can exploit with useful cultivations, if you are willing to do so. But with hearts it is quite a different matter! When all the Good has been destroyed, nothing but bramble for the fodder of demons will grow in them. Remember that and be vigilant against My enemies' insinuations, which will be thrown into your hearts like infernal sparks. Be ready to fight the fire then. And what is that fight? A stronger and stronger Faith, a firm will to belong to God. It means to belong to a holy Fire. Because fire does not consume fire. Now, if you are fire of love for the true God, the fire of hatred against God will not be able to harm you. The Fire of love defeats every other fire. My Doctrine

is love and those who accept it enter the Fire of Charity and cannot be tortured by the fire of the Demon.

<sup>11</sup>From the top of that hill, while I was watching the heather burning and I heard the words of your souls to the Lord their God, more than I noticed your actions aiming at putting out the flames, I was smiling. And one of My apostles asked Me: "Why are You smiling? ". I promised him: "I will tell you when speaking to those who have been saved". And I am doing that now. I was smiling thinking that as the flames spread among the heather of the valley, in vain restrained by your efforts, so My Doctrine will spread throughout the world, persecuted in vain by those who reject Light. And it will be light. It will be purification. It will be beneficent. How many little snakes have perished among these ashes, and other harmful insects with them! You were afraid to come to the valley, because there were too many asps in it. Well, not even one has survived. Likewise the world will be freed of many heresies, of many sins, of many sorrows, when it becomes acquainted with Me and is cleansed by the fire of My Doctrine. Cleansed and freed of harmful vegetation, it will be ready for the seed, and will become rich in holy fruits. That is why I was smiling... In the fire which was advancing, I saw a symbol of the spreading of My Doctrine in the world. Then the love for our neighbour, which is never to be separated from that for the Lord, made Me consider your necessities. And I lowered My thoughts from the contemplation of the interests of God to that of the interests of My brothers, and I stopped the fire, so that while rejoicing, you might praise the Lord. You can thus see that My thought rose to God, it descended from Him made more powerful, because union with God always increases our powers, and rose, once again, to God with yours. Thus, through charity, I did at the same time promote the interests of the Father and of My brothers. Do likewise in your future lives.

<sup>12</sup>And now I ask you to give shelter to these women for the night. The moon is setting and the fire has delayed our journey. We cannot therefore proceed to the next town. »

«Come! Come all of you! There is room for everybody. We might have been homeless! Our homes are yours. Our houses are poor, but clean. Come and they will be blessed» they all shout.

And they slowly climb the rather steep slope as far as the little



village, which miraculously escaped destruction, then each pilgrim disappears with his host...

442. Judas Iscariot in Nazareth at the house of Mary.

23<sup>rd</sup> May 1946.

442. 1 'Dawn is breaking and the eastern sky is just beginning to redden, when Judas of Kerieth knocks at the door of the little house in Nazareth.

On the road there are only peasants, or rather: small land owners of Nazareth, who are going to their vineyards or olive-groves with their work tools and are greatly surprised at seeing the man knock at Mary's door so early in the morning. They speak in low voices to one another.

«He is a disciple» says one replying to the remarks of another. «He is certainly looking for Jesus of Joseph. »

«It's no use. He went away yesterday evening. I saw Him myself. I will tell him... » says another man.

«Never mind! It's Judas of Kerieth. I don't like him. Perhaps we are guilty of much wrong doing with regards to Jesus and we are making a mistake. But he, that man over there, did much harm to us here last year... We might have been converted. But he... »

«What? How do you know? »

«I was present one evening in the house of the head of the synagogue and I foolishly believed everything at once... Now... that's enough! I think I have sinned and... »

«Perhaps he also realised that he had sinned and... »

They move away and I can hear nothing else.

442. 2 <sup>2</sup>Judas knocks once again at the little door, to which he has been clinging, his face pressed against the wood, as if he wished to avoid being seen and recognized. But the little door remains closed. Judas makes a gesture of disappointment and he goes away along a path skirting the kitchen garden and he goes to the rear of the house. He casts a glance over the hedge of the quiet garden. Only the doves animate it.

Judas considers what to do. He talks to himself: «Has She perhaps gone away, too? And yet... I would have seen Her. And

then! No. I heard Her voice yesterday evening... Perhaps She has gone to sleep at Her sister-in-law's... Ugh! This is as annoying as a bee on one's face, because She will come back with her, and I want to speak to Her alone, without that old woman as a witness. She is gossipy and would raise objections. And I don't want any. And she is as sly as every old wife of the people. She would not accept my excuses and she would point that out to that stupid dove of her sister-in-law... I know I can make a fool of Her... in every way. She is as dull as ditch-water... And I *must* put right what happened at Tiberias. Because if She speaks... I wonder whether She has mentioned it or has kept quiet? If She has spoken, it is more difficult to put matters right... But She will not have spoken... She confuses virtue with foolishness. Like Mother like Son... And the others are busy while they are fast asleep. In any case they are right. Why leave them aside if they seem to be wanting... But what do they want after all?... My notions are foggy... I must stop drinking and... Of course! But money is a temptation, and I am like a colt which has been kept inside too long. Two years, I say! Even longer! Two years of all kinds of abstinence... But in the meantime... What did Helkai say the day before yesterday? Eh! He is not a bad teacher! Certainly! Everything is legal providing we succeed in putting Jesus on the throne. But if He does not want that? But He must certainly consider that if we do not triumph, we will all end up like the followers of Theudas or of Judas the Galilean\*... Perhaps I ought to part company with them because... well, I do not know whether what they want is right. I don't trust them very much... They have changed too much recently... I would not like to... How dreadful! I to be the means to damage Jesus? No. I will part company. But it is sad to have dreamt of a kingdom and have to go back to what? To nothing... But better nothing than... He always says: "He who will commit the great sin". Hey!? It won't be me, eh! Me? Me? I will sooner drown myself in the lake... I'll go away. It is better for me to go away. I will go to my mother, I will get her to give me some money, because I certainly cannot ask the members of the Sanhedrin to give me the money to go away.

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\* Theudas, already mentioned in 73. 5, and Judas the Galilean, who will also be mentioned in 478. 3 and 507. 3. Their fate as remembered by Gamaliel in: Acts 5, 36-37.

They help me because they hope that I will help them to get over their state of uncertainty. Once Jesus is acknowledged as king, we will be settled. The crowds will side with us... Herod... who will bother about him? Neither the Romans nor the people. They all hate him! And... and... But Jesus is quite capable of renouncing the throne as soon as He is proclaimed king. Oh! Well! When Eleazar ben Annas assures me that his father is ready to crown Him king!... Afterwards He cannot remove His sacred character. After all... I am doing what the unfaithful steward of His parable did... I am having resort to my friends on my behalf, that is true, but also on His. So I am making unfair means serve as... Well, no! I must try once again to persuade Him. I am not convinced that I am doing the right thing by resorting to this subterfuge... and... Oh! If I could only convince Him! Because it would be so beautiful! Yes... very! That is the best solution: to tell the Master everything frankly. To implore Him... Providing Mary has not told Him about Tiberias... What did I say I should tell Mary?... Ah! yes! The refusal of the Roman ladies. Cursed be that woman! If I had not gone to her, I would not have met Mary that evening! But who could have imagined that Mary was in Tiberias? And yet I never went out on the day before the Sabbath, on the Sabbath or the day after it, as I did not want to see any of the apostles... What a fool! I could have gone to Hippos, to Gerghesa to find a woman! No! I had to go just there! To Tiberias through which the people of Capernaum must pass to come here... And all that because of the Roman ladies... I was hoping... No, that is what I must say to excuse myself, but it is not true. There is no sense in saying that to myself, as I know why I went: to meet some of the powerful people in Israel and to have a good time, since I had plenty money... But... how quickly money goes. I will soon have none left... Ha! Ha! I will invent some story for Helkai and his partners and they will give me some more... »

442.3

3«O Judas! Have you gone mad? I have been watching you for some time from the top of this olive-tree. You are gesticulating, speaking by yourself... Has the sun of the month of Tammuz harmed you? » shouts Alphaeus of Sarah leaning out of the forked branches of a huge olive-tree, about thirty metres away from the spot where Judas is standing.

Judas starts, looks around, sees him and moans: «May death

rake you! Cursed village of spies! » But smiling affably he shouts:  
«No. But I am worried because Mary is not opening... Is She perhaps not well? I have knocked several times!... »

«Mary? You can knock as long as you like! She is in the house of a poor old woman who is dying. They sent for Her at the third watch... »

«But I must speak to Her. »

«Wait. I will come down and I will go and tell Her. But do you really need Her? »

«Eh! I should say so! I have been here since sunrise. »

Alphaeus climbs down the tree solicitously and runs away.

«He has seen me, too! And he will certainly come back with that other woman! Everything is going awry! » and he hurls a string of insults at Nazareth, the Nazarenes, Mary of Alphaeus, and even at the Blessed Virgin's charity for the dying woman and at the dying woman herself..

<sup>442</sup> He has not yet finished when the door, which from the dining-room leads into the kitchen garden, is opened and Mary appears looking very pale and sad.

«Judas! », «Mary! » they say simultaneously.

«I will now open the door to you. Alphaeus said to Me only: "Go home. There is someone wanting You" and I ran here, also because the old woman no longer needs Me. She has finished suffering because of a bad son... »

Judas, while Mary is speaking, runs along the path and goes back to the front of the house... Mary opens the door.

«Peace to you, Judas of Kerioth. Come in. »

«Peace to You, Mary. »

Judas is somewhat hesitant. Mary is kind, but serious.

«I knocked so much, at dawn. »

«Yesterday evening a son broke his mother's heart... And they came looking for Jesus. But Jesus is not here. I am saying that to you, too: Jesus is not here. You came late. »

«I know that He is not here. »

«How do you know? You have just arrived... »

«Mother, I will be frank with You, since You are good: I have been here since yesterday... »

«And why did you not come? Your companions came here every Sabbath, except one... »

«Eh! I know! I went to Capernaum but I did not find them. »

«Do not lie, Judas. *You never went to Capernaum.* Bartholomew remained there all the time and he never saw you. Bartholomew came here only yesterday. But you were not here yesterday... So... Why are you telling lies, Judas? Do you not know that a lie is the first step towards theft and homicide?... Poor Esther died, killed by grief because of the behaviour of her son. And Samuel, her son, became the shame of Nazareth through little lies, which became bigger and bigger... And from them he passed on to all the rest. Do you, an apostle of the Lord, wish to imitate him? Do you want your mother to die broken-hearted? »

She reproaches him slowly, in a low voice. But Her words bear heavily on him. Judas does not know what to reply. He sits down abruptly, his head in his hands.

442. 5     5Mary watches him. She then says: «Well? Why did you want to see Me? While assisting poor Esther I prayed for your mother... and for you... Because I feel sorry for both of you, and for two different reasons. »

«Then, if you pity me, forgive me. »

«I have never had ill-feelings. »

«What?... Not even because... of that morning at Tiberias?... You know? I was in that state because the evening before the Roman ladies had maltreated me as madman and... as the traitor of the Master. Yes, I admit it. I did the wrong thing in speaking to Claudia. I was mistaken with regards to her. But I do it for a good purpose. I grieved the Master. He has not mentioned it to me, but I am aware that He knows that I spoke. It was certainly Johanna who told Him. Johanna has never liked me and the Roman ladies grieved me... To forget, I drank... »

Mary's expression of compassion is unintentionally ironic, and She says: «Jesus, then, should get drunk every night, considering the grief He supposedly enjoys every day... »

«Did You tell Him? »

«I do not increase the bitterness of the chalice of My Son with the news of fresh defections, falls, sins, snares... I have been and will be silent. »

Judas falls on his knees trying to kiss Mary's hand, but She withdraws, without being rude, but quite decided not to be touched or kissed.

«Thank You, Mother! You are saving me. That is why I came here... and that You might make it easier for me to approach the Master without being reproached or ashamed. »

«To avoid that, all you had to do was to go to Capernaum and I then come here with the others. It was very simple. »

«That is true... But the others are not kind, and they had me spied upon in order to reproach and accuse me. »

«Do not give offence to your brothers, Judas. Stop committing sins! You have been spying here, in Nazareth, the fatherland of the Christ, you... »

Judas interrupts Her: «When? Last year? They have distorted my words! But believe me, I... »

«I do not know what you did or said last year. I am referring to yesterday. You have been here since yesterday. You know that Jesus went away. So you have been investigating. But not in the friendly houses of Aser, Ishmael, Alphaeus, or of the brother of Judas and James, or of Mary of Alphaeus, or of any of the few people here who love Jesus. Because if you had done so, they would have come and told Me. Esther's house became crowded with women at dawn, when she died, but none of them had heard of you. They are the best among the women of Nazareth, those who love Me and love Jesus, and they strive to practise His Doctrine notwithstanding the hostility of their husbands, fathers and children. So you made inquiries among those who are enemies of My Jesus. What do you call that? I do not want to know.

"I tell you this only. Many swords will be plunged into My heart, 442-6 which will be pierced over and over again, mercilessly by the men who grieve My Jesus and hate Him. And one of the swords will be yours, and it will never be withdrawn. Because the memory of you, Judas, who do not want to be saved, who are ruining yourself, who are frightening Me, not because I am afraid for Myself, but for your soul, the memory of you will never be forgotten by My heart. Just Simeon pierced my soul with one sword, while I was carrying My Baby, My holy little Lamb, against My heart... You... you are the other sword. The point of your sword is already torturing My heart. But you are not yet satisfied with distressing a poor woman thus... and you are waiting to thrust your sword, like an executioner, right through the heart which has given you nothing but love... But it is foolish of Me to ex-

pect pity from you, who have none for your own mother!... On the contrary, now, I tell you! With one blow you will transfix Me and her, o wretched son, whom the prayers of two mothers cannot save!... >>

Mary weeps while speaking, but her tears do not fall on Judas' dark-haired head, because he has remained where he fell on his knees, away from Mary... The holy tears are absorbed by the brick floor. And the scene reminds me of Aglae, on whom, instead, Mary's tears fell\*, because she was pressing against Mary in sincere desire of redemption.

442. 7

7«Can you not find one word, Judas? Can you not find within yourself the strength for a good purpose? Oh! Judas! Judas! Tell Me: are you satisfied with your way of living? Examine yourself, Judas. First of all, be humble and sincere with yourself, and then with God, so that you may go to Him, after removing your burden of stones from your heart, and say to Him: "Here I am. For Your sake I got rid of these stones". »

«I haven't... the courage to confess to Jesus. »

«You have not the humbleness to do it. »

«That is true. Help me... »

«Go to Capernaum and wait for Him, humbly. »

«But You could... »

«I can but tell you to do what My Son always does: to have mercy. I do not teach Jesus, but it is Jesus Who teaches Me, His disciple. »

«You are His Mother. »

«And that concerns My heart. But, by right, He is My Master. Exactly the same as He is for all the other women disciples. »

«You are perfect. »

«He is the Most Perfect One. »

Judas is silent and pensive. He then asks: «Where has the Master gone? »

«To Bethlehem in Galilee. »

«And then? »

«I do not know. »

«Is He coming back here? »

«Yes, He is. »

\* Mary's tears foil, as narrated in 168. 8.

«When? »

I dō not know.

«You do not want to tell me! »

«I cannot tell you what I do not know. You have followed Him for two years. Can you say that His itinerary was always certain? How many times did the will of men compel Him to change it? »

«True. <sup>81</sup> will go away... To Capernaum. »

442. 8

«The sun is too strong to travel. Stay here. You are a pilgrim like all the others. And He said that the women disciples are to take care of them. »

«My presence is unpleasant to You... »

«The fact that you do not want to be cured is grievous to Me! Only that... Take off your mantle... Where did you sleep? »

«I did not sleep. I waited until dawn as I wanted to see You all alone. »

«Then you must be tired. In the large room there are the little beds which Simon and Thomas used. It is still quiet and cool in there. Go and sleep while I prepare some food for you. »

Judas goes away without discussion. And Mary, without a rest after sitting up the whole night, goes into the kitchen to light the fire and then into the kitchen garden to get some vegetables. And tears and tears fall silently while She bends over the fire-place arranging the firewood, or when She stoops to pick the vegetables, and while She washes them in the basin and prepares them... And tears fall with the golden grains of corn when She feeds the doves, and they fall on the clothes which She takes out of the wash-tub and hangs out in the sun... The tears of the Mother of God... of the Faultless Mother, Who was not exempt from sorrow and suffered more than any other woman, in order to be the Co-Redeemer...

#### 443. The death of the grandfather of Marjiam.

25<sup>th</sup> May 1946.

<sup>1</sup> Jesus must have left the women because He is with the apostles, Isaac and Marjiam. They are going down the last slopes towards the Esdraelon plain while it is slowly getting darker.

443. 1

Marjiam is very glad that the Lord is taking him to his dear



grandfather. The apostles are not so happy, as they remember the recent incident with Ishmael\*. But they are gravely silent, in order not to grieve the boy, who rejoices that he has not touched the honey which Porphirea gave him, «because» he says «I was hoping that the Lord would satisfy the desire of my heart by letting me see my grandfather. I do not know why... but for some time he has always been present to my spirit, as if he were calling me. I told Porphirea and she said to me: “It happens to me as well, when Simon is away”. But I don’t think it is as she says, because it never happened to me before. »

«Because you were a little boy previously. Now you are a man and you ponder more over things» Peter says to him.

«I have also two small round pieces of cheese and some olives. Just what I could bring of my own to my beloved grandfather. Then I have a hemp tunic and another hemp garment. Porphirea wanted to make them for me. But I said to her: “If you love me, make them for the old man”. He is always so tattered and torn, so hot wearing clothes of coarse wool!... He will have some relief. »

«And so you are left without any cool clothes, and you are sweating like a sponge wearing woolen ones» Peter says to him.

«Oh! It does not matter! My grandfather went very often without food to give it to me, when I lived in the wood... At last I also can give him something. I wish I could save enough to give him what he needs to redeem himself! »

«How much have you got so far? » asks Andrew.

«Little. I earned one hundred and ten didrachmas with the fish. But I will soon be selling the lambs and then... If I could do it before it gets very cold!... »

«Will you be keeping him? » Nathanael asks Peter.

«Yes. We shall not be ruined if the poor old man has a morsel of our food... »

«And then... He will be able to do little jobs... He can come to Bethsaida, where we are, is that right, Philip? »

«Of course... We will help you, Simon, and thus make our good Marjiam and the old man happy... »

443. 2     <sup>2</sup>«Let us hope that Johanan is not there... » says Judas Thaddeus.

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\* Ishmael may have been a slip-up by M. V. instead of *Johanan*, the protagonist of the episode narrated in chapter 430.

«I will go ahead and warn them» says Isaac.

They walk fast in the moonlight... At a certain point Isaac parts from them quickening his step, while the group follows him more slowly. There is dead silence in the plain. Even night-ingales are quiet.

They walk on, until they see two shadows running towards them. «One is certainly Isaac... The other... may be Micah or the steward. One is as tall as the other... » says John.

They are now close... very close... It is the steward followed by Isaac who looks dismayed.

«Master... Marjiam poor son! Come quickly... Your grandfather, Marjiam, is ill... very ill... »

«Ah! Lord!... » shouts the boy sorrowfully.

«Let us go, let us go... Be strong, Marjiam» and Jesus takes his hand and starts almost to run while He says to the apostles: «You can follow us. »

«Yes... But don't make too much noise... Johanan is there» shouts the steward who is already far away.

<sup>3</sup>The poor old man is in Micah's house. Even a fool can understand that he is really dying. He is lying languidly, his eyes closed, his features relaxed, as is typical of a dying person. He is waxen, with the exception of his cheek-bones, where a cyanotic red persists. 443. 3

Marjiam bends over the little bed calling: «Grandpa! My grandpa! I am Marjiam! Do you understand? Marjiam! Jabez! Your Jabez!... O Lord! He no longer hears me... Come here, Lord ... Come here. Will You try... Cure him... Let him see me, let him speak to me... Must I see all my relatives die thus, without a parting word to me?... »

Jesus approaches him, He bends over the dying man, He lays a hand on his head saying: «Son of My Father, listen to Me. »

Like one who awakes from a deep sleep, the old man takes a deep breath, he opens his already glassy eyes looking vaguely at the two faces bent over his. He tries to speak, but his tongue is powerless. But now he must have been able to recognize, because he smiles and tries to take the hands of the two to lift them to his lips.

«Grandpa... I have come... I prayed so hard that I might come!... I wanted to tell you... that I will soon have enough mon-

ey... that I will be able to give you what you need to redeem yourself... and you will come with me, to Simon and Porphirea, who are so good, so kind to your Jabez... and to everybody... »

The old man succeeds in moving his tongue and he says with difficulty: «May God reward them... and reward you... But it is late... I am going to Abraham... to suffer no more... » He turns towards Jesus and eagerly asks: «It is so, is it not? »

«It is. Be in peace! » and Jesus straightens Himself imposingly saying: «With My power of Judge and Saviour, I absolve you of all faults and omissions you may have committed during your lifetime, and of any feeling of your heart against charity and against those who hated you. I forgive you everything, son. Go in peace! » Jesus has held His hands stretched out high above the little bed as if He were before an altar and He, the Priest, were consecrating a victim.

443.4 <sup>4</sup>Marjiam is weeping, while the old man smiles gently whispering: «One falls asleep peacefully with Your help... Thank You, Lord... » and he collapses...

«Grandpa! Grandpa! Oh! he is dying! he is dying! Let us give him some honey... his tongue is dry... He is cold... honey warms one... » shouts Marjiam and he tries to search in the sack with one hand while he supports with the other his grandfather's head, which is becoming heavier.

The apostles have appeared on the threshold... and are watching in silence...

«A11 right, Marjiam. I will hold your grandfather» says Jesus... and then, addressing Peter: «Simon, come here... »

And Simon comes forward, deeply moved.

Marjiam tries to give a little honey to the old man. He puts a finger into the little vase and takes it out covered with liquid honey, which he places on the lips of his grandfather, who opens his eyes again, looks at him, smiles and says: «It's good. »

«I made it for you... And also the tunic of fresh hemp... »

The old man lifts his trembling hand and endeavours to lay it on the brown-haired head saying: «You are good... better than honey... And that... the fact that you are good, does me good... But your honey... does not serve any more... Neither does your cool tunic... Keep them... keep them with my blessing... »

Marjiam falls on his knees and weeps with his head resting

on the edge of the little bed moaning: «All alone! I am remaining all alone! »

Simon goes to the other side of the bed and in a voice made more hoarse than ever by emotion, he caresses Marjiam's hair saying: «No... Not alone... I love you. Porphirea also loves you... The disciples... as many brothers... And then... Jesus... Jesus Who loves you... Don't weep, my son! »

«Your... son... yes... I... happy... Lord!... Lord... » the old man whispers confusedly... he feels the end is approaching.

<sup>5</sup>Jesus embraces him with one arm, lifts him up, and intones slowly: «I lift my eyes to the mountains, whence help will come I o me» and He continues till the end of psalm 120. He then stops watching the man who is dying in His arms placated by those words... He intones psalm 121. But He says little of it, because as soon as He starts the fourth verse He stops, saying: «Go in peace, just soul! » and He lays him down again slowly and closes his eyelids with His hand. 443. 5

Such a placid death that no one, except Jesus, noticed it. But they realise seeing the gesture of the Master and they begin to whisper.

Jesus makes a gesture requesting silence. He goes beside Marjiam, who has not noticed anything, as he is weeping with his head on the bed, He bends and embraces the boy and tries to lift him up saying: «He is in peace, Marjiam! He does not suffer any more. This is the greatest grace of God for him: death, and in the arms of the Lord! Do not weep, dear son. Look how peaceful he is... In peace... Few people in Israel had the reward which this just man had, to die on the breast of the Saviour. Come here, in My arms... You are not alone. And there is God, and that is everything, and He loves you for the whole world. »

<sup>6</sup>Poor Marjiam is really in a pitiful state, but he still finds the strength to say: «Thank You, Lord, for coming... and you, Simon, for bringing me here... And to you all, thanks... for what you gave me for him... But it is of no farther use... But... the garment is... We are poor... We cannot have him embalmed... Oh! grandfather! I cannot even give you a sepulchre!... But if you trust me, if you can... meet the expenses and in October I will give you the money of the lambs and of the fish... » 443. 6

«Hey! I say: you still have a father! I will see to it, at the cost

of selling a boat. The old man will receive full honours. The important thing is to have a loan... and someone who can give a sepulchre... »

The steward says: «In Jezreel there are some disciples among the people. They will not deny anything. I will go at once and I will be back by the third hour... »

«Good, but... the Pharisee? »

«Don't worry. I will let him know that there is a dead man and in order not to be contaminated, he will not come out of the house. I am going... »

And while Marjiam, bent over his grandfather, weeps and caresses him, and Jesus speaks in a low voice to the apostles and to Isaac, Micah and the others are busy preparing the last honours to their dead companion.

443. 7 <sup>7</sup>And I make here a personal comment. I happened to be in similar situations several times, and I often noticed that the people present, with good intentions or with blameworthy intolerance, contradict those who grieve over the loss of a relative. I point out the kindness of Jesus, Who bears with the suffering of the orphan and does not exact an unnatural heroism from him... How much there is to be learned from each least act of Jesus!...

444. Praise to Marjiam. Lesson on the sole precept of love, on the salvation of virtuous pagans and on the merits of the Man God.

30<sup>th</sup> May 1946 (Ascension-Day).

444. 1 <sup>1</sup>«Where did you leave the boats, Simon, when you came to Nazareth? » asks Jesus while walking north-eastwards, leaving behind the Esdraelon plain and proceeding towards Mount Tabor.

«I sent them back, that they may go fishing, Master. But I told them to be at Tarichea every third day... I did not know how long I would be staying with You. »

«Very well. Which one of you wants to go to tell My Mother and Mary of Alphaeus to join us at Tiberias? Joseph's house will be the meeting place. »

«Master... we would all like to go. But it is better if You say

who is to go. »

<<Then, Matthew, Philip, Andrew and James of Zebedee. Let the others come with Me to Tarichea. You will explain to the women the reason for the delay. And tell them to close the houses and to come. We will be together for the whole duration of the moon. Go, because this is where the road diverges. And may peace be with you. » He kisses the four who part, and He takes to I lie road again with the others.

Hut after a few steps He stops and watches Marjiam who is walking with his head lowered a little behind the group. When the boy comes up with Him, Jesus passes His hand under his chin forcing him to raise his head. Tears are streaming down the boy's tanned face.

«Would you like to go to Nazareth, too? »

«Yes, Master... But do as You wish. »

«I want you to be consoled, son... Go... Run after them. My Mother will comfort you. » He kisses the boy and lets him go, and Marjiam starts running and soon catches up with the four apostles.

<sup>2</sup>«He is still a boy... » remarks Peter.

444. 2

«And he is suffering much... Yesterday evening, as I found him weeping in a corner of the house, he said to me: "It is as if my father and mother had died yesterday... The death of my old grandfather has renewed all the grief in my heart..." » says John.

«Poor son!... But it was a good thing that he was present at that death... » says the Zealot.

«He had so fondly cherished the illusion that he might be able to help the old man!... Porphirea told me that he made all sorts of sacrifices in order to be able to save money. He worked in fields, he made faggots for bakers, he fished, he did not eat any cheese or honey, so that he might sell them... He had that fixed idea in his heart and wanted the old man with him... who knows! » says Peter.

«He is a serious-minded and strong-willed man. Sacrifice and work are no burden to him. Good points» says Bartholomew.

«Yes, he is a good son and will be one of the best disciples. You can see how strictly he controls himself even in the most troubled circumstances... His afflicted heart was longing for Mary, but he did not ask to go. He has understood so well what strength

there is in praying, that he exceeds many adults» says Jesus.

«Do you think that he makes sacrifices with an intent fixed in advance? » asks Thomas.

«I am sure he does. »

«It is true. Yesterday he gave some fruit to an old man saying: “Pray for my father’s father, who died recently”, and I remarked to him: “He is in peace, Marjiam. Do you not consider Jesus’ absolution valid? ”. He replied to me: “I do consider it valid. But when offering sacrifices, I think of the souls for whom no one prays, and I say: if my grandfather no longer needs this, let these sacrifices be atonement for those who are forgotten by everybody”. And I remained edified» says James of Alphaeus.

«Yes» says Peter. «Yesterday he came to me and throwing his arms around my neck, because, after all, he is still a boy, he said to me: “Now you really are my father... and I am giving back to you what your kindness had allowed me to save. My old grandfather no longer needs that money... and you and Porphirea are doing so much for me... ”. I, I found it difficult to restrain my tears, I replied to him: “No, son. We will use that money as alms to poor old people or to orphans and God will make use of your alms to increase the peace of your old grandfather”. And Marjiam kissed me twice so fondly that... well... I could not hold back my tears. And how grateful he is to you, Bartholomew, for meeting the expenses. He said to me: “As far as I am concerned the honour paid to my old grandpa is priceless. I will tell Bartholomew to keep me as his servant”. »

«Oh! poor son! Not even for one hour! He serves the Lord and edifies us all. I honoured a just man. I was able to do it because my name is well known and it is easy for me to find people willing to advance a sum of money. When in Bethsaida I will have the little debt settled, after all it was a trifle... »

«Yes. With regards to money it was not much, because those in Jezreel were generous. But your love for a fellow disciple is not a trifle. Because each act of love is of great value.

444. 3 <sup>3</sup>You are being perfected in your neighbour’s love, which is the latter part of the fundamental precept of the Law of God, and which had been gravely neglected in Israel. The many precepts, the minuteness which followed the simple, yet complete, although brief Law of Sinai, have distorted the former part of the

fundamental precept, converting it into a heap of exterior rites which lack what gives them strength, value, truth: that is they lack *active consistence of the interior with the exterior forms of cult*, through deeds performed and temptations overcome. What value can the ostentation of a cult have in the eyes of God, when internally a heart does not love God, does not annihilate itself in respectful love for God, when a heart does not praise and admire God by loving what He made, and first of all by loving man, who is the masterpiece of the terrestrial Creation?

Do you understand how the mistake was made in Israel? It happened because, at first, of one precept they made two, and afterwards, with the decline- of spirits, they cut the latter neatly off from the former, as if it were a useless branch. It was not a useless branch, there were not even two branches. It was one trunk only, which from its very base had adorned itself with the individual virtues of the two loves. Look at that big fig-tree which has grown up there, on that hillock. It grew spontaneously, and almost from its roots, that is, as soon as it sprang up from the ground, it split into two branches, which are so united that the two barks have adhered together. But each branch has put forth its own foliage at the sides, in such an eccentric manner, that the little village on this hillock has been named after it the "House of the twin fig-tree". Now, if one should want to separate the two trunks, which are actually one trunk only, one would have to use a hatchet or a saw. But what would one do? One would cause the tree to die, or, if one were so skilful as to handle the hatchet or the saw in such a way as to injure one only of the two trunks, one would be saved whilst the other would inexorably die, and the survivor, although still alive, would live poorly and would probably wither, bearing no fruit or very little.

The same happened in Israel. They wanted to divide, to separate the two parts, which were so united as to really be one thing only, they wanted to touch up what was perfect. Because each work, each thought and work of God is perfect. Therefore, if God on Sinai ordered man to love the Most High God and his neighbour, by means of one only precept, it is evident that they are not precepts which may be practised independently one from the other, but they are one precept only. And as I am never satisfied with perfecting you in this sublime virtue, the greatest of them



all, because it rises with the spirit to Heaven and is the only one which subsists in Heaven, I insist on it, the soul of the whole life of e spirit, which dies if it loses Charity, because it loses God.

444.4 <sup>4</sup>Listen to Me. Suppose one day a very wealthy couple came and knocked at your door, asking to be given hospitality for their lifetime. Could you say: "We accept the husband, but we do not want the wife" without hearing the husband reply to you: "That is not possible, because I cannot part with the flesh of my flesh. If you do not want to accept her, I cannot stay with you, and I will go away with all my treasures, which I would have shared with you"?

God is joined to Charity. And Charity is truly, and more intimately and really the spirit of His Spirit even more than a married couple who love each other deeply. God Himself is Charity. Charity is but the most manifest and illustrative aspect of God. Of all His attributes Charity is the sovereign and original one, because all the other attributes of God originate from Charity. What is Power but active charity? What is Wisdom but teaching charity? What is Mercy but forgiving charity? What is Justice but ruling charity? And I could go on thus with regards to all the countless attributes of God. Now, after what I have said, can you believe that he, who has no Charity, has God? No, he has not. Can you imagine that he may accept God, but not Charity? There is one Charity only and it embraces Creator and creatures and it is not possible to have only one half of it: that for the Creator, without having also the other half: that for our neighbour.

God is in His creatures. He is in them with His indelible sign, with His rights of Father, Spouse and King. The soul is His throne, the body His temple. Now he who does not love one of his brothers and despises him, holds in contempt, grieves and underestimates the Landlord of his brother's house, the King, the Father, the Spouse of his brother, and it is natural that this great Being Who is Everything, and Who is present in a brother, in all brothers, should consider as given to Him the offence given to a lesser being, to a part created by Everything, that is to a single man. That is why I taught you the corporal and spiritual works of mercy, t hat is why I taught you not to scandalise your brothers, that is why I taught you not to judge, not to have contempt or to reject your brothers, whether they are good or not good, faith-

ful or Gentiles, friends or enemies, rich or poor.

“When on a nuptial bed a conception takes place, it is performed through the same action, whether it happens on a golden bed or on straw in a stable. And the creature which forms in a royal womb is no different from that which forms in the womb of a beggar. To conceive, to form a new being, is the same in every spot of the Earth, irrespective of parents’ religion. All creatures are born as Abel and Cain were born of Eve’s womb. And to the equality of conception, formation and manner of birth of the children of man and woman on the Earth, corresponds another (‘quality in Heaven: the creation of a soul to be infused into the embryo, so that it may be the soul of a man and not of an animal, and it may accompany him from the moment of its creation until death, and may survive expecting the universal resurrection, when it will join the risen body and have with it a reward or a punishment. A reward or punishment according to the deeds accomplished in the earthly life. Do not think that Charity is unfair, and that only because many people do not belong to Israel or to Christ, although they are virtuous in the religion which they follow convinced that it is the true one, they are to remain forever without reward.

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After the end of the world no other virtue will survive except Charity, that is, the Union of all the creatures who lived in justice, with the Creator. There will not be several Heavens: one for Israel, one for Christians, one for Catholics, one for Gentiles, one for heathens. There will be one Heaven only. And likewise there will be one reward only: God, the Creator, Who rejoins His creatures who lived according to justice, and in whom, because of the beauty of the souls and bodies of saints, He will admire Himself with the joy of Father and of God. There will be one Lord only. Not one Lord for Israel, one for Catholicism, one for each of the other religions.

°I will now reveal a great truth to you. Remember it. Hand it down to your successors. Do not always wait for the Holy Spirit to clarify the truth after years or centuries of darkness. Listen. You may say: “Then, what justice is there in belonging to the holy religion, if at the end of the world we shall be treated exactly as the Gentiles? ”. I reply to you: the same justice which there is and it is true justice - for those who, although they belong to

444. 6

the holy religion, will not be beatified, because they they did not lead a holy life. A virtuous heathen, only because he lived according to choice virtue, convinced that his religion was good, will have Heaven at the end. When? At the end of the world, when of the four abodes of the dead, two only will remain: that is, Paradise and Hell. Because Justice, at that time, will only be able to keep and give the two eternal kingdoms to those, who from the tree of free will, chose good fruits or wanted wicked ones. But what a long expectation before a virtuous heathen achieves that reward!... Do you not think so? And that expectation, particularly from the moment when Redemption will have taken place with all its consequent wonders and the Gospel will have been preached all over the world, will be the purgation of the souls which lived with justice in other religions, but were not able to enter the true Faith, after they became acquainted with its existence and the proof of its reality. Their abode will be Limbo for centuries and centuries, until the end of the world. The believers in the true God, who were not heroically holy, will have a long Purgatory, which may last until the end of the world for some of them. But after expiating and waiting, the good, irrespective of their provenance, will all sit at the right hand of God; the wicked, whichever their provenance may be, at the left hand and then in the dreadful Hell, while the Saviour will enter the eternal Kingdom with all the good souls. »

444. 7 «Lord, forgive me if I do not understand. What You say is very difficult... at least for me... You always say that You are the Saviour and that You will redeem those who believe in You. So those who do not believe, either because they did not know You, as they lived before You, or because - the world is so large! - they had no news of You, how can they be saved? \*» asks Bartholomew.

«I told you: because of their just lives, of their good deeds, and through their faith which they believe is the true one. »

«But they did not have recourse to the Saviour... »

«But the Saviour will suffer also for them. Do you not consider, Bartholomew, what ample value My merits of Man-God will have? »

«My Lord, they will always be inferior to those of God, to

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\* how can they be saved? is a question similar to that of Sinyche in 289. 5, followed by the reply of Jesus.

those You have always had. »

«Your reply is and is not correct. The merits of God are infinite, you say. Everything is infinite in God. But God does not have any merits in the sense that He has not merited. He has attributes, virtues of His own. He is He Who is: Perfect, Infinite, Almighty. But to merit, it is necessary to do something, and with effort, superior to our nature. For instance, to eat is not a merit. But to eat frugally can become a merit, if we make real sacrifices, in order to give to the poor what we save. It is no merit to be silent. But it becomes a merit if we are quiet instead of retorting an insult. And so forth. Now, you know that God does not need to make any effort, because He is Perfect, Infinite. But the Man-God can make an effort by humiliating His infinite divine Nature within human limitations, by defeating human nature, which is not absent or metaphorical, but real, in Him, with all its senses and feelings, with its possibility of suffering and dying, with its free will. No one loves death, particularly when it is painful, untimely and undeserved. No one loves it. And yet, (‘very man must die. So man ought to look at death with the same calm with which he sees every living being come to an end. Well, I force my Humanity to love death. Not only. But I chose life to tie able to have death. For the sake of Mankind. Thus, in my condition of Man-God I gain those merits which I could not have gained if I had remained God. And through them, which are infinite, because of the manner in which I gain them, because of the divine Nature joined to the human nature, because of the virtues of Charity and Obedience, with which I put Myself in condition to deserve them, because of Fortitude, Justice, Temperance, Prudence, because of all the virtues which I put in My heart to make it acceptable to God, My Father, I will have infinite power, not only as God, but also as Man, Who sacrifices Himself for the sake of everybody, that is, Who reaches the extreme limit of Charity. It is sacrifice which gives merit. The greater the sacrifice, the greater the merit. A complete merit for a complete sacrifice. Perfect merit for a perfect sacrifice. And it may be used according to the holy will of the victim, to whom the Father says: “Let it be as you wish! », because the victim has loved both God and his neighbour measurelessly. I tell you. The poorest man can be the richest and benefit countless brothers, if he can love to the

extent of sacrifice. I tell you: even if you did not have a crumb of bread, a glass of water, a ragged garment, you can always help. How? By praying and suffering for your brothers. Help whom? Everybody. In which way? In a thousand holy ways, because if you can love, you will be able to act, teach, forgive, administer as God does, and to redeem, as the Man-God redeems. »

444. 8 «0 Lord, grant us that charity! » says John with a sigh.

«God gives you it, because He gives Himself to you. But you must receive it and practise it more and more perfectly. No event is to be separated from charity, as far as you are concerned. Both with regards to material and to spiritual events. Everything is to be done with charity and for Charity. Sanctify your actions, your days, put salt in your prayers, and light in your actions. Light, flavour, sanctification are Charity. Without it rites are of no value, prayers are vain, offerings false. I solemnly tell you that the smile with which a poor man greets you as brothers is of greater value than a sack of money which one may throw at your feet only to be noticed. Love, and God will always be with you. »

«Teach us how to love thus, Lord. »

«I have taught you for two years. Do what you see Me do and you will be in Charity and Charity will be in you, and on you there will be the seal, the chrism, the crown, which will really make you known as the ministers of God-Charity. Let us stop now in this shady place. The grass is thick and long and the trees mitigate the heat. We will proceed in the evening... »

445. In Tiberias, the return of the Iscariot during a storm.

Two parables. The arrival of the Holy Mary,  
who intercedes for salvation of Samuel of Esther.

3<sup>rd</sup> June 1946.

445. 1 'Jesus arrives at Tiberias with His apostles on a stormy morning. He has come along the short route from Tarichea to Tiberias, with the boats tossing terribly on the very rough lake which is grayish like the sky, where large clouds chase one another threateningly.

Peter scans the sky and the lake and orders the servants to put the boats in a safe place: «Before long you will hear some

fine music! I am no longer Peter the fisherman, if the downpour and the billows of the lake do not cause damage shortly. Is there anybody on the lake? » he asks himself scanning the heavy sea of Galilee. And he sees that it is deserted, with billows sweeping it more and more violently, under the vault of heaven which is becoming more and more threatening. He takes comfort seeing that it is deserted and thinking that it will not cause any harm to human beings, and he happily follows the Master, Who is proceeding among such strong gusts of wind, that the apostles walk with difficulty in clouds of dust, while their garments flap fiercely in the storm.

In Tiberias, in this part of the town where ordinary people live, families of fishermen or of poor workmen employed in jobs connected with fishing, people are busy coming and going to put back in the houses what could be damaged by the storm. Some run laden with nets, some with the oars from boats which have already been beached safely, and some drag their working tools into the houses, and all this takes place in the howling wind which raises clouds of dust and makes doors bang. The other part of Tiberias, the northern one, with buildings lined along the lake and beautiful parks visible along the curved shore, is sleeping idly. Only some servants or slaves, according to whether the house belongs to Israelites or to Romans, are busy removing curtains from roof-terraces, beaching sport-boats, and taking away chairs lying about in gardens...

<sup>2</sup>Jesus, Who has come to this part, says to Simon Zealot and to His cousin Judas: «Go and ask the door-keeper of Johanna Of Chuza whether any of our friends have been looking for us. I will wait here. » 445. 2

«All right. And what about Johanna? »

«We will see her later. Go and do what I told you. »

The two go away quickly, and while the others are awaiting their return, Jesus sends them, some here, some there, to get a little food «for themselves and for the women, because it is not fair to be a burden to the family of the disciple» says Jesus. And He remains alone, leaning against the wall of a garden, from which comes the roar of a hurricane, so violent is the struggle of its tall trees against the wind.

Jesus is engrossed in thought, wrapped in His clothes, which

He holds tight under His mantle, the top part of which He has pulled over His head like a hood, to protect Himself against the wind, which blows His hair in His eyes. And thus, covered in dust, with His face half hidden by the edge of His mantle, leaning against a wall almost at the corner of a road, which crosses a beautiful thoroughfare coming from the lake towards the town centre, He looks like a beggar waiting for alms. Some people pass by and look at Him. But since He does not say anything and does not ask for anything and is keeping His head lowered, no one stops to give Him anything or to speak to Him. The storm in the meantime has become more violent and the noise of the lake stronger, filling the whole town with its roar.

445. 3 *3*A tall man, who is walking stooped to defend himself from the wind - he also is completely wrapped in his mantle, which he is holding tight under his chin with one hand - is coming from the internal road towards the coast one, and, on looking up to avoid a file of donkeys of market-gardeners who, after leaving the vegetables at the market, are going back to their gardens, he sees Jesus (and I see that the young man is Judas of Kerioth).

«Oh! Master! » he exclaims from the other side of the donkey file. I was just coming to Johanna's looking for You. I was at Capernaum looking for You, but... » The last donkey has gone by and Judas rushes towards the Master, ending his speech: «... but there was nobody at Capernaum. I waited for days, then I came back here, and I went to Joseph's and to Johanna's every day looking for You... »

Jesus looks at him with His piercing eyes, and stops those impetuous words by saying simply: «Peace be with you. »

«It's true! I did not even greet You! Peace be with You, Master. But You always have such peace! »

«And have you not? »

«I am a man, Master. »

«A just man has peace. Only the guilty man is upset. Are you such? »

«I... No, Master. At least... Of course, if I have to tell You the truth, the fact that I was far from You did not make me happy... but that was not exactly being deprived of peace. I missed You, because I am fond of You... But peace is something different, is it not?... »

«Yes. It is. Separations do not impair the peace of the heart, if the heart of the separated person does not do things which his conscience tells him to be such as to grieve the person he loves, if the latter should hear of them. »

«But those who are absent do not know... Unless somebody tells them. »

Jesus looks at him and is silent.

<sup>4</sup>«Are You alone, Master? » asks Judas trying to change the subject to more usual topics. 445. 4

«I am waiting for those whom I sent to Johanna to find out whether My Mother has come from Nazareth. »

«Your Mother? Are You making Your Mother come here? »

«Yes, I am. I will stay with Her at Capernaum for the whole month, and I will go by boat to the villages on the banks of the lake, returning every day to Capernaum. There must be many disciples... >>

«Yes... Many... » Judas has lost his gift of the gab. He is pensive...

«Have you nothing to tell Me, Judas? We are alone now... Has nothing happened to you, during the time of this separation no incident about which you feel the need of a word of your Jesus? » Jesus asks kindly, in such a manner as to help the disciple to confess by making him feel all His merciful love.

«And do You know of anything in me which needs Your word? If You know - and I really do not know of anything which deserves such word - speak up. It is burdensome for a man to have to remember his sins and faults and confess them to another man... »

«I, Who am speaking to you, am not *another* man, but... »

«No. You are God. I know. That is why it is not even necessary that I should speak. You know... »

«I was saying that I am not *another* man, but I am your most loving Friend. I am not saying your Master, your superior, I am saying: your Friend... »

«It's still the same thing. And it is always boring to pry into what one has done in the past, as such confession may cause reproaches. But the annoying part is not so much to be reproached, as to lose a friend's esteem... »

<sup>5</sup>«At Nazareth, the last Sabbath I was there, Simon Peter inad- 445. 5



vertently told a companion something which he should not have mentioned. It was not a voluntary disobedience, it was not slander, it was not anything which might have injured his neighbour. Simon Peter had mentioned it to an honest heart and to a serious man, who realizing that he had become acquainted with a secret, although neither he nor Peter wished so, swore that he would not repeat the secret to anybody else. Simon could have set his mind at rest... But he did not resign himself until he confessed his fault to Me. At once... Poor Simon! He called it a fault! But if in the hearts of My disciples there were only such faults, and so much humbleness, so much confidence, so much love, as Peter has, oh! I should proclaim Myself the Master of a crowd of saints!... »

«And so You want to tell me that Peter is holy and I am not. It's true. I am not a saint. Send me away, then... »

«You are not humble, Judas. Pride is ruining you. And you do not know Me yet... » concludes Jesus most sadly.

Judas perceives His grief and whispers: «Forgive me, Master!... » «Always. But be good, son! Be good! Why do you want to harm yourself? »

Tears well up in Judas' eyes, whether they are true or not I do not know, and he seeks shelter in Jesus' arms, weeping on His shoulder.

And Jesus caresses his hair whispering: «Poor Judas! Poor Judas, who is seeking elsewhere, where he cannot find it, his peace and who may understand him... »

«Yes. It is true. You are right, Master. Peace is here... In Your embrace... I am a wretch... You are the only one who understands and loves me... You alone... I am the fool... Forgive me, Master. »

«Yes, be good, be humble. If you fall, come to Me and I will raise you. If you are tempted, run to Me. I will defend you, from  
445. 6 yourself, from those who hate you, from everything... 6But stand up. The others are coming... »

«A kiss, Master... A kiss... »

And Jesus kisses him... And Judas recomposes himself... But in the meantime he has not confessed his faults at all, at least I do not think so...

«We are a little late because Johanna was already up and the door-keeper wanted to tell her. She will come today, to pay her respects to You, at Joseph's house» says Thaddeus.

«At Joseph's? If we get all the rain which heaven is promising, I hose streets will be like quagmires. Johanna will certainly not come to that hovel and along those streets. We had better go to her house... » says Judas who has already become sure of himself once again.

Jesus does not reply to him, but He replies to His cousin asking: «Did any of our friends look for us at Johanna's? »

«No, not yet. »

«A11 right. Let us go to Joseph's house. The others will join us... »

«If I were sure that our mothers are on the way here, I would go and meet them... » says Judas of Alphaeus.

«It would be a good thing. But there are several roads from Tiberias. And perhaps they did not take the main one... »

«That's true, Jesus... Let us go... »

They walk away fast, while the first thunder and lightning <sup>445.7</sup> furrow the leaden sky, rumbling in the gorges of the hills which surround the lake almost completely. They enter Joseph's poor house, which in the stormy atmosphere looks poorer and darker. There is only one bright thing, the face of the disciple, and t hose of his relatives, who are so happy to have the Master in their house.

«But You are unlucky, Lord» apologises the boatman. «I could not go out fishing on a lake like this and I have nothing... but vegetables... »

«And your kind heart. But I have provided. Our companions are coming now with what is necessary. Do not tire yourself, woman... We can sit also on the floor. It is so clean. You are a clever woman, I know. And the tidiness which I see here confirms it. »

«Oh! my wife! She is really a strong woman! My, nay, our joy» proclaims the boatman, who is thrown into a transport of delight by the praise of the Lord, Who is sitting down peacefully on the lower edge of the fireplace in which no fire is lit, almost on t he floor, holding between His legs a little boy, who looks at Him full of amazement.

Those who had gone to do the shopping arrive at the moment of the first downpour and they shake mantles and sandals on the threshold, to avoid carrying water and mud into the house.

It seems the end of the world because of thunder, lightning, rain and wind. The roaring of the lake sounds like an accompaniment to the soli of thunderbolts and howling wind.

«Good health! Summer is wetting its feathers and drenching the fireplace... We will feel better afterwards... Providing it  
445. 8 does not damage the vines... <sup>8</sup>May I go upstairs to have a look at the lake? I want to see in what mood it is... »

«Go. The house is yours» the disciple replies to Peter.

And Peter, wearing only his tunic, goes out happily to enjoy the storm. He climbs up the outside staircase and remains on the terrace to freshen himself and to give his responses to those inside the house, as if he were on the deck of his boat giving orders for manoeuvres.

The others are sitting about in the kitchen, where they can hardly see, as they are compelled to keep the door ajar because of the rain, and only a thread of greenish light comes in through the fissure, interrupted by the short dazzling flashes of lightning...

Peter comes back in, wet through as if he had fallen into the lake and he states: «It's above our heads now. It's moving away towards Samaria. It's going to drench all there... »

«It has already soaked you! You are dripping like a fountain» remarks Thomas.

«Yes. But I feel so well after so much heat. »

«Come inside. It will do you no good to stand at the door wet as you are» advises Bartholomew.

«No! I am like seasoned wood... I was not yet able to say "father" well, when I began to remain in dampness. Ah! How well one breathes!... The street, however, is like... a river... You should see the lake! It's all the colours of the rainbow and is boiling like a pot. You cannot even see which way the billows are running. They boil on the spot... But it was needed... »

«Yes, we needed rain. The walls were not cooling down any  
445. 9 more, they were so heated by the sun. <sup>9</sup>The leaves of my vines were curled up and dusty... I watered the roots... but... What can a little water do when all the rest is like fire? » says Joseph.

«It does more harm than good, my friend» states Bartholomew. «Plants need water from heaven, because their leaves also drink it, eh?! It does not seem so, but it is true. Roots, roots!

Very well. But leaves are there, too, for some reason and they have their rights... »

«Master do You not think that Bartholomew is proposing the subject for a beautiful parable? » asks the Zealot provoking Jesus to speak.

But Jesus Who is lulling the little boy frightened by the thunder, does not relate the parable, however, He agrees saying: «And how would you propose it? »

«Badly, certainly, Master. I am not You... »

«Tell it as best you can. It will be a great help to you to preach by means of parables. Get accustomed to doing it. I am listening, Simon... »

«Oh!... You are the Master,!... a fool... But I will obey. I would say this: “A man had a beautiful vine. But as he did not own a vineyard, he had planted the vine in the little kitchen garden near his house so that it might climb up to the terrace to give shade and grapes, and he took great care of his vine. But it was growing amid houses near the street, so the smoke of kitchens and ovens and the dust of the road began to molest it. And while the rain still descended from heaven in the month of Nisan, (April) the leaves of the vine were cleaned of impurities and enjoyed sunshine and air without any ugly crust of dirt on their surfaces preventing it. But when summer came and no more water descended from heaven, smoke, dust, excrement of birds formed thick layers on the leaves, while the sun, which was too strong, dried them up. The owner of the vine watered the roots deeply set in the ground, and thus the plant did not die, but it vegetated with difficulty, because the water sucked by the roots nourished only the central part, and the poor leaves did not enjoy any of it. On the contrary, fumes of fermentation rose from the torrid soil, wetted with little water and spoiled the leaves with spots resembling malignant pustules. But at last a torrential rain came from heaven and the water descended on the leaves, if ran along the branches, the trunk, the grapes, it quenched the fierce heat of walls and ground, and after the storm the owner of I he vine saw that his plant was clean, fresh, enjoying and giving joy under the serene sky”. That is the parable. »

«Good. <sup>10</sup>But what about the comparison with man?... »

«Master, do it Yourself. »

«No. You must do it. We are among brothers, so you must not be afraid of cutting a bad figure. »

«I am not afraid of a bad figure, as if it were something grievous. On the contrary I love it, because it helps me to be humble. But I would not like to say anything wrong... »

«I will correct you. »

«Oh! In that case I would say: "The same applies to a man who does not live isolated in the garden of God, but lives in the midst of the dust and smoke of worldly things. They, in fact, encrust him slowly, almost inadvertently, and he finds that his spirit is sterilised under such a thick layer of humanity, that the breeze of God and the sun of Wisdom can no longer be of any avail to him. And in vain he tries to make up for it with a little water drawn from practices, and given with so much humanity to the inferior part, that the superior part does not enjoy any of it... Woe to the man who does not cleanse himself with the water from Heaven, as it cleans out impurities, it extinguishes the ardours of passions, and gives true nourishment to his whole ego". I have spoken. »

«You have spoken well. I would also say that, unlike plants, which have no free will and are fixed to the ground, and consequently they are not free to go and look for what helps them and shun what is harmful for them, man can go and look for the water of Heaven and avoid the dust, the smoke and the ardour of the flesh, of the world and of the demon. The teaching would then be more completes

«Thank You, Master. I will remember that» replies the Zealot.

445.11 n«We do not live a solitary life... We live in the world... So... » says Judas of Kerioth.

«So what? Do you mean that Simon has spoken foolishly? » asks Judas of Alphaeus.

«I don't mean that. I am saying that as we cannot live all alone... we are bound to be covered with things of the world. »

«The Master and Simon are just saying that we must seek the water of Heaven to keep ourselves clean notwithstanding that the world is around us» says James of Alphaeus.

«Sure! But is the water of Heaven always available to cleanse us? »

«Of course it is» replies John sure of himself. «Is it? And

where do you find it? »

«In love. »

«Love is fire. It will burn you even more. »

«Yes, it is fire. But it is also water which cleanses. Because it removes everything which belongs to the Earth and gives all the things which come from Heaven. »

«... I do not understand these operations. It removes, it gives... »

«No. I am not mad. I say that it removes what is humanity and it gives you what comes from God and is therefore divine. And a divine thing can but nourish and sanctify. Day after day love cleanses you of what the world gave you. »

<sup>12</sup>Judas is about to reply, but the little child who is in Jesus's <sup>445 12</sup> lap says: «Another parable, a beautiful one... for me... » which puts an end to the argument.

«On what, child? » asks Jesus condescending.

The little fellow looks around and he finds it. He points at his mother and says: «On mothers. »

«A mother is for the soul and the body what God is for them. What does a mother do for you? She looks after you, she takes care of you, she teaches you, she loves you, she watches that you do not hurt yourself, she keeps you under the wings of her love, just as a dove does with its little ones. And a mother is, to be obeyed and loved, because everything she does, she does it for our good. Good God also, and much more perfectly than the most perfect of mothers, keeps His children under the wings of His love, He protects them, He teaches them, He helps them and He thinks of them day and night. But also good God, just like, even much more than a mother - because a mother is the greatest love on Earth, but God is the greatest and eternal love on Earth and in Heaven - is to be obeyed and loved, because everything I le does, He does it for our good... »

«Also thunderbolts? » interrupts the boy who is frightened of them.

«Yes. »

«Why? ».

«Because they clean the sky and the air and... »

«And then the rainbow appears!... » exclaims Peter, who, half inside and half outside the house, has listened and been quiet.

And he adds: «Come, little dove, and I will show it to you. Look how beautiful!... »

In fact the weather is clearing up, as the storm is over, and a huge rainbow, from the shores of Hippo, stretches its arched ribbon across the lake, disappearing beyond the mountains behind Magdala.

They all go to the door, but in order to see the lake, they have to take off their sandals, because the yard is a little pond of yellowish water, which is slowly decreasing. The only reminder of the storm is the lake, that has become yellowish, while its waves are beginning to calm down. But the sky is clear and the air fresh. The shades of leaves have brightened up.

445.13 <sup>13</sup>And Tiberias becomes busy again... And along the road still full of water and mud, they soon see Johanna come with Jonathan. She looks up to greet the Master, Who is on the terrace, where she climbs up quickly to prostrate herself, full of happiness... The apostles are speaking to one another, with the exception of Judas, who, half way between Jesus and Johanna on one side and the apostles on the other, is absent-minded, pensive. I bet that he is all ears listening to the words of Johanna, whose attitude towards Judas is not known, as she greeted all the apostles, just saying: «Peace to you. » But Johanna is speaking only of the children and of the permission she got from her husband to go to Capernaum by boat while the Master is there. And Judas' suspicions subside and he joins his companions...

With the lower parts of Her garments splashed with mud, but dry elsewhere, the Most Holy Virgin Mary appears coming forward with Mary of Alphaeus and the five who had gone to bring Her here. Mary's smile while She goes up the short staircase is more beautiful than the rainbow still visible in the sky.

«Your Mother, Master! » announces Thomas.

Jesus goes to meet Her, followed by all the others. And they congratulate the women on their having had no other trouble but a little mud on the edges of their garments.

«As soon as it began to rain we stopped at a market-gardener's» explains Matthew. And he asks: «Have you been waiting long for us? »

«No. We arrived at dawn. »

«We are late, because of a poor wretch... » says Andrew.

«Well. Now that you are all here and that the weather is clearing up, I would say that we should leave for Capernaum this evening» says Peter. 445. 14

Mary, Who is always agreeable, this time objects: «No, Simon. We cannot leave, if first... Son, a mother has implored Me to ask You - as You are the only one who can do it - to convert the soul of her only son. I beg You, listen to Me, because I promised... Forgive him... Your forgiveness... »

«He has already forgiven, Mary. I have already spoken to the Master... » interrupts Judas thinking that Mary is referring to him.

«I am not speaking of you, Judas of Simon. I am referring to Esther of Levi, a woman of Nazareth, a mother killed by the behaviour of her son. Jesus, she died the night You left. Her invocations to You were not for herself, a poor mother martyr of a disgraceful son, but for her son... because we mothers are solicitous about you sons, not about ourselves... She wants her Samuel to be saved... But now that she is dead, Samuel, a prey to remorse, seems mad and will not listen to reason... But You, Son, can cure his intellect and spirit... »

«Is he repentant? »

«How can You expect him to be so if he is desperate? »

«In fact to have killed one's mother by grieving her continuously, must make one desperate. The first commandment of love for our neighbour cannot be infringed with impunity. Mother, how can You expect Me to forgive and God to give peace to this impenitent matricide? »

«Son, that mother is asking for peace from the other life... She was good... she suffered so much... »

«She will have peace... »

«No, Jesus. There is no peace for the spirit of a mother, if she sees that her child is deprived of God... »

«It is just that he should be deprived. »

«Yes, Son. Of course. But for poor Esther's sake... Her last word was a prayer for her son... And she asked Me to tell You... Jesus, during her lifetime Esther never had any joy, You know that. Give her this joy now that she is dead, give it to her spirit which is suffering because of her son. »



«Mother, I tried to convert Samuel when I stopped at Nazareth. But I spoke to him in vain because love was extinguished in him... »

«I know. But Esther offered her forgiveness, her sufferings, that love might revive in Samuel. And, who knows? Could his present torment not be love coming back to life again? A painful love, and one could say: a useless love, since his mother can no longer enjoy it. But You... but I, we know, I through faith, You by knowledge, that the charity of the dead is vigilant and close at hand. They do not lose interest, neither do they ignore what happens to the beloved ones they left here... And Esther may still enjoy this late love which her ungrateful son, now tortured by remorse, has for her. My Jesus, I know, this man fills You with disgust because of the enormity of his sin. A son who hates his mother! A monster, for You, Who are full of love for Yours. But just because You are full of love for Me, listen to Me. Let us go back to Nazareth together, at once. The road is no burden to Me, nothing is of any trouble to Me, if it helps to save a soul. »

445. 15 «A11 right. You have won, Mother... <sup>15</sup>Judas of Simon, take Joseph with you and leave for Nazareth. You will bring Samuel to Me at Capernaum. »

«I, Why I? »

«Because you are not tired. The others are. They walked for such a long time, while you were resting... »

«I have walked, too. I went to Nazareth looking for You. Your Mother can tell You. »

«Your companions went to Nazareth every Sabbath and they have just come back from a long tour. Go and do not argue... »

«The fact is... they do not like me at Nazareth... Why send me? »

«They are not fond of Me either, and yet I go to Nazareth. It is not necessary to find love in a place to go there. Go and do not argue, I am telling you again. »

«Master... I am afraid of madmen... »

«The man is deranged by remorse, but he is not mad. »

«Your Mother said that he is... »

«And for the third time I say to you: go and do not argue. It will do you nothing but good to ponder on the consequences which may be brought about by making a mother suffer... »

«Are You comparing me with Samuel? My mother is the queen in her house. I am not even close to her to control her or to be a burden to her by keeping me... »

«Such things are no burden to mothers. But the lack of love of their sons, the fact that they are imperfect in the eyes of God and of men... are rocks that crush them. Go, I tell you. »

«I am going. But what shall I tell the man? »

«To come to Capernaum, to Me. »

«If he never obeyed even his mother, do You expect him to obey me, particularly now, that he is so desperate? »

«And have you not yet understood that if I am sending you, it means that I have already worked on the spirit of Samuel, freeing him from the delirium of desperate remorse? »

«I am going. Goodbye, Master. Goodbye, Mary. Goodbye, friends. » And he leaves, not at all enthusiastic, followed by Joseph, who, on the contrary, is overjoyed at being chosen for that mission.

<sup>16</sup>Peter sings something softly between his teeth...

445. 16

Jesus asks him: «What are you saying, Simon of Jonah? » «I was singing an old lake song... »

«Which is? »

«It says: "Always so! Farmers like fishing, fishermen don't! ". And here, truly, we have seen that the disciple was more anxious to go fishing than the apostle... »

Many laugh. But Jesus does not laugh, He sighs. «Have I grieved You, Master? » asks Peter.

«No. But do not criticise all the time. »

«My Cousin is grieved because of Judas» says Judas of Alphaeus. «Will you be silent, too, and above all in the bottom of your heart. »

«But has Samuel really received a miracle already? » asks Thomas who is curious and somewhat incredulous. «Yes, he has. »

«Then there is no need for him to come to Capernaum. »

«It is necessary. I have not cured his heart completely. He must seek to be cured, by himself, that is, he must ask for forgiveness through holy repentance. But I have enabled him to reason again. It is for him to achieve the rest through his free will. I, et us go downstairs. We will go among the humble people... »

«Not to my house, Master? »

«No, Johanna. You can come to Me whenever you wish so. They are tied to their work and I am going to them... »

And Jesus descends from the terrace and goes out into the street followed by the others, also by Johanna, who has sent Jonathan home and who is quite determined not to part from Jesus, since Jesus is not willing to go to her house.

They go among poor little houses, towards poorer and poorer suburbs... And the vision ends thus.

#### 446. Arrival and welcoming in Capernaum.

4<sup>th</sup> June 1946.

446.1

T do not know whether spontaneously or because she was informed by somebody, Porphirea is on the little shore of Capernaum when the boats arrive there, and they are three instead of two, which makes me think that someone went to Capernaum ahead of the others, to inform that the Master was arriving, and to get another boat for the women and Marjiam. And with Porphirea are the daughters of Philip and Mirjiam of Jairus, in addition to the mother of James and John.

But my attention is attracted by Porphirea who, ignoring the wavelets which beat upon the shore with merry and somewhat cheeky laps, as the lake is not yet completely calm, goes into the water, up to her knees, and she leans on the boat, in which Marjiam is, and kisses him saying: «I will love you also on his behalf. My dear son, I will love you on behalf of everybody! » and she is deeply moved when saying so. And as soon as the boat stops, and the people in it land, Porphirea embraces Marjiam, as she does not wish to cede to anybody the task of making the boy feel that he is *deeply* loved.

She then joins the group of the other boat to venerate the Master and be able to do so before the people of Capernaum and the many disciples, who have been waiting for the arrival of the Master for a long time, may take possession of Jesus, depriving the women disciples of the joy of having Him to themselves. The women crowd around the Master, and only the children of Capernaum can break their circle squeezing their slim bodies

between the women and thus reach Jesus, Who is going slowly towards the house.

<sup>2</sup> As it is early morning, there are not many people in the streets; <sup>446. 2</sup> they are mostly women going to the fountain or to the market, surrounded by their host of children, or some fishermen, who are coming back taking oars and nets to the boats, to prepare them to go out fishing in the evening. But there are no notables, with the exception of Jairus, who comes forward respectfully to venerate Jesus and to express his happiness, as he has heard that the Master will be staying for some weeks, going at night to the towns on the lake, to speak there in the morning, coming back to Capernaum to rest during the day. And it is Jairus, on account of the respect which he inspires in his fellow citizens, who is the first to succeed in placing himself beside Jesus. And he is successful because he pushes aside his daughter with paternal authority. After him the more influential disciples are able to join Jesus, that is, those to whom, out of instinctive motion of justice, the others surrender the first places after the apostles, that is the old priest John (the ex leper), Stephen, Hermas, Timoneus, Naomi's son John, Nicolaus and the shepherd disciples, who are all present, with the exception of the two who went towards Lebanon.

Jesus takes an interest in the others, those who are absent, and He inquires after them of their companions. Are they still fervent? Oh! very! Are they resting at home? No. They are working in their towns or in nearby villages making new disciples. And what about Ermasteus? Ermasteus has gone along the coast and is going down to his own town. He is with Joseph, the disciple from Emmaus, and they want to speak of the Saviour along all the coasts, and they have been joined by their two friends Samuel and Abel, who want to show what the Lord can do, as one was a cripple and the other a leper.

Questions and answers, and the road is not sufficient to exhaust them, neither can Thomas' house in Capernaum receive so many people who are now pressing around the Master, Who has come back after such a long absence. And Jesus decides to go towards the country, so that He may stay with them all, without any preferences.

447. Sermon on mercy in the synagogue  
of Capernaum. Affront by Eli the Pharisee,  
threatened by a centurion.

22<sup>nd</sup> June 1946.

447.1

It is the Sabbath. I think it is, because I see people gathered in the synagogue. But they may have gathered there to avoid being in the sun, or to be more tranquil in Jairus' house. And the people are pressing, paying attention, notwithstanding the heat which not even the doors and windows left open to have currents of air can alleviate. Those who have not been able to enter the synagogue, in order not to be roasted in the sun outside, have taken shelter in the shady garden behind the synagogue, Jairus' garden rich in thick pergolas and leafy fruit-trees. And Jesus is speaking near the door opening onto the garden, so that He may be heard both by these listeners and by those inside the synagogue. Jairus is beside Him, listening attentively. The apostles are in a group near the door which opens onto the garden. The women disciples, with Mary in the middle, are sitting under a pergola, which almost touches the house. Mirjam of Jairus and Philip's two daughters are sitting at Mary's feet.

From the words I hear I gather that there has been an incident between the usual Pharisees and Jesus and that the people are upset because of that. Jesus in fact is exhorting them to be peaceful and to forgive, saying that the word of God cannot bear fruit in hearts which are upset.

«We cannot bear You to be insulted» shouts someone from the crowd.

«Leave it to My Father and yours and imitate Me. Be patient, and forgive. Enemies are not convinced by returning insult for insult.»

«They are not convinced either by continual meekness. You are letting them tread upon You» shouts the Iscariot.

«My apostle, do not cause scandal by setting an example of wrath and criticism.»

«Your apostle, however, is right. His words are just.»

«The heart which utters them is not just, neither is the heart which listens to them. He who wants to be My disciple must imitate Me. I tolerate and I forgive. I am meek, humble and peaceful.

The children of wrath cannot stay with Me, because they are the children of the century and of their passions. Do you not remember the fourth Book of Kings? In a passage it says\* that Isaiah spoke against Sennacherib who thought he could attempt everything, and prophesied that nothing would save him from God's punishment. He compares him with an animal, through the nostrils of which a ring is put and a bit through its lips to subdue its wicked fury. You know how Sennacherib perished by the hands of his own sons. In fact cruel people perish through their own cruelty. They perish both in their bodies and in their souls. I do not love cruel people. I do not love proud people. I do not love wrathful, greedy, lustful people. I have not confirmed by word or set an example for you of such things, on the contrary I have always taught you the virtues which are the opposite of such evil passions. <sup>447.2</sup>How beautiful is the prayer of our king David, when, re-sanctified by sincere repentance of past sins and by years of wise behaviour, he praised the Lord, meek and resigned to the decree by which he was not allowed to be the builder of the new Temple! Let us say it together, praising the Most High Lord... » And Jesus intones the prayer of David\*\*, while those who are sitting stand up and those leaning against the wall assume an attitude of respect moving away from their support.

Then, in His habitual tone, Jesus resumes: «You must always remember that everything is in the hands of God, every enterprise, every victory. Magnificence, power, glory and victory belong to the Lord. And He grants this or that thing to man, if He deems that it is the right time to grant it for a certain good purpose. But man cannot demand anything. God did not allow David to build the Temple, although he had been forgiven, as he was still in need of victory over himself, after his past errors: "You have shed much blood and fought too many battles; it is not for you to build a house for My Name since you have shed so much blood in My presence. But a son will be born to you and he will be a man of peace... he will therefore be named Peaceful... he shall build a house for My Name". That is what the Most High said to His servant David. I say the same to you. Are you will-

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\* In a passage it says, that is in: *2 King 19, 20-37* according to the neo-vulgate.

\*\* the prayer of David, which is in: *1Chroucles29, 10-19*; the following quotations taken from: *1 Chronicles 22, 7-10*.

ing, because of your wrath, not to deserve to build in your hearts the house for the Lord your God? Reject, therefore, every feeling which is not love. Have perfect hearts, as David invoked for his son, the builder of the Temple, so that by keeping My commandments and doing everything according to what I taught you, you may succeed in building within your hearts the abode of your God, while waiting to go yourselves to His eternal joyful house.

447. 3 »Give Me a parchment, Jairus. I will explain to them what God wants. »

Jairus goes where the rolls are piled and he takes one at random in the middle of the pile, and after dusting it, he hands it to Jesus, Who unrolls it and reads: «“Jeremiah, chapter 5. Rove to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, look, watch, search her squares, if you can find one man who does right and tries to be faithful, and I will be merciful unto her”. » (The Lord says to me: «Do not continue. I will read the whole chapter. »)

Jesus, after reading it all, hands the roll back to Jairus and speaks.

«My children. You have heard which dreadful punishments are laid aside for Jerusalem, for Israel, for not being just. But do not rejoice at that. She is our Fatherland. Do not rejoice thinking: “Perhaps we shall no longer be here”. She is always full of your brothers. Do not say: “Serves her right, because she is cruel with the Lord”. The misfortunes of the Fatherland, the sorrows of fellow-citizens must always grieve those who are just. Do not measure as other people do, but as God measures, that is, mercifully. What are you, therefore, to do with respect to this Fatherland and these fellow-countrymen, whether by Fatherland and fellow-countrymen you mean the great Fatherland and its inhabitants, the whole of Palestine, or this little one, that is, Capernaum, your hometown, whether you mean all the Hebrews, or these few, who are hostile to Me, in this little town of Galilee? You must accomplish deeds of love. Endeavour to save Fatherland and fellow-countrymen. How? Perhaps through violence? With scorn? No. By love, by patient love to convert them to God. You have just heard. “If I find one man who does right, I will pardon him”. Strive, therefore, so that hearts may come to justice and become just. In actual fact in their injustice they say of Me: “It is not Him”, and they thus believe that by persecut-

mg Me, no harm will befall them. They really say: "Such things will never happen. The prophets spoke at random". And they will try to make you speak as they do. You who are present here, are faithful. But where is Capernaum? Is this all Capernaum? Where are those whom the other times I saw crowd around Me? So the yeast, which fermented the last time I was here, has ruined many hearts? Where is Alphaeus? Where is Joshua with his three sons? Where is Haggai of Malachi? Where are Joseph and Naomi? Where is Levi, Abel, Saul, Zacharias? Have they forgotten the undeniable help they received, because false words overwhelmed it? But can words destroy facts? You can see! This is only a small place. In this place, where is the largest number of people assisted, envious malice has been able to devastate faith in Me. I see gathered here only those who are perfect in faith. And could you expect remote events, remote words to keep all Israel faithful to God? That should be the case, because faith must be such also without the support of facts. But it is not so. And the greater is science, the smaller is faith, because learned people think that they are exempted from simple sound faith, which believes through the strength of love and not by means of the assistance of science. It is love which you must hand down to posterity and inflame. And to do that you must be inflamed. You must be convinced, heroically convinced, in order to convince. In place of ill manners, in reply to insults, you must have humbleness and love. And with them you must go and remind of the words of the Lord those who no longer remember them: "We must fear the Lord Who gives us the rain of the early and later season". »

«They would not understand us! On the contrary they would offend us saying that we are sacrilegious, teaching without the right to do it. You know who are the scribes and Pharisees!... »

«Yes. I know. But even if I had not known, I would know now. But it does not matter what they are. It matters what we are. If they and priests clap their hands to false prophets who prophesy what gives them some profit, forgetting that hands should be clapped only to the good deeds which the Decalogue commands, that is no reason why my faithful believers should imitate them or feel discouraged and just stand looking, as if they had been defeated. <sup>4</sup>You must work as hard as Evil works... »



«We are not Evil» shouts from the threshold, on the street, the husky voice of Eli the Pharisee, who tries to enter shouting all the time: «We are not the Evil ones, instigator. »

«Man, you are the disturber, go away! » says at once a centurion who must have been there watching, as his intervention is so fast. «You, a pagan, you dare impose on me... »

«I, a Roman, do. Go out! The Rabbi is not disturbing you, but you are disturbing Him. You cannot... »

«We are the Rabbis, not the Galilean carpenter» cries the old man, who resembles more a barrow woman than a master.

«One more, one less... You have hundreds of them, and they are all wicked teachers. Here is the only virtuous one. I order you to go out. »

«Virtuous, eh?! Virtuous the man who pays Rome for His safety! Sacrilegious! Unclean! »

The centurion utters a cry and the heavy steps of soldiers mingle with Eli's shrill insults. «Take that man and throw him out! » orders the centurion.

«Me? Pagan hands touching me? The feet of pagans in one of our synagogues! Anathema! Help! They are polluting me!... »

«I beg you, soldiers. Let him go! Do not come in. Please respect this place and his old age» says Jesus from His place.

«As You wish, Rabbi. »

«Ha! Ha! Intriguer! But the Sanhedrin will be informed. I have the proof! Now I believe the words which were related to us. I have the proof. Anathema on You! »

«And my sword on you if you say another word. Rome defends what is right. She does not intrigue, you old hyena, with anybody. The Sanhedrin will be informed of your lies. The Proconsul will have my report. I am going to write it at once. Go home and remain there at the disposal of Rome» and the centurion makes a perfect right-about turn and goes away followed by four soldiers, leaving Eli astounded and trembling cravenly...

447. 5

<sup>5</sup>Jesus resumes speaking as if nothing had interrupted Him: «You must work as hard as Evil works, to build within you and around you the house of the Lord, as I was saying at the beginning. You must act with great holiness so that God may descend again into hearts and on our dear Fatherland, which is already punished so severely and does not know which clouds of mis-

fortune are piling up for her in the north, in the strong country which already rules over us and will rule more and more, because the deeds of citizens are such as to disgust the Most Kind Lord and to arouse the strong ruler. And with the indignation of God and of the ruler, do you expect perhaps to have peace and welfare? Be good, children of God. Strive to have not one, but hundreds of good people in Israel, to ward off the dreadful punishments of Heaven. I told you at the beginning that where there is no peace, there can be no word of God, which heard peacefully may yield fruit in hearts. And you know that this meeting has been neither tranquil nor fruitful. There is too much agitation in hearts... Go. We will still have some hours to be together. And pray, as I do, that those who upset us, may mend their ways... Let us go, Mother» and squeezing through the crowd, He goes out into the street.

«Eli is still there and, as ashen as death, he throws himself at Jesus' feet. «Have pity! You saved my grandson once. Save me, I hat I may have time to mend my ways. I have sinned! I confess it. But You are good. Rome... Oh! what will Rome do to me? » 447. 6

«She will remove the summer dust from you with a good thrashing» shouts one, and the people laugh while Eli utters a painful groan as if he already felt the scourge, and he moans: «I am old... aching all over... Alas! »

«The cure will do you good, you old jackal! »

«You will be restored to youth and will be able to dance... »

«Silence! » Jesus orders the scoffers. And He says to the Pharisee: «Stand up. Be dignified. You know that I do not conspire with Rome. So, what do you want Me to do for you? »

«That is true. Yes. It is true. You do not conspire. Nay, You disdain the Romans, You hate them, You c... »

«Nothing of the kind. Do not lie praising Me, as you lied previously accusing Me. And you had better know that It would be no praise to Me to say that I hate this one or that one, or I curse this or that one. I am the Saviour of every soul, and there are no races or faces in My eyes, but souls only. »

«That is true! Very true! But You are just and Rome knows and that is why she defends You. You keep the crowds calm, You teach them to respect the laws and... »

«Is that perhaps a fault in your eyes? »

«Oh! no! It is justice! you know how to do what we should all do, because You are just, because... »

The crowds sneer and murmur. Several epithets, such as «Liar! Coward! This very morning he spoke differently! » and so forth can be heard, although spoken in a low key.

«Well? What shall I do? »

«Go! Go to the centurion. Quick! Before the messenger leaves. See? They are getting the horses ready! Oh! Have mercy,! »

447. 7 <sup>7</sup>Jesus looks at him: small, trembling, wan with fear, miserable... and examines him... compassionately. Only four eyes look at him pitifully: those of Jesus and of His Mother. All other eyes are either ironical, or severe, or upset... Even the eyes of John and Andrew are stern with disdainful severity.

«I have pity. But I will not go to the centurion... »

«He is Your friend... »

«No. »

«He is grateful to You, I mean... because You cured\* his servant. »

«I cured\*\* also your grandson. And you are not grateful to Me, although you are an Israelite like Me. Beneficent help creates no obligation. »

«Yes it does. Woe to those who are not thankful to... » Eli realizes that he is condemning himself and becomes quiet, stammering. The crowds sneer at him.

«Quick, Rabbi. Great Rabbi! Holy Rabbi! He is giving orders, see?! They are on the point of leaving! You want me to be laughed at! You want me dead! »

«No. I am not going to remind him of a favour. Go and say to him: “The Master tells you to be merciful”. Go! »

Eli runs away and Jesus sets out in the opposite direction towards His house.

The centurion must have agreed, because I see the soldiers, who had got into the saddles, dismount and hand back a wax tablet to the centurion and then take the horses away.

447. 8 <sup>8</sup>«What a pity! It would have served him right! » exclaims Peter, and Matthew replies to him: «Yes. The Master should have let him be punished! A blow for each insult to us. Hateful old man! »

\* You cured, in 177. 2/3.

\*\* I cured, in 161. 2/4.

«And so he is ready to start all over again! » exclaims Thomas. Jesus turns around severely: «Have I followers, or have I demons? Go away, you with merciless hearts! Your presence is unpleasant to Me. »

The three remain where they are, petrified by the reproach.

«Son! You are already so grieved! And I am in such great pain! Do not add this one... Look at them!... » implores Mary.

And Jesus turns around to look at the three. Three desolate faces, with eyes full of hope and of sorrow. «Come! » orders Jesus.

Oh! Swallows are not as swift as the three.

«And let it be the last time that I hear you speak such words. You, Matthew, have no right to speak thus. You, Thomas, are not yet dead, to judge who is imperfect, thinking that you are saved. And you, Simon of Jonah, behaved like a rock carried with great difficulty to a mountain top and then rolled down to the valley. Understand Me for what I mean... And now listen. It is useless to speak here in the synagogue, or in town. I will speak from the boats on the lake, now here, now there. Prepare the boats, as many as are needed and we will go out in the placid evenings or at the cool dawns... »

448. A gathering of boats on the lake. A parable provoked by Peter, who undergoes a judgement.

24<sup>th</sup> June 1946.

<sup>1</sup>Where, Master? » asks Peter who has completed the manoeuvres and preparations for navigation and is with his boat at the head of the little flotilla which, laden with people, is ready to follow the Master. 448. 1

«To Magdala. I promised Mary of Lazarus. »

«All right» replies Peter and he manoeuvres the rudder in order to tack in the right direction.

Johanna is in the boat with the Master, the Blessed Virgin, Mary of Clopas, Marjiam, Matthew, James of Alphaeus and a man whom I do not know: she points at the many boats on the lake in the quiet summer evening, which softens the glow of sunset with cascades of purple veils, as if heaven rained showers of

amethysts or of trusses of wistaria in bloom. She remarks: «Perhaps the boats of the Roman ladies are among those. It is one of their favourite amusements to simulate fishing in these placid evenings. »

«But they will be farther south» observes the man whom I do not know.

«Oh! no, Benjamin. They have fast craft and experienced sailors. They come up as far as hero

«For all they have to do... » grumbles Peter, and he continues through his beard, as he is an intolerant fisherman who considers navigation and fishing a profession, not a pastime, almost a religion completely regulated by severe useful laws, and its improper use seems a profanation to him: «With their incense, their flowers and perfumes and other demoniacal things they contaminate the water with their music, loud cries and language they disturb the fish; with their smoky lamps they frighten them; with their cursed nets cast inconsiderately they spoil the bottom and damage reproduction... It should be forbidden. The Sea of Galilee belongs to Galileans, who are also fishermen, not to prostitutes and their partners... If I were the master! I would fix you, you filthy heathen boats, you floating sinks of vice, alcoves sailing to bring here, on these waters of God, of our God, to His children, your... Oh! look! They are coming straight here! Can one stand that!... Can one allow... Can... »

448.2 <sup>2</sup>Jesus interrupts the accusatory oration, by which Peter gives vent to his spirit of Israelite and fisherman, flushing, suffocating with rage, panting as if he were struggling against infernal forces, and He says with a peaceful smile: «It is a good job that you are not the master. Fortunately you are not! For them and for yourself. Because you would prevent them from following a good impulse, thus an impulse impressed on their spirits - pagan, I agree, but naturally good - impressed on their spirits by the Eternal Mercy which guides these creatures, who are not guilty of being born Romans and not Jews. And God looks at them with merciful eyes because He sees that they tend to what is good. And you would harm yourself because you would commit an act against charity and one against humbleness... »

«Humbleness? I don't understand... Being the master of the lake, it would be lawful for me to dispose of it as I like. »

«No, Simon of Jonah. No. You are wrong. Also the things which belong to us, belong to us because God grants them to us. So, even if we possess them for a limited period of time, we must always consider that He Who possesses everything without any limitation of time or measure is One only. One only is the Master. Men... Oh! they are only administrators of crumbs of the great Creation. But He is the Master, My Father and yours and of all living beings. Further, He is God, thus most perfect in all His thoughts and actions. Now: if God looks benignly at the movement of these heathen hearts towards the Truth, and does not only look, but encourages such movement, communicating to it a stronger and stronger motion towards Good, do you not think that you, a man, by wanting to stop it, actually want to prevent God from doing something? And when do you stop anything? When you do not consider it good. So this is what you would be thinking of your God: that He is doing a deed which is not good. Now, if it is not right to judge our brothers, because every man has his faults and his faculty of knowing and judging is so limited that seven times out of ten his judgement is wrong, it is absolutely wicked to judge God in His action. Simon, Simon! Lucifer wanted to judge God in one of His thoughts and he considered it wrong and wanted to take the place of God, thinking that he was more just than God. You know, Simon, what Lucifer achieved. And you know that all the pains we suffer have come because of that pride... »

448. 3

<sup>3</sup>«You are right, Master! I am a poor wretch! Forgive me, Master! » And Peter, who is always impulsive, leaves the tiller of the rudder to throw himself at Jesus' feet, while the boat, suddenly left to itself, and just on the crest of a wave, yaws and heels in a fearful manner amidst the screams of Mary of Clopas and Johanna and the shouts of those in the light twin boat, when they see Peter's heavy boat coming straight for them.

Fortunately Matthew is quick in taking the rudder, and the boat resumes its course after pitching dreadfully, also because the others, to keep away from it, have used their oars with vigorous strokes, thus agitating the water.

«Hey! Simon! Once you were insolent\* to the Romans, whom

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\* you were insolent, in 98. 2.

prow, are mirrored in the lake.

Faces look strange in the contrast of the red-yellow lights or of the moonbeams; some appear very clear, some can hardly be seen as they are, some seem cut into two, lengthwise or horizontally, with only the forehead or only the chin lit up, or with one cheek only, half a face, with a clean-cut profile, as if there was nothing on the other side. Some eyes are shining, some look like empty eye-sockets: and likewise, some mouths are seen smiling cheerfully displaying strong teeth, while others seem to be erased from the shaded faces.

But to make it possible for everybody to see Jesus, the boats from Capernaum and Magdala hand over a large number of lamps, which are placed at Jesus feet, on the little benches, while some are hung on the inactive oars, some are placed in the bow and stern, and some are even hung up in clusters on the mast the sail of which has been struck. Jesus' boat is thus resplendent in a circle of boats left without lamps, and He is now clearly visible, as He is floodlit. Only the Roman boats still look reddish because of their red torches, the flames of which flicker in the very light breeze.

448. 6 <sup>6</sup>«Peace be with you! » begins Jesus standing up, steady notwithstanding the light pitching of the boat, and stretching out His arms to bless. He then goes on, speaking slowly, to be heard by everybody, and His voice carries powerfully and harmoniously over the silent lake.

«A short time ago one of My apostles suggested a parable to Me which I will now propose to you and it may be useful to everybody, as everybody can understand it. Listen to it.

A man, sailing on the lake on a calm evening like this and feeling sure of himself, presumed that he was faultless. He was most skilled in manoeuvring and consequently he considered himself superior to all the other people he met on the lake many of whom were on it to amuse themselves and thus they lacked the experience which comes from habitual work done to earn one's living. Further, he was a good Israelite and so he thought that he possessed all virtues. Finally, he was really a good man. Now, one evening when he was sailing confidently, he took the liberty of passing judgement on his neighbour. A neighbour, according to him, so remote as not to be considered as neighbour. No tie

of nationality, or of trade or faith joined him to that neighbour and thus, without any restraint of national, religious or professional solidarity, he derided him frankly, nay, severely, and he complained at not being the master of the place, because, if he were, he would drive his neighbour from it, and in his intolerant faith, he almost reproached the Most High for allowing those other people, who were different from him, to do what he did and to live where he lived.

In his boat was a friend, a good friend who loved him with justice and therefore wanted him to be wise and, when necessary, corrected his wrong ideas. So that evening, this friend said to the boatman: "Why such thoughts? Is not the Father of men one only? Is He not the Lord of the Universe? Does perhaps His sun not shine on all men to warm them, and do His clouds perhaps not rain on the fields of Gentiles as they do on those of Hebrews? And if He does that for the material needs of man, will He not provide likewise for their spiritual necessities? And would you suggest to God what he must do? Who is like God? "

The man was good. In his intolerance there was much ignorance, many wrong ideas, but his will was not evil, he had no intention of offending God, on the contrary it was his intention to defend His interests. Upon hearing those words he threw himself at the feet of his wise friend and asked him to forgive him for speaking foolishly. He asked him so impetuously, that he almost caused a disaster, sinking the boat and drowning those in it, because in his anxiety to ask for forgiveness, he neglected rudder, sails and currents. Thus after his first mistake of evil judgement, he made another error of wrong manoeuvre, and proved to himself that he was not only a poor judge but also a clumsy sailor.

That is the parable. Now listen. According to you, was that man forgiven by God or not? Remember: he had sinned against God and his neighbour by judging the actions of both and he almost became the homicide of his companions. Meditate and reply... »

And Jesus folds His arms and looks around at all the boats, as far as the most remote ones, at the Roman boats, which display a line of attentive faces of patricians and oarsmen, looking over the gunwales...

<sup>7</sup>The people speak in low voices and confer with one another...

448. 7



A hardly audible murmur of voices which mingles with the barely perceptible lapping of the water against the hulls. The judgement is a difficult one. The majority, however, are of the opinion that the man was not forgiven because he had sinned. No, he was not forgiven at least as far as the first sin was concerned...

Jesus hears the murmur become louder in that sense and smiles while His most beautiful eyes shine even at night like two sapphires in the rays of the moon, which is more and more beautiful and bright, so much so that many put out torches and lamps and remain with only the phosphorescent moonlight.

«Put out these lights as well, Simon. They are as tiny as sparks when compared with the stars and planets with which this sky is strewn» says Jesus to Peter who is in suspense waiting to hear the judgement of the crowds. And Jesus caresses His apostle, while the latter stretches out to detach the lamps, and He asks him in a low voice: «Why do you look so upset? »

«Because this time You are having me judged by the people... »

«Oh! Why are you afraid of them? »

«Because... like me... they are unfair... »

«But it is God Who judges, Simon! »

«Yes. But You have not yet forgiven me and You are now awaiting their judgement to do so... You are right, Master... I am incorrigible... But... why this judgement of God for Your poor Simon?... »

Jesus lays His hand on his shoulder and He does so easily because Peter is in the lower part of the boat and Jesus is standing on a stern board, thus much above Peter. And He smiles... but does not reply to him. He instead asks the people: «Well? Speak up. Boat by boat. »

Alas! Poor Peter! If God had judged him according to the opinion of the people who are present, He would have condemned him. With the exception of three boats, all the others, including the apostolic ones, condemn him. The Romans do not give their opinions, and they are not asked to do so, but it is obvious that they also judge that the man is to be condemned, because they wave from one boat to the other - there are three of them - with thumbs down.

Peter's frightened rolling eyes look up at Jesus' face and they

meet an even kinder glance coming from His sapphire eyes, just like peace, and he sees a face bright with love bend over him while he feels being drawn against Jesus' side, so that his grey-haired head is against Jesus' chest, while the arm of the Master clasps him embracing his shoulder.

<sup>8</sup>«That is how man judges. But God does not judge so, My children! You say: "He was not forgiven". I say: "The Lord did not even see in him anything to be forgiven". Because forgiveness presupposes fault. But in this case there was no fault. No, do not grumble, shaking your heads. I repeat: there was no fault here. When is it that a fault occurs? When there is the will to commit a sin, the knowledge of sinning and the persistence to want to sin also after knowing that a certain action is sinful. It all depends on the will by which one performs an action, whether it is virtuous or sinful. When one does something which is apparently good, but does not know that it is a good action, nay, one believes that it is a bad action, one commits a sin as if one had performed a bad action, and vice versa. 448.8

Take, as an instance, a man who has an enemy who knows that he is ill. He knows that by the doctor's order his enemy must not drink any cold water, nay, any liquid whatsoever. He goes to visit him, feigning friendliness. He hears him moan: "I am thirsty! I am thirsty!" and simulating pity, he hastens to give him some icy water from a well, saying: "Drink, my friend. I love you and I cannot bear to see you suffer so much from thirst. Look. I brought you this water on purpose, it is so cool. Drink it, for a great reward is given to those who assist sick people and give drink to the thirsty" and by giving him to drink, he causes his death. Do you think that that action, good in itself because it comprised two works of mercy, is a good one now that it has been performed for a wicked purpose? No, it is not.

And again: a son who has a drunken father and who locks the wine-cellar so that he may not drink himself to death, takes his money and imposes himself severely on him so that he may not go about the village, drinking and ruining himself, do you think that he sins against the fourth commandment simply because he reproaches his father and he acts as head of the family also with regards to his father? To all appearance he makes his father suffer and seems to be guilty. In actual fact he is a good son, because

his will is good, as he wants to save his father from death. It is always one's will which sets value on one's deeds.

And again: is the soldier who kills in war a murderer? No, if his spirit does not agree to slaughter and if he fights because he is compelled to do so, and he does so with the least humanity which the hard law of war and his subaltern situation impose.

Therefore that boatman, who through the goodwill of believer, patriot and fisherman, could not stand those who, according to him, were desecrators, did not sin against the love for his neighbour, but he only had the wrong idea of love for our neighbour. Neither did he sin against respect for God, because his resentment against God came from his good, but not well balanced or bright spirit of believer. And he did not commit murder because he caused the boat to heel through his goodwill to ask for forgiveness.

448. 9 So you must always distinguish. <sup>9</sup>God is Mercy more than intransigence. God is good. God is a Father. God is Love. That is the true God. And the true God opens His heart to everybody, saying to everybody: "Come", pointing His Kingdom to everybody. And He is free to do so, because He is the Only, Universal, Creator, Eternal Lord.

I beg you, you people of Israel. Be just. Remember these things. Beware lest they should be understood by those whom you consider unclean, while they remain incomprehensible to you. Also excessive and disorderly love for religion and father land is sinful, because it becomes selfishness. And selfishness is always the reason and cause of sin.

Yes. Selfishness is a sin, because it sows in hearts an evil will which makes people rebel against God and His commandments. The mind of a selfish person no longer sees God or His truth clearly. Pride exhales fumes in the egoist and dims the truth. The mind, which in the fog no longer sees the pure light of truth as it saw it before becoming proud, begins the process of queries, and from queries it passes on to doubt, from doubt to indifference not only with regards to love and trust in God and His justice, but also in respect of the fear of God and of His punishment. And thus the easiness to sin, and from such easiness the solitude of the soul which departs from God, and as it no longer has the will of God as guidance, it lapses into the law of its own will of sinner.

Oh! the will of a sinner is a nasty chain, one end of which is in the hands of Satan, and the other end is fastened together with a cannon ball to the feet of man to hold him there, a slave, in filth, bent, in darkness. Is it then possible for man not to commit mortal sins? Is it possible for him not to commit them, if he is urged only by his evil will? Only then God does not forgive. But when man is animated by goodwill, and performs also spontaneous acts of virtue, he certainly ends up by possessing the Truth, because goodwill leads to God, and God, the Most Holy Father, bends lovingly, pitifully, leniently to assist, to bless, to forgive His children who have goodwill.

So the man of that boat was fondly loved because, as he did not wish to sin, he had committed no sin.

Go in peace, now, to your homes. The stars have filled the whole sky and the moon is clothing the world with purity. Go, and be as obedient as the stars and become as pure as the moon. Because God loves those who are obedient and pure in spirit, and He blesses those who in all their actions apply their goodwill to love God and their brothers and to work for His glory and their benefit. Peace be with you! »

And Jesus stretches out His arms again blessing, while the circle of the boats move away, breaks up, and each boat resumes its course.

<sup>10</sup>Peter is so happy that he does not think about moving.

448. 10

Matthew shakes him: «Are you not moving, Simon? I am not very experienced... »

«That's true!... Oh! My Master! So You had not condemned me?! And I was so afraid... »

«Be not afraid, Simon of Jonah. I took you to save you, not to lose you. I took you because of your goodwill... Cheer up. Take the rudder and look at the North Star and go with confidence, Simon of Jonah. Never hesitate... In all your navigations... God, your Jesus, will always be standing beside you in the prow of your spiritual boat. And He will always understand you, Simon of Jonah. Do you understand? Always. And He will not have to forgive you because you may also fall, like a weak child, but you will never have the evil will to fall... Be happy, Simon of Jonah. »

And Peter nods... he is too moved to be able to speak, suffocated by love, and his hand is rather shaky on the rudder, but

his face shines with peace, with confidence, with love, while he looks at His Master standing beside him, on the edge of the little boat, like a bright white archangel.

#### 449. Little Alphaeus no longer loved by his mother.

25<sup>th</sup> June 1946.

449. 1 <sup>1</sup>«Take provisions and clothes for several days. We are going to Hippo and then to Gamala and Aphek, we will then go down to Gherghesa and come back here before the Sabbath» orders Jesus, standing on the threshold of the house and caressing absent-mindedly some children of Capernaum, who have come to greet their great Friend, as soon as the setting sun is no longer deadly scorching and allows people to leave their houses. And Jesus is one of the first to do so in the little town which revives after the suffocating torpor of the hot hours of the day.

The apostles do not appear to be very enthusiastic about the order they have received. They look at one another, they cast glances at the sun, which is so pitiless, they touch the walls of the house and feel that they are still hot, with their bare feet they touch the ground and say: «It is as hot as a brick near the fire... » implying by such pantomime that one must be mad to go about...

Jesus stands off the door-post against which He was leaning lightly and He says: «Anyone who does not feel like coming may remain here. I do not force anybody. But I do not want to leave this area without My word. »

«Master... don't say that! We are all coming... Only... we thought it was still early to go about... »

«Before the Feast of the Tabernacles I want to go towards the north, so much farther and where boats cannot go. Consequently we must do this area now, as travelling by lake we can save much of the road. »

«You are right. I am going to prepare the boats... » and Simon of Jonah goes out with his brother and the two sons of Zebedee and some disciples, to prepare for departure.

Jesus is left with the Zealot, His cousins, Matthew, the Iscariot, Thomas and the inseparable Philip and Bartholomew, who are preparing their sacks and filling flasks, packing loaves of

bread, fruit, everything that is needed.

<sup>2</sup>A little child is whining leaning against Jesus' knees.

«Why are you weeping, Alphaeus? » asks Jesus, bending to kiss him...

No reply... He whimpers more loudly.

«He has seen the fruit and wants it» says the bored Iscariot.

«Oh! poor little fellow! He is right! One must not let children see certain things, without giving them some. Take this, son. Don't cry! » says Mary of Alphaeus, picking a golden bunch of grapes from a vine branch, placed in a basket with all the leaves and bunches still attached to it.

«I don't want the grapes... » and he cries louder.

«He wants honeyed water, certainly» says Thomas and he offers his little flask saying: «Children like it and it is good for them. Also my little nephews... »

«I don't want your water... » and his crying increases in tone and intensity.

«What do you want then? » asks Judas of Alphaeus half serious and half annoyed.

«Two slaps, that's what he wants! » says the Iscariot.

«Why? poor boy! » asks Matthew.

«Because he is a bore. »

«Oh! If we had to box all the boring persons' ears... we would have to spend our lives boxing our own» says Thomas very calmly-

«Perhaps he is not feeling well. Fruit and water, water and fruit... make tummies ache» states Mary Salome who is among the women disciples.

«If he gets bread, water and fruit, he is lucky... They are so poor! » says Matthew, who by his experience as tax collector is aware of all the financial situations in Capernaum.

«What is the matter with you, my little son? Is it sore here?... But you are not feverish... » says Mary of Clopas who is kneeling beside the little child.

«Oh! Mother! He is just being naughty!... Can't you see it? You would spoil everybody. »

«I did not spoil you, my dear Judas. But I loved you. And you did not realize, son, that I loved you to the extent of protecting you against the rigours of Alphaeus... »

«That's true, Mother... I was wrong in reproaching you. »

«No harm, son. But if you want to be an apostle, strive to have the heart of a mother for believers. They are like children, you know... and one must be patient and loving with them... »

«Well said, Mary! » says Jesus approvingly.

449. 3 3«We will end up by being taught by women» grumbles Judas Iscariot. «And perhaps even by pagan females... »

«Without any doubt. They will exceed you in many things, if you remain what you are, and you above all, Judas. You Will certainly be surpassed by everybody, by little children, by beggars, by ignorant people, by women, by heathens... »

«You could say that I will be the abortion of the world and You would be quicker» replies Judas with a sneer.

«The others are coming back... and we had better leave, don't you think so? » says Bartholomew to put an end to the scene, which is grievous for many, although in different ways.

The crying of the little boy reaches its peak.

«Well what is it that you want? What is the matter with you? » shouts the Iscariot shaking the boy rudely to take him away from of Jesus' knees, to which the child is clinging, and above all to give vent to his anger on the innocent boy.

«With You! With You!... Go away... and blows, blows... »

449. 4 4«Ah!... Oh! poor child! It is true! Since his mother got married again the children of her first husband... are like beggars... as if they were not born of her... She sends them about like beggars and... oh! there is no bread for them... » says the wife of the landlord and she seems to be well informed of facts and their protagonists. And she concludes: «It would be a good thing if someone adopted the three forlorn sons... »

«Don't tell Simon of Jonah, woman. You would get his mother-in-law to have a mortal hatred of you; she is very angry at him and at all of us. Even this morning she insulted Simon, Marjiam and me, as I was with them... » says Matthew.

«I will not tell Simon... But that is the situation... »

«And would you not take them? You have no children... » says Jesus gazing at her...

«L.. oh! I would like... But we are poor... and then... Thomas... He has nephews... and I also... and... and... »

«And above all you do not want to help your neighbour...

Woman, yesterday you criticised the Pharisees of Capernaum as being hard-hearted, you criticised your fellow-citizens for turning a deaf ear to My words... But in what are you behaving differently, having known Me for over two year's?... »

The woman lowers her head teasing her dress with her fingers... But she does not speak one word in favour of the little child who is still crying.

<sup>5</sup>«We are ready Master» shouts Peter who is arriving.

449. 5

«Oh! to be poor!... And persecuted!... » says Jesus with a sigh, raising His arms and shaking them in a gesture of discouragement...

«Son!... » says Mary, Who has been silent so far, to comfort Him. And Her word is sufficient to console Him.

«Go ahead with the provisions. I am going with My Mother to the boy's house» Jesus orders those who are arriving and those who are already with Him, and He sets out with His Mother, Who is carrying the child in Her arms...

They go towards the country. «What will You tell her, Son? »

«Mother, what do You expect Me to tell a mother whose heart has no love even for the children who are the fruit of her womb? »

«You are right... So? »

«So... Let us pray, Mother. » They walk praying.

<sup>6</sup>An old woman asks them: «Are You taking Alphaeus to Meroba? Tell her that it is time that she should take care of them. They can but become thieves... They are like locusts wherever they happen to go... I am indignant at her, not at those three poor wretches... Oh! How unfair death is! Could Jacob not have survived and could she not have died? You should make her die, so... »

449. 6

«Woman, old as you are, are you not yet wise? And you say such words, while you may die at any moment? In actual fact, you are as unfair as Meroba. Repent and sin no more. »

«Forgive me, Master... It's her guilty behaviour that makes me talk nonsense... »

«Yes, I forgive you. But never speak those words again, not even to yourself. You do not correct errors by cursing, but by loving. If Meroba died, would the fate of these children change? Perhaps the widower would get married again and he would have children of a third marriage and the boys would have a step-



mother... Thus their destiny would be worse. »

«That is true. I am old and foolish. Here is Meroba. She is cursing already... I leave You, Master. I do not want her to think that I have been talking to You about her. She is a viper... »

But her curiosity is stronger than her fear for the «viper», and the little old woman, even if she moves away from Jesus and Mary, does not go far, instead she bends to root out on the roadside some grass, which a nearby fountain has moistened in order to listen without being noticed.

449. 7 <sup>7</sup>«You are here? What have you done? Go home! You are always wandering about like stray animals, like dogs with no master, like... »

«Like children with no mother. Woman, are you aware that it is an adverse testimony for a mother the fact that her little children are not always close to her skirt? »

«It's because they are bad... »

«No. I have been coming here these last thirty months. Previously, when Jacob was alive and during the first months of widowhood, it was not so. Then you got married again... and with the memory of your previous wedding, you lost also that of your children. But what is the difference between them and the one who is maturing in your womb? Did you not bear them as well? Did you not suckle them? Look at that dove over there... How tenderly it takes care of that little pigeon... And yet it is already sitting on other eggs... Look at that sheep. She no longer suckles the lamb of the previous litter because she is pregnant again. And yet see how she licks its little snout and she lets the lively little lamb bump against her side? Are you not replying to Me? Woman, do you pray the Lord? »

«Of course I do. I am not a heathen... »

«And how can you speak to the just Lord if you are unjust? And how can you go to the synagogue and listen to the rolls of parchment which speak of the love of God for His children, without feeling remorse in your heart? Why do you not speak, and your attitude is so arrogant? »

«Because I did not ask for Your words... and I do not know why You have come to annoy me... My condition deserves respect... »

«And does the condition of your soul not deserve any? Why do

you not respect the rights of your soul? I know what you mean: that a fit of anger may risk the life of the unborn child... But do you not take care of the life of your soul? It is more valuable than the unborn child's... You know that... Death may be the end of your state. And do you want to face that hour with an upset, sick unjust soul? »

«My husband says that You are one to whom nobody should listen. I will not listen to You. <sup>8</sup>Alphaeus, come... » and she is about to go away amidst the screams of the little boy who knows that he is going to get a thrashing and does not want to leave Mary's arms. And Mary sighing tries to persuade the woman and says to her: «I am a mother as well and I can understand so many things. And I am a woman... I can therefore pity women. You are going through a difficult period, are you not? You suffer but you are not good at suffering... you become embittered thus... Sister, listen. If I gave you little Alphaeus now, you would be unfair to him and to yourself. Leave him with me for a few days, oh! only a few days. You will see that when he is no longer with you, you will pine for him... because a son is such a dear thing, that when he is away from us, we feel poor, cold, with no light... »

449. 8

«But take him! Take him! I wish You would take the other two as well! But I don't know where they are... »

«Yes, I will take him. Goodbye, woman. Come, Jesus. » And Mary turns around quickly and goes away sobbing...

«Do not weep, Mother. »

«Do not judge her, Son... »

The two sentences are uttered simultaneously and then, with one thought only, their lips speak the same words: «If they do not understand natural love, can they understand the love which is in the Gospel? » and Son and Mother look at each other, over the little head of the innocent child who now relaxes confidently and happily in Mary's arms...

«We will have one disciple more than we foresaw, Mother. »

«And he will enjoy days of peace... »

<sup>9</sup>«Have You seen, eh! She is as deaf as a door-post. I had warned You! And now? And later? »

449. 9

«Now there is peace. Later God grant there may be a pitiful heart... Why not yours, woman? A glass of water given out of love is taken into account in Heaven. But for those who love an inno-

cent child for My sake... oh! what beatitude for those who love the little ones and save them from evil!... »

The little old woman remains pensive... and Jesus takes a short cut to the lake. When He arrives there, He takes the little boy from Mary's arms to let Her get into the boat more easily, and He lifts the child up as far as He can, to show him and He smiles brightly saying to those who are already in the boats: «Look! This time our preaching will certainly be fruitful, because an innocent is with us» and He walks with steady steps on the board although it sways, He goes into the boat and sits beside His Mother, while the boat moves away from the shore, steering at once south-east, towards Hippo.

#### 450. Miracles in the village near Hippo and healing of the leper John.

26<sup>th</sup> June 1946.

450.1 'Hippo is not on the shore of the lake, as I thought, when I saw some houses on the shore almost at the south-eastern end. I realize that, from the words of the disciples. That group of houses, I would say, is the forefront of Hippo, which is farther back in the hinterland. Like Ostia with regards to Rome, or the Lido with regards to Venice, it represents the outlet on the lake for the inland town which makes use of the lake routes for imports and exports, and also to shorten journeys from this area to the Galilean shores on the other side, and finally, as a place of amusement for the idle citizens of the town and for the supplies of fish procured by the many fishermen of the village.

In the calm evening they land here, near a little natural port formed by the bed of a torrent at present dry, and where the sky-blue water of the lake comes in calmly for a few metres, as it is no longer driven back by the water of the torrent. On the shore there are large and small houses of fishermen, who toil the waters abounding in fish, and of market-gardeners, who cultivate a strip of rich moist ground, which is irrigated by the nearby waters and stretches from the shore inland, more northwards than southwards, ending sharply at the beginning of the high cliff, which rises almost sheer from the lake. It is the same cliff from

which the pigs of the miracle\* of the Gerasenes rushed into the lake.

<sup>2</sup>As it is evening, the inhabitants are on the terraces or in the kitchen gardens having supper. But as the kitchen gardens are surrounded by low hedges and the terraces by low walls, their inhabitants soon see the little fleet of boats moor in the little harbour and many get up and go to meet those who have arrived, some out of curiosity, some because they know them.

«It's the boat of Simon of Jonah together with that of Zebedee. So it can be no one but the Rabbi Who has come here with His disciples» declares a fisherman.

«Woman take the child at once and follow me. Perhaps it is Him. He will cure him. The angel of God has brought Him to us» a kitchen gardener orders his wife, whose face is tear-stained.

«As far as I am concerned, I believe. I remember that miracle very well! All those pigs! The pigs which extinguish with water the heat of the demons possessing them... The torture must have been dreadful, if the pigs, which are always so disdainful of cleanliness, threw themselves into the water... » says a man who hastens there in support of the Master.

«Oh! You are right! It must have been real torture. I was there as well, and I remember. The bodies exhaled fumes, so did the waters. The lake became warmer than the water of Hamatha. And the wood and the grass across which they ran were burnt. »

«I went there but I saw no change... » a third man observes.

«No change! Well your eyes are covered with scales!. Look! You can see it from here. See over there? Where the dry river-bed is? Look a little farther away and you will see whether... »

«No! That devastation was brought about by the Roman soldiers when they were looking for that rogue in the cold nights of the month of Tebeth. They camped there and lit fires. »

«And did they burn all the wood to light fires? Look how many trees are missing there! »

«A wood! Two or three oak-trees! »

«And is that nothing? »

«No. But you know! As far as they are concerned, our property is of no account. They are the rulers and we the oppressed peo-

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\* miracle, in 186. 5.

pie. Ah! Until... » the discussion moves from the supernatural to the political field.

450. 3

3«Who will take me to the Rabbi? Have mercy on a blind man! Where is He? Tell me. I. looked for Him in Jerusalem; at Nazareth, at Capernaum. He had always left before I arrived... Where is He? Oh! Have mercy on me! » moans a man about forty years old groping about with a stick.

Those whose legs or backs are struck abuse him, but no one feels pity for him and everybody knocks against him passing by, without stretching out a hand to guide him. The poor blind man stops, frightened and depressed...

«The Rabbi! The Rabbi! Ahc-Ahc, il il Ieee! » (I am striving to reproduce... the word of a shrill cry of the women modulating it. But it is a cry, not a word! It resembles more the chirping of some birds than a human word. )

«He will bless our children! »

«His word will startle the fruit which I have in my womb. Rejoice, my creature! The Saviour is speaking to you» says a buxom wife caressing her swollen abdomen under her loose dress.

«Oh! Perhaps He will make mine prolific! It would be joy and peace between Elisha and me. I have been to all the places where they say that a woman becomes fertile. I drank the water of the well near Rachel's tomb and that of the stream in the grotto where His Mother gave birth to Him... I went to Hebron to take for three days the earth of the place where the Baptist was born... I fed on the fruit of Abraham's oak-tree and I wept invoking Abel where he was delivered and killed... I have tried all the holy things, all the miraculous things of Heaven and earth, as well as medicines, and doctors, and vows, and prayers, and offerings... but my womb has not opened to the seed, and Elisha can hardly put up with me and he finds it difficult not to hate me!!! Alas! » moans an already withered woman.

«You are old now, Sella! Resign yourself! » reply those women - with pity mixed with slight contempt and evident triumphant mien - who pass by with their wombs swollen with maternity or with sucklings feeding at their flourishing mammae.

«No! Don't say that! He raised the dead! Will He not be able to give life to my womb? »

«Make room! Make room! Make room for my sick mother»

shouts a young man who is holding the shafts of an improvised litter, which is held at the other end by a very depressed girl. On the litter is a woman, still young, but reduced to a yellowish skeleton.

«We will have to inform Him of poor John and show Him where he is. He is the most unhappy of all, because he is a leper and he cannot go looking for the Master... » says an authoritative old man.

«We are first! If He goes towards Hippo, we have no hope. The townspeople will take Him for themselves and we will be neglected as usual. »

<sup>4</sup>«But what is happening there? Why are the women shouting <sup>450</sup> 4 thus over there, on the shore? »

«Because they are silly! »

«No. They are shouts of joy. Let's run... »

The road is thronged with people moving towards the shore and the gravel-bed, where Jesus and His apostles have been blocked by the people who flocked there first.

«A miracle! A miracle! Eliza's son, who was given up by doctors, has been cured! The Rabbi cured him by putting some saliva in his throat. »

The «Ahc-Ahc-il-il-Ieee» of the women becomes more trilling and piercing, mingled with the loud hosannas of men.

Jesus is literally overwhelmed notwithstanding His height. The apostles do everything they can to make room for Him. Nothing to be done! The women disciples with Mary in the middle of them are separated from the group of the apostles. The little boy is frightened and is crying in the arms of Mary of Alphaeus. And his weeping draws the attention of many people to the group of the women disciples, and there is the usual well-informed man who says: «Oh! there is also the Mother of the Rabbi and the mothers of the disciples!... »

«Which? Which are they? »

«The Mother is the pale fair-haired one wearing a linen dress, and the others are the old ones, the one with the little boy and the one with a basket on her head. »

«And who is the little' boy? »

«Her son, eh! Can't you hear him call her mummy? »

«Whose son? The old woman's? Not possible! »

«The young woman's. Can't you see that he wants to. go to her? »

«No. The Rabbi has no brothers. I know that for certain. »

450. 5

5 Jesus, moving with difficulty, manages to reach the litter on which the sick woman is lying, carried by her children and He cures her. Meanwhile some women, who have overheard the conversation, curious as they are, go towards Mary.

But one of them is not curious. She throws herself at Her feet saying: «For the sake of Your maternity, have mercy on me. » She is the barren woman.

Mary bends and asks: «What do you want, sister? »

«To be a mother... A son!... Only one!... I am hated because I am barren. I believe that Your Son can do everything, but I have such great faith in Him, that I think that as He was born of You, He made You as holy and powerful as He is. Now I beg You... for Your joys of mother I beg You: make me fertile. Touch me with Your hand and I will be happy... »

«Your faith is great, woman. But faith is to be given to Him, Who is entitled to it: to God. Come, therefore, to My Jesus... » and She takes her by the hand asking with graceful insistence to be allowed to pass until She reaches Jesus.

The other women disciples follow Her in the wake which opens in the crowd and the women who had approached Mary do likewise and in the meantime they ask Mary of Alphaeus who is the little boy whom she is holding up above the crowds.

«A little boy who is no longer loved by his mother. He has come to the Rabbi seeking love... »

«A little boy no longer loved by his mother!?! »

«Have you heard, Susanna? »

«Who is the hyena? »

«Alas! And I am suffering agonies because I have none! Give him to me, give him to me, that a son may kiss me at least once!... » and Sella, the barren woman, almost tears the little child from the arms of Mary of Alphaeus and she presses him to her heart still trying to follow Mary, Who has become separated from her the moment that Sella left Mary's hand to take the child.

450. 6

6 «Jesus, listen. There is a woman asking a grace. She is barren... »

«Do not trouble the Master for her, woman. Her womb

is dead» says one who is not aware that he is speaking to the Mother of God. Then, embarrassed because of his mistake about which he is warned he endeavours not to be noticed and to disappear while Jesus replies both to him and to the suppliant woman saying: «I am the Life. Woman, let it be done to you what you have asked» and He lays His hand on Sella's head for a moment.

«Jesus! Son of David, have mercy on me! » shouts the blind man mentioned previously. He has slowly arrived near the crowd and from the outskirts of it he cries his invocation.

Jesus, Who had lowered His head to hear Sella's words of supplication, raises His head again and looks in the direction from which the voice of the blind man comes, syncopated like the cry of a shipwrecked person.

«What do you want Me to do for you? » He shouts.

«That I may see. I am in darkness. »

«I am the Light. I want it! »

«Ah! I see! I can see again! Let me pass! That I may kiss the feet of my Lord! »

<sup>7</sup>«Master, You have cured everybody here. But there is a leper in a hut in the wood. He always begs us to take You to him... »

«Let us go! Please! Let Me go. Do not hurt yourselves! I am here for everybody... Please, make room. You are hurting women and children. I am not leaving yet. I will be here tomorrow and I will be in this area for five days. You can follow Me, if you wish so... »

Jesus tries to discipline the crowd, to ensure that the citizens in order to benefit by His visit, may not harm themselves. But the crowd is like an elastic substance which dilates then presses around Him once again, it is like an avalanche, which by natural law can but become more compact the more it descends. It is like particles of iron attracted by a magnet... Thus progress is slow, encumbered, difficult... They are all perspiring, the apostles are bawling: elbowing their way through the crowd, kicking shins at the same time... All efforts are vain! It takes them a quarter of an hour to cover ten metres.

A woman about forty years old succeeds through sheer perseverance in making her way as far as Jesus- and touches His elbow.

«What do you want, woman? »



«That little boy... I heard about him... I am a widow and I have no children... Remember me. I am Sarah of Aphek, the widow of the mat vendor. Remember. My house is near the square of the red fountain. But I own also some vineyards and a wood. I can afford to assist those who are alone... and I would be happy... »

«I will remember that, woman. May your pity be blessed. »

450. 8

8The village, which stretches more in a parallel direction than in a vertical direction with respect to the lake, is soon crossed and they find themselves in the peaceful silent country at twilight. However, it does not get dark, as the transition from daylight to moonlight is imperceptible. They go towards the ramifications of the high cliff, which farther south stretches out as far as the lake. On the cliff there are some grottoes, I do not know whether they are natural ones or dug on purpose in the rock; many have been walled up and whitewashed outside and are certainly sepulchres.

«Here we are! Let us stop in order not to be infected. We are close to the leper's hideout and this is the time when he comes to that rock, to collect offerings. He was rich, You know? We remember him. And he was also good. But now he is a holy man. The more sorrow struck him, the more holy he became. We do not know how it happened. They say that it was brought about by some pilgrims to whom he gave hospitality. They were going to Jerusalem, so they said. They appeared to be sound, but they were certainly lepers. The fact is that after they left, the wife and the servants first, then the children, finally he, became infected with leprosy. All of them. The first - and it was their hands that became infected - were those who had washed the feet and the clothes of the pilgrims, that is why we say that they must have been the cause of it all. The children: three, died soon. Then the wife, and she died more of grief than of disease... He... When the priest declared them all lepers, he bought this part of the mountain with his money which had now become useless and he had provisions stored there for himself and his family... including servants, together with hoes and picks... and he began to dig the sepulchres... and one by one he buried them all: his little children, then his wife, the servants... He is the only one left all alone, poor, because everything comes to an end, as time pass-

es... and the situation has lasted fifteen years... And yet... never one complaint. He was a learned man: he repeats the Scriptures by heart. He repeats them to the stars, to herbs, to trees, to birds, he repeats them to us who have so much to learn from him, and he comforts our sorrows... he, wonder of wonders! comforts our sorrows. People come from Hippo and Gamala and even from Gherghesa and Aphek to hear him. When he heard of the miracle of the two men possessed... oh! he began to preach faith in You. Lord, if men greeted You with Your name of Messiah, if women greeted You as victor and king, if children know Your name and that You are the Holy One of Israel, that is due to the poor leper» relates on behalf of everybody the old man who was the first to speak of John.

«Will You cure him? » ask many.

«And are you asking Me? I have mercy on sinners, so what will I have for a just man? <sup>9</sup>But is it perhaps he who is coming? <sup>450</sup> Over there, among those bushes... »

«It is certainly him. What wonderful sight You have, Lord! We can hear the rustling noise, but do not see anything... »

The rustling also stops. There is dead silence and expectation... ~

Jesus is clearly visible, alone, a little ahead of the others, because He has gone forward as far as the rock on which some provisions have been laid; the others disappear in the dim light of some trees, mingling with trunks and bushes of the unbroken ground. Children also are silent, either because they have fallen asleep in their mothers' arms, or because they are frightened of the silence, of the sepulchres, of the bizarre shadows which the moon casts illuminating trees and rocks.

But the leper must see, and see well, from his hiding-place. He must be able to see the tall solemn person of the Lord, handsome and all white in the white moonlight. The tired glances of the leper certainly meet Jesus' bright eyes. What language is spoken by those divine, wide eyes, as bright as stars? What language is uttered by the lips open in a smile of love? Above all, what does the heart of the Christ say? A mystery. One of the many mysteries between God and souls in their spiritual relationship. The leper certainly understands because he shouts: «Here is the Lamb of God! Here is He Who has come to cure all the sorrows

of the world! Jesus, blessed Messiah, our King and Saviour, have mercy on me! »

«What do you want? How can you believe in the Unknown One and see in Him the Expected One? What am I for you? The Unknown... »

«No. You are the Son of the living God. How do I know and see? I do not know. Here, within me, a voice has shouted: "Here is the Expected One! He has come to reward your faith". Unknown? Yes. The face of God is not known to anybody. Thus You are the "Unknown One" in Your appearance. But You are the Known One because of Your Nature and Your Royalty. Jesus, Son of the Father, Word Incarnate and God like the Father. That is who You are, and I greet You and beg You, believing in You. »

«And if I were not able to do anything and your faith were disappointed? ».

«I would say that that is the will of the Most High and I would continue to believe and love, always hoping in the Lord. »

450. 10 <sup>10</sup>Jesus turns to the crowds who are listening in suspense to the conversation and He says: «I solemnly tell you that this man has the faith which moves mountains. I solemnly tell you that true charity, faith and hope are tested more in sorrow than in joy, because the excess of joy is often the ruin of a spirit not yet perfected. It is easy to believe and be good when life is a placid succession of days all alike, even if not a pleasant one. But he who is able to persist in faith, hope and charity, also when diseases, poverty, death, misfortunes cause him to be left all alone, forlorn, avoided by everybody, and he does nothing but say: Let that be done which the Most High deems is useful to me", he truly not only deserves help from God, but, I tell you, his seat is ready in the Kingdom of Heaven and he will suffer no delay in expectation, because his justice has cancelled all debts of his past life. Man, I say to you: "Go in peace, as God is with you!" ». »

He turns around in saying so and stretches His arms out to the leper with His gesture. He almost draws him towards Himself, and when he is close at hand and clearly visible, He orders: «I want it!. Be cleansed!... » and with her silvery beams the moon seems to cleanse and wipe away the pustules, the wounds, the nodules and the scabs of the horrible disease.

The body recomposes its features and becomes sound. It is an

old dignified man, ascetic in his leanness, who, as soon as he becomes aware of the miracle through the hosannas shouted by the crowd, bends to kiss the ground, as he cannot touch Jesus or any other man before the time prescribed by the Law.

«Stand up. They will bring you clean clothes so that you may present yourself to the priest. But always present yourself to your God in purity of spirit. Goodbye, man. Peace be with you! »

And Jesus joins the crowds and slowly goes back to the village to rest.

451. Sermon, in the village close to Hippo,  
on the duties of husbands and wives and their children.

27<sup>th</sup> June 1946.

<sup>1</sup>It is a cool morning when the people wait for Jesus to come <sup>4511</sup> out of a house in the lake village to begin His preaching.

I think that the inhabitants slept very little that night, deeply moved as they were by the miracles which had been worked, by the joy of having the Master with them, by their desire not to waste one moment of His presence. They were late in going to sleep, because of the long talking in houses, recapitulating the events, examining whether their spirits were endowed with faith, hope and charity, firm against every painful event, praised by the Master and proclaimed sure means to obtain grace from God in this and in the next life. And they woke up early fearing that the Master might come out and go away early in the morning and they might not be present when He departed. Thus houses opened early to let their inhabitants go out into the streets, where, seeing that they were so many, practically all, and all prompted by the same thoughts, they said to one another: «It is really the first time that one only thought has urged our hearts and united them» and with fresh, kind, brotherly friendship, by mutual consent, they all set out towards the house where Jesus has been given hospitality and they crowded around it, noiselessly, waiting patiently and untiringly, quite decided to follow the Master, as soon as He comes out.

And many market-gardeners have picked in their gardens the fruits still covered with dew and are protecting them from

the rising sun, from dust and flies, by covering them with fresh vine leaves or large fig-leaves, through the indentations of which peep red apples, which seem to have been painted by a miniaturist, and grapes like amber or onyx, or soft round figs of all kinds, some firmly closed within their skin delicately withered on the sweet pulp, some turgid and smooth as if they were covered with well-ironed silk and decorated with diamond drops at their lower ends, some open in a smile of their blond, rosy, deep red fibres, according to qualities. And some fishermen have brought some fish in small baskets, fish which they certainly caught during the night, sacrificing their sleep, because some are still alive and are gasping in their last painful aspirations and spasms of agony, while their panting and faint wriggling increase the silvery or delicately blue hues of their stomachs and backs, lying on a bed of grey-green leaves of willow trees or poplars.

451.2 <sup>2</sup>The lake, in the meantime, has changed from the delicate milky hue which light bestows on waters at daybreak - a hue so pure, I would say so angelical, almost abstract, so calmly the water rests on the shingly shore, just murmuring delicately among the pebbles - to the resplendent, more human, I would say carnal hue of dawn, which tinges the water with red as the rosy clouds are reflected in the lake. And the lake becomes sky-blue in the pure light of dawn and begins to live again, to pulsate, with its wavelets which stir and run joyfully breaking into foam on the shore, then run back to dance with other wavelets, adorning the entire sheet of the lake with a light snow-white lace, thrown on the silky blue water, rippled by the morning breeze. Then the first ray of sunlight strikes the water over there, towards Tarichea, where it was so green-blue because of the woods which it reflected, and it assumes a golden hue and shines like a broken mirror struck by the sun and the mirror expands incessantly, tinging with gold and topazes waters still blue, cancelling the rosy hues of the clouds reflected in the water, enveloping the keels of the last boats which are returning to port after fishing, as well as the keels of the first boats going out, while the sails, in the triumphal light of the risen sun, are as white as the wings of an angel against the blue of the sky and the green of the hills. Magnificent lake of Galilee which with its fruitful shores reminds me of our Lake Garda, and with its mystical peace Lake

Trasimeno, gem of Palestine, worthy surroundings for most of the public life of Jesus!

<sup>3</sup>Jesus appears at the door of the hospitable house and He <sup>4</sup> smiles, raising His arms to bless the patient citizens awaiting Him.

51.3

«Peace be with you all.

Were you waiting for Me? Were you afraid that I might run away without saying goodbye to you? I always keep My promises. I am with you today to evangelize you and I will remain with you as I promised, to bless your houses, your gardens and boats, so that each family may be sanctified, and your work may be sanctified as well. But, remember, My blessing is to be assisted by your goodwill in order to be fruitful. And you know which is the goodwill that must enliven a family so that the house sheltering it may be holy. The husband is to be the head, but not the despot, of the wife, of the children and of the servants, and at the same time he is to be the king, the true king in the biblical sense of word.

Do you remember chapter eight of the first Book of the King\*. The elders of Israel gathered together and went to Ramah, where Samuel lived and they said to him: "Look, you are old and your children do not follow your ways. So give us a king to Judge us, like the other nations". King, therefore, means Judge, and he should be a just judge in order not to make his subjects unhappy here on the earth with wars, abuse of power, unfair heavy taxes, or in eternal life with a kingdom permissive of lasciviousness and vice. Woe to those kings who fail in their ministry, who turn a deaf ear to the voices of their subjects, who turn a blind eye to the evils of the nation who become responsible for the sufferings of the people through alliances formed against justice for the only purpose of strengthening their power with the help of allies! But woe also to those fathers who fail in their duties, who are blind and deaf to the needs and faults of the members of their families, who are the cause of scandal or grief for it, who stoop to arrange worthless marriages by compromise, in order to enter into an alliance with rich powerful families, without considering that matrimony is intended, besides procreation, for the el-

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\* chapter eight of the first Book of the King, a quotation that in the neo-vulgate corresponds to: *1 Samuel 8, 4-5*.

evation and, comfort of man and woman; it is a duty, a ministry, not a bargain, it is not sorrow, it is not debasement of either husband or wife. It is love, not hatred. The head of the family, therefore, must be just without excessive hardness or pretensions and without excessive compliance and weakness. But if you had to choose between the former excess and the latter, pick the latter, because God, with regards to it, may say to you: "Why were you so good?" and will not condemn you, because excess in kindness is already a punishment for man through the overbearing action which other people take the liberty of performing against good persons; whereas He would always reproach you for your hardness, which is lack of love for your closest neighbour.

451. 4 <sup>4</sup>And the wife at home must be just with her husband, her children and servants. She must obey, respect, console and help her husband. She is to be obedient, providing her obedience does not imply consent to sin. The wife must be submissive but not degraded. Beware, O wives, that the first to judge you, after God, for certain guilty condescensions, are your very husbands, who persuade you to comply. They are not always desires of love, but they are also tests for your virtue. Even if he does not think about it at the moment, the day may come when the husband may say to himself: "My wife is very sensual" and thence he may begin to be suspicious of her fidelity. Be chaste in your conjugality. Behave in such a way that your chastity may impose on your husbands that reservedness which one has for pure things, and they may consider you as their equals, not as slaves or concubines kept only for "*pleasure*" and rejected when they are no longer liked. The virtuous wife, I would say the wife who also after conjugality retains that virginal "something" in attitude, in words, in her transports of love, can lead her husband to an elevation from sensuality to sentiment, whereby the husband divests himself of lewdness and becomes really "one thing" with his wife, whom he treats with the same respect with which a man treats a part of himself, which is just, because the wife is "bone from his bones and flesh from his flesh" and no man ill-treats his bones or his flesh, on the contrary he loves them, and therefore husband and wife, like the first married couple, look at each other without seeing their sexual nakedness, but let them love each other because of their spirits, without degrading shame.

Let the wife be patient and motherly with her husband. Let her consider him as the first of her children, because a woman is always a mother and man is always in need of a patient, prudent, affectionate, comforting mother. Blessed is the woman who knows how to be the companion and at the same time the mother of her husband to support him, and his daughter to be guided by him. A wife must be industrious. Work, while it does away with day-dreams, is good for honesty and to one's purse as well. She should not torture her husband with foolish jealousy, which serve no purpose. Is the husband honest? A stupid jealousy, by driving him out of the house, exposes him to the danger of falling into the snares of a prostitute. Is he not honest and faithful? The fury of a jealous wife will not correct him, but her serious attitude, free from grudge and rudeness, her dignified and loving, still loving behaviour will make him ponder and return to reason. Learn how to win back your husbands, when a passion separates them from you, through your virtue, just as you conquered them in your youth through your beauty. And, to gain strength for such duty, and resist the grief which might make you unfair, love your children and consider their welfare.

<sup>5</sup>A woman has everything in her children: joy, a royal crown 4515  
for the cheerful hours when she is really the queen of the house and of her husband, and a balm in sorrowful hours, when betrayal or other grievous experiences of married life scourge her forehead and above all pierce her heart with the thorns of her sad regality of martyr spouse. Are you so depressed as to wish to go back to your family, divorcing, or to find compensation in a false friend who raves for the female but feigns to feel pity for the heart of the betrayed wife? No, women, no! Your children, your innocent children, who are already upset and prematurely sad because of the domestic milieu, which is no longer serene or just, are entitled to their mother, to their father, to the comfort of a house, where, if one love has perished, the other remains vigilant to watch over them. Their innocent eyes look at you, they study you and they understand more than you think, and they mould their spirits according to what they see and understand. Never scandalize your innocent children, but take shelter in them, as in a bulwark of adamant lilies, against the weakness of the flesh and the snares of snakes. And let the woman be a



mother. The just mother who is the sister as well as the mother, who is the friend as well as the sister of her sons and daughters. And who, above all and in everything, is an example. She must watch over her sons and daughters, correcting them gently, supporting them, making them ponder, and all that without preferences; because the children were all born of the same seed and of the same womb and if it is natural that good children are well-liked, because of the joy they give, it is also fair that children who are not good should be loved as well, although with sorrowful love, bearing in mind that man must not be more severe than God, Who loves not only good people, but also those who are not good, and He loves them to try and make them good, to give them means and time to become so, and He is patient until the death of man, reserving to Himself the right to become just Judge when man can no longer make amends.

451. 6 <sup>6</sup>And let Me tell you now something which does not concern this subject, but is useful for you to bear in mind. Very often, too often we hear people say that wicked persons are better off than good persons and that that is not fair. First of all I say to you: "Do not Judge by appearances and by what you do not know". Appearances are often misleading and the judgement of God is not known on the Earth. You will become aware of it in the next life and you will see that the fleeting welfare of the wicked was granted as a means to attract them to Good and as a reward for the little good which even the most wicked man may do. But when you see things in the right light of future life, you will realize that the joyful time of the sinner was shorter than the life of a blade of grass, which began to grow in spring in the gravel-bed of a torrent which dries up in summer, whereas one moment of glory in Heaven is greater than the most triumphant life any man ever lived because of the joy which it confers on spirits who delight in it. Therefore, do not envy the prosperity of the wicked, but strive, through goodwill, to possess the eternal treasure of the just.

451. 7 <sup>7</sup>And reverting to how the members of a family and the inhabitants of a house should be, so that My blessing may remain fruitful in it, I tell you, children, to be submissive to your parents, to be respectful and obedient, so that you may be so also with the Lord your God. Because if you do not learn to obey the simple or-

ders of your fathers and mothers, whom you see, how will you be able to obey the commands of God, which are given to you in His name, but you neither see nor hear Him? And if you do not learn to believe that he who loves, as a father and a mother love, can but order good things, how can you believe that the things which are related to you as commands of God, are good? God loves, you know? and is a Father. And precisely because He loves you and wants you to be with Him, dear children, He wants you to be good. And the first school where you learn to become so, is your family. You learn there to love and to obey and there begins for you the way that leads to Heaven. So be good, respectful, docile. Love your fathers also when they correct you, because they do so for your own good, and love your mothers if they restrain you from doing actions which by their experience they know are not good. Honour your parents and do not make them blush because of your wicked deeds. Pride is not a good thing, but there is a holy pride, the pride of saying: "I did not grieve my father or my mother". Such behaviour, which makes you enjoy their company while they are alive, is peace on the wound of their death, whereas the tears, which a son causes his parents to shed, scorch the heart of the wicked son like melted lead, and notwithstanding every effort to soothe the injury, it is painful, and all the more so when the parent's death prevents the son from making amends... Oh! children, be good, always, if you want God to love you.

<sup>8</sup>Lastly, holy is that house in which, through the justice of the masters, the servants also become just. Masters should remember that bad behaviour exacerbates and spoils servants, and the servants should bear in mind that their bad behaviour disgusts masters. Let each stay in his own place, but with a tie of love for the neighbour to fill the division existing between servants and masters.

451. 8

Then the house blessed by Me will keep its blessing and the Lord will dwell in it. And likewise, My blessing and thus My protection will remain on boats, kitchen gardens, working and fishing implements, when you lead your lives as fishermen or market-gardeners working holily on days permitted and holily devoted to worshipping God on holy Sabbaths, and you do not cheat when selling or weighing, and you do not curse your work, neither do you make it the sovereign of your lives by preferring it to

God. Because if work gives you a profit, God gives you Heaven.

451.9

<sup>9</sup>And now let us go and bless houses and boats and oars and kitchen gardens and hoes, then we will go and speak near the place where John is, before he goes to the priest. Because I will not come back here again, and it is fair that he should hear Me at least once. Take some bread, fish and fruit; we will take them into the wood and we will eat in the presence of the cured leper giving him the best bits, so that also his body may rejoice and he may feel that he is already a brother among the believers in the Lord. »

And Jesus sets out followed by the people of the village and by other people who have come from nearby towns, where, during the night some inhabitants of this village perhaps went with the news that the Saviour is on this shore.

452. The ex-leper John becomes a disciple.

The parable of the ten monuments.

29<sup>th</sup> June 1946.

452.1

«My Lord! » shouts the ex-leper dropping on his knees as soon as he sees Jesus appear in the unbroken ground in front of the rocky place, where he has lived for so many years. Then, standing up, he shouts again: «Why have You come back to me? »

«To give you the viaticum of My word after that of your health. »

«Viaticum is given to him who is about to depart, and in fact this evening I am leaving for my purification. But I am leaving to come back and join Your disciples, if You will accept Me. Lord, I no longer have home or relatives. I am too old to resume an activity in life. They will reinstate me in my property. But what will my house be like after fifteen years of neglect? What shall I find there? Perhaps dilapidated walls... I am a bird with no nest. Let me join the group which follows You. In any case... I no longer belong to myself, I belong to You for what You have given me, I do not belong to the world any more, which cast me away for such a long time, and quite rightly as I was unclean. Now, after becoming acquainted with You, I find that the world is impure and I want to flee from it and come to You. »

«And I will not reject you. But I tell you that I would like you to stay in this area. Aera and Arbela have one of their sons who is a disciple and evangelizes there. I ask you to be such a disciple for Hippo, Gamala, Aphek and nearby villages. I will be going down to Judaea shortly and I will not come back to this area any more. But I want some evangelizers here. »

«Your will makes every renouncement dear to me. I will do what You wish. I will begin as soon as purifications are over. I had made up my mind not to take care of my house any more. Now instead I will have it repaired, so that I can live in it and receive during winter the souls which are anxious to hear of You. And I will ask one of the disciples who has been following You for years, to come with me, because if You want me to be a little master, I need to be taught by someone more learned than I am. And in spring I will go about like the others preaching Your Name. »

<sup>2</sup>«That is a good plan. God will help you to fulfil it. »

452. 2

«I have already begun it by burning everything I possessed: that is, my poor pallet and the utensils which I used, the clothes I wore until yesterday, everything that I had touched with my diseased body. The grotto in which I lived is black with the smoke of the fire which I lit in it to destroy and purify. Nobody will be infected going into it to take shelter in a stormy night. And then... (the man's voice becomes feeble, it almost breaks, his speech slows down... ) and then... I had an old chest, by now falling to pieces... worm-eaten... It seemed that leprosy had corroded it as well... But to me... It was more valuable than the wealth of the world... It contained my dear things... mementoes of my mother... the wedding veil of my Anne... Ah! when I, so happy, took it off her the evening of our wedding and I contemplated her face, as beautiful and pure as lilies, who could have told me that a few years later I was to see it all covered with sores! And... the garments of my children... their toys... which their little hands had played with while they were able to hold... an object... and... oh! my grief is so deep... forgive my tears... It is so painful now that I have burned them for the sake of justice... without being able to kiss them any more... because they had belonged to lepers... I am unfair, Lord... I am showing You tears... But bear with me... I have destroyed the last memory of them... and now I am like a

man lost in a desert... » The man collapses weeping near the heap of ashes, the remembrance of his past...

«You are not lost, John, and you are not alone. I am with you. And your dear ones will soon be with Me, in Heaven, waiting for you. Those remains reminded you of them, disfigured by disease, or lovely and healthy before the calamity. Sorrowful remembrances all of them. Leave them among the ashes of the fire. Cancel them in My assurance that you will find them, happy and beautiful in the joy of Heaven. The past is dead, John. Do not mourn any more over it. Light does not delay to look at the darkness of the night, but it is happy to part from it and to shine climbing the sky behind the sun every morning. And the sun does not delay in the east, but it rises, springs and rushes until it shines high in the vault of heaven. Your night is over. Forget it. Rise with your spirit up there, where I, the Light, will lead you. Through sweet hope and beautiful faith, you will already find joy there, because your charity will be able to communicate with God and your beloved ones awaiting you. It is but a rapid climb... and you will soon be up there, with them. Life is a puff of air... eternity is the eternal present. »

<sup>452.3</sup> «You are right, Lord. You are comforting and teaching me how to overcome this hour with justice... <sup>3</sup>But You are standing in the sun to be as close to me as You are allowed. Withdraw, Master. You have given me enough. The sun, already strong, might harm You. »

«I have come to stay with you. We have all come for that. But you can move as well towards the trees and we will be near each other without any danger. »

The man obeys departing from the rock at the foot of which is the heap of ashes, his past, and he goes towards the spot, for which Jesus is making, where the apostles, deeply moved, are with the women and the people of the village and those who have come from other towns to hear the Master.

«Light the fires to cook the fish. We will share the food in a banquet of love» orders Jesus.

And while the apostles do so, He goes about under the trees which have grown in a disorderly way in this place, which everybody has shunned because of the presence of the leper. A thick wild tangle of trees unaware of pruning-knives or axes since

( they began to come up. People suffering or depressed are in the propitious shadow of the brushwood and they speak to Jesus of their distresses, and Jesus cures, advises or comforts, patiently and powerfully. Further away, in a small meadow, the boy from Capernaum is playing with the children of the village and their joyful cries compete with the singing of many birds in the thick trees, while their multi-coloured garments, waving while they run on the green grass, make them look like large butterflies fluttering from flower to flower.

<sup>4</sup>The food is ready and they call Jesus. He kindly asks a peasant for a basket, who had brought some figs and grapes, and He fills it with bread, with the nicest fish, with tasty fruit, He adds His flask of water sweetened with honey, and He turns His steps towards the ex-leper.

452. 4

«You will be left without a flask, Master» says Bartholomew warning Him. «He cannot give it back to You. »

And Jesus replies smiling: «There is still so much water for the thirst of the Son of man! There is the water which the Father put *into deep wells*. And the Son of man can drink from His cupped hands, while they are still free... The day will come when I will have neither free hands nor water... not even the water of love to give refreshment to the Thirsty One... Now I have so much love around Me... » and He goes on carrying with both hands the wide round low basket and laying it on the grass a few metres from John, to whom He says: «Take and eat. It is the banquet of God. »

He then returns to His place. He offers and blesses the food and has it handed out to the people present who add what they had of their own. They all eat with relish and in peaceful joy, and Mary takes care of little Alphaeus with motherly love.

When the meal is over, Jesus stands between the crowd and the ex-leper and He begins to speak, while mothers take in their laps the children satiated with food and tired of playing and they lull them to sleep, so that they may not disturb.

<sup>5</sup>«Listen everybody. In a psalm\* David, the psalmist, asks: «Who will dwell in the Tabernacle of God? Who will rest on the mountain of God? ». And he goes on to enumerate who will be

452. 5

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\* a psalm, which is in *Psalms 15*.

the fortunate people and why they will be so. He says: "The man whose way of life is blameless and who does what is right. He who speaks the truth from his heart and does not plot deceit with his tongue, who does no wrong to his fellow, who does not listen to words discrediting his neighbour". And in a few lines, after describing those who will enter the dominions of God, he says what good these blessed souls do after having done no wrong. Here: "In his eyes the reprobate is nothing. He honours those who fear God. When he swears to his neighbour he stands by his pledge. He does not ask interest on loans, he will not be bribed to victimise the innocent". And he concludes: "The man who does all that will never waver". I solemnly tell you that the psalmist spoke the truth and I confirm with My wisdom that he who does such things will never waver.

452. 6 <sup>6</sup>The first condition to enter the Kingdom of Heaven: "To live without fault".

But can man, a weak creature, live without fault? The flesh, the world and Satan, in continuous ferment of passions inclinations and hatred squirt out their spray to stain souls, and if Heaven were open only to those who lived without fault ever since the age of reason, very few men would enter Heaven, just as very few are the men who arrive at death without experiencing more or less serious diseases during their lifetime. So? Are the children of God barred from Heaven? And will they have to say: "I have lost it" when an attack of Satan or a storm of the flesh causes them to fall and they see their souls stained? Will there be no more forgiveness for the sinners? Will nothing delete the stain which disfigures the spirit? Do not fear your God with unjust fear. He is a Father and a father always stretches out a hand to his wavering children, he offers help so that they may rise again, he comforts them with kind means so that their dejection may not degenerate into despair, but it may flourish into humbleness willing to make amends and thus become again pleasing to the Father.

Now. The repentance of the sinner, the goodwill to make amends, both brought about by true love for the Lord, cleanse the stain of fault and make one worthy of divine forgiveness. And when He Who is speaking to you has completed His mission on the Earth, the most powerful absolution which the Christ will have achieved for you at the cost of His sacrifice, will be added

to the absolutions of love, of repentance and of goodwill. With souls purer than those of new-born babies, much purer, because from the bosoms of those who believe in Me, rivers of living water will spring deterring also the original sin, the first cause of weakness in man, you will be able to aspire to Heaven, to the Kingdom of God, to His Tabernacles. Because the Grace which I am about to restore to you will help you to practise justice which, the more it is practised, the more it increases the right, that a faultless spirit gives you to enter the joy of the Kingdom of Heaven. Infants will enter Heaven and they will rejoice, because of the beatitude given to them gratuitously, as Heaven is joy. But also adults and old people will enter it, those who have lived, fought, won and who to the snow-white crown of Grace will add the many-coloured one of their holy deeds, of their victories over Satan, the world and the flesh, and great, very great will be their beatitude of winners, so great, that man cannot imagine it.

<sup>7</sup>How does one practise justice? How does one gain victory? <sup>452 7</sup>  
Through honesty of words and deeds, through charity for one's neighbour. Acknowledging that God is God, not placing the idols of creatures, money, power in the place of the Most Holy God. By giving everybody the place to which they are entitled, without trying to give more or to give less than what is right. He who honours one because he is a friend or a mighty relative and serves him also in evil deeds, is not just. On the contrary, he who harms his neighbour because he has no hope of receiving any kind of profit from him and bears false witness against him on oath, or is bribed to testify against the innocent or to judge partially, not according to justice but according to the profit he may gain with his unfair judgement from the more powerful of the competitors, is not just and vain are his prayers and offers, because they are stained with injustice in the eyes of God.

You can see that what I am telling you is the Decalogue. The word of the Rabbi is always the Decalogue. Because good, justice, glory consist in doing what the Decalogue teaches and orders us to do. There is no other doctrine. In days gone by it was given amid the flashes of lightning on Mount Sinai, now it is given in the refulgence of Mercy, but the Doctrine is the same. It does not change. It cannot change. Many in Israel will say, as an excuse to justify their lack in holiness, even after the passage of



the Saviour on the Earth: "I did not have the possibility to follow and listen to Him". But their excuse is of no value. Because the Saviour did not come to impose a new Law, but to confirm the first, the only Law, nay, to reconfirm it in its holy plainness, in its perfect simplicity. To reconfirm with love and the promises of the assured love of God what previously was said with severity on one side and listened to with fear on the other.

452. 8

<sup>8</sup>To make you understand properly what are the ten Commandments and how important it is to abide by them, I will now tell you a parable.

The father of a family had two sons. He loved them both equally and wanted to be their benefactor impartially. This father in addition to the house in which his sons lived, owned some property in which great treasures were hidden. The sons were aware of such treasures, but did not know the way to go there because the father for reasons of his own, had not revealed the road which led there, and that had been the situation for many years. But one day he called his sons and said: "The time has now come when you ought to know where the treasures are, which I laid aside for you, so that you may go there when I tell you. You had better know the road and the signals which I put on it, so that you may not go astray. So listen to me. The treasures are not in a plain where waters stagnate, where dog days scorch, where dust spoils everything, thorns and bramble suffocate, and where robbers can easily go and rob you. The treasures are on the top of that high rugged mountain. I put them on the top there and they are waiting for you up there. There is more than one path on the mountain, in actual fact there are many. But one only is the right one. Of the others some end up in precipices, some in caves with no exit, some in ditches full of muddy water, some in nests of vipers, some in craters of burning sulphur, some against insurmountable walls. The right road, instead is a difficult one, but it reaches the top without any interruption of precipices or other obstacles. In order to enable you to recognize it, I placed along it, at regular intervals, ten stone monuments, on each of which is carved these three identification words: *Hove, obedience, victory*'. Follow that path and you will reach the place of the treasure. I will come along another road, which is known to me alone and I will open the doors to you, so that you may be happy".

<sup>9</sup>The two sons said goodbye to the father who, as long as <sup>452</sup><sup>9</sup> they could hear him, repeated: "Follow the path I told you. It's for your own good. Do not yield to the temptation to follow the others, even if they seem better to you. You would lose both the treasure and me...".

They arrive at the foot of the mountain. The first monument was there, at the beginning of the path, which was in the middle of several paths radiating in different directions towards the mountain top. The two brothers began to climb the good path. At first it was very good, although there was not the least bit of shade. From the sky the sun darted down on it, flooding it with light and heat. The white rock in which the path had been dug, the clear sky above them the warm sun embracing their bodies: that is what the brothers saw and felt. But still animated by goodwill, by the remembrance of their father and by his advice, they climbed joyfully toward the top. Then the second monument... and later the third one. The path had become more and more difficult, solitary, warm. They could not even see the other paths with grass, trees or clear waters, and above all, where the slope was more gentle, because it was not so steep and the tracks were laid on ground and not on rocks.

"Our father wants us dead when we get there" said one of the sons on arriving at the fourth monument. And he began to slacken his pace. The other encouraged him to go on saying: "He loves us as his very own and even more because he saved the treasure for us in such a wonderful way. He dug this path in the rock and it takes one from the foot of the mountain to its top without any risk of getting lost. And he put these monuments to guide us. Just consider that, my brother! He did all that by himself, for our sake! To give it to us! To ensure that we arrive there without the possibility of mistakes and without any danger".

They continued to walk. But the paths they had left down in the valley reappeared now and again close to the track in the rock and they did so more and more frequently as the cone of the mountain became narrower near the top. And how beautiful, shady and attractive they were!...

"I think I will take one of those" said the discontented brother, when he arrived at the sixth monument. "It goes to the top as well".

“You cannot be sure of that... You cannot see whether it goes up or down...”.

“There it is, up there!”.

“You do not know whether it is this one. In any case our father told us not to leave this good path...”.

The listless brother continued to climb against his will. At the seventh monument he said: “Oh! I am definitely going away”.

“Don’t, brother!”.

They went on their way up the path, which was now very difficult, but the top was now close at hand...

They arrived at the eighth monument and very close to it was the flowery path. “Oh! you can see that this one goes up as well, although not in a straight line!”.

“You don’t know if it is the same one”.

“I do. I recognize it”.

“You are mistaken”.

“No. I’m going”.

“Don’t. Think of father, of the dangers, of the treasure”.

“They can all go to the dogs! What am I going to do with the treasure if I will be as good as dead when I get up there? Which danger is greater than this path? And which hatred is stronger than our father’s, who fooled us with this track to let us die? Goodbye. I will arrive before you, and alive...” and he jumped on to the adjacent path, and disappeared with a joyful exclamation behind the tree trunks shading it.

452. 10 <sup>10</sup>His brother went his way sadly... Oh! the last part of the track was really dreadful! The man was exhausted. He felt worn out with fatigue and heat! At the ninth monument he stopped panting, leaning against the carved stone and reading the engraved words mechanically. Nearby there was a shady path with water and flowers... “I almost... No! It is written there, and it was my father who wrote it: *Hove, obedience, victory*. I must believe in his love, in his truthfulness, and I must obey to show my love... Let us go... May love support me...”.

He is now at the tenth monument... Exhausted, burnt by the sun, he walked stooping, as if he were under a yoke... It was the loving holy yoke of faithfulness, which is love, obedience, strength, hope, justice, prudence, everything... Instead of leaning on the monument he sat down in the narrow shade which it cast on the ground. He felt

that he was dying... From the nearby path came the gurgle of streams and the smell of forests... "Father, help me with your spirit, in this temptation... help me to be faithful until the end! ", From afar the joyful voice of his brother shouted: "Come, I will wait for you. Eden is here... Come... "

"And if I went?... " and shouting loud: "Does it really go to the top? "

"Yes, come. There is a cool tunnel which takes one up. Come! I can already see the top beyond the tunnel, in the rock... "

"Shall I go? Shall I not?... Who will help me?... I will go... ". He pushed his hands on the ground to help himself get up and while doing so he noticed that the engraved words were not as clear as those on the first monument. "At each monument the words were less distinct... as if my father, being exhausted, had found it difficult to engrave them. And... look!... Here also is the dark red mark, which has been visible as from the fifth monument... The only difference is that here it fills the hollow of each letter and it has overflowed, furrowing the rock as if it were dark tears, tears... of blood... ". With a finger he scratched a blotch as large as two hands. And the blotch crumbled into dust leaving uncovered and clear these words: "Thus I loved you. To the extent of shedding my blood to lead you to the Treasure".

"Oh! oh! Father! And I was thinking of not obeying your order?! Forgive me, father. Forgive me", The son wept leaning on the rock and the blood filling the words became fresh and as bright as a ruby and the tears became food and drink and strength for the good son... He stood up... out of love he called his brother aloud... He wanted to tell him of his discovery... of their father's love, and say to him: "Come back". But no one replied...

The young man resumed his way, almost on his knees on the hot rock because his body was exhausted with fatigue, but his spirit was serene. There was the top... and his father.

"Father! "

"My beloved son! "

The young man threw himself on his father's breast, his father embraced him and kissed him fondly.

"Are you alone? "

"Yes... But my brother will soon be here... "

"No. He will never arrive. He left the way of the ten command-

merits. He did not come back to it after the first warning disappointments. Do you want to see him? There he is. In the abyss of fire... He persisted in his error. I would have forgiven and awaited him if after realizing his mistake, he had retraced his steps and, although late, he had passed where love had passed first, suffering to the extent of shedding the best part of his blood, the dearest part of himself for you”.

“He did not know... ”,

“If he had looked with love at the words engraved in the ten monuments, he would have understood their true meaning. You read it as from the fifth monument and you called his attention to it when you said: ‘Our father must have injured himself here!’ and you read it in the sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth... clearer and clearer, until by instinct you discovered what was under my blood. Do you know the name of that instinct? ‘Your true union with me’, The fibres of your heart, blended with my fibres, startled and they said to you: ‘You will have here the measure of how much your father loves you’. Now, since you are affectionate, obedient, forever victorious, take possession of the Treasure and of me”.

That is the parable.

452.11

<sup>11</sup>The ten monuments are the ten commandments. Your God engraved them and placed them on the path that leads to the eternal Treasure, and He suffered to lead you to that path. Do you suffer? God does, too. Do you have to force yourselves? God has, too. Do you know to what extent? Suffering to separate Himself from Himself and striving to know what it means to be a human being with all the miseries of mankind: to be born, to suffer from cold, starvation, fatigue, to suffer sarcasm, affronts, hatred, snares, and at the end to die, shedding all His Blood to give you the Treasure. God, Who descended to save you, suffers all that. God suffers that in Heaven, allowing Himself to suffer it.

I solemnly tell you that no man, however laborious his path may be to reach Heaven, will ever follow a more laborious and sorrowful way than the one along which the Son of man has to go to come from Heaven to the Earth and from the Earth to the Sacrifice, to open the doors of the Treasure to you. On the tablets of the Law there is already My Blood. On the Way which I am tracing out for you there is My Blood. It is the gush of My Blood

that opens the door of the Treasure. Your souls become pure and strong through the purification and nourishment of My Blood. But to prevent it from being shed in vain, you must follow the immutable way of the ten commandments.

Let us rest now. At sunset I will go towards Hippo. John will go to be purified, and you will go home. May the peace of the Lord be with you. »

453. Arrival in Hippo and sermon in favour of the poor that are cured. Healing of the slave Aquila.

2<sup>nd</sup> July 1946.

<sup>1</sup>Jesus enters Hippo on a clear morning. He must have spent the night in the country house of an inhabitant of the town, who had gone to listen to Him, in order to go to town early in the morning of a noisy market day. Many people of Hippo are with Him and many more run to meet Him when they are told that the Rabbi has arrived. But not only citizens of Hippo are around Jesus. Also those of the village on the lake are present. Only a few women are absent, whether because of their physical conditions or because their children are too young to allow them to leave their homes. 453. 1

The town appears to be a nice one. It is situated a little above lake level and stretches out on the first undulations of the table-land, which lies beyond the lake and rises eastwards, extending to south-east as far as the mountains of Hauran, and to north-east as far as the mountain range dominated by the great Hermon. The town is important not only because of its flourishing trade and wealth, but also because it is a road junction linking many regions beyond the lake, as is evidenced by the road signs placed in its neighbourhood, bearing the names of Gamala; Gadara, Pella, Arbela, Bozrah, Gherghesa and others. It is densely populated and much frequented by foreigners who come from the nearby villages to purchase or to sell or on other business. I see that among the crowd there are many Romans, both civilians and soldiers and I notice that the people here, either because it is a characteristic of this town or it is typical of the whole region, do not appear to be so hostile or adverse to the Romans. Perhaps

business relationships have linked them with bonds of expediency, if not of friendship, more than in any other area on the opposite shore.

453. 2

<sup>2</sup>The crowds increase as Jesus moves towards the town centre, where He stops in a large square planted with trees, in the shade of which the market takes place, that is, the more important business is negotiated, as retail selling and buying of food-stuffs and utensils is done beyond this square, on an embankment, on which the sun is already darting down and buyers and vendors protect themselves from it by means of sheets, which are stretched on small poles and cast small patches of shadow on the goods exposed on the ground. This place, covered as it is with sheets of all shades, set up not far from the ground and swarming with people wearing gaily-coloured garments, looks like a meadow adorned with huge flowers, partly immobile, partly moving around the tiny paths between the many-coloured sheets. The place has thus a pleasant sight, which, however, disappears when the old-fashioned booths are removed and the embankment appears in the yellowish desolation of a barren wild place. It is at present animated with people bawling. How loud these people yell and how many words they shout bargaining even for a wooden bowl, a sifter or a handful of seed! And the bawling of buyers and vendors is increased by a chorus of beggars who strain their voices to be heard above so much noise.

«You cannot speak here, Master! » exclaims Bartholomew. «Your voice is powerful but it cannot overwhelm this noise! »

«We will wait. See? The market is about to end. Some people are already taking their goods away. In the meantime go and give alms to the beggars with the offerings of the local rich people. It will be the prologue to and the blessing on the sermon, because alms given with love passes from the degree of material relief to that of love of neighbour and attracts graces» replies Jesus.

The apostles go away to carry out the order.

453. 3

<sup>3</sup>Jesus continues to speak among the attentive crowds. «The town is rich and flourishing. At least this part of it. I see you wear beautiful clean garments. And you look well fed. Everything tells Me that you do not suffer poverty. I would now like to ask you whether those people, who are complaining over there, are from Hippo or are occasional beggars who have come here

from other villages to have relief. Be sincere... »

«Well. We will tell You, although Your words already sound like a reproach. Some are foreigners, most of them are from Hippo. »

«And is there no work for them? I see that you are building many houses here, and there should be work for everybody... »

«It is mostly the Romans who engage workers... »

«Mostly. You are right. Because I have seen also some of the local people supervise jobs. And I have noticed that many of them have engaged foreigners. Why not help your fellow citizens first? »

«Because... It is difficult to work here because, particularly some years ago, before the Romans built good roads, it was a hard task to bring big rocks here and open new roads... And many were taken ill or became crippled... and they are now beggars, because they are no longer fit to work. »

«But you enjoy the work they did? »

«Certainly, Master! See how beautiful and comfortable the town is, with plenty of water in deep cisterns and beautiful roads which connect this town with other rich ones. See what solid constructions. See how many laboratories. See... »

«I see everything. And you were helped to build these things by those, who now in a mournful voice ask you to give them a piece of bread? You say that you were? Well, then, if you now enjoy what they helped you to possess, why do you not give them a tiny bit of enjoyment? Some bread, without them asking for it. A bed, so that they may not be compelled to share dens with wild animals. Some assistance for their diseases, which, if cured, would no longer prevent them from still being able to do something, instead of losing heart in forced mortifying idleness. How can you sit happily at meals sharing with joy plentiful food with your smiling children, knowing that, not far from you, some of your brothers are hungry? How can you go and rest in a well protected bed, when you are aware that outside, in the night, there are men who have no beds and can get no rest? Are your consciences not tortured by those coins which you put away in safes, when you know that many people have not even a farthing to buy some bread?

<sup>4</sup>You told Me that you believe in the Most High Lord and that <sup>453</sup> 4



you comply with the Law, that you are acquainted with the prophets and the Books of Wisdom. You told Me that you believe in Me and you are anxious to know My Doctrine. You must, therefore, have kind hearts, because God is love and He prescribes love, because the Law is love, because the prophets and the Books of Wisdom advise love and My doctrine is a doctrine of love. Sacrifices and prayers are in vain unless their base and altar is love for your neighbour and particularly for the poor and needy, to whom you can give all forms of love by means of bread, beds, clothes comfort and doctrine, leading them to God. Poverty, by disheartening people, causes spirits to lose that faith in Providence, which is beneficial to resist the trials of life. How can you expect a poor man to be always good, patient, pious, when he sees that those who have received everything from life, and thus, according to common opinion, from Providence, are hard-hearted, without true religion - because their religion lacks the first and most essential part: love - they are without patience and, although they have everything, they cannot even tolerate the entreaties of a starving man? At times they curse God and you? But who induces them to such sin? Do you ever consider, O rich citizens of a rich town, that your duty is great, that is: to lead poor wretches to Wisdom through your own behaviour?

I have heard some of you say to Me: "We would all like to be Your disciples, in order to preach You". I say to you all: you can do so. Those who come here timidly, and are shy because of their ragged clothes, with emaciated faces, are the ones who are awaiting the Gospel, which is given above all for the poor, that they may have a supernatural comfort in the hope of a glorious life after the reality of their present sad life. You can practise this doctrine of Mine with less material fatigue, but with greater spiritual difficulty, because riches are dangerous to holiness and justice. They can do so with all kinds of difficulties. The lack of bread, insufficient garments, their being homeless, urge these people to ask themselves: "How can I believe that God is my Father, when I do not have what the birds of the air possess? ". How can the hardness of neighbours make them believe that they must love one another like brothers? It is your duty to assure them that God is a Father and, through your active love, that you are their brothers. Providence does exist and you, the rich people

Of the world, are its ministers. The fact that you are its means is to be considered by you as the greatest honour granted to you by God and as the only way to make dangerous riches holy,

<sup>3</sup>And behave as if in each of them you saw Me. I am in them, I wanted to be poor and persecuted to be like them and so that the remembrance of the Christ, poor and persecuted, may last throughout centuries, casting a supernatural light on those who are poor and persecuted like the Christ, a light that would make you love them as if they were Myself. I am in fact in the beggar who has been given food, drink, clothes, lodgings. I am in the orphan who has been taken in out of love, in the widow who has been assisted, in the pilgrim who has been given hospitality, in the patient who is cured. And I am in the afflicted who are comforted, in the doubtful who are assured, in the ignorant who are instructed. I am wherever love is received. And anything done to a brother, who is poor in material or spiritual means, is done to Me. Because I am the Poor One, the Afflicted One, the Man of Sorrows, and I am thus, in order to give Wealth, Joy, supernatural Life to all men who many a time - they do not know but it is so - are rich and joyful only apparently, and are all poor in true riches and joys, because they are without Grace through the Original Sin which deprives them of it. You know that without Redemption there is no Grace, without Grace there is no joy or Life. And to give you Grace and Life I did not want to be born a king or a mighty man, but I chose to be poor, a common humble man, because crown, throne, power are nothing for Him Who comes from Heaven to lead souls to Heaven, whereas the all important thing is the example which a true Master must set in order to give strength to his Doctrine. Because the majority of people are poor and unhappy, whereas the powerful and happy are few. Because Goodness is Pity.

That is why I came and the Lord anointed His Christ: that I may announce the Gospel to meek people and cure those who are broken-hearted, that I may preach freedom to slaves, release to prisoners, that I may console those who weep and put on the children of God - the children who know how to remain such both in joy and in sorrow - their diadem, the robe of justice, and transform them from wild plants into trees of the Lord, into His champions and His glory. <sup>6</sup>I am completely devoted to everybody

453. 5

453. 6

and I want everybody with Me in the Kingdom of Heaven. It is open to everybody providing one lives in justice. Justice is in the practice of the Law and in the exercise of love. One does not enter that Kingdom by right of wealth, but by heroism in holiness. He who wants to enter it should follow Me and do what I do: he should love God above everything and his neighbour as I love him, he should not curse the Lord, he should observe holy days and honour his parents, he should not raise a violent hand on his fellow-man, he should not commit adultery, or rob his neighbour in any way, or give false testimony, or wish what he does not have and other people possess, but he should be satisfied with his destiny, always considering it a fleeting state, a way and means to conquer a better and eternal fate, he should love the poor, the afflicted, the least on the Earth, orphans, widows, and he should not practise usury. He who does that, whatever his nationality and language, his condition and wealth, will be able to enter the Kingdom of God: the gates of which I will open to you.

Come to Me, all you of goodwill. Be not afraid of what you are or you were. I am Water that cleanses the past and fortifies for the future. Come to Me, you who are poor in wisdom. Wisdom is in my word. Come to Me, start a new life on new ideas. Be not afraid of not knowing, of not being able to do it. My Doctrine is easy, my yoke is light. I am the Rabbi Who gives without asking for recompense, without asking for any recompense but your love. If you love Me, you will love my Doctrine and consequently your neighbour and you will have Life and the Kingdom. Rich people, divest yourselves of your attachment to riches, and buy with them the Kingdom by means of all the words of merciful love for your neighbour. Poor people, divest yourselves of your dejection and come onto the way of your King. With Isaiah I say\*: "Oh, come to the water all you who are thirsty, and you as well who have no money come and buy". With love you will buy what is love, what is unperishable food, the food which satisfies and fortifies.

453a

<sup>7</sup>I am going away, O rich, poor men and women of Hippo. I am going away to obey the Will of God. But I want to depart less afflicted than I was when I arrived. It is your promise which will relieve My affliction. For the welfare of you rich people, for the

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\* say, as in: *Isaiah 55, 1.*

welfare of this town of yours, be and promise to be merciful towards the least among you in the future. Everything is beautiful here. But as a dark stormy cloud frightens even the most beautiful town, so the hardness of your hearts is an impending danger here, like a shadow which causes beauty to fade away. Remove your hardness and you will be blessed. Remember: God promised\* not to destroy Sodom, if ten just people were found in it. You do not know the future. I do. And I solemnly tell you that it is more laden with punishments than a summer cloud is with hail. Save your town with your justice and your mercy. Will you do that? »

«We will, Lord, in Your name. Speak, please, go on speaking to us! We have been hard-hearted and sinners. But You are saving us. You are the Saviour. Speak to us... »

«I will be with you until evening. But I will speak through My deeds. Now, while the sun is flaming, go to your houses and meditate on My words. »

«And where are You going, Lord? Come to my house! To mine! » All the rich people in Hippo want Him and they almost contend with one another to justify the reason why Jesus should go with this man or that one.

He raises His hand imposing silence. He achieves it with difficulty. He says: «I am staying with these. » And He points at the poor people who, gathered in a group at the end of the crowd are looking at Him with the attitude of people who, although derided, feel that they are loved. And He repeats: «I am staying with them to comfort them and share our bread with them. I want to give them an advance of the happiness of the Kingdom where the King will be sitting among His subjects at the same banquet of love. And in the meantime, as their faith is written on their faces and in their hearts, I say to them: "Let be done to you what your hearts desire, and may your bodies and souls rejoice in the first cure of your health which the Saviour grants you". »

There must be at least one hundred poor people. At least two thirds of them are suffering from physical disability, or are blind, or clearly ill; the other third are children begging on behalf of their widow mothers or of their grandparents... Well, it

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\* promised, in: *Genesis 18, 32.*

is wonderful to see deformed arms, dislocated hips, mis-shaped backs, lifeless eyes, exhausted people dragging themselves along, all kinds of painful diseases and misfortunes, contracted through labour accidents or excess of fatigue and privations, being restored to normal healthy state, thus allowing the poor wretches to begin to live once again and feel that they are in a position to look after themselves. Their cries fill the large square and resound in it.

453. 8

8 A Roman elbows his way through the delirious crowd and reaches Jesus while He, with as much difficulty, is going towards the poor people who have just been cured and are blessing Him from where they are standing, as it is impossible for them to squeeze through the compact mass of people.

«Hail, Rabbi of Israel. What You have done, is it only for the members of Your people? »

«No, man. Neither what I have done, nor what I have said. My power is universal, because My love is universal. And My doctrine is universal because there are no limitations of castes, religions or nations for it. The Kingdom of Heaven is for all Mankind who can believe in the true God. And I am here for those who can believe in the power of the true God. »

«I am a pagan. But I believe that You are a god. I have a slave, who is dear to me. An old slave who has followed me since I was a little boy. Paralysis is now killing him slowly and with great pain. But he is a slave and perhaps You... »

«I solemnly tell you that I know only one slavery which disgusts Me: the slavery of sin, and of obstinate sin. Because he who sins and repents meets with My pity. Your slave shall be cured. Go and get rid of your error by entering the true faith. »

«Are You not coming to my house? »

«No, man. »

«Actually... I have asked for too much. A god does not go to the houses of mortals. We read about that only in fables... But no man ever gave hospitality to Jupiter or Apollo. »

«Because they do not exist. But God, the true God enters the homes of those who believe in Him and bestows health and peace to them. »

«Who is the true God? »

«He Who is. »

«Not You? Do not lie! I feel You are god... »

«I am not lying. What you said is true: I am God. I am the Son of God Who has come to save also your soul as I saved your beloved slave. Is that not him coming shouting at the top of his voice? »

9The Roman turns around, he sees an old man, who is followed by other people and is running, wrapped in a blanket, shouting: «Marius! Marius! My master! » 453. 9

«By Jove! It's my slave! How!... I... said: Jove... No: I say: by the Rabbi of Israel. I... I... »the man does not know what to say...

The crowds open out willingly to let the old man, who has just been cured, pass through.

«I am well, master. I felt something like a fire in my limbs and I lit heard an order: "Get up! ". I thought it was your voice. I got up... I could stand... I tried to walk... and I was able... I tried to touch my bedsores... they had disappeared. I shouted. Nereus and Quintus came. They told me where you were. I did not wait to get some clothes. Now I can still serve you... » the old man, on his knees, is weeping kissing the tunic of the Roman.

«Not me. This Rabbi cured you. We will have to believe, Aquila. He is the true God. He cured those people just with His voice and You... I do not know how... We must believe... Lord... I am a heathen, but... here... No. It's too little. Tell me where You are going and I will honour You. » He offers a purse, then puts it away.

«I am going with them under that dark porch. »

«I will send You an offering for them. Hail, Rabbi. I will tell those who do not believe... »

«Goodbye. I will wait for you on the ways of God. »

The Roman goes away with his slaves. Jesus goes away with His poor people, with His apostles and the women disciples.

The porch - it is more like a sheltered road than a porch - is shady and cool, and the joy is so great that even the place looks beautiful, although it is a very common one. Now and again a citizen comes and gives offerings. The slave of the Roman comes back with a heavy purse. And Jesus gives words of light and support in money, and when the apostles come back with a variety of foodstuffs, He breaks the bread and blesses the food, which He then hands out to the poor people, to His poor people...

454. Holy Mary and her love of fusion with God.  
The anger of the Iscariot against little Alphaeus.

3<sup>rd</sup> July 1946.

454. 1 Wight is falling bringing cool breezes which refresh after so much heat, and also twilight which is a relief after so much bright sunshine.

Jesus takes leave of the people of Hippo as He is quite firm in His decision not to delay departure, in order to be at Capernaum for the Sabbath. The people depart from Him reluctantly and a few obstinate people follow Him even out of town.

Among them is the woman from Aphek, the widow who in the village on the lake begged the Lord to choose her as guardian for little Alphaeus, who is not wanted by his mother. She has joined the group of the women disciples, as if she were one of them, and she has now become so familiar with them, that they regard her as one of the family. She is now with Salome, to whom she is speaking animatedly in a low voice.

454. 2 <sup>2</sup>Mary is farther back with Her sister-in-law, and they adapt their steps to the pace of the little boy who is walking hand in hand between them and enjoys himself jumping over every stone in the road, which, being paved with regular slabs, was certainly built by the Romans. And at each jump he laughs and says: «See how clever I am? Look, look again! ». It is a game which I think all children in the world have played when they are held by the hand by people who they perceive are fond of them. And the two holy women who are leading him by the hand show great interest in his game and praise him for being so clever in jumping. The poor little fellow has flourished in a few days of peaceful loving life, his eyes are cheerful like those of happy children and his silvery laughter makes him more beautiful and above all more puerile, without the expression of a sad little man, as he had looked the evening he left Capernaum.

Mary of Alphaeus, considering the situation, when she hears some words of Sarah, the widow, says to her sister-in-law: «That would be ideal! If I were Jesus, I would give her the boy. »

«He has a mother, Mary... »

«Mother? Don't call her that! A she-wolf is more motherly than that wretch. »

«That is true. But even if she does not feel any obligation towards her son, she always has a claim on him. »

«H'm! To make him suffer! Look how much he has improved! »

«I know. But... Jesus has no right to take children away from mothers, not even to give them to those who would love them. »

«Neither are men entitled to... Better not say more. I know what... »

«Oh! I understand You... You mean: neither are men entitled to take Your Son away from You, and yet they will do so... But by doing so - a cruel action from a human point of view - they will bring about infinite good. In this case, instead, I do not know whether it would do that woman any good... »

«But it would do the child much good. <sup>3</sup>But why... did He tell <sup>454</sup> <sup>3</sup> us that dreadful thing? I have had no peace since I heard of it... »

«And did you not know even previously that the Redeemer was to suffer and die? »

«Of course I did! But I did not know that it was Jesus. I have been very fond of Him, You know? I loved Him more than my own sons. So handsome, so kind... Oh! I envied You Him, my dear Mary, when He was a boy, and always later... always... Even a puff of air worried me, lest it should harm Him and... I cannot believe that He will be tortured... » Mary of Clopas weeps under her veil.

And Mary, the Mother, comforts her. «Mary, My dear, do not look at the matter from a human point of view. Think of its fruits... You can imagine how I see daylight fading away every evening... When it dies out I say: one day less to have Jesus... Oh! Mary! For one thing above all I thank the Most High: for granting Me to achieve perfect love, as perfect as a creature can possess it, because such love allows Me to cure and fortify My heart saying: "His sorrow and Mine are useful to My brothers, therefore blessed be Sorrow". If I did not love My neighbour thus... I could not endure the thought that they will put Jesus to death... »

«So, what love is Yours? What love must a mother have to say such words? In... in order not to run away with her son, to defend him and say to her neighbours: "My first neighbour is my son and I love him above all things"? »

«He Who is to be loved above everything is God. »

«And He is God. »



«He does the Will of the Father and I do it with Him. What love is Mine? What love is required to be able to say those words? The love of fusion with God, complete union, total surrender, to be lost in Him, to be nothing but a part of Him, as your hand is part of you and does what your head commands. That is My love and such is the love which one must have to do always the Will of God willingly. »

«But You are You. You are the Blessed One among all creatures. You were certainly such even before You had Jesus, because God chose You to have Him, and it is easy for You... »

«No, Mary. I am the Woman and the Mother like every woman and mother. The gift of God does not suppress the creature. She is as human as any other creature, even if the gift gives her a very strong spirituality. You know, by now, that I had to accept the gift, of My own free will, and with all the consequences which it involved. Because each divine gift is a great beatitude, but also a great obligation. And God does not force any man to accept His gifts, but He asks man and if the latter replies: "No" to the spiritual voice speaking to him, God does not force him.

454. 4 «Every soul is interrogated by God at least once in its lifetime whether... »

«Oh! I have not been! He never asked me anything! » exclaims Mary of Alphaeus confidently.

The Blessed Virgin smiles kindly and replies: «You did not notice it and your soul replied without you being aware of it; and the reason for that is that you already love the Lord very much. »

«I am telling You that He has never spoken to me!... »

«Why, then, are you here, a disciple following Jesus? And why are you so anxious that your sons, all of them, should be followers of Jesus? You know what it implies to follow Him, and yet you want your sons to follow Him. »

«Certainly! I would like to give them all to Him. I could then truly say that I bore my children to the Light. And I pray that I may give them to It, to Jesus, with true, eternal maternity. »

«You see! And why that? Because God interrogated you one day and He said: "Mary, would you give Me your sons to be My ministers in the new Jerusalem? ". And you replied: "Yes, Lord". And even now that you are aware that a disciple is not superior to the Master, you reply to God, Who questions you again to test

your love: "Yes, my Lord. I now want them to be Yours! ". Is it not so? »

«Yes, Mary, it is. That's true. I am so ignorant that I cannot understand what happens in a soul. But when Jesus or You make me ponder, I say that it is true. It is really true. I say that... I would rather see them killed by men than be hostile to God... Certainly... if I saw them die... if... oh! But the Lord... Eh! Would the Lord help me in that hour... or will He help You alone? »

«He will help all His faithful daughters, who are martyrs in the spirit, or in the spirit and in the flesh for His glory. »

«But who is to be killed? » asks the little boy, who has stopped jumping upon hearing their conversation, and has been all ears. And he asks again, partly out of curiosity, partly out of fear, looking about the lonely country which is growing dark: «Are there highwaymen about? Where are they? »

«There are no highwaymen, My child. And no one, for the time being, is to be killed. Jump, go on jumping... » replies the Most Holy Virgin.

<sup>5</sup>Jesus, Who was far ahead, has stopped waiting for the women. Of the people who followed Him from Hippo, three men and the widow are still present. The others made up their minds, one after the other, to leave Him and go back to their town. The two groups come together again. Jesus says: «Let us wait here until the moon rises. We will then set out in order to arrive at the town of Gamala at dawn. »

454.5

«But Lord! Do You not remember how they drove You out of it? They begged\* You to go away... »

«So? I went away, now I am going back. God is patient and prudent. Then, in their excitement, they were not in a state to receive the Word, which, in order to be fruitful, is to be received with a peaceful spirit. Remember Elijah\*\* and his meeting with the Lord on the Horeb and take into account that Elijah was a spirit beloved by the Lord and accustomed to hearing Him. Only in the peace of a gentle breeze, when, after being dismayed, his spirit was resting in the peace of creation and of his honest ego, only then the Lord spoke. And the Lord has waited for the fright, left by the legion of demons in remembrance of their

\* begged, in 186. 7.

\*\* Remember Elijah, in the passage of: *1 King 19, 13-18*

passage through that region - I because if the passing of God is peace, the passing of Satan is perturbation - and the Lord has waited for such fright to come to an end and for their hearts and minds to become crystal clear, before going back to the people of Gamala, as they are still His sons. Be not afraid! They will do us no harm! »

454. 6

«The widow from Aphek comes forward and prostrates herself: «And are You not coming to my house, Lord? Aphek also is full of sons of God... »

«The road is a difficult one and our time is short. We have the women with us and we must go back to Capernaum for the Sabbath. Do not insist, woman» says the Iscariot resolutely, almost rejecting her.

«The fact is... I wanted Him to be convinced that I can keep the boy properly. »

«But do you not understand that he has his mother? » says the Iscariot once again, and he says so rudely.

«Do you know any short cuts between Gamala and Aphek? » Jesus asks the mortified woman.

«Oh! yes! There is a road across the mountains, but it is good and cool, because it runs through woods. And it is possible to hire some donkeys for the women, and I will pay for them... »

«I will come to your house to console you, even if I cannot give you the child, because he has a mother. But I promise you that in the event that God should judge that the innocent with no love should find love again, I will think of you. »

«Thank you, Master. You are good» says the widow, and she looks at Judas in a way that means: «And you are bad. »

The little boy, who has listened and understood, at least in part, and has grown fond of the widow, who has conquered him with caresses and dainties, both by natural instinct of reflection and by the spirit of imitation typical of children, repeats exactly what the widow has done, the only difference being that he does not prostrate himself at Jesus' feet, but he clings to His knees, raising his little face which looks bright in the moonlight, and he says: «Thank You, Master. You are good. » And he does not stop at that; he wants to make his mind quite clear and he concludes: «and you are bad» and to ensure that there is no error of person, he lightly kicks the Iscariot's foot.

<sup>7</sup>Thomas bursts out laughing, which makes the others laugh as well, while he says: «Poor Judas! It is really a fact that children do not like you! Now and again one of them judges you\*, and they always say that you are bad!... » 454. 7

Judas has so little sense of humor that he shows his anger, an unfair anger, out of proportion to the cause and object giving rise to it and to which he gives vent by tearing the child away from Jesus' knees very coarsely and throwing him backwards, shouting: «This is what happens when in serious matters we have pantomimes. It is neither decent nor useful to take with us a train of women and parentless children... »

«No, you can't say that. You met his father, too. He was the legitimate husband, and a just man» remarks Bartholomew severely.

«So? Is he not a tramp and a future thief? Is he not the cause of unpleasant remarks uttered behind our backs? Some people thought he was Your Mother's son... And where is Your Mother's husband to justify a son of his age? Or they suppose that he is the son of one of us, and... »

«Enough of that. You are speaking the language of the world. But the world speaks a filthy language to frogs, to water snakes, to lizards, to all unclean animals... <sup>8</sup>Come, Alphaeus. Do not weep. Come to Me. I will carry you in My arms. » 454. 8

The little boy is deeply grieved. All his sorrow of an orphan rejected by his mother and which had calmed down during the previous peaceful days, comes to light again, boils over and overflows. He is weeping not so much because of the bruises on his forehead and hands, which were injured when he fell on stony ground, bruises which the women are cleaning and kissing to comfort him, as because of his grief of a son who is not loved. A long heart-rending weeping, during which he cries for his dead father his mother... Oh! poor child!

And I weep with him, as men never care for me, and with him I take shelter in the arms of God, today, the anniversary of my father's funeral; today when an unfair decision deprives me of

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\* Now and again one of them judges you, as Benjamin of Magdala in 184. 7 (and 490. 6), and Jabé-Marjiam in 196. 6 (and 365. 3/4). It can be read in in 309. 4: "... Also to Judas of Simon... seems to make children speak to him... ". Even the nephew of Nahum, a deformed child healed by Jesus, will mark Judas as "bad" in 584. 6.

receiving Holy Communion frequently...

Jesus takes him, kisses him, lulls and comforts him, walking ahead of everybody, with the innocent child in His arms, in the moonlight... And as his weeping slowly abates and his sobbing becomes less frequent, in the silence of the night Jesus' voice can be heard saying: «I am here, Alphaeus. I am here for everybody. I will be father and mother to you. Do not weep. Your father is near Me and he kisses you with Me. The angels look after you like mothers. If you are good and innocent, all our love is with you... »

And the hoarse voice of one of the three men who came from Hippo is heard saying: «The Master is good and He attracts people. But His disciples are not. I am going away... »

454. 9 <sup>9</sup>And in a severe voice the Zealot says to the Iscariot: «Do you see what your behaviour does? »

Only the widow from Aphek remains with the women disciples and sighs with them. As the three men from Hippo have gone away, one can hear only the reduced shuffling of feet. The situation remains unchanged until they stop near a large grotto, where shepherds perhaps take shelter, because there is a layer of heather and ferns, which have been recently cut, laid on the ground to dry.

«Let us stop here. Let us assemble this bed of Providence for the women. We can lie down just outside, on the grass» says Jesus. And they do so, while the full moon sails in the vault of heaven.

455. Entrusting of the Church to the motherhood of Mary.  
Preaching, near Gamala, in favour of the slave workers. <sup>8</sup>

8<sup>th</sup> July 1946.

455. 1 <sup>1</sup>Day is just dawning when Jesus awakes and sits up on His rustic bed made of earth and grass. He then stands up, picks up His sandals and the mantle with which He had covered Himself as a protection from dew and the chill of the night, and cautiously steps over the tangle of legs, arms, bodies and heads of the apostles asleep around Him. He moves away a few steps, with keen eyes to see where He lays His feet in the subdued gleam of

dawn, which under the leafy trees is barely a feeble light. He arrives at an open meadow, from which, through an opening between trees and rocks, one can catch a glimpse of a little strip of a lake which is waking up and a large piece of the sky which is becoming clearer, passing from the grey-blue hue typical of the vault of heaven at daybreak, to sky-blue, while to the east it is already fading into a light yellow shade which becomes more and more defined and deeper and deeper changing into a rosy yellow and finally into a most beautiful pale coral hue.

Dawn promises a lovely day, despite a very light haze which is reluctant to surrender the eastern sphere of the sky to daylight, and moves forward in such light veils of clouds that the blue sky does not suffer by it: on the contrary it is embellished as if it were an ornament of snow-white muslin fringed with gold and corals constantly changing, and becoming more and more beautiful, as if it were striving to reach the perfection of its fleeting beauty before being destroyed by daylight with its triumphant sunshine. To the west, on the other hand, a few stars are still visible, although deprived of their bright night twinkling as light increases, and the moon, about to set behind the tops of mountains, sails on looking very pale, with no moonbeams, like a dying planet.

<sup>2</sup>Jesus, standing barefooted on the dewy grass, His arms folded across His chest, His head raised watching the rising day, is pensive... or is speaking to the Father in a spiritual conversation. There is dead silence, so much so that the large drops of abundant dew can be heard falling on the ground.

Jesus, still standing with arms folded, lowers His head and becomes engrossed in an even deeper meditation. He is completely absorbed in Himself. His magnificent wide open eyes are fixed on the ground as if they wished to wring a reply from the herbs. But I am sure that they do not even see the slow movement of stems quivering in the cold breeze of dawn, like people who wake up, stretch, turn round, stir themselves in order to awake completely and be thus alert in all their nerves and muscles. He looks, but does not see the awaking of herbs and wild flowers, with their little branches, leaves, corollas shaped like umbrellas, or growing in clusters, spikes and tufts. Some of the flowers are isolated in calyces, some are shaped like radiant crowns

or snapdragons, cornucopias, plumes or berries. Some are stiff on their stalks: some are soft, hanging from stems which are not their own and round which they have twined, some are lying and creeping on the ground: some are grouped in families of many little low humble plants: some are solitary, large, violent in hue and carriage: they are all intent on shaking off their petals the dew-drops, which they no longer want, eager as they are now for sunshine only, as whimsical in their desires as in their lay-out. They are thus very much like men, who are never satisfied with what they have.

Jesus seems to be listening. But He certainly does not hear either the rustling of the wind, which is becoming stronger and is amusing itself in shaking the dew-drops and making them fall, or the ever increasing whispering of little birds, which are awaking and telling one another their dreams of the night, or are exchanging their views on the warm canorous nests in which, among down and soft hay, nestlings so far bare, are beginning to show plumage or are opening their huge beaks wide showing their greedy red throats and screeching in their first exacting request for food. Jesus seems to be listening. But He certainly does not hear the first scoffing call of the blackbird, the first sweet song of the blackcap or the golden trilled note of the skylark, which rises joyfully towards the early sun, or the shrieking, which rends the quiet air, of the many swallows, which leave the rocks, where they built their nests, and begin to weave their untiring flights from the earth to the sky. Neither does He hear the wild cry of a magpie perched on a branch of an oak near Him and seems to be asking: «Who are You? What are You pondering?» deriding Him. Not even that interrupts His meditation.

But who does not know that magpies are spiteful? This one, tired of seeing an intruder on the little meadow which is perhaps its territory, tears off the oak-tree two lovely acorns joined on one single stem, and with the precision of a first-class shot, drops them on Jesus' head. It is not a heavy shell, capable of hurting, but taking into account the height from which it is dropped, it is sufficiently solid to shake the Pensive One, Who looks up and sees the bird which with its wings opened out and nodding in a funny way, rejoices at its shot. Jesus smiles gently, shakes His head, He sighs as a conclusion of His meditation and He moves away

walking up and down. The magpie with a laugh and a mocking cry flies down to the meadow, flapping its wings, searching and scratching about the grass freed from the Intruder.

<sup>3</sup>Jesus looks for some water, but He does not find any. He resigns Himself to going back to the apostles, but birds teach Him where to find it. Flocks of them fly towards some very wide calyx-shaped flowers which in actual fact are little cups containing water, or they alight on wide hairy leaves, where each hair has retained a drop of dew, and they quench their thirst there or have their ablutions. Jesus imitates them. He collects in the hollow of His hands the water of some calyces and refreshes His face, He picks some wide hairy leaves and with them He removes the dust from His bare feet, He cleans His sandals and puts them on, and with some more leaves He washes His hands until He sees that they are clean and He smiles whispering: «The divine perfections of the Creator! »

455. 3

He is now refreshed, tidy, because with His wet hand He has tidied up His hair and beard and as the first sunbeams turn the meadow into a mat studded with diamonds, He goes to wake up the apostles and the women.

<sup>4</sup>Both groups are hardly able to awaken, tired as they are. Mary is awake but She is unable to move because of the little boy who is sleeping clinging to Her breast, with his little head under Her chin. And the Mother, on seeing Jesus appear at the entrance of the grotto, smiles at Him with Her kind blue eyes, while Her face becomes rosy out of the joy of seeing Him. And She frees Herself from the child, who whimpers a little on being moved, She gets up and goes towards Jesus with Her silent slightly rolling gait of a modest dove.

455. 4

«May God bless You, Son, today. »

«May God be with You, Mother. Was the night unpleasant for You? »

«No. On the contrary, very pleasant. I seemed to have You, a little Baby, in My arms... And I dreamed that a kind of golden river was flowing from Your mouth, emitting such a sweet sound that it cannot be described, and a voice said... oh! what a voice: "This is the Word which enriches the world and gives beatitude to those who listen to it and obey it. Without any limitation of power, time or space, It will save". Oh! My Son! And You, My



Child, are that Word! How will I be able to live so long and to do so much as to be able to thank the Eternal Father for making Me Your Mother? »

«Do not worry about that, Mother. Every beat of Your heart pleases God. You are the living praise of God, and You will always be so, Mother. You have been thanking Him since You... »

«I do not seem to be doing it sufficiently, Jesus. It is so great, so great what God did for Me! After all, what do I do more than all those good women do, who, like Me, are Your disciples? Son, tell our Father to give Me the opportunity to thank Him as His gift deserves. »

«Mother! And do You think that the Father needs Me to ask Him that for You? He has already prepared for You the sacrifice which You will have to consume for this perfect praise. And You will be perfect when You have accomplished it... »

«My Jesus!... I understand what You mean... But will I be able to think in that hour?... Your poor Mother... »

«The Blessed Spouse of the eternal Love! Mother, that is what You are. And the Love will be thinking in You. »

«You say so, Son, and I relax on Your Word. But You... pray for Me, in that hour that none of these understands... and which is already impending... That is true, is it not? »

It is impossible to describe the expression of Mary's face during this conversation. No writer can possibly translate it into words without spoiling it with mawkishness or uncertain hues. Only he who has a heart, a kind heart, even if a virile one, can mentally give Mary's face the real expression which it has in this moment.

Jesus looks at Her... Another expression untranslatable into poor words. And He replies to Her: «And You will pray for Me in the hour of death... Wes. None of these understands... It is not their fault. Satan is creating fumes so that they may not see, that they may be like drunken people who do not understand, and therefore unprepared... and easier to bend... But You and I will save them, despite Satan's snares. Mother, I entrust them to You as from this moment. Remember these words of Mine: I entrust them to You. I give You My inheritance. I have nothing upon the Earth, except a Mother, and I offer Her to God: Victim with the Victim; and My Church, and I entrust it to You. Be her Nurse. A

short time ago I was wondering in how many people, in the future, the man of Kerioth will be reviving with all his faults. And I was thinking that anyone, who were not Jesus, would reject that faulty being. But I will not reject him. I am Jesus. During the time that You will remain on the Earth, and You are second to Peter with regards to ecclesiastical hierarchy, he being the Head and You a believer, but first as Mother of the Church having given birth to Me, Who am the Head of this mystical Body, do not reject the many Judases, but assist and teach Peter, My brothers, John, James, Simon, Philip, Bartholomew, Andrew, Thomas and Matthew not to reject, but to assist. Defend Me in My followers, and defend Me from those who want to disperse and dismember the dawning Church. And in future centuries, Mother, always be She Who pleads for and protects, defends and helps My Church, My Priests, My believers, from Evil and Punishment, from themselves... How many Judases, O Mother, in future centuries! And how many will be like half-wits who cannot understand, or like blind and deaf people who cannot see or hear, or like cripples and paralytic people who cannot come... Mother, let them all be under Your mantle! You alone can and will be able to change the punishment decrees of the Eternal Father for one soul or for many of them. Because the Trinity will never be able to deny its Flower anything. »

«I will do that, Son. As far as it depends on Me, You may go to your goal in peace. Your Mother is here to defend You in Your Church, always. »

«May God bless You, Mother... <sup>455. 6</sup>6Come! I will pick for You some calyces of flowers full of scented water, and You will refresh Your face with it, as I did. Our Most Holy Father prepared them for us, and the birds have pointed them out to Me. See how everything is useful in the orderly Creation of God! This elevated tableland close to the lake, so fertile because of the mists which rise from the Sea of Galilee and of the tall trees which attract dew, allowing this luxuriance of herbs and flowers, even in the excessive summer heat. This abundant fall of dew to fill these calyces so that His beloved children may wash their faces... That is what the Father has arranged for those who love Him. Here. The water of God, in calyces of God, to refresh the Eve of the new. Paradise. » And Jesus picks the very wide flowers, the name

of which I do not know, and He pours into Mary's hands the water collected in them...

455. 7 <sup>7</sup>The others in the meantime have tidied themselves up and are coming looking for Jesus Who had moved a short distance away from the resting place.

«We are ready, Master. »

«All right. Let us go this way. »

«But is it the right one? The woods come to an end here; the last lime we walked through woods... » objects James of Zebedee.

«Because we were coming up from the lake. But now we can take the right road. See? Gamala is over there, south-east, and this is the only road. The other three sides are impassable, except for wild goats. »

«You are right. We will avoid the deep barren valley, from which we saw the men who were possessed come» says Philip.

They walk fast and are soon out of the wood in which they slept, along a stoney path running beyond a little valley that grows wider the more they approach the bizarre mountain to which Gamala clings and which is very steep on three sides, that is, to the east, north and west and is linked to the remaining area only by this road which runs straight from south to north, and is elevated between two wild stony valleys that separate it from the country on the eastern side and from woods of oak-trees on the western side.

455. 8 <sup>8</sup>Many swineherds pass by in the middle of their grunting herds, going to the oak-woods. Carts laden with squared stones pass squeaking, drawn by slow oxen yoked in pairs. Some horse-men pass at a trot raising clouds of dust. Teams of ragged emaciated diggers - I think most of them are slaves or men condemned to hard labour for some reason - pass by going to their work under the strict surveillance of supervisors.

As they draw closer to the mountain and the road begins to climb, they can see fortified ditches surrounding the mountain like rings fastened to its sides. It must be a difficult task to dig out those works, particularly in certain spots which are almost sheer. And yet many men are working to repair existing fortifications, to build new ones and are carrying on their bare shoulders stone cubes which bend the poor wretches and leave bleed-

ing wounds on their naked shoulders.

«What are those citizens doing? It is perhaps wartime that they should work thus? They are mad» say the apostles to one another while the women pity the unhappy men who are half-naked, ill-fed and compelled to do works exceeding their strength.

«But who compels them to work? The Tetrarch or the Romans? » ask the apostles once again and they discuss the matter among themselves because it would appear that Gamala is, so to say, independent of the Tetrarchy of Philip and of that of Herod, and because it seems impossible to some of the apostles that the Romans should busy themselves in building in foreign countries fortifications which in the future might be used against them. And the eternal idea, as fixed as a maniacal idea, of the temporal kingdom of the Messiah, is displayed as the insignia of an already certain victory, of glory and national independence.

<sup>455.9</sup> They shout so much that some supervisors approach them and listen. They are coarse men, clearly not of Jewish race, many are elderly, several of them have scars on their bodies. But their identity is clarified by the scornful remark of one of them: «Our kingdom"! Did you hear that, Titus? O big-nosed people! Your kingdom is already crushed under these stones. He who uses the enemy to build against the enemy serves the enemy. Publius Corfinius tells you. And if you do not understand, live long enough; and the stones will explain the enigma to you» and he laughs raising his lash because he sees an exhausted workman stagger and sit down, and he would strike him if Jesus did not stop him moving forward and saying: «You are not allowed to do that. He is a man like you. »

«Who are You Who meddle with and defend a slave? »

«I am Mercy. My name as a man would not mean anything to you. But My attribute reminds you to be merciful. You said: "He who uses the enemy to build against the enemy serves the enemy". You spoke a sorrowful truth. But I will tell you a bright one: "Who does not use mercy will not find mercy". »

«Are You a rhetor? »

«I told you, I am Mercy. »

Some people from Gamala, who are going towards their hometown, say: «He is the Rabbi of Galilee. He Who gives orders to diseases, to the winds, waters and demons, Who changes

stones into bread and Whom nothing *can* resist. Let us run to town to tell the people. So that sick people may come! And we may hear His word. We belong to Israel, too! » and some of them run away, some gather around the Master.

The supervisor mentioned previously asks: «Is it true what they are saying about You? »

«Yes, it is. »

«Work a miracle and I will believe. »

«You do not ask for miracles to believe. You ask faith to believe, and thus obtain a miracle. Faith and pity for your neighbour

«I am a heathen... »

«That is not a valid reason. You live in Israel which gives you money... »

«Because I work. »

«No. Because you make people work. »

«I know how to make people work. »

«Yes, mercilessly. But have you never considered that if instead of being a Roman you were a Jew, you might have been in the place of one of these men? »

«Eh!... Of course... But I am not, through the protection of the gods. »

«Your vain idols could not protect you if the true God wanted to strike you. You are not dead yet. So be merciful in order to receive mercy... »

The man would like to retort and discuss, but he shrugs his shoulders disdainfully and turning his back he goes away and strikes a man who had stopped working with his pick in a hard rocky layer.

Jesus looks at the unhappy fellow who has been struck and He looks at the striker as well. Two glances of the same, and yet different, pity. And they are so deeply sad, that they remind me of certain glances of Christ during His passion. But what can He do? As He has no power to interfere, He resumes His way, with the burden of the misfortunes just seen lying heavy on His heart.

455. 10 <sup>10</sup>But some citizens, certainly notables, run down from Gama-la, and they reach Jesus before Whom they bow deeply inviting Him to enter their town and speak to the people, who are coming in flocks of their own accord.

«You can go wherever you wish. They (and He points at the workers) cannot. It is now cool and we are protected here from the sun. Let us go towards those poor wretches so that they may hear the Word of Life as well» replies Jesus. And He sets out first retracing His steps and taking an uneven path which leads down the mountain, where it is more painful to work. He then addresses the notables saying: «If it is in your power to do so, order the work to be stopped. »

«We certainly can! We are the ones who pay and if we pay some hours for nothing, no one can complain» reply the men from Gamala and they go to speak to the supervisors and a few moments later I see the latter shrug their shoulders, as if to say: «If you are happy, why should we worry? » They then whistle to the gangs, a signal which obviously means rest.

Jesus in the meantime has spoken to other people from Gamala, and I see them nod assent and walk away fast back to town.

The workers hurry around the supervisors looking frightened. «Stop working. Your noise is annoying the philosopher» orders one of them, probably the head of them all.

The workmen look with tired eyes at the one pointed out as the «philosopher» who is giving them the gift of a rest. And the «philosopher» looking at them pitifully, replies to their glances and to the words of the supervisor saying: «Their noise does not annoy Me, but their misery grieves Me. Come, My children. Rest your bodies and even more your hearts near the Christ of God. »

The population, the slaves, the condemned men, the apostles and disciples crowd in the free space between the mountain and the trenches, and those who do not find any room there, Climb up to the upper trenches on the ground, and the less lucky ones resign themselves to going onto the road, where the sun is already shining. And more people come from Gamala and many travellers coming from other towns and going to Gamala stop as well.

There is a large crowd. And those who had gone away a short time before are elbowing their way through the crowd. They are carrying heavy baskets and containers. They push their way as far as Jesus, Who has instructed the apostles to bring the workmen to the front row. They lay baskets and amphorae at Jesus' feet.

«Give them the offerings of charity» orders Jesus.

«They have had their food and there is still some water mixed with vinegar and bread. If they eat too much, they will feel heavy at work» shouts one of the supervisors.

Jesus looks at him and repeats his order: «Give them food suitable for men, and bring Me their food. »

The apostles with the help of volunteers execute his order.

Their food! A kind of a hard dark crust, not suitable for animals, and some water mixed with vinegar. That is the nourishment of the convicts! Jesus looks at it and has the poor food placed near the mountain side. And He looks at those who were to eat it, underfed bodies in which only the muscles, overdeveloped through excessive fatigue, can hold out with sheaves of fibres swelling out from the flaccid skin, feverish frightened eyes, avid mouths which seem even bestial in biting the good, plentiful unexpected food, in drinking the real corroborating fresh wine...

455.11 <sup>11</sup>Jesus waits patiently for them to finish their meal. And He does not have to wait long because their avidity is such that everything is soon consumed.

Jesus stretches out his arm in the habitual gesture when He is about to speak, to draw the attention of people and impose silence. He says:

«What do the eyes of man see in this place? Valleys dug deeper than they were created by nature, hills formed by man with massive ramparts, winding roads penetrating into the mountain like dens of animals. And why all that? To stop a danger which is not known whence it may come, but is felt impending like a hail-storm from a stormy sky.

In actual fact they have acted here in a human way, with human power and human means, at times also inhuman, to defend themselves and prepare means of offence, unmindful of the words\* of the Prophet, who teaches his people how it is possible to defend oneself from human misfortunes through superhuman means, the most valid ones. He cries: «Console my people... comfort Jerusalem, because her slavery is ended, her sin is atoned for, because she has received from the hand of the Lord double pun-

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\* words, that are in chapter 40 of the book of Isaiah, according to the reference inserted by M. V. in the original manuscript. The quotations of Jesus's lecture are in: *Isaiah 40, 1-8; 56, 4-7; 61, 1.*

ishment for all her crimes". And after the promise he explains the way to make it become real: "Prepare the ways of the Lord, make straight the ways of God across the desert. Every valley will be filled in, every mountain will be laid low, the winding way will become straight, the hard one will become comfortable. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all men, without any exception, shall see it, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken". Those words were taken up by the man of God, John the Baptist, and death only silenced them on his lips.

That is, O men, the true defence against the misfortunes of mankind. Not weapon against weapon, defence against offence, not pride, not fierceness. But supernatural weapons, but virtues achieved in solitude, that is, in the interior of the individual, all alone with himself, who works to sanctify himself, erecting mountains of charity, lowering peaks of pride, straightening twisted ways of concupiscence, removing sensual obstacles from his way. Then the glory of the Lord will appear and man will receive the defence of God against the spiritual and material snares of enemies. What do you expect a few trenches, a few glacis, a few forts to be against God's punishment which the wickedness or just the tepidness of man draws upon himself? Against punishments which will be named: Romans, as in the past they were named: Babylonians, Philistines, or Egyptians, but in actual fact are divine punishments, and nothing else, deserved by the excessive pride, sensuality, greed, falsehood, selfishness, disobedience to the holy Law of the Decalogue. A man, even the strongest one, can be killed by a fly. Even the most fortified town can be taken by storm when neither man nor town enjoy God's protection, which vanishes or is driven away by the sins of man or of the town.

<sup>12</sup>The Prophet goes on saying: "All flesh is grass and all its <sup>455</sup> <sup>12</sup> glory is like a wild flower. The grass withers, the flower fades as soon as the breath of the Lord blows on them".

Today, by My will, you are looking at these men with pity, whereas up to yesterday you had looked at them like machines compelled to work for you. Today, because I put them, brothers among brothers, amid you, who are rich and happy, today you see them for what they are: men. Contempt or indifference have disappeared from many hearts and pity has replaced them. But



consider them more intimately, beyond their oppressed flesh. In it, in them, there is a soul, a thought, feelings as in you. Once they were like you: healthy, free, happy. Later they were no longer so. Because if the life of man is like grass which withers, his well-being is even more fragile. Those who are healthy today, may be taken ill tomorrow, those who are free today, may become slaves tomorrow, those who are happy today, may be unhappy tomorrow. Some of these men are certainly guilty. Do not judge their faults, do not rejoice at their expiation. For many reasons, you might be guilty yourselves tomorrow and compelled to make hard expiation. So be merciful, because you do not know your future, which may be so different from your present time, that you may need all divine and human mercy. Be prone to love and forgiveness. There is no man on the Earth who does not need to be forgiven by God and by some of his own fellow-men. So forgive, to be forgiven.

455.13

<sup>13</sup>The Prophet goes on to say: "Grass withers, flowers fade; but the word of the Lord remains forever".

That is the weapon and defence: the eternal Word which has become the law of all your actions. Raise that true bulwark against the impending danger and you will be saved. So accept the Word, He Who is speaking to you, but do not receive it in a material way, just for one hour within the walls of the town, but in your hearts, forever, because I am He Who knows, Who acts and Who rules with power. And I am the good Shepherd, Who pastures the flock which relies upon Him, and I neglect nobody, not the little ones, or those who are tired, injured or hit by bad fortune, or those who bewail their errors, or those who, although rich and happy, disregard everything to achieve true riches and happiness: that is, to serve God until their death.

The Spirit of the Lord is over Me because the Lord has sent Me to announce the Good News to the meek, to cure those whose hearts are broken, to preach freedom to slaves and liberation to prisoners. Neither can anyone say that I am an instigator, because I do not instigate to rebellion, neither do I advise slaves and prisoners to evade, but I teach the man in chains and the slave true freedom and true liberation, which cannot be taken away from them or even limited, as the more man gives himself up to it, the greater it grows: spiritual freedom, liberation from sin,

meekness in sorrow, I teach him to see God beyond men fettering prisoners, to believe that God loves those who love Him, and forgives when man does not forgive, to hope for an eternal place of reward for those who are successful in being good in misfortunes, who can repent their sins and be faithful to the Lord. Do not weep, men, to whom I am particularly referring. I have come to comfort, to gather those who have been rejected, to bring light to their darkness, peace to their souls, to promise a joyful abode both to those who repent and to those who are not guilty. There is no past which may prevent this Present that waits in Heaven for those who serve the Lord in the situation in which they are.

<sup>14</sup>It is not difficult, My poor children, to serve the Lord. He <sup>455</sup> has granted you an easy way to serve Him, because He wants you to be happy in Heaven. To serve the Lord is to love. To love the will of God because you love God. The will of God is hidden even in the most apparently human things. Because - I am speaking to you who have perhaps shed the blood of brothers - because if it certainly was not the will of God that you should be violent, it is now His will that through expiation you should cancel your debts towards Love. Because, if it was not God's will that you should rebel against your enemies, it is now His will that you should become as humble as once you were proud, to your own detriment. Because if it was not God's will that you should obtain by fraud, whether big or small, what did not belong to you, it is now God's will that you should be punished, so that you may not present yourselves to God with your sins in your hearts. And that should not be forgotten by those who are at present happy, by those who think that they are safe, and through such silly safety do not prepare in themselves the Kingdom of God, and in the hour of the trial will be like children remote from the house of the Father, at the mercy of the storm, under the lash of pain.

<sup>15</sup>You must act with justice, all of you, and raise your eyes to <sup>455</sup> the house of the Father, to the Kingdom of Heaven, which, once its gates have been opened wide by Him, Who came to open them, will not refuse to accept anyone who has achieved justice. You, who are mutilated in your bodies, cripples, eunuchs; or you, who are mutilated in your spirits, cripples, eunuchs in the power of the spirit, rejected in Israel, be not afraid of having no place in the Kingdom of Heaven. Mutilations, crippling, impairment of

bodies come to an end with bodies. The moral ones, such as prison and slavery, will come to an end one day as well; those of the spirit, that is the fruit of past faults, are mended through goodwill. And material mutilations do not count in the eyes of God, and spiritual ones are cancelled in His eyes when loving repentance covers them.

The fact that one does not belong to the holy People does not prevent one from serving the Lord. Because the time has come when all frontiers of the Earth disappear before the Only King, the King of all kings and peoples, the King who gathers all peoples into one only to make it his new People. That people from which only those will be excluded who try to deceive the Lord with false obedience to his Decalogue, which all men of goodwill can follow, whether they are Jews, Gentiles or idolaters. Because where there is goodwill, there is natural inclination to justice, and he who is prone to justice, will have no difficulty in adoring the true God, once he gets to know Him, in respecting his Name, in observing holy days, in honouring parents, in not killing, stealing, bearing false witness, in not being an adulterer or fornicator, in not desiring what does not belong to him. And he who has not done that so far, should do it as from now onwards, so that his soul may be saved and he may conquer his place in Heaven. It is written: "I will give them a place in My House if they keep My Covenant and I will make them joyful". And that is said with regards to *all* men of holy will, because the Holy of Holies is the common Father of all men.

455. 16 <sup>16</sup>I have finished. I have no money for these people. Neither would it be of any use to them. But I say to you, people of Gamala, who have made so much progress in the way of the Lord since the first time we met, that you should build the most valid defence for your town: that of love for one another and for these men, by assisting them in my Name while they work for you. Will you do that? »

«Yes, Lord» shout the crowds.

«Let us go then. I would not have entered your town if the hardness of your hearts had replied "no" to my request. May you, who are remaining here, be blessed... Let us go... »

And He goes back to the road, now flooded with sunshine and goes up to the town which is almost built in the rock like a trog-

lodytic town, but has well-kept houses and a most beautiful varied view according to the direction in which one looks, to the mountains of Hauran or the sea of Galilee, to the remote Great Hermon or to the green Jordan valley. The town is cool because of the way it is built, high up, and with streets which protect from the hot sun. It looks more like a huge castle than a town, a chain of fortresses, because the houses, half brickwork and half dug in the mountain, seem forts.

In the main square, the highest of them all, in the highest part of the town - one's eyes therefore enjoy a vast panorama of mountains, forests, lakes, rivers, all lying underneath - are the sick people of Gamala. And Jesus passes curing them...

456. Departure from Gamala and arrival in Aphek.  
Admonishment of the widow Sarah  
and the miracle in her house.

13<sup>th</sup> July 1946.

<sup>1</sup>They must have spent the night at Gamala, because it is now morning, a windy morning. Perhaps the town enjoys the wind, so pleasant in eastern countries, because of its location and terraced construction from the top of the town down to the walls, which are massive and equipped with massive ironshod gates, typical of fortresses. If the town looked beautiful to me yesterday, when it was exposed to the sun, now it seems even more beautiful. The houses, arranged as they are, do not obstruct the sight of the vast view, because the terrace of one house is on the same level as the upper street, so that each street looks like a long terrace from which it is possible to admire the horizon. The full circle of the horizon can be seen from the top of the mountain, whereas farther down it is a semicircle, but still vast and very beautiful.

At the foot of the mountain the greenery of the oak-groves and of the country form an emerald setting beyond the deep barren valley surrounding the mountain of Gamala. Then to the east, as the eye can see, the cultivations of the tableland, of the plateau. (I think that is the name of the large low elevations of the crust of the earth, but if I am wrong, please correct it in my name be-

cause I have no dictionary within reach. In fact I am alone in my room and it is impossible for me to fetch the dictionary which is on the writing-desk, less than three metres away from me. I am saying this to remind you that she who is writing is crucified to her bed. ) Beyond the large plateau are the mountains of Hauran and farther back the highest peaks of Bashan; to the south the fertile strip between the blue Jordan and the continuous compact rising ground which is on the eastern side of the river and is similar to a buttress-like projection of the vast plateau, to the north the remote mountains of the Lebanese chain dominated by the imposing Hermon adorned with countless shades in this early morning. And down, in the near west, the gem of the Sea of Galilee. A real gem fastened to a blue necklace of a different shade of the Jordan flowing into and out of the lake, narrower where it flows in wider where it resumes flowing southwards, shining in the sun, placid between its green banks, is really biblical. The little lake of Merom, instead, is not visible, hidden as it is behind the hills north of Bethsaida, but one can imagine where it is by the luxuriant greenery of the surrounding country, which stretches north westwards between the Sea of Galilee and the lake of Merom in the plain where Korazim rises. I think that in the past I have heard the apostles say that it is the plain of Gennesaret.

456.2

<sup>2</sup>Jesus takes leave of the citizens, who, proud of their town, are busy showing Him the beautiful sights of the horizon and those of the town provided with aqueducts, thermal baths and beautiful buildings. «It was all done with our work and our money. Because we have learned from the Romans and we have followed their example as far as useful things are concerned, but we are not like the other peoples in the Decapolis! We pay the Romans and they serve us. But that's all! We are faithful. Also our isolation is a sign of faithfulness... »

«Ensure that your faithfulness is not just formal, but real, intimate, just. Otherwise your defence works will be of no avail. I repeat that. See? You have built this aqueduct. It is solid and useful. But if it were not fed by a remote spring, would it give you water for your fountains and thermal baths? »

«No. It would not give us anything. It would be quite useless. »

«You have said it: useless. Likewise natural or artificial defences are useless unless those who build them make them pow-

erful by means of the help of God, and God does not help those who are not His friends. »

«Master, You are speaking as if You knew that we have great need of God... »

«All men are in need of God, and for everything. »

«Yes, Master. But... it seems that we are going to have more need than any other town in Palestine and... »

«Oh!... » a sorrowful exclamation...

The people of Gamala look at Him disconcertedly. The boldest man among them asks: «What do You think? That we shall experience the old horrors once again? »

«Yes, and even more dreadful ones, and lasting longer... longer!... oh! My Fatherland! So much longer... And that will happen if you do not receive the Lord! »

«We have received You. So we are safe! The last time we behaved foolishly, but You have forgiven us... »

«Make sure that you persevere in your present justice towards Me, and that you grow in justice according to the Law. »

«We will do that, Lord. »

<sup>3</sup>They would like to follow Him and keep Him longer, but Jesus wants to join the women who have gone ahead on little donkeys and He tears Himself away from their insistence going quickly down the road by which He came up yesterday. He slows down only when He is where the labourers are working, to raise his hand to bless the unhappy men who look at Him as one looks at God.

At the foot of the mountain the road divides into two branches, one goes towards the lake, the other inland. The four little donkeys are on the latter and they are trotting along raising dust from the road parched by summer, and shaking their long ears. Now and again one of the women turns around to see whether Jesus is joining them, and they would like to stop to wait for Him, but with His hand He beckons them to proceed in order to get quickly off the uncovered stretch of the road on which the sun is already blazing down, and thus reach the woods which climb towards Aphek. It is cool in the woods which interlace a green vault over the track. They enter them happily, with exclamations of relief. Aphek is much farther inland than Gamala. It is among the mountains and so it is no longer possible to see the lake of

456. 3

Galilee. In actual fact it is not possible to see anything because the road climbs between two ridges which are like screens.

456. 4 <sup>4</sup>The widow is ahead of them to point out the shortest way, that is, she leaves the track and takes a path which climbs up the mountain and is even cooler and shadier. But I understand the reason for the deviation when, turning around on her saddle, Sarah says: «Look. These woods are mine. Valuable trees. They come from as far as Jerusalem to buy them to make chests for rich people. And these are old trees; but I have also seedling nurseries. Come. See... » and she drives her little donkey down steep slopes, then up crests and then down once again, following a little path through her woods where are in fact zones with old trees, ready to be cut down, and zones with tender plants, at times only a few centimetres off the ground, among green herbs, smelling of all mountain aromas.

«This place is beautiful and well kept. You are a wise woman» says Jesus praising her.

«Oh!... But just for myself... I would take care of everything more willingly, if I had a son... »

Jesus does not reply. They go on. Aphek can now be seen in the middle of apple-orchards and other fruit trees.

«That orchard is mine as well. Too much for me alone!... It was already too much when I had my husband. In the evenings we used to look at each other in the house which was too empty, too large, with too much money and with accounts of crops too plentiful for us and we used to say to each other: "And for whom? ". And I say that even more now... » All the sadness of a sterile marriage stands out from the woman's words.

«There are always poor people... » says Jesus.

«Oh! yes! And my house is open to them everyday. But afterwards... »

«Do you mean when you are dead? »

«Yes, Lord. It will be painful to leave, to whom?... the things I have taken care of... »

456. 5 <sup>5</sup>Jesus smiles faintly, a smile full of sympathy. But He replies kindly: «You are wiser with regards to the things of the Earth than you are for those of Heaven, woman. You take care to ensure that your trees grow well and that no glades are left in your woods. You grieve at the thought that afterwards they will not

be looked after as they are now. But such thoughts are not very wise, nay they are completely foolish. Do you think that in the next life such poor things as trees, fruits, money, houses will be of any value? And that it will be distressing to see them neglected? Emend your ideas, woman. The ideas of this world do not exist there, in none of the three kingdoms. In Hell hatred and punishment dim minds savagely. In Purgatory the craving for expiation cancels every other thought. In Limbo the blissful expectation of the just is not profaned by any sensuality. The Earth is remote, with its miseries; it is instead close with its supernatural needs, the needs of souls, not with the needs of things. The dead, who are not damned, turn their spirits towards the Earth only out of supernatural love, and they address their prayers to God on behalf of those who are on the Earth, not for any other reason. And when the just will enter the Kingdom of God, what can you expect this miserable prison, this place of exile named: Earth, to be for a soul contemplating God? What, the things left there? Can daytime look back with regret on a smoky lamp, when it is lit up by the sun? »

«Oh! no! »

«So? Why do you sigh for what you will leave? »

«But I would like an heir to continue to... »

«To enjoy earthly riches and be prevented by them from becoming perfect, whereas detachment from wealth is the means to possess the eternal riches? See, woman? The greatest obstacle preventing you from having this innocent boy is not his mother with her rights on her son, but your heart. He is an innocent, a sad innocent, but still an innocent who is dear to God because of his suffering. But if you made him avaricious, greedy, perhaps vicious, through the means which you possess, would you not deprive him of God's predilection? And since I take care of these innocent children, could I be a thoughtless master who allows one of his innocent disciples to go astray? Take care of yourself first, divest yourself of your still exceedingly alive humanity, free your justice from the crust of humanity depressing it, and you will then deserve to be a mother. Because not only who gives birth to a child is a mother, or who loves an adopted son and takes care of him and looks after his needs of animal creature. Also the mother of this boy gave birth to him. But she is not a



mother because she does not take care either of his body or of his spirit. A woman is a mother when she takes care above all of what does not die, that is of the spirit, not only of what dies, that is of material things. And believe Me, woman, those who love the spirit, will love also the body, because they possess the right love and therefore they will be just. »

«I see that I have lost the son... »

«Not necessarily. Let your desire urge you to become holy and God will satisfy you. There will always be orphans in the world. »

456.6

6They are now at the first houses. Aphek is not a town which can compete with Gamala or Hippo. It is more rural than anything else, but perhaps because it is an important road junction, it is not a poor town. As a transit town for caravans travelling from the hinterland to the lake, or from the north southwards, it is bound to be equipped to supply pilgrims with lodgings, clothes, sandals and foodstuffs, and consequently there are many stores and hotels.

The widow's house is near a hotel in the square and the ground floor is a large store with all kinds of goods and is run by an old big-nosed bearded man, who is shrieking like one of the damned at some stingy buyers.

« Samuel! » calls the woman.

«Mistress! » replies the old man bowing as low as the bales of goods piled up in front of him allow him.

«Send Elias or Philip here and meet me in the house» orders the widow and then, addressing the Master, she says: «Come. Come into my house and be my welcome guest. »

They all go in, passing through the warehouse, while the little donkeys are taken, I do not know where, by a tall boy who has come for them. Beyond the warehouse, which does not give the house a very artistic appearance, is a fine yard with porches on two sides. In the middle there is a fountain, or, at least, a basin, because no water is running. Vigorous plane-trees at the sides shade the whitewashed walls. A staircase climbs to the terrace. Doors open into rooms on the porchless sides: the farthest from the warehouse.

«Previously, in the days of my husband, it was full here, and we gave lodgings to merchants overtaken by the night. The porches are for goods, there are stables for animals and the foun-

tain over there to water them. Come into the rooms» and she crosses the yard diagonally going towards the nicest part of the house. She calls: «Mary! Johanna! »

Two maid-servants come, one with her hands soiled with dough, the other with a broom in her hand.

«Mistress! Peace be with you and with us, now that you are back. »

«And with you. Any trouble these past days? »

«Joseph, that light-headed man, broke the rose-bush of which you were so fond. I gave him a good thrashing. You should thrash me for allowing him to go near the plant. »

«It is of no value... » but tears well up in the eyes of Sarah who justifies them saying: «My husband brought me it the last spring that he was healthy... »

«And Elias broke his leg, which has made Samuel furious, because he has no help in these days of busy markets... He fell from the staircase on the other side of the house, while he was hanging out to have the walls whitewashed for you» says the other woman and she concludes: «He is suffering very much and he will remain lame. And you, mistress, did you have a pleasant journey? »

«As I could never have hoped. I have come back with the Rabbi of Galilee. Quick! Make preparations for my guests. Come in, Master! »

They enter the house passing before the two dumbfounded maid-servants.

They are received in a large cool room, in dim light, furnished with seats and chests. The widow goes out to give instructions, and Jesus calls the apostles to send them through the town to prepare people for His coming. Samuel comes in, transformed from salesman to butler, followed by maid-servants with amphorae and basins, for the purifications before taking food, which is carried in large trays: bread, fruit, milk.

<sup>7</sup>The mistress comes back: «I told my servant that You are here. He begs You to be merciful to him and I ask You to be merciful to me as well. Many people pass through here for the Feast of the Tabernacles. And the traffic begins immediately after the new moon of Tishri. I do not know how we will manage, if he is not well!... »

«Tell him to come here. »

«He cannot. He cannot stand. »

«Tell him that the Rabbi is not going to him, but wants to see him. »

«I will get Samuel and Joseph to bring him. »

«That would be the last straw! I am old and tired» grumbles Samuel.

«Tell Elias to come on his own legs. I want it. »

«A poor rabbi! Not even Gamaliel could do that» mumbles again the old servant.

«Be quiet, Samuel!... Forgive him, Master! He is a faithful servant. He was born here of servants of my husband's family, he is diligent and honest... but stubborn in his ideas of an old Israelite... » explains the widow in a low voice to excuse him.

«I understand his spirit. But the miracle will change him. Go and tell Elias to come and he will come. »

The widow goes and comes back: «I told him. And I ran away at once as I did not want to see him put his black swollen leg on the floor. »

«Do you not believe in a miracle? »

«Yes, I do. But that leg is horrifying... I am afraid that it will become gangrenous and rot completely. It is shiny, so shiny... horrible and... Oh! »

Her interruption and exclamation are due to the fact that she sees Elias run towards them, more nimbly than a healthy man, and throw himself at Jesus' feet saying: «Praised be the King of Israel. »

«Praised be God alone. How did you come? How did you dare? »

«I obeyed. I thought: "The Holy One cannot lie. Neither can He order foolish things. I have faith, I believe" and I moved my leg. It was no longer sore, I could move it. I put my foot on the floor, my leg was firm. I took a step. I was able to walk. I ran here. God does not disappoint those who believe in Him. »

«Stand up, man. I solemnly tell you that few people have faith like this man. From whom did it come to you? »

«From Your disciples who came here preaching You. »

«Were you the only one who heard them? »

«No, everybody heard them, because they were our guests here after Pentecost. » «And you alone believed... Your spirit is

well advanced in the ways of the Lord. Proceed... »

Old Samuel is drawn this way and that by conflicting sentiments... But, like many in Israel, he cannot detach himself from the old mentality for the new one, and he remains firm in his standpoint saying: «Magic! Magic! It is written\*»: “My people shall not be contaminated by magicians and diviners. If a man has recourse to them, I shall set My face against him and destroy him”. Tremble with fear, mistress, lest you should be unfaithful to the laws! » and he goes away with a stern shocked look, as if he had seen the demon installed in the house.

«Do not punish him, Master! He is old! He has always believed thus... »

«Be not afraid. If I had to punish all those who say that I am a demon, many sepulchres would open to swallow the preys. I can wait... I will speak at sunset... Then I will leave Aphek. I now agree to remain under your roof. »

457. Lecture in Aphek after a dispute between believers and non-believers. Sarah becomes a disciple.

15<sup>th</sup> July 1946.

Jesus is speaking to the people of Aphek from the doorstep of Sarah's warehouse. And He is addressing a mixed crowd, which is more curious than attentive and in which the Jews are not as numerous as the other people, mainly merchants and pilgrims who are passing through, some going towards the lake, some ready to go down to the Jericho ford, some coming from eastern towns on their way to coastal towns.

At present it is not really a speech, but replies of Jesus to this man and that one, dialogue to which everybody listens, although with different feelings, clearly shown by their countenances and by their words, which make me understand who they are and where they are going. The dialogue at times changes in tone and interlocutors, because, while Jesus is left aside, it becomes a debate among the people present for reasons of race and difference of opinions.

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\* It is written: in: *Leviticus 20, 6.*

Thus an old man of Joppa quarrels with a merchant from Sidon, as the latter defends the Master against the disbelief of the Jew, who will not admit that Jesus is the One Expected by nations. And there is a turmoil of quotations from the Holy Scriptures, applied rightly or wrongly, confuted by a simple statement of the Syro-Phoenician who says: «I am not interested in those words, but I say that it is He, because I have seen His miracles and heard His words. » The dispute expands, as other people take part in it, and those against Christ shout: «Beelzebub helps Him. The Holy Man of God is not like that. He is a King. He is not a false rabbi and a beggar», whilst those who are of the same opinion as the man from Sidon reply: «Wise people are poor because they are honest. Philosophers are not clad in gold and arrogance like your false rabbis and priests. » And one gathers that they say so because they are not Jews, but Gentiles from various countries, who are by chance in Palestine or naturalized there, but still pagan-minded.

«Impious people! »

«You are impious, because you do not even perceive the divinity of His thought» reply some.

«You do not deserve to have Him. But, by Jove! We condemned Socrates and we suffered the consequences of that. I say, mind what you do. Be careful lest you should be struck by the gods, as we were several times» shouts one, certainly a Greek.

«Ah! Gentiles defending the king of Israel! »

«And some Samaritans! And we are proud of being so, because we would look after the Rabbi better than you do, if He came to Samaria. But you... You have built the Temple. It is beautiful, but it is a sepulchre full of rottenness even if you have covered it with gold and valuable marbles» shouts from the end of the crowds a tall figure dressed in linen, with flounces and embroidery work, with sashes round his waist, ribbons, bracelets...

«Ah! a Samaritan! » and they seem to be saying: «the devil» so loud the intolerant horrified Jews shout stepping aside as if the man were a leper. And running away they shout to Jesus: «Drive him away! He is impure... »

But Jesus does not drive anybody away. He tries to impose order and silence, with the help of the apostles, without much success. <sup>2</sup>Thus, to put an end to disputes, He begins His sermon.

«When the people of God\*, after Miriam's death at Kadesh, rebelled in the desert because of lack of water and shouted against Moses, their saviour and leader from the land of sin to the promised land, as if he were their mad destroyer, and they inveighed against Aaron as a useless priest, Moses entered the Tabernacle with his brother and they spoke to the Lord requesting a miracle to stop the grumbling of the people. And the Lord, although He is not obliged to yield to every request, particularly if the request is a violent one coming from spirits who have lost holy trust in the Father's Providence, spoke to Moses and Aaron. He could have spoken to Moses only, because Aaron, although High Priest, one day had forfeited God's favour by adoring the idol. But God wanted to try him again and give him the opportunity to increase in grace in His eyes. And He ordered them to take Aaron's branch, which had been deposited in the Tabernacle after it had bloomed in open flowers and leaves, which later turned into almonds, and to go with it and speak to the rock, as the rock would give water for men and animals. And Moses with Aaron did what the Lord commanded but both of them did not believe in the Lord completely. And the one who believed less was the High Priest of Israel: Aaron. The rock, struck by the branch, split and poured out so much water as to quench the thirst of people and animals. And that water was called the water of Contradiction, because the Israelites contended there with the Lord and censured His actions and orders and they were not all equally loyal, on the contrary, it was the very High Priest who gave rise to doubt about the truth of God's divine words. And Aaron was removed from the living and was not allowed to reach the Promised Land.

Also now the people rebel against the Lord saying: "You have brought us here to die, both as people and as individuals, under the rule of oppressors". And they shout to Me: "Make Yourself our king and free us". But of which freedom are you speaking? Of what punishment? Of material ones? Oh! in material things there is neither salvation nor punishment! A much greater punishment and a much greater salvation is within your free will's reach and you can make your choice. God allows you. I am say-

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\* When the people of God... is the start of the account taken from: *Exodus 17, 1-7; Numbers 20.*

ing this for the Israelites who are present here, for those who should be able to read the figures of the Scriptures and understand them. But as I feel pity for My people whose spiritual King I am, I want to help you to understand at least one figure, so that it may assist you to realize Who I am.

457. 3

<sup>3</sup>The Most High said to Moses and Aaron: "Take the branch and speak to the rock and streams of water will gush out to quench the thirst of the people so that they may complain no longer". The Most High, to put an end to the complaints of His people, has said once again to the Eternal Pnest: "Take the branch which germinated from the stock of Jesse and a flower, untouched by human filth, will spring from it and it will become a fruit: a sweet almond full of unction. And with that almond of the root of Jesse, with its wonderful shoot upon which the Spirit of the Lord will descend with its seven gifts, strike the stone of Israel so that copious water may gush for its salvation". The Priest of God is Love Himself. And Love formed a Body making its shoot germinate from the root of Jesse, which no dirt had soiled, and it was the Body of the Word Incarnate, of the expected Messiah Who had been sent to speak to the rock so that it might split. That it might split its hardcrust of pride and greed and might receive the waters sent by God, the waters gushing from His Christ, the sweet oil of His love and thus become malleable, kind and holy, receiving in its heart the gift of the Most High to His people. But Israel does not want the living Water in her bosom. She remains closed and hard, particularly in her great people to whom the branch which bloomed and bore fruit speaks in vain and whom it strikes uselessly. And I solemnly tell you that many who belong to this people will not enter the Kingdom, whereas many who do not belong to it, will enter it, because they will believe what the priests of Israel refused to believe. That is why I am among you like a sign of contradiction and you will be judged according to the manner in which you have understood Me. To the others who do not belong to Israel I say: the house of God, lost by the children of His people, is open to those seeking Light. Come. Follow Me. If I am placed as a sign of contradiction, I am placed also as a sign for all Nations and those who love Me will be saved. »

457. 4

<sup>4</sup>«You love foreigners more than You love us. If You evange-

lized us, we would end up by loving You! But You are everywhere except in Judaea» says a Judaeen moved by Jesus' words.

«I will come down to Judaea as well, and I will stop there for a long time. But that will not change the stones in the hearts of many. They will not even change when the Blood will fall upon them. You are the head of a synagogue, are you not? »

«Yes, I am, how did You know? »

«I know. Well, you can thus understand what I am saying. »

«The blood must not fall on the stone. It is a sin. »

«You will pour the Blood on the stone with joy, that it may remain there. And the stone on which the Blood of the true Lamb will be poured will seem a trophy of victory to you. Then the day will come when you will understand... You will understand the real punishment and which was the true salvation offered to you. Let us go... »

A man elbows his way forward: «I am Siro-Phoenician. Many of us believe in You, although they have never met You... and we have many sick people... Will You not come to us? »

«No, I will not come to you. I have no time. But now, after the Sabbath, I will leave this place and I will go towards your borders. Whoever is in need of graces should wait at the border passes. »

«I will tell my fellow countrymen. God be with You, Master. »

«Peace to you, man. »

<sup>5</sup>Jesus takes leave of the widow, that is, He would like to take <sup>457 5</sup> leave of her, but she kneels down and declares her decisions: «I have decided to leave Samuel here - he is better as a servant than as a believer - and I will come to Capernaum to be near You. »

«I will be leaving Capernaum soon, and for good. »

«But You have good disciples there. »

«That is true. »

«That is my decision... I will thus prove to You that I can become detached from riches and love with justice. I will use the money which accumulates here for Your poor people and I will consider the boy as the first of the poor, if his mother wants to keep him, even if she does not love him. In the meantime, take this» and she offers a heavy purse to Jesus.

«May God bless you with His blessings and with those of the people you assist. You have made much progress in a few hours. »



The woman blushes. She looks around, then she avows: «It was not I who made so much progress. Your apostle taught me. That one over there, the one who is hiding behind the dark-haired young man. »

«Simon Peter. The Head of the apostles. So, what did he tell you? »

«Oh! he spoke to me in such a simple manner and so well! He humbled himself, he the apostle, admitting that he also was like me unfair in his desires. Oh! I cannot believe that! But he said that he strove to become good in order to deserve what he wanted and that he strives more and more to become so, as he does not want to turn into evil the good that he has received. You know, the things said among ourselves, poor people, are understood better... Am I offending You, Lord? »

«No. You are giving glory to God through your sincerity and your praises for My apostle. Do as he advised you and may God be always with you who are tending to justice. ^

He blesses her and is the first to set out, going north-west, under green orchards rustling in the wind which has risen suddenly.

458. A spiritual healing in Gherghesa. A lesson on the use of the gifts of God. Return to Capernaum.

16<sup>th</sup> July 1946.

458.1

<sup>1</sup>They arrive on the shore of the lake, in the immediate neighbourhood of Gherghesa, when the red sunset is changing into a violet peaceful twilight. The shore is crowded with people preparing their boats for night fishing or bathing joyfully in the lake, lightly rippled by the wind blowing over it.

Jesus is seen and recognised at once, so that before He enters the town, the people know that He has come and crowds rush as usual to hear Him.

A man elbows his way through the crowd saying that some people had come in the morning from Capernaum looking for Him and that He was to go there as soon as possible.

«This very night. I am not stopping here, and as our boats are not here, I ask you to lend Me yours. »

«As You wish, Lord. But will You speak to us before You depart? »

«Yes, I will, also to say goodbye to you. I will be leaving Galilee soon... »

<sup>2</sup>A woman, who is weeping, calls Him from the middle of the crowd, begging the people to let her pass, so that she may go to the Master. 458. 2

«It is Arria, the Gentile who has become a Jewess out of love. You have already cured her husband once\*. But... »

«I remember. Let her pass! »

The woman comes forward. She throws herself at Jesus' feet weeping.

«What is the matter with you, woman? »

«Rabbi! Rabbi! Have mercy on me. Simeon... »

A man from Gherghesa helps her to speak: «Master, he misuses the health You gave him. He has become hard-hearted and greedy and does not even look like an Israelite any longer. The woman is really much better than he is, although she was born in a heathen country. And his hardness and greed cause brawls and draw hatred upon him. His head was seriously injured in a fight and the doctor says that he will almost certainly become blind. »

«If that is the case, what can I do? »

«You... cure... She, as You can see, is in despair... She has many children, and they are still young. The blindness of her husband would mean poverty for the family... It is true that it is money earned through evil deeds... But his death would be a disaster because a husband is always a husband, and a father is always a father, even if in place of love and bread he gives infidelity and blows... »

«I cured him once and I said to him: "Sin no more". He has sinned even more. Had he perhaps not promised that he would not sin any more? Had he not vowed that he would no longer be a usurer and thief, if I cured him, that where possible, he would give back what he had usurped, and where it was not possible he would use it for the poor? »

«Master, that is true. I was present. But... the man is not firm in his purposes. »

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\* You have already cured her husband once. It may refer to the miracle that Jesus refers to in 159. 1.

«What you said is true. And Simeon is not the only one. As Solomon says\*, many have two weights and false scales, not only in a material sense, but also in the way they judge, act and behave towards God. And Solomon again says: "It is ruinous for man to devour saints; and to repent after making a vow". But too many people do that... 'Woman, do not weep. Listen to Me and be just, because you have chosen the religion of Justice. If I proposed two alternatives to you, which one would you choose? Here they are: that I should cure your husband and let him live so that he may continue to mock God and pile up sins on his soul, or I should convert him, forgive him and then let him die? Make your choice. I will do whatever you decide. »

The poor woman is in a dire struggle. Natural love, the necessity of a man who somehow or other earns a living for his children, would urge her to ask for «life». Her supernatural love for her husband incites her to ask for «forgiveness and death». The crowds are silent, attentive, moved, awaiting her decision.

At last the poor woman, throwing herself once again on the ground, grasping Jesus' tunic as if she wished to draw strength from it, moans: «Eternal Life... But help me, Lord... » and she collapses with her face on the ground as if she were about to die.

«You have chosen the better part. May you be blessed. Few people in Israel would equal you in fear of God and justice. Stand up. Let us go to your husband. »

«But will You really make him die, Lord? And what shall I do? » The human creature rises once again from the fire of the spirit like the mythological phoenix; and she suffers and is dismayed humanly...

«Be not afraid, woman. You, I, we all entrust everything to the Father in Heaven and He will act with His love. Can you believe that? »

«Yes, my Lord... »

«Well, let us go, saying the prayer of all petitions and of all consolations. ».

And while walking, surrounded by the crowd and followed by a train of people, He says the Our Father slowly. The apostolic group joins in and the harmonious chorus raises the words of

\* says, in: *Proverbs 11, 1; 20, 10, 23, 25.*

the prayer above the buzz of the people who, wishing to hear the Master pray, become silent little by little, so that the last petitions can be heard very clearly in the solemn silence.

«The Father will give you your daily bread. I can assure you in His Name» says Jesus to the woman and addressing not only her but all the people, He goes on to say: «And your sins will be forgiven, if you forgive this man who has offended and harmed you. He needs your forgiveness to be forgiven also by God. And everybody needs the protection of God in order not to fall into sin as Simeon did. Bear that in mind. »

<sup>4</sup>They have now arrived at the house which Jesus enters with the woman, Peter, Bartholomew and the Zealot. 458. 4

The man, lying on a little bed, his face covered with bandages and wet pieces of cloth, is restless and delirious. But Jesus' voice, or His will, make him come round again and he shouts: «Forgive me! Forgive me! I will not fall into sin again. Forgive me as You did the last time! And cure me, as the last time! Arria! Arria! I swear it. I will be good. I will no longer make use of violence or fraud, I will not... »the man is willing to make all kinds of promises, afraid as he is of death...

«Why do you want all that? » asks Jesus. «To expiate or because you are afraid of God's judgement? »

«That, that! Not to die now! Hell!... I have stolen, I have stolen the money of poor people! I have lied. I hit my neighbour and I have made my relative suffer. Oh!... »

«Fear is not sufficient. Repentance is required. Sincere firm repentance. »

«Death or blindness! Oh! what punishment! Not to be able to see anymore! Darkness! Darkness! No!... »

«If blindness of the eyes is dreadful, is the blindness of the heart not more horrible? And are you not afraid of the eternal horrible darkness of Hell? Of the perpetual privation of God? Of continuous remorse? The grief of having killed yourself forever, in your spirit? Do you not love this woman? Do you not love these children? And your father, mother, brothers, do you not love them? Well, do you not consider that you will not have them with you any longer if you are damned? »

«No! No! Forgive me! Forgive me! Expiation here, yes, here... Also blindness, Lord... But Hell no... Do not let God curse me!

Lord! You expel demons and forgive sins. Do not raise Your hand to cure me, but to forgive me and free me from the demon possessing me... Lay Your hand on my heart, on my head... Free me, Lord... »

«I cannot work two miracles. Consider that. If I free you from the demon, I will leave you with your illness... »

«It does not matter! Be the Saviour. »

«Let it be as you wish. Make sure that you avail yourself of My grace, which is the last I will grant you. Goodbye. »

«You have not touched me. Your hand! Your hand! »

Jesus pleases him by laying His hand on the head and chest of the man who, blinded by bandages and the wound, gropes convulsively for Jesus' hand, and having found it, weeps on it, reluctant to leave it, until he falls asleep like a tired child, still holding Jesus' hand pressed against his feverish cheek.

Jesus withdraws His hand cautiously and goes out of the room noiselessly, followed by the woman and the three apostles.

«May God reward You, Lord. Pray for Your servant. »

«Continue to grow in justice, woman, and God will always be with you. » He lifts His hand to bless the house and the woman and goes out into the street.

58.5 <sup>5</sup>The buzz of the crowd becomes louder when countless curious questions are asked. But Jesus beckons them to be quiet and to follow Him. He goes back to the main road. Night is falling slowly. Jesus gets into a boat which is bobbing up and down near the shore and He speaks from there.

«No. He is not dead and he has not been cured, according to the flesh. His spirit has meditated on his sins and has indicated the right direction to his thoughts, he has been forgiven because he asked to expiate in order to be forgiven. You, all of you, must support him in his journey towards God.

Consider that we are all responsible for the soul of our neighbour. Woe to those who scandalise! But woe betide also those who through their intolerant behaviour frighten a man just re-born to Good and with their intransigence drive him away from the path on which he has set out. Every man can somehow be a master and a kind master to his neighbour and all the more so when his neighbour is weak and unaware of the wisdom of Good.

I exhort you to be patient, docile and magnanimous with

Simeon. Do not show hatred, grudge, contempt, irony. Forget his past and do not remind him of it. A man who rises after being forgiven, after repenting, after sincere resolutions, is willing, but he is also burdened by the weight, by the heritage of passions and habits of his past life. It is necessary to help him to get rid of them. And very discreetly. Without making allusions to his past: they are imprudent both with regards to charity and to the human being. To remind a repentant culprit of his faults is to dishearten him. His awakened conscience is sufficient for that. To remind a man of his past, is to give rise to revivals of passions and, at times, to returns to passions already overcome, to fresh consent. In the best of cases it always implies leading into temptation.

Do not tempt your neighbour. Be prudent and charitable. If God has preserved you from certain sins, praise Him. But do not ostentate your justice in order to humiliate whoever has not been just. Learn to understand the imploring look of a repentant man who would like you to forget and who, in the event that he is aware that you have not forgotten, implores you at least not to mortify him by reminding him of his past. Do not say: "He was a leper in his soul" to justify the fact that you have forsaken him. A man affected with leprosy, after the purifications following his recovery, is readmitted among the people. Let the same apply to him who has been cured of sin. Do not be like those who consider themselves perfect, whilst they are not such because they lack charity towards their brothers. On the contrary, with your love you are to surround your brothers who have risen again to grace, so that good companionship may prevent fresh failures.

Do not wish to be more exacting than God, Who does not reject the sinner who repents, but forgives him and readmits him to His company. And even if that sinner caused you a damage which can no longer be mended, do not revenge yourselves now that he is not an overbearing fellow to be frightened of; but forgive him and take much pity on him because he lacked the treasure which every man can have, if he only wishes so: goodness. Love him because by grieving you he has given you the means to deserve a greater reward in Heaven. Join your means to his forgiveness, and your prize will grow even more in Heaven. And do not despise anybody, not even if they belong to another race. You can see that when God attracts a spirit, even the spirit of a hea-

then, He transforms it in such a way that it exceeds many of the chosen people in justice.

I am going. Remember now and always these words and the... others which I have spoken to you. »

458. 6

<sup>6</sup>Peter, who was ready, pushes the boat away from the bank with the oar and starts on the voyage followed by the other two boats. The lake, which is not very calm, causes the boats to roll, but no one is frightened because the voyage is a short one. The red lamps are reflected like red rubies on the dark water or they tinge the white foam with a red hue.

«Master, will that man recover or not? I have not understood anything» asks Peter after a short time, without taking his hand off the rudder.

Jesus does not reply. Peter beckons to John who is sitting at the end of the boat at Jesus' feet, with his head reclined on Jesus' knees. And John repeats the question in a low voice.

«He will not recover. »

«Why, Lord? According to what I heard, I thought that he would recover in order to expiate. »

«No, John. He would sin again, because his spirit is weak. »

John rests his head again on the Master's knees saying: «But You could have made him strong... » and it sounds like a kind reproach.

Jesus smiles running His fingers through John's hair and raising his voice so that everybody can hear Him, He gives the last lesson of the day: «I solemnly tell you that also when granting a grace, it is necessary to take into account its opportunity. Life is not always a gift, wealth is not always a gift, a son is not always a gift, yes, even an election is not always a gift. They become gifts and remain such when he who receives them uses them rightly and for supernatural aims of sanctification. But when good health, wealth, affections, mission are used to ruin one's spirit, it would be better not to have them. And at times God gives such a great gift that He could not grant a greater one, by not giving what men would like to have or would think it was right to have as being a good thing. The father of a family or a wise doctor knows which things are to be given to the children or to sick people in order not to make them more sick or not to let them be taken ill. Likewise God knows what is to be given for

the well-being of a spirit. »

«So that man will die? Unhappy households

«Would it be happier if a reprobate lived in it? And would he be happier if, while living, he should continue to sin? I solemnly tell you that death is a gift when it serves to prevent more sins and a man dies while he is reconciled with his Lord. »

<sup>7</sup>The keel rubs against the sandy bottom of the lake at Capernaum.

458. 7

«Just in time. There will be a storm tonight. The lake is raging, the sky is starless, it is pitch black. Can you hear the roar behind the mountains? Can you see those lights? Thunder and lightning. There will be a downpour any moment now. Quick! Let us beach the boats which do not belong to us! Let the women and the boy go away before it starts raining. Hey, you! Give us a hand! » shouts Peter to other fishermen who are drawing nets and baskets.

With the strength of their arms they beach the boats as the first billows come to lash their half-naked bodies and the gravel on the shore. They then run home while the first large drops of rain raise the dust of the parched land giving off a strong smell, and it is flashing already above the lake and the basin formed by the hills around the lake are full of the roar of thunder.

459. Forgiveness of Samuel of Nazareth.  
A lesson on bad friends.

17<sup>th</sup> July 1946.

Gin the room upstairs there are some men from Nazareth. And your brothers came yesterday looking for You. And then some Pharisees came, and many sick people. And a man from Antioch» says the Iscariot as soon as he sees them enter the house.

459. 1

«Have they gone away, perhaps? »

«No. The man from Antioch has gone to Tiberias, but he is coming back after the Sabbath. The sick people are scattered in various houses. But the Pharisees wanted your brothers as their guests and paid much honour to them. They are now in the house of Simon, the Pharisee. »

«H'm!... » mumbles Peter.



«What's the matter with you? Are you not glad that they honour the Master in His relatives?» asks the Iscariot.

«Oh! if it is true honour and a useful meeting... I am very happy!»

«To mistrust is to judge. The Master does not want us to judge.»

«Of course! But to be certain I will wait before judging. I will thus avoid being a fool and a sinner.»

«Let us go upstairs, to see the people from Nazareth. We will go to the sick people tomorrow» says Jesus.

The Iscariot addresses Jesus: «You cannot. It is the Sabbath. Do You want to be reproached by the Pharisees? If You are not concerned about Your honour, I am» says Judas very theatrically. And he concludes: «By the way, as I realize that You are anxious to cure at once those who are looking for You, well, we will go and impose our hands on them in Your Name and...»

«No.» A very sharp «no» allowing no discussion.

«You do not want us to work miracles? You want to work them Yourself? Well... we will go and tell them that You are here and that You promise to cure them. They will be happy...»

«It is not necessary. The fishermen have seen us. So it is already known that I am here. And they know that I cure those who have faith in Me, in fact they have come looking for Me.»

Judas is silent, dissatisfied, his face momentarily dark and unpleasant.

459. 2 <sup>2</sup>Jesus goes outside, heedless of the storm and of the heavy showers of rain, and He goes upstairs. He pushes the door and goes inside. The apostles follow Him. The women are already up there talking to the Nazarenes. In a corner there is a man unknown to me.

«Peace to you.»

«Master!» The Nazarenes bow and then they say: «Here is the man» pointing at the unknown person.

«Come here» orders Jesus.

«Do not curse me!»

«To do that it was not necessary to tell you to come here. Is that the only word you have for the Saviour?» Jesus is austere, but encouraging at the same time.

The man looks at Him... He then bursts into tears and throw-

ing himself on the ground he shouts: «If You do not forgive Me, I will have no peace... »

«Why did you reject Me, when I wanted to make you good? Now it is late to make amends. Your mother is dead. »

«Ah! don't tell me! You are cruel! »

«No. I am the Truth. And I was the Truth when I told you that you would kill your mother. And I am the Truth now. And you laughed at Me then. Why are you looking for Me now? Your mother is dead. You have sinned and you have continued to sin although you knew that you were sinning. I had told you. That is your serious sin: you wanted to sin rejecting the Word and Love. Why complain now that you have no peace? »

«Lord! Lord! Have mercy on me! I was insane and You cured me, I have hoped in You, before I had lost all hope, in everybody. Do not disappoint my hope... »

«And why had you lost all hope? »

«Because... I caused my mother to die of grief... also the last evening... she was exhausted... and I was merciless... I hit her, Lord!!! » A cry of real despair fills the room. «I struck her!... She died during the night!... And she had only told me to be good... My mother!... I killed her... »

«You killed her years ago, Samuel! Since you stopped being just. Poor Esther! How many times have I seen her weep! And how many times she asked Me to caress her in your place... And you know that I used to come to your house not because I was friendly with you, who are My age, but out of pity for her... I should not forgive you. But two mothers have begged Me to help you, and your repentance is sincere. So I forgive you. With an irreproachable life you must obliterate from the hearts of your fellow-citizens the memory of Samuel sinner and win back your mother. You will achieve that if through a life of justice you conquer Heaven and your mother at the same time. But remember - and bear this very clearly in mind - that your sin was very serious and consequently your justice must be great in proportion in order to cancel your debt. »

<sup>3</sup>«Oh! You are good! You are not like that disciple of Yours who went out immediately after he came in. And he came to Nazareth only to terrify me! These people can tell You... »

459. 3

Jesus turns around... Of all the apostles only the Iscariot is

missing. So it is he who ill-treated Samuel. What is Jesus to do? In order not to have the apostle criticised, as apostle if not as man, he says: «Every man can but be severe with regards to your sin. When one commits an evil deed one ought to consider that men judge the evil-doer, and that one gives them the opportunity to judge... But one must bear no grudge. Put the mortification you receive on the scales of God as expiation. Let us go. Here, the just are rejoicing because of your redemption. You are among brothers who do not despise you. Because every man can sin, but a man is contemptible only when he persists in sinning. »

«I bless You, Lord. I ask You to forgive me also for all the times I sneered at You... I do not know how to thank You... Peace, You know?, is coming back to me» and he weeps calmly...

«Thank My Mother. If you have been forgiven, if I have cured your delirium to enable you to repent, it was through Her inter-  
459. 4 cession. <sup>4</sup>Let us go downstairs. Supper is ready and we will share the food. » And He goes out holding the man by the hand.

Supper is in fact ready. But Judas is not even downstairs. He is not in the house. The landlady explains: «He went out. He said: "I will be back soon". »

«All right. Let us sit down and have our meal. »

Jesus offers, blesses and hands out the food. But a glacial shadow is in the room lit up by two lamps and the fireplace. Outside the storm is still raging...

Judas comes back, panting, soaked through as if he had fallen into the lake. Although he had covered his head with his mantle his hair looks smooth, wet, sticking to his cheeks and neck, when he throws the drenched cloak on the floor. They all look at him. But no one speaks. Although no one asks him anything, he wants to apologise saying: «I ran to Your brothers to tell them that You are here. But I obeyed You. I did not go to the sick people. It was not possible, in any case. What a downpour!... But I wanted to honour Your relatives at once... Are You not glad, Master? You are not speaking!... »

459. 5 <sup>5</sup>«I am listening. Take this and eat. And while waiting to go and rest, let us talk among ourselves.

Listen: it is written\* that we must not confide secrets to a for-

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\* it is written, in *Sirach 8, 18-19*.

eigner, because we do not know his habits. But can we say that we know the hearts even of our fellow-citizens? Or the hearts of our friends? Or of our relatives? God alone has perfect knowledge of the heart of man, and man has one means only to know the heart of a fellow-man and understand whether he is a true fellow-countryman, or a true friend and relative. Which is the means? Where is it to be found? In our neighbour and in ourselves. In his actions and words and in our upright judgement. When through our honest judgement we perceive that there is no good in the words or actions of our neighbour, or in the actions required of us, then we can say: "This man has not an honest heart and I must distrust him". But he is to be treated charitably, because he is a poor wretch affected by the gravest unhappiness: that of a diseased spirit, but his actions are not to be imitated, his words are not to be taken as true and wise, least of all is his advice to be followed.

Do not allow yourselves to be harmed by the following proud thoughts: "I am strong and the evil of other people will not affect me. I am just, and even if I listen to unjust people, I will remain just". Man is a deep abyss in which all the elements of good and evil can be found. The former, that is, the help of God, assists us in improving and becoming kings; the latter, that is, evil passions and bad friendship help men to grow more wicked and to reign noxiously. All the germs of evil and all the longing for good are latent in man by God's loving will, and by the wicked will of Satan, who influences, tempts and instigates, whereas God attracts, comforts and loves. Satan tries to seduce, he works to conquer God. And God does not always win, because creatures are heavy until they choose love as their law, and being heavy they debase themselves and crave more easily for anything which is immediate satisfaction and gratification of the lowest instincts of man.

From what I am telling you about human weakness, you can understand how necessary it is not to trust yourselves and to watch your neighbour very carefully, lest you should join the poison of an impure conscience to that already fermenting in you. When you understand that a friend is the ruin of your hearts, when his words upset your consciences, when his advice is the cause of scandal, you must forsake the harmful friendship.

If you persist you would end by seeing your souls perish, because you would pass onto actions which remove from God and prevent a hardened conscience from understanding God's inspirations. If every man guilty of serious sins could or wanted to speak explaining how he came to commit such sins, one would see that there is always a bad friendship at the origin... »

«That is true! » admits Samuel of Nazareth in a low voice.

459. 6 «Do not trust those who after fighting you without any reason, load you with honours and gifts. Do not trust those who praise every action of yours and who praise everybody and everything: they commend loungers as being hard workers, adulterers as faithful husbands, thieves as honest people, violent fellows as being meek, liars as being sincere, wicked people as being loyal and they point out the worst disciples as exemplary ones. They do so to ruin you and to make use of your downfall for their artful aims. Shun those who want to intoxicate you with praises and promises to make you do things, which you would refuse to do if you were not intoxicated. And when you have sworn loyalty to a man, have nothing to do with his enemies. They would approach you only to harm him whom they hate and do so through your very help. Keep your eyes open. I said\*: be as wise as serpents besides being as simple as doves. Because simplicity is holy when dealing with spiritual matters, but to live in the world without damaging oneself and one's friends, it is necessary to possess the cunning which is capable of finding out the artfulness of those who hate saints. The world is a nest of snakes. You must become acquainted with the world and its systems. And then, staying like doves not in the mire where serpents are, but in the shelter of a high cliff, have the simple hearts of the children of God. And pray and pray, because I solemnly tell you that the great Serpent is hissing around you, and you are therefore  
459. 7 in great danger and those who are not vigilant will perish. <sup>7</sup>Yes, among the disciples there are some who will perish with great joy of Satan and infinite grief of the Christ. »

«Who, Lord? Perhaps one who does not belong to us, a proselyte, one... who is not from Palestine, one... »

«Do not investigate. Is it not written\*\* that abomination will

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\* I said, in 265. 7.

\*\* written, in: *Daniel 9, 27; 11, 31; 12, 11.*

enter, and has already entered the Temple? Now, if it is possible to sin in the Holy Place, will a Galilean or a Judaeon among my followers not be able to sin? Be vigilant, my friends. Watch over yourselves and other people, take heed of what other people say to you and of what your consciences tell you. And if you cannot see clearly by yourselves, come to Me, for I am the Light. »

Peter bustles and whispers something standing behind John who shakes his head in denial. Jesus turns his eyes and sees... Peter strikes an attitude and feigns to be going away. Jesus stands up, He smiles gently... He then intones the prayers, He blesses and dismisses the crowds. And He remains alone to carry on praying.

460. Pharisees in Capernaum with Joseph and Simon of Alphaeus. Jesus will not conceal the hour of the Sacrifice from His Mother.

18<sup>th</sup> July 1946.

\*«Are You not taking the boy back to his mother? » Bartholomew asks Jesus, when he sees Him on the terrace deeply engrossed in prayer. 460.

«No. I will wait until she comes back from the synagogue... »

«Are You hoping that the Lord will speak to her there... and that she... will understand her duty? You are thinking wisely. But she is not wise. Any other mother would have run here yesterday evening to get her child. After all... we had been sailing on a stormy sea... she did not know whence we came... Was she anxious to ascertain whether her child had suffered? Will she be coming this morning? Look how many mothers are already up, although it is so early, as they are anxious to hang out the best clothes and dry them thoroughly so that they may be clean and ready to be worn by the children on the Lord's day. A Pharisee might say that they are doing servile work by hanging out those little garments. I say that they are doing a work of love, towards God and towards their children. They are mostly poor women. Look, over there is Mary of Benjamin and Rebecca of Micah. And on that poor terrace Johanna is patiently disentangling the fringe of the old mantle of her son so that it may look less shab-

by when he goes to the holy ceremony. And over there, on the shore which will soon be completely exposed to the sun, Selida is spreading out coarse cloth so that it may look finer, whereas it is beautiful only on account of the sacrifice it costs her: so many morsels of bread, of which she deprived her hungry stomach, to change them into tows of hemp. And is that not Adina who is rubbing her daughter's discoloured dress with greens in order to make it look more colourful? But I cannot see her... »

«May the Lord change her heart! There is nothing else to be said... »

460. 2 <sup>2</sup>They remain leaning on the low wall of the terrace, looking at nature refreshed by the storm which has cleaned both atmosphere and greenery. The lake, which is not yet completely calm, is not as blue as usual, because it is streaked with the waters of torrents which, in flood for a few hours, have dragged down the dust of their parched beds, but is beautiful despite those ochre infusions. It looks like a huge lapis-lazuli striped with pearls, and it smiles in the serene sun which is shining at present from behind the western mountains and is glittering in all the rain drops still hanging from branches and leaves. Swallows and doves are joyfully furrowing the purified air and all kinds of birds are trilling and chirping in the leafy branches.

«The warm season is ending. And this season is beautiful, rich and beautiful. Like ripe age. Isn't it, Master? »

«Yes... lovely... » But Jesus is obviously lost in thought.

Bartholomew looks at Him... He then asks: «What are You thinking about? Of what You will be saying in the synagogue today? »

«No. I was thinking that the sick people will be waiting for us. Let us two go and cure them. »

«Just the two of us? »

«Simon, Andrew, James and John have gone to haul the lobsterpots which Thomas cast foreseeing our return. The others are sleeping. Let us two go. »

460. 3 <sup>3</sup>They go down towards the country, to the houses scattered among vegetable-gardens, or in the fields, looking for sick people sheltered in the houses of poor people, who are always hospitable.

But some people run ahead of Him, guessing where He is go-

ing and some say to Him: «Wait here, in my kitchen garden. We will bring them to You here... » And soon, like the waters of tiny brooks which gather in one pond only, the sick people come from all directions or are brought to Him, Who cures them. The miracles have been worked.

Jesus dismisses them saying: «If anybody should question you, do not say that I cured you. Go back to the houses where you were. This disciple of Mine will bring some assistance to the more needy ones before sunset. »

«No, do not mention He, because you would harm Him. Remember that this is the Sabbath and many people hate Him» corroborates Bartholomew.

«We will not harm He Who has helped us. We will tell the people in our villages, without mentioning the day on which we were cured» says a man who was previously a paralytic.

«Nay, I would say that we should spread out in the country awaiting sunset. The Pharisees know where we were given hospitality and they might come to see... » says one whose diseased eyes have been cured.

«You are right, Isaac. Yesterday we were asking for too much and too many things... They will think that, being tired of waiting, we left before sunset. »

«But did the apostle see us yesterday evening? » asks one who was blind. «Was it not him who was speaking? »

«No. It was one of the Lord's brothers. He will not betray us. »

«Just tell me where you are going so that I may find you when I come» says Bartholomew.

The sick people consult with one another. Some would like to go towards Korazim, some towards Magdala. They leave it to Jesus to decide.

And Jesus says: «Go to the fields along the road to Magdala. Follow the second torrent and shortly afterwards you will find a house. Go there and say: "Jesus sent us". They will receive you as brothers. Go and God be with you and you with God, not committing any sin in future. »

<sup>4</sup> And Jesus sets out again, but He does not go straight back to the village by the way He came. Walking along a semicircular lane among the kitchen gardens He arrives at the spring near the lake, while the women have assailed it wishing to get their sup- 460. 4



plies of water when it is still cool and the sun is not high in the sky.

«The Rabbi! The Rabbi! » There is a rush of women, children and also of men, mainly old ones, who are idle because of the Sabbath.

«A word, Master, to make this day a happy one» says an old man, who is holding a boy by the hand, perhaps a grandchild, because if the man is certainly almost one hundred years old, the little boy is not more than six.

«Yes, please old Levi, and us at the same time. »

«You will have Jairus' explanation today. I am here to hear him. You have a wise synagogue leader... »

«Why do You say that, Master? You are the head of all synagogue leaders, the Master of Israel. We acknowledge but You. »

«No, you must not do that. The synagogue leaders have been appointed as your masters, to practise the cult with you, setting a good example, in order to make you faithful Israelites. There will still be synagogue leaders when I am no longer here. They will have a different name and their ceremonies will be different, but they will still be the ministers of the cult. You must love them and pray for them. Because where is a good synagogue leader there are good believers and, consequently, God is there. »

«We will do that. But speak to us now. We have been told that You are about to leave us... »

«I have so many sheep scattered throughout Palestine. They are all waiting for their Shepherd. But you have my disciples, who are becoming more and more numerous and wise... »

«Yes, but what You say is always good and easy to be understood by our ignorant minds. »

«What shall I tell you?... »

«Jesus, we have been looking for You everywhere! >> shouts Joseph of Alphaeus, who has just arrived with his brother Simon and a group of Pharisees.

«And where can the Son of man be if not among the humble and simple-hearted people? Did you want Me? Here I am. But allow Me to say a word to these people first... <sup>5</sup>Listen. You have been told that I am about to leave you. It is true. I have not denied it. But before leaving you I give this commandment to you: watch over yourselves very carefully in order to know yourselves well,

and approach the Light more and more so that you may see. My word is Light. Preserve it in your hearts and when in its light you discover stains or shadows, persecute them to drive them out of your hearts. You must no longer be what you were before I met you. You must be much better because now you know much more. Previously you were in a kind of twilight, now you have the Light within you. You must thus be the children of Light. Look at the sky in the morning when it clears up at dawn: it may seem clear only because it is not completely covered with storm-clouds, but as the light increases and the bright sun appears from the east, then our surprised eyes see rosy spots in the blue sky. What are they? Oh! little light clouds, so light that they did not seem to be there while the light was faint, but now, lit up by the sun, they are like light foam in the vault of heaven. And they remain there until the sun melts them dispelling them with its splendour. Do likewise with your souls. Take them closer and closer to the light to discover even the lightest mist and then keep them under the great Sun of Charity. It will consume your imperfections as the sun evaporates the light humidity condensed in those flimsy little clouds which the sun dissolves at dawn. If you remain firmly in Charity, it will work continuous wonders in you. Go now and be good... »

<sup>460-6</sup>He dismisses them and goes towards his two cousins, whom He kisses after giving low bows to the Pharisees present, among whom is Simon the Pharisee of Capernaum. The others are unknown to me.

«We have been looking for You more on behalf of these people than for ourselves. They came from Nazareth looking for You, so... »

«Peace to you. What do you need? »

«Oh! nothing. We only wanted to see You, listen to You and hear the wisdom of Your words... »

«Just for that? »

«Actually, to give You some advice as well... You are too good and the people take advantage of it. These people are not good. And You know that. Why do You not curse sinners? »

«Because the Father orders Me to save them, not to lose them. »

«You will get into trouble... »

«It does not matter. I cannot disobey the order of the Most High for any human profit. »

«And if... You know... It is murmured that You caress the crowds to make use of them in a rebellion. We have come to ask You whether it is true. »

«Have you come or have you been sent? »

«It is the same thing. »

«No, it is not. But I reply to you and to those who have sent you that the water overflowing from My bucket is water of peace, that the seed which I spread is the seed of renunciation. I trim proud branches. I am ready to bare the roots of evil trees, so that they may not harm good ones, if they are unsuitable to be engrafted. But what I call "good" is not what you say is good. Because I call good obedience, poverty, renunciation, humbleness and the charity which embraces all humble and pitiful situations. Fear no one. The Son of man does not lay snares for the powers of men, but has come to inculcate strength into souls. Go and relate that the Lamb will never be a wolf. »

«What do You mean? You are misunderstanding us and we are misunderstanding You. »

«No. We understand each other very well... »

«Well, in that case do You know why we came? »

«Yes, to tell Me that I must not speak to the crowds. And you do not consider that you cannot interdict Me from going, like every Israelite, where the Scriptures are read and explained and where every circumcised man is entitled to speak. »

«Who told You! It was Jairus, was it not? We will report that. »

«I have not seen Jairus yet. »

«You are lying. »

«I am the Truth. »

A man in the crowd which has gathered again says: «He is not lying. Jairus left before sunset with his wife and daughter; he took them to see his mother, who is dying and he will come back only after the purifications. He left his assistant here. »

The Pharisees do not have the pleasure of proving that Jesus is lying, but they rejoice finding out that He is without His most powerful friend in Capernaum. They look at one another: a display of meaningful glances.

Joseph of Alphaeus, the eldest son in the family, feels it is his

duty to defend Jesus and he addresses Simon the Pharisee saying: «You honoured me by sharing your bread and salt with me and the Most High will take into account such honour paid to the offspring of David. You showed yourself to be just. My brother is being accused by these Pharisees. Yesterday they said to me, the head of the family, that their only grief was that Jesus neglected Judaea, because, as the Messiah of Israel it was His duty to love and evangelize the whole of Israel in the same manner. I found their argument just and I was going to tell my brother. But why are they speaking so differently today? They should at least say why He must not speak. As far as I know He does not say anything against the Law or the Books. Tell me the true reason and I will convince Jesus to speak differently. »

«What you say is right. Reply to the man... » says Simon the Pharisee. «Has He said... anything sacrilegious? »

«No. But the Sanhedrin accuse Him of dividing, of trying to divide the Nation. The King must be the King of Israel, not of Galilee alone. »

«Dear is all the Fatherland, most dear, in the Fatherland, is the birthplace. His love for Galilee is not such a serious reason as to deserve to be punished. In any case, we belong to David, so... »

«Let Him come to Judaea then. And tell Him not to despise us. »

«Have You heard that? That is an honour for You and for the family! » says Joseph half severely and half haughtily.

«Yes, I have. »

«I advise You to yield to their desire. It is good and honourable. You say that You want peace. Put an end, then, to the variance between the two regions, since You are loved by both of them. You will certainly do it. Oh! He will certainly do it. I can assure you on His behalf as He is obedient to His elders. »

«It is written: "There is no one greater than I am. There is no other god except Me". I will always do what God wants. »

«Have you heard Him? So, you may go in peace. »

«We have heard Him. But, Joseph, before going away, we want to know what He means by "what God wants". »

«What God wants is that I do His will. »

«Which is? Tell us. »

«That I may gather the sheep of Israel and unite them in one

flock only. And I will do that. »

«We will bear Your words in mind. »

«That is good. May God be with you» and Jesus turns away from the group of Pharisees and goes towards the house.

460. 8 <sup>8</sup>His cousin Joseph stands beside Him, half happy, half unhappy, and with a patronising attitude points out to Him that if one knows how to deal with them (as he did), if one relies on relatives (as was the fortunate case today), if one remembers one's right to the throne (as David's offspring), and so forth, even Pharisees become good friends.

Jesus interrupts him saying: «And you believe that? You believe their words? Truly, pride and false praises are sufficient to make people absolutely blind. »

«But I would... please them. You cannot expect them to carry You shoulder-high shouting hosanna, all of a sudden... You must conquer them, Jesus, with a little humbleness, a little patience. Honour deserves every sacrifice... »

«Enough of that! You are speaking human words, and even worse. May God forgive you, and give you light, brother. But go away, because you are grieving Me. And do not mention such silly advice to your mother and brothers or to My Mother. »

«You want to be ruined! You are the cause of our ruin and of Your own! »

«Why have you come if you are still the same? I have not yet suffered for you. But I will, and then... »

Joseph has gone away... upset.

«You disgust him... He is like our father, You know. He is an old Israelite... » whispers Simon.

«When he understands, he will see that My action, which he now considers disgusting, was holy... »

460. 9 <sup>9</sup>They are at the door of the house. They go in. Jesus says to Peter: «Have the boat ready at sunset. We will take the two Marias to Tiberias and Simon will see them home. Matthew will come with you in addition to your companions, the fishermen. The others will remain here and wait for us. »

Peter draws Jesus apart: «And if the man from Antioch comes? I am asking You because of Judas of Kerioth... »

«Your Master tells you that we will meet him on the pier at Tiberias. »

«Oh! well! » and in a loud voice: «The boat will be ready. »

<sup>10</sup>«Mother, come upstairs with Me. We will be together during these hours. » 460. 10

Mary follows Him without speaking. They go upstairs into a room which is cool and shady because it is covered by a vine and is protected from the sun by curtains.

«You are going away, My Jesus!? » Mary is very pale.

«Yes. It is time. »

«And have I not to come for the Tabernacles? Son!... » says Mary with a sob.

«Mother! Why? It is not the first time that we part! »

«No that is true. But... Oh! I remember what You told Me\* in the wood near Gamala... Son! Forgive a poor woman. I will obey... With the help of God I will be strong... But I want a promise from You... »

«Which, Mother? »

«That You will not conceal the dreadful hour from Me. Not out of pity, not out of mistrust of Me... It would be too grievous... and too much torture... Grief because... I would learn everything all of a sudden and not from people who love Me as You love this poor Mother... And it would be a torture if I were to think that while I am spinning, or weaving or looking after the doves, You, My Creature, are put to death... »

«Be not afraid, Mother. You will know... But this is not our last farewell. We shall meet again... »

«Really? »

«Yes. We shall meet again. »

«And will You say to Me: "I am going to fulfil the Sacrifice"? Oh!... »

«I will not say so. But You will understand... And then it will be peace. So much peace... Just consider: to have done everything that God wants from us, His children, for the welfare of all the other children. So much peace... The peace of perfect love... » He holds Her to his bosom, holding Her tight in a filial embrace: He so much taller and stronger, She smaller, young in her incorrupt youth of body and countenance, added to the eternal youth of her immaculate spirit.

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\* You told Me, in 455. 4/5.

And She repeats heroically, so heroically: «Yes. What God wants... »

There are no other words. The two Perfect Ones are already consuming the sacrifice of their hardest obedience. No tears are shed. No kisses are given. There are only Two Who love perfectly and lay their love at the feet of God.

461. A plot for the election of Jesus as King.  
The Greek Zenon and the letter of Syntyche  
with news of the death of John of Endor.

23<sup>rd</sup> July 1946.

461. 1 <sup>4</sup>A11 the inhabitants of Tiberias have rushed onto the lake shores or to the lake itself to find relief in the breeze blowing over the water and stirring the foliage of trees in the gardens along the shore. The rich people of this town, where many races have gathered and mingled for many reasons, are finding comfort in comfortable sport boats, or from the shade of their green gardens they are watching the movements of boats on the turquoise waters which have already been cleared of the yellowish hue ensuing from the downpour of the previous evening. The poor people, and children in particular, are romping on the shore, where the wavelets come to die, and their shrill screams, when the cold water wets them higher up than they would wish, sound like the screeching of swallows.

The boats of Peter and James come close to the shore and steer towards the little pier.

«No. To Johanna's garden» orders Jesus.

Peter obeys without speaking and the boat, followed by her twin sister, veers round perfectly leaving a foamy wake, shaped like a question mark, and steers towards the landing place at Chuza's garden, which it approaches and stops. Jesus is the first to land and gives a hand to the two Maries helping them to disembark on the pier.

«You will now go to the main mole and preach the Lord there. You will see a man, who will approach you, asking where I am. He is the man from Antioch. Bring him to Me after you have dismissed the crowds. »

«Yes... but... What are we to tell the people? Are we to tell them that You have come, or preach Your doctrine? »

«That I have come. Tell them that at dawn I will speak at Tarichea and I will cure the sick people. One of you should look after the boats, or get one of the disciples to do that, so that they may be ready to depart. Go, and peace be with you. » And He sets out towards the gate which closes on the landing-stage. The two Marias follow Him in silence.

<sup>2</sup>There is no one to be seen in the large garden, in which some tenacious roses are still blooming, although very sparsely. But one can hear the happy cries of the two little ones who are playing. 461. 2

Inserting His hand through the arabesques of the gate, Jesus tries to make the bolt slide without success. He looks for something with which to make a noise and attract attention, but does not find anything. Then, hearing the voices of the two children closer, He calls in a loud voice: «Mary! ». The two voices become silent all of a sudden... Jesus repeats: «Mary! »...

Then in the middle of the lawn, which is as smooth as a carpet with the well kept rose-bushes rising from it, a little girl appears, walking with short wary steps, a little finger pressed on her lips, her searching eyes scanning in all directions, then a few steps behind her there is Matthias, followed by a little lamb as white as foam.

«Mary! Matthias! » shouts Jesus.

His voice guides the innocent eyes. The two children look towards the gate and they see Jesus, His face against the bars, smiling at them.

«The Lord! Run, Matthias, call mother... Tell Elias or Micah to come and open... »

«You can go. I am going to the Lord... » and they both start running with their arms stretched out, like two butterflies, one white, the other rosy with a little dark head.

But, fortunately, while running they call the servants, who rush out still holding watering-cans and rakes, so that at last the gate is opened and the children take shelter in the arms of Jesus, Who kisses them and crosses the threshold holding them by the hands.

<sup>3</sup>«Mummy is in the house with her friends. They always send us away, because they do not want us» says Matthias promptly. 461. 3



«Don't speak so harshly. Mummy sends us away because those ladies are Romans and they still speak of their gods and we, who have been saved by Jesus, must know Him only. That is why, Lord. Matthias is still too young and he does not understand» she says gracefully with the wisdom of a creature who has suffered and is thus more mature and more adult than her age would suggest.

«Father also sends us away when those of the Court come. And I would like to stay because almost everyone is a soldier... a warrior... War! War is beautiful! It makes one win! It sends the Romans away. Down with Rome! Hurrah for the Kingdom of Israel!» shouts the boy proudly.

«War is not beautiful, Matthias, and very often one does not win the war and then one from subject becomes a slave. »

«But Your Kingdom must come. And to make it come a war will be waged. And everybody will be sent away, also Herod, and You will be king. »

«Be silent, silly boy. You know that you are not to repeat what you hear. They are right in sending you away. Don't you know that you can harm father, mother and also Jesus by saying that? » says Mary. And then she explains: «One day, that man who is like a prince and is a relative of Herod and is also Your disciple came to speak to father. And they shouted so much, they were not alone, but with many more people... »

«They were all handsome, with lovely swords and they spoke of war... » interrupts Matthias.

«Be quiet, now! They shouted so much that we could hear them, and since then this fool does nothing but speak of it. Tell him that he must not... Mummy told him and father has threatened to take him to the top of the Great Hermon, and leave him in a grotto with a deaf and dumb slave, until he learns to be silent. And he would have to be silent there, because if he speaks to the slave, the latter will not hear him and will not reply to him, and if he shouts, eagles and wolves will come to eat him... »

«A really terrible punishment») says Jesus smiling and caressing the child who has lost his boldness and presses against Jesus as if he already saw eagles and wolves ready to devour him completely, including his little imprudent tongue. «A really dreadful punishment! » He repeats.

«Yes, and I am afraid that that is what is going to happen to him and that I will be left without Matthias, and I cry... But he feels no pity for me or for mummy and will make us die broken-hearted... »

«I don't do it deliberately... I say... what I hear... It is so nice... to think that the Romans are defeated, that Herod and Philip are expelled and that Jesus is the King of Israel» he concludes in a whisper concealing his face against Jesus' tunic to deaden even more the sound of his voice.

<sup>4</sup>«Matthias will never say these things again. He will promise Me and will keep his promise. Is that right? So he will not be devoured and Johanna and Mary will not die broken-hearted. Chuza will not be upset and I will not be hated. Because, see, Matthias? You have Me hated, by saying such things. Are you glad if Jesus is persecuted? Just imagine how remorseful it would be if one day you had to say to yourself: "I made people persecute Jesus Who saved me, because I repeated what I heard people say by chance". They were men. And men often lose sight of God because they are sinners. As they do not see God, they do not see Wisdom and they make well-intentioned mistakes, or what they think such. But children are good. Their spirits see God and God rests in their hearts. Thus they must understand things in a wise manner and say that My Kingdom will not be established through violence on the Earth, but with love, in the hearts of men. And they must pray so that men may understand this Kingdom of Mine as children understand it. The prayers of children are taken to Heaven by their angels and the Most High converts them into graces. And Jesus needs such graces to change men, who think of war and of a temporal kingdom, into apostles who understand that Jesus is peace and that His Kingdom is spiritual and heavenly. See this little lamb? Could it tear anything to pieces? »

461. 4

«Eh! no! If it could do that, father would not have given it to us not to have us torn to pieces. »

«Exactly, you are right. Also the Father Who is in Heaven would never have sent Me if I had had the power and will to tear to pieces. I am Lamb and Shepherd. And I am as meek and docile as a lamb and I am He Who gathers with love, with the crook of a good Shepherd and not with the lance and sword of a warrior.

Have you understood? And will you promise Me, just Me, that you will never speak of these things again? »

«Yes, Jesus. But... help me... because by myself... »

«I will help you. Look, I will caress your lips and thus they will be able to remain closed. »

461. 5 <sup>5</sup>«My Master. This is a holy evening, as it allows me to see You! » says Jonathan coming from the house and prostrating himself at Jesus' feet.

«Peace to you, Jonathan. Can I see Johanna? »

«She is coming. She has dismissed the Roman ladies to come to You. »

Jesus looks at him inquisitively but does not ask anything. He walks towards the house listening to Jonathan who is speaking of Chuza «much disgusted with Herod» and who says: «For my mistress' sake I beg You to stop him, because he wants to do things which... would not do any good to You or to him, above all to You. »

461. 6 <sup>8</sup>Johanna hastens towards the Lord and heedless of her beautiful dress she prostrates herself in the dust of the path and kisses Jesus' feet. She is wearing a splendid white dress, over which from her head hangs a veil that looks like silver filigree so closely is it embroidered with silver threads - and I do not know how such light cloth can support that silver brocade embroidery - and on her head a thin diadem point-shaped in front, like a mitre studded with pearls, heavy pearl earrings, a pearl necklace and pearl bracelets and rings: an appearance of beauty, purity and grace.

«Peace to you, Johanna. »

«When You are with me there is always peace in me and in my house... Mother!... » and she wants to kiss the feet of Mary, Who, instead, receives her in Her arms kissing her. A kiss is exchanged with Mary of Alphaeus as well.

After the greetings, Jesus says: «Johanna, I must speak to you. »

«Here I am, Master. Mary, my house is Yours. Order what You need. I am going with the Master... »

Jesus has already gone onto the lawn, where He can be seen by everybody, but is so isolated that no one can hear Him. Johanna joins Him.

«Johanna, I have to receive a messenger from Antioch, who is certainly coming from Syntyche. I was thinking of doing so in your house. Here, in your garden... »

«You are the master of everything that belongs to Johanna. »

«Also of your heart? » Jesus stares at her.

«You know already, Master! I was almost certain. Now I am completely sure. Chuza... The incoherence of men is really great! Their attachment to interests is very strong! And their pity for their wives is really so faint! We are... Even we, the wives of the best husbands, what are we? A jewel which is displayed or concealed according to its usefulness... A mime who must laugh or weep, attract or reject, speak or be silent, show or hide herself in compliance with her man's wishes... always in his interest... Our destiny is a sad one, Lord! And degrading as well! »

«As compensation your spirits are enabled to climb higher. »

«That is true. Did You find out by Yourself or did they speak to You about it? Have You seen Manaen? He was looking for You... »

«No. I have not seen anybody. Is he here? »

«Yes, we are all here... I mean: all the courtiers of Herod... and many to hate him. Among them there is also Chuza since Herod, by Herodias will, delighted in mortifying his superintendent... Lord, do You remember that at Bether I told You that he wanted to separate me from You because he was afraid of falling into Herod's disfavour? Only a few months have gone by... And he now wants me to... Yes, Lord. He would like me to persuade You to accept his help to become king in place of the Tetrarch... I must tell You because I am a woman, thus subject to man, and a Jewish woman over and above, thus subject to the will of her husband more than ever. And I am telling You... And I do not advise You... because I hope that I am already aware that You... oh! You will not make Yourself king with the help of hired lancers. Oh!... what have I said! I should not have spoken thus... I should have let You listen to Chuza, Manaen and others first... And if I had kept silent, would I not have done the wrong thing?... Lord, help me to see what is just... »

<sup>7</sup>«What is just is in your heart, Johanna. Neither with Roman cohorts, nor with Israelite lancers will I make Myself king, even if Rome and Israel decided to pacify this region through Me. I

461. 7

have already understood enough to reconstruct facts. Matthias has spoken imprudent words. Jonathan has mentioned people being disgusted. You are telling the rest. I will complete the picture thus: a foolish idea of My kingdom is inducing good people, who are not yet just, like Manaen, to create risings capable of establishing the kingdom of Israel according to the fixed idea of the majority of people. A sharp passionate need to revenge themselves of an affront is urging others, among whom your husband, to do the same thing. The shrewdness of Pharisees, Sadducees, scribes and also of Herod plays on those two motives to succeed in getting rid of Me, by making Me appear in the eyes of our rulers what I am not. You have dismissed the Roman ladies to tell Me this, in order not to betray Chuza, Manaen or the others. But I tell you that in actual fact the Gentiles have understood Me more than anybody else. They call Me a philosopher, perhaps they consider Me a dreamer, an unrealist, an unhappy man, according to their mentality which bases everything on violence. But they have understood, at least they have understood this: that I do not belong to the Earth, that My Kingdom does not belong to the Earth. They are not afraid of Me, but of My followers. They are right. My followers, some out of love, some out of pride, would be quite capable of doing anything to realize their idea: to make of Me, Who am the King of kings, the universal King, the poor king of a small nation... I really must watch this snare very carefully, as it works in the shade, instigated by My true enemies, who are not in the proconsular building at Caesarea, or in that of the Governor in Antioch, or in the Antonia. They are under the tephilim, the fringes and zizith of Jewish garments and particularly under the wide tephilim and the fluffy zizith attached to the large garments of Pharisees and scribes to prove their even greater compliance with the Law. But the Law is in hearts, not on garments... If it were in their hearts, those who hate one another, but who are now united forgetting their hatred in order to do me harm - the hatred which digs deep ravines between one cast of Israel and another and which now is no longer separated but has been levelled because the ravines have been filled with hatred for Me - if the Law were in their hearts, and not hanging or attached to their garments, foreheads, hands, just as a savage wears amulets, shells, bones, beaks of vultures out of supersti-

tion or as ornaments, if this Law were in their hearts, if Wisdom were not written in the tephilim but on the fibres of their hearts, they would understand who I am and that they cannot go against Me to destroy Me as Word and as Man. I must therefore defend Myself from friends and from enemies, unfair equally in their hatred and in their love. I must try to guide their love and appease their hatred. I do so, to do My duty. And I will do so until I build My Kingdom, wetting the stones with My Blood to cement them. When I have sprinkled you with My Blood, Your hearts will no longer vacillate. I am speaking of hearts faithful to Me. Of yours, Johanna, who are struggling between two forces and two loves which are on you and in you: Chuza-I. »

«But You will win, Lord. »

«Yes, I will win. »

«But try to save Chuza as well... Love whom I love. »

«I love him who loves you. »

«Love Chuza who loves You... »

«Falsehood does not befit that forehead which is as pure as the pearls adorning it and is now blushing in the effort of wishing to persuade itself and Me of Chuza's love for Me. »

«And yet he loves You. »

«Yes. For his own interest. As for his interest he did not love Me at Zio and Siram... <sup>8</sup>But here is Simon of Jonah with the <sup>461</sup> stranger. Let us go and meet them... »

They go as far as the large vestibule at the rear of the house, more a semicircular porch <sup>r</sup> than a vestibule, open on the park, which extends as far as the house. The semicircular vestibule, open on the garden, is adorned with columns with branches of rosebushes at present without flowers and delicate branches of jasmines full of flowers, and with other purple creepers, the names of which I do not know.

«Peace be with you, foreigner. Did you want Me? »

«Health and glory, Lord. I wanted You. I have a letter for You. A Greek woman gave it to me at Antioch. I am... No, I am no longer Greek, because I became a Roman citizen to continue my contract work. I am purveyor to the Roman troops. I hate them. But it is profitable to supply them with provisions. For what they have done to us, I should mix hemlock with their flour. But they should all be poisoned. A few is of no avail. It would be worse...

They think that they are allowed to do anything because they are strong. They are barbarians, as compared with the Greeks. They have robbed us of everything to adorn themselves with our art and appear civilised. But if you scratch the crust which is coloured with the hue of our civilization, you will always find an Amulius, a Romulus, a Tarquinius... You always find a Brutus, the murderer of his benefactor. At present they have Tiberius! Still not enough for them! They have Seianus. They have what they deserve. Swords, chains, crimes committed by them are turning against them and biting the flesh of the Roman brutes. Still too little. But the law will not fail. When the monster becomes huge, it will collapse because of its own weight and will rot. And the vanquished will laugh at the enormous corpse and will become once again the winners. Let it be so. May the feet of all the conquerors crush her who crushed everything in her brutal expansion... But forgive me, Lord. I have been carried away

461. 9 once again by my perpetual grief... 9I was saying that a Greek woman gave me a letter for You and she told me that You are the perfect Virtuous Man. Virtuous... You are young to be so... The great spirits of Hellas spent all their lives to become a little virtuous... And yet the woman informed me of Your Idea. If You really believe in what You teach, You are great... Is it true that You live to prepare Yourself to die in order to give the world the wisdom of living as gods and not as brutes, as men do at present? Is it true that You maintain that there is only one wealth worth achieving: that of virtues? Is it true that You have come to redeem but that redemption begins in ourselves, following Your teaching? Is it true that we have a soul and that we must take care of it, as it is a divine thing, everlasting, incorruptible by its nature, but that we, by living as brutes, can deprive it of its divine character, although we cannot destroy it? Answer, O Great One! »

«It is true. It is all very true. »

«By Jove! Also our Greatest One said so. But it sounded like music lacking a note, like a lyre lacking a chord. Now and again one perceived an empty space, which the philosopher never crossed. You have filled it up, if You have really come not only to teach but also to die, not compelled by anybody, but through Your own will to obey God, which changes Your death from sui-

cide to sacrifice... By divine Pallas! None of our gods ever did that. I infer, therefore, that You are above them. The Greek woman says that they do not exist, and that You only are... So am I speaking to a God? And can a God listen thus to a purveyor, to a miserable thief who hates his enemies? Why do You listen to me? »

«Because I see your soul. »

«You see it?!!! What is it like? »

«Twisted, dirty, snake-haired, bitter, ignorant, although your intellect is quite different from that of a barbarian. But within your ugly temple you have an altar which is waiting, like the one in the Aeropagus, and it is waiting for the same thing: the true God. »

«For You, then, because the Greek woman says that You are the true God. But, by Jove, what You say of my soul is true. You are more explicit and certain than the Delphic oracle. But You preach peace, love and forgiveness. Difficult virtues. And You preach continence and all kinds of honesty... To be all that is to be gods greater than the gods, because they... oh! they are not pacific, honest, generous!... They are the perfection of the wicked passions of men, with the exception of Minerva who is at least wise:... Even Diana!... Pure but cruel... Yes, to be what You preach is to be greater than the gods. If I became so... by the most beautiful Ganymede! He: he was abducted by the Olympic eagle and became a divine cup-bearer. But Zeno from supplier of fodder to barbarian rulers will become god... <sup>10</sup>But let me dwell 461.10 on this thought, and in the meantime You can read the letter of the woman... » and the man begins to walk up and down like a peripatetic.

Peter, being tired and seeing that the conversation was a long one has sat down comfortably on a seat in the hall, and has begun to doze peacefully in the cool place, on the soft cushions lying on the seat... But he must have been sleeping with one eye open, because he is roused by the noise of the seal being broken and of the unrolling parchment, and he rises to his feet, rubbing his sleepy eyes. He approaches the Master, Who is reading standing under a chandelier made of mica plates of a delicate violet hue. As the light is faint, suitable to light up the place without depriving it of the charm of moonlight in clear nights, Jesus is



holding the parchment high up in order to see the words, and Peter, who is much smaller than the Master, standing beside Him, tries to stretch his neck, standing on the tips of his toes, in order to see, but without success.

«It's Syntyche, eh? What does she say? » he asks twice and he begs: «Read in a loud voice, Master! »

And Jesus replies: «Yes, it is she... Later... » and He goes on reading, and when He finishes the first sheet, He rolls it up, He puts it in the folds of His belt and begins to read the second sheet.

«What a long letter she has written, eh? How is John? And who is that man? » Peter is as insistent as a boy.

Jesus is so engrossed that He no longer listens to him. Also the second sheet is finished and is put away as the first one.

«They will get spoilt there. Give them to me. I will keep them... » and he certainly thinks: «and I will have a look at them. » But when he raises his eyes to look at Jesus' hand unrolling the third and last sheet, he sees a tear shine on Jesus' fair eyelashes. «Master?! Are You weeping?! Why, Master? » he says, and he presses against Him embracing Him with his short muscular arm.

«John is dead... »

«Oh! poor man! When did he die? »

«At the beginning of summer... wishing so much to see us... »

«Oh! poor John... Of course... he was already at his end!... And his grief in parting... All because of some snakes! I wish I knew their names!... Read aloud, Lord. I was fond of John! »

«Later. I will read it to you later. Be quiet now. »

Jesus reads attentively... Peter stretches himself even more to see... The reading is over. Jesus rolls the sheet and says: «Call My Mother. »

«Are You not going to read? »

«I am waiting for the others... In the meantime I will dismiss that man. »

461.11 <sup>11</sup>And while Peter goes into the house where the women disciples are with Johanna, Jesus approaches the Greek: «When are you leaving? »)

«Oh! I have to go to the Proconsul at Caesarea and then to Joppa after I purchase some goods. I will be leaving in a month's time, in time to avoid the November storms. I am going by sea.

Do You need me? »

«Yes, to send a reply. The Greek woman says that I can trust you. »

«They say that we are false. But we are also able not to be so. You can trust me. You can prepare Your letter and look for me at the Tabernacles at Cleanthes' house; he supplies me with the cheese of Judaea for the tables of the Romans. It is the third house after the fountain in the village of Bethphage. You cannot go wrong. »

«You cannot go wrong either if you proceed along the path on which you have set foot. Goodbye, man. Greek civilization leads you to the Christian one. »

«Are You not reproaching me for hating? »

«Do you feel that I should? »

«Yes, because You disapprove of hatred as being a contemptible passion and You abhor vengeance. »

«And what is your opinion on the matter? »

«I think that he who does not hate and forgives is greater than Jupiter. »

«Achieve, then, that greatness... Goodbye, man. May your family love Syntyche, and in the exile in which you are at present take the paths that lead to the eternal Fatherland: Heaven. Those who believe in Me and practice My words will have that Fatherland. May Light enlighten you. Go in peace. »

The man says goodbye and goes away. He then stops, comes back and asks: «Will I not hear You speak? »

«I will speak at dawn, at Tarichea. Then I will be going towards Syro-Phoenicia and later, I do not know by which road, to Jerusalem. »

«I will look for You. And I will be at Tarichea tomorrow to see whether You are as eloquent as wise. »

He goes away finally.

<sup>12</sup>The women are in the hall and with Peter they are comment- 461.12  
ing on John's death. Also the other apostles have come, the ones who had been left in town to inform the people that the Rabbi would be nt Tarichea the following morning. They all speak of poor John of Endor and are anxious to know.

«He died, Son! »

«Yes. He is in peace. »

«He has come to an end of his suffering. »)

«He has been freed from prison once and for all. »

«He should not have suffered the last affliction of exile. »)

«An additional purification. »)

«Oh! I would not like that kind of purification for myself. Any other... but not to die far from the Master! »)

«And yet... we shall all die thus... Master... take us away with You! ») says Andrew after the others have spoken.

«You do not know what you are asking, Andrew. This is your place until I call you. <sup>13</sup>But listen to what Syntyche writes.

“Syntyche of Christ greets Christ Jesus.

The man who will bring You these sheets is a compatriot of mine. He has promised to look for You until he finds You, using as last resort Bethany, where he will leave the letter with Lazarus, in the event he should not succeed in finding You anywhere. He is one who is making up, as best he can, for all the wrong he and his ancestors have received from Rome. Rome has struck them three times, in many ways and with her usual methods. He says, with Greek humour, that he is now milking the cows of the Tiber to make them spit out the Greek goats. He is purveyor to the Governor and to many Roman families of this little Rome and great town queen of the East. Further, after the delicatessen for rich people, with his astute manners of servile flattery concealing his incurable hatred he has been successful in securing the contract for supplying the Eastern cohorts. I do not approve of his methods. But everybody has his own ways. I would have preferred the bread begged in the street to the gold coffers given to him by the oppressor. And I would have always behaved thus, if I were not urged by another reason, which brings no profit to me, to imitate the Greek for my own purpose.

After all, he is a good man and his wife is good as well as his three daughters and his son. I met them at the little school at Antigonea and with the balm I cured the mother who had been taken ill at the beginning of spring and so I began to go to their house. Many families would have welcomed me with pleasure as a teacher and embroideress: noble families and business people, but I preferred this one for a reason which has nothing to do with their being Greeks. I will explain the situation to You.

I beg You to bear with Zeno, even if You cannot approve of his

mentality. He is like certain arid grounds, which are quartziferous on the surface, but very good under the hard crust. I hope to succeed in removing this hard crust brought about by so much grief and thus lay bare the good soil. It would be of great assistance to Your Church, as Zeno is well known and in touch with many people in Asia Minor and Greece, in addition to Cyprus and Malta and even in Iberia, where he has relatives and friends everywhere, Greeks persecuted like himself, as well as Roman soldiers and magistrates, who could be very useful to Your cause one day.

<sup>14</sup>Lord, while writing, from the terrace of the house I can see Antioch with her wharves on the river, the Governor's building in the island, her regal streets and walls with hundreds of powerful towers, and if I turn around I can see the top of Sulpius dominating me with its barracks, and the other building of the Governor. I am thus between the two displays of Roman power, I, a poor woman, all alone. But they do not frighten me. On the contrary I think that what the fury of the elements and the strength of a rebelling nation cannot do, will be done by the weakness which does not outshine anybody, by an apparent weakness despised by the mighty ones, the weakness of He Who is true strength because He possesses God: You. 461-14

I think, and I tell You, that this Roman strength will be Christian strength when it becomes acquainted with You and that our work should begin from the citadels of heathen Roman spirit, because they will always be the masters of the world and a Christian Roman spirit will mean universal Christendom. When? I do not know. But I feel that it will happen. So I look at these witnesses of Roman power smiling, thinking of the day when they will place their insignia and their power at the service of the King of kings. I look at them as one looks at helpful friends who are not yet aware of their usefulness, and who will cause sufferings before they are conquered, but once they have been conquered, they will take You and the knowledge of You as far as the end of the world.

I, a poor woman, dare say to my older brothers in You, that when the time comes, the conquest of the world to Your Kingdom will have to begin not from Israel, too closed in its Mosaic rigorism exacerbated by the Pharisaic one and by the other castes to

be conquered, but from here, from the Roman world and from its ramifications. The conquest of souls to the Truth must begin from the tentacles by which Rome strangles every faith, every love, every freedom which is not as she wants and is not useful to her.

You know that, Lord. But I am speaking for my brothers who cannot believe that we also, the Gentiles, yearn after Good. I say to my brothers that under the heathen cuirass there are hearts disappointed of heathen emptiness, sick of the life they lead simply because such is the custom, tired of hatred, of vice, of harshness. There are honest spirits who do not know on what to rely to find satisfaction to their yearning for Good. Give them a faith which may satisfy them. They will die for its sake, carrying it farther and farther ahead, like a torch in darkness, as the athletes of the Hellenic games do". »

461. 15 15Jesus rolls up the first sheet and while the listeners comment on the style, strength and ideas of Syntyche, and they wonder why she is no longer at Antigonea, Jesus unrolls the second sheet.

Peter, who has remained seated so far, comes closer once again as if he wanted to hear better and he begins to stand on the tips of his toes to see, pressing against Jesus.

«Simon, it is so warm, and you are oppressing Me» says Jesus smiling. «Go back to your place. Have you not heard so far? »

«Heard? Yes, I have. But I have not seen. And now I want to see because it was at this sheet that Your countenance changed and You wept... And not only because of John... We knew that he was about to die... »

Jesus smiles, but to prevent Peter from casting side glances at the sheet from behind His back, He leans against the nearest column, ignoring that He is moving away from the light of the chandelier which, as compensation, illuminates Jesus' face brightly, if it no longer lights up the sheet.

Peter, who is thoroughly determined to see and understand, drags a stool in front of Jesus and sits down staring at the Master's face.

«I am so convinced of this that when I remained alone, I left Antigonea for Antioch, as I was sure that I could work more in this area, where, as in Rome, all races blend and mingle, than

where Israel rules... I, a woman, cannot set out to conquer Rome. But if Rome is out of my reach, I will scatter the seed from the most beautiful daughter of Rome, the city most like her mother in the whole World... On how many hearts will it fall? In how many will it germinate? In how many will it be carried elsewhere awaiting the apostles to germinate? I do not know. I do not ask to be told. I will work and I offer my work to the God, Whom I have known and Who gratifies my spirit and my intellect. I believe in this God as the only almighty God. I know that He does not disappoint those who are full of goodwill. That suffices for me and supports me in my work.

<sup>16</sup>Master: John died on the sixth day before the nones of June 46116 according to the Romans, almost at the new moon of Tammuz according to the Jews. Lord... Why tell You what You know? I am saying so for my brothers. John died as a just man, and considering what he really suffered, I should say as a martyr. I assisted him with all the pity which a woman can have, with all the respect which one has for a hero, with all the love which one has for a brother. But that did not prevent me from suffering so much, that I, not out of disgust or tiredness, but out of pity, I prayed the Eternal Father to call him to peace. He used to say: 'To freedom'.

What words he spoke! Can a man, who had fallen so low in the underworld, as he used to say, rise to so much light of Wisdom? Oh! death is really the mystery which reveals our origin, and life is the scenery which conceals the mystery. A scenery which is given to us without any drawing and on which we can work whatever we wish. He had written many things on it, but they were not all beautiful. The last ones, however, were sublime. From the dull sky of the underworld, on which were drawings of human sorrow and human violence, he passed, like a wise craftsman, to more and more luminous signs, adorning with virtue the end of his Christian life and attaining the refulgent brilliancy of a soul lost in God. I tell You: he did not speak, but he sang his last poem. He did not die: he rose. And I was not able to tell exactly when it was the man who spoke or when it was already the spirit son of God speaking.

Lord, You know that I have read all the works of philosophers searching for a pasture for my soul tied with the double chain of slavery and heathenism. But they were the works of men. Here

it was not the voice of man: they were the words of a super-man, of a royal spirit, even more: of a semi-divine spirit. I watched over the mystery, which on the other hand, would not have been understood by those who gave us hospitality: they were kind to the man but they were Israelites in the most wide and complete sense of the word... And when in the last touches of love John was nothing but an expression of love, I sent everybody away and I alone received what You certainly know...

Lord... that man is dead, and 'having come out at last from prison, has entered freedom' as he used to say, with hardly any voice left in his last days, and with his eyes enraptured, pressing my hand and revealing Paradise to me with his words. That man died teaching me how to live, to forgive, to believe, to love. He died preparing me for the last period of Your life. Lord, I know everything. In the winter evenings he instructed me in the prophets. I know the Book like a true Israelite. But I know also what is not specified in the Book... My Master and my Lord... I will imitate him! And I would like to have the same favour, but I think that it is more heroic not to ask it, and to do Your will... »

461.17 <sup>17</sup>Jesus rolls up the sheet and is about to take the third one.

«No, Master! It cannot be... There is something else. It is not possible that the sheet finished so soon! » exclaims Peter. «You are not reading everything! Why, Lord? You, all of you! Protest. Syntyche has written more for us than for Him and He is not reading the letter to us. »

«Do not insist, Peter! »

«I do insist! Of course I do! I noticed, You know, that Your eyes went to the bottom of the sheet all of a sudden; the sheet is transparent and You have not read the last lines. I will not be quiet until You read again the end part of that sheet. Before... You were weeping!... What? Is there any reason for weeping in what You have read? Of course we are sorry to hear that he is dead... but such a death does not make people weep! I thought that he had died an evil death, losing his spirit... Instead... Come on, read it! Mother! John! You who obtain everything... »

«Hear him, Son, and if it is something sorrowful to learn, we will all drink the chalice... »

«Let it be as you wish... »

«I know the Book like a true Israelite. But I know also what

is not specified in the Book, that is, that Your Passion will not be delayed, because John is dead, and You promised him a short expectation in Limbo. He told me. He told me that You had promised to take him before he knew how far the hatred of Israel against You could go and thus prevent him from hating Your torturers out of love for You. He is now dead... and You are therefore about to die... No. To live. To really live through Your Doctrine, with Yourself in us, with Your Divinity in us after Your Sacrifice has given us the life of our souls, Grace, union with the Father, with the Son, with the Holy Spirit.

Master, my Saviour, my King, my God... I am strongly tempted, nay I have been strongly tempted to join You now that John is sleeping with his body in the tomb and his resting with his soul in expectation. I would like to come to You to be with the other women near Your altar. But altars are to be adorned not only with the victim, but also with garlands in honour of the God in Whose honour the sacrifice is celebrated. I lay my violet garland of a remote disciple at the foot of Your altar. I lay there the obedience, the work, the sacrifice of not seeing and hearing You...

Ah! It will really be hard! It is really hard now that Your supernatural conversations with John are over and I no longer enjoy them!... Lord, raise Your hand on Your servant that she may be able to do only Your Will and she may know how to serve You". »

<sup>46118.</sup> Jesus rolls up the sheet and looks at the faces of the listeners. They are pale. But Peter whispers: «I do not understand why You were weeping... I thought that there was something else... »

«I was weeping because I was comparing the uxoricide, the galley slave of the past and the heathen slave woman with too many people in Israel. »

«I see! It grieves You that Hebrews are inferior to Gentiles, and priests and princes to galley slaves. You are right. It was foolish of me! What a woman she is! It's a pity that she had to go away... » Jesus unrolls the third sheet.

«And that she may imitate in everything the disciple and brother who is already in peace, and is resting there after accomplishing every purification... in Your honour and to alleviate Your sufferings ". »

«Ah! certainly not! » Peter has jumped with agility on to the seat before Jesus can move aside, and sees that it is not possible



to be already where Jesus is looking. It is to be borne in mind that the parchment rolls up as its upper part is released and thus many lines are hidden at the top of the sheet.

Jesus raises His head, and with a more melancholy than sad countenance, He gently but firmly repels His apostle and says: «Peter, your Master knows what is good for you! Let Me give you what will do you good... »

Peter is moved by those words and even more by the way Jesus looks at him, so imploringly, His eyes shining with tears about to stream down His face. He descends from the stool saying: «I obey... But what can ever be there?! »

461.19

<sup>19</sup>Jesus resumes reading:

«And now that I have written about other people I will write about myself. I left Antigonea after John's burial. Not because I was ill-treated, but because I felt that it was not my place. Why did I feel that? I do not know. I felt it. As I told You, I had become acquainted with many families, because many people had come to us. I preferred to settle down with Zeno's family, because it is in the environment in which I intend to work.

A Roman woman wanted me in her magnificent house near Herod's Colonnades. A very rich Syrian woman invited me as teacher to the textile factory which her husband, a man from Tyre, has set up in Seleucia. A widow proselyte, the mother of seven daughters, living near the Seleucus bridge, wanted me out of respect for John, the teacher of her sons. A Greek-Assyrian family with stores in a street near the Circus asked me to stay with them because I could have been useful when games are on. Finally a Roman, a centurion I think, certainly a soldier, who has remained here with I do not know exactly what task and who was also cured with the balm, insisted on having me. No. I did not want rich people or merchants. I wanted souls, Greek and Roman souls, because I feel that the spreading of Your Doctrine in the world must begin with them.

And here I am in Zeno's house, on the slopes of mount Sulpius, near the barracks. The citadel impends threateningly from its top. And yet, coarse as it is, it is better than the rich buildings of the Onpholus and Nympheus and I have friends there. A soldier, whose name is Alexander, knows You. The simple heart of a child enclosed in the huge body of a soldier. And the very

tribune, who came here recently from Caesarea, has a righteous heart under his chlamys. Alexander is closer to the Truth in his coarse simplicity. But also the tribune, who admires You as a perfect rhetor, as a 'divine' philosopher, as he says, is not hostile to Wisdom, even if he cannot as yet accept the Truth. But to conquer these men and their families through the least knowledge of You means to scatter the seed of such knowledge north, south, east and west, because soldiers are like grains stirred by the winnowing-fan, or rather, like chaff which the whirlwind, in our case the will of the Caesars and the demands of dominion, scatter everywhere.

When one day Your apostles, like birds set free to fly, will spread throughout the world, it will be of great help to them to find in the places of their apostolate one, one only, even only one person who knows that You existed. For this idea I treat also the aching limbs of old gladiators and the wounds of young ones. That is why I no longer shun Roman women and I put up with people who grieved me... Everything. For You. If I am wrong, advise me with Your wisdom. I only ask You to consider - and You know - that my mistakes are caused by incapacity and not by wickedness.

Lord, Your servant has told You so much... a mere nothing of what I have in my heart. But You see my spirit Lord... When shall I see Your face? When shall I see Your Mother? My brothers?... Life is a passing dream. Our separation will pass. I will be in You, and with them, and it will be joy and freedom for me, also for me, as for John.

I prostrate myself at Your feet, my Saviour. Bless me with Your peace. To Mary of Nazareth, to the women disciples, peace and blessings. To the apostles and disciples, peace and blessings. To You, Lord, glory and love”.

<sup>20</sup>I have finished reading. Mother, come with Me. You can wait <sup>461\_20</sup> for Me, or rest. I am not coming back in. I am staying with My Mother to pray. Johanna, should anybody look for Me, I am in the bower near the lake. »

Peter has taken Mary aside and speaks to Her excitedly, but in a low voice. Mary smiles at him and whispers something. She then joins Her Son Who is going along the path hardly visible in the night.

«What did Simon of Jonah want? »

«He wanted to know, Son. He is like a boy... a big boy... But he is so good. »

«Yes, very good. And he begged You, Who are very good, to know... He has found out the weak points: You and John. I know. I pretend I do not know, but I know. But I cannot always give in, to please him... It was not necessary, Jonathan. We could have stayed also in the dark» Jesus says seeing Jonathan hurrying towards Him with a silver lamp and some cushions which he lays on the table and the seats in the bower.

«Johanna told me to bring them. Peace to You, Master. »

«And to you. »

They remain alone.

«I was saying that I cannot always please him. This evening it was impossible. You are the only one who can be informed of what I omitted. That is why I wanted You with Me, also to be with You, Mother... To be with You in the last hours before parting is to gather so much gentle strength as to have enough for many hours of solitude in the world which does not understand Me or misunderstands Me. And to be with You in the first hours when I come back is to acquire new strength at once through Your kindness, after all the chalices I have to drink in the world... and which are so bitter and disgusting. »

Mary caresses Him without speaking. Standing beside Him, while He is seated, She is the Mother Who comforts Her Son. But He makes Her sit down and says: «Listen... » and then Mary, in attentive attitude, sitting in front of Him, becomes the disciple hanging on the lips of Jesus Master.

461. 21 <sup>21</sup>«Speaking of Antioch Syntyche writes: "I am not wise and so I cannot tell where the will of men ends and the will of God begins, but a will, stronger than my desire, has brought me here and I wonder whether it was the will of God. One thing is certain - and I am almost sure it is by the grace of Heaven - I love this town now as with the summits of Casius and Amanus watching over it on two sides and the green crests of the black Mountains farther away, it reminds me of my lost Fatherland. And this seems to me the first step back to my land, not the tired step of a weary pilgrim returning to die, but of a messenger of life coming to give life to her who was her mother. It seems to me that

from here, well rested like a swallow before resuming its flight and nourished with Wisdom, I am about to fly back to the town where I was born and from which I want, I would like to rise towards the Light after giving that Light which was given to me.

I am aware that my brothers in You would not approve of this idea. They want Your Wisdom exclusively for themselves. But they are wrong. One day they will understand that the world is waiting and that the world which is now despised is the better one. I am preparing the way from them. Not only here, but with all those who come here and then depart for other countries and it makes no difference to me whether they are Gentiles or proselytes, Greeks or Romans, or whether they belong to other colonies of the empire or of the Diaspora. I speak to them, I excite in them the desire to know You... The sea is not made by one cloud pouring its water into it. It is made by clouds and clouds and clouds that empty I pour their waters onto the Earth and flow into the sea. I will be a cloud. The sea will be Christianity.

I want to spread the knowledge of You to contribute in forming the sea of Christendom. I, a Greek woman, know how to speak to Greeks, not so much through their language as by understanding them... I, previously the slave of Romans, know how to deal with Romans, of whose sensitive points I am aware. And since I lived among the Hebrews I know also how to deal with them, particularly here where there are many proselytes. John died for Your glory. I will live for Your glory. Bless our spirits”.

<sup>22</sup>And farther down, where she speaks of John's death, where I <sup>46122</sup> did not let Simon read, she writes: “John died after accomplishing every purification, also the last one, by forgiving those who killed him through their behaviour and compelled You to send him away. I know their names, at least the name of the main one. John revealed it to me saying: ‘Never trust him. He is a traitor. He betrayed me, he will betray Him and his companions. But I forgive the Iscariot as Jesus will forgive him. The abyss in which he lies is already so deep that I do not want to make it any deeper by not forgiving him for killing me by separating me from Jesus. My forgiveness will not save him. Nothing will save him, because he is a demon. I should not say that, as I was an assassin, but in my case an offence had driven me mad. He inveighs against those who have done him no harm and he will end up by

betraying his Saviour. But I forgive him because God's kindness has turned his hatred against me into good for me. See? I have expiated everything. He, the Master, told me yesterday evening. I have expiated everything. I am now going out of prison. I am now really entering freedom, free even of the weight of the remembrance of Judas of Kerioth's sin towards a poor wretch, who had found peace near his Lord'.

I also, following John's example, forgive him for tearing me away from You, from Your blessed Mother, from my sister disciples, from listening and following You until death, to be present at Your triumph of Redeemer. And I do so for Your sake, in Your honour and to alleviate Your sufferings. Be in peace, my Lord. The name of the disgraceful man among Your followers will never pass my lips, neither will anything pass of what I heard from John when his ego spoke with Your invisible gladdening Presence. I was in doubt whether I should come to see You before settling in my new residence. But I felt that I would betray myself with my horror for the Iscariot and that I might damage You with Your enemies. So I made a sacrifice also of that consolation... feeling certain that the sacrifice would not be without fruit and without reward".

461. 23      23There You are, Mother. Could I have read that to Simon? »

«No. Neither to him nor to the others. In My grief I am happy for John's holy death... Son, let us pray that he may feel our love and... and that Judas may not be the shame... Oh! it is dreadful!... And yet... we will forgive... »

«Let us pray... » They stand up and pray in the flickering light of the lamp in the middle of screens of hanging branches, while the surf breaks rhythmically on the shore...

462.                      Speech and healings  
at the hot springs of Emmaus of Tiberias.

26<sup>th</sup> July 1946.

462. 1      1The lake is just like a huge sardonyx within the setting of the hills, hardly visible in the starlight, as the moon has already set. Jesus is alone in the green bower with His head reclined on His forearms which are resting on the table near the lamp, which is

about to go out. But He is not sleeping. Now and again He raises His head, He looks again at the sheets unrolled on the table, held thus by the lamp placed at the top of the sheet and by His fore-arms at the other end, and He reclines His head once again.

Silence is unbroken. Even the lake seems to be asleep in the dead sultry calm. And then suddenly and all at the same time, the wind rustles among the leaves, a solitary wave laps the shore, there is a change in nature, I would say that it is the creaking of awakening elements. The very dim light at the beginning of dawn, when day is about to break, is already light, although one's eyes do not yet perceive it when one looks around the deserted garden. It is the sheet of the lake which gives an indication of the first appearance of light, because its black, leaden sardonyx becomes clearer and reflecting the whitening sky, from leaden it slowly becomes slate-grey and then iron-grey, then opal and finally it reflects the sky and its waters become paradisiacal blue.

<sup>2</sup>Jesus stands up, He picks up the sheets, takes the lamp which <sup>462:2</sup> has gone out at the first whiff of breeze, and He goes towards the house. He meets a maid-servant who bows, then a gardener, who is going towards the flower-beds and He exchanges greetings with him. He enters the hall where other servants are carrying out the first tasks of the day.

«Peace to you. Could you call My apostles? »

«They are already up, Lord. And the wagon for the women is ready. Johanna also is up. She is in the inner hall. »

Walking through the house Jesus goes to the hall which is on the street side. They are in fact all gathered there.

«Let us go. Mother, the Lord be with You. Mary, and with you, and may My peace accompany you. Goodbye, Simon. Take My peace to Salome and the children. »

Jonathan opens the heavy gate. A covered wagon is on the road. The road between the houses is still almost dark and it is completely deserted. The women get in the wagon with their relative and they set off.

«Let us leave at once as well. Andrew, run to the boats and tell the servants to meet us at Tarichea. »

«What? Are we going on foot? We shall be late... »

«It does not matter. You may go ahead while I take leave of Johanna. »

The apostles set off...

«I will follow You, Lord. Or rather: I will precede You because I am coming by boat. »

«You will have to wait for a long time... »

«It does not matter. Let me come. »

«As you wish. Is Chuza here? »

«He did not come home, Lord. »

«Give him My regards and tell him that I exhort him to be just. Caress the children on My behalf. And... since you have understood your Master, convince Chuza that he and all those who want to make a temporal king of the Christ, are in error. »

Jesus also goes out and He soon joins the apostles. «Let us go along the Emmaus road. Many unhappy people go to the springs, some to be cured, some to receive assistance. »

«But we do not have a coin... » objects James of Zebedee.

Jesus does not reply.

462. 3

3The roads are soon crowded with two very different classes of people, that is, with market-gardeners, vendors, servants, slaves, common people hurrying to the market, and with rich pleasure-seekers who in litters or on horseback are also going towards the springs, which I suppose are hot ones, if they are curative.

Tiberias must be really a rather cosmopolitan city because people of various nations can be seen among its inhabitants. Romans who have become corpulent through an idle vicious life, smartly dressed Greeks as dissolute as the Romans, but with masks of vice which differ in expression from those of the Latins, people from the Phoenician coast, Hebrews, mainly elder ones, people speaking different languages with different accents, and wearing different clothes, pale faces of sick men and women, or the tired faces of noble women... or the faces of hedonists of both sexes proceeding in groups on horseback near litters or in litters, joking, talking of frivolous subjects, making wagers...

The street is a beautiful one. A shady avenue from which, through the gaps between the trees it is possible to see the lake on one side and the country on the other. The sun which has now risen brightens up the hues of the waters and greenery.

Many people turn around to look at Jesus Who is followed by whispers: admiring words of women, satires of men, at times

sneering words or grumbling ones, a few entreaties of suffering people, the only ones, among the many, to whom Jesus listens and whom He satisfies.

When He restores agility to the limbs stiffened by arthritis of a man from Tyre, the ironical indifference of many Gentiles is roused.

«Eh! » exclaims an old Roman with the debauched face of a reveller. «Eh! It is lovely to be cured like that. I will call Him. »

«It is not for you, old Silenus. What would you do in the event that you were cured? »

«I would begin to enjoy myself all over again! »

«In that case there is no sense in going to the sad Nazarene. ))

«I will go and I bet everything I have that... »

«Don't bet. You'll lose.»

«Let him wager. He is still drunk. We will have a good time with his money. ))

<sup>4</sup>The old man staggers out of his litter and reaches Jesus, Who <sup>462 4</sup> is listening to a Jewish mother speaking to Him of her daughter, a deadly pale girl whom she is leading by the hand.

«Be not afraid, woman. Your daughter will not die. Go back home. Do not take her to the springs. She would not recover the health of her body there, but she would lose the purity of her soul. It is a place of degrading licentiousness)) and He says so in a very loud voice, so that everybody may hear.

«I have faith, Rabbi. I am going back home. Bless Your servants, M aster. »

Jesus blesses them and is about to set out.

The Roman plucks His sleeve: «Cure me» he orders. Jesus looks at him and asks: «Where? »

The Romans, with some Greeks and Phoenicians, have gathered together and are sneering and betting. Some Israelites, who have moved aside grumbling: «Desecration! Anathema! )) and other similar words, stop, however, inquisitively...

«Where? » asks Jesus.

«Everywhere. I am unwell... oh! oh! oh! » I do not know whether he is laughing or weeping, so strange is the sound passing his lips. It sounds as if the flaccid fat, accumulated in years of vicious living, affects even his vocal chords. The man enumerates his troubles and expresses his fear of dying.



Jesus looks at him severely and replies: «You must in fact fear death because you have killed yourself» and turns His back on him. The Roman tries to pull Him once again by His clothes, while the people present laugh scornfully. But Jesus frees Himself from the man's grasp and goes away.

«Thumbs down, Appius Fabius! Thumbs down! The so called king of the Jews has not granted you the grace. Give us your purse. You lost the bet. » The Greeks and Romans make a terrible din surrounding the disappointed man who pushes them aside and begins to run, as best he can, being so obese, pulling up his clothes and lurching with all his tallowish mass. But he stumbles and falls in the dust amid the guffaws of his friends who drag him towards a tree, against the trunk of which the drunk man presses weeping the silly tears of drunkards.

462.5

<sup>5</sup>The springs must be close at hand now because the crowd is becoming larger and larger as people flow from many streets towards the same spot. The smell of sulphurous water stagnates in the air.

«Shall we go down towards the shore to avoid these unclean people?» asks Peter.

«They are not all unclean, Simon. There are many people from Israel as well among them») says Jesus.

They arrive at the thermal baths. A series of white marble buildings, separated by avenues, facing the lake from which they are separated by a kind of large square planted with trees, under which people are taking a walk awaiting a bath or relaxing during its reaction after it. Bronze heads of Medusa, protruding from the wall of a building, pour steaming water into a marble basin, which is white outside and reddish inside, as if it were covered with rusty iron. Many Jews go to the fountains and drink the mineral water out of chalices. I can see Jews only do that in this pavilion. I believe that I am right in guessing that observant Israelites have demanded a place of their own to avoid contact with Gentiles.

Many sick people are on litters awaiting treatment and seeing Jesus many of them shout: «Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me. »

Jesus heads towards them: people suffering from paralysis, arthritis, ankylosis; with fractured bones which will not heal, or

suffering from anaemia, glands, women withered before time, children prematurely adults. And under the trees beggars who moan asking for alms.

Jesus stops near the sick people. The rumor spreads that the Rabbi will speak and cure. People, also those belonging to other races, come close to see.

Jesus looks around. He smiles seeing the Greek sent by Syn-tyche coming out of the baths with his hair still wet after a shower. He raises His voice at once to make Himself heard: «Mercy opens the *door to grace*. *Be* merciful in order *to* receive mercy. Every man is poor in something: some in money, some in affection, some in freedom, some in health. And all men are in need of help from God, Who created the universe and Who, being the only Father, can assist His children. ))

He stops, as if He wanted to give people time to make up their minds whether they should come to listen to Him or go to the baths. Most of them forget about the baths. Israelites or Gentiles crowd to listen and some sceptical Romans conceal their curiosity saying jokingly: «We have a rhetor today to make this place resemble Roman thermal baths. »

Zeno, the Greek, elbows his way through the crowd shouting: «By Jove! I was about to go to Tarichea and I find You here! »

<sup>6</sup>Jesus continues: «Yesterday they said to Me: “It is difficult to accomplish what You do”. No, it is not difficult. My doctrine is based on love, and love is never difficult to be accomplished. What does My doctrine preach? The cult of a true God, love for our neighbour. Man, the eternal child, is afraid of shadows and follows chimeras because he does not know love. Love is wisdom and light. It is wisdom because it descends to teach. It is light because it comes to enlighten. Where there is light shadows disappear, and where there is wisdom chimeras die. There are Gentiles among those who are listening to Me. They are saying: “Where is God? “. They are asking: “Who can assure us that Your God is the true one? “. Or: “How can You assure us that You are speaking the truth? “. And the Gentiles are not the only ones to say so. Other people ask Me: “With what power do You do these things? “. With the power that comes to Me from the Father, from that Father Who has placed everything at the service of man, His favourite creature and Who sends Me to teach men, My brothers.

462. 6

Can the Father, Who gave power to the bowels of the Earth to make spring water medicinal, can He have limited the power of His Christ? And who, which God, but the true God, can grant the Son of man to work miracles which recreate destroyed limbs? In which temple of idols do you ever see blind people recover their sight and paralytics motion, in which temple do dying people, at the command: "I want" of a man, rise healthier than healthy people? Well, I, in order to praise the true God and have Him known and praised by you, I say to all those who are gathered here, whichever their religion and race may be, that they will recover the health which they expected from water, and they will receive it from Me, the living Water, as I give the life of the body and of the spirit to those who believe in Me and I work deeds of mercy with righteous hearts. I do not ask for difficult things. I ask for a motion of faith and one of love. Open your hearts to faith. Open your hearts to love. Give in order to receive. Give poor coins to have help from God. Begin to love your brothers. Learn how to be merciful. Two thirds of you are sick because you are selfish and lustful. Demolish selfishness, repress lust. You will gain physical health and wisdom. Crush pride. And you will receive help from the true God. I ask you to give Me alms for the poor and then I will give you the gift of good health. »

462. 7 <sup>7</sup>And Jesus raises the hem of His mantle and holds it out to receive the money: the large number of coins which heathens and Israelites hasten to throw into it. And not only coins, but also rings and other jewels are thrown freely by Roman women who look at Jesus when they approach Him and some of them whisper a few words to which Jesus nods assent or replies briefly.

The offering is over. Jesus calls the apostles and tells them to bring the beggars to Him and the whole amount disappears as quickly as it was put together. Some jewels remain and Jesus hands them back to the donors because there is no one who can buy them and thus change them into money. And to comfort the women who offered them He says: «Your desires are as good as accomplished actions. The offerings you made are as precious as if they had been distributed, because God sees the thoughts of men. »

He then stands up and shouts: «From whom does My power come? From the true God. Father, let Your power shine brightly

in Your Son. In Your name I give this order to diseases: go away! »

And there is the usual sight which has been seen so often: crippled people stand up straight, paralytics move, faces become healthily coloured, eyes begin to shine, shouting of hosannas, reciprocal congratulations of Romans, among whom two women and a man have been cured and they want to imitate the cured people of Israel; but as they are not yet prepared to humble themselves like the Hebrews by kissing Jesus' feet, they stoop, take the hem of His mantle and kiss it.

Jesus then sets out eluding the crowds. But He cannot evade them because, with the exception of a few stubborn Gentiles and some Hebrews even more guiltily obstinate, they all follow Him along the road to Tarichea.

463. In Tarichea, a lecture on the nature of the Messianic kingdom and conversion of a prostitute.

Jesus yields to an invitation of Chuza,  
winning the opposition of Peter.

27<sup>th</sup> July 1946.

<sup>463: 1</sup>The little peninsula of Tarichea stretches out on the lake forming a deep creek south-westwards, so that it is correct to say that, rather than a peninsula, it is an isthmus almost completely surrounded by water, only a small strip being joined to the mainland. At least it was so in Jesus' days, in which I see it. I do not know whether later, in the course of twenty centuries, sand and pebbles carried by a little torrent which flows just into the south-western inlet may have altered the appearance of the place, silting up the little bay and widening the strip of land of the isthmus. The bay is calm, clear blue with jade streaks where it reflects the green trees leaning from the coast towards the lake. Many boats undulate gently on the almost calm water.

What surprises me is a strange dam which, with its arches based on the gravel of the shore, forms a kind of promenade, a pier, I would say, extending westwards. I do not understand whether it is an ornament or whether it was built for some useful purpose of which I am unaware. The promenade, or dam or pier, is covered with a thick layer of earth in which trees have

been planted so thickly that, although they are not large ones, they form a green gallery above the road. Many people wander idly under the rustling gallery, which is pleasantly cooled by the breeze, the water and the leafy branches.

One can clearly see the mouth of the Jordan and the water of the lake flowing into the river-bed, forming whirlpools and obstructions near the piers of a bridge, which I would say is a Roman one, judging by its architecture with robust pillars, placed like break-waters, against the corners of which the current breaks up with a pearly play of light of the spray in the sunshine, while the water forces its way into the deeply embanked gorge of the river after having so much space in the lake. Almost at the end of the bridge, on the opposite shore, is a little white town spread out in the green fertile country. And farther up, to the north, on the eastern coast of the lake, is the village preceding Hippo and woods high above the cliff, beyond which is Gamala clearly visible on top of the hill.

Jesus, with a train of people who have followed Him from Emmaus and who have increased in numbers with those already waiting for Him at Tarichea - among whom is Johanna who came by boat - moves towards the dam planted with trees. And He stops in the middle of it, with the lake on His right hand side and the shore on His left. Those who can find room on the shady road stop there, otherwise they go down to the shore, which is still somewhat damp after the high tide of the previous night or for other reasons, and is partly shaded by the leafy branches of the trees on the dam. Other people ask the boatmen to come close to the shore and they sit in the shade of the sails.

463. 2 <sup>2</sup>Jesus raises His hand indicating that He wants to speak and everybody falls silent.

«It is written\*»: “You marched to save Your people, to save them through Your Christ”. It is written: “And I will rejoice in the Lord and I will exult in God my Jesus”. The people of Israel have taken these words for themselves and have given them a national, personal selfish meaning, which does not correspond to the truth concerning the person of the Messiah. They have given those words a restricted meaning which degrades the greatness of the

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\* It is written, in: *Habakkuk 3, 13. 18.*

Messianic idea to a common display of human power and of overwhelming victory over the rulers found by the Christ in Israel.

But the truth is different. It is great, unlimited. It comes from the true God, from the Creator and Lord of Heaven and Earth, from the Creator of Mankind, from He Who multiplied the stars in the vault of heaven and covered the Earth with all kinds of plants, and peopled it with animals and placed fish in the waters and birds in the air, and likewise He multiplied the children of Man created by Him to be the king of Creation and His favourite creature. Now, how could the Lord, the Father of *a//*mankind, be unfair to the children of the children of the children born of the Man and the Woman, formed by Him with matter: the earth, and with soul: His divine breath? And how could He treat these differently from those, as if they did not come from one only source, as if other branches had been created by some other supernatural antagonist, not by Him, and were consequently strangers, illegitimate, contemptible?

The true God is not a poor god of this or of that people, an idol, an unreal figure. *He is* the supreme Reality, the universal Reality, the Only Supreme Being, the Creator of all things and of all men. *He is therefore the God of all men.* He knows them even if they do not know Him. He loves them: even if they, not knowing Him, do not love Him, or if they do not know Him well and they do not love Him well, or even if they know Him, they do not know how to love Him. Paternity does not cease when a son is ignorant, silly or wicked. A father strives to teach his son, because it is love to instruct him. A father works hard to make a mentally deficient son less silly. A father tries to correct a wicked son and make him good with tears, being indulgent, with beneficial punishments and forgiving him mercifully. That is what a man-father does. And will the God-Father be perhaps inferior to the man-father? So the God-Father loves all men and wants their salvation. He, the King of an infinite Kingdom, the eternal King, looks at His people, which comprises all the peoples spread all over the Earth, and He says: "This is the people of those I created, the people to be saved through My Christ. This is the people for whom the Kingdom of Heaven was created. It is now time to save them by means of the Saviour".

<sup>3</sup>Who is the Christ? Who is the Saviour? Who is the Messi- 463.3

ah? There are many Greeks here, and many, even if they are not Greeks, know what the word Christ means. Christ is therefore the consecrated person, the person anointed with regal oil to fulfil His mission. Consecrated to what? Perhaps to the fleeting glory of a throne? Perhaps to the greater glory of priesthood? No. He is consecrated to gather under one only sceptre, into one only people, in one only doctrine, all men, so that they may be brothers to one another and children of one only Father, children who know their Father and comply with His Law to take part in His Kingdom.

Christ, a king in the name of the Father Who sent Him, reigns as it becomes His Nature, that is, divinely, as God. God has placed the world as the foot-stool of His Christ, not because He should oppress, but that He may save. His name is in fact Jesus, which in Hebrew means Saviour. When the Saviour saves His people from the fiercest snare and wound, a mountain will be under His feet and a multitude of people of every race will cover the mountain to symbolise that He reigns and rises above the whole Earth and above all peoples. But the King will be bare without any riches, except His Sacrifice, to symbolise that He tends only to spiritual things, and that spiritual things are conquered and redeemed with spiritual bravery and heroic sacrifice, not with violence and gold. He will be like that to reply to those who fear Him and also to those who through false love exalt and degrade Him while wishing Him to be king according to the world. He will be like that to those as well who hate Him solely for fear of being deprived of what is dear to them. For His response is that He is a spiritual King and nothing else, sent to teach spirits how to conquer the Kingdom, the only Kingdom that I have come to establish.

I will not give you new laws. I confirm the Law of Sinai for Israelites; to Gentiles I say: the law to possess the Kingdom is nothing but the law of virtue which every man of noble morals imposes on himself and which, through faith in the true God, from moral law and human virtue becomes a superhuman moral law.

463.4 40 Gentiles! It is your custom to proclaim gods the great men of your countries, and you place them among the many unreal gods with whom you people Olympus, created by you to have

something in which to believe, because religion is a necessity for man, exactly as faith is a necessity, because faith is the permanent state of man and incredulity is the accidental abnormality. And those men raised to the rank of gods are not always worthy even as men, as at times they are great because of their brutal strength, at times through powerful cunning, at times also because of the power which they somehow achieved. So they carry with themselves, as qualifications of supermen, certain miseries which a wise man recognizes for what they are: the rottenness of unrestrained passions. That I am speaking the truth is proved by the fact that in your chimerical Olympus you have not put a single one of those great spirits who sensed by intuition the supreme Being and were the intermediate agents between man and Divinity, which was instinctively perceived by them through their contemplative virtuous spirit. Between the reasoning spirit of a philosopher, of a true great philosopher, and the spirit of a true believer who worships the true God, the gap is small, whereas between the spirit of the believer and the ego of a cunning or overwhelming man, or of a man who is a hero only in a material way, there is an abyss. And yet you have not placed in your Olympus those who had been elevated by their virtuous lives so much above the human mass that they approached the kingdoms of the spirit, whereas you have put those whom you feared as cruel masters, or whom you adulated as servile slaves, or you admired as living examples of those free animal instincts which your abnormal appetites consider as the aim and purpose of life. And you have envied those who have been numbered among the gods, neglecting those who were closer to divinity because of their honest practices and of the doctrine, which they taught and according to which they lived virtuously.

I now solemnly tell you that I will give you the means to become gods. He who does what I say and believes in what I teach, will climb the true Olympus and will be god, god son of God, in a Heaven where there is no corruption whatsoever and where Love is the only law. In a Heaven where we love one another spiritually, without the dullness and snares of senses making its inhabitants hostile to one another, as it happens in your religions. I have not come to request deeds which are noisily heroic. I have come to say to you: live as becomes creatures gifted with soul and rea-



son, not as brutes. Live in such a way as to deserve to live, to really live, with your immortal part, in the Kingdom of He Who  
463. 5 created you. <sup>5</sup>I am the Life. I have come to teach you the Way to go to Life. I have come to give Life to you all, and I give it to you that you may rise from death, from your sepulchres of sin and idolatry. I am Mercy. I have come to call you and gather you all together. I am the Christ Saviour. My Kingdom does not belong to this world. And yet a kingdom is established in the hearts of those who believe in Me and in My word, even from the present days, and it is the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of God within you.

It is written\* \*\* of Me that I am He Who will bring justice among nations. It is true. Because if the citizens of each nation did what I teach, hatred, wars, overbearing actions would come to an end. It is written of Me that I would not raise My voice to curse sinners or My hand to destroy those who are like cracked canes and smoky wicks because of their unbecoming way of living. It is true. I am the Saviour and I have come to strengthen those who are weak, to give humour to those whose light is smoky through lack of the necessary essence. It is written of Me that I am He Who opens the eyes of blind people, and frees prisoners from jail and takes light to those who were in the darkness of prison. It is true. The blindest of blind people are those who cannot see the Light, that is, the true God, even with the sight of their souls. I, the Light of the world, have come that they may see. The most imprisoned prisoners are those whose chains are their wicked passions. Every other chain vanishes with the death of the prisoner. But the chains of vice last and enchain even after the death of the body. I have come to loosen them. I have come to relieve from the darkness of the dungeons of ignorance of God all those whom paganism smothers under the mass of its idolatries.

463. 6 <sup>6</sup>Come to Light and to Salvation. Come to Me because My Kingdom is the true one and My Law is good. All I ask of you is to love the Only God and your neighbour, and consequently to repudiate the idols and passions which harden your hearts and make you arid, sensual, thieves, homicides. The world says\* \*: "Let us oppress the poor, the weak, the lonely. Let force be our right,

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\* It is written, in: *Isaiah 42, 1-9.*

\*\* says, as in: *Wisdom 2, 10-12.*

harshness our habit, intolerance, hatred, ferocity, our weapons. Let us crush the just man, since he does not react, let us oppress the widow and the orphan whose voices are weak". I say: be kind and meek, forgive your enemies, assist the weak, be honest in selling and purchasing, be generous also when asserting your rights, without taking advantage of your possibility to crush those who are oppressed. Do not avenge yourselves. Leave to God the care of protecting you. Be sober in all your dispositions, because moderation is proof of moral strength, whilst lust is proof of weakness. Be men and not brutes, and never fear of having fallen so low that you cannot rise again.

I solemnly tell you that as muddy water can become pure again evaporating in the sun, which purifies it by heating it, so that it may rise to the sky and fall as beneficial rain or dew, free from defilement, providing it is exposed to the sun, so the spirits which approach the great Light which is God and shout to Him: "I have sinned, I am filth, but I yearn for You, O Light" will become purified spirits which ascend to their Creator. Remove horror from death converting your lives into money to purchase the Life. Divest yourselves of your past as if it were a dirty garment and clothe yourselves with virtue. I am the Word of God and in His Name I tell you that those who have faith in Him and goodwill, those who repent of their past and make righteous resolutions for the future, whether they are Hebrews or Gentiles, will become the children of God and will possess the Kingdom of Heaven.

At the beginning of My speech I asked you: "Who is the Messiah? ". I now say to you: It is I Who am speaking to you and My Kingdom is Your hearts if you are willing to receive it, and then it will be in Heaven, which I will open to you, if you persevere in My Doctrine. That is the Messiah and nothing else. He is the King of a spiritual kingdom, the gates of which He will open to all men of goodwill through His Sacrifice. »

<sup>7</sup>Jesus has finished speaking and is about to go towards a short flight of stairs which takes one from the dam to the shore. Perhaps He wants to go to Peter's boat which is pitching near a rough landing-place. But he suddenly turns around, looks at the crowds and shouts: «Who has invoked Me for the spirit and body?»

463. 7

Nobody replies. He repeats the question and casts His beautiful eyes around at the crowds who have crowded around His back, not only on the road, but also down on the shore. Still no reply.

Matthew remarks: «Master, who knows how many have sighed for You under the emotion of Your words... »

«No. A soul has cried: “Mercy” and I heard it. And to tell you that it is true I reply: “Let it be done to you as you have asked because the motion of your heart is fair”. » And tall as He is, He looks wonderful as He stretches His hand imperiously towards the shore.

He tries once again to set out towards the short flight of steps, but Chuza, who has obviously come off a boat, stands in front of Him and greets Him bowing low. «I have been looking for You for many days. I have made the tour of the lake following You all the time, Master. I must speak to You urgently. Be my guest. I have many friends with me. »

«I was at Tiberias yesterday. »

«They told me. But I am not alone. See those boats sailing towards the other shore? There are many in them who want You, including some of Your disciples. Please, come to my house, beyond the Jordan. »

«It is useless, Chuza. I know what you want to tell Me. »

«Come, Lord. »

«Sick people and sinners are waiting for Me; leave Me... »

«We also are waiting for You and we are sick with anxiety for Your welfare. And there are some people who are physically sick, also... »

«Have you heard My words? So why do you insist? »

«Lord, do not reject us, we... »

463.8

8A woman has elbowed her way through the crowd. I am by now sufficiently familiar with Jewish garments to realize that she is not a Jewess, and I know enough of... decent dresses to understand that she is indecent. But to cover her features and her charms, I perhaps too immodest, she has wrapped herself in a veil, which is sky-blue like her wide dress, but still provoking because of its shape which leaves her beautiful arms uncovered. She throws herself on the ground, creeping on the dust until she reaches Jesus' mantle, which she clasps with her fingers, kissing

its hem and weeps, sobbing convulsively.

Jesus, Who was about to reply to Chuza saying: «You are wrong and... » casts down His eyes and says: «Was it you who invoked Me? »

«Yes... but I am not worthy of the grace which You granted me. I should not have called You even with my soul. But Your word... Lord... I am a sinner. If I uncovered my face, many people would tell You my name. I am... a courtesan... an infanticide... and because of my vice I became diseased... I was at Emmaus, I gave You a jewel... You gave it back to me... and Your glance... pierced my heart... I have followed You... You have spoken. I repeated to myself Your words: "I am filth, but I yearn after You, the Light". I said: "Cure my soul, and then, if You wish so, my body". Lord, my body has been cured... and what about my soul?... »

«Your soul has been cured by your repentance. Go and sin no more. Your sins have been remitted. »

The woman kisses the hem of Jesus' mantle once again and stands up. In doing so her veil slips off her face.

«Galatia! Galatia! » shout many and cast contumelies on her, they pick up pebbles and sand and throw them at the woman who stoops frightened.

<sup>9</sup>Jesus raises a hand severely and imposes silence. «Why are you insulting her? You did not do so when she was a sinner. Why do it now when she is redeeming herself? » 463. 9

«She is doing that because she is old and ill» shout many sneeringly.

Actually, although the woman is no longer very young, she is far from being old and ugly, as they say. But crowds are like that.

«Go ahead of Me and get into that boat. I will take you home along a different way» orders Jesus and He says to His apostles: «Keep her in the middle of you and accompany her. »

The anger of the crowd, instigated by some intolerant Israelites, explodes against Jesus and amidst shouts of: «Anathema! False Christ! Protector of prostitutes! Who protects them, approves of them! Worse! He approves of them because He enjoys them» and similar phrases shouted or rather howled particularly by a small group of Hebrew madmen, I do not know of which caste, amidst such howling, they throw handfuls of damp sand

which strikes Jesus on the face soiling it.

He lifts His arms and cleans His cheek without any protest. Not only, but with a gesture He stops Chuza and some other people who would like to react defending Him and He says: «Leave them. I would stand much more for the salvation of a soul! I forgive them! »

Zeno, the man from Antioch, who had never moved away from the Master, exclaims: «Now I really know who You are! A true god and not a false rhetor! The Greek woman told me the truth! Your words at the thermal baths had disappointed Me, but the present ones have conquered me. The miracle amazed me, Your forgiving the offenders has conquered me. Goodbye, Lord. I will think of You and of Your words. »

«Goodbye, man. May the Light enlighten your heart. »

463.10

<sup>10</sup>Chuza insists once again while they are going towards the landing-place, and while there is a violent quarrel on the dam between Romans and Greeks on one side and Israelites on the other.

«Come! Only for a few hours. It is necessary. I will bring You back myself. You are kind to prostitutes and do You want to be inflexible with us? »

«A11 right. I will come. It is in fact necessary... » He addresses the apostles who are already in the boats: «You can go now. I will join you... »

«Are You going alone? » asks Peter who is not very happy.

«I am with Chuza... »

«H'm! And can we not come? Why does he want You with his friends? Why did he not come to Capernaum? »

«We did come. You were not there. »

«You could have waited for us. That's all! »

«Instead we decided to follow your tracks. »

«Come to Capernaum now. Why must the Master come to you? »

«Simon is right» say the other apostles.

«But why do you not want Him to come with me? Is it perhaps the first time that He comes to my house? Do you perhaps not know me? »

«Yes, we know you. But we do not know the others. »

«And of what are you afraid? That I am a friend of the Mas-

ter's enemies? »

«I know nothing! But I remember the end of John, the prophet! »

«Simon! You are offending me. I am a man of honour. I swear to you that I would let them pierce me through before they dare touch a hair of the Master's head. You must believe me! My sword is at His service... »

«Eh!... If they pierced you... What purpose would it serve? Afterwards... Yes, I believe that, I believe you... But once you are dead, it would be His turn. I prefer my oar, my poor boat to your sword, and above all our simple hearts at His service. »

«But there is Manaen with me. Do you trust Manaen? And there is also Eleazar, the Pharisee, the one you know, and Timoneus, the head of the synagogue, and Nathanael ben Fada. You do not know him, but he is an important leader and he wants to speak to the Master. And there is John, named Antipas from Antipatris, a favourite of Herod the Great, now old and powerful, the owner of the whole valley of Gaash, and... »>

«That's enough! You are mentioning great names, but they mean nothing to me, with the exception of two... and I will come as well... »

«No. They want to speak to the Master... »

«They want! And who are they? They want?! And I don't want. Get in the boat, Master, and let us go. I will not hear of anybody, I won't, I trust no one but myself. Come on, Master. And you can go in peace and tell those people that we are not vagabonds. They know where they can find us» and he pushes Jesus rather coarsely while Chuza protests in a loud voice.

<sup>11</sup>Jesus settles the matter once and for all by saying: «Be not afraid, Simon. No harm will happen to Me. I know. And it is better that I should go. For My own sake. Try to understand Me... » and He stares at him as if He wanted to say: «Do not insist. Understand Me. There are reasons which advise Me to go. »

Simon yields unwillingly. But he gives in, as if he were subdued... Nevertheless he grumbles between his teeth with a dissatisfied expression.

«Go without worrying, Simon. I will personally bring you back your Lord and mine» promises Chuza.

«When? »>

463. 1

«Tomorrow. »

«Tomorrow?! Does it take so long to exchange a few words? We are now between the third and the sixth hour... If He is not with us before evening, we will come to you, bear that in mind. And we will not be alone... » and he says so in a tone of voice which leaves no doubt about his intentions.

Jesus lays a hand on Peter's shoulder. «I am telling you, Simon, that they will do Me no harm. Bear evidence that you believe in My true nature. I am telling you. I know. They will do Me no harm. They only want to explain things to Me... Go... Take the woman to Tiberias, you may stop at Johanna's, you will thus be able to see that they are not abducting Me with boats and armed men... »

«Right, but I know his house (and he points at Chuza). I know that there is land behind it, it is not an island, there is Galgala and Gamala, Aera, Arbela, Gerasa, Bozrah, Pella and Ramoth and many more towns!... »

«But do not be afraid, I tell you! Be obedient. Give Me a kiss, Simon. Go! And you, too» and He kisses and blesses them. When He sees the boat depart He shouts to them: «It is not My hour. And until that moment, nothing and no one will be able to raise a hand against Me. Goodbye, friends. »

He turns towards Johanna who clearly looks upset and worried and He says to her: «Be not afraid. It is a good thing that this should happen. Go in peace. » And He says to Chuza: «Let us go. To show you that I am not afraid. And to cure you... »

«I am not ill, Lord... »

«You are. I tell you. And many with you. Let us go. »

He gets into the fast rich boat and sits down. The oarsmen begin to row on the calm waters making a detour to avoid the strong current at the end of the lake, where the water flows into the riverbed.

464. In the country house of Chuza. The attempted election of Jesus as King. The testimony of the Beloved.

30<sup>th</sup> July 1946.

4On the other shore, at the end of the bridge, a covered wagon

is already waiting.

«Get in, Master. You will not get tired although the journey is a long one, because I gave instructions to have yokes of oxen here all the time in order not to give offence to guests more observant of the Law... They are to be pitied... »

«But where are they? »

«They have preceded us in other wagons. Tobit! »

«Master? » says the driver who is yoking the oxen.

«Where are the other guests? »

«Oh! Far ahead. They must almost be at the house. »

«Do You hear that, Master? »

«And if I had not come? »

«Oh! We were certain that You would come. Why should You not have come? »

«Because!! Chuza, I have come to prove to you that I am not a coward. Only wicked people are cowardly, those who are at fault and consequently Are afraid of justice... Of the justice of men, unfortunately, whereas they ought to be afraid first of all of the only one, of God's justice: But I am not in the wrong and I am not afraid of men. »

«But Lord! All those who are with me revere You! As I do. And there is no reason whatsoever why we should frighten You! We want to honour You, not to insult You! » Chuza is grieved and almost angry.

Jesus, Who is sitting in front of him, while the wagon proceeds slowly creaking amidst the green countryside, replies: «Rather than the open war of enemies I must fear the underhand one of false friends, or the unjust zeal of true friends who have not yet understood Me. And you are one of them. Do you not remember what I said\* at Bether? »

«I have understood You, Lord» whispers Chuza, but he is not very sure of himself and does not answer the question directly.

«Yes. You have understood Me. During the wave of sorrow and joy your heart had become as clear as the sky with a rainbow after a storm. And you saw things in a just manner. Then... Turn around, Chuza and look at our Sea of Galilee. It looked so limpid at dawn! During the night the dew had cleansed the atmosphere

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\* said, on 402. 2/7.



and the cold air had mitigated the evaporation of the waters. Sky and lake were two sheets of clear sapphire reflecting their respective beauties, and the hills, all around, were fresh and clean as if God had created them during the night. Look now. The dust of the coastal roads, trodden by people and animals, the heat of the sun, which makes woods and gardens steam like boilers on a hearth and inflames the lake making its water evaporate, look how they have disturbed the view. The shores previously looked close at hand, so neat they were in the very clear air; but look now... They look dimmed, blurred and seem to be trembling, like objects seen through a veil of impure water. The same has happened to you. Dust: humanity. Sun: pride. Chuza, do not upset yourself... »

Chuza lowers his head, toying mechanically with the ornaments of his robe and with the buckle of his rich sword-belt. Jesus is silent, with His eyes almost closed as if He were sleepy. Chuza respects His sleep or what he thinks is such.

464.2

<sup>2</sup>The wagon proceeds slowly south-eastwards, towards the light undulations which form, at least I think so, the first terraces of the tableland that circumscribes the Jordan valley on this eastern side. The country is fertile and beautiful owing to the abundance of underground waters or to some stream; grapes and fruit are hanging on every tree.

The wagon leaves the main road and takes a private one, entering an avenue thick with trees, under which is shade and cool air, at least relatively cool, as compared with the sunny main road which is like a furnace. A low white magnificent looking house is at the end of the avenue. More modest houses are scattered here and there in the fields and vineyards. The wagon crosses a little bridge and a borderline, beyond which the orchard changes into a garden with an avenue strewn with pebbles. Jesus opens His eyes at the different noise of the wheels on the pebbles.

«We have arrived, Master. Here are the guests, who have heard us and are now coming» says Chuza.

And in fact many men, all well off, crowd at the beginning of the avenue and with ostentatious bows greet the Master Who is arriving. I see and recognize Manaen, Timoneus, Eleazar and I think I can see other people, who are not new to me, but whose names I do not know. And there are many more whom I have nev-

er seen or at least I have never noticed them particularly. Many are wearing swords, others in the place of swords display the plentiful Pharisaic and priestly or rabbinical furbelows.

The wagon stops and Jesus is the first to get off bowing in a collective greeting. The disciples Manaen and Timoneus move forward and exchange personal greetings with the Master. Then Eleazar (the good Pharisee at the banquet in Ishmael's house) comes forward with two scribes who push through the crowd to make themselves known. One is the man whose son was cured at Tarichea on the day of the first multiplication of loaves, and the other offered food to everybody at the foot of the mountain of beatitudes. And another man pushes his way through: the Pharisee, who in Joseph's house, at harvest time, was instructed by Jesus on the real reason for his unjust jealousy.

Chuzza proceeds with introductions which I will omit for the benefit of everybody. Because one would lose one's head with all the Simons, Johns, Levis, Eleazars, Nathanaels, Josephs, Philips found so forth; Sadducees, scribes, priests, Herodians mostly, nay I would say that the Herodians are the most numerous, a few proselytes and Pharisees, two members of the Sanhedrin and four heads of synagogues and one Essene, who got in here I know not how.

Jesus bows at each name, casting a sharp glance at each face, and at times smiling gently when someone, to be more clearly identified, mentions the circumstances of a previous contact with Jesus.

Thus a Joachim from Bozrah says: «My wife Mary was cured by You of leprosy. May You be blessed. »

And the Essene says: «I heard You when You spoke near Jericho and one of our brothers left the shores of the Salt Sea to follow You. And I also heard of You with regards to the miracle for Elisha of Engedi. We also live in that part of the country, awaiting... >>

What they are awaiting I do not know. But I know that while saying so the Essene looks with a rather elated superior air at the others who certainly do not pose as mystics, as most of them seem to enjoy merrily the wealth which their positions afford them.

<sup>3</sup>Chuzza takes his Guest away from the ceremonial greetings

and leads Him to a comfortable bathroom where He leaves Him to the customary ablutions, certainly pleasing in so much heat, and he goes back to his guests, with whom he talks animatedly, in fact they almost come to an altercation, because of their different opinions. Some want to start the conversation at once. Which? Some instead suggest that the Master should not be assailed immediately but that He should be persuaded beforehand of their deep respect. The latter suggestion prevails as it is supported by the majority and Chuza, the landlord, calls some servants to order a banquet for the evening, leaving time to Jesus, «Who is tired, as everybody can see, to rest. » This decision is accepted by everybody, and in fact when Jesus appears, all the guests take their leave bowing low, leaving Him with Chuza, who takes Him to a shady room where there is a low couch covered with rich rugs.

But Jesus, Who has been left all alone after He handed a servant His sandals and tunic so that they might be brushed and tidied after the journey of the previous day, does not sleep. Sitting on the edge of the couch, His bare feet on the floor-mat, a short tunic or vest covering His body as far as His elbows and knees, He is engrossed in thought. And if His scanty attire makes Him look younger in the splendid perfect harmony of His virile body, the intensity of His thoughts, which are certainly not joyful, wrinkle and contract His face in a painful expression of tiredness, which makes Him look older.

There is no noise in the house, and there is nobody in the country, where the grapes are ripening in the oppressive heat. The dark curtains hanging at doors and windows are motionless.

464. 4 <sup>4</sup>Hours pass thus... Twilight increases as the sun sets. But the heat persists. And Jesus' meditation persists as well.

At last the house appears to be awaking. One can hear voices, shuffling of feet, orders.

Chuza slowly moves the curtain aside to see without disturbing.

«Come in! I am not sleeping») says Jesus.

Chuza goes in: he is already wearing a trimmed robe for the banquet. He looks and realizes that the couch shows no sign that anyone has lain on it. «Have You not slept? Why? You are tired... »

«I have rested in the silence and the shade. It is enough for Me»

«I will have a tunic brought to You... »

«No. Mine is certainly dry. I prefer it. I intend to leave as soon as the banquet is over. I beg you to have a wagon and boat ready for Me. »

«As You wish, Lord... I would have liked to keep You here until dawn tomorrow... »

«I cannot. I must go... »

Chuza goes out bowing... I can hear many people talk in low voices...

More time passes. The servant comes back with the linen garment, which has just been washed, sweet-smelling of sunshine, and with the sandals, which have been brushed and softened with oil or fat, and are thus shiny and flexible. Another servant follows him with a basin, an amphora and some towels and he leaves everything on a low table. They go out...

<sup>5</sup>... Jesus joins the guests in the hall that divides the house from north to south, forming a pleasantly ventilated room, provided with seats and adorned with light variegated curtains, which modify the light without interfering with the air. As they are now drawn, one can see the green border surrounding the house. 464. 5

Jesus is imposing. Although He has not slept, He seems to be full of energy and His gait is as majestic as a king's. The linen garment, which He has just put on, is snow-white and His hair, bright after the bath in the morning, shines gently framing His face with its golden hue.

«Come, Master. We were waiting for You only» says Chuza and leads Him before everybody into the room where the tables are laid.

They sit down after the thanksgiving prayer and a supplementary ablution of hands, and dinner begins, as pompous as usual, in silence at first. Then the ice is broken.

Jesus is near Chuza and Manaen is on the other side with Timoneus as companion. The others have been placed by Chuza, with the experience of a courtier, on the sides of the U-shaped table. The Essene only has obstinately refused to take part in the banquet and sit at the table with the others, and only when a servant, on instructions from Chuza, offers him a precious basket full of fruit, he agrees to sit at a low table, after I do not know

how many ablutions, and after rolling up the wide sleeves of his white tunic lest he should stain them, or for some rite, I do not know.

It is a strange banquet as they communicate with one another by means of glances rather than by words. They only exchange few words of courtesy and scrutinise one another, that is, Jesus studies His fellow-guests and is studied by them.

<sup>464.6</sup> <sup>6</sup>At the end Chuza beckons to the servants to withdraw after laying on the table large trays of fruit, which is fresh and cool having probably been kept in a well, and is really beautiful, I would say that it is almost frozen as it is covered with that kind of hoar-frost that is typical of fruit kept in ice-boxes. The servants go out after lighting also the lamps, which are at present not required as it is still clear in the long summer sunset.

«Master» begins Chuza «You must have wondered why we held this meeting and why we have been so silent. But what we have to tell You is very serious and is not to be heard by imprudent ears. We are now alone and we can speak. As You can see, all the people present have the greatest respect for You. You are among men who venerate You as Man and as Messiah. Your justice, Your wisdom, the gifts of which God has made You master, are known and admired by us. You are for us the Messiah of Israel. Messiah according to the spiritual idea and the political one. You are the Expected One who will put an end to the grief and dejection of a whole population. And not only of this people within the borders of Israel, or rather, of Palestine, but of the People of all Israel, of the countless colonies of the Diaspora, spread all over the Earth, which make the Name of Jehovah resound under every sky and make known the promises and hopes, which are now being fulfilled, of a Restorer Messiah, of a Revenger, of a Liberator and creator of true independence and of the Fatherland Israel, that is, of the greatest Fatherland in the world, the Fatherland, *queen and ruler*; which will cancel all remembrance of the past and every existing sign of servitude, Hebraism triumphing over everybody and everything, and forever, because that was said and that is being accomplished. Lord, You have here, before You, all Israel in the representatives of the several classes of this eternal people, punished but beloved by the Most High Who proclaims it. "His". You have the pulsating

wholesome heart of Israel with the members of the Sanhedrin and the priests, You have power and holiness with Pharisees and Sadducees, You have wisdom with scribes and rabbis, You have politics and value with Herodians, You have wealth with rich people, the population with merchants and landowners, You have the Diaspora with proselytes, You have even those who are separated, as they are now inclined to become united since they see in You the Expected One: the Essenes, the unreachable Essenes. Look, O Lord, at this first wonder, at this great sign of Your mission, of the truth concerning You. Without violence, without means, without ministers, without troops, without swords, You are gathering together all Your people, as reservoir collects the waters of countless springs. Almost without any word, without whatever imposition You have gathered us, a people divided by misfortunes, by hatred, by political and religious ideas, and You have reconciled us. O Prince of Peace, rejoice at having redeemed and restored even before assuming sceptre and crown. Your Kingdom, the expected Kingdom of Israel, has begun. Our wealth, our power, our swords are at Your feet. Speak! Order! The hour has come. »

Everybody approves of Chuza's speech. Jesus, His arms folded on His chest, is silent. 464. 7

«Are You not speaking? Are You not replying, Lord? You are perhaps amazed at the situation... Perhaps You feel unprepared and You doubt above all whether Israel is prepared... But it is not so. Listen to our voices. I am speaking, and Manaen with me, with regards to the Court. It no longer deserves to exist. It is the rotten disgrace of Israel. It is shameful tyranny which oppresses the people and stoops servilely to flatter the usurper. Its hour has come Rise, O Star of Jacob, and dispel the darkness of that chorus crimes and shame. Here are present those who are called Herodians: they are the enemies of the profaners of the name of the Herods, which is sacred to them. My friends, it is for you to speak now. »

«Master. I am old and I remember the splendour of days gone by. To call the degenerate descendants of Herod after him, is like calling a stinking carrion after a hero, so much are they disgracing our people. It is time to repeat the gesture made several times by Israel when unworthy monarchs reigned over the suffering

people. You alone are worthy of accomplishing such gesture. »

Jesus is silent.

«Master, do You think that we can possibly be doubtful? We have scrutinised the Scriptures. You are the promised one. You must reign» says a scribe.

«You must be King and Priest. A second Nehemiah, greater than the first one\*, You *must* come and purify. The altar is desecrated. May the zeal of the Most High urge You» says a priest.

«Many of us have fought against You. Those who are afraid of Your wise manner of reigning. But the people is with You and the best of us are with the people. We are in need of a wise man. »

«We need a pure man. »

«A true king. »

«A saint. »

«A Redeemer. We are more and more enslaved to everything and to everybody. Defend us, Lord! »

«We are trodden down in the world because although we are great in number and wealth, we are like sheep without a shepherd. Rally Your people with the old cry: "Return to your tents, Israel! ", and from every spot of the Diaspora Your subjects will spring up like a lever, overthrowing the tottering thrones of the mighty ones who are not loved by God. »

Jesus is still silent. He is the only one to be sitting calmly, as if the matter did not concern Him, in the middle of about forty hot-headed men, of whose arguments I can grasp only a tiny part as they are all speaking at the same time making a terrible din. He maintains His attitude and remains silent.

They all shout: «Say a word! Answer! »

Jesus stands up slowly, pushing his hands on the edge of the table. There is dead silence. While eighty eyes aflame with curiosity stare at Him, He his parts his lips and the others do likewise, as if they wanted to inhale his reply. And the reply is short, but resolute: «No. »

«What? Why? Are You betraying us? You are betraying Your people! He is disowning His mission! He is repudiating God's order!... » What a hullabaloo! What an uproar! Many faces become

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\* the first one, mentioned in the book of *Nehemiah*. Other biblical references will follow: *Deuteronomy* 5, 30; *Judges* 4, 4-18, *1 Samuel* 10, 1; 16, 1-13; *2 Samuel* 2, 1-4; 5, 1-3, *1 King* 1, 32-40, *1 Maccabees* 2, 42-44; 3, L9.

crimson while eyes are inflamed and hands are agitated threateningly... Rather than loyal supporters they look like enemies. But such is life: when hearts are dominated by political ideas, also meek people become like wild animals against anyone opposing their ideas.

<sup>8</sup>A strange silence follows the uproar. It looks as if, having exhausted their strength, they all feel worn out and overwhelmed. They look at one another inquisitively, desolately... some are upset...

Jesus looks around and says: «I knew that this was the reason why you wanted Me. And I knew that your attempt was useless. Chuza can confirm that I told him at Tarichea. I came to prove to you that I am not afraid of any deceit, because My hour has not come yet. Neither will I be afraid when the ambush against Me takes place, because I came just for that. And I came to convince you. Not everybody, but many of you are in good faith. But I must correct the error into which you have fallen in good faith. See? I do not reproach you. I do not reproach anybody, not even those, who being My faithful disciples, ought to act with justice and control their passions with justice. I do not reproach you, My just Timoneus; but I tell you that at the bottom of your love that is anxious to honour Me there is still your ego that is excited and dreams of better days, when you may see those struck who struck you. I do not reproach you, Manaen, although you appear to have forgotten the wisdom and the completely spiritual examples you had from Me and from the Baptist before Me; but I say that in you as well there is a root of humanity which flourishes again after the ardour of My love. I do not reproach you, El-eazar, so just because of the old woman left to you, always just, but not now; neither do I reproach you, Chuza, although I ought to, because in you, more than in all those who want Me to be king in good faith, is your ego alive. Yes, you want Me to be king. There is no deceit in what you say. You have *not come to catch Me out, to denounce Me to the Sanhedrin, to the King, to Rome.* But rather than out of love - you think that everything is love but it is not so - rather than out of love you are acting to avenge yourself for the offences given to you by the court. I am your guest. I should not mention the truth concerning your feelings, but I am the Truth in everything, and I am speaking for your own good.



And the same applies to you, Joachim of Bozrah, and to you, scribe John, and to you, to you, to you. » And He points at this one and that one, without resentment, but with sadness... and He continues: «I do not reproach you, because I know that you do not want this, spontaneously. It is Deceit, it is the Enemy who is working in you, and you are, without being aware of it, entirely dominated by him. Also of your love, O Timoneus, O Manaen, O Joachim, and you all who really love Me, also of your veneration, you who feel that I am the perfect Rabbi, also of all that, he, the Cursed One, makes use to harm people and to harm Me. But I say to you, and to those who do not share your feelings and, with aims which sink lower and lower, to the extent of becoming treason and crime, would like Me to agree to become king, I say: No. My Kingdom is not of this world. Come to Me, that I may establish My Kingdom in you, and nothing else. <sup>9</sup>And now let Me go. »

«No, Lord. We are quite determined. We have already made our wealth available, we have prepared plans and decided to get out of this uncertainty, which is upsetting Israel, and of which other people are taking advantage to harm Israel. Snares are being laid for You, that is true. You have enemies in the very Temple. I, an Elder, do not deny it. But there is means to put an end to that: Your unction. And we are willing to do that. It is not the first time that in Israel a man is proclaimed king thus, to put an end to national calamities and contentions. There is here who can do that in the name of God. Let us do so» says one of the priests.

«No. It is not lawful. You do not have such authority. ))

«The High Priest is the first to want that, contrary to appearances. He can no longer allow the present situation of Roman rule and royal scandal. ))

«Do not lie, priest. Blasphemy is twice impure on your lips. Perhaps you do not know and you are deceived. But in the Temple *they do not want that.* »

«Do You consider our assertion to be a false one? )>

«Yes, I do. If not of all of you, *of many among you.* Do not lie. I am the Light and I enlighten hearts... »

«You can believe us» shout the Herodiaris. «We do not like Herod Antipas or anybody else. ))

«No. You love no one but yourselves. That is true. And you

cannot love Me. I would be used as a lever to overthrow the throne and thus open for you the way to greater power and to let you oppress the people more sorely. A deceit for Me, for the people and for yourselves. Rome would crush everybody after your crushing. ))

«Lord, among the colonies of the Diaspora there are many ready to rise... our wealth will support them)) say the proselytes.

«And mine and the full support of Hauran and Trachonitis)) *shouts the man* from Bozrah. «I know what I am saying. Our mountains can keep an army free from snares, and then launch it like a flock of eagles at Your service. ))

«Perea as well. »

«And Gaulanitis. ))

«The valley of Gaash is with You! »

«And with You are the shores of the Salt Sea with the nomads who believe that we are gods, if You agree to join us» shouts the Essene and he continues with a long-winded harangue typical of hot-headed people, but his words are lost in the uproar.

«The mountaineers of Judaea belong to the race of strong kings. ))

«And those of High Galilee are heroes of the same temperament as Deborah. Also women, even children are heroes! ))

«Do You think we are too few? We form numerous troops. All the population is with You. You are the king of the stock of David, the Messiah! This is the cry on the lips of wise and of ignorant people, because it is the cry of their hearts. Your miracles... and Your words... The signs... » The confusion is such that I cannot follow what they say.

Jesus, like a solid rock in a windstorm, does not move, He does not even react. He is impassive. And the confusion of prayers, impositions, reasons, goes on.

«You are disappointing us! Why do You want our ruin? Do You want to do it by Yourself? You cannot. Mattathias Maccabee did not refuse the help of the Hasidaeans and Judas freed Israel with their assistance... Accept!!! )) Now and again they all shout this word together.

Jesus does not yield.

<sup>10</sup>One of the Elders, a very old man, talks in a low voice to a priest and a scribe, both older than he is. They come forward and

impose silence. The old scribe, who has called near him also El-eazar and the two scribes named John, begins to speak: «Lord, why will You not put on the crown of Israel? »

«Because it is not Mine. I am not the son of a Hebrew prince. »

«Lord, perhaps You do not know. One day I was summoned with these two because three Wise Men had come asking where was He Who was born king of the Jews. See? “Born king”. We, the chief priests and scribes of the people, were summoned by Herod the Great, to give the reply. And Hillel the Just was with us. Our answer was: “at Bethlehem in Judah”. We are told that You were born there and great signs occurred at Your birth. Among Your disciples are some witnesses of them. Can You deny that You were worshipped as King by the three Wise Men? »

«I do not deny it. »

«Can You deny that miracles precede You, accompany You and follow You as a sign from Heaven? »

«I do not deny it. »

«Can You deny that You are the promised Messiah? »

«I do not deny it. »

«Well then, in the name of the living God, why do You want to deceive the hopes of the people? »

«I have come to accomplish the hopes of God. »

«Which? »

«The redemption of the world, the formation of the Kingdom of God. My Kingdom is not of this world. Lay aside your wealth and your weapons. Open your eyes and spirits to read the Scriptures and Prophets and to receive My Truth and you will have the Kingdom of God within you. »

«No. The Scriptures mention a King liberator. ))

464. 11 «From Satanic slavery, from sin, from error, from the flesh, from Gentilism, from idolatry. <sup>11</sup>Oh! what did Satan do to you, O Hebrews, wise people, to make you fall into error concerning the prophetic truths? What is he doing to you, O Hebrews, My brothers, to make you so blind? What is he doing to you, My disciples, that you, as well, no longer understand? The greatest misfortune of a people and of a believer is to fall into false interpretation of signs. And such misfortune is taking place now. Personal interests, prejudice, craziness, false love of the fatherland, everything helps to create the abyss... the abyss of error in which a people

will perish failing to recognize its King. ».

«You are failing to recognize Yourself. »

«You are failing to recognise yourselves and Me. I am not a human king. And you... Three quarters of you who are gathered here, want to harm Me, not to help Me, and you are aware of that. You are acting out of hatred, not out of love. But I forgive you. I say to honest-hearted people: “Come to your senses, do not be the unconscious servants of evil”. Let Me go. There is nothing farther to be said. »

They all become silent, greatly surprised...

Eleazar says: «I am not hostile to You. I thought I was doing the right thing. And I am not the only one... Some good friends think as I do. »

«I know. But tell Me, and be sincere: what does Gamaliel say? »

«The rabbi?... He says... Yes, he says: “The Most High will give the sign if He is His Christ”. »

«He is right. And what does Joseph the Elder say? »

«That You are the Son of God and will reign as God. »

«Joseph is a just man. And Lazarus of Bethany? »

«He suffers... He does not say much... But he says... that You will reign only when our spirits receive You. »

«Lazarus is wise. When your spirits receive Me. For the time being you, as well as those whom I considered to be well disposed spirits, are not accepting the King and the Kingdom, and that is what grieves Me. »

<sup>12</sup>«In brief, are You going to refuse? » shout many.

464. 12

«You have said it. »

«You have made us compromise ourselves, You are harming us, You... » shout others: Herodians, scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees, priests...

Jesus leaves the table and goes towards the group darting glances at them. What flashing eyes! They unintentionally become silent and press against the wall... Jesus goes really face to face with them and in a low voice, but with incisiveness cutting like a slash, He says: «It is written\*<sup>12</sup>: “A curse on him who strikes down his neighbour in secret and accepts a bribe to take an in-

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\* It is written, in: *Deuteronomy 27, 24-25.*

nocent life". I say to you: I forgive you. But your sin is known to the Son of man. If I did not forgive you... Many people in Israel were incinerated by Jehovah for much less. » But He is so terrible in saying so, that no one dare move, and Jesus moves aside the double heavy curtain and goes out into the hall without anyone daring to make a gesture.

Only when the curtain stops waving, that is, after a few minutes, they rouse.

«We must reach Him... We must hold Him... » say the most enraged ones.

«We must get Him to forgive us» say with a sigh the better ones, that is, Manaen, Timoneus, some proselytes, the man from Bozrah, in brief, the honest-hearted ones.

They rush out of the room. They look for Him, they ask the servants: «The Master, where is He? »

The Master? No one has seen Him, not even those who were at the two doors in the hall. He is nowhere... With torches and lamp they search for Him in the shadows of the garden, in the room where He had rested. He is not there, neither can they find the mantle He had left on the bed, or the bag which had been left in the hall...

«He has escaped from us! He is a Satan! No. He is God. He does what He likes. He will betray us! No. He will know us for what we are. » The clamour of different opinions and reciprocal insults. The good ones shout: «You have led us astray. Traitors! We should have imagined all this! » The wicked ones, that is, the majority, reply threateningly, and having lost the scapegoat and thus being unable to assail it, the two groups fight against each other...

464. 13 <sup>13</sup>And where is Jesus? I see Him, of His own accord, when He is very far away, near the bridge across the inlet of the Jordan. He is walking fast, as if He were carried by the wind. His hair is waving around His pale face and His mantle is flapping like a sail as He walks with vigorous strides. Then, when He is sure that He is at a good distance, He plunges into the bog grass near the shore and takes the eastern bank and as soon as He finds the first rocks of the high cliff, He begins to climb up, heedless of the danger in climbing the cliffy coast in faint light. He climbs up as far as a rock jutting out over the lake and watched over by an age-

old oak-tree. He sits down there, He rests an elbow on one of His knees and His chin in the palm of His hand, and staring with His eyes at the darkening vast expanse, just visible mainly because of His white garments and the pallor of His face, He keeps still...

<sup>14</sup>But someone has followed Him: John. John is half-naked, that is, he is wearing the short tunic of fishermen, his hair is stiff and smooth as is typical of people who have been in water, he is panting and nevertheless wan. He approaches his Jesus slowly: he seems a shadow sliding on the rugged cliff. He stops not very far away. He watches Jesus... He does not move. He looks like a rock fixed to the rock. His dark tunic makes him even more inconspicuous: only his face and bare legs and arms can just be seen in the darkness of the night.

464. 14

But when he hears, rather than sees Jesus weep, he can resist no longer and he approaches Him and then calls Him: «Master! » Jesus hears the whisper and looks up: He gathers His clothes ready to flee.

But John shouts: «What have they done to You, Master, that You no longer recognize John? »

And Jesus recognizes His Beloved. He stretches out His arms and John throws himself into them and they both weep over two different sorrows and one only love.

When their weeping subsides Jesus is the first to see things clearly. He feels and sees John half-naked, with a damp tunic, frozen and barefooted. «How come you are here in this state? Why are you not with the others? »

«Oh! Don't scold me, Master. I could not stay... I could not let You go... I took my clothes off, everything except this, I dived into the lake and I swam back to Tarichea, and from there I ran along the shore to the bridge and then I followed You. I remained in the ditch near the house, ready to come to help You, or at least to know whether they abducted or harmed You. And I heard many voices quarrelling, then I saw You run past me. You looked like an angel. To follow You without losing sight of You I fell into ditches and logs and I am all covered in mud. I must have soiled Your mantle... I have been watching You since You came here... Were You weeping?... <sup>15</sup>What have they done to You, my Lord? Did they insult You? Did they strike You? »

464. 15

«No. They wanted to make Me king. A poor king, John! And

many were in good faith, they were acting out of Jove, for a good purpose... Most of them... to be able to denounce Me and get rid of Me... »

«Who are they? »

«Do not ask. »

«And the others? ».

«Do not ask their names either. You must not hate or criticize... I forgive... »

«Master... were there any disciples?... Tell me just that. »

«Yes, there were. »

«And apostles? »

«No, John. No apostle. »

«Really, Lord? »

«Really, John. »

«Ah! May the Lord be praised for that... But why are You still weeping, Lord? I am with You. I love You on behalf of everybody. And also Peter, Andrew and the others... When they saw me dive into the lake they said that I was mad and Peter was furious, and my brother said that I wanted to get drowned in the whirlpools. But later they understood and they shouted to me: "May God be with you. Go. Go... ". We love You. But no one loves You as much as I do, although I am only a poor boy. »

«Yes. No one like you. You are cold, John! Come here, under My mantle... »

«No, at Your feet, thus... My Master! Why does everybody not love You as much as the poor boy who is I? »

Jesus draws him upon His heart, sitting beside him. «Because they do not have your heart of a child... »

«They wanted to make You king? But have they not understood yet that Your Kingdom is not of this Earth? »

«They have not understood! »

464. 16 <sup>16</sup>«Without mentioning any names, tell me all about it, Lord... »

«But will you not tell what I tell you? »

«If You do not want, Lord, I will not mention it... »

«You will make no mention of it, except when men want to present me as a common popular leader. That will happen one day. You will be there and you shall say: "He was not a king of the Earth because He did not want to be one. Because his King-

dom was not of this world. He was the Son of God, the Incarnate Word, and He could not accept what belongs to the earth. He wanted to come into the world and take a body to redeem bodies and souls and the world, but He was not subjected to the pomp of the world or to the incentives of sin, and there was nothing sensual and worldly in Him. The Light was not enveloped in Darkness, the Infinite did not accept finite things, but of creatures limited by flesh and sin, He made creatures more like Himself by elevating those who believed in Him to true royalty, and founding His Kingdom in the hearts of men, before founding it in Heaven, where it will be complete and eternal with all those who have been saved". You shall say that, John, to all those who consider Me entirely a human being and to those who maintain that I am entirely spiritual, to those who deny that I was subject to temptation... and to grief... You shall tell men that the Redeemer wept... and that they, men, were redeemed also by My tears... >>

«Yes, Lord. How much You are suffering, Jesus!... )>

«How much I redeem! But you console Me in My suffering. We shall depart from here at dawn. We shall find a boat. If I say to you that we shall be able to proceed without oars, will you believe Me? »

«I would believe You even if You said that we can go without a boat... »

They remain embraced, wrapped only in Jesus' mantle, and John, tired as he is, ends up by falling asleep in the warmth, like a child in its mother's arms.

31<sup>st</sup> July 1946.

<sup>17</sup>Jesus says:

464. 17

«It is for upright hearted people that this evangelical page, unknown and so explanatory, is given. John, when writing his Gospel after many years, alludes briefly to the fact. He reveals to men this detail, of which they were unaware, and he thus obeys the wish of his Master, Whose divine nature he illustrates more clearly than any other evangelist, and he reveals it with the virginal demureness which enveloped all his actions and words with discreet humble modesty.

John, to whom I confided the most serious events of My life,



never made any pretentious displays of My favours. On the contrary, if you read him properly, you will see that he seems to suffer in revealing them and to say: "I must say this because it is true and it exalts my Lord, but please forgive me if I have to appear as being the only one aware of it" and he concisely mentions the detail known to him alone.

464.18 <sup>18</sup>Read the first chapter of his Gospel, in which he tells of his meeting with Me: "John the Baptist was once again with two of his disciples... Hearing this, the two disciples... Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, was one of the two who had heard the words of John and had followed Jesus. The first to be met by Andrew... ". He makes no mention of himself, on the contrary he hides behind Andrew, whom he brings into prominence.

He was with Me at Cana, and he says: "Jesus was with His disciples... and His disciples believed in Him". It was the others who were in need of belief. He already believed. But he puts himself with the others, as if he needed to see miracles in order to believe.

Although he was a witness to the first expulsion of dealers from the Temple, to the discourse with Nicodemus, to the episode of the Samaritan woman, he never says: "I was there", but he maintains the policy he had adopted at Cana and says: "His disciples" also when he was alone or with another companion. And he continues thus, never mentioning his name, always putting his companions forward, as if he had not been the most faithful, the always faithful and perfectly faithful disciple.

Remember how delicately he refers to the episode of the Last Supper, as it shows that he was the favourite and was recognized as such also by the others who apply to him when they want to be informed of the secrets of the Master: "So the disciples began to look at one another wondering which He meant. One of the disciples, the one Jesus loved, was leaning on His breast. Simon Peter signed to him and asked: 'To whom is He referring? '. And he, leaning as he was on Jesus' breast, asked Him: 'Who is it, Lord? ' .

Neither does he mention his name as being called into Gethsemane with Peter and James. He does not even say: "I followed the Lord". He says: "Simon Peter and another disciple followed Him, and as this disciple was known to the high Priest, he went with Jesus into the high Priest's palace". Without John I would

not have had the comfort of seeing him and Peter during the first hours after I had been captured. But John does not boast about it.

One of the main key figures during the hours of My Passion, the only apostle to be lovingly, pitifully, heroically present near the Christ, near His Mother, in front of the unchecked fury of Jerusalem, he leaves out his name also in the outstanding episode of the Crucifixion and of the words of the Dying Christ: "Woman, this is Your son", "This is your mother". He is the "disciple", the nameless one, with no other name but the one which is his glory after being his vocation: "the disciple".

Even after the honour of becoming the "son" of the Mother of God he does not become elated and describing the Resurrection he says once again: "Peter and the other apostle (who had been informed by Mary of Lazarus of the empty tomb) came out and went... They ran... but the other disciple ran faster than Peter and arrived first, and he bent down and saw... but did not go in... ". A gesture of gentle humbleness! He, the favourite, the faithful disciple, lets Peter, the chief, although a cowardly sinner, enter first. He does not judge him. He is his Pontiff. Nay, he supports him with his holiness, because also "chiefs" may need, they do actually need subjects to support them.

How many subjects are better than their "chiefs"! O holy subjects, never refuse to be pitiful towards your "chiefs", who bend under the weight which they cannot bear, or who are made blind or inebriated by the vanity of honours. O holy subjects, be the Simons of Cyrene for your Superiors, and you, too, My little John, because I am speaking to you on behalf of everybody, of all the "Johns" who run ahead and lead the "Peters", and then stop letting them go in, out of respect for their office, and who - oh! what a masterpiece of humbleness! - in order not to mortify the "Peters" who are not capable of understanding and believing, go as far as to appear and make people believe that they also are as dull and incredulous as the "Peters".

Read the last episode on the lake of Tiberias. Once again it is John who, repeating the gesture made several times, recognizes the Lord in the Man standing on the shore, and after sharing the food together, in Peter's question: "And what about him? ", he is still "the disciple", nothing else.

He humbles himself in everything concerning him. But when there is something to be said which may make the Incarnate Word of God shine with a brighter and brighter divine light, then John lifts the veils and reveals a secret.

464. 19

<sup>19</sup>In the sixth chapter of his Gospel he says: "When He realised that they wanted to abduct Him to make Him king, He escaped back to the hill by Himself". And that hour in the life of the Christ is made known to believers so that they may know that the Christ was subjected to manifold and complex temptations and struggles in His several distinctive features of Man, Master, Messiah, Redeemer, King and that men and Satan - the eternal instigator of men - spared the Christ no deceit to diminish, demolish and destroy Him. Satanic and human wickedness assailed the Man, the Eternal Priest, the Master as well as the Lord, disguised with pretexts most acceptable as good ones and they teased and tempted all the passions of the citizen, of the patriot, of the son, of the man, I find a weak spot upon which they might act.

Oh! My children, who ponder only on the initial temptation and the last one, and consider only the last part of My work of Redeemer to be "fatigue", and only My last hours to be grievous, and My last experience bitter and disappointing, take My place for an hour, and imagine that it is to you that they propose peace with compatriots, their help, the possibility of accomplishing the necessary purifications to impart sanctity to your beloved Country, the possibility of restoring and gathering together the scattered limbs of Israel, to put an end to sorrow, serfdom and sacrilege. And I do not mean: replace Me, thinking that you have been offered a crown. I only ask you to have My Heart of Man for an hour and tell Me: how would you feel after the alluring proposal? Triumphers faithful to the divine Idea, or rather defeated? And would you come out of it more holy and spiritual than ever, or would you destroy yourselves by assenting to temptation or yielding to threats? And with what heart would you come out of it, after verifying to what extent Satan urged his armies to wound Me in My mission and in My affections, leading astray, on the wrong way, My good disciples and compelling Me to openly fight My enemies, by now unmasked and made furious by the fact that their plots had been found out?

464. 20

<sup>20</sup>Do not stand with compasses and small measuring instru-

ments, with microscope and human science, with pedantic reasoning of scribes trying to measure, compare and discuss whether John has spoken the truth and to what extent this or that is true. Do not superimpose John's sentence on the episode shown yesterday to ascertain whether the outlines fit properly. John did not make a mistake out of senile weakness, neither did little John make a mistake out of weakness in illness. The latter related what she saw. Great John, many years after the event told what he knew and subtly linking together places and events he revealed the secret, of which he alone was aware, of the attempt perpetrated maliciously at the incoronation of the Christ.

At Tarichea, after the first miracle of the loaves, the people began to think of making the Rabbi from Nazareth king of Israel. Manaen, the scribe and many more people were present and as they were still spiritually imperfect but honest hearted, they picked up the idea and supported it to honour the Master, to put an end to the unfair fight against Him, owing to an error in interpreting the Scriptures, an error spread all over Israel blinded with dreams of human regality. They also hoped to sanctify the Fatherland contaminated by many things.

And many, as was natural, welcomed the idea in a simple manner. And many pretended underhand to welcome it in order to harm Me. Hatred against Me joined the latter together, making them forget their hatred of castes which had always divided them, and they entered into an alliance to tempt Me in order to give a legal appearance to the crime already settled in their hearts. They were hoping in My weakness and in My pride. And My pride and weakness, and My consequent acceptance of the crown they offered Me, would justify the charges they wanted to bring against Me. And later... And later they would serve to give peace to their sly spirits feeling remorse, because they would say to themselves, hoping to be able to believe it: "It was Rome, not us, who punished the Nazarene agitator". The legal elimination of their Enemy, such was the Saviour to them...

Those are the reasons for the attempted proclamation. That is the explanation of their subsequent more bitter hatred. And that, finally, is the sublime lesson of the Christ. Do you understand it? It is a lesson of humbleness, of justice, of obedience, of strength, of prudence, of loyalty, of forgiveness, of patience, of

vigilance, of endurance, towards God, towards one's mission, towards friends, towards day-dreamers, towards enemies, towards Satan, towards those men who are his instruments of temptation, towards things, towards ideas. Everything is to be contemplated, accepted, rejected, loved or not loved, looking at the holy aim of man: Heaven, the Will of God.

464. 21 Little John. This has been one of Satan's hours for Me. As the Christ had them so, will the little Christs have them. One must suffer them and overcome them with humbleness and confidence. They are not without a purpose. And a good purpose. But be not afraid. During such hours God does not forsake, but He supports those who are faithful. Then Love descends to make the faithful ones kings. And even more, when the hour of the Earth is over, the faithful ones ascend to the Kingdom, in peace forever, victorious forever...

My peace, little John, crowned with thorns... My peace... »

465. In Bethsaida for a confidential mission to Porphyrea.  
The hurried departure from Capernaum.

1<sup>st</sup> August 1946.

465. 1 «Steer the boat towards Bethsaida» orders Jesus Who is with John in a little boat, a real nutshell, in the middle of the lake, which is becoming clear as day breaks.

John obeys without speaking. A rather strong breeze fills the little sail and drives the boat so fast that the latter heels. The eastern coast passes by rapidly and the curve of the northern side of the lake comes nearer and nearer.

«Land before the village. I want to go to Porphyrea without being seen by anybody. You can meet Me at the usual place and wait for Me in the boat. »

«Yes, Master. And if anybody should see me? »

«Converse with everybody without saying where I am. I will not be long. »

John finds a good landing spot on the shore as he remembers a sandy stream from which men have taken away sand for their needs, forming thus a small gulf a few meters wide where a boat can reach the shore, which is about half a meter above wa-

ter level. He steers the boat there. The boat rubs lightly on the shingly shore but it can reach the dry beach where John holds it fast grasping a root sticking out of the sand. Jesus jumps on the beach. John presses an oar against it making an effort to push the boat back on the lake. He is successful. He raises his face, bright with his good smile and says: «Goodbye, Master. »

«Goodbye, John» and Jesus sets out among the trees while John steers his little boat along the coast.

<sup>2</sup>Jesus turns towards the inland and passes through the vegetable gardens at the rear of Bethsaida. He is walking fast to enter the village before it arouses. He arrives at Peter's house without meeting anybody. He knocks at the kitchen door. After a moment Porphyrea's head looks out cautiously above the little wall of the terraced roof. When she sees Jesus she utters an «Oh! » of surprise. With one hand she collects her beautiful hair - her only beauty - falling loose on her shoulders and runs down the little staircase, barefooted as she is, in her hurried morning attire.

465. 2

«Lord, You! All alone? »

«Yes, Porphyrea. Where is Marjiam? »

«He is sleeping. He is still sleeping. The boy has been somewhat sad, rather languid... and I spare him a little. It is also his age... he is growing... While sleeping he does not think and does not weep. »

«Does he weep often? »

«Yes, Master. I think that it is his present weakness. And I try to strengthen him... and comfort him... But he says: "I am left alone. All those whom I love go away. When Jesus is no longer with us... " and he says so as if You were about to leave us... Of course... he has suffered much in his lifetime... But Simon and I love him... so much, Master, believe me. »

«I know. But his soul is sensitive... Porphyrea, I must speak to you just about this. That is why I came, without Simon, at this time of the day. Where can we go and speak so that Marjiam may not hear us and nobody will disturb us? »

«Lord... I have but my bedroom, or the room where the nets are stored... Marjiam is upstairs, I was up there as well, because to escape the heat, we went to sleep up there... »

«Let us go into the room where the nets are. It is farther away and Marjiam will not hear us even if he should wake. »

«Come, Lord» and Porphyrea leads Him into, the large rustic room encumbered with all sorts of things: nets, oars, provisions, hay for the sheep, a loom...

Porphyrea hastens to clear a kind of table placed against the wall, dusting it with a flock of tow so that the Master may sit on it. «It does not matter, woman. I am not tired. »

Porphyrea raises her mild eyes towards Jesus' depressed tired face and she seems to be saying: «Of course You are. » But, being accustomed to be silent, she does not speak.

465. 3 <sup>3</sup>«Listen, Porphyrea. You are a clever woman and a good disciple. I have been very fond of you since I met you and it was with great joy that I accepted you as a disciple and I entrusted the boy to you. I am aware that only few women are as wise and prudent as you. And I know that you can keep silent: a very rare virtue in women. For all those reasons I have come to speak to you secretly and confide to you something of which no one is aware, not even the apostles, not even Simon. I am confiding it to you because I must tell you how you are to behave in future with Marjiam... and with everybody... I am sure that you will meet your Master's request and that you will be as prudent as ever... »

Porphyrea, who has really become purple on hearing the praise of her Lord, can only nod assent, as she is too moved to be able to utter any word expressing her agreement; she is in fact so timid and accustomed to being pressed by overbearing people giving her orders without knowing whether she is disposed to agree...

«Porphyrea... I will never come back again to this part of the country. Never again, until everything is accomplished... You are aware of what I must accomplish, are you not?... »

At these words Porphyrea drops her hair, which she was still holding against the nape of her neck with her left hand and emits a sound which is more like a sob than a cry and which she stifles pressing her face with both hands while she falls on her knees moaning: «I know, Lord, my God... » And weeps so silently that her weeping is revealed only by the tears falling on the floor through her fingers compressing her face.

«Do not weep, Porphyrea. I came just for that. I am ready... and ready are those who, by serving Evil, will serve Good, in actual fact, because they will cause the hour of Redemption to

begin. It could be fulfilled even now because both they and I are ready... and every farther hour that passes or event which takes place will do nothing but... perfect their crime... and My Sacrifice. But also these hours, and they will be numerous, which are to pass before that hour, will serve... There is still something to be done and said, so that all the things which were to be accomplished to make Me known, may be done... But I will not come back here again... I am looking at this place for the last time... and I have come into this honest house for the last time... Do not weep... I did not want to go away without saying goodbye to you and giving you the blessing of your Master. I will take Marjiam with Me. I will take him with Me now while going towards the Phoenician borders and also later when I go down to Judaea for the feast of the Tabernacles. There will be no problem in sending him back here before the depth of winter. Poor boy! He will enjoy My company for some time. <sup>465. 4</sup>And then... Porphyrea, it is not right that Marjiam should be present at *My* hour. So you shall not let him depart for Passover... »

«The precept, Lord... »

«I absolve him from the precept. I am the Master, Porphyrea, and I am God, as you know. As God, I can absolve, in advance, from an omission which is not even such, because I am commanding it out of justice. Obedience to My command is by itself absolution from the omission of the precept, because obedience to God - which is also a sacrifice for Marjiam - is always superior to everything else. And I am a Master. He who cannot measure the capability and reactions of a disciple and does not consider the consequences which an effort greater than that which the disciple can stand may cause him, is not a good Master. Also when imposing virtuous deeds one must be prudent and not exact a maximum which the spiritual perfection or the general strength of the person involved cannot give. By exacting too great a virtue or spiritual control as compared with the degree of spiritual, moral and also physical strength attained by a person, one can cause a loss of the strength already stored up as well as the shattering of the human being in its three degrees: the spiritual, moral and physical ones. Marjiam, poor boy, has already suffered too much and is too familiar with the brutality of his fellow-creatures, to the extent of almost hating them. He would



not be able to bear what My Passion will be: a sea of grievous love in which I will wash the sins of the world, and a sea of satanic hatred which will try to overwhelm all those whom I loved and to destroy all My work as a Master. I solemnly tell you that also the strongest ones will bend under the pressure of Satan, at least for a short time... But I do not want Marjiam to bend or to drink of that distressing water... He is innocent... and is dear to Me... I feel pity, much pity, for those who have already suffered more than their strength would permit... I have called back to the hereafter the soul of John of Endor... »

«Is John dead? Oh! Marjiam had written many rolls for him... Another sorrow for the child... »

«I will inform him of John's death... I was saying that I took him away from this world to preserve him as well from the impact of that hour. John also had suffered too much from men. Why awake appeased feelings? God is good. He tries His children, but He is not a rash experimenter... Oh! if men were able to do as much! How fewer hearts would be ruined, or simply; how many fewer dangerous storms in hearts!... But reverting to Marjiam, he must not come to the next Passover. Say nothing for the time being. When the time comes, say to him: "The Master ordered me not to send you to Jerusalem. And He promises you a special reward if you will obey Him". Marjiam is good and will obey... 5Porphyrea, that is what I want from you. Your silence, your loyalty, your love. »

«Anything You want, my Lord. You honour Your poor servant too much... I do not deserve so much... Go in peace, Master and God. I will do what You want... » but sorrow overwhelms her and she collapses with her face on the floor - she had been kneeling all the time, relaxing on her heels, staring at Jesus' face - she collapses on the floor completely covered by the mantle of her raven hair sobbing in a loud voice: «How grievous, Master! Oh! How grievous! What is coming to an end! What is coming to an end for the world! Particularly for us who love You! And for Your servant! The Only One! The Only One Who really loved me! Who never despised me! Who has never been overbearing with me! Who treated me like the others, although I am so ignorant, poor and stupid! Oh! Marjiam and I - because Marjiam was the first to tell me - had set our minds at rest... Everybody said that it

could not be true... Everybody: Simon, Nathanael, Philip... and their wives... and they know, they are learned... and Simon... yes! My Simon, if You chose him, he must be worth something!... and they all said that it is not possible... But now You are saying it is... and we cannot doubt Your word... » She is really desolate and moving in her grief.

Jesus stoops to lay a hand on her head: «Do not weep thus... Marjiam will hear you... I know... No one believes it, no one wants to believe it... and their very learning and love are the reason of their not believing... But it is so... Porphyrea, I am going away. Before leaving you I bless you now and forever. Always remember that I loved you and that I am pleased with your love for Me. I will not say: persevere in it. I know that you will, because the remembrance of your Master will always be your solace and you will take shelter in it. Your solace and peace, also at the hour of death. Consider then that your Master died to open Paradise to you and that He is waiting for you there... Now, stand up. I will go and wake Marjiam and speak to him. Remove the traces of your tears and join us. John is waiting for Me to take Me to Capernaum. If you have something to send to Simon, prepare it. Remember that he will need his heavy clothes... »

Porphyrea, a true submissive and obedient person, kisses Jesus' feet, and is on the point of standing up when a wave of love makes her lose her head and, blushing deeply, takes Jesus' hands and kisses them once, twice, ten times. She then stands up and lets Him go...

<sup>6</sup>Jesus goes out and up to the terrace, He passes under a kind of canopy formed by sails stretched on ropes, under which are two little beds. Marjiam is still sleeping with his face downwards, pressed against the little pillow. Only one cheek-bone of his little dark face and a long lean arm can be seen outside the sheet which covers him. 465. 6

Jesus sits on the floor near the little bed and gently caresses the ruffled locks which fall on the pale cheek of the sleeping boy, who stirs but does not wake up as yet. Jesus repeats His gesture and bends to kiss on the forehead the face which is now uncovered.

Marjiam opens his eyes and sees Jesus beside him, bending over him. He can hardly believe it, perhaps he thinks that he is

dreaming, but Jesus calls him and the young boy then sits up and throws himself into Jesus' arms and takes refuge there... «You are here, Master?»

«I have come to take you away with Me for some months. Are you glad?»

«Oh! And Simon?»

«He is at Capernaum. I came with John...»

«Has he come back as well? He will be happy! I will give him what I wrote.»

«I am not speaking of John of Endor, but of John of Zebedee. Are you not glad?»

«Yes. I am fond of him. But I am fond also of the other one... almost more...»

«Why, Marjiam? John of Zebedee is so good.»

«Yes, but the other one is so unhappy and I was unhappy, too, and I still am a little... People who suffer understand and love one another...»

«Would you be happy to learn that he no longer suffers and that he is very happy?»

«Of course I would. But he cannot be happy unless he is with You. Or... Is he perhaps dead, Lord?»

«He is in peace and we must be pleased with that, without being selfish, because he died as a just man and because his spirit is no longer separated from ours. We have another friend praying for us.»

Two large tears stream down Marjiam's very thin pale face and whispers: «It is true.»

Jesus says nothing farther, neither does He make any remark concerning the physical and moral state of Marjiam, who has clearly grown weaker. On the contrary He says: «Let us go. I have already spoken to Porphyrea. She has certainly prepared your clothes. Tidy yourself up, because John is waiting for us. We will give Simon a surprise. Is that not his boat coming back to Capernaum? Perhaps he has been fishing on his way back...»

«Yes, it is that one. Where are we going, Lord?»

«To the north and then to Judaea.»

«For a long time?»

«Yes, for a long time.»

Marjiam, excited by the idea of being with Jesus, gets up

quickly and runs down to wash himself in the lake, and lie goes back with his hair still wet, shouting: «I have seen. John. He waved to me. He is at the mouth of the stream, among the reeds... »

«Let us go. »

<sup>7</sup>They go downstairs. Porphyrea is closing two bags and she <sup>465.7.</sup> says: «I have decided to send the heavy garments later, by my brother who will be coming to Gethsemane for the feast of the Tabernacles. Both you and your father will be able to walk more quickly» and while she finishes tying the straps, she mentions what she has prepared: milk, bread, fruit...

«We will take everything and eat in the boat. I want to go before the shore becomes crowded. Goodbye, Porphyrea. May God bless you always and may the peace of the just be always with you. Come, Marjiam. »...

They cover the short stretch of the road quickly and while Marjiam goes to John, Jesus goes to the boat, where He is soon joined by the two who run through the reed-thicket and jump into the boat and at once press an oar against the shore to push the boat out into deep water.

The short voyage is soon over and they stop at the little beach of Capernaum awaiting Peter's boat, which is just arriving. The early hour saves them from being assailed by the crowds and they can eat their bread and fruit in peace, lying on the sand in the shade of the boat.

Simon does not know to whom the little boat belongs and thus only when he sets foot on the shore and sees Jesus stand up from behind it, he notices Him. «Master! and you, Marjiam! How long have you been here? »

«Just now. I called at Bethsaida. Be quick. We must leave at once... »

Peter looks at Him but does not say anything. With his companions he unloads the catch, the bags of garments, including John's, who at last can get dressed. And Simon asks something of his companion, who makes a gesture meaning: «Wait... »

They go to the house and enter. The remaining apostles gather there.

«Make haste. We are going away at once. Take everything because we are not coming back here» orders Jesus.

The apostles cast sidelong glances at one another and one group gesticulates to the other. But they obey. Actually I think that they act quickly to be able to speak among themselves in the other rooms...

465. 8 <sup>8</sup>Jesus remains in the kitchen with Marjiam and He takes leave of the landlords. But He does not say to them: «I will not come back again» neither does He say so to the people of Capernaum who meet Him in the streets and greet Him. He greets them in a simple manner, as He always does when departing. He stops only at Jairus' house. But Jairus is not back yet...

At the fountain He meets the little old woman who lives near the house of little Alphaeus' mother and He says to her: «A widow will I coming here shortly. She will look for you. She is going to settle here. Be friendly to her and be very good to the boy and to his brothers... Do it in a holy way, in My name... »

He proceeds saying: «I would have liked to say goodbye to all the children... »

«You can do so, Master. Why did You not take a rest? You are very tired. You look pale and Your eyes are tired. It is not good for You... It is still warm and You certainly did not sleep either at Tiberias or at Chuza's... »

«I cannot, Simon. I have to go to certain places and time is short... »

They are near the shore. Jesus calls Peter's workmen and says goodbye to them instructing them to take the little boat to the village before Hippo and give it to Saul of Zacharias.

He takes the shady road along the river. He continues on it as far as a cross-road and proceeds along the latter.

«Where are we going, Lord? » asks Simon who had spoken so far to his companions in a low voice.

«To Judas and Anne and then to Korazim. I want to say goodbye to My good friends... »

The apostles cast more sidelong glances at one another and talk in low voices.

465. 9 <sup>9</sup>Finally James of Alphaeus moves forward and joins Jesus Who is ahead of them all with Marjiam. «Brother, are we not coming back any more to these parts, since You say that You wish to say goodbye to Your friends? We wish to know. »

«Of course, you will come back. But after many months. »

«And what about You? »

Jesus makes an evasive gesture... Marjiam withdraws discreetly and joins the others, that is, everybody, with the exception of James of Alphaeus, who is with Jesus, and of the Iscariot who is alone, behind them all, somewhat gloomy, as if he were listless.

«Brother, what has happened to You? » asks James laying one hand on Jesus' shoulder.

«Why are you asking Me? »

«Because... I do not know. We are all wondering. You seem to have changed... You came with John only... Simon said that You had been Chuza's guest... You are not resting... You greet only few people... It would appear that You do not want to come back here... And Your face... Do we no longer deserve to be informed? Not even I... You were very fond of me... You told me things of which I only am aware... »

«I still love you. But I have nothing to say. I lost one day more than I expected. I must make up for it. »

«Was it necessary to go to the north? »

«Yes, brother, it was. »

«Then... Oh! You have suffered. I can see it... »

Jesus embraces him, passing His arm around His cousin's shoulder: «John of Endor is dead. Did you know? »

«Simon told me when I was preparing my clothes. What else?.. »

«I parted from My Mother. »

«What else? » James, who is smaller than Jesus, looks up at Him, insistingly, inquiringly.

«And I am happy to be with you, with all of you, with Marjiam. I am going to keep him with Me for a few months. He needs it. He is sad and is suffering. Have you seen him? »

«Yes. But that has nothing to do with the matter... You do not want to tell me. It does not matter. I love You even if You do not treat me as a friend. »

«James, you are more than a friend to Me. But My heart is in need of rest... »

«And therefore it is also in need of not speaking of what is grieving You. I see. Is it Judas who is grieving You? »

«Judas? Your brother? »

«No. The other one. »

«Why do you ask Me that question? »

«I do not know. While You were away, a messenger, we do not know whose, looked for Judas several times. He rejected him every time, but... »

«As far as you all are concerned, every action of Judas is always a crime. Why do you all lack charity?... »

«Because he is so grim, upset. He avoids his companions. He is unwilling... »

«Leave him alone. He has been with us for over two years and has always been like this... Consider how happy the two old people will be. And do you know why I am going there? I want to recommend the little carpenter of Korazim to them... »

They move away speaking. Behind them, in a group, come the apostles who have waited for Judas, in order not to leave him behind all alone, although he is so obviously unwilling as not to encourage anybody to share his company.

466. A short stay at the home  
of the old couple Judas and Anne.

3<sup>rd</sup> August 1946.

466. 1 When they arrive they are hot although they have walked among thick orchards bent under the weight of ripe fruit. From the numerous beautiful vineyards comes the typical aroma of vines when bunches are already ripe and leaves are beginning to wither in autumn.

The first people to be seen are two peasants who are coming back from the orchards laden with baskets of beautiful apples and they inform a servant who passes the news around. In the meantime the two peasants greet Jesus and tell Him that «many disciples who have come from the mountains of Gaulanitis and from Ituraea have stopped in the house on their way to Jerusalem» and that «their Masters have decided to go with them to the Tabernacles through Decapolis and Perea. » But they have no time to finish their information as their lords rush out of the house to meet the Master, preceded and followed by many disciples.

Among the disciples are almost all those who were shepherds at Bethlehem and there are others as well, such as the first leper to be cured and his friend, the cripple, who was also restored to health, that is, those from beyond the Jordan, with the exception of Timoneus. I do not see Isaac, or Stephen or Hermas, or Hermasteus and Joseph from Emmaus, or Abel from Bethlehem, or Nicolaus from Antioch or John from Ephesus. They are joined by servants and peasants, among whom is the boy who was miraculously cured\* of paralysis during the previous vintage and his mother.

<sup>2</sup>«Peace to you all and to this house» says Jesus raising His hand to bless them. 466. 2

«Come in, Master, and rest under our roof. The season is still warm to walk during these hours. But we will give You refreshment and the rooms are cool at night. »

«I shall only stay here a few hours. I shall leave in the evening. It will shortly be the feast of the Tabernacles and I have still to call at many places. »

The landlords are disappointed but they do not insist. They only say: «We were hoping that You would wait for us. We are picking the grapes tomorrow and we have already begun to pick the fruit. After the wine pressing we should have all left together, with these disciples of Yours. We are old and the roads are very unsafe since gangs of highwaymen have come, we do not know whence, to infest this bank of the Jordan. They hide in the mountains of Rabbah Ammon and Gilead and along the Jabbok valley and they storm on caravans. The Roman legionaries chase them... But... Is it pleasant to meet them? We prefer to be with these... They are Your disciples and God will certainly protect them. »

Jesus smiles wittily but does not say anything on the matter. He goes into the house and welcomes the refreshments which the hosts offer in the way of ablutions and drinks and He then listens to the disciples who inform Him of the work they have done in the mountains: «But with little fruit, Master. Little also at Caesarea Philippi, where, however, we were not molested. But we will go back with You. And then! »

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\* miraculously cured, in 108. 7.



Jesus looks at them He does not disillusion them and replies: "If you persevere, you will certainly convert them. God always helps His servants."

466. 3 <sup>3</sup>Jesus then leaves them and joins the landlady who is laying the tables herself and He invites her to go out with him, as He has to speak to her. The good old lady does not make Him repeat His request twice and to avoid going outside, where it is so warm she leads Jesus into a long cool room in the northern side of the house.

«Anne, you always say that you would like to serve Me in every possible way... »

«Yes, my Lord. Both Judas and I. But You never apply to us. This is a great feast for us because Your disciples are somehow part of You, and having them in the house, we seem to be serving You. »

«It is in fact so, because what is done to a disciple is done to the Master and even one glass of water or a piece of bread given to assist those who work for Me will be rewarded by God Himself. The disciples take care of the spirits of believers and believers must love and assist disciples considering that they have given up everything and are ready to give up their lives in order to show believers the Way, Life and Truth which the Master taught them with instructions to give it to believers. »

«Oh! Lord, let me call my Judas. Your word is so holy!... »

«Call your Judas» agrees Jesus smiling. And the woman goes out and comes back again with her husband to whom she is repeating the Master's words.

«Believe me, we would do it willingly. But we are out of the way, and that is certainly the reason why Your disciples seldom come here» says the old man and I feel that he regrets being left aside.

466. 4 «I will tell them to come here frequently. <sup>4</sup>In the meantime I ask you to grant me a grace... »

«You? It is a grace for us to serve You! Give us Your order, Lord. We are old and we cannot follow You as many people do. But we are anxious to serve You. What is it that You want? If these vineyards and this house, which are so dear to us because they belonged to my father and our children were born here, are to Your liking and if You want them, we will give them to You.

We only ask You to promise us divine mercy on our spirits. »

«You can be sure that it will be with you. But I am not asking for such a sacrifice. Listen. I am going to Judaea and winter is drawing near. At Korazim there is a widow with many children and the oldest is little more than a boy. His father was a carpenter... »

«Ah! The carpenter! Oh! everybody has spoken about Your action... But Korazim was not converted, although Your deed more than Your word should have achieved that. Their mother worked here at harvest time... But she is not healthy... We know, we know. »

«Well I am not asking you to let them lead an idle life, but to assist them. You will always need someone to repair this thing or that one. Think of Joseph and let his fair reward be completed by your pity and love. »

«Oh! Master! Is that all? I would say, what do you say, woman? I think we should take the two little girls who gleaned here. The house is large and you are old, and Mary and Naomi are also old... For little things... »

«That is what we will do, Judas. In remembrance of our little girl... Our only daughter, Lord... She flourished for three years... and then... So many years have gone by... but my heart still aches... If You had been here with us, she would not have died... I would not have lost her... A daughter is always a smile... » The old woman is moved and the old man sighs.

«She is not lost... She is waiting for you... She is an innocent soul and you may be sure that you will find her. It is necessary to be more afraid for those children who are adult but do not live completely in the ways of the Lord... »

«That is true! It is true!... You are aware, Lord... You know everything. In this house, which is so peaceful, there is such sorrow... Master, can a sacrifice obtain a grace at times? »

«Not at times. *Always.* »

«Ah! it is pleasant to hear You say so. Go in peace, Master. The widow of Korazim will be helped and You will find them to be happy at springtime. Because if You recommend them for the winter months, it means that You are not coming back until spring. »

«I am not coming back... I am going down to Judaea and I am

not coming back. »

466. 5

<sup>5</sup>«And is also the little disciple coming to Judaea? »

«Yes, Marjiam is coming to Judaea... »

«A long journey, Master. He looks very sickly... »

«He lost his last relative. You know his story... and this new grief has debilitated him. »

«It is also his age and his growing... But we know... we are aware of the good he does. A little master, a real little master... His relative was in the plain of Esdraelon, was he not? And did he die there? And did he suffer there? »

«Yes, woman. Why are you asking? »

«Because... Master, I should not be telling You, Who are a Master. But I am a woman and a mother and I have wept... I say: why do You want to take him towards those places? Leave him with me as far as Jerusalem... I will feel as if I were going down to the holy City with my young sons once again... and he will not get tired and will not suffer any longer. The other disciples are coming as well. »

Jesus is pensive. He objects: «Marjiam is happy to be with Me and I with him. »

«Yes, but if You tell him, he will be happy to obey. You will be separated only for a few days. What is a little more than two weeks for one who is so young? He has time to enjoy Your company... »

Jesus looks at her and at the old man, who are so unaware that the time left to enjoy the Saviour is not very long. But He does not say anything. He stretches out His arms as if to say: «Let it be done as you wish» and He only says: «Then, call Marjiam and Simon. »

The old man goes out and comes back with the two. Simon looks around inquiringly. He seems to be suspicious of who knows what. But when he hears the reason he calms down and says: «May God bless you! The boy is run down and, to tell you the truth, I thought it was imprudent to make him walk so far... »

«But I was willing to come! I was with the Master, and if the Master was taking me with Him it means that I was fit to go... He does everything well. » and Marjiam's voice is almost choked by tears.

«That is true, Marjiam. But one must be compliant. These are

two good friends: to Me and to all My friends. I agree to their wish and you... »

«As You wish, my Master. But at Jerusalem... »

«At Jerusalem you will come with Me» promises Jesus. And Marjiam, a good boy, does not reply.

<sup>6</sup>They leave the room and Jesus joins the disciples who are so happy because of the unexpected meeting. 466.0

The old landlord loiters round the group. Jesus notices it and interrogates him.

«Well, the fact is that I would like to hear You speak. You are tired, I can see that. But before the meal, before we withdraw to rest, because You will be resting at least until evening, will You not say anything? »

«I will speak before I leave. So also the servants of the house and of the fields will be able to hear Me. Your wife is calling us now, see?... »

And Jesus stands up and goes into the room where the tables have been laid for the blessed guests.

467. The parable of the distribution of water.

Conditional forgiveness for the peasant Jacob.

Warnings to the apostles on their way to Korazim.

5<sup>th</sup> August 1946

<sup>1</sup>The news that the Master is there and that He is going to speak before evening has certainly spread and the surroundings of the house are crowded with people speaking in low voices, because they are aware that the Master is resting and they do not want to wake Him. They are waiting patiently under the trees, which protect them from the sun but not from the heat which is still strong. There are no sick people, at least I think so, but, as usual, there are children and Anne, to keep them quite, has some fruit given to them. 467.1

But Jesus does not sleep for long and the sun is still high when He appears pushing aside the curtain and smiling at the crowds. He is alone. The apostles are probably still sleeping. Jesus goes towards the people and stops near the lower edge of a well which is certainly used to water the trees of the orchard, because lit-

tie irrigation canals depart radially from the well spreading out among the trees. He sits on the lower edge and begins to speak at once.

2«Listen to this parable.

A wealthy man had many subordinates in numerous places of his state, but not every place was rich in water and fertile soil. Several places suffered from lack of water, and people suffered even more because if the ground was cultivated with trees which could withstand the drought, people suffered very much from the shortage of water. The rich owner instead had, close to the house in which he lived, a lake rich in water which gushed from underground springs.

One day he decided to make a tour of his estate and he saw that some places, those closest to the lake, were rich in water, whereas others, which were remote, had none, except the small quantity which God sent as rain. And he also noticed that those who had plenty of water were not kind to their brothers who were deprived of it, and begrudged them even with a pail of water with the excuse that they were afraid of being without. The lord meditated on the situation. And he decided thus: "I will divert the waters of my lake towards those who are closer to it and I will order them not to refuse water any longer to my distant servants who are suffering because of the parched land".

And he undertook the work at once and had canals dug to take the good water of the lake to the nearest parts of his property, where he dug large cisterns so that abundant water should gather there increasing the supplies already existing, and from each part he had smaller canals built to feed other more remote cisterns. He then summoned the people living in those places and said to them: Remember that I have not done all this work to give you superfluous quantities of water, but I did it to assist, with your help, those who lack also what is necessary. Be, therefore as merciful as I have been" and he dismissed them.

3Some time passed and the rich owner wished to visit all his possessions once again. He saw that the nearest ones had become more beautiful and abounded not only in useful plants but also in ornamental ones, in vats, swimming-pools, fountains placed everywhere around the houses.

"You have turned these houses into abodes of rich people" re-

marked the lord. "I do not have so much superfluous beauty myself", and he asked them: "Do the others come? Have you given them plenty water? Are the smaller canals fed? "

"Yes. They have been given as much as they asked. And they are over particular, they are never pleased, they are neither prudent nor moderate, they come and ask at any time, as if we were their servants and we have to defend ourselves to protect what belongs to us. They were no longer satisfied with the small canals and cisterns. They come as far as the large ones".

"Is that why you have enclosed these places and placed these wild dogs in each of them? "

"Yes, that is the reason, sir. They used to come in without any consideration and expected to take everything away and they spoiled... "

"But have you really given water to them? Do you realise that I did all this for them and I used you as an intermediate link between the lake and their parched land? I do not understand... I had as much water diverted from the lake as to satisfy everybody without any waste".

"And yet you must believe us: we never denied them water". ' The lord set out towards his remote possessions. The tall trees fit for arid ground were green and leafy. "They have spoken the truth" said the lord seeing them rustling in the distance. But when he approached them and walked under them he saw the parched soil, the almost withered grass on which emaciated sheep grazed with difficulty, the sandy vegetable gardens near houses and then the first farmers: sickly, with feverish eyes, downhearted... They looked at him and lowered their heads withdrawing as if they were frightened.

He was surprised at their behaviour and he called them. They approached him trembling. What are you afraid of? Am I no longer your good master who has taken care of you and with provident work has relieved you of the shortage of water? Why are your faces so sickly looking? Why is this land so arid? And the sheep so lean? And why do you seem to be frightened of me? Speak without fear. Tell your master what is afflicting you".

One man spoke on behalf of everybody. Lord, we have been badly disappointed and deeply grieved. You promised to help us and we have lost also what we had previously and we have given

up every hope in you”.

“How? Why? Did I not let water come abundantly to the nearest people with instructions that the abundance was for you?”

“Is that what you said? Really?”

“Most certainly. The level of the ground prevented me from bringing the water here directly. But with goodwill you could have gone to the little canals of the cisterns with goatskins and donkeys and taken as much as you wanted. Did you not have enough donkeys and goatskins? And was I not there to give you some?”

“There you are! I told you! I said: ‘It is not possible that the lord has given instructions to deny us water. I wish we had gone for it!’”

“We were afraid. They told us that the water was a reward for them and that we were to be punished”. And they informed the good master that the tenant farmers of the privileged possessions has told them that the landlord, in order to punish the servants of the arid fields because they were not producing more, had given instructions to measure not only the water of the cisterns but also that of the old wells, so that while previously they had two hundred baths of water a day for themselves and the land, and they had to carry it with much fatigue for a long distance, now they did not even have fifty and to have enough for men and animals they had to go to the brooks at the borders of the fortunate places, where water overflowed from gardens and baths and take that muddy water, and they were dying. They were dying of diseases and thirst and vegetables and sheep were also perishing...

“Oh! that is too much! And I must stop it. Take your goods and chattels and your animals and follow me. You will fatigue a little, worn out as you are, but then you will have peace. I shall proceed slowly to allow you to follow me, in spite of your weakness. I am a good master, a good father to you and I see to my Children. And he sets out slowly followed by the sad crowd of servants and animals who, however, were already rejoicing in the solace of their good master’s love.

467. 4     4They arrived at the possessions very rich in water. When they were at the borders, the master took some of the strongest men

and said to them: "Go and ask for some water in my name".

"And if they set the dogs on us? "

"I shall be behind you. Be not afraid. Go and say that I sent you and tell them not to close their hearts to justice, because the water belongs to God and all men are brothers. Tell them to open the canals at once".

They went and the landlord followed them. They stopped at a gate and the master hid himself behind the enclosure wall. They called and the tenant farmers went to the gate.

"What do you want? "

"Have mercy on us. We are dying. The landlord has sent us with instructions to take the water which he brought here for us. He says that God gave the water to him, he gave it to you for us because we are brothers and that you are to open the canals at once".

"Ha! Ha! " laughed the cruel people. "These ragged people are our brothers? You are dying? So much the better. We will take over your places, and we will take water there. We will certainly take it there in that case! And we will make the soil fertile. Water for you? You are stupid! The water is ours".

"Have mercy. We are dying. Open the canals. It's the master's order".

The wicked tenants consulted with one another and then they said: "Wait a moment" and they went away. They then came back and opened the gate. But they had dogs with them and heavy clubs... The poor people were afraid. "Come in, come in... Are you not coming in now that we have opened the gate? And then you will say that we were not generous... ". One of the men went in imprudently and a shower of blows rained on him while the unleashed dogs rushed upon the others.

The landlord appeared from behind the wall. "What are you doing, you cruel people? Now I know you and your animals and I will strike you" and he shot arrows at the dogs and he went in. He was severe and angry. "Is that how you carry out my orders? Is that why I gave you this wealth? Call all your people. I want to speak to you. And you" he said to the parched servants "come in with your women and children with your sheep and donkeys, with your doves and all your animals, and drink and refresh yourselves, and pick this juicy fruit and you, little inno-





cent children, play among the flowers. Enjoy yourselves. There is justice in the heart of your good master and there will be justice for everybody”.

And while the thirsty people ran to the cisterns, dived into the swimming-pools, and the cattle went to the vats and they were all full of joy, the others came from all directions looking frightened.

467. 5

<sup>5</sup>The landlord climbed on to the edge of a cistern and said: “I had all this work done and I made you trustees of my order and of this treasure, because I had chosen you as my ministers. But you failed in the test. You appeared to be good. You should have been good, because welfare makes people good, grateful to their benefactor and I had always assisted you by giving you the tenancy of this well-watered land. Such wealth and choice has made you hardhearted, more arid than the land which you have made completely arid and more sick than these people parched with thirst. Because water can cure them, whereas you, with your selfishness, have parched your spirits which are not likely to recover, and the water of charity will flow back into you with great difficulty. I will now punish you. Go into their lands and suffer what they suffered”.

“Mercy, lord! Have mercy on us! Do you want us to perish? Are you less compassionate towards us men than we are towards animals? ”.

“And who are these? Are they not men, your brothers? What mercy did you have on them? They were asking for water and you gave them blows with clubs and treated. them sarcastically. They were asking for what was mine and which I had given, and you refused them saying that it was ‘yours’. Whose water is it? Even I will not say that the water of the lake is mine although the lake is mine. Water belongs to God. Which of you has created one single drop of dew? Go!... And to you, to you who have suffered, I say: be kind. Do to them what you would have liked done to you. Open the canals which they closed and let the water flow towards them, as soon as possible. I make you my dispensers to these guilty brothers to whom I leave means and time to redeem themselves. And the Most High entrusts you with the wealth of His water. More than I do so that you may be providential for those who have none. If you can do this with love and justice, be-

ing satisfied with what is necessary, giving what is superfluous to the poor, being honest, not calling yours what is a gift given to you, a deposit more than a gift, great will be your peace and God's love and mine will always be with you".

<sup>467.6</sup>That is the end of the parable and everybody can understand it. I only say to you that rich people are only the depositaries of the wealth granted to them by God with instructions to distribute it to those who suffer. Consider the honour which God grants you by calling you to be partners in the work of Providence in favour of poor and sick people, of widows and orphans. God could ram money, garments, food on poor people. But in that case He would deprive rich people of great merits: those of charity towards their brothers. Not all rich people can be learned, but they can all be good. Not all rich people can take care of sick people, bury the dead, visit invalids and prisoners. But all rich people, and even those who are not poor, can give a piece of bread, a drop of water, cast-off garments, and they can welcome to their fireplaces those who are shivering, and can give hospitality to those who are homeless, and are exposed to rain and dog-days. He is poor who lacks what is necessary to live. The others are not poor, they have scanty means, but they are still rich as compared with those who die of starvation, privations and cold.

I am going away. I can no longer assist the poor people of this area. And my heart suffers thinking that they are losing a friend... Well I Who am speaking to you, and you know Who I am, I ask you to be the providence of the poor who are being left without their merciful Friend. Give them alms and love them in My name and in memory of Me... Be My continuators. Relieve My depressed heart with this promise: that you will always see Me in the poor and that you will receive them as the most true representatives of Christ Who is poor, Who wanted to be poor out of love for the most unhappy people on Earth, and to expiate, through His own indigence and ardent love, the unfair prodigality and selfishness of men.

Remember! Charity and mercy are rewarded forever. Remember! Charity and mercy are absolution from sins. God remits very much to those who love. And love for the poor who cannot reciprocate is the most deserving in the eyes of God. Remember these words of Mine until the end of your lives and you will

cent children, play among the flowers. Enjoy yourselves. There is justice in the heart of your good master and there will be justice for everybody”.

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ing satisfied with what is necessary, giving what is superfluous to the poor, being honest, not calling yours what is a gift given to you, a deposit more than a gift, great will be your peace and God's love and mine will always be with you".

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I am going away. I can no longer assist the poor people of this area. And my heart suffers thinking that they are losing a friend... Well I Who am speaking to you, and you know Who I am, I ask you to be the providence of the poor who are being left without their merciful Friend. Give them alms and love them in My name and in memory of Me... Be My continuators. Relieve My depressed heart with this promise: that you will always see Me in the poor and that you will receive them as the most true representatives of Christ Who is poor, Who wanted to be poor out of love for the most unhappy people on Earth, and to expiate, through His own indigence and ardent love, the unfair prodigality and selfishness of men.

Remember! Charity and mercy are rewarded forever. Remember! Charity and mercy are absolution from sins. God remits very much to those who love. And love for the poor who cannot reciprocate is the most deserving in the eyes of God. Remember these words of Mine until the end of your lives and you will

be saved and blissful in the Kingdom of God. - \_

May My blessing descend upon those who accept the word of the Lord and practice it.

467.7 <sup>7</sup>The apostles and Marjiam have come out of the house quietly while He was speaking and are in a compact group behind the crowds. But they come forward when Jesus ends His speech, and while doing so they collect the alms offered by many people. And they take the money to Jesus.

A shabby sickly looking man follows them. He is walking with his head so bent that I cannot see his face. He approaches Jesus and striking his chest he moans: "I have sinned, Lord, and You punished me. I deserve it. But at least forgive me before You depart. Have mercy on Jacob, a sinner!" He raises his face and I recognize, rather because he mentions his name than by his worn-out appearance, the farmer who was helped first and later punished\* through his harshness towards the two little orphans.

"My forgiveness! Sometime ago you wanted to be cured by this forgiveness. And you were worried because your corn was spoiled. And these apostles sowed for you. Are you perhaps without bread?"

"I have enough. "

"And is that perhaps forgiveness?" Jesus is very severe.

"No. I would rather die of starvation but feeling that my mind is at rest. I tried to make amends as best I can... I have prayed and wept... But You only can forgive and give peace to my spirit. Lord, I ask but to be forgiven..."

Jesus stares at him... He makes him raise his face, which he had bowed and pierces him with His bright eyes, bending slightly over him... He then says: «Go. You will or will not be forgiven according to how you live in the time left to you. »

«Oh! my Lord! Not thus! You have forgiven graver sins... »

«They were not people who had been assisted like you and they had not sinned against innocent children. The poor are always sacred, but orphans and widows are the most sacred of all. Do you not know the Law?... »

The man is weeping. He wants to be forgiven at once.

Jesus resists: «You have fallen twice and you have not been in

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\* helped, in 110. 5/6; punished, in 298. 2/6 and 338. 1.

a hurry to rise... Remember. What you, a man, allowed yourself, God can allow Himself. God is still very good if He tells you that He is not denying you forgiveness in an absolute manner, but He conditions it to the way you will live until your death. Go. »

«At least bless me... so that I may have more strength to be just. »

«I have already given My blessing. »

«No, not like that. Bless me in particular. See my heart... »

Jesus lays His hand on the man's head and says: «I have warned you. But may this caress convince you that, although I am severe, I do not hate you. My love is severe to save you, to treat you as an unhappy friend, not because you are poor, but because you have been bad. Remember that I loved you, that I had mercy on your spirit and may this remembrance make you anxious to have Me no longer as a severe friend. »

«When, Lord? Where shall I find You if You say that You are going away? »

«In My Kingdom. »

«Which one? Where are You establishing it? I will come there... »

«My Kingdom will be in your heart if you make it good and then it will be in Heaven. Goodbye. I must leave because it is getting dark and I must bless those whom I am leaving» and Jesus dismisses him turning to His disciples and to the landlord and landlady, and He blesses them one by one.

<sup>467.8</sup>He then resumes His journey after giving the money to Judas... He disappears in the green country as He walks south-westwards towards Capernaum...

«You are walking too much, Master! » exclaims Peter. «We are tired. We have covered so many stadia... »

«Be good, Simon. We shall soon be in sight of Korazim. You will enter the town calling at the few houses which are friendly to us and in particular at the widow's. And tell little Joseph that I want to greet him at dawn. You will bring him to Me on the road which goes up to Giscala... »

«But are You not coming to Korazim? »

«No. I am going up the mountain to pray. »

«You are exhausted. You are pale. Why do You neglect Yourself?

And why are You not coming with us? Why are You not coming to town? » They overwhelm Him with questions. Their fondness is at times heavy.

But Jesus is patient... and He replies patiently: «You know very well! Prayer is rest for Me. It is fatigue to be among people when I am not there to cure or to evangelize. So I will go up the mountain. Where I have been other times. You know the place. »

«On the path that takes one to Joachim's house? »

«Yes. You know where to find Me. At dawn I will come and meet you... »

«And shall we be going towards Giscala? »

«It is the right road to go towards the Syro-Phoenician borders. I told the people at Aphek that I would go there and I will go. »

«It's because... Don't You remember the last time? »

«Be not afraid, Simon. They have changed system. At present they honour Me... »

«Oh! So they love You. »

«No. They hate Me more than they did previously. But as they cannot overthrow Me by means of their strength, they try to do so by deceit. They are trying to seduce the Man... And to seduce one makes use of honours, even if they are false. Nay... <sup>467.9</sup>9Come here near Me, all of you» He says to the others who were proceeding in a group seeing that Jesus was speaking to Peter privately.

They gather together. Jesus says: «I was saying to Simon - and I will say it to everybody as I have no secrets for My friends - I was saying to Simon that those who are hostile to Me have changed their way to harm Me, but they have not changed their minds with regards to Me. So whilst previously they made use of insults and threats, now they have resort to honours. Not only with regards to Me, but also to you. So be strong and wise. Do not let their false words, their gifts and seductions deceive you. Remember what Deuteronomy says\*: "Gifts blind the eyes of wise men and alter the words of just people". Remember Samson. He was God's nazirite from his birth, from his mother's womb and she conceived and formed him in abstinence by order of the angel so that he might be a just judge of Israel. But where did so

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\* says, in: *Deuteronomy 16, 19.*

much good end? And how? And through whom? And was virtue not demolished many other times by means of honours, money and hired women to play into the enemies' hands? So be shrewd and vigilant in order not to be deceived and not to serve enemies even unawares. Strive to remain as free as birds, which prefer scanty food and a branch on which to rest to golden cages where food is plentiful and where they can rest comfortably, but where they are prisoners of the whims of men. Remember that you are My apostles, servants, therefore, of God only, as I am servant only of the Will of the Father. They will try to seduce you, perhaps they have already done so, catching each of you by your weak points, because the servants of Evil are cunning as they are taught by the Evil One. Do not believe their words. They are not sincere. If they were, I would be the first to say to you: "Let us greet these people as good brothers of ours". Instead we must mistrust their deeds and pray for them, that they may become good. I do so. I pray for you, that you may not be deceived by the new form of war, and I pray for them, that they may stop laying snares for the Son of man and they may cease offending God His Father. Imitate Me. Pray the Holy Spirit fervently. That He may give you light to see. And be pure, if you want Him to be your friend. Before leaving you I want to fortify you. I absolve you if you have sinned up to the present time. I absolve you of everything. Be good in future. Good, wise, chaste, humble and faithful. May the grace of My absolution fortify you... <sup>467.10</sup>Why are you weeping, Andrew? And why are you upset, My brother? »

«Because this sounds like a farewell... » says Andrew.

«And do you think that I would say goodbye to you so briefly? It is only a piece of advice for the present days. I see that you are all upset. That must not happen to you. Agitation upsets peace. Peace must always be with you. You are in the service of Peace and She loves you so much that She has chosen you as Her first servants. She loves you. Therefore you must consider that She will always help you, also when you are left alone. God is peace. If you are faithful to God, He will be with you. And if He is with you, of what can you be afraid? And what can separate you from God, If you do not get into a situation whereby you may lose Him? Sin only separates from God. But the rest: temptations, persecutions, death, no, not even death separates from



God. On the contrary, they join one more to God because every temptation which is overcome raises man by one step towards Heaven, because persecutions achieve for you double protecting love of God, and the death of a saint or of a martyr is but union with the Lord God. I solemnly tell you\* that with the exceptions of the children of perdition, none of My great disciples will die before I open the gates of Heaven. Consequently none of My faithful disciples will have to wait for the embrace of God after passing away from this dark exile into the light of the other life. I would not tell you this if it were not true. You can see it yourselves. Also today you have seen a man who after going astray has come back to the way of justice. One ought not to sin. But God is merciful and forgives those who repent. And he who repents can surpass also one who has not sinned, if his repentance is absolute and if his virtue, following his repentance, is heroic. It will be so pleasant to meet up there! To see you come up to Me, while I run to meet you and embrace you, taking you to My Father saying: "Here is one of My beloved. He always loved Me and thus he always loved You since I spoke to him of You; He has come now. Bless him, Father, and may Your blessing be his bright crown. My friends... Friends here and in Heaven. Do you not think that every sacrifice is light if it achieves such eternal

467. 11 joy? <sup>11</sup>You have cheered up now. Let us part here. I am going up there and you must be good... Let Me kiss you... » And He kisses them one by one.

Judas weeps when he kisses Him. He waited to be the last although he usually seeks to be the first, and he clings to Jesus: kissing Him several times and whispering through His hair close to His ear: «Pray, pray for me... »

They part, Jesus goes towards the hill and the others proceed towards Korazim, whose white houses already appear through the green trees.

467. 12 <sup>12</sup>Jesus says: «You will put here the vision of 23<sup>rd</sup> September 1944. There is no better rest for Me than to say: "I have saved one who was perishing", and the dictation that follows. »

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\* I solemnly tell you, as already in 346. 10.

468. A repentance of Judas Iscariot  
and the episodes that illustrate his character.

23<sup>rd</sup> September 1944.

<sup>1</sup> Jesus says:

468.1<sup>1</sup>

«In the meantime I tell you that, if you are going to do a regular work, the episode of Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> September\* is to be placed a year before My death, because it happened at harvest time in my 32<sup>nd</sup> year of age. The necessity to comfort and instruct you, my beloved, and others, has compelled Me to follow a special order when giving visions and relevant dictations. But in due course I will show you how to distribute the episodes of the three years of my public life.

The order of the Gospels is good, but not perfect as a chronological order. A diligent observer notices that. He who could have given the exact order of events, having been with Me from the beginning of the Evangelization to My Ascension, did not do so, because John, a true son of the Light, devoted himself to and worried about making the Light shine brightly through its appearance of a Body in the eyes of the heretics, who contested the truth of the Divinity enclosed in a human body. John's sublime Gospel achieved its supernatural purpose, but the chronology of My public life has not been improved by it. The other three evangelists show resemblances to one another with regards to events, but they alter their order with regards to time, because only one of the three was present at almost all My public life: Matthew, and he wrote it only fifteen years later, whilst the others wrote theirs even later after hearing the story from My Mother, from Peter, from other apostles and disciples.

I want to give you a guide to collect together the events of the three years, year by year.

And now see and write. The episode follows that of Wednesday (20<sup>th</sup> September). »

<sup>2</sup>I see Jesus walking slowly up and down a little country path <sup>468.2</sup> <sup>.2</sup> in the bright moonlight. The moon is full and shines with its broad smiling face in a very clear sky. By its position in the sky -

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\* the episode of Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> September is indicated in chapter 406.

it is beginning to set - I infer that it must be past midnight.

Jesus is certainly thinking and praying, although I do not hear any word. But He does not lose sight of what is around Him. He stops once and smiles listening to the loud song of a nightingale in love: the bird sings a melody with arpeggios and trills and a solo, notes which are held so well, so loud and for so long that it seems impossible that they come forth from that little bunch of feathers. In order not to disturb it with the shuffling of His sandals on the little stones of the path and with the rustling of His tunic on the grass, Jesus stops with folded arms and smiles raising His face. He even half-closes His eyes to concentrate better on hearing it, and when the nightingale comes to the end with a high note which rises and rises by thirds (I am not sure whether I remember correctly) and finishes with a very high note held as long as its breath allows, He expresses His approval and applauds silently nodding two or three times with a happy smile.

Now, instead, He bends over a tuft of honeysuckle in bloom, which exhales a strong scent from its numerous calyces like yawning serpents' mouths, in which the tongues of yellowish pistils tremble and a golden mark shines on the lower petal. The flowers look whiter, almost silvery, in the moonlight. Jesus admires and smells them and caresses them with His hand.

He retraces his steps. The place must be slightly high because in the moonlight one can see to the south something that shines like a wet piece of glass illuminated by the moon, certainly a tiny part of a lake, because it is neither a river nor the sea, as it is surrounded by hills on the side opposite to the one where Jesus is standing. Jesus looks at the placid calm waters sparkling in the peaceful summer night. He then turns around, from south to west, and looks at a village, standing out in its whiteness, about two kilometres away, probably less. It is quite a large village. He stops looking at it and shakes His head following a thought which distresses Him deeply.

He then resumes walking slowly and praying. Finally He sits on a large stone at the foot of a very tall tree, and assumes his usual posture, with his elbows resting on his knees, His forearms stretched out and his hands joined in prayer.

468. 3 <sup>3</sup>He remains thus for some time and would remain longer if a man, like a shadow, did not come towards Him from the thicket

calling Him: «Master? »

Jesus turns around, because the person is coming from behind Him, and He says: «Judas? What do you want? »

«Where are You, Master? »

«At the foot of the walnut-tree. Come here. » And Jesus stands up and goes onto the path, in the moonlight, so that Judas may see Him. «Have you come, Judas, to keep your Master company for a little while? » They are now close to each other and Jesus lovingly lays an arm on His disciple's shoulder. «Or am I needed at Korazim? »

«No, Master. There is no need for You. I wanted to come to You. »

«Come then. There is room for both of us on this stone. »

They sit down close to each other and remain silent. Judas does not speak, he looks at Jesus. He is struggling. Jesus wants to help him. He looks at him kindly, but keenly.

«What a beautiful night, Judas! Look how everything is pure! I do not think that the first night which smiled at the Earth and at Adam's sleep in the earthly Paradise was purer. Smell how scented are these flowers. Smell them. But do not pick them: They are so beautiful and pure! I also have refrained from picking them because to pluck them is to profane them. It is always wrong to do violence, to plants as to animals, to animals as to men. Why deprive them of their lives? Life is so beautiful when it is spent well!... And those flowers spend their lives well because they are sweet smelling, they cheer up people with their beautiful appearance and scents, they give honey to bees and butterflies and they transfer to the latter the gold of their pistils to place tiny drops of topaz on their pearly wings, and are used to make beds in nests... If you had been here a little while ago, you would have heard a nightingale sing so sweetly its joy of living and praising the Lord. Dear little birds! What an example they are for men! They are satisfied with little and only with what is legal and holy. A tiny grain and a little worm as given to them by the Father Creator; and if there is none, they do not become angry or irritated, but they deceive the hunger of their bodies with the ardour of their hearts, which makes them sing the praises of the Lord and the joy of hope. They are happy to be tired after flying from dawn to sunset to build a nest for themselves, a tepid,

soft, safe nest, not out of selfishness, but out of love for their offspring. And they sing urged by the joy of loving each other honestly: the nightingale for its mate and both for their little ones. Animals are always happy because they have no remorse or reproach in their hearts. We make them unhappy, because man is bad, disrespectful, overbearing, cruel. And he is not happy to be so with his like. His wickedness overflows on inferiors. And the more he feels remorse, the more his conscience spurs him and the more pitiless he is towards other people. I am sure, for instance, that that horseman who today was spurring his horse so cruelly, although it was wet with perspiration and tired, and he lashed it to the point of leaving swollen marks on the hair of its neck and sides, and even on its nostrils so tender, and on its dark eyelashes, which closed painfully on its eyes so resigned and mild, I am sure that his soul was not in peace. He was either going to commit a crime against Honesty, or he was coming from one. » Jesus becomes silent and pensive.

468. 4 <sup>4</sup>Judas is silent and pensive, too. He then says: How beautiful it is, Master, to hear You speak thus! Everything becomes clear to the eyes, to the mind, to the heart... and everything becomes easy. Also to say: "I want to be good!". Also to say to You... also to say to You: "Master, my soul is upset as well! Do not be disgusted at me, Master, since You love so much those who are pure!". »

«Oh, Judas! I disgusted? My dear friend, My dear son, what is upsetting you? »

«Keep me with You, Master. Hold me tight... I have sworn to be good after You spoke to me so kindly. I have sworn to become the Judas of the first days, when I followed and loved You as a groom loves his bride and I yearned for nothing but You, as I found every satisfaction in You. That is how I loved You, Jesus... »

«I know... and that is why I loved you... But I still love you, My dear hurt friend... »

«How do You know that I am hurt? And do You know by what?... »

There is silence. Jesus looks at Judas so kindly... Tears seem to make His eyes wider and kinder, tempering their brightness: the eyes of an innocent defenceless child who gives himself completely in love.

Judas drops at his feet with his face on Jesus' knees and clasp-

ing his sides with his arms he moans: «Keep me with You, Master... keep me... My flesh is howling like a demon... and if I give in, then all evil befalls me... I know that you are aware of it, but You wait for me to tell You... But it is hard, Master, to say: "I have sinned. »»

«I know, My friend. That is why one ought to act correctly: So that later one may not have to lower oneself saying: "I have sinned". But, Judas, that is also a very good medicine. The fact that one has to make an effort to confess one's sin restrains one from committing it; and if it has been committed the pain in accusing oneself is already redeeming repentance. And if one suffers not so much out of pride or for fear of punishment, but because one realises that by sinning one has caused sorrow, then I tell you that the sin is cancelled. It is love that saves. »

«I love You, Master. But I am so weak... Oh! You cannot love me! You are pure and You love the pure... You cannot love me because I am... I am... <sup>5</sup>Oh! Jesus, relieve me of the hunger of sensuality! Do You know what a demon it is? »

468. 5

«I know. I did not listen to it, but I know what its voices sound like. »

«See? See? You are so much disgusted by it that by simply mentioning it You look very upset... Oh! You cannot forgive me! »

«Judas. And do you not remember Mary? Or Matthew? Or the publican who became a leper? Or that woman, the Roman prostitute, for whom I prophesied a place in Heaven, because being forgiven by Me she will have the strength to live holily? »

«Master... Master... Oh! How sick at heart I am!... This evening I ran away... from Korazim... because if I had remained, I would have been lost. You know... it is like one who drinks and is taken ill... The doctor forbids him to drink wine and any intoxicating drink and he recovers and is healthy as long as he does not taste such liquors... But if he gives in, once only, and he tastes them again... he is thirsty... thirsty for such liquids... he no longer resists... and drinks and drinks... and is taken ill again... forever... mad... possessed by his demon by that demon of his... Oh! Jesus, Jesus, Jesus!... Don't tell the others... Don't tell them... I blush with shame before them all. »

«But not before Me. »

Judas misunderstands. «That is true! I ought to blush more

before You than anybody else, because You are perfect... »

«No, son. I did not mean that. Your grief, your distress, your dejection must not confound you. I said that you may blush before everybody, but not before Me. A son is not afraid or ashamed of a good father neither is an invalid of a clever doctor. And confession is to be made to both without any fear, as one loves and forgives, and the other understands and cures. I love and understand you. So I forgive and cure you. But tell Me, Judas. What is it that puts you into the hands of your demon? Is it I? Your brothers? Corrupt women? No. *It is your will.* I now forgive you and cure you... With what joy you have filled Me, My Judas! I was already rejoicing at this clear, scented night, which sweet songs made delightful, and I was praising the Lord for it. But the joy which you are now giving Me exceeds this clear moonlight, these scents, this peace, these songs. Can you hear it? The nightingale seems to join Me in telling you that it is glad of your goodwill, as the little singing bird is so willing to do that for which it was created. And likewise, this early morning breeze, which blows over flowers awaking them and letting dewy diamonds drop into the hollow calyces, so that butterflies and sunbeams may find them very soon, the former to refresh themselves, the latter to have their great brightness reflected by the tiny mirrors. Look: the moon is setting. Dawn is being announced by that cock crowing far away. The darkness and phantasm of the night are vanishing. See how quickly and pleasantly time has passed, whereas, if you had not come to Me, you would have spent it in disgust and remorse? You ought to come to Me every time you are afraid of yourself. One's own ego!!! A great friend, a great tempter, a great enemy and a great judge, Judas! And see? While it is a sincere loyal friend if you have been good, it can be an insincere friend if you are not good, and after being your accomplice, it rises to the office of implacable judge and tortures you with its reproaches... It is cruel

<sup>468.6</sup> in reproaching... Not I! <sup>6</sup>Well, let us go. The night is over... »

«Master, I did not let You rest... and today You have to speak so much... »

«I have rested in the joy which you gave Me. There is no better rest for Me than to say: "Today I have saved one who was perishing". Come... Let us go down to Korazim! Oh! if this town only knew how to imitate you, Judas! »

«Master... what will You tell my companions? »

«Nothing, if they do not ask Me... If they ask Me, I will say that we spoke of God's mercy... It is such a true and boundless subject that a very long life is not sufficient to treat it. Let us go... »

And they go down, both tall, differently handsome but equally young, One beside the other, and they disappear behind a group of trees...

<sup>7</sup>Jesus says:

468.7

«It is an episode of mercy like those of the Magdalene. But if you make a book, it will be better if you put the periods in orderly succession rather than the categories, simply stating at the beginning or end of each episode to which category it belongs.

Why do I elucidate Judas' figure? Many may wonder why.

I reply. Judas' figure has been distorted too much in the course of time. And lately it has been completely perverted. Some schools have sung his praises as if he had been the second and indispensable author of Redemption. Many also think that he succumbed to a sudden fierce assault of the Temptor. No. Every fall has premises in time. The graver the fall, the more it is prepared. Antecedent factors explain the fact. One does not collapse or rise all of a sudden, either in Good or in Evil. There are long insidious factors in descents, and patient holy ones in ascents. Judas' unfortunate drama can teach you so well how to save yourselves and how to become acquainted with the method of God and His mercy in saving and forgiving those who descend towards the Abyss.

One does not arrive at the satanic delirium in which you saw Judas struggle after the Crime, unless one is completely corrupted by Hellish habits, which one has taken up voluptuously for years. When one commits a crime driven by a sudden event, which deranges one's mind, one suffers but is capable of expiation, because some parts of the heart are still free from internal poison. To the world denying Satan, because it has him so much in itself that it no longer notices him, it has absorbed him and has become part of his ego, I prove that Satan exists. He is eternal and immutable in the method employed to make you his victims.

That is now. Remain with My peace. »



469. Farewell from the few faithful followers, of Korazim.

6<sup>th</sup> August 1946.

469. 1 <sup>1</sup>It is not yet dawn when Jesus meets the eleven apostles and in the middle of them the little carpenter Joseph, who darts off like an arrow as soon as he sees Jesus, Whose knees he clasps with the simplicity of one who is still a child. Jesus bends to kiss his forehead and then, holding him by the hand, He goes towards Peter and the others.

«Peace be with you. I was not expecting to meet you here. »

«The boy woke when it was still dark and he wanted to come lest he might be late» explains Peter.

«His mother will be here soon with the other children. She wants to greet You» adds Judas of Alphaeus.

«Also the woman who was a cripple is coming, and Isaac's daughter, Elias' mother and others who were cured by You. They gave us hospitality... »

«And the others? »

«Lord... »

469. 2 «Korazim perseveres in its harsh spirit. I understand. It does not matter. <sup>2</sup>The good seed has been sown and it will germinate one day... thanks to these... » and He looks at the boy.

«Will he be a disciple and will he convert people? »

«He is a disciple, are you not, Joseph? »

«Yes. But I am not good at speaking, and as far as I know, they do not listen to me. »

«It does not matter. You will speak through your goodness. » Jesus presses the child's little face in His long hands and bending lightly over his raised face He speaks to him.

«I am going away, Joseph. Be good and be a good worker. Forgive those who do not love you. Be grateful to those who help you. Always bear this in mind: that God is present in those who assist you and thus accept all assistance respectfully, without pretending, without saying: "I will idle about as there is someone who takes care of me", without spoiling the assistance you received. Work, because work is holy and you, a boy, are the only man in your family. Remember that by assisting your mother you honour her. Remember that to set a good example to your little brothers and to watch over the honour of your sisters is a du-

ty. Wish for what is just and work to have it, but do not envy the rich and do not wish to be wealthy to have a grand time. Remember that your Master taught you not only the word of God, but also love for work, humbleness and forgiveness. Be always good, Joseph, and one day we shall be together again. »

«But are You not coming back anymore? Where are You going, Lord? »

«I am going where the will of the Father Who is in Heaven wants Me to go. His will must always be stronger than ours, and dearer to us than ours, because it is always a perfect will. You also, during your lifetime, are not to put your will before that of God. All the obedient people will meet in Heaven and it will be a great feast then. <sup>3</sup>Give Me a kiss, child. »

469. 3

A kiss! The boy gives Him many kisses shedding many tears, and his mother finds him thus, clinging to Jesus' neck, when she arrives with the crowd of her children and very few people, seven in all, from Korazim.

«Why are you weeping, son? » asks the woman after greeting the Master.

«Because every farewell is sorrowful. But even if we are separated we shall always be united if your hearts continue to love Me. You know how to love Me and in what your love for Me consists. In doing what I taught you, because he who does what someone has taught him, shows that he holds in high esteem that person, and esteem is always love. So do what I taught you with My words and examples, and do what My disciples will teach you in My name. Do not weep. Time is short and we shall soon be reunited and in a better manner. And do not weep out of selfishness. Think of how many people are still waiting for Me, of how many will die without seeing Me, of how many will have to love Me without ever knowing Me. You have had Me here several times and faith and hope are made easier for you by our mutual love. They instead will have to have a great faith, a blind faith, in order to be able to say: "He is really the Son of God, the Saviour, and His word is truthful". A great faith to be able to have the great hope of eternal life and immediate possession of God after a life of justice. They will have to love Him Whom they never met, Whom they never heard, Whom they never saw work miracles. And yet, only if they love thus, they will have eternal Life.

You ought to bless the Lord Who has privileged you by granting you to know Me. Go now. Be faithful to the Law of Sinai and to My new commandment to love everybody like brothers, because there is God in love. Love also those who hate you, because God was the first to set the example of loving men who, through their sins, show hatred to God. Always forgive as God forgave men by sending His Word Redeemer to cancel the Sin, the cause of grudge and separation. Goodbye. May My peace be with you. Let your hearts remember My deeds, to fortify them against the words of those who will try to convince you that I am not your Saviour. And keep My blessing for your strength in the trials of future life. »

Jesus stretches out His hands repeating the Mosaic blessing on the little herd prostrated at His feet. He then turns around and goes away...

470. A lesson on marriage to a mother-in-law  
who is discontent with her daughter-in-law.

7<sup>th</sup> August 1946.

470.1 <sup>1</sup>The fertile woody mountains where Giscala is situated afford refreshment of greenery, breezes, water and views which are varied and beautiful according to the different directions of the road. To the north there is a series of wooded summits covered with the most varied green shades. I would say that the Earth seems to rise towards the blue vault of heaven, offering it, in grateful homage for the waters and sunbeams granted by it, all the vegetable beauties of nature. To north-east the eye stops fascinated contemplating the jewel of the Great Hermon which changes its colour according to time and light and raises its highest peak like a gigantic obelisk of diamond, of opal, of very pale sapphire, or of very delicate ruby, or of lightly hardened steel - according to whether the sun kisses it or leaves it and the ruffled clouds blown by winds cause a play of light on its perpetual snow - then the eye descends along the emerald slopes of the tablelands, along ridges, gorges and peaks, which are at the base of the royal giant. Then turning farther eastwards one sees the green expanse of the plateaux of Gaulanitis and Hau-

ran bordered at their eastern ends by mountains vanishing in a distant haze, and delimited on the western side by the different shade of green which lies along the Jordan and marks its valley. And closer at hand, are two lakes, as splendid as two sapphires: the lake of Merom within the low circle of a well-watered plain, and the lake of Tiberias, as graceful as a delicate pastel amid the hills surrounding it, different in shape and shades, with its shores constantly full of flowers: an eastern dream with groups of palm-trees waving their tops in the breeze from nearby mountains, the poetry of our lakes most beautiful for the calm of their waters and the cultivations of their shores. And then to the south, mount Tabor with its typical summit, and the little Hermon, completely green, watching over the Plain of Esdraelon the vast extent of which is revealed by the long horizon uninterrupted by mountain chains, and farther down, to the south, the high powerful mountains of Samaria stretching beyond man's sight towards Judaea. The only one which is not visible is the western side, where Mount Carmel must be and the plain stretching to the north, towards Ptolemais, both hidden by a mountain chain higher than this one, so that they cannot be seen.

I am trying hard to provide a topographical vision\* from the mountains where Giscala is, as i believe I have never given one before. It is one of the most beautiful sights in Palestine.

<sup>2</sup>Jesus is proceeding following the road among the mountains, at times all alone, at times joined by this or that apostle. 470. 2

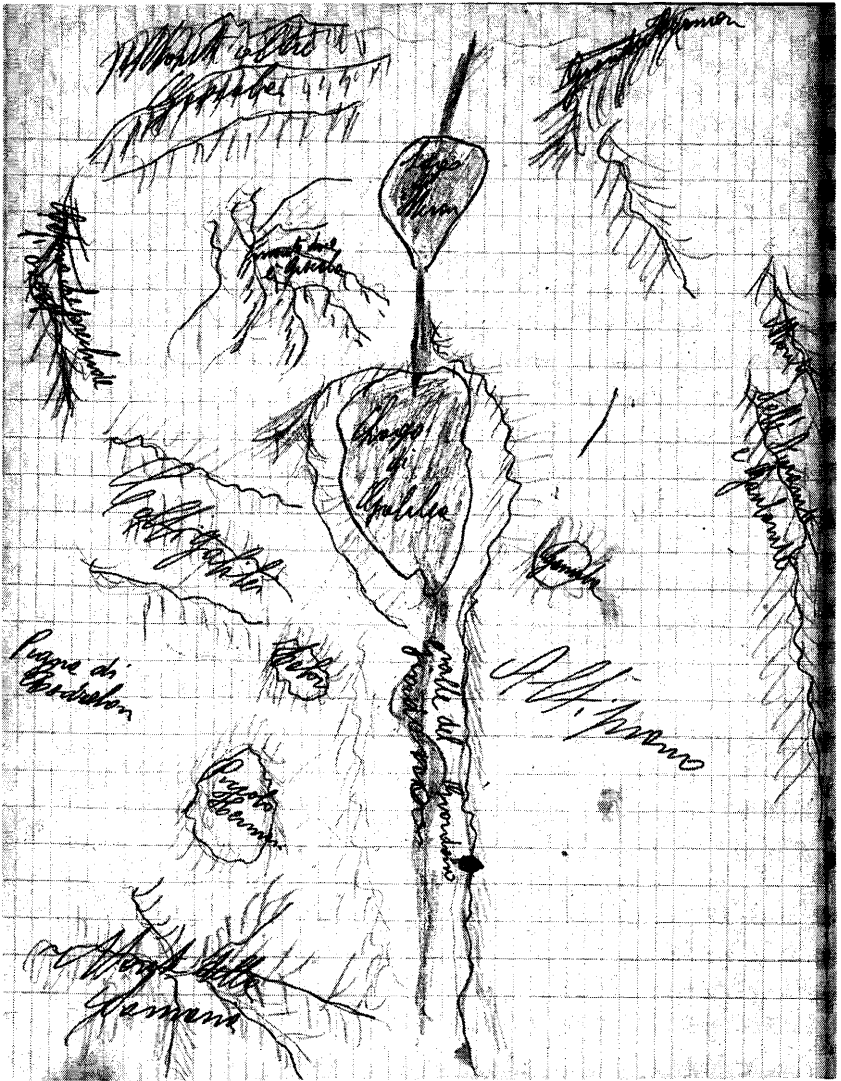
He stops once to caress a shepherd's children who are playing near the flock and He accepts the milk that the shepherd, who has recognised Him as the Rabbi described by other people who had seen Jesus, wants to give Him saying: «For You and for Your friends. »

He stops again to listen to an old woman who, not knowing who He is, tells Him her family troubles caused by a daughter-in-law who is shrewish and disrespectful.

<sup>3</sup>Although He pities the old woman, Jesus exhorts her to be patient and to convince her daughter-in-law to be kind through 470. 3

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\* a topographical vision, that MV provides and that we have illustrated on the following page, positions the *mountains where Giscala is* to the south east of the *Merom Lake*. The description in the text may help to decipher all the names of the drawing.



her own kindness: «You must be a mother to her, even if she is not your daughter. Be sincere: if instead of being your daughter-in-law she were your daughter, would her faults appear to you so serious? »

The old woman ponders... and she then confesses: «No... But a daughter is always a daughter... »

«And if one of your daughters should tell you that in the house of her husband her mother-in-law ill-treated her, what would you say? »

«That she is bad. Because she ought to teach the customs of the house - as every house has its own - kindly, particularly if the wife is young. I would say that she should remember when she was a newly-wed bride herself, and how pleased she was to be loved by her mother-in-law, if she had been lucky to have a good one, and how she had suffered, if she had had a bad one. And that she should not make her daughter-in-law suffer what she had not suffered, or not make her suffer because she knows what it is to suffer. Oh! I would defend my daughter! »

«How old is your daughter-in-law? »

«She is eighteen years, Rabbi. She has been married to Jacob three years. »

«She is very young. Is she faithful to her husband? »

«Oh! yes. She is a stay-at-home and she is full of love for him and for little Levi and for the little girl, whose name is Anne, like mine. She was born at Passover... She is so beautiful!... »

«Who wanted her to be named Anne? »

«Mary did! Levi was the name of the father-in-law and Jacob called his first son after him, and when Mary had the girl she said: "We will give her the name of your mother". »

«And do you not think that that is love and respect? »

The old woman is pensive... Jesus insists: «She is honest, she is fond of her home, she is a loving wife and mother, she is anxious to make you happy... She could have given her daughter the name of her own mother, instead she called her after you... she honours your house with her behaviour... »

«Oh! That is true! She is not like that wretch of Jezebel. »

«Well, then! Why do you complain and lay information against her? Do you not think that you are using two measures in judging your daughter-in-law in a different manner than you would judge a daughter of yours?.. »

«The trouble is... is... that she has deprived me of the love of my son. Before he was all for me, now he loves her more than he loves me... » The real reason of prejudices of mothers-in-law overflows at last from the old woman's heart together with tears from her eyes.

«Does your son leave you wanting anything? Has he neglected you since he got married?.. »

«No. I cannot say that. But, in brief, he belongs to his wife now... » and she weeps moaning more loudly.

470. 4

<sup>4</sup>Jesus smiles a quiet pitiful smile for the jealous old woman. But, being as kind as ever, He does not reproach her. He feels pity for the suffering mother and tries to cure her. He lays His hand on her shoulder as if He wanted to guide her, because she is blinded by tears, perhaps to make her feel, through His contact, so much love that she may be comforted and cured, and He says to her:

«Mother, and is it not right that it is so? Your husband did so with you, and his mother did not lose him, as you say and think, but she felt that he belonged less to her because your husband divided his love between his mother and you. And your husband's father, in his turn, stopped belonging completely to his mother, to love the mother of his children. And so on from generation to generation, going back in time to Eve: the first mother who saw her children divide with their wives the love which they previously had exclusively for their parents. But does Genesis not say: "This at last is bone from my bones and flesh from my flesh... This is why a man will leave his father and mother and will join himself to his wife and they will become one body". You may object: "It was the word of a man". Yes, but of what man? He was in the state of innocence and grace. He thus reflected without any shadow the Wisdom which had created him and he was aware of its truth. Through Grace and his innocence he possessed also the other gifts of God in full measure. As his senses were subdued to his reason, his mind was not obscured by the fumes of concupiscence. And because science was proportionate to his state, he spoke words of truth. So he was a prophet. Because you know that prophet means a person who speaks in the name of another person. And as true prophets always speak of matters concerning the spirit and the future, even if relating apparently to the present time and the body - because in the sins of the flesh and in the facts of the present time are the seeds of future punishments, or facts of the future have roots in ancient events: for instance the coming of the Saviour originates from Adam's sin, and the punishments of Israel, foretold

by the prophets, were brought about by the behaviour of Israel - so He Who urges their lips to speak things of the spirit can but be the Eternal Spirit Who sees everything in an eternal present. And the Eternal Spirit speaks through saints, because he cannot dwell in sinners. Adam was a saint, because justice was complete in him and every virtue was present in him, because God had instilled the fullness of His gifts into His creature. Man has to work hard now, to attain justice and possess virtues, because the incentives of evil are in him. But such incentives were not in Adam, on the contrary Grace made him little inferior to God his Creator. So his lips spoke words of grace. And this is a truthful word: "A man will leave his father and mother for a woman and he will join himself to his wife and they will become one body". And it is so absolutely true, that the Most Good Lord in order to comfort mothers and fathers included the fourth Commandment in the Law: "Honour your father and your mother". A Commandment that does not end with the marriage of man, but lasts beyond marriage. Previously good people instinctively honoured their relatives also after they left them to set up a new family. Since Moses it is an obligation of Law. And the purpose of it is to mitigate the grief of parents who were too often forgotten by their children after they got married. But the Law has not cancelled the prophetic words of Adam: "Man will leave his father and mother for his wife". They were just words and they are still valid. They reflected the thought of God. And the thought of God is immutable because it is perfect. <sup>5</sup>So, mother, you must accept without selfishness the love of your son for his wife. And you will be holy as well. On the other hand, every sacrifice is compensated on the Earth. Is it not pleasant for you to kiss your grandchildren, the children of your son? And will the evening of your life not be peaceful and your last sleep placid with the delicate love of a daughter near you, to take the place of those daughters who are no longer in your house?... »

«How do You know that my daughters, who are all older than my son, are married and live far away?... Are You a prophet, too? You are a Rabbi. I can tell by the tassels of Your mantle and even if You did not have them, Your word reveals it. Because You speak like a great doctor. Are You perhaps a friend of Gamaliel? He was here just the day before yesterday. Now I do not know...



And there were many rabbis with him, and many of his favourite disciples. Perhaps You have arrived late. »

«I know Gamaliel. But I am not going to him. I am not even going into Giscala... »

«But who are You? You are certainly a rabbi. And You speak even better than Gamaliel... »

«Then... do what I told you. And you will have peace. Goodbye, mother. I am going on My way. You are certainly going to town. »

«Yes Mother!... The other rabbis. are not so humble with a poor woman... She Who bore You is certainly holier than Judith if She gave You such a kind heart for every creature. »

«She is holy, indeed. »

«Tell me Her name. »

«Mary. »

«And Yours? »

«Jesus. »

«Jesus!... » The little old woman is bewildered with astonishment. The news has paralysed her and riveted her where she heard it.

«. Goodbye, woman. Peace be with you» and Jesus goes away quickly, He almost runs away before she may recover from the shock.

470. 6 6And the apostles follow Him with vigorous strides amid much fluttering of garments, in vain chased by the shouts of the woman who implores: «Stop! Rabbi Jesus! Stop! I want to tell You something... » They slow down when the thick of the wooded mountains conceal them again and they can no longer see the road which takes one to Giscala and from which their mule-track branches off.

«How well You spoke to the woman» says Bartholomew.

«The lesson of a doctor! A pity that she was alone... » remarks James of Alphaeus.

«I want to remember those words... » exclaims Peter.

«The woman understood, or almost, after Your Name... Now she Will talk of You in town... » says Thomas.

«Provided she does not tease the wasps hurling them after us! » murmurs Judas of Kerioth.

«Oh! we are far away now!... And one does not leave traces

in these woods, so we shall not be troubled» says Andrew optimistically.

«Even if we were!... I restored peace in a family» Jesus replies to everybody.

«How peculiar they are! Mothers-in-law are all alike! » says Peter.

«No. We have met some good ones. Do you remember the mother-in-law of Jerusa of Doco? And the mother-in-law of Dorcas\* from Caesarea Philippi? ».

«Of course, James... There are some good ones... » agrees Peter; but he certainly thinks that his mother-in-law is a torture.

«Let us stop and eat. Then we will have a rest, so that we may arrive at the village in the valley before night» orders Jesus.

And they stop in a green dell, like the inside of a huge emerald green shell encrusted in the mountain and open to receive pilgrims in its peace. Light is mild, despite the time of the day, as tall mighty trees form a rustling vault over the meadow. And the temperature is mild because of the breeze blowing from the mountains. A little spring pours a silvery stream between two dark rocks and murmurs in a low voice disappearing among the thick herbs, in a tiny bed which it has dug, about a palm wide and all covered with the stalks growing on the banks, and waving in the light breeze; it then descends, in a tiny waterfall, on a rock below. The horizon, as seen between two large tree trunks, looks hazy and distant, towards the mountains of Lebanon, and is wonderful...

471. Philip elates thinking of the Messianic era.  
Having refused the invitation to go to Giscala,  
Jesus illustrates the notion of sin  
to the Levite Joseph, also known as Barnaba.

10<sup>th</sup> August 1946.

<sup>1</sup>It is pleasant to rest on the small tableland. But it is wise to descend to the valley while it is daylight, because it would be dark very early under the thick trees covering the mountain. <sup>471. 1</sup>

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\* of Jerusa, in 131. 6 and 134; of Dorcas, in 345. 3/5, 368. 6/11 and 370. 11.

Jesus is the first to get up and He goes to freshen up His face, hands and feet in the tiny stream running from the little spring. He then calls His apostles, who are sleeping on the grass, and invites them to get ready to depart. And while they imitate Him, one after the other, washing themselves in the cool brook and filling their flasks at the fine stream flowing from the rock, He goes to the edge of the little meadow waiting for them near two age-old trees delimiting its eastern side, and He looks at the distant horizon.

Philip is the first to join Him, and looking in the same direction as his Master, he says to Him: «This sight is beautiful! You are admiring it... »

«Yes, but I was not looking only at its beauty. »

«At what, then? Were You perhaps thinking of the time when Israel will be great, of those places beyond Lebanon and Orontes, which in the course of centuries vexed us and are still distressing us, because the heart of the power which oppresses us through its Ambassador resides there? The prophecies concerning them made by several prophets are terrible indeed: “I will break Assyria in my country, I will crush him on my mountains... This is the hand stretched out against all the nations... And who will be able to hold it back?... Damascus is going to cease to be a city, she will become a heap of ruins... Such will be the lot of our plunderers”. Isaiah speaks thus! And Jeremiah says\*: “I will light a fire inside the walls of Damascus, it shall devour the palaces of Ben-hadad”. And that will happen when the King of Israel, the Promised One, takes His sceptre, and God has forgiven His people by sending the King Messiah to them... Oh! Ezekiel says\*\* so: “Mountains of Israel grow branches and bear fruit for my people Israel who will soon return... I will lead my people back to you, and they will have you for their own domain... I shall never again let you hear the insults of the nations... ”. And the psalms sing with Ethan the Ezrahite: “I have found my servant David and anointed him with my holy oil. My hand will assist him... His enemy will not be able to do anything against him... His for-

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\* Isaiah speaks, in: *Isaiah 14, 25-27; 17, 1, 14*; Jeremiah says, in: *Jeremiah 49, 27*.

\*\* Ezekiel says, in: *Ezekiel 36, 8, 12, 15*. Quotations follow, once again through the words of Philip from: *Psalms 89, 21-28; Psalm 72, 5-11*; and through the words of Jesus: *Psalms 69, 22; Isaiah 63, 1-3*.

tunes shall rise in my name... He will stretch his hand over the sea and his right hand over rivers... And I will make him the first-born, the sovereign among the kings of the Earth". And Solomon sings: "He will endure like sun and moon... His empire shall stretch from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the Earth... All the kings of the Earth will do him homage, all nations will become his servants... ". You, Messiah, because all the signs of the spirit and of the flesh are in You, all the signs given by the prophets. Alleluia to You, Son of David, King Messiah, holy King! »

«Alleluia! » shout in chorus the others who have joined Jesus and Philip and have heard the latter, s words. And alleluia echoes through gorges and hills...

Jesus looks at them very sadly... And He replies: «But do you not remember what David says of the Christ, and what Isaiah says of Him... You are taking the sweet honey and the inebriating wine of the prophets... but you are not considering that in order to be the King of kings the Son of man will have to drink bile and vinegar and dress Himself with the purple of His own Blood... But it is not your fault if you do not understand... Your error in understanding is love. I would like a different love in you. But for the time being you cannot... Ages of sin are against men preventing them from seeing the Light. But the Light will demolish the walls and will enter you... <sup>2</sup>Let us go. »

471. 2

They go back to the mule path which they had left to go up to the remote plateau and they descend quickly towards the valley. The apostles speak to one another in low voices...

Then Philip runs ahead, joining the Master and asks: «Have I displeased You, Lord. I did not want to... Are You angry with me? »

«No, Philip, I am not. But I would like you at least to understand. »

«You were looking there with such keen desire... »

«Because I was thinking of how many places have not yet had Me... And will not have Me... because My time flies... How short is the time of man! And how slow man is in acting! How much the spirit feels such limitations of the Earth!... But Father may Your will be done! »

«But You have covered all the regions of the old tribes, my

Master. You have sanctified them at least once, so one can say that You gathered in Your hands the twelve tribes... »

«That is true. But, afterwards, you will do what time did not let Me do. »

«Since You can stop rivers and calm seas, could You not slow down time? »

«I could. But the Father in Heaven, the Son on the Earth, the Love in Heaven and on the Earth, are eager to accomplish forgiveness... » and Jesus becomes engrossed in deep meditation which Philip respects leaving Him alone and joining his companions to whom he relates his conversation.

471.3 3... The valley is now close at hand and a road can already be seen, a real main road, which from the south proceeds westwards, bending just at the foot of the mountain, and running along its base. It then runs straight towards a fine village lying in the green near a little river the bed of which is covered with stones, With a few resisting reeds here and there, particularly in the middle, where a little stream, just a tiny stream, persists in flowing towards the sea.

They all gather together before taking the main road, and they have only walked a few metres when two men come towards them waving their hands to greet them.

«Two disciples of rabbis, and one is a Levite. What do they want? » the apostles ask one another and they are not at all happy to meet them. I do not know how they can infer that the two are disciples and that one is a Levite. I do not yet understand the meaning of tassels and fringes and other secrets of Israelite garments.

When Jesus is about two metres away from the two men, and when no misunderstanding is possible as the road is now clear of wayfarers hurrying towards the village on foot or on horseback, He returns their repeated greetings and stops waiting.

«Peace to You, Rabbi» says the Levite who previously had just made low bows.

«Peace to you. And to you» says Jesus, addressing the other one.

«Are You the Rabbi named Jesus? »

«I am. »

«A woman came into town before the sixth hour and she said

that she had spoken on the road to a rabbi greater than Gamaliel, because besides being wise He is good. The news reached us and our masters put off our departure for Jerusalem and sent us all out to look for You: two of us on each road going down from Giscala to the roads in the plain. In their names and through us they say to You: "Come into town, because we want to consult You". »

«Why? »

«That You may declare Your opinion on an event which took place in Giscala and of which the consequences are still lasting. »

«And have you not got the great doctors in Israel to give you their opinions? Why apply to the unknown Rabbi? »

«If You are He, Whom the rabbis say, You are not unknown. Are You not Jesus of Nazareth? »

«I am. »

«Your wisdom is known to the rabbis. »

«And their bitter hatred for Me is known to Me. »

«Not in all of them, Master. The greatest and just one does not hate You. »

«I know. But he does not love Me either. He studies Me. But is rabbi Gamaliel in Giscala? »

«No. He already left to be at Sephoris before the Sabbath. He left immediately after the sentence. »

«So why are you looking for Me? I have to keep the Sabbath as well and I can just reach that place in time. Do not keep Me any longer. »

«Are You afraid, Master? »

«I am not afraid because I know that so far no power has been given to My enemies. But I leave the joy of judging to wise people. »

«What do You mean? »

«That I do not judge. I forgive. »

«You can judge better than anybody else. Gamaliel said so. He said: "Only Jesus of Nazareth would judge with justice in this case". »

«A11 right. But you have already judged. And the matter can no longer be mended. My opinion would have been to calm passions before striking. If there was a fault the guilty man might have repented and redeemed himself. If there was no fault, there

would have been no punishment, which according to some people is, in the eyes of God, the same as wilful murder. »

«Master! But how do You know? The woman swore that You spoke with her only of her matters... and... You know... So are You really a prophet? »

«I am Who I am. Goodbye. Peace to you. The sun is descending to the west» and He turns around and goes towards the village.

«You have done the right thing, Master! They were certainly lying in wait for You! » The apostles are solid for the Master.

471. 4 <sup>4</sup>But their praises and reasons are cut short by the two previous men who reach them entreating Jesus to go up to Giscala.

«No. Sunset would overtake Me on the way. Tell those who sent you that I comply with the Law, I always do, when its observance is not prejudicial to the Commandment which is greater than the Sabbatic one: that of love. »

«Master, Master, we implore You. This is just a case of love and justice. Come with us, Master. » «I cannot. Neither can you go back up in time. »

«We have permission to do it in this case. »

«What? They reproached Me if I cured a sick man and absolved him on a Sabbath, and you are allowed to infringe the Sabbath for an idle discussion? Are there perhaps two measures in Israel. Go! Go and let Me go. »

«Master, You are a prophet and so You know. I believe it and this man believes it. Why are You rejecting us? »

«Because!... » Jesus stares at them and stops. His severe eyes, which pierce and penetrate beyond the veils of the body to read their hearts, scrutinise domineeringly the two men in front of Him. And then His eyes, so unsustainable in severity, so mild in love, now change by assuming such a loving and merciful expression that if previously a heart trembled with fear because of their powerful look, now it trembles with emotion in the presence of the bright love of the Christ. «Because! » He repeats... «Not I, but men reject the Son of man, and He must distrust His brothers. But to those whose hearts are without malice I say: “Come” and I also say: “Love Me” to those who hate Me... »

«So, Master... »

«So I am going to the village for the Sabbath. »

«At least wait for us. »

«I am leaving at sunset of the Sabbath. I cannot wait. »

<sup>5</sup>The two men look at each other, they consult each other in remaining behind; then the one whose face is more open and who has spoken almost all the time, runs back. «Master, I am staying with You until after the Sabbath. » 471. 5

Peter, who is beside Jesus, plucks His tunic compelling Him to turn to his side and whispers: «No. A spy. » Judas Thaddeus who is behind his Cousin, says in a soft voice: «Don't trust him. » Nathanael, who had gone ahead with Simon and Philip, turns around and looks sternly meaning: «No. » Even the two most trustful ones, Andrew and John, shake their heads from behind the pestering fellow.

But Jesus does not pay attention to their suspicious fears and He replies briefly: «Stay» and the others must resign themselves.

The man is now happy and feels more at home. He also feels that he must tell his name, who he is, why he is in Palestine although he was born in the Diaspora, that he was consecrated to God from his birth, because he was «the consolation of his parents» who, grateful to the Lord for having him, entrusted him to relatives in Jerusalem, that he might be of the Temple. It was there, while serving the House of God, that he met Gamaliel and became his diligent and loved disciple. «They named me Joseph because like the ancient one\*, I relieved my mother of the grief of being barren.

But my mother always said “my consolation” when she fed me, so I became Barnabas\*\* for everybody. Also the great Rabbi calls me thus because he finds solace in his best disciples. »

«Ensure that God also may say that of you, and above all that He may call you so» says Jesus. <sup>6</sup>They enter the village. 471. 6

«Are you familiar with this place? » asks Jesus.

«No, I have never been here. It is the first time that I come here, to Naphtali. The rabbi brought me here with other people, because I am all alone, I have no relatives... »

«Is God your Friend? »

«I hope so. I try to serve Him as best I can. »

«Then you are not alone. A sinner is alone. »

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\* the ancient one, that is Joseph in *Genesis 30, 22-24*.

\*\* I became Barnabas, as can be read in *Acts 4, 36*.



«I may sin, too. »

«As you are the disciple of a great rabbi, you are certainly aware of the conditions whereby an action becomes a sin. »

«Everything, Lord is sin. Man sins continuously, because the precepts are more numerous than the moments in a day. And consideration and circumstances do not always help us to avoid sin. »

«It is true that circumstances above all often lead us to sin. But have you a clear conception of the main attribute of God? »

« Justice. »

«No. »

«Power. »

«Neither. »

«... Severity. »

«Less than ever. »

«And yet it was so on Sinai and even later... »

«The Most High was then seen amidst lightning which encircled the face of the Father and Creator with awful haloes. You really do not know the true face of God. If you knew Him and His spirit, you would know that the main attribute of God is Love and merciful Love. »

«I know that the Most High has loved us. We are the chosen people. But it is tremendous to serve Him! »

«If you know that God is Love, how can you say that He is tremendous? »

«Because by sinning we lose His love. »

«I have already asked you whether you know the conditions whereby an action becomes a sin. »

«When it is not an action of the six hundred and thirteen precepts, or of the traditions, decisions, customs, blessings and prayers, besides the ten commandments of the Law, or it does not comply with the teaching of the scribes, then it is a sin. »

«Even if man does not do it with full knowledge and perfect consent of will? »

«Yes, even so. Because who can say: "I do not sin"? Who can hope to have peace in Abraham after death? »

471.7 <sup>7</sup>«Are the spirits of men perfect? »

«No, because Adam sinned and we have that fault in us. It makes us weak. Man has lost the Grace of the Lord, the only

strength to support us... »

«And does the Lord know that? »

«He knows everything. »

«So, do you think that He has no mercy taking into account what makes man weak? Do you think that He exacts from the smitten descendants what He could exact from the first Adam? That is where the difference lies which you do not take into consideration. God is justice, I agree. He is Power, I agree. He may also be Severity with the unrepentant sinner who perseveres in his sin. But when He sees that one of His children - all men are children on the Earth which is one hour of eternity for the spirit, that becomes adult at its spiritual examination of eternal majority at the moment of the particular judgement - when He sees that one of His children errs because he is absent-minded, or slow in distinguishing, or not very well educated, or because he is very weak in one or more things, do you think that the Most Holy Father may judge him with inflexible severity? You said it yourself, that man lost Grace, the strength to react against temptation and incentives. And God knows that. And one must not be afraid of God and shun Him as Adam did after his sin. But man ought to remember that He is Love. His face shines upon men, not to reduce them to ashes, but to comfort them as the sun comforts with its beams. Love, not severity radiates from God: sunbeams, not flashes of lightning. In any case... What did Love impose of His own will? A burden which cannot be carried? A code of numberless chapters easy to be forgotten? No. Just ten commandments, to bridle like a colt the animal man, who without bridle goes to rack and ruin. But when man is saved, when Grace is given back to him, when the Kingdom of God is established, that is, the Kingdom of love the children of God and subjects of the King will be given one only commandment which will comprise everything: "Love your God with your whole self and your neighbour like yourself". Because, believe, o man, that God-Love can but alleviate the yoke and make it pleasant and love will make it pleasing to serve God, when He is no longer feared but loved. Only loved, loved for Himself and loved in our brothers. How simple the last Law will be! As God is, Who is perfect in His simplicity. Listen: love God with your whole self, love your neighbour as yourself. Meditate. Are the burdensome

six hundred and thirteen precepts and all the prayers and blessings not already included in these two sentences, divested of useless cavils, which are not religion but slavery towards God? If you love God you will certainly honour Him every hour of the day. If you love your neighbour, you will not do anything which may grieve him. You will not lie steal kill or injure, you will not commit adultery. Is it not so? »

471. B 8«It is... Just Master, I would like to stay with You. But Gamaliel has already lost to You his best disciples... I... »

«It is not yet the hour for you to come to Me. When it comes, your very master will tell you, because he is a just man. »

«He is, is he not? Do You say so? »

«I say so because it is the truth. I am not one who knocks people down to rise above those who have been knocked down. I recognise everybody's rights... But they are calling us... They must have found lodgings for us. Let us go... »

472. The new Law. The treacherous request  
of an opinion about an event that occurred in Giscala.

12<sup>th</sup> August 1946.

472. 1 1«I am not at all happy to stay here with this man who has joined us... » grumbles Peter who is with Jesus in a thick orchard.

It must be the afternoon of the Sabbath, because the sun is still high, whereas it was already twilight when they arrived at the village.

«We shall depart after the prayers. It is Sabbath. We were not allowed to walk and this rest has done us good. We shall not stop any more until the next Sabbath. »

«But You have not rested very much. All those sick people!... »  
«So many are now praising the Lord. To spare you so much road, I would have stopped here for two days to give the people whom I cured time to take the news beyond the borders, but you did not agree. »

«No! I would like to be already far away. And... do not trust people too much, Master. You talk and talk! But do You know that every word of Yours becomes poison against You on certain lips? Why did they send him to us? »

«You know why. »

«Yes, but why did he stay? »

«He is not the first one to remain with us after approaching Me. » Peter shakes his head, he is not convinced. And he grumbles: «A spy... A spy!... »

«Do not judge, Simon. You might repent of your present judgement one day... »

«I am not judging! am afraid. For You. And that is love. And the Most High cannot punish me because I love You. »

«I am not saying that you would repent of that but of having a bad opinion of a brother of yours. »

«He is the brother of those who hate You. So he is not my brother. »

From a human point of view his logic is correct, <sup>2</sup>but Jesus re- 472. 2  
marks: «He is a disciple of Gamaliel and Gamaliel is not against Me. »

«But he is not with You either. »

«He who is not against Me is with Me, even if he does not appear to be so. You cannot expect Gamaliel, the greatest doctor at present in Israel a well of rabbinical knowledge, a real mine in which is all the... essence of rabbinical science, to disown everything at once to accept... Me. Simon, it is difficult even for all of you to accept Me, forsaking all your past... »

«But we have accepted You! »

«No. Do you know what it means to accept Me? It means not only to love Me and follow Me. That is very much the merit of the Man I am and Who is an attraction for you. To accept Me is to accept My doctrine, which is identical to the ancient one in the divine Law, but which is completely different from that law, from that heap of human laws which have been piling up in the course of centuries forming a code and a formulary which has nothing divine. You, all the humble people in Israel and also some important very just people, complain of and criticise the formalistic subtleties of scribes and Pharisees, their intolerance and hardness... but you are not immune yourselves. It is not your fault. In the course of the centuries, you Hebrews have slowly absorbed the... the human exhalations of those who have adulterated the pure superhuman Law of God. You know. When a man continues to live for years in a way which is different from that of his na-

tive country, because he is in a foreign country and his children and the children of his children live there it happens that his offspring end up by becoming like the people of the place where they are. They become so acclimatised that they lose even their national physical appearance, in addition to moral habits, and unfortunately, also the religion of their ancestors... But here are the others. Let us go to the synagogue. »

472. 3 <sup>3</sup>«Are You going to speak? »

«No. I am a simple believer. I spoke this morning through miracles... »

«Provided that it is not going to be detrimental... » Peter is really dissatisfied and worried, but he follows the Master Who has joined the other apostles and meets on the road with the man from Giscala and other people, probably from the village.

In the synagogue the minister, out of deference to Jesus, addresses Him asking: «Will You explain the Law, Rabbi? »

But Jesus refuses and like a simple believer follows all the ceremonies, kissing like the others the parchment presented to Him by the assistant (I call him thus because I do not know what name to give the assistant of the synagogue minister) and listening to the explanation of the passage chosen by the minister. However, although He does not speak, his appearance is already a sermon owing to the way He prays... Many look at Him. Gamaliel's disciple does not lose sight of Him for one moment. And the apostles keep good watch on the disciple, suspicious as they are.

Jesus does not even turn around when some people speak in low voices at the entrance of the synagogue distracting many believers. But the rite comes to an end and the people go out into the square of the synagogue. Although Jesus was closer to the back than to the front of the synagogue, He is one of the last to come out and He goes towards the house to get His sack and depart. <sup>4</sup>Many people of the town follow Him and among them is Gamaliel's disciple, who at a certain moment is called by three men leaning against the wall of a house. He speaks to them and then elbows his way with them towards Jesus.

«Master, these men wish to speak to You» he says attracting the attention of Jesus Who was speaking to Peter and His cousin Judas.

«Scribes! I told You! » exclaims Peter already upset.

Jesus bows to the three men who greet Him and He asks: «What do you want? »

The oldest man says: «As You did not come, we came. And that no one may think that we have infringed the Sabbath, we inform everybody that we covered the road in three different periods of time. The first until the last light of sunset lasted. The second, of six stadia, while moonlight illuminated the paths. The third ended just now and it did not exceed the legal measure. We say that for your souls and ours, but for our minds we apply to Your wisdom. Are You aware of what happened in the town of Giscala? »

«I came from Capernaum. I do not know anything. »

«Listen. A man who had been away from home for a long time on business, learned, when he came back, that during his absence his wife had been unfaithful to him, to the extent of giving birth to a child, who could not be of her husband, as he had been away for fourteen months. The man killed his wife secretly. But he was denounced by a man who had been informed by the maid servant and was killed, according to the law of Israel. The lover, who according to the Law should be stoned\*, has taken shelter at Kedesh and he will certainly try to go to other places. The illegitimate child, whom the husband wanted to kill as well, was not handed to him by the woman who suckled him and she went to Kedesh to excite the pity of the true father and convince him to take care of his son, because her husband is opposed to keeping the illegitimate child in his house. But the man rejected her and his son stating that the latter would be a hindrance to him in his flights. What is Your opinion on the matter? »

«I do not think that it can be judged any more. All judgement, whether right or wrong, has already been given. »

«Which judgement, according to You, is just and which is unjust. There is disagreement among us concerning the punishment of the murderer. »

<sup>5</sup>Jesus stares at them, one after the other. He then says: «I will speak. But first answer My questions, whatever their weight may be. And be sincere. Did the man who murdered his wife belong to this town? » 472. 5

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\* stoned, as prescribed in: *Leviticus 20, 10; Deuteronomy 22, 22-24*. Stoning of adulterers is also mentioned in: 26. 6 - 357. 11 - 494. 1 - 495. 2.

«No. He settled here when he married the woman who is from here. »

«Did the adulterer come from here? »

«Yes, he did. »

«How did the man find out that his wife had been unfaithful to him? Was their sin known in public? »

«Not really, and we do not know how the man was able to find out. The woman had been away for months saying that, as she did not want to be all alone, she was going to Ptolemais to stay with some relatives, and she came back saying that she had brought with her the little son of a relative of hers who had died. »

«When she was in Giscala was her behaviour impudent? »

«No. In fact we were all surprised to hear that Marcus had an affair with her. »

«My relative is not a sinner. He is accused but he is innocent» says one of the three men who had never spoken so far.

«Was he a relative of yours? Who are you? » asks Jesus.

«The first of the Elders of Giscala. That is why I wanted the life of the murderer, because he not only killed, but he killed an innocent» and he looks sullenly at the third man, who is about forty years old and who replies: «The Law says that the murderer is to be killed. »

«You wanted the lives of the woman and of the adulterer. »

«That is the Law. »

«Had there been no other reason, no one would have spoken. » The dispute becomes animated and the two antagonists almost forget about Jesus. But the one who was the first to speak, the oldest man, imposes silence saying impartially: «It is not possible to deny that a homicide has been committed, neither can one deny that there has been a fault. The woman confessed it to her husband. But let the Master speak. »

«I say: how did the husband find out? You have not answered My questions

The man defending the woman says: «Because someone spoke as soon as the husband came back. »

«In that case I say that his soul was not pure» says Jesus lowering His eyelids to veil His eyes so that they may not accuse.

But the forty year old man who wanted the death of the woman and of the adulterer exclaims: «I did not hunger for her. »

«Ah! it is clear now! It was you who spoke! I suspected that, but now you have betrayed yourself! Assassin! »

«And you are an accomplice of the adulterer. If you had not warned him, he would not have escaped us. But he is your relative! That is how justice is done in Israel! That is why you are defending also the memory of the woman: to defend your relative. If she were the only one involved, you would not worry about her. »

«And what about you, who hurled the man against the woman to take vengeance for her refusals? »

«And what about you, the only witness against the man, and you paid a maid-servant in that house to be helped by her? One witness only is not a valid one. That's\* the Law. »

A terrible uproar!

Jesus and the old man try to calm the two men who represent two opposed interests and trends and who reveal an incurable hatred of two families. They succeed with some difficulty <sup>472. 6</sup> and Jesus now speaks calmly and solemnly, after defending Himself from the accusation of one of the two opponents, who said: «You Who protect prostitutes... »

«I not only say that consummated adultery is a crime against God and one's neighbour, but I say: also he who craves lustfully for the wife of another man commits adultery in his heart and commits a sin. It would be dreadful if every man who has craved for the wife of another man should be put to death! Lapidators would need to have stones in their hands all the time. But if the sin often remains unpunished on the Earth, it will be expiated in the next life, because the Most High said: "You shall not commit adultery and you shall not covet your neighbour's wife", and God's word is to be obeyed. But I also say: "Woe betide him who is the cause of scandal and him who informs against his neighbour". In this case everybody is guilty. The husband: was it really necessary for him to leave his wife for such a long time? Did he always treat her with the love that conquers the heart of a companion? Did he examine himself to ascertain whether the woman had not been offended by him before he was offended by her? The law of retaliation says: "An eye for an eye, a tooth for

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\* That's, in: *Numbers 35, 30.*



a tooth". But if it says so to exact amends, are these to be given by one only? I am not defending the adulteress. But I say: "How many times could she have accused her husband of that sin? "

The people whisper: «It is true! It is true! » and also the old man from Giscala and Gamaliel's disciple agree. »

Jesus goes on: «... I say: why did he, who caused such a tragedy out of revenge, not fear God? Would he have liked all that to happen in his family? I say: the man who ran away and who after enjoying himself and causing ruin now disowns also the innocent child, does he think that by fleeing he will escape the eternal Avenger? That is what I say. <sup>472,7</sup> I also say: the Law exacted the lapidation of adulterers and the killing of murderers. But the day will come when the Law, necessary to control the violence and lust of men not fortified by the Grace of the Lord, will be modified, and if the commandments: "You shall not kill and you shall not commit adultery" remain, the sanctions against such sins will be referred to a higher justice than that of hatred and blood. A justice, of human judges, all of whom are adulterers, and perhaps several times adulterers, if not even killers, will be less than nothing. I am speaking of the justice of God Who will ask men also the reason for lustful desires which are the causes of revenge, delations, murders, and above all will ask them why they deny guilty people time to redeem themselves and why they compel innocent people to bear the burden of other people's faults. They are all guilty in this case. Everybody. Also the judges urged by opposing reasons of personal revenge. One only is innocent. And My pity is for him. I cannot go back. But which of you will be charitable to the baby and to Me Who am suffering for him? Jesus looks at the crowd with eyes expressing sad prayer. »

Many say: «What do You want? Remember: he is illegitimates

« There is a woman in Capernaum whose name is Sarah. She comes from Aphek. She is one of My disciples. Take the child to her and say: "Jesus of Nazareth entrusts him to you". When the Messiah, whom you are expecting, establishes His Kingdom and issues His laws, which do not cancel the Word of Sinai but they complete it through charity, illegitimate children will no longer be motherless, because I shall be the Father of those who have no father and I will say to My believers: "Love them for My sake".

And other things will be changed, because violence will be replaced by love.

<sup>472</sup> .8  
Perhaps you were expecting Me to deny the Law when you questioned Me. And that is why you were looking for Me. Say to yourselves and to those who sent you that I came to perfect the Law, not to deny it. Say to yourselves and to the others that He Who preaches the Kingdom of God cannot certainly teach what in the Kingdom of God would be horror and consequently could not be accepted there. Say to yourselves and to the others that you must remember\* Deuteronomy: "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet from your country, from your brothers. Listen to him. This is what you asked the Lord your God at Horeb and you said: 'Do not let me hear again the voice of the Lord my God, nor look any longer on this great fire and I may not die'. And the Lord said to me: 'They have spoken well and I will raise up a prophet like yourself for their own brothers and *I will put My words* into his mouth and he shall tell them all I command him. And if anyone does not listen to the words that he speaks in My name, I will avenge Myself on him",.

God sent His Word to you that He might speak without killing you with His voice. God had already said so much to man and it was more than man deserved to hear from God. So much was said by means of the Law of Sinai and through the Prophets. But so much was still to be said and God kept it for His prophet of the time of Grace, for the One Promised to His people, in Him is the Word of God and through Him forgiveness will be accomplished. Founder of the Kingdom of God, He will codify the Law with new precepts of love, because the time of love has come. And He will not ask the Most High for vengeance on those who do not listen but He will only beg that the fire of God may melt the hearts of stone and the Word of God may penetrate them and established in them the Kingdom which is the Kingdom of the spirit, just as its King is a spiritual King. To whoever loves the Son of man the Son of man will give the Way, Truth, Life to go to God, to know Him and to live the eternal Life. Sources of light will be opened in whoever accepts My word, so that they may know the concealed meaning of the words of the Law and they may

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\* remember as stated in: *Deuteronomy 18, 15-19.*

see that prohibitions are not threats but invitations of God, Who wants men to be happy, not damned, to be blessed, not cursed.

472.1 9 Once again you have made use of a question already resolved, but not as holiness would have resolved it, but as an inquisitive instrument to catch Me in sin. But I know that I am not sinning. And I am not afraid to speak My mind, which is: for making profit the aim of his life, the murderer has paid first with disgrace and then with death. The woman has paid for her sin with her death and - this will surprise you but it is the truth - her confession to convince her husband to have pity for the innocent child has diminished in the eyes of God the weight of her sin. The others: you and you, and he who fled with no pity even for his own child are more guilty than the first two. Are you grumbling? You have not paid with your lives, neither have you the extenuating circumstances of the husband of the adulteress or those of the woman for being neglected and for her confession.

You have all committed a sin, all of you with the exception of the wet-nurse of the innocent child: the sin of rejecting the innocent like a shameful evil. You were able to kill the homicide. You would have been able to kill also the adulterers. You have been able to do and would have been able to do what is severe justice. But not one has been or is able to stretch out his arms and have pity for the innocent Child. But you are not fully responsible. You do not know... You never know exactly what you do and what ought to be done. And that is your excuse. When this disciple of Gamaliel came to Me he said: "Come. They want to consult You with regards to a fact the consequences of which are still lasting". The consequences are the innocent child. Well, now that you are aware of My opinion, are you going to change your judgement where it is still changeable?

I said to this man: "I do not judge. I forgive". Gamaliel said: "Only Jesus of Nazareth would judge with justice in this case". I, as I told this man, would have advised *everybody*, I say *everybody*, not to strike until the matter had been carefully examined and passions had subsided. Many things could have been

472.10 changed without infringing the Law. <sup>10</sup>The matter is over now. And may God forgive those who repented or will repent. I have nothing else to say. Or rather, I have still one thing: may God forgive you once again for tempting the Son of man. »

«Not I Master! Not I! I... I love Gamaliel as a disciple should love his master: more than a father. More, because a rabbi perfects the intellect which is greater than the body. And... I cannot leave my rabbi to follow You. But to greet You, I can find no other words\* but those of Judith's canticle. They rise from the depth of my heart because I found justice and wisdom in *a//*Your words. "Adonai, Lord You are great and magnificent in Your power. No one can conquer You. No one can resist Your Voice. Those who fear You will be great in Your eyes in everything!... I will go to Capernaum to see the woman You mentioned... Pray for me that my stone may melt and may be pierced by the Word which establishes the Kingdom of God in us... Now I have understood. We are mistaken. And we disciples are the less guilty... »

«What are you saying, you fool? » interrupts violently the Elder of Giscala addressing Gamaliel's disciple.

«What am I saying? I am saying that my master is right. And that he who tempts Him to establish a temporal kingdom is a demon, because He is a true Prophet of the Most High and Wisdom speaks through His lips. Tell me, Master, what must I do? »

«Meditate. »

«But... »

«Meditate. You are an unripe fruit. And you need to be engrafted, too. I will pray for you. » He then tells the apostles to follow Him and when they have picked up their bags, He sets out with them leaving all comments behind.

<sup>11</sup>Jesus says: «You will put here the vision of 15<sup>th</sup> August 1944: <sup>472. 11</sup> Jesus cures the boy born blind from Sidon. »

473. Healing of a blind boy from Sidon.

Teaching for the wives of today.

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

[...]

<sup>11</sup>I see Jesus come out of a synagogue surrounded by His apostles and by a crowd of people. I realise that it is a synagogue, be- <sup>473. 1</sup>

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\* words taken from: *Judith 16, 13-15.*

cause through the wide open door I can see the same furniture that I saw in the synagogue of Nazareth, in one of the visions preparing for Passover.

The synagogue is in the main square of the village. A bare square, surrounded only by houses, with a basin in the centre nourished by a fountain pouring lovely clear water from only one jet of stone carved like a bent tile. The basin is used to water quadrupeds and many doves which fly about from house to house; the fountain to fill the jugs of women, beautiful copper amphorae, some of which are hammered, some smooth, all shining in the sun. Because it is sunny and warm, the earth of the square is dry and yellowish, as when it is parched by strong sunshine. There is not even one tree in the square. But branches of fig-trees and vine-shoots hang out over the little walls of orchards along the four roads which depart from the square. It must be the end of summer and the end of a day, because ripe bunches of grapes are hanging from the pergolas, and sunbeams are not perpendicular but oblique as at sunset.

In the square some people are waiting for Jesus. But I do not see any miracle among them. Jesus passes, He bends over them, He blesses and comforts them, but does not cure them, at least for the time being. There are also women with children and men of all ages. They appear to be known to the Master, Who greets them calling them by their names and they crowd around Him with familiarity. Jesus caresses the children bending lovingly over them.

473. 2<sup>2</sup>In a corner of the square is a woman with a little boy or girl (they are all dressed alike with light coloured little tunics). She does not seem to come from here. I would say that she is of higher social standing than the others. Her dress is more elaborate, with braids and folds; it is not the plain tunic of ordinary women with only a cordon to adorn and shape it. This woman, instead, is wearing an elaborate dress, which, although not a masterpiece like the garments of Mary Magdalene, is very graceful. She has a light veil on her head, much lighter than the other women's veils, which are made of thin linen fabric, whereas hers is almost muslin, so light it is. It is gracefully pinned at the middle of her head, displaying her well combed brown hair, with locks plaited in a simple fashion, but with more skilled care than those of the oth-

er women, whose tresses are in a knot on the napes of their necks or form a circle around their heads. On her shoulders she has a real mantle, that is, a cloth which I do not know whether it is sewn or woven in a round shape, with around the neck a braid ending in a silver clasp. The cloth of the mantle falls in beautiful wide folds down to her ankles.

The woman is holding by the hand the little boy or girl I mentioned previously. A lovely boy about seven years old. He is also strong, but not in the least lively. He is standing very quietly beside his mother, his hand in hers, with his head lowered, without taking an interest in what is happening.

The woman is watching but she dare not approach the group which has gathered around Jesus. She seems undecided, as while she is urged by her desire to go, she is afraid of moving forward. She then decides to take a middle course: to attract Jesus' attention. She sees Him take in his arms a beautiful big rosy smiling baby whom a mother has offered Him and whom He dandles pressing him to his heart while speaking to a little old man. She bends over her little boy and says something to him.

The boy raises his head. I now see a sad little face, with closed eyes. He is blind. «Have mercy on me, Jesus! » he says. The infantile little voice cleaves the still air of the square and arrives as far as the group with its lament.

<sup>3</sup>Jesus turns around and sees him. He moves at once with loving care. He does not even hand back to its mother the child He is holding in his arms. Tall and most handsome as He is, He goes towards the blind boy, who after crying, has lowered his head again in vain urged by his mother to repeat the cry.

473. 3

Jesus is now before the woman. He looks at her. She also looks at Him; then she timidly lowers her eyes. Jesus helps her. He has handed the child He had in his arms to the woman who gave it to Him.

«Woman, is this son yours? »

«Yes, Master, he is my first-born. »

Jesus caresses his bent head. Jesus does not seem to have noticed the blindness of the little one. But I think that He does so deliberately to let the mother make her request.

«So the Most High has blessed your house with numerous children and giving you first the son sacred to the Lord. »

«I have only one son; this one and three girls. And I will not have any more... » She sobs.

«Why are you weeping, woman? »

«Because my son is blind, Master! »

«And you would like him to be able to see. Can you believe. »

«I do believe, Master. I was told that You have opened eyes which were closed. But my boy was born with dried eyes. Look at him, Jesus. There is nothing under his eyelids... »

Jesus raises towards Himself the little face prematurely serious and looks closer lifting the eyelids with His thumbs. There are empty spaces under them. He resumes speaking holding with His hand the little face raised towards Himself.

«Why have you come, then woman? »

«Because... I know that it is more difficult for my boy... but if it is true that You are the Expected One, You can do it. Your Father created the worlds... Could You not make two eyes for my child. »

«Do you believe that I come from the Father, the Most High Lord? »

«I believe it and I believe that You can do everything. »

473. 4 Jesus looks at her as if He wished to evaluate how much faith there is in her and how pure is her faith. He smiles. He then says: «Child, come to Me» and He takes him by the hand to a little wall, about half a metre high, built on the road against a house, a kind of parapet to protect it from the road, which has a bend just there.

When the boy is steady on the wall, Jesus becomes serious and imposing. The crowds press around Him, the boy and the anxious mother. I see Jesus from one side, in profile. He is all wrapped up in his very dark blue mantle, which He wears over a tunic a little lighter in shade. His face is inspired. He looks taller and even sturdier, as is usual when the power of miracles emanates from Him. But this time He seems more imposing. He lays His hands open on the boy's head, and places His thumbs against the hollow eye-sockets. He raises His head praying fervently, but without moving His lips: He is certainly conversing with His Father. He then says: «See! I want it! And praise the Lord! » and to the woman: «Let your faith be rewarded. Here is your son who will be your honour and your peace. Show him to your husband.

He will love you once again and your house will be blessed with farther happy days. »

<sup>5</sup>The woman, who has uttered a shrill cry of joy when, the divine thumbs being removed, from the empty eye-sockets two deep blue wonderful eyes, like those of the Master, look at her full of wonder and happiness, under the fringe of dark hair, cries once again, and although she still presses her son against her heart, she kneels at Jesus' feet saying: «Are You aware also of that? Ah! You really are the Son of God. » And she kisses his mantle and sandals and then stands up transfigured with joy and says: «Listen, everybody. I have come from the distant land of Sidon. I came because another mother spoke to me of the Rabbi of Nazareth. My husband, a Jewish merchant, has stores in that town to trade with Rome. He is rich and faithful to the Law, but he has no longer loved me since I after giving him an unhappy boy, gave birth to three girls and then I became barren. He left the house and although I had not been repudiated, I was living in the same situation as if I had been divorced, and I was already aware that he wanted to get rid of me to have from another woman an heir capable of carrying on his trade and enjoying his wealth. Before coming here I went to my husband and I said to him: "Wait, sir, wait until I come back. If I come back and my son is still blind, you may repudiate me. Otherwise do not break my heart and do not deny your children a father". And he swore to me: "By the glory of the Lord, woman, I swear to you that if you bring back my son cured - I do not know how you will be able to do that as your womb was not able to give him eyes - I will come back to you as in the days of our first love". The Master did not know of my grief as a wife, and yet He comforted me also in that respect. Glory be to God and to You, Master and King. » The woman is on her knees once again and is weeping for joy.

<sup>6</sup>«Go. Tell Daniel, your husband, that He Who created the worlds, has given two bright stars as eyes to the little one sacred to the Lord. Because God is faithful to His promises and has sworn that he who believes in Him will see all kinds of wonders. Let him now be faithful to his oath and let him not commit a sin of adultery. Tell Daniel that. Go. Be happy. I bless you and this child and with you I bless all those who are dear to you. »

The crowd is a chorus of praises and congratulations and Je-



sus goes into a nearby house to rest.

The vision ends thus. And I can assure you that I was deeply moved by it.

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

473. 7

<sup>7</sup>Jesus says:

«God always surpasses the requests of His children, when they have faith in Him, and gives them even more. Believe it and let everybody believe it. To the woman who came to Me from Sidon with two swords piercing the secrets of her heart and who dared to tell Me the name of only one of them, I gave also a second miracle, because it is more grievous to reveal certain intimate misfortunes than to say: "I am not well".

In the eyes of the world it may have seemed and may still seem much easier to establish reconciliation between husband and wife separated by a reason which has been satisfactorily overcome, than to give two eyes to someone born without them. But it is not so. It is most simple for the Lord and Creator to make two eyes, just as simple as to give the breath of life back to a corpse. The Master of Life and of Death, the Master of everything there is in Creation does certainly not lack the breath of life to be instilled into dead bodies or two drops of humour for a dried eye. If He wants, He can. Because it depends exclusively on His power. But when it is a matter of reconciliation between men, the "will" of men is required together with the desire of God. God only rarely does violence to human freedom. As a rule He lets you act as you wish.

That woman, who lived in a country of idolaters and, like her husband remained faithful to the God of her fathers, already deserves benignity from God. And she deserved a double miracle, because she carried her faith beyond the limit of human measure and overcame the doubts and the denials of most Jewish believers, which is proved by what she said to her husband: "Wait until I come back", as she was certain of going back with her son cured. She deserved also the difficult miracle of opening the eyes of her husband's spirit, as those eyes had become blind to love and to her grief, as they laid on her a blame, which is not a blame.

473. 8 <sup>8</sup>I would also like wives in particular, to meditate on the

respectful humbleness of their sister.

"I went to my husband and I said to him: 'Wait, sir'". She was in the right because to blame a mother for a birth defect is foolish and cruel. Her heart was already broken by the sight of her unhappy child. She is doubly in the right because she was neglected by her husband since she became barren, and she was aware of his intention to divorce her, and yet she remained his "wife": that is, the faithful companion, submissive to her companion, as prescribed by God and taught by the Scriptures. She did not harbour thoughts of rebellion or thirst for revenge or intention to find another man in order not to be the "lonely woman". "If I do not come back with my son cured, you can repudiate me. Otherwise do not break my heart and do not deny your children a father". Do you not seem to be hearing Sarah and ancient Hebrew women speak thus?

How different, o wives, is your present language! And how different, too, is what you get from God and from your husbands. And families are ruined more and more.

<sup>9</sup>As usual, in working the miracle, I had to give it a sign to make it more incisive. I had to persuade a world enclosed in the barriers of an ancient way of thinking, led by a sect hostile to Me. Hence the necessity for making My supernatural power shine clearly. But the teaching of the vision does not consist in that. It consists in the faith, humbleness, faithfulness to one's consort, in the right path undertaken, o wives and mothers, who have found thorns where you expected to have roses, to see new flowery branches grow on the thorns which prick you. 473. 9

Turn to your Lord God Who created marriage so that man and woman might not be alone and might love each other, forming one only indissoluble body, since they were joined together, and Who gave you the Sacrament so that His blessing might descend upon your marriage, and through My merits you may have what you need in your new life of consorts and procreators. And in order to be able to turn to Him with confident faces and souls, be honest, good, respectful, faithful, true companions of your husbands, not just guests in their houses, or worse still, strangers which chance has gathered under one roof, like two who meet by chance in a hotel of pilgrims.

That happens too often nowadays. Does man make a mistake?

He is wrong. But that does not justify the behaviour of too many wives. And you are even less justified when you do not render good for good and love for love to a kind companion. I will not even take into consideration the too common case of your carnal unfaithfulness which makes you like prostitutes with the aggravating circumstance that you are hypocritically vicious, and you pollute the family altar around which are the angelical souls of your innocent children. But I refer to your moral unfaithfulness to the pact of love sworn before *My* altar.

Well, I said\*: "He who looks at a woman with lustful desire commits adultery in his heart"; I said: "He who dismisses his wife with a libel of divorce, exposes her to adultery". But now that too many wives are strangers to their husbands, I say: "Those who do not love their companions with their *souls, minds and bodies*, incite them to adultery, and if I ask such husbands why they committed adultery, I will also ask their wives the same question, because although they do not perform it, they cause it". It is necessary to understand the Law of God in its full extent and depth and it is necessary to live it in full truthfulness.

Remain with My peace, the above does not apply to you, and keep your heart fixed in Mine. »

474. A vision that is lost in a rapture of love.

15th August 1946.

474. 1 <sup>1</sup>As they often do while walking, perhaps to alleviate the monotony of their continuous traveling with this distraction, the apostles speak to one another recapitulating and commenting on the latest events, questioning now and again the Master, Who in general speaks very little, just not to be unkind, making such effort only when it is the case of teaching the crowds or His apostles, or correcting wrong ideas, or comforting unhappy people.

Jesus was the «Word», but He certainly was not a «chatter-box»! As patient and kind as nobody else, He never appeared to be bored when He had to repeat a concept once, twice, ten times, a hundred times to make it enter the heads hardened by phari-

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\* I said, in 174. 13. 18. 19.

saical and rabbinical precepts, neglecting *His* own tiredness, at times so exhausting as to be painful, in order to relieve the moral or physical suffering of a person. But it is clear that He prefers to be silent, keeping aloof in quiet meditation which may last for many hours, if He is not distracted by someone questioning Him. He generally walks ahead of His apostles, with His head slightly bent, raising it now and again to look at the sky, the country, people, animals. I said to look. But that is wrong. I must say: to love. Because it is a smile, God's smile that pours forth from His eyes to caress the world and creatures: a love-smile. Because it is love that shines forth, spreads, blesses and purifies the light of His eyes, which are so bright, most bright, when He comes out of intense concentration..

<sup>2</sup>What are His concentrations like? I think - and I am sure that I am not mistaken, because it is enough to watch His countenance to see what they are - I think that they are much more than our ecstasies in which a human creature already lives in Heaven. They are the «sensible reunion of God with God». Divinity is always present and united to the Christ, Who is God like the Father. On the Earth as in Heaven the Father is in the Son and the Son is in the Father, They love each other and by loving each other they generate the Third Person. The power of the Father is the generation of the Son and the act of generating and being generated creates the Fire, that is, the Spirit of the Spirit of God. The Power turns to the Wisdom Whom It generated and who turns to the Power in the joy of being one for the other and of knowing each other for what they are. And since all good reciprocal knowledge creates love - even our imperfect knowledge does - there is the Holy Spirit... There is the One Who, if it were possible to add perfection to divine perfections, ought to be called the Perfection of Perfection. The Holy Spirit! The simple thought of Him fills one with light, joy, peace...

In the ecstasies of the Christ, when the incomprehensible mystery of the Unity and Trinity of God was renewed in the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, what complete perfect, bright, sanctifying, joyful, peaceful production of love must have been engendered and must have spread like heat from a blazing furnace, like incense from a burning thurible, to kiss with the kiss of God the things created by the Father, made by means of the

Son-Word, made for the Love, for the only Love, because all the operations of God are Love? And that is the look of the Man-God when as Man and as God He raises His eyes, which have contemplated in Himself the Father, Himself and the Love, to look at the Universe admiring the creative power of God, as Man; rejoicing, as God, at being able to save it in the royal creatures of such creation: men.

474. 3 <sup>3</sup>Oh! no one can, no one will ever be able, neither poet, nor artist, nor painter, to make visible to the crowds that look of Jesus, when He comes off the embrace, from the sensible reunion with the Divinity, always united to the Man hypostatically, but not always so deeply sensible to the Man, Who was the Redeemer and Who thus, to His many sorrows, to His many annihilations had to add this one, this very deep grief, of no longer being always able to be in the Father, in the great vortex of the Love, as He was in Heaven: almighty... free... joyful. Wonderful is the power of His look with regards to miracles, most kind is the expression of His eyes as man, very sad the light of sorrow in the hours of grief... But they are still human, although perfect in expression. This look of God, Who has contemplated and loved Himself in the Triform Unity is beyond comparison, there is no adjective for it... And the soul prostrates itself before Him, worshipping, having become a mere «nonentity» in the knowledge of God, but blessed in contemplating His infinite love.

The torrents of delight are flowing into my soul... I am blessed! All grief, every memory is made void under the waves of the love of Jesus God... and these waves raise me to Heaven, to Heaven, to You!

474. 4 <sup>4</sup>Thanks, my adorable Love!... Thanks!... Now I still serve You... The creature has become a woman again, she is once again the mouthpiece after being for an instant a «seraph». She is once again a woman, a martyr, perhaps another torment is already behind my back... But the light You gave me is shining in my spirit, the blissful light of contemplating You; neither flood of tears nor cruel tortures will be able to put it out. Thank You, my Blessed One! You alone love me!

I now understand Paul\* as never before! «Who will be able

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\* Paul, in the text of *Romans 8, 35-39*

to separate us from the love of Christ?... We triumph through these trials by the power of Him Who loved us... I am certain that neither death nor life, no angel, no prince, no virtue, nothing that exists, nothing still to come, not any power, or height or depth, *nor any created thing*, can ever come between us and the love of God that is in Jesus Christ our Lord». It is the victorious jubilant paean blaring from the groups of the winners, of the lovers, of those saved by love, because this is holiness: *salvation received because one has been loved and has loved*. It is already blaring! And the spirit, even here, a prisoner on the Earth, hears it and sings its joy, its trust, its certainty... And light, even more light comes, and the luminous words of the Apostle brighten even more, even more... «... the love of God that is in Jesus Christ our Lord».

Indeed, now I understand the words of Azariah\*, last winter: «Jesus is the compendium of the love of the Three». Indeed! All Love is in Him. We men can find this love of God without waiting to go back to God, without awaiting Heaven, by loving Jesus. Yes! Springs of living water, sources of light, sources of love open for those who believe, because those who believe go to Jesus, because those who believe, believe that Jesus is in the Eucharist with His Body, Blood, Soul, Divinity, as He was on the Earth, as He is in Heaven, with His Heart, with His Heart! And in Jesus' Heart there is the love of God. And when a man receives the Most Holy Body of Jesus, he receives in himself the Heart of Jesus. Thus he has in himself not only Jesus, but he has the Love of God, that is, he has God the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, because the Love of God is the Most Holy Trinity that is one thing only: Love. The Love that divides into three flames to make us three times happy. Happy to have a Father, a Brother, a Friend. Happy to have who provides, who teaches, who loves. Happy to have God!

<sup>5</sup>Oh! I can no longer bear this!... Lord, Your gift is too great! <sup>474.5</sup> Who obtains it for me from Heaven? Is it You, Most Blessed Mother, contemplated in Your splendour of Queen of Heaven, where You have been bodily received? Is it you, lover of Christ, kind John of Bethsaida, my friend? Is it you, amiable Patriarch

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\* the words of Azariah, written on 20<sup>th</sup> January 1944 and included in the volume "The Notebooks. 1945-1950".

protector of those who are persecuted, solicitous supplier of consolation, most venerable Joseph? Is it you, my great little sister, Therese of the Child Jesus, who obtain for me what I have been asking for these twenty one years: that the waves of the Love may overflow into my soul? Oh! if it is you, complete the work. Obtain for me to die not in one of these assaults of love. I am a little soul, too, and I do not wish extraordinary things. But to die after one of these assaults of love, when I have become again a «little, very little soul», made even smaller by the knowledge of what is the Infinite Love, after one of these assaults, because after, it is as if one were baptised again by love and no shadows of stains are left in us. Love burns... Or is it you, Azariah, my good friend, who have obtained this hour of blessedness for me, because of all the tears you collected from my eyes and you took to Heaven? If it is you, may you be blessed for that!

But I do not ask you, Therese, Joseph, John and the Blessed Virgin to let me have that ecstasy again, to fill me with joy and fire. But I ask and implore you to let other hearts have it, particularly those known to you, those hearts that torture mine and displease God, Whom they cannot perceive or obey. If those hearts have one instant only of those assaults of love, they will be converted to the Love, to the true Love. They will love. With their whole selves. Above all with their intellects that will reject the barriers of rationalism, of human science, which deny and hamper simple good faith and set limits to the power of God. And with their hearts in which the crusts of selfishness, of envy, of hatred will melt like wax near a fire...

Do that, my dearest ones. I accept to never place my lips again on the refreshing chalice of love, I accept to drink forever, until my return to God, the bitter chalice of all renunciations, but let them go back to the bright path, let them be sanctified in all their actions to deserve the sight of Jesus-God, as I was granted to enjoy it today. To deserve it here, to possess it forever in Heaven, as I, hoping in my Lord, confide to possess it as well...

The same day at 12 o'clock.

474. 6 <sup>6</sup>I read it again. I am thinking of theologians who will read these pages. Perhaps they will find errors in my description of the ecstasies and of Jesus' concentration. Let them remember

that I am a poor ignorant woman, that I know nothing about theology or theological terms, and that I strive to say what I see as best I can and with the sentences that my poor mind can construct...

16<sup>th</sup> August 1946

<sup>7</sup>I say to Jesus: «Lord, yesterday You carried me away and everything was lost in You. The vision... ». He smiles with sweet divine joy and He replies caressing me: <sup>474. 7</sup>

«You sang instead of narrating. You sang. The whole of Paradise sang the glories of My Mother yesterday, and you sang with Paradise and at a certain moment Paradise listened to your “a solo”. Do you know when? *When you asked not to have the enjoyment, but that “they” should be invaded by love to be saved.* Loving Heaven listened to you, because to renounce beatitude so that others may have Life is granted only to those who are on the Earth but are already citizens of Heaven. Owing to your singing the Saints remembered when they were the singers on the Earth. The Angels listened looking at your Azariah with brotherly satisfaction. Mary smiled offering your song to the Love. And the Love, oh! My Mary! and the Love kissed you... and still kisses you. Be happy. You have understood the Love. I am in you and, as you have understood, God One and Trine is in Me. Go along the roads of supernatural joy today, instead of the roads in Palestine towards Jesus’ grief... Mary, are you not happy to be in the same condition as I was in my last year? That is also a gift, and a light to understand Me. Without a personal proportional experience, a human being could not understand what was My long Passion. But today, as yesterday, go along the paths of heavenly joy. God is with you. Be in peace. »

<sup>8</sup>And thus the conversations of the apostles on the episode of Giscala, on the miracle of the blind boy, on Ptolemais to which they are heading, on the road with steps cut in the rock which they climbed to arrive at the last village on the border between Syro-Phoenicia and Galilee - and it must be the one I saw\* when they went to Alexandroscene - on Gamaliel and so forth, are now over. Or rather, they are left, for what I heard of them, in <sup>474. 8</sup>

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\* saw, in 328. 1. This is the so-called “Tiro’s flight of steps” also mentioned in 330. 5 and 331. 9.



my heart. I only say that I wanted to say this. That the apostles, who in the early days, when they were less spiritually perfected, used to disturb the Master for a trifle, now that they are more spiritually developed, respect His isolation and they prefer to speak among themselves, remaining a few steps behind Him. Only when they need some information, or His opinion, or they are urged by their love for the Master, do they approach Him.

475. A suspicion of Peter. Digression on the Hebrews.  
The mercy of Abel of Bethlehem for his enemies.

17<sup>th</sup> August 1946.

475. 1 <sup>1</sup>«Get up and let us go» Jesus orders the apostles who are sleeping soundly on some hay - probably bog grass rather than hay - piled up near a little river, which is waiting for the autumn rains to fill its bed with water.

The apostles, still half asleep, obey without speaking. They pick up their sacks, put on the mantles which they had used as blankets during the night, and set out with Jesus.

«Are we going via the Carmel? »

«No, via Sephoris. We shall then take the road to Megiddo. We have just enough time... » replies Jesus.

«Yes. And the nights are becoming too damp and cold to sleep in the fields when for some reason no house gives us hospitality» remarks Matthew.

«Men! How easily they forget!... Lord? But will it always be like this? » asks Andrew.

«Yes. Always. »

«Well! If it is like this with You, when it is our turn, as soon as we turn our backs, everything will be cancelled» says Thomas downheartedly.

475. 2 <sup>2</sup>«But I say that there is someone who makes people forget. Because men, I agree, forget quite easily. But they do not always forget. I see that we men remember the things we have received and those which we have given. With regards to You, instead... No, it is always the same people who strive to cancel the memory of You» says Peter.

«Do not judge without a valid reason» says Jesus.

«Master, I have a good reason! »

«Have you? What have you discovered? » asks the Iscariot with keen interest, and at the same time other apostles ask the same question. But Judas is the most eager, I would say that he is anxious.

Peter, who was looking at Jesus, turns around and looks at Judas... a quick, watchful suspicious glance, and he remains silent, while looking at him, for a moment. He then says: «Oh! nothing... and everything, if you do not mind being informed. Enough, if I were anxious to use every possible means to succeed, to go and report many facts to those who rule over us, and I am sure that someone would get into trouble. But I prefer not to be successful, rather than have help from that side. In matters concerning God I take only the help of God, and I would appear to be profaning the things of God if I should get them... to help to crush reptiles. They are reptiles themselves... and... I would not trust them... They are quite capable of crushing those who are denounced together with their denouncers... So... I act on my own. That's it! »

«But do you not realise that you are offending the Master? »

«I am? Why? »

«Because He approaches them. »

«He is He, and if He approached them He does not do it for any profit, but to take them to God. He can do it and He does. But He does not run after them... You can see that they have to come to Him to hear “the philosopher” as they say. But I don't think that they are so anxious now. And I am not weeping over it. »

«You seemed to be happy as well at Passover! »

«He seemed. Man is very often foolish. He no longer seems now, and he is not. And I am right. »

«As a person who does not mix human profit with spiritual matters, you are right, Simon. But as an apostle who rejoices at other people moving away from the Light, no, you are not right. If you considered that every soul won over to the Light is a glory for your Master, you would not speak thus» says Jesus.

Judas Iscariot looks at Peter with a sarcastic smile. Peter notices it... but he controls himself and does not say anything.

Jesus also notices it and, addressing Peter, but as if he were speaking to everybody He says: «You must know, however, that an excess of religious scruple, *for a good purpose*, is more jus-

tifiable than overlooking everything with indifference just to achieve a human aim. I have told you several times: it is the goodwill or the bad will which qualifies an action. And in this case it is goodwill, even if imperfect in its form, to oppose carrying human interests into superhuman matters, and what one considers unclean in the eyes of God. His intolerance is not fair because I have come for everybody. But his opinion is very close to perfection when he states that in the things of God one must have recourse only to His supernatural help, without begging for interested or utilitarian human help. » And with this impartial judgement Jesus puts an end to the argument.

475. 3 <sup>3</sup>They have crossed another river-bed parched by summer heat without getting wet, and they have reached the main road which from Sicaminon takes one towards Samaria, I think, if I remember correctly the place I saw previously. The road is very busy because of the oncoming festivity and it has already assumed the typical aspect of Palestinian roads when pilgrimages to the Temple are compulsory. There are wayfarers, donkeys, carts carrying people, tents, household furnishings for stops at halting-places and even in Jerusalem, which is always overcrowded at solemnities, so much so that it is advisable to camp on the surrounding hills, weather permitting. In the present festival of the Tabernacles the emigration of entire families is more noticeable, not because pilgrims are more numerous than at Passover and Pentecost, but as they are compelled to live in tents for some days, they have household furnishings which on the occasion of other solemnities they leave at home. It is really the exodus of a people who rush from every direction towards the capital as blood, from every vein, flows towards the heart.

475. 4 <sup>4</sup>To understand *even now* the obstinate religion of Israel, so tenacious, so compact - whereby co-religionists help one another wherever they are, driven by destiny and, whatever the country may be where they were born, that does not prevent another Jew of a different country from always feeling that he is a brother and a fellow-country man of the co-religionist he meets - one must bear in mind that, although they are dispersed, persecuted, derided, apparently without a real Fatherland, they do not feel like that at all. They have their Fatherland, that their Jehovah gave them, they have their capital: Jerusalem, and from all over

the world the best of their beings converges there: their spirits, their hearts. Have they sinned? Has God punished them? Have the prophecies come true? Yes, it is true. But they are still left with that bright cause of a shining hope: the reconstruction of the kingdom of Israel... of the Messiah Who is to come... And in the grief trembling with fear of having deserved to be censured by God, and in an everlasting question: «Was Jesus of Nazareth the true Messiah? » they try to be reconstituted as a Nation in order to have the Messiah; they try to keep their firm faith in their religion to deserve to be forgiven by God and see the promise accomplished.

I am a poor woman, I know nothing of political problems, I have never taken an interest in the present Jews and in their troubles, sometimes I even laughed at them as they are still awaiting Him Who has come and Whom they crucified, their tears seemed somewhat false to me, their actions did not seem and do not seem to be such as to deserve what they hope from God: not the Christ Who will come only on the Last Day, and not even the reconstruction of the scattered Jewish race as an independent Nation. But now that I spiritually *see* the ancestors of the present Jews, I understand their age-old tragedy and their tenacity, the source of their tenacity. They are still the People of God and by God's will they converge towards the land promised to their Fathers, to the Patriarchs, and for ages they have fulfilled the Mosaic rite, thinking of Jerusalem, of its Temple shining on the Moriah. Are they prevented from going there? Yes, they are. But their spirits go there.

Bayonets, guns, prisons serve against man, not against the spirit. Israel cannot perish *because it has remained in its religion*. A theoretic, Pharisaic, ritual religion devoid of what is the true life of a religion: the congruity of the spirit with the material rite? As you wish. But around the crumbled body that was a Nation, and is now numberless fragments scattered all over the Earth, there are ties of ideas, of rites, of age-old precepts, coming from prophets and rabbis, to keep it together and, like a lighthouse visible from all over the world, a place shines: Jerusalem, and its name is like a cry to rally them all, it is like a flag waved to recall them, it is a memento, a promise. No. This people cannot be silenced by any human power. There is a strength in it

greater than human power.

All this is understood when one watches these people go along impervious roads, in uncomfortable seasons, heedless of what is painful, cheerful with the joy of going to the Holy City. It is understood seeing them go, rich people with poor fellows, children with old men, from Palestine or from the Diaspora towards *their* heart: Jerusalem. It is understood hearing them sing their songs... And, I confess it, I wish we, Christians and Catholics, were like them, and we had for the heart of Catholicism, Rome, the Church, and for him who lives in it: the present Peter, the feelings of these people whom I see go on and on untiringly; I wish we had what they have, and in addition our Faith, which is perfect because it is Christian.

One may object: «They are full of faults. » And what about us?

Are we faultless? We who have been fortified by Grace and the Sacraments? We who should be «perfect just as the Father Who is in Heaven is perfect»?

475.5 <sup>5</sup>I have digressed. But, following the march of the apostles mingled with the other crowds of Israel, my mind is active... At a cross-roads a group of disciples sees the Master and they crowd around Him. Among them there is Abel of Bethlehem, who throws himself immediately at Jesus' feet saying: «Master, I have prayed the Most High so much that He might make me meet You. And I had given up hope. But He has heard me. I beg You now to hear Your disciple. »

«What do you want, Abel? Let us go over there, to the edge of the field. There are too many people here and we are causing trouble to them. »

They all go in a group to the spot pointed out by Jesus and Abel says what he wants. «Master, You saved me\* from death and from slander and You made me one of Your disciples. So do You love me very much? »

«How can you ask Me that? »

«I am asking You to be sure that You will hear my prayer. When You saved me, You punished my enemies with a terrible chastisement. You gave it, so it must be right. But, oh! Lord! it is so horrible! I looked for those three men. I looked for them every

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\* You saved me, in 248. 5/11. The same episode will be referred to in 476. 6/7.

time I came to see my mother: in the mountains, in the caves near my town. But I could never find them. »

«Why were you looking for them? »

«To speak to them of You, Lord. That believing in You, they might invoke You and be forgiven and cured. I found them only in summer, but they were not together. One, the one who hated me because of my mother, left the others who went farther up, towards the highest mountains of Jiphthahel. They told me where he is staying... And I was given indications of their whereabouts by some shepherds of Bethlehem, the ones who gave You hospitality that night. Shepherds wander about quite a lot with their flocks, and they know many things. They knew that the two lepers I was looking for were in the mountain of the Beautiful Spring. I went there. Oh... » Horror appears on the face of the young man, who is still an adolescent.

«Go on. »

«They recognised me. But I could not recognise my fellow-citizens in those two monsters... They called me... and they prayed me, as if I were a god... The servant in particular aroused my pity, because of his sincere repentance. He wants nothing but Your forgiveness, Lord... Aser wants also to be cured. He has an old mother, Lord, an old mother who is dying broken-hearted in town... »

«And the other one? Why did he go away? »

«Because he is a demon. He is the most guilty one, he was already an adulterer when he became homicide, he incited Aser, he corrupted Joel's servant who is a bit silly and easily subdued, and he continues to be a demon. From his lips hatred and curses, from his heart hatred and cruelty. I saw him as well... I wanted to convince him to be good. He threw himself against me like a vulture and I found my salvation only in taking to flight, and as I am young and healthy I was able to run fast and for a good distance. But I have not lost all hope of saving him. I will go back... Once, twice, many times with succour and love and I will make him love me. He thinks that I go to sneer at his ruin. But I go to rebuild it. If he succeeds in loving me, he will listen to me, and if he listens to me he will end up by believing in You. That is what I want. Oh! it was easy with the others because they meditated and understood by themselves. And the servant has become the

simple master of the other one, because there is so much faith in him and such a great desire to be forgiven. <sup>6</sup>Come, Lord! I promised them that I would take You to see them whenever I met You. »

«Abel, their crime was a serious one, many crimes in one. They have expiated only for a short time... »

«Their torture has been great, and also their repentance. Do come. »

«Abel, they wanted your life. »

«It does not matter, Lord. I want to give them life. »

«Which life? »

«The life You give, the life of the spirit, forgiveness, redemption. »

«Abel, they were your Cains, and no one could have hated you more than they did. They wanted to deprive you of everything: of your life, honour and mother... »

«They have been my benefactors, because I had You through them. I love them because of that gift and I ask You to grant them to be where I am, among Your followers. I want their salvation like mine, more than mine, because their sin is greater. »

«What would you offer God in exchange for their salvation, if He should ask you for an offer? »

Abel thinks for a moment... then he says sure of himself: «Even myself. My life. I would lose a handful of rubbish to possess Heaven. A happy loss. A great, infinite gain: God, Heaven. And two sinners would be saved: the first-born of the flock, which I hope to lead and offer to You, Lord. »

Jesus makes a gesture which He never makes thus in public. He bends, because He is much taller than Abel, and taking his head with His hands, He kisses his lips saying: «Let it be so», at least I think that is what His «Maranatha» means. And He adds: «Because of your feeling let it be done to you according to the request of your words. Come with Me. You will lead Me. John, come with Me. And you can all go on, to Engannim via the Megiddo road. You will wait for Me there, if you do not meet Me before. »

«And we shall preach You and Your doctrine» says the Iscariot. «No. You will wait. Nothing else, behaving like just and humble pilgrims, nothing else. And be like brothers to one another. And on your way you will call on Johanan's peasants and will give them what you have and tell them that, if possible, the Mas-

ter will pass through Jezreel at dawn, in two days' time, as from today. Go. Peace be with you. »

476. A lesson on how to cure souls.  
Forgiveness of two sinners who became lepers.

19<sup>th</sup> August 1946.

<sup>1</sup>The rough massif of Jiphthahel dominates to the north <sup>476.1</sup> concealing the view. But where the steep slopes of this mountainous group begin, and they appear almost sheer to the caravan track running from Ptolemais towards Sephoris and Nazareth, there are many caves among the rocky blocks protruding from the mountain, hanging over the abyss, and placed like roofs and supports to the caverns.

As it is customary near the more important roads, there are some lepers who keep aloof but are sufficiently close to be seen and assisted by wayfarers. It is a small colony of lepers who give their scream of warning and invocation when they see Jesus pass with John and Abel. And Abel looks up at them saying: «This is He of Whom I spoke to you. I am taking Him to the two men you know. Have you nothing to ask the Son of David? »

«What we ask everybody: bread, water, to eat our fill while pilgrims pass by. Later, in winter, we shall be starving... »

«I have no food today. But I have Health with me... »

But the suggestive invitation to have recourse to the Health is not accepted. The lepers turn their backs and withdraw from the cliff; they go round the spur of the mountain to see whether any pilgrims are coming from the other road.

<sup>2</sup>«I think that they are heathen sailors or idolaters. They came <sup>476.2</sup> a short time ago, driven out of Ptolemais. They came from Africa. I do not know how they were taken ill. I know that they were healthy when they left their country and after a long tour along the African coasts to get ivory, and I believe also pearls to be sold to Latin merchants, they arrived here and were diseased. The harbour officials isolated them and burned even their ship. Some took the roads to Syro-Phoenicia and some came here. These ones are more dangerously ill, because they can hardly walk any more. But their souls are even more diseased., I tried to



instil some faith into them... They ask for nothing but food... »

«Perseverance is required in conversions. What does not succeed in one year, may succeed in two or more. One must insist speaking of God, even if they appear to be like the rocks sheltering them. »

«Am I wrong then in providing food for them?... I always brought them some food before the Sabbath, because the Jews do not travel on Sabbaths and no one thinks of them... »

«You did the right thing. You said it yourself: they are heathens, thus more anxious about their bodies and blood than their souls. The loving care you have for their hunger awakes their affection towards the unknown person who sees to them. And when they love you they will listen to you, also when you speak of something which is not food. Love precludes the desire to follow him whom one has learned to love. They will follow you one day in the ways of the spirit. Corporal works of mercy pave the way for spiritual ones, which make it so free and level, that the entry of God in a man prepared in such a way for the divine meeting takes place without the individual knowing it. He finds God within himself and he does not know whence He entered. Whence! At times behind a smile, behind a compassionate word, behind a piece of bread there is the initial opening of the door of a heart closed to Grace and the beginning of God's journey to enter that heart.

476. 3     <sup>3</sup>Souls! They are the most varied thing there is. No matter, and there are so many matters on the Earth, is so varied in its aspects as souls in their tendencies and reactions. See this mighty terebinth? It is in the middle of a wood of terebinths like it in species. How many are they? Hundreds and hundreds, perhaps a thousand, perhaps more. They cover this rough slope of the mountain, exceeding with their sharp healthy smell of resins every other scent of the valley and mountain. But look. They are a thousand and more but, if you watch carefully, there is not one like any other in thickness, height, power, inclination, disposition. Some are as straight as blades, some face north, some south, some east, some west. Some have grown in deep earth, some on a profusion and no one knows how it can support the tree and how it can stand up itself, outstretched as it is over the abyss, almost forming a bridge, with the other versant, high above the torrent,

which is now dry, but is so stormy in the rainy season. Some are twisted as if a cruel man had tortured them when they were tender plants, some are faultless. Some are leafy almost as far down as the ground, some are bare with just a tuft of leaves on their tops. Some have branches only on the right hand side. Some are leafy below while their tops have been burned by lightning. This one is withered and survives only in an obstinate branch, one only, which has come up almost from the root, sucking the surviving sap which dried up at the top. And this one, the first one I pointed out to you, as beautiful as a tree can be, has it perhaps a branch, a twig, a leaf - what do I say speaking of one leaf out of the thousands which it bears - which is like any other? They seem to be, but they are not. Look at this branch, the lowest one. Look at its top, just at the top of the branch. How many leaves are on that top? Perhaps two hundred thin green needles. And yet see? Is there one like any other in shade, size, freshness, flexibility, bearing, age? There is not.

It is the same with souls. As numerous as they are, as many are their differences in tendencies and reactions. <sup>4</sup>And he who is not capable of understanding them and working on them according to their various tendencies and reactions, is not a good master and doctor of souls. It is not an easy task, My friends. One must study continuously and be accustomed to meditation which enlightens more than reading fixed texts for a long time. The book which a master and doctor of souls must study are the souls themselves. As many pages as souls and in each page many sentiments and passions of past and present times and in the embryo stage. So what is required is continuous, diligent, meditative study, constant patience, endurance, courage, in doctoring the most putrid wounds, to cure them without showing disgust, which disheartens the patient. And one must act without false pity, which in order not to mortify anybody by uncovering putrefaction and not removing it lest the rotten part might suffer, allows it to become gangrenous, poisoning the whole body. And at the same time prudence is needed to avoid irritating the wounds of hearts with too coarse manners and not to be infected by their contact: one must not be so sure of oneself as to pretend that one is not afraid of being infected when dealing with sinners. And where do all these virtues necessary to the master and doctor

476. 4

of souls, find light to see and understand, where do they find patience, which at times is heroic, to persevere although they are requited with indifference and often with insults, and their strength to doctor wisely, their prudence not to injure patients and themselves? In love. Always in love. It throws light on everything, it gives wisdom, strength and prudence. It preserves from the curiosity which causes people to take upon themselves the faults which have been cured.

When one is full of love one cannot have any other desire or science but love. See? Doctors say that when a man has been on the point of dying of a disease, it is most unlikely that he will catch the same disease again, because his blood has already been affected by it and has overcome it. The concept is not perfect, but it is not entirely wrong. But love, which is health and not a disease, does what doctors say and with regards to all bad passions. He who is deeply in love with God and his brothers, does not do anything which may grieve God and his brothers, consequently even if he approaches people with diseased spirits and he becomes acquainted with matters which love had so far concealed, he is not corrupted by them, because he remains faithful to love and does not commit sin. What do you expect sensuality to be when one has overcome it through charity? What are riches for those who find all treasures in the love of God and of souls? What are gluttony, avarice, incredulity, indolence, pride for those who crave only for God, for those who give themselves, even themselves to serve God for those who find all their good in His Faith, for those who are urged by the untiring flame of charity and work indefatigably to give joy to God, for those who love God - to love Him is to know Him - and cannot become proud, because they see themselves as they are with regards to God?

476.5 <sup>5</sup>One day you will be priests of My Church. You will therefore be the doctors and masters of spirits. Remember these words of Mine. It will not be the name you bear, or your garment, or the duties you perform that will make you priests, that is, ministers of Christ, masters and doctors of souls, but it will be the love which you possess to make you such. It will give you everything you need to be such, and the souls, although different one from another, will acquire one only likeness: that of the Father, if you

know how to work on them with love. »

«Oh! what a beautiful lesson, Master! » says John.

«But shall we ever succeed in being such? » asks Abel.

Jesus looks at both of them, He then lays an arm around the neck of each and draws them towards Himself, one on His right, the other on His left hand side and kisses their hair saying: «You will succeed because you have understood love. »

<sup>476. 6</sup>They go on walking for some time, with greater and greater difficulty because of the roughness of the path which is cut almost on the brink of the mountain. Below, in the distance, there is a road and one can see people walking along it.

«Let us stop, Master. See, over there, from that rocky platform the two lepers lower with a rope a basket to passers-by, and their grotto is beyond the platform. I will call them now. And he utters a cry moving forward, while Jesus and John remain behind, hidden among thick shrubs.

After a few moments a face appears... - let us call it a face because it is situated on top of a body, but it could be called also a snout, a monster, a nightmare... - and it looks down from a bush of blackberries.

«Is that you? But did you not leave for the Tabernacles? »

«I found the Master and I came back. He is here! »

If Abel had said: «Jehovah is hovering over your heads» very likely the cry, the gestures, the enthusiasm of the two lepers because while Abel was speaking also the other one appeared would not have been so sudden and respectful, in jumping out, onto the platform, in full sunshine, prostrating themselves on the ground and shouting: «Lord, we have sinned. But Your mercy is greater than our sin! » They shout so without even ensuring whether Jesus is really there, or whether He is still afar, on the way towards them. Their faith is such that it makes them see what their eyes - because of the sores on their eyelids and their prompt throwing of themselves on the ground - certainly did not see.

Jesus moves forward while they repeat: «Lord, our sin does not deserve to be forgiven, but You are the Mercy! Lord Jesus, for the sake of Your Name, save us. You are the Love which can overcome Justice. »

«I am the Love. That is true. But above Me is the Father. And

He is the Justice» says Jesus severely, moving forward along the path with John.

476: 7 <sup>7</sup>The two raise their disfigured faces and look at Him through the tears streaming down their cheeks mingled with rotten matter. How horrible are those faces to be seen! Old? Young? Which is the servant? Which is Aser? It is impossible to say. The disease has assimilated them transforming them into two figures of horror and disgust.

I do not know how Jesus must seem to them, as He stands in the middle of the path, while the sun envelops Him with its beams and inflames his golden hair. I know that they look at Him and then they cover their faces moaning: «Jehovah! The Light! » Then they shout again: «The Father sent You to save. He calls You His Beloved One. He is pleased with You. He will not refuse You to forgive us. »

«Forgiveness or health? »

«Forgiveness» shouts one. And the other: «... and then health. My mother is dying broken-hearted because of me. »

«If I forgive you, the justice of men will still remain, for you in particular. So of what avail is My forgiveness to make your mother happy? » says Jesus temptingly, to make him say the words which He is waiting for in order to work the miracle.

«It is of great avail. She is a true Israelite. She wants the bosom of Abraham for me. And the place of expectation for Heaven is not for me because I have sinned too much. »

«Too much. You have said it. »

«Too much!... It is true... But You... Oh! Your Mother was there on that day... Where is Your Mother now? She felt pity for Abel's mother. I noticed that. And if She heard me now, She would have mercy on mine. Jesus, Son of God, in Your Mother's name, have mercy on me!... »

«And what would you do afterwards? »

«Afterwards? » They cast frightened glances at each other. The «afterwards» is the sentence of men, it is contempt, or flight, exile. They tremble before the prospect of recovery as if they were about to lose salvation. How attached are men to life! The two, caught in the dilemma of being cured and then being condemned by the law of men, or having to live as lepers, almost prefer to live as lepers. They admit it saying: «The punishment

is dreadful! ». I realise that it is Aser in particular, one of the two homicides, to say so...

«It is dreadful. But at least it is justice. You were going to inflict it on this innocent man, you... with lustful aims, and you... for a handful of coins. »

«That is true! O my God! But he has forgiven us. We beg You to forgive us as well. It means that we shall die. But our souls will be saved. »

«Joel's wife was stoned because she was an adulteress. Her four children are living with her mother and are finding it difficult to make ends meet, because Joel's brothers drove them out as illegitimate children and they took possession of their brother's property. Did you know that? »

«Abel told us... »

«And who will make amends for their misfortune? » Jesus' voice resounds like thunder, it is really the voice of God Judge and it is frightening. All alone in the sunshine, standing straight, He is the figure of terror. The two look at him with fear. Although the sunshine exacerbates their sores, they do not move, neither does Jesus, Who is completely enveloped in it. Elements lose their power in these hours of souls...

After some time Aser says: «If Abel wants to love me thoroughly, let him go to my mother and tell her that God has forgiven me and... »

«I have not forgiven you yet. »

«But You will because You can see my heart... And he will tell her that I want everything belonging to me to go to Joel's children. Whether I live or die, I renounce the wealth that made me vicious. »

<sup>8</sup>Jesus smiles. He becomes transfigured in smiling, His countenance from severe becomes pitiful and in a changed voice He says: «I can see your hearts. Stand up. And raise your spirits to God blessing Him. As you are cut off from the world you may go away without the world knowing about you. And the world is waiting for you to give you the possibility to suffer and expiate. » 476. 8

«Are You saving us, Lord?! Are You forgiving us?! Are You curing us?! »

«Yes, I am. I will let you live because life is painful particularly for those who have recollections like yours. But you cannot get

out of here just now. Abel must come with Me, like all Hebrews he must go to Jerusalem. Wait for his return. It will coincide with your recovery. He will take you to the priest and will inform your mother. I will tell Abel what he must do and how to do it. Can you believe My words, even if I go away without curing you? »

«Yes, Lord, we can. But tell us once again that you are forgiving our souls. Do that. Then everything will happen when You wish. »

«I forgive you. May you revive with new spirits and sin no more. Remember that in addition to abstaining from sin, you must accomplish acts of justice directed at the complete cancellation of your debt in the eyes of God, and that consequently your penance is to be continuous, because your debt is a heavy one indeed. Yours in particular concerns all the commandments of the Lord. Think about it and you will see that not one of them is excluded. You forgot about God, you made sensuality your idol, You turned feast days into delirious idleness, you offended and dishonoured your mother, you helped in killing and you wanted to kill. You stole life and you wanted to rob a mother of her son, you deprived four children of their father and mother, you have been lustful, you bore false witness, you lewdly coveted the woman who was faithful to her dead husband, you coveted what belonged to Abel, so much so that you wanted to kill him to take possession of his property. »

Aser moans at each sentence: «It's true, it's true! »

«As you can see, God could have reduced you to ashes without resorting to human punishments. He spared you that I might save another man. But the eyes of God watch you and his intelligence remembers. Go» and He turns around and goes back to the thicket near Abel and John, who had taken shelter under the trees on the mountain side.

476.9 <sup>9</sup>And the two men, still disfigured, perhaps smiling - but who can tell when a leper smiles? - with the typical shrill metallic intermittent voice of lepers intone psalm 114\* with sudden tone variations, while Jesus descends the mountain following the dangerous path...

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\* psalm 114, indicated here according to the vulgate, it became the first part of *psalm 116* in the neo-vulgate: *I love the Lord, for he heard my voice; he heard my cry for mercy...*

«They are happy! » says John. «I am happy, too» says Abel.

«L thought that You were going to cure them at once» says John again.

«So did I, as You usually do. »

«They were big sinners. This is a fair expectation for those who have sinned so much. Now listen, Ananias... »

«My name is Abel, Lord» says the surprised young man and he looks at Jesus, as if he were asking himself: «Why is He mistaking? »

Jesus smiles and says: «You are Ananias to Me, because you really seem to be born of the kindness of the Lord. Be so more and more. And listen. On the way back from the Tabernacles you will go to your town and tell Aser's mother what her son decided and that it is to be carried out as soon as possible, giving *everything* in atonement *less one tenth*. And that out of pity for the old mother who should leave Bethlehem of Galilee with you and go to Ptolemais, waiting for her son, who will join her and you with his companion. After leaving the woman with some disciple in town, you will go and get what is necessary for the purifications of lepers and- you will leave only when everything is over. Make sure that the priest is not one who is aware of their past, and get one from a different town. »

«And then? »

«You will then go back home or join the disciples. And the two men who have been cured, will take the road of expiation. I am saying only what is essential. I leave man free to act afterwards... »

<sup>10</sup>And they continue to go down, without tiring, despite the roughness of the road and the heat of the sun... without tiring and without speaking for a long time. 476. 10

Then Abel breaks the silence saying: «May I ask a grace of You, Lord? »

«Which? »

«To let me go to my town. I am sorry to leave You. But that mother... »

«Go. But do not be late. You will get to Jerusalem just in time. »  
«Thank You, Lord! I shall find but her, poor old soul, ashamed of everything, since Aser sinned. But she will smile once again. What shall I tell her in Your name? »



«That her tears and prayers have achieved grace and that God encourages her to hope more and more and that He blesses her. But before parting, let us stop for an hour. Not more. It is not the time to stop. Then you will go your way, John and I Mine, taking short cuts. And you, John will go ahead of Me, to My Mother. You will take Her this bag containing linen garments and you will come with woollen ones. You will tell Her that I want to see Her and that I shall be waiting for Her in the wood of Mattathias, the one belonging to his wife. You know it. Speak to Her alone and come at once. »

«I know where is the wood. And what about You? Are You remaining alone? »

«I am remaining with My Father. Be not afraid» says Jesus raising His hand and laying it on the head of His beloved disciple, who is sitting on the grass beside Him. And He smiles at him saying: «But we ought to be there by the evening... »

«Master when I have to make You happy, I do not get tired. You know that. And to go to Mother!... I feel as if angels were carrying me. But it is not very far. »

«What one does with joy is never far... But you will stay for the night at Nazareth. »

«And You? »

«And I... I will stay with My Father after being with My Mother for a short time. And I will set out at dawn, taking the road of the Tabor, without entering Nazareth. You know that I have to be at Jezreel at dawn the day after tomorrow. »

«You will be very tired, Master. You already are. »

«We shall have time to rest in winter. Do not worry. And do not hope to be able to evangelize all the time, in peace, as you do here. We shall meet with many delays... »

Jesus lowers His head pensively nibbling at His piece of bread more to keep the two disciples company - young as they are and happy to be with the Master they are eating with relish - than to satisfy His hunger. In fact He stops eating and becomes absorbed in deep silence, which the two respect resting quietly in the breeze of the mountain, with their bare feet in the cool grass which has grown round the feet of mighty tree trunks. And they would also doze, but Jesus raises His head and says: «Let us go. We shall part at the cross-roads. ».

And after tying their sandals they set out. The shadow in the wood and the wind blowing from the north help them to bear the sultry heat of the warm hour of the day, although it is not so torrid as in full summer months.

477. A conversations with His Mother in the wood of Mattathias. The moral sufferings of Jesus and Mary.

21<sup>st</sup> August 1946.

1 Jesus is alone. All alone in a slightly HOLLOW-SHAPED table-land which with slight but continuous undulations rises on the slopes of the hills surrounding the lake of Galilee, which I can see below, to the right, as its beautiful blue water becomes darker because of the oncoming sunset which withdraws the brightly sparkling sunbeams from a wide surface of the lake. Behind the dell, to the north are the mountains of Arbela, and farther back, beyond the lake, the higher mountains of Meiron and Giscal. To the north-east in the distance, the mighty majestic, from whatever side one looks at it, Great Hermon, the highest peak of which is whimsically lit up by the setting sun, so that its western side is a pinkish topaz hue, whilst the rest is an opaline shade verging to the nondescript snowy blue nuance which I have seen at times on the tops of our Alps at the borders.

That is what I see looking north and if I turn to the right I can easily see the lake below, on the left, and the higher hills which obstruct the view of the plain along the coast. But if I face south I can see the Tabor behind smooth hills which are certainly the ones which surround Nazareth. There is a little town down, at the bottom, near a very busy road along which people are hurrying to reach their halting places.

Jesus does not look at what I am looking. He is only seeking a place where to sit down and He chooses it at the foot of a very powerful holm-oak whose leafy branches have protected the grass growing on the ground around it from dog-days, so that it is fresh and thick, as if parching summer had never passed there. Thus the lake is in front of Jesus, and on His side, among trees, is the path on which He came up, on the opposite side the undulating ground surrounding the northern part of the dell covered

with meadows and woods, where He is, and which is completely green, because most trees are holm-oaks, that is evergreens not affected by autumn. Only here and there they show blood-red spots, where leaves change then colour before falling, making room for fresh ones, which in the embryo state are already growing near the withering ones.

Jesus is very tired and leans against the powerful trunk and remains for some time with His eyes closed, to rest. He then takes his usual posture, moving away from the trunk, leaning slightly forward, his elbows resting on his knees, his forearms stretched forward, his hands joined and his fingers interlaced. He is pensive. He is certainly praying. Now and again when He hears a noise nearby - birds squabbling over a resting place for the night, some animal among the grass causing a stone to roll down the mountain side, a branch blown by a solitary gush of wind knocking against another branch - He raises His eyes, and with a pensive glance which certainly does not see, He looks in the direction of the sound, wondering if it comes from the little road that climbs among the holm-oaks. He then lowers his eyes again concentrating on Himself. He looks attentively at the lake twice which is already in the shade, and then He turns His head looking westwards where the sun has already set behind the woody hills. The second time He stands up and walks towards the path to see whether anybody is coming up, and then He goes back to his place.

477. 2      <sup>2</sup>Finally the sound of footsteps is heard and two figures appear: Mary wearing a dark blue garment and John laden with bags. John calls twice: «Master! » and as soon as Jesus turns around he says: «Here is Your Mother» and he helps Her to cross a little stream and to step over some large stones placed on the path for the purpose of consolidating it and making it more comfortable for people going up or down, whereas in actual fact they are pitfalls for people wearing light sandals.

Jesus gets up at once to meet His Mother and helps Her with John to climb the stones of the collapsed dry wall, which was to support the plateau. In actual fact only the roots of the holm-oaks fulfil that function. Mary is now supported by Her Son Who looks at Her and asks: «Are You tired? »

«No, Jesus» and She smiles at Him.

«But I think that You really are tired. I am sorry that I made You come. But I could not come to You... »

«Oh! it does not matter, Son. I am a little hot. But it is pleasant here... But You are very tired, and poor John, as well. »

But John shakes his head smiling and putting down the new well-packed bag of Jesus and his own on the grass, at the foot of the holm-oak and he withdraws saying: «I am going down. I saw a little fountain. I am going to refresh myself in its water. But if You should call me, I shall hear You» and he goes away leaving the Two free.

<sup>3</sup>Mary unfastens her mantle and takes off her veil wiping the perspiration beading her forehead. She looks at Jesus and smiles at Him, and She drinks in his smile, as He also smiles at Her while caressing her hand and pressing it against his cheek to be caressed. He is so «filial» in that gesture which I have seen Him make more than once! Mary frees Her hand and tidies up his hair, removing a tiny bit of the bark of a tree from his locks, and each movement of her fingers is a caress, such is the love with which it is made. And She says: «You are in a sweat, Jesus. Your mantle is wet on the shoulders, as if You had been in the rain. But You can take another one now. I will take this one back. Sunshine and dust have discoloured it. I had everything ready, and... Wait! I know that You have just had something to eat: a crust of stale bread and a handful of olives, which were so salty as to irritate Your throat. I was told by John who did nothing but drink as soon as he arrived. But I brought You some new bread. I had just taken it out of the oven, and a honeycomb which I took from the beehive yesterday, to give it to Simon's children. But I have more honeycombs for them. Take it, Son. It comes from our house... » and She bends to open the bag, in which, on top of all its contents, there is a low wicker basket with some fruit lying on which is a honeycomb wrapped in long vine leaves, and She offers everything to Her Son with some new crisp bread.

And while Jesus is eating, She takes out of the bag the garments which She prepared for the winter months; they are heavy and warm suitable to protect one from cold and rain and She shows them to Jesus, Who says: «How much work, Mother! I still had those of last winter... »

«When men are away from their women, they must have eve-

rything new, so that they do not need to have anything mended, in order to be properly dressed. But I have not wasted anything. This mantle of mine is your old one, which I shortened and re-dyed. It is still all right for Me. But not for You. You are Jesus... »

It is impossible to say what there is in this sentence. «You are Jesus». A simple sentence. But all the love of the Mother, of the disciple, of the ancient Hebrew women for the Promised Messiah, of the Hebrew women of the blessed time in which Jesus lived, is in those few words. If the Mother had prostrated Herself worshipping Her Son as God, Her veneration would have been of a limited form. But Her words express something which is more than the formal adoration of knees that bend, of a back that bows, of a forehead that touches the ground: here it is Mary's whole being, Her flesh, blood, mind, heart, spirit, love, adoring the God-Man completely and perfectly. *i*

I have never seen anything greater, more absolute than these adorations of Mary for the Word of God, Who is her Son, and Who She always remembers is her God. None of the people whom I see worship their Saviour, after being cured or converted by Jesus, not even the most fervent ones, not even those who inadvertently behave theatrically in their transport of love, have anything like this. They love completely, but always as creatures lacking something to be perfect. Mary loves, I dare say, divinely. She loves more than a creature. Oh! She really is the daughter of God free from sin! That is why She can love thus!... And I think of what man lost through the original Sin... I think of what Satan stole from us by overwhelming our First Parents. He deprived us of the power of loving God as Mary loved Him... He deprived us of the power of loving well.

477. 4 <sup>4</sup>While I am meditating on these matters watching the perfect Couple, Jesus, at the end of his meal, is sitting on the grass at Mary's feet resting His head on her knees like a tired sad child who takes shelter near the only person who can console him. And Mary caresses His hair, touching Jesus' smooth forehead lightly. She seems to be wishing to dispel all the tiredness and all the grief which are in Her Son by means of Her caresses. Jesus closes His eyes and Mary stops caressing Him; She remains with Her hand resting on His head, looking in front of Her, pensively still. Perhaps She thinks that Jesus may fall asleep. He is so tired.

But Jesus opens His eyes again almost at once, He sees that it is growing dark, He realises that it is not possible to prolong that hour of solace so He raises His head, still sitting where He is and He says: «Do You know, Mother, from where I come. »

«Yes, I know. John told Me. Two souls returning to God. A joy for You and for Me. »

«Yes. And I am going down to Jerusalem with that joy. »

«To make up for the disappointment You received the same day that we parted. »

«How do You know? Did John tell You? He is the only one who knows... »

«No. I asked him about it. But John replied: “Mother, You will be seeing Him before long. Ask Him”. »

Jesus smiles saying: «John is scrupulously faithful. »<sup>5</sup>There is a pause, then Jesus asks: «So, who spoke to You about it? » 477. 5

«Not to Me. Some... men came to Your brother Joseph. And... he came to Me. He was still a little... Yes, Son. It is always better to speak the truth. He was somewhat upset after meeting You at Capernaum and especially after his discussion with Judas and James. They met during Your absence. and James, too, nay James above all was severe... Very severe... I would say too severe. But the Eternal Father, Who is always good, derived some good from their variance. Certainly because it was a variance originating from two sources of love. Different, of course, but still love. Imperfect, that is true. Because if they had been perfect, if at least one source were perfect, it would not have gone so far as to get angry... Anger is perhaps too strong a word to describe James' mood, but he was certainly very severe... You would have certainly reminded him to be charitable. I... did not approve, but I bore with him because I realised what was upsetting so much the ever patient James. One cannot expect him to be perfect... He is a man. And he is still *very much* of a man, too. Oh! there is still a long way to go before James becomes as just as was My Joseph! He... knew how to control himself and be always good... But I am digressing! I was speaking of the imperfect love of the two for You - because they love You so much. Also Joseph does, although at first sight he does not seem to. It is really love for You all the care he takes of Me, a poor woman. And it is love for You his way of thinking, as an old Israelite,

firm in his ideas like his father. He would give anything to see You loved by everybody! His way... of course... -. But reverting to the fact, I must tell You that Joseph, whom James' firm behaviour did not harm, began to come to Me every day. And do You know why? That I may explain the Scriptures to him "as You and Your Son understand them" he said. To explain the Scriptures in the light of the Truth!... It is not easy when he who is listening to you is Joseph of Alphaeus that is, one who firmly believes in the temporal kingdom of the Messiah, in His royal birth and in so many other things!

But it was his own pride that helped Me to make him accept the idea that the King of Israel is to be of royal descent, of David's stock, agreed, but that it is not necessary for Him to be born in a royal palace. He... oh! how proud he is of belonging to the stock of David! I told him many things in a kind way... and I got him to revise that idea. He now admits, in accordance with the prophecies, that You are the predicted one. But... oh! I would not have been successful in convincing him that Your true greatness consists exactly in being the King of the spirit, the only thing that can make You the universal and eternal King, if people had not come on two occasions looking for him... The first, still those from Capernaum with others, after tempting him with dazzling promises of grandeur for the whole household, seeing that he was less inclined to yield to their suggestions - they expected him to force You and to force Me to make You accept a crown - they betrayed themselves when they began to threaten him... The usual half-hidden threats which they use. Sharp knives wrapped in soft wool to make them seem harmless... And Joseph reacted saying: "I am the oldest, but He is of age and I have never been told that in our family there have been fools or madmen. For twenty years, since He became of age, He has been aware of what He does. So go to Him and ask Him, and if He refuses, leave Him in peace. He is responsible for His actions".

Then some of Your disciples came, it was just the eve of the Sabbath... Are You looking at Me, Son? Allow Me not to mention their names, but let Me tell You to forgive them... A son who should lift his hands against his old father, a levite who should desecrate the altar and be afraid of Jehovah's wrath, would not be like them... They came from Capernaum where they had

been looking for You... They had come along the lake road from Capernaum to Magdala and then to Tiberias hoping to find You. And they had met with Hermas and Stephen, who were going down to Jerusalem with other people after being Gamaliel's guests for some days. I do not want to repeat what they said, what they want to tell You and are anxious to tell You. But their words had increased even more the grief of the disciples who had been led astray to the extent of joining those who wished to betray You by means of a false unction. Joseph was with Me when they came. And it was a good thing. Oh! Joseph has not yet reached the Light, but he is already in the twilight of his dawn. Joseph understood the snare and... our Joseph is very fond of You now. He loves You, I dare not say in the right manner, but at least as an adult relative who suffers because of Your suffering, who watches over Your safety, who *knows* Your enemies...

That is why I know what they did to You, Son. A sorrow... and a joy because more than one recognised You for what You are. Such grief and joy for You and for Me. But we are forgiving everybody, are we not? I have already forgiven those who repented, as far as I am allowed to forgive. »

«Mother, You might have forgiven them also on My behalf. Because I had already forgiven them as I saw their hearts. They are men... What You said is correct!... <sup>477. 6</sup>But I have also the joy of seeing Joseph proceeding towards the dawn of the true Light... »

«Yes. He was hoping to see You. You ought to see him. He was absent today until sunset. And he will be grieved at not seeing You. But he will be able to see You in Jerusalem. »

«No, Mother. I will not be staying in Jerusalem so that people may see Me. I must evangelize the City and the villages in the neighbourhood, and I would be driven out at once if they found Me. So I will have to act like one doing evil, whereas I only want to do good... But it is so. »

«So will You not see Joseph? He is leaving tomorrow for the Tabernacles. You could have travelled together... »

«I cannot... »

«Are they already persecuting You so fiercely, Son? » How much anxiety is in the Mother's voice!

«No, Mother. No. Not more than previously. Be reassured. On the contrary... kind spirits come to Me. Others, who are not good,



stop and meditate, whilst previously they struck without any reason, the disciples are increasing, the older ones are improving in their spiritual training, the apostles are becoming more perfect. I am not referring to John: he has always been a grace granted to Me by the Father, I mean Simon of Jonah and the others. Simon is changing day by day from the man he was into an apostle, and You know what I mean. And he gives Me so much joy. And Nathanael and Philip are freeing themselves from the ties of their ideas. And Thomas and... But what am I saying? All of them. Yes, believe Me. They are all good at present: they are My joy. You must not worry since You know that I am with them: they are the friends, the comforters, the supporters of Your Son. I wish You were so well defended and loved! »

«Oh! I have Mary, I have the wives of Joseph and Simon and them as well and their children. I have good Alphaeus. And then, who in Nazareth is not fond of Mary of Nazareth? You must not worry... A whole village loves Your Mother. »

«But they do not love Me as yet, with few exceptions. I know and I am aware that their love for You is imbued with the commiseration one feels for the Mother of a mad vagrant. But  
477. <sup>7</sup>You know that I am not and that I love You. <sup>7</sup>You know that to part from You is I will not say the greatest, but the most lovingly sorrowful obedience which the Father requests of Me... »

«Yes, Son! I know. But I do not regret anything. I would certainly like to be with You, I would prefer to be with You, on muddy roads, exposed to winds, sleeping in the open, persecuted, tired, without a home and a fireplace, with no bread, as You are very often, rather than be in My house, while You are far away, and *I do not know* how You are, when I think of You. If You were with Me and I with You, You would suffer less and I would suffer less... Because You are My Son and I could always hold You in My arms and defend You from the cold, from hard stones, and above all from hardened hearts, with My love, My breast, My arms. You are My Son. I held You so long against My heart in the grotto, in the journey to Egypt, and on the way back, always when the dangers of season and the snares of men might have injured You. Why could I not do it now? Am I perhaps no longer Your Mother, because You are now the Man? So can a mother no longer be everything for her son, because he is no longer a little

child? I think that if I am with You they will not be able to injure You... because nobody... No. I am silly... You are the Redeemer... and men - I have noticed it - have no mercy even for their own mothers... But let Me come with You. Everything is better for Me than being away from You. »

«If men were kinder I would come back to Nazareth again. But even Nazareth... It does not matter. They will come to Me. For the time being I am going to other people... And I cannot take You with Me. I will come back here only when they realise Who I am. <sup>8</sup>I am now going to Judaea... I will go up to the Temple... 477. 8

I will then remain in that district... I will go through Samaria once again. I will work where there is more work to be done. So, Mother, I advise You to be ready to join Me early in spring and to settle near Jerusalem. It will be easier for us to meet. I will go up to the Decapolis again and we shall meet again... I hope so. But as a rule, I will remain in Judaea. Jerusalem is the sheep needing more care because she is really more stubborn than an old ram and more quarrelsome than a wild billy-goat. I am going there to spread the Word like dew which never tires falling on her aridity... »

Jesus stands up, He stops and looks at His Mother Who gazes at Him attentively. He moves His lips and shaking His head He says: «There is still something to be said before the last thing... Mother, if Joseph wants to speak to Me, let it be at dawn the day after tomorrow on the road which from Nazareth goes to Jezreel via the Tabor. I shall be there alone or with John. »

«I will tell him, Son. »

<sup>9</sup>There is silence dead silence, because the birds have ceased quarrelling among the leafy branches and also the wind is quiet while twilight deepens. Then Jesus, Who seems to have found with difficulty the words to be spoken last, says: «Mother, My pause is over... A kiss, Mother. And Your blessing. » They kiss and bless each other. 477. 9

Then Jesus, bending to pick up His Mother's veil and calling John as if He wished to make the words less serious, says: «When You come to Judaea bring Me My best tunic. The one which You wove for Me for solemn festivities. In Jerusalem I must be "Master" in the widest meaning and also more human sensitively, because those closed hypocritical spirits look more at the outside:

one's garments, than the inside: one's doctrine. And thus also Judas of Kerioth will be happy... and Joseph will be satisfied seeing Me in a royal garment. Oh! it will be a triumph! And the garment woven by You will contribute... » and He smiles to mitigate the harsh truth concealed by those words.

But Mary is not deceived. She stands up and leans on Jesus' arm exclaiming: «Son! » with such heart-rending grief that makes me suffer. Jesus takes Her in His arms and She weeps against His heart...

«Mother, this is the reason why I wanted to speak to. You in this hour of peace... I entrust You with My secret and what is dearest to Me here on the Earth. None of My disciples know that we shall not come back to these parts of the country until everything has been accomplished. But You... I have no secrets for You... I promised\* You Mother. Do not weep. We still have many hours to spend together. That is why I say to You: "Come to Judaea". To have You near Me will requite Me for the fatigue of the most difficult evangelization of those stone-hearted people who are obstructing the Word of God. Come with the Galilean women disciples. You will be very helpful to Me. John will see to lodgings for You and for them. Let us pray together now, before He comes back. Then You will go back to the village, and I will come, too, during the night... »

477.10 <sup>10</sup>They pray together and they are at the last words of the Our Father when John appears and in the dim light, when he is close at hand, he sees the traces of tears on Mary's face and is amazed. But he makes no remark. He greets the Master and says: «At dawn I shall be on the road outside Nazareth... Come, Mother. Outside the wood it is still daylight and the road, below, is lit up by the lamps of the carts which are travelling... »

Mary kisses Jesus again, weeping under Her veil, and then supported by John who is holding Her by the elbow, She goes down to the path and descends towards the valley.

Jesus is left alone, to pray, to think, to weep. Because Jesus weeps watching His Mother descend. He then goes back to where He was previously and He assumes the same position as before while shadows and silence become deeper and deeper around Him.

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\* promised in 460. 10.

14<sup>th</sup> February 1944.

<sup>11</sup>Jesus says:

477. 11

«I did not forget this sorrow of Mary, My Mother, either. That I had to torture Her with the expectation of My suffering, that I had to see Her weep. That is why I deny Her nothing. She gave Me everything. I give Her everything. She suffered all sorrows. I give Her all joy.

When you think of Mary, I would like you to meditate on that agony of Hers that lasted thirty-three years and culminated at the foot of the Cross. She suffered that for your sake. For your sake She suffered the mockery of the crowds that considered Her the mother of a madman. For your sake She endured the reproaches of relatives and important people. For your sake She bore My apparent disavowal\*: “My Mother and My brothers are those who do the will of God”. And who did His will more than She did, and a terrible Will, that imposed on Her the torment of seeing Her Son tortured?

For your sake She endured the fatigue of joining Me here and there. For your sake She made sacrifices, from the sacrifice of leaving Her little house and mingling with the crowds, to the sacrifice of leaving Her little fatherland for the tumult of Jerusalem. For your sake She had to be in touch with him who was brooding over betrayal in his heart. For your sake She suffered hearing Me accused of diabolical possession and heresy. Everything for your sake.

<sup>12</sup>You do not know how much I loved My Mother. You do not consider how the heart of Mary’s Son was sensitive to affections. And you think that My torture was purely physical, at the most you add the spiritual torment of the final abandonment by the Father. 477. 12

No, children. I experienced also the passions of man. I suffered seeing My Mother suffer, having to lead Her, like a meek ewe lamb, to the torture, being compelled to torment Her with continual farewells, at Nazareth before evangelizing, with the one which I have shown you and which precedes My imminent Passion, with the one before the Supper, when Judas had already initiated My Passion with his betrayal, and with the dreadful

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\* apparent disavowal, as in 269. 12.

one on Calvary.

I suffered seeing Myself derided, hated, slandered, circumvented by unwholesome inquisitiveness that did not evolve into good, but into evil. I suffered because of all the falsehood that I had to hear or see acting beside Me. The falsehood of the hypocritical Pharisees, who called Me Master and asked Me questions not because they believed in My intelligence but to lay snares for Me; the falsehood of those who had been benefited by Me and who became My accusers in the Sanhedrin and in the Praetorium; the long premeditated subtle falsehood of Judas who sold Me and continued feigning to be My disciple, and indicated Me to the executioners with the sign of love. I suffered because of the lie of Peter, who was seized with human fear.

How much falsehood and so revolting for Me, Who am the Truth! How much there still is, even now, with regards to Me! You say that you love Me, but you do not love Me. You have my Name on your lips, but you adore Satan in your hearts and you follow a law contrary to Mine.

I suffered thinking that with respect to the infinite value of My Sacrifice - the Sacrifice of a God - too few would be saved. *All, I say: all those who throughout the centuries of the Earth would prefer death to eternal life, making My Sacrifice vain, were present to Me.* And with that knowledge I went to My death.

477. 13 <sup>13</sup>You can see, little John, that your Jesus and His Mother suffered bitterly in their moral egos. And for a long time. So be patient, if you will have to suffer. "No disciple is superior to his Master". I said so\*.

Tomorrow I will speak of the sorrows of the spirit. Rest now, peace be with you».

478. The meeting with Joseph and Simon of Alphaeus  
who go to the feast of the Tabernacles.

22<sup>nd</sup> August 1946.

478. 1 <sup>1</sup>The sun has just begun to shine on the country which is wet after a shower. It must have rained only recently because the

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\* said so, in 265. 11.

dust on the road is still wet but has not turned into mud. That is why I say that it rained recently and that it was a brief fall. One of the first autumn showers foreshadowing the November rains which will turn the road of Palestine into slimy ribbons. But this shower, favourable to wayfarers, has only moistened the dust - the other calamity for Palestine reserved for summer months, as mud is for the winter ones - and it has washed the atmosphere, leaves and herbs, which are now shining, clean as they are, in the early sunshine. A pleasant clean breeze is blowing among the olive groves covering the hills of Nazareth, and a flight of angels seems to be passing among the peaceful trees, as the rustling leafy branches resound like large wings in flight and their glossy silvery leaves gleam, when blown all to one side, as if a wake of heavenly light was left behind by the angelical flight.

The town has been left a few stadia behind when Jesus, Who has taken some short cuts along the hills, arrives at the main road which from Nazareth goes towards the plain of Esdraelon, the caravan route now becoming busier every minute with pilgrims. He walks a few more stadia on the road, when at a cross-road near a milestone on the opposite sides of which is inscribed: «Japhia Sidonia-Bethlehem Carmel» to the west, and «Xalot-Naim Scytopolis-Engannim» to the east, He sees, standing on the roadside His cousins Joseph and Simon, who greet Him at once together with John of Zebedee.

«Peace to you! Are you already here? I was thinking of stopping here waiting for you and that I was going to be the first to arrive... and I find you already here» and He kisses them clearly happy to see them.

«It was not possible for You to be the first to arrive. As we were afraid that You might pass before we arrived, we left by starlight which was soon dimmed by clouds. »

«I told you that you would see Me. So, John, you have had no sleep. »

«Little, Master, but certainly more than You had. But it does not matter» and a smile brightens John's serene face a true mirror of his happy character which is always satisfied with everything.

<sup>2</sup>«Well, brother. Did you want to speak to Me? » says Jesus to <sup>478 2</sup> Joseph.

«Yes... Let us go into that vineyard. It will be more quiet there» and Joseph of Alphaeus is the first to advance between two rows of vines already stripped of their fruit. Only an odd small bunch of grapes is left on the vine branches, among the yellowing branches about to fall, to satisfy the hunger of poor people and of pilgrims, according to Mosaic prescriptions.

Jesus follows him with Simon. John remains on the road but Jesus calls him saying: «You may come, John. You are My witness. »

«But... » says the apostle looking perplexedly at Alphaeus' two sons.

«No. Do come. Nay, we want you to listen to our words» says Joseph and John then goes down into the vineyard where they all proceed so far, following the curve of the rows of vines, that they cannot be seen from the road.

478. 3 <sup>3</sup>« Jesus, I was happy to see that You love me» says Joseph.

«Could you doubt it? Have I not always loved you? »

«And I have always loved You. But... in our love, for some time, we have not been understanding each other. I... could not approve of what You were doing, because I thought that You were ruining Yourself, Your Mother and us. You know... We, the elderly Galileans we all remember how Judas the Galilean was struck and how his relatives and followers were scattered and their property confiscated. Those who were not killed were sent to the galleys and their goods were confiscated. I did not want that to happen to us. Because... Well, I thought that it was not true that just from us, of the stock of David, of course, but in this way... We are not short of bread, definitely not, and may the Most High be praised for that. But where is the regal grandeur which all the prophecies ascribe to Him Who will be the Messiah? Are You the rod\* that strikes in order to dominate? You were not the light when You were born. You were not even born in Your house!... Oh! I know the prophecies well! We are withered trees now, but nowhere it was said that the Lord would cover them again with leaves. And what are You but a just man? Those are the thoughts which made me oppose You moaning our ruin. And while I was moaning thus, tempters came to make my ideas of grandeur, of

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\* the rod, as in: *Micah 7, 14.*

royalty flare up even more... Jesus, Your brother was foolish. I believed them and I displeased You. It is hard to admit it, but I must acknowledge it. And consider that all Israel was in me, as foolish as I was, as certain as I was that the figure of the Messiah is not like the one which You give us... It is unpleasant to say: "I was wrong! We were wrong and we are wrong! We have been wrong for ages". But Your Mother explained the words of the prophets to me. Oh! yes! James is right. And Judas, too. When one hears the prophecies explained by Her, as they did when they were children, one sees that You are the Messiah. That is it. My hair is growing hoary, because I am no longer a boy, neither I was when Mary came back from the Temple and was engaged to Joseph. And I remember those days. And the astonished criticism\* of my father when he saw that his brother was not completing the marriage in a short time. He was amazed, and Nazareth was amazed. And people spoke slightly. Because it is not customary to let so many months pass before the wedding, putting oneself in condition of sinning and of... Jesus, I think highly of Mary and I honour the memory of my relative. But the world... It was not a good moment according to the world... You... Oh! now I know. Your Mother explained the prophecies. That is why God wanted them to delay the wedding, so that Your birth might coincide with the great Edict and You should be born in Bethlehem of Judah\*\*. And... yes... Mary explained everything to me and it was like a light that made me understand also what She did not mention out of humbleness. And I say: You are the Messiah. That is what I said that is what I will say. But to say that did not imply changing my mind... because my mind considers the Messiah a King. The prophecies speak... and it is difficult to understand a different character in the Messiah than that of king...

<sup>4</sup>Are You following me? Are You tired? »

478.4

«No, I am listening. »

«Well... Those who were tempting my heart came back and wanted me to force You... And as I did not agree, the veil fell off their faces and they appeared as they are: false friends and true enemies:... And more people came, weeping like sinners, and I

\* criticism, as seen in 14. 6.

\*\* You should be born in Bethlehem of Judah, according to the prophecy of *Micah* 5, 1.



heard them. They repeated the words which You spoke in Chuzza's house... Now I know that You will reign over spirits, that is, You will be the One in Whom all the wisdom of Israel will assemble so that You may give new universal laws. You have the wisdom of the patriarchs, of the judges, and of the prophets, and the wisdom of our ancestors David and Solomon, and the wisdom which led the kings, Nehemiah and Ezra and supported the Maccabees. All the wisdom of a people, of our people, of the People of God. I understand that You will give the world, completely subjected to Your power, Your very wise laws. And Your people will really be a people of saints. <sup>5</sup>But, my dear Brother, You cannot do that by Yourself. Moses, for much less, chose some assistants. And it was but *one* people! You... All the world! All the world at Your feet!... Ah! But to do that You must make Yourself known... Why are You smiling with Your lips, and closing Your eyes? »

«Because I am listening and I am saying to Myself: "My brother is forgetting that he reproached Me because I was making Myself known, saying that I would harm the whole family! ". That is why I am smiling. And I am also thinking that for two and a half years I have done nothing but make Myself known. »

«That is true. But... Who knows You? The poor. Peasants. Fishermen. Sinners. And women! You can count on the fingers of one hand those who are not valueless nonentities among those who know You. I say that You must make Yourself known to the great ones in Israel! To the Priests, to the High Priests, to the Elders, the scribes, the great Rabbis of Israel, to all those, who, although few, are worth a multitude. They must know You! They, those who do not love You, among their charges which I now realise are false, have one which is true and just: that You neglect them. Why do You not present Yourself for what You are and conquer them with Your wisdom? Go up to the Temple and install Yourself in Solomon's Porch - You are of the stock of David and a prophet, and You are entitled to that place and nobody is rightfully entitled to it as You are - and speak. »

«I did speak. That is why they hate Me. »

«Insist. And speak as a king. Do You not remember the power, the majesty of Solomon's deeds? If (what a wonderful "if"! ) You are really the One predicted by the prophets, as the prophecies

show if one looks at them with the eyes of the spirit, You are more than a Man. He, Solomon, was but a man. So show Yourself for what You are, and they will worship You. »

«Will the Hebrews, the princes, the heads of the families and the tribes of Israel adore Me? Not everybody, but some who do not adore Me, will adore Me in spirit and truth. But that will not happen now. First I must assume the crown, take the sceptre and put on the purple. »

«Ah! So You are king, You will soon be king! You are saying so!

It is just as I thought! As many people think! »

«You really do not know how I shall reign. Only the Most High and I, and few souls to whom the Spirit of the Lord was pleased to reveal it, now and in the past, know how the King of Israel, the Anointed of God, will reign. »

<sup>6</sup>«But listen also to me, Brother. Joseph is right. How can You expect them to love You or fear You if You always avoid astonishing them? Do You not want to call Israel to arms? Do You not want to utter the cry of war and victory? But at least become king by public acclamation, by being able to gain such an acclamation through Your power of Rabbi and Prophet, as it is not the first time that kings have been hailed thus in Israel» says Simon of Alphaeus.

«I already am king. I have always been king. »

«Yes. One of the Temple leaders told us. You were born king of the Hebrews. But You do not love Judaea. You are a deserter king, because You do not go there. You are not a holy king if You do not love the Temple, where the will of a people will anoint You king. Without the will of a people You cannot reign, unless You wish to impose Yourself on them through violence» replies Simon.

«You mean without the will of God, Simon. What is the will of the people? What is the people? For whom is the people? Who supports it as such? God. Do not forget that, Simon. And I shall be what God wants Me to be. By His will I shall be what I must be. And nothing can prevent Me from being so. It will not be My concern to utter the cry to gather the people. The whole of Israel will be present at My proclamation. Neither shall I have to go up to the Temple to be proclaimed. They will carry Me there.

All the people will carry Me there that I may ascend My throne. You accuse Me of not loving Judaea... In its heart, in Jerusalem, I shall become the "King of the Jews". Saul was not proclaimed king in Jerusalem, neither was David nor Solomon. But I shall be anointed King in Jerusalem. But I will not go to the Temple in public now and I will not install Myself there, because it is not yet My hour. »

478. 7 <sup>7</sup>Joseph resumes speaking. «You are letting Your hour pass by. I am telling You. People are tired of foreign oppressors and of our leaders. This is the hour. I am telling You. The whole of Palestine, with the exception of Judaea, but not all of it, is following You as a Rabbi, and even more than that. You are like a flag hoisted on a mountain top. Everybody is looking at You. You are like an eagle and everybody follows Your flight. You are like a revenger. And everybody is waiting for You to shoot the arrow. Go. Leave Galilee, the Decapolis, Perea, the other regions, and go to the heart of Israel, to the citadel in which all evil is enclosed and from which all good is to come, and conquer it. You have disciples there as well. But they are tepid because they do not know You well. They are few, because You do not stay there. And they are somewhat doubtful because You did not work there the deeds which You worked elsewhere. Go to Judaea so that they also may see who You are through Your deeds. You reproach the Hebrews for not loving You. But how can You expect to be loved by them if You hide Yourself from them? No man seeking or wishing to be acclaimed in public performs his works secretly, but he does them in such a way that people may see them. So if You can work wonders in hearts, bodies and elements, go there and make Yourself known to the world. »

«I told you: it is not My hour. My time has not yet come. You think that it is the right moment, but it is not so. I must act in My time. Not before. Not after. It would be useless before. I would make the world and hearts obliterate Me before I accomplish My work. And the work already done would bear no fruit because it is not completed and helped by God, Who wants Me to fulfil it without omitting one word or one deed. I must obey My Father. And I will never do what you hope for because it would prejudice the design of My Father. I understand you and I pity you. I bear you no grudge. I am not even tired of or annoyed at your blind-

ness... You do not know. But I know. You do not know. You see the surface of the face of the world. I see its depth. The world shows you a face which is still kind. It does not hate you, not because it loves you, but because you do not deserve its hatred. You are a mere trifle. But it hates Me because I am a danger to the world. A danger to the falseness, the greed, the violence which is the world.

<sup>478. 8</sup> I am the Light and light enlightens. The world does not love light because it reveals the actions of the world. The world does not love Me, it cannot love Me because it knows that I have come to defeat it in the hearts of men and in the gloomy king who dominates it and leads it astray. The world does not want to convince itself that I am its Doctor and Medicine and like a madman it would like to destroy Me in order not to be cured. The world does not want to persuade itself yet that I am the Master because what I say is the opposite of what it says. And so it tries to stifle the Voice which speaks to the world in order to lead it to God and show it the true nature of its wicked actions. There is an abyss between Me and the world. And it is no fault of Mine. I have come to give the world the Light, the Way, the Truth, the Life. But the world will not receive Me and My light becomes darkness for it because it will bring about the condemnation of those who rejected Me. In the Christ is all the Light for those men willing to receive it, but in the Christ is also all the darkness for those who hate Me and reject Me. That is why, at the beginning of My human life I was prophetically pointed out as a "sign of contradiction". Because according to how I am received, there will be salvation or condemnation, death or life, light or darkness.

But I solemnly tell you that those who receive Me will become the children of the Light, that is, of God, born to God, because they received God. <sup>478. 9</sup> So if I came to make men the children of God, how can I make Myself king, as many in Israel wish, out of love or hatred, out of simplicity or wickedness? Do you not realise that I would destroy Myself, the real Myself, that is, the Messiah, not the Jesus of Mary and Joseph of Nazareth, that I would destroy the King of kings, the Redeemer, the One born of a Virgin and called\* Immanuel, Admirable, Counsellor, Strong, the

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\* called, as in: *Isaiah 7, 14; 9, 5-6.*

Father of the future century, the Prince of Peace, God, Whose empire and peace will have no end, sitting on the throne of David with regard to His human descent, but having as His footstool the world and all His enemies, and the Father at His side, as it is written\* in the book of Psalms, by the superhuman right of His divine origin? Do you not understand that God cannot be Man but through perfection of goodness, in order to save man, but He cannot and must not lower Himself to poor human things? Do you not understand that if I should accept the crown and the kingdom as you conceive it, I would admit that I am a false Christ, I would lie to God, I would disown Myself and the Father and I would be worse than Lucifer, because I would deprive God of the joy of having you. I would be worse than Cain for you, because I would condemn you to perpetual exile from God in a Limbo without hope of Paradise?

Do you not understand all that? Do you not see the snares of men to make Me fall? The trap of Satan to hit the Eternal Father in His Beloved Son and in His creatures: men? Do you not see that this is the sign that I am more than a man, that I am the Man-God? This craving *of Mine only for spiritual matters* in order to give you the spiritual Kingdom of God?... Do you not understand that the sign that I...»

«Gamaliel's words!» exclaims Simon.

«... that I am not a king, but the King, is all this hatred from hell and of all the world towards Me? I must teach, suffer and save you. That is what I must do. But Satan and his like do not want that. <sup>10</sup>One of you said: "Gamaliel's words". Now. He is not My disciple and will never be while I am in this world. But he is a just man. Well: is Gamaliel perhaps among those who tempt you and Me with regards to the poor human kingdom?»

«Oh! no! Stephen said that the rabbi, when he heard what happened at Chuza's house, exclaimed: "My spirit startles as I ask myself whether He can really be what He says. But no such question would ever cross my mind, if He had agreed to that proposal. The Child Whom I heard said that slavery and royalty will not be as we believed them, misunderstanding the prophets, that is, material, but spiritual, thanks to the Christ, the Redeemer from Sin

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\* is written, in: *Psalms 110,1.*

and founder of the Kingdom of God in souls. I remember those words. And I judge the Rabbi by them. If in judging Him I should find out that He is inferior to that height, I would reject Him as a sinner and a liar. And I trembled seeing the hope, which the Child had put into them, dissolve into nothing"» says Simon.

«Yes, but in the meantime he does not say that He is the Messiah's remarks Joseph.

«He is waiting for a sign, so he says» replies Simon. «Give him it, then! And make it a powerful ones

«I will give him what I promised him. But not now. <sup>11</sup>In the meantime you may go to the feast. I am not coming publicly, as a rabbi, as a prophet, to impose Myself, because it is not yet My hours

«But at least You will go to Judaea? You will give the Hebrews proof that will convince them? So that they may not say... »

«Yes. But do you think that they will be of any avail to my peace? Brother, the more I do that, the more I shall be hated. But I will satisfy you. I will give them such evidence that more incontrovertible ones cannot be produced... and I will speak to them words capable of changing wolves into lambs and hard stones into soft wax. But they will be of no avail» Jesus is sad.

«Have I grieved You? I was speaking for Your own goods «You are not grieving Me... But I would like you to understand Me, My dear brother, and to see Me for what I am... I would like to go away with the happy certainty that you are My friend. A friend understands and protects the interests of his friend... »

«And I tell You that I will do that. I know that they hate You. I am certain by now. That is why I came. But You know. I will watch over You. I am the oldest. I will rebuff slander and I will see to Your Mother» promises Joseph.

«Thank you, Joseph. My burden is heavy and you are relieving it. Sorrow, like a sea, is advancing with its waves to submerge Me and hatred is with it... But it is nothing if I have your love. Because the Son of man has a heart... and this heart needs love... »

«And I will give. You it. Yes. In the eyes of God Who sees me I tell You that I will give You it. Go in peace, Jesus, to Your work. I will help You. We were fond of each other. Then... But let us go back to those days. One for the other. You: the Saint, I: the man,

but united for the glory of God. Goodbye, Brother. »

«Goodbye, Joseph. »

They kiss each other and then Simon asks: «Bless us that our hearts may open to all the Light. »

Jesus blesses them and before leaving them He says once again: «I entrust My Mother to you... »

«Go in peace. We shall be like two sons to Her. »

They part

478. 12 <sup>12</sup>Jesus goes back to the road and begins to walk fast with John beside Him.

After quite a long time John breaks the silence asking: «But is Joseph of Alphaeus convinced by now or is he not? »

«Not yet. »

«Then, what are You as far as he is concerned? Messiah? Man? King? God? The situation is not clear to me. I think that he... »

«Joseph is like one of those morning dreams when the mind draws near reality relieving itself of the heavy slumber which caused unreal dreams and at times nightmares. Night phantoms recede, but the mind fluctuates in the dream which one would like never to come to an end, because it is beautiful... He is like that. He is approaching the moment when one awakes. But for the time being he is still caressing the dream. He is almost holding it back, because, for him, it is beautiful... But one must learn to take what man can give. And we must praise the Most High for the transformation which has taken place so far. Blessed be children! It is so easy for them to believe! » and Jesus passes an arm around the waist of John, who knows how to be a child and to believe, to make him feel His love.

479. With John near the tower of Jezrael  
awaiting the peasants of Johanan.

24<sup>th</sup> August 1946.

479. 1 <sup>1</sup>«You are very tired, John. And yet we should arrive at Enganim tomorrow before sunset. »

«We shall arrive, Lord» says John and he smiles although he is pale with fatigue, having walked more than everybody else. And he tries to walk faster to convince the Master that he is not

very tired. But he soon falls back to the pace of one who is exhausted, with stooped shoulders, his head bent forward as if he were oppressed by a yoke, dragging his feet and stumbling along.

«At least give Me the bags. Mine is heavy. »

«No, Master. You are more tired than I am. »

«You must be more tired because from Nazareth you came to Mattathias' wood and then you went back to Nazareth. »

«And I slept in a bed. You did not. You were awake in the wood and You left early. »

«And you, too. Joseph said so. You left by starlight. »

«Oh! but the stars last until dawn!... » remarks John smiling.

<sup>2</sup>He then becomes serious and adds: «And it is not the lack of sleep that grieves one... » 479 :2

«What else, John? What has grieved you? Perhaps My brothers... »

«Oh! no, Lord! They as well... But what makes me feel heavy... no, not heavy... What makes me old is that I saw Your Mother weep... She did not tell me why She was weeping and I did not ask Her, although I felt inclined to do so. But I looked at Her so much that She said: "I shall speak to you at home. Not now, because I would weep more copiously". And in the house She spoke to me so kindly and so sadly that I wept as well. »

«What did She tell you? »

«She told me to love You very much, that I must never be the cause of the least sorrow to You, because later I would regret it bitterly. She said to me: "Let us do all our duty in the remaining months, even more than our duty". Because duty alone is too little for You Who are God. And She also said to me - and it made me suffer so much and if She had not said it I could not believe it and She said to me: "And it is also too little to do only our duty towards One Who is about to go away, and Whom we shall no longer be able to serve... In order to be resigned later, when He is no longer among us, we must have done more than our duty. We must have given everything, all our love, attention, obedience, everything. Then in the torture of separation one can say: 'Oh! I can say that, while it was God's will that I should have Him, I did not neglect to love and serve Him even for one moment'". And I said: "But is the Master really going away? He has still so much to do! There will be time... ". And She shook Her head say-



ing, and two large tears streamed down from Her eyes: "The true Manna, the living Bread will go back to the Father when man rejoices savouring again bread made with new wheat... And we shall be alone, then, John". In order to comfort Her I said: "A great sorrow. But we must rejoice if He goes back to the Father, because no one will be able to hurt Him any more". And she said  
479. 3 moaning: "Oh! but before! ", and I thought I understood. <sup>3</sup>But will it be really like that, Lord? Really? See, it is not a question of not believing Your words. The fact is that we love You and... I shall not say to you as Simon\* did one day: that cannot happen to You. I believe, we all believe... But we love You and... Oh! my Lord! Are the sins of love really sins? »

«Love never sins, John. »

«Then we, who love You, are ready to fight and kill in order to defend You. Galileans are not loved by other peoples because they say that we are quarrelsome. Well, we shall justify that reputation by defending You. We are in the places\*\* where in the days of Deborah, Barak destroyed Sisera's army with his ten thousand men. And those ten thousand came from Naphtali and Zebulun. And we come from there as well. The name is different but the hearts are the same. »

«They were ten thousand... But even if you were ten times ten thousand now, what would you be able to do? »

«What? Are You afraid of the cohorts? They are not so many, and then... They do not hate You. You do not cause them any trouble. You are not thinking of a kingdom which may tear away a prey from the Roman eagles. They will not interfere with us and Your enemies who will soon be destroyed. »

«Even if you were one thousand, ten thousand, one hundred thousand, of what avail would that be against the will of the Father? I must fulfil it... »

John, depressed, speaks no more. How odd is the stubbornness and mental inability even of the best followers of Jesus to understand His greatest mission! They accept Him as Master and as Messiah. They believe in His power to save and redeem. But when they face His *way* of redeeming, their intellects become blind. The very prophecies seem to lose their value with regards to

\* as Simon, in 346. 6.

\*\* places, where the narrated facts occurred in: *Judges 4, 1-16.*

them. And no more can be said with regard to Israelites, who, we can say, breathe and walk and are nourished and live by means of the prophecies! Everything written in the holy Books is true except this: that the Messiah must suffer and die and be defeated by men. They cannot accept that. To me they look like blind and deaf people to whom Jesus is anxious to show the pictures of His future Passion, that they may read in them what it will be. But they close their eyes. Thus they neither see nor understand.

4It is a rather dull evening and it is getting dark when they arrive in sight of Jezreel. 479.4 .

Jesus comforts John, who has not spoken any more and is proceeding like a sleep-walker so tired he is, saying: «We shall soon be there. You will go in and look for a shelter for yourself. »

«And for You. »

«No, John. I shall remain near the road coming from the plain. I think that they will come during the night and I want to comfort them and send them away before dawn. »

«You are so tired... and it may rain as it did last night. At least come until half the watch of the cock's crow. »

«No, John. »

«In that case I will stay with You. We are near the estates of the Pharisees and... And I promised Your Mother and myself. I do not want to have to repent... »

Some towers are at the four corners of Jezreel, but I do not know which purpose they serve. They were already old when I saw them. They look like four gruff giants placed as jailors to the town which is built on an elevation overlooking the plain now slowly disappearing in the early shadows of a cloudy evening.

«Let us climb that slope near the tower. We shall be able to see all the road without being seen. There is grass on which to lie down and the step before the door will protect us if it should rain» says Jesus.

They go up. They sit down on a very low wall, which is half ruined and is about ten metres away from the tower. It looks like a protection built in olden time around the tower. It is almost completely crumbled and thick grass covers the ruins with huge cascades of wild convolvuli and other herbs which grow among ruins, with large downy leaves, the name of which I do not know.

They nibble at some bread in the last light of the day. They

have nothing else. John, although exhausted, eyes the branches of a fig-tree, which has come up, twisted and dishevelled, among the stones and among the yellowing leaves he discovers some small figs spared by birds and children. They eat them completing their meal. They have water in their little flasks. The meal is soon over.

479. 5 <sup>5</sup>«Does anybody live in the tower? » asks John who is sleepy.

«I do not think so. No light or sound leaks out of it. Did you want to ask for shelter? You are dead-beat... »

«Oh! no. I was just wondering... But it is pleasant here... »

«At least lie down, John. The grass is thick and it has not rained here yet. The ground is dry. »

«... No... No... Lord. I am not sleepy... Let us speak. Tell me something... A parable... I will sit here at Your feet. I am quite happy if I rest my head on Your knees... » and he sits down leaning his head, with his face looking at the sky, on Jesus' knees. He makes desperate efforts not to fall asleep... He tries to speak to keep awake... He tries to take an interest in what he sees... stars in the sky, lights on the road. The former are becoming more and more numerous, because the wind has blown the clouds away; whilst the latter are rarer and rarer because pilgrims have stopped traveling at night. Only a few obstinate people persist in proceeding with their carts equipped with a lantern dangling from mats or blankets stretched across the arches of the cart.

But silence itself, now deeper and deeper, makes one sleepy... John, in a voice which sounds more and more remote, says: «How many lights in the sky! And look: some seem to have descended upon the Earth and tremble and quiver as they did up there... But they are smaller and not so beautiful... We cannot make stars... There is smoke in ours and they smell of wick... and anything can put them out... You once said\* that a butterfly is enough to put out a light in us and You compared butterflies with the allurements of the world... And then You said that... while butterflies can put out a light, the wings of angels, and You called angels spiritual things, make the light within us brighter... I... the angel... the light... » John falls asleep slowly and he lies down unintentionally, exhausted by fatigue.

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\* said, something similar in 281. 6 and 411. 3.

Jesus waits until he is comfortably settled and then He puts his bag under his head and covers him with a mantle with paternal gestures. In a final flash of lucidity John whispers: «I am not sleeping, Master, You know?... Only... thus I can see more stars and I see You better... » and he passes on to see Jesus and the starry sky better, dreaming of them in a sound sleep.

Jesus goes back to sit on His green seat. He rests His right elbow on His knee and His cheek on the palm of His hand and thinks, prays, looking at the road now deserted, while His Beloved apostle, with one arm folded under his head, sleeps as placidly as a child.

480. Departure from Jezrael after  
the night visit of the peasants of Johanan.

26<sup>th</sup> August 1946.

<sup>1</sup>«John, it is dawning. Get up and let us *go*» says Jesus shaking the apostle so that he may awake. 480. 1

«Master! The sun has already risen! How long have I slept! And what about You? »

«I slept, too, beside you, under our mantles. »

«Ah! You convinced Yourself that these peasants would not come and You lay down! I had foreseen that... »

Jesus smiles and replies: «They came when the stars of the Great Bear pointed out with their position that crowing was about to begin. »

«Oh! I did not hear anything!... » John is mortified. «Why did You not keep me awake? »

«You were so tired. You looked like a baby sleeping in a cradle. Why awake you? »

«To keep You company! »

«You did that by means of your placid sleep. You fell asleep talking of angels, of stars, of souls, of light... and in your sleep you certainly continued to see angels, stars and your Jesus... Why bring you back to the iniquity of the world when you were so far away from it? »

«And if... if instead of the peasants, some criminals had come up here? »

«I would have called you in that case. But who would come? »

«Well... I do not know... Johanan, for instance... He hates You... »

«I know. But only his servants came. No one betrayed... because that is what you are thinking: that somebody may have spoken to injure Me and them. But no one betrayed. And I did the right thing in waiting for them here. The new steward is as wicked as his master and has very severe instructions. I do not lack in charity by calling them: cruel. Any other word would be a lie... The peasants ran away as soon as it was dark praying the Lord that He would make them meet Me. God always rewards the faith of His unhappy children and comforts them. If they had not met Me they would have remained here until morning and would  
480. 2 have then gone back to be in the fields by dawn... 2And so I saw them and blessed them... »

«And You are sad because You saw them so oppressed. »

«That is true. So many reasons to be sad... For the reason you mentioned, because I had nothing to give their exhausted bodies, because of the thought that I will not see them again... »

«Did You tell them? »

«No. Why add sorrows where everything is sorrow? »

«I would have willingly said goodbye to them myself for the last time. »

«It is not the last time for you. On the contrary, when I have gone away, you will take great care of them together with your fellow disciples. I entrust all My followers to you, and in particular the most unhappy ones and those whose only comfort is their faith and whose only joy is their hope of Heaven. »

«Oh! My master! As Your brother Joseph, I shall say to You as well: go in peace, Master. I will continue, as best I can. Believe me. »

480. 3 «I am sure of that. 3Let us go... The road is becoming busy. Clouds are grouping in the sky and light is decreasing instead of increasing. It is going to rain today and everybody is hastening towards the next halting places. But the clouds have been kind to us. The night was not cold and there was no rain for us who were out in the open. The Father always watches over His beloved children. »

«You are beloved, Master.!... »

«You are loved by Him because you love Me. » «Oh! that is true. Unto death... »

And mingling with the crowd, they depart southwards...

481. Arrival in Engannim. Judas  
Iscariot's plot to foil a snare.

27<sup>th</sup> August 1946.

<sup>1</sup>The weather has really kept its promise and turned into a <sup>481.1</sup> gloomy persistent drizzle. Those who are in wagons are well protected. But those who are travelling on foot or on donkeys get wet and are annoyed at it, particularly those who are troubled not only by the water wetting their heads and shoulders, but also by the mud which is becoming more and more watery and thus soaks into their sandals, sticks to their ankles and splashes their garments. The pilgrims have pulled over their heads mantles or blankets, which they have folded double, and they look like hooded monks.

Jesus and John, who are on foot, are drenched. But they take more care in protecting their bags, containing their spare clothes, than themselves. They arrive thus at Engannim and they begin to look for the apostles, separating, in order to find them sooner.

<sup>2</sup>And it is John who finds them, that is, he finds James of <sup>481.2</sup> Zebedee who had purchased provisions for the Sabbath.

«We were worried. And if you had not come, we were going to walk back, notwithstanding that it was the Sabbath... Where is the Master? »

«He is looking for you. The first to find you is to go near the blacksmith's. »

«Then... Look. We are staying in that house. She is a good woman with three daughters. Go to the Master at once and come back... » James lowers his voice and whispers looking around: «There are many Pharisees... and... they are certainly evil-minded. They asked us why He was not with us. They wanted to know whether He had gone ahead or was behind. At first we said: "We do not know". They did not believe us. And they were right, because how can we say that we do not know where He is?

Then the Iscariot - he is not so scrupulous - said: "He is ahead of us" and as they were not convinced and asked with whom, with what, when He had gone, because they knew that last Friday He was near Giscala, he said: "He embarked at Ptolemais and so He preceded us. He will land at Joppa and will enter Jerusalem by the Damascus Gate, and will go at once to see Joseph of Arimathea in his house in Bezetha". »

«But why so many lies? » asks John who is scandalised.

«Who knows?! We told him as well. But he laughed saying: "Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, and lie for lie. Provided the Master is safe. They are looking for Him to hurt Him. I know". Peter pointed out that by mentioning Joseph's name he might cause trouble for him. But Judas replied: "They will rush there and seeing Joseph's astonishment they will realise that it is not true". "They will hate you, then, for making fools of them..." » we objected. But he laughed and said: "Oh! I do not give a fig for their hatred. I know how to make it harmless... ". But go, John. Try to find the Master and come with Him. The rain is helping us as the Pharisees are indoors in order not to wet their bulky garments... »

John gives his brother his bag and is about to run away, but James holds him back to say to him: «And do not mention Judas' lies to the Master. Even if they were told for a good purpose, they are still lies. And the Master hates falsehood... »

«I will not tell Him» and John runs away.

What James said is true. Rich people are already at home. Only poor people are bustling about in the streets, looking for shelter...

481.3 <sup>3</sup>Jesus is in a lobby near the forge. John approaches Him and says: «Come quickly. I found them. We shall be able to put on dry clothes. » He does not say anything else to justify his hurry.

They soon arrive at the house. They go in through the door left ajar. Immediately behind it are the eleven apostles who crowd around Jesus, as if they had not seen Him for months. The landlady, a little withered shrunken woman, peeps at them through a door ajar.

«Peace to you» says Jesus smiling and He embraces them all with the same fondness.

They all speak at the same time wishing to tell Him so many

things. And Peter shouts: «Be quiet! And let Him go. Don't you see how wet and tired He is? » And he says to the Master: «I had a warm bath prepared for You... and give me Your wet mantle... and warm clothes. I took them from Your bag... » He then turns round towards the inner part of the house and he shouts: «Hey! woman! The Guest has arrived. Bring the water, because I will see to the rest. »

And the woman, as timid as everybody who has suffered - and it is clear from her countenance that she has suffered - passes through the corridor silently, followed by three girls who are like her in thinness and countenance, to go into the kitchen and get the cauldrons full of boiling water.

«Come, Master. And you, too, John. You are as cold as drowned bodies. I had some juniper boiled with vinegar and I put it in the water. It is good for you. » In fact the smell of vinegar and other aromas has spread from the cauldrons as they passed by.

Jesus, upon entering the little room in which are two large tubs (that is two small wooden vats probably used as wash-tubs) looks at the woman going out with her daughters and He greets her: «Peace to you and to your daughters. And may the Lord reward you. »

«Thank You, Lord... » she replies and she slips away.

Peter goes in with Jesus and John. He closes the door and whispers: «Remember that she does not know Who You are... We are pilgrims... all of us, and You are a rabbi, we are Your friends. Which is true, after all... It isn't... H'm! of course! it is but a half hidden truth... Too many Pharisees... and too interested in You. Act accordingly... we shall speak later» and he leaves them alone and goes back to his companions who are sitting in a little room.

<sup>481.4</sup> «And now? What shall we tell the Master? If we tell Him that we lied He will be grieved. But... we cannot hide the truth from Him» says Peter.

«Do not sacrifice yourself! I lied and I will tell Him. »

«And you will make Him even sadder. Have you not noticed how depressed He is? »

«Yes, I have. But that is because He is tired... In any case... I can also say to the Pharisees: "I told you a lie". That is a trifle. The important thing is that He may not suffer. »

«I would not say anything to anybody. If you tell Him, you



will not keep it a secret. If you tell them, you will not be able to save Him from their snares... » remarks Philip.

«We shall see» says Judas confidently.

481. 5 <sup>5</sup>A short time later Jesus comes in wearing dry clothes and refreshed by the bath. John follows Him.

They speak of everything that happened to the apostolic group and to the Master and John. But no one mentions the Pharisees until Judas says: «Master, I know for certain that those who hate You are looking for You. And in order to save You I spread the rumour that You are not going to Jerusalem along the usual route, but by sea as far as Joppa... They will rush there, aha! aha! »

«But why lie? »

«And why do they lie? »

«But they are they, and you are not, *you ought not be* like them... »

«Master, I am only one thing: one who knows them and who is fond of You. Do You want to be ruined? I am ready to prevent that. Listen to me carefully and hear my heart speak to You through my words. You shall not go out of here tomorrow... »

«Tomorrow is the Sabbath... »

«A11 right. But You shall not go out. You will rest, You... »

«Everything but sin, Judas. No consideration will make Me agree to neglect sanctifying the Sabbath. »

«They... »

«Let them do what they want. I will not sin. If I did, in addition to My sin which would weigh on Me, I would put in their hands a weapon to ruin Me. Do you not remember that they already say that I violate the Sabbath? »

«The Master is right» say the others.

«A11 right... You can do what You like on the Sabbath. But not with regards to the road. Do not let us take the road that everybody takes, Master. Listen to me. Disorientate them... »

481. 6 <sup>6</sup>«Now, listen! What do you know exactly, since you speak so much? » shouts Simon shaking his short arms. «Master, tell him to speak! »

«Peace, Simon. If your brother has got knowledge of a danger, which may be a risk for him, too, and he warns us about it, we must not treat him as an enemy, but we must be grateful to him.

If he cannot tell us everything, because that might involve third persons who are not bold enough to take the initiative in speaking, but are still honest enough not to allow a crime, why do you want to force him to speak? So let him speak, and I will accept what is good in his project and reject what might not be good. Speak, Judas. »

«Thanks, Master. You are the only One Who knows me for what I am. I was saying. We could proceed safely within the borders of Samaria. Because Rome rules more in Samaria than in Galilee and Judaea and those who hate You, do not wish to get into trouble with Rome. But I say that in order to puzzle spies we should not follow the direct route, but, departing from here, we should turn our steps towards Dothan and then, without going to Samaria, we should cut across the country and pass through Shechem, then down to Ephraim, along Mount Adummim and Cherith and then proceed to Bethany. »

«A long and difficult road, particularly if it rains. » «Dangerous! The Adummim... »

«You seem to be seeking danger... »

The apostles are not enthusiastic. But Jesus says: «Judas is right. We shall go that way. Afterwards we shall have time to rest. I have still other things to do before the hour comes and is perfect, and I must not, out of stupidity, put Myself in their hands, until everything is accomplished. We shall thus call on Lazarus. He is certainly very ill and is waiting for Me... You may have your meal. I am withdrawing. I am tired... »

«Not even a little food? You are not ill, are You? »

«No, Simon. But I have not slept in a bed for seven nights. Goodbye, My friends. Peace be with you... » And he withdraws.

<sup>7</sup>Judas is overjoyed: «See? He is humble and just and He does <sup>4817</sup> not reject what He feels is right... »

«Yes... but... Do you think that He is happy? Really happy? »

«I don't... But He realises that I am right... »

«I would like to know how you managed to become acquainted with so many things. And yet... you have always been with us!... »

«Yes. And you watch over me as if I were a dangerous beast. I know. But it does not matter. Bear this in mind: also a beggar, and even a thief may be useful to find out things, and a woman

as well. I spoke to a beggar and I helped him. And I spoke to a robber and I found out... And to... a woman and... how many things a woman may know! »

The astonished apostles look at one another. They cast inquisitive glances at one another. When? Where did Judas find out and get in touch with?...

He laughs and says: «And I spoke to a soldier! Yes. Because the woman had said so much as to make me go to the soldier. And he confirmed. And I made people know... Everything is permitted when it is necessary: also courtesans and soldiers! »

«You are... you are...! » exclaims Bartholomew repressing what he was about to say.

«Yes. I am I. Nothing more than myself. A sinner according to you. But I, with all my sins, serve the Master much better than you do. In any case... If a courtesan knows what Jesus' enemies want to do, it means that they go to courtesans or they have them, ballerina or mimes, to amuse themselves... And if they have them close at hand... I can have them as well. See? She... she was useful to me. You must consider that at the borders of Judaea He might have been caught. And since I avoided that you ought to say that I was wise... »

481. 8 <sup>8</sup>They are all pensive and take their food listlessly. Then Bartholomew stands up.

«Where are you going? »

«To look for Him... I do not believe that He is sleeping. I will take Him some warm milk... and I shall *see*. »

He goes out and is absent for some time. He comes back.

«He was sitting on the bed... and was weeping... You have grieved Him, Judas. Just as I thought. »

«Did He say that? I will go and explain. »

«No. He did not say that. On the contrary He said that you have your merits, too. But I understood Him. Do not go. Leave Him in peace. »

«You are all fools. He suffers because He is persecuted and hindered in His mission. That is the reason» replies Judas in a rebellious tone.

And John confirms: «That is true. He wept also before joining you. He is suffering bitterly, also because of His Mother, His brothers, the unhappy peasants. Oh! such deep grief!... »

«Tell us... »

«It is grievous to leave His Mother... and to see that He is not understood, that no one understands Him. And it grieves Him that Johanan's peasants... »

«Yes! It is really sad to see them!... I am glad that Marjiam did not see them. He would have suffered and hated the Pharisee... » says Peter.

«But have my brothers made Jesus suffer again? » asks Judas Thaddeus severely.

«No, on the contrary. They met and spoke affectionately and they parted in peace and with good promises. But He would like them to be like us... and more than us all... He would like us all to be convinced of His Kingdom and of its nature. And we... » But John says no more... And silence descends upon the little room lit up by a double-flame lamp which illuminates twelve differently pensive faces.

#### 482. Walking with a Samaritan shepherd whose faith is rewarded.

28<sup>th</sup> August 1946.

<sup>1</sup>I cannot say in which part of Samaria we are. We are certainly right in the middle of the Samaritan mountains, although these ones are not the highest. The highest ones, in fact, are farther south, with their steep tops rising towards the sky, which has now cleared up. 482.1

The apostles are keeping as close as possible to Jesus while walking, but the path, a short cut, does not allow them to do so very frequently and the group forms and breaks up continuously.

Many shepherds are in the mountains with their flocks and the apostles apply to them to find out whether the path is the right one to take them to the caravan track which from the sea goes to Pella. Although they are Samaritans, they answer the questions without any rudeness. <sup>2</sup>On the contrary, one of them, at a junction of paths running in all directions and forking again in more branches, says: «I shall be going down to the valley soon. Have a little rest and then we can set out together. If you should get lost in these mountains... it would not be a good thing... » He 482.2

lowers his voice and adds: «Highwaymen! » and he looks around as if he were afraid that they might be close to him and threatening him. Then, when he is reassured, he says: «They come down from the slopes of Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal and they spread about in these days of pilgrimages. And they are always active, notwithstanding that the Romans reinforce guards on roads... because there are always people who avoid busy roads to travel quicker or for other reasons. »

«You have many rascals, eh? » remarks Philip with a meaningful smile.

«You, a Galilean... do you think that they are Samaritans? » replies the shepherd resentfully.

The Iscariot intervenes as he feels that it is his duty to avoid every unpleasant incident, as he was the promotor of the change of itinerary, and he says: «No, no! It is because people know that you are hospitable and thus those who have done evil deeds elsewhere come here seeking shelter. It is as if... the whole place were a city of refuge. Evil-doers know very well that nobody, Galileans or Judaeans, would follow them here and they take advantage of that. And nature assists them as well. All these mountains... »

«Ah! I thought that you were considering... The mountains, of course, serve their purpose. The two highest ones, particularly... Yes... but... how many come from the Adummim mountains and from the gorge of Ephraim! They belong to all races, eh!... and the Roman soldiers are shrewd... They do not go to dislodge them. Only snakes and eagles are aware of their dens and can reach them. And dreadful things are reported. But sit down. I will give you some milk... I am a Samaritan, but I know the Pentateuch as well!

And I do not offend those who do not offend me. You... you do not offend, and yet you are Galileans and Judaeans. <sup>3</sup>But they say that a prophet has risen to teach us how to love one another. If I did not consider that according to the scribes and Pharisees of Israel we are cursed, so they say, I would say that the great prophets who loved us, although we are Samaritans, have come back in Him, as some people say, to love once again. But I do not believe it... Here is the milk... But I would like to meet that prophet. They say that the other prophet, the one who took refuge at our borders and whom we did not betray - those who insult us

ought to remember that - said that this prophet is greater than Elijah. He called Him the Lamb of God, the Christ. And some Samaritans from Shechem spoke to Him, and they now tell great things of Him, and many people have gone to the main roads, waiting for Him, because they think that He may pass there. Nay - it is the first time that it happened - also some Judaeans, Pharisees and doctors have questioned us in every town, saying that if we see Him, we should run ahead of Him to tell them that He is arriving, because they want to give Him a great welcome. »

The apostles look at one another stealthily, but they wisely remain silent. Judas, with his bright dark eyes, full of triumphant light, seems to be saying: «Have you heard that? Are you now convinced that I was right? »

The shepherd continues to speak: «You certainly know Him. Where do you come from? »

«From Upper Galilee» replies Judas at once.

«Ah! you are... No. You are not Galilean. »

«We come from all places. We went on pilgrimage to the tombs of the doctors. »

«Ah! Perhaps you are disciples... But is this man not a rabbi? » he says pointing at Jesus.

«We are disciples. You are right. Yes, this man is a rabbi. But you know that one rabbi differs from another... »

«I know. He is certainly young and he has still much to learn from the great doctors of your Temple» and there is a touch of contempt in the possessive adjective.

But Judas, who is always ready to answer back, is wonderfully submissive. The others do not speak, Jesus looks absorbed in thought, so the pungent remark provokes no reply. Judas in fact says smiling: «He is very young indeed. But He is the wisest of us all» <sup>4</sup>and to put an end to the conversation which might become dangerous, he says: «Have you to stay here much longer? Because we would like to be down in the valley by night. »

482.4

«No. I am coming. I shall gather the sheep and come. »

«All right. In the meantime we shall move on... » and he stands up with the others and takes to the path at once.

When a thicket is between him and the shepherd he laughs and laughs, saying: «How easy it is to tease people! And are you now convinced that I was not lying and I was not foolish? »

«No. You were not lying... but you lied now. »

«Lied? no. How can you say that, Philip? *I knew how to speak the truth preventing it from becoming harmful.* Do we not come from Upper Galilee? Do we not come from all places? Did we not go one day to venerate the tombs of doctors and were pelted with stones? And did we not go near them also in our last journey towards Giscala? Have I perhaps denied that Jesus is a rabbi? Have I perhaps said that He is not the wisest of us all?... In saying that, I was thinking, and my heart was rejoicing, that by saying "we" I was offending the rabbis, who are all inferior to the Master although they do not think so, and I was making a fool of the shepherd... Ha! Ha! One must know how to say things... and one can say everything without sinning and without causing any harm. »

Judas of Alphaeus makes a grimace of disgust and says: «As far as I am concerned it is still a lie. »

«Of course! I did it! But did you hear him, eh? They put aside prejudices, disgust, arrogance in order to tell Samaritans to inform them of the passage of the Master, so that they might welcome Him at the borders! Ah! What a welcome! »

«Welcome! They also thought and spoke of something true, while lying... Judas of Kerioth is right» says Thomas.

Jesus turns around and says: «Yes. Their words were deceitful and hateful. But to say one thing for another, even if for a good purpose, is always blameworthy. Do you think that the Lord needs such behaviour to protect His Messiah? Do not lie any more, not even for a good purpose. The mind becomes accustomed to imagining lies, and lips to utter them. No, Judas. Avoid being insincere. »

482.5 «I will, Master. <sup>5</sup>But let us be quiet now. The shepherd is running to join us... »

In fact the shepherd arrives pushing forward his sheep, which feeling the fold close at hand begin to run with their shambling gait, bleating, shoving one another, forcing their way through the apostles, whom they almost sweep away. He is followed by the young shepherd and the dog and he stops only when with the help of the boy and the dog he succeeds in holding back the sheep gathering them together so that they may not scatter about or go to the valley by themselves.

«They are the most stupid animals on the Earth. But they are

so useful! » he says wiping his perspiration and he adds with a sigh: «Eh! If Reuben were still here! But with this boy only!... » He shakes his head going down behind his sheep, which the dog and the boy, at the head of the flock, are keeping together. And talking to himself he says: «If I knew where to find that prophet, although I am a Samaritan, I would speak to Him... »

«And what would you say to Him?» asks Jesus.

«I would say: "I had a wife as good as mountain water is to a thirsty man, and the Most High took her from me. I had a daughter as good as her mother, a Roman saw her and wanted to marry her and took her away. I had my first-born son and he was everything to me... he slid down the mountain one rainy day and broke his back and is motionless and now he has been taken ill as well with an internal disease and the doctors say that he will die. I am not going to ask You why the Eternal Father punished me, but I beg You to cure my son". »

«And do you believe that He could cure him for you?»

«I certainly believe it! But I shall never see Him... »

«Why are you sure? He is not a Samaritan. »

«He is a just man. He is the Son of God, so they say. »

«You, in your fathers, offended God. »

«That is true. But it is also said that God will forgive the Sin of man by sending the Redeemer. This promise\* can be read in the Pentateuch next to the condemnation of Adam and Eve. And the Book repeats it several times. If He forgives that sin, will He not have mercy on me, who am not guilty of being born a Samaritan. I think that if the Messiah heard of my grief, He would feel pity for me. »

Jesus smiles but does not say anything. Also the apostles smile meaningly, which, however, is not noticed by the shepherd.

«So is that boy not your son?» asks Jesus.

482.6

«No. He is the son of a widow who has seven sons and lives in poverty. I have taken him as an assistant... and a son so that I shall not be left alone... when Reuben is in his grave... » and he sighs.

«But if your son should recover, what would you do with this one?»

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\* promise, as in *Genesis 3, 15*.



«I would keep him. He is good and I feel sorry for him... » he lowers his voice saying: «He does not know... But his father died on the galleys. »

«What had he done to deserve that? »

«Nothing deliberately. But his cart ran over a drunk soldier and was accused of doing it deliberately... »

«How do you know that he is dead? »

«Oh! one does not survive long at the oar! But definite news was given to us by a merchant of Samaria, who had seen his dead body being removed from the shackles and thrown into the sea beyond the Pillars. »

«And you would really keep him with you? »

«I am quite prepared to swear it. He is unhappy, I am unhappy. And I am not the only one to do so. Other people have taken the sons of the widow, who is now left with her three daughters. They are still too many. But it is better to be four than twelve... But I need not swear!... Reuben will die... »

482.7 <sup>7</sup>One can now see the road which is very busy with pilgrims hastening to their halting places. It will soon be dark. «Have You a place where to sleep? » asks the shepherd. «Not, really. »

«I would like to say to You: "Come", but my house is too small for everybody. But the pen is large. »

«May God reward you as if you had given Me hospitality. But I will go on until the moon sets. »

«As You wish. Are You not afraid of getting lost? Of meeting wicked people? »

«The poverty of My companions and Mine will protect Me against highwaymen. With regards to the road, I rely on the angel of pilgrims. »

«I must go to the front of the herd. The boy does not yet know... »

And the road is full of carts... » and he runs ahead to lead the sheep safely.

«Master, the worst is coming now. We have to cover a stretch of the road among people... » whisper the apostles.

They are now on the road, behind the sheep, which are proceeding in a line, closed between the mountain side, the shepherd's crook and the alert dog. The boy is now beside Jesus Who caresses him.

They arrive at a cross road. The shepherd has stopped the herd saying: «Here we are. This is Your road and that one is mine. But if You come towards the village, You will find a shorter one to go to the next village. Look: can You see that huge sycamore? Go as far as that and then turn to the right. You will see a little square with a fountain and after it, a house, black with smoke. It is the forge. The road is beyond it. You cannot go wrong. Goodbye. »

«Goodbye. It was very kind of you and God will comfort you. »

The shepherd goes his way and Jesus takes His. The former is surrounded by sheep, the latter by the apostles. Two shepherds in the middle of their flocks...

<sup>8</sup>They are now separated, concealed by a group of houses built between the main road, followed by the shepherd, and the lane which passes through a poor part of the village, the poorest, I think, silent, solitary... The poor people are already indoors and the fireplaces in the kitchens can be seen through the half-open doors... Night is falling with the darkness of twilight. 482.8

«We shall stop just outside the village» says Judas. «I can see some houses over there in the fields. »

«No. It is better to go on. » There are different opinions.

They reach the fountain. They rush towards it to wash themselves and fill their little flasks. There is the smith. He is closing his black workshop. And there is the road towards the fields... They take it...

But a cry is heard from afar, from the village. «Rabbi! Rabbi. My son! Citizens! Come! Where is the Pilgrim? »

«They are looking for us, Master! What have You done? »

«Run. If we reach that wood no one will be able to see us any more. »

They run across a field covered with recently cut hay, they arrive at a hillock which they climb and disappear, followed by the voices, now numerous, and by people who have spread about, outside the village, calling rather than looking, because not much can be seen in the twilight. They stop at the foot of the hill-ock.

«It was the Rabbi Who went to Shechem\*, I am telling you. It could be but Him. And He cured my Reuben. And I did not rec-

\* Who went to Schechem, and to Sicar, that perhaps was the suburb, in 142. 4, 143-146 and 193. 3/5.

ognise Him. Rabbi! Rabbi! Rabbi! Allow me to worship You! Tell me where You are hidden! »

Only the echo replies and it seems to say: «Abbi! Abbi! Abbi! » and to change the last word into «heaven».

«But He cannot be far» says the forger. «He passed in front of me shortly before you arrived... »

«And yet He is not here. See. There is nobody on the road. He was to take this one. »

«Will He be in the wood? »

«No. He was in a hurry... » Then he seeks help from his dog. «Find them! Find them! » and for a moment the dog seems to be able to discover the hiding place, because it makes for the wood after sniffing at the meadow. Then the animal stops perplexed, with one paw lifted up, its muzzle in the air... then, disappointed by I do not know what, it starts off in the opposite direction, barking, and the people run after it...

482.9 9«Oh! Blessed be the Lord! » exclaim the apostles with sighs of relief and they cannot help saying to the Master: «But what have You done, Lord! » and they almost reproach Him for doing it. «You know that it is dangerous for You to be pointed out, and yet You... »

«And was I not to reward faith? And is it not a good thing that they should think that I am on the road which from Dothan takes one to Pella? Do you perhaps no longer want them to have no clear idea about anything? »

«That is true. You are right! But if the dog found You out? » «Oh! Simon! And do you think that He Who imposes His will, also from a distance, on diseases and elements and drives out demons, is not able to impose it on an animal? Now let us try to reach the road beyond the bend, and they will not be able to see us any more. Let us go. »

And they proceed almost gropingly through the thicket on the hill, until they get back to the road: a small road, all white in the light of the rising moon, and far from the village now completely concealed by the hill...

483. The apostles discuss the hate of the Jews.  
The ten lepers healed in Samaria.

29<sup>th</sup> August 1946.

<sup>1</sup>They are still in the rugged mountains, on paths where no cart can pass but only wayfarers or people riding strong mountain donkeys, which are taller and stronger than the usual little donkeys one finds in more level areas. Many people may consider this remark rather trite, but I am making it just the same. 483. 1

In Samaria there are customs which differ from those of other places, both with regards to garments and many other things. And one is the large number of dogs, unlike other places, and it surprises me as I was surprised at the presence of pigs in the Decapolis. Perhaps there are many dogs because there are many shepherds in Samaria and there are probably many wolves in the mountains which are so wild. There are many dogs also because I see that in Samaria the shepherds are generally alone, at the most with a boy, each one pastures his own flock, whereas elsewhere there are mostly many looking after large herds of rich people. It is a fact that here each shepherd has his dog or more dogs according to the number of sheep of his flock.

Another characteristic are the donkeys, almost as tall as horses, they are robust, fit to climb these mountains with a heavy load on the pack-saddle, also big logs, for I see them coming down from these wonderful mountains covered with age-old woods.

Another distinctive feature: the ease of manner of the inhabitants, who without being «sinners» as the Judaeans and Galileans considered them, are open and frank, without bigotry and without the silly complications of other people. And they are hospitable. This remark makes me think that in the parable\* of the good Samaritan there is not only the intention of pointing out that there is good and evil everywhere and among all races, and that also among heretics there may be righteous people, but there is also a real description of Samaritan behaviour towards those who are in need. They may have stopped at the Pentateuch, I hear them speak of it and of nothing else, but they practise it,

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\* parable, as in 281. 10.

at least towards their neighbours, with more rectitude than the others, with their six hundred and thirteen precepts etc.

4832 <sup>2</sup>The apostles are speaking to the Master, and although they are convinced Israelites, they are compelled to acknowledge and praise the attitude of the people of Shechem, who invited Jesus to stay with them as I understand from the conversation I hear.

“You have heard them, haven’t you? » says Peter «how they said very clearly that they are aware of the hatred of Judaeans? They said: “They hate You more than they hate us Samaritans, as many as we are and have ever been. There is no limit to their hatred for You”. »

«And that old man? How rightly he said: “After all it is only fair that it should be so, because You are not a man, You are the Christ, the Saviour of the world and thus You are the Son of God, because only God can save the corrupt world. Therefore as You have no limits as God, no limits in Your power, in Your holiness and in Your love, as Your victory over Evil will have no limit, so it is natural that Evil and Hatred, all one thing with Evil, have no limit against You”. He really spoke the truth! And that reason explains many things!» says the Zealot.

“What does it explain according to you? I.. I say that it explains only that they are fools» says Thomas straightforwardly.

«No. Foolishness would be a justification. But they are not fools. » «Intoxicated then intoxicated with hatred» replies Thomas.

«Not even that. Intoxication yields after bursting forth. Their hatred does not yield. »

«It cannot be more unrestrained than it is! And it has been so for such a long time... that it should have subsided by now. »

«My friends, it has not reached its goal yet» says Jesus calmly, as if the goal of that hatred were not His death.

«No?! And yet they never leave us in peace?! »

«Master, they cannot bring themselves to believe that I have spoken the truth. But I did. Oh! I did indeed! And I say also that if it had depended on you, you would have all fallen into the trap, like the Baptist. But they will not succeed because I am on the watch... » says the Iscariot.

And Jesus looks at him. And I look at him as well wondering, and I have been wondering for some days, whether the behaviour

of the Iscariot has been brought about by a good real return to the path of virtue and love for the Master, a release from the human and extra-human powers which held him back, or it is more refined work preparatory to the final blow, a greater enslavement to the enemies of Christ and to Satan. But Judas is such a special being that he is not decipherable. God only can understand him. And God Jesus draws a veil of mercy and prudence over all the actions and the personality of His apostle... a veil which will be torn, throwing full light on so many questions at present mysterious, only when the books of Heaven are opened.

<sup>3</sup>The idea that the hatred of enemies has not yet reached its goal has worried the apostles so much that they have stopped speaking for some time. Then Thomas addresses the Zealot saying: «Well then, if they are neither intoxicated nor foolish, if their hatred explains many things but not this one, what does it explain? What are they? You have not told us... »

483. 3

«What are they? They are possessed. They are what they say He is. That explains their fury which knows no bounds, on the contrary the more His power is revealed, the more it increases. The Samaritan spoke the truth. In Him, Son of the Father and of Mary, Man and God, there is the Infinity of God, and the Hatred which opposes that perfect Infinity is infinite, even if in its limitless being, Hatred is not perfect, because God only is perfect in His actions. But if Hatred could touch the abyss of perfection it would descend to touch it, nay it would hurl itself down to touch it, to bounce back up again, through the very vehemence of its fall into the abyss of hell, against the Christ, in order to wound Him with the weapons snatched from the infernal Abyss. The firmament regulated by God, has one sun only. It rises, it shines and sets leaving the place to the smaller sun which is the moon and the latter after shining in her turn, sets to give the place to the sun. Stars teach men many things because they are submitted to the will of the Creator. Men are not. The opposition to the Master is an instance of that. What would happen if the moon should say: "I am not going to disappear and I will come back along the route I went"? She would certainly clash against the sun horrifying and damaging the whole of Creation. That is what they want to do, as they think they can shatter the Sun... »

«It is the struggle of Darkness against the Light. We see it

every day at dawn and in the evening. The two forces oppose each other dominating the Earth alternately. But darkness is always defeated because it is never absolute. A little light is always shed, even in the most starless night. The very air seems to create it in the infinite spaces of the vault of heaven shedding it, even if it is very scanty, to persuade men that the stars are not extinguished. And I say that likewise in this particular darkness of Evil against the Light which is Jesus, the Light will be there to comfort those who believe in It, despite all the efforts of Darkness» says John smiling at his own thought, in which he is engrossed as if he were talking to himself.

His thought is pursued by James of Alphaeus. «In the Books the Christ is called "Morning Star". So He, too, will know a night, and - it terrifies me! - we also shall be aware of it, of a period of time when the Light will not seem strong, whereas Darkness will appear to be winning. But since He is called the Morning Star in a way that excludes limitation of time, I say that after the momentary night He will be the pure, fresh, virginal morning Light, renovating the world, like the light which followed Chaos on the first day. Oh! yes. The world will be recreated in His Light. »

«And accursed will be the reprobates who will have raised their hands to strike the Light, repeating the errors already made by Lucifer down to the desecrators of the holy people. Jehovah leaves man free in his actions. But for the sake of man He will not allow Hell to prevail», concludes Judas of Alphaeus.

483. 4 «Oh! it's a good thing that after so much drowsiness of our spirits: whereby we all seemed to be dull and sluggish, due to premature old age, wisdom flourishes again on our lips. We no longer seemed ourselves! Now I find the Zealot again, and John, and the two brothers of the good old days! » says the Iscariot congratulating them.

«I do not think we had changed so much as to no longer seem to be ourselves» says Peter.

«We had indeed! All of us. And you were the first. And then Simon and the others, including myself. If there was one who was more or less the same as before, it was John. »

«H'm! I don't really know in what... »

«In what? Uncommunicative, as if we were tired, indiffer-

ent, worried... We no longer heard conversations like those of the good old days, like the present one, so useful... »

«For disputes» says Thaddeus remembering how they often turned into squabbles.

«No for our formation. Because we are not all like Nathanael, or Simon, or like you, the sons of Alphaeus, with regards to birth and wisdom. And those who are less so, learn from those who are more like that» replies the Iscariot.

<sup>5</sup>«Actually... I would say that what is most necessary is to <sup>483 5</sup> grow in justice. And Simon has given us a wonderful lesson on that» says Thomas.

«Me? You are seeing things the wrong way. I am the most stupid of the lot» says Peter.

«No. You are the one who has changed most. In that respect Judas of Kerioth is right. There is very little left in you of the Simon I met when I came and joined you and who, forgive me, remained as he was for a long time. Since I joined you again, after parting for the Feast of the Dedication, you have done nothing but improve yourself. You are now... yes, I will tell you: you are more fatherly and at the same time more austere. You bear more with your poor brothers than you did previously... And one can see, at least I see it, what it costs you. But you control yourself. And you never commanded so much respect as you do now that you do not speak and do not reproach so much... »

«Well, my dear friend! It is very kind of you to judge me so... I have not changed at all, except for the love for the Master, which grows in me more and more. »

«No. Thomas is right. You have changed very much» many of them confirm.

«Who knows! You say so... » says Peter shrugging his shoulders. And he adds: «Only the Master could give a definite opinion. But I will take good care not to ask Him. He is aware of my weakness and He knows that an undeserved praise might harm my spirit. So He would not praise me, and He would be doing the right thing. I have become more and more acquainted with His heart and His method and I see how just they are. »

Because you have an upright mind and you love more and more it is your love for the Master that makes you see and understand. Your Master, the true and greatest Master who makes you



understand your Master, is Love» says Jesus Who so far has been listening and has been silent.

«I think... it is also the grief that is within me»

«Grief? Why some of them ask.

483.6 «Hey! because of many things, which after all, are *one* thing only: what the Master suffers... and the thought of what He will suffer. ¶It is not possible for us to be as absent-minded as we were in the early days, like children who do not know, now that we know what men are capable of doing and how one must suffer to save them. Oh! we thought everything was easy in the early days. We thought all we had to do to make the others side with us was to present ourselves! We thought that to conquer Israel and the world was like... casting a net in waters abounding in fish. Dear me! I think that if He does not succeed in having a good haul we will have none at all. But that is nothing! I think they are wicked and they make Him suffer. And I think that is the reason for our change in general...»

«That is true. As far as I am concerned it is true» confirms the Zealot.

«Also with regards to me. Also with regards to me» say the others «I have been worried about that for a long time and I tried to have... some good assistance. But they betrayed me... and you did not understand me... And I did not understand you. I thought you were like that through spiritual tiredness, lack of confidence, disappointment...»

«I never hoped for human joys, so I was not disappointed» says the Zealot.

«My! brother and I would like Him to be victorious, but for His own joy! We followed Him out of love as His relatives, rather than as disciples. We have always followed Him since our childhood. He is younger than we are, but always so much greater than we are...» says James with his boundless admiration for his Jesus.

«If there is one thing we must regret, it is that not all His relatives love Him in spirit and only with the spirit. But we are not the only ones in Israel who love Him in a wrong way» says Thad-deus.

483.7 ¶Judas Iscariot looks at him and would probably say something, but his attention is distracted by a cry coming from a hill-

ock dominating the little village, around which they are walking, looking for the road to enter it.

«Jesus! Rabbi Jesus! Son of David and our Lord, have mercy on us.»

«They are lepers! Let us go, Master, otherwise the whole village will rush here and will detain us in their houses» say the apostles.

But the lepers have the advantage of being ahead of them, high up on the road, at least five hundred metres from the village, and they come down limping and rush towards Jesus repeating their cries.

«Let us go into the village, Master. They cannot go in» say some of the apostles, but others remark: «Some women have already come out and are looking. If we go in, we will avoid the lepers, but we will not avoid being recognised and retained.»

And while they are uncertain as to what they should do, the lepers come closer to Jesus, Who heedless of His disciples' ifs and buts, has gone on His way. And the apostles resign themselves to following Him while women with children hanging on to their skirts and a few old men left in the village come to see, remaining at a prudent distance from the lepers who, however, stop at a few metres from Jesus and implore once again: «Jesus, have mercy on us!»

Jesus looks at them for a moment; then, without approaching the sorrowful group, He asks: «Are you from this village?»

«No, Master. We come from different places. But the other side of the mountain where we stay, faces the road to Jericho and it is a good spot for us...»

«Go then to the village which is nearest to your mountain and show yourselves to the priests.»

And Jesus resumes walking, moving to the roadside, so that He may not touch the lepers, who look at Him, while He draws closer, with their poor diseased eyes expressing nothing but hope. And when Jesus reaches them, He raises His hand to bless them.

The people of the village are disappointed and go back to their houses... The lepers clamber up the mountain again going to their grottoes or towards the Jericho road.

«You did the right thing in not curing them. The people in the

village would not have let us go away...»

«Yes, and we ought to arrive at Ephraim before night.»

483.8

<sup>8</sup>Jesus continues to walk and is silent. The village is now hidden by the bends of the winding road which follows the irregular contour of the mountain at the foot of which it is dug.

But a voice reaches them: «Praise to the Most High God and to His true Messiah. All power, wisdom and mercy is in Him! Praise to the Most High God Who has granted us peace through Him. Praise Him, O men of the towns in Judaea, Samaria, Galilee and beyond the Jordan. Let the praise to the Most High and to His Christ resound as far as the snow on the very high Hermon as far as the parched stones in Idumea, as far as the beaches lapped by the waves of the Great Sea. The prophecy of Balaam\* has been fulfilled. The Star of Jacob is shining in the restored sky of the fatherland reunited by the true Shepherd. And the promises made to the patriarchs are also fulfilled! Here, here is the word of Elijah, who loved us. Listen to it, peoples of Palestine and understand it. One must no longer limp on two sides but one must choose by the light of the spirit, and if the spirit is righteous one will choose correctly. This is the Lord, follow Him! Ah! so far we have been punished because we did not strive to understand! The man of God cursed the false altar prophesying: “A son shall be born to the house of David, Josiah by name, who shall immolate on the altar and burn the bones of Adam. And the altar will burst apart as far as the bowels of the Earth and the ashes of the immolation will be scattered to the north, to the south, to the east and where the sun sets”. Do not behave like foolish Ahaziah who sent messengers to consult the god of Ekron when the Most High was in Israel. Do not be inferior to Balaam’s donkey\*\* which for its respect for the spirit of light would have deserved to live, whereas the prophet who did not see would have been struck down. Here is the Light passing among us. Open your eyes, men whose souls are blind, and see» and one of the lepers follows them drawing closer and closer also on the main road, where he points Jesus out to pilgrims.

The apostles, annoyed, turn around two or three times order-

\* **the prophecy of Balaam**, which is in: *Numbers 24,15-19*.

\*\* Ballam’s **donkey**, as narrated in: *Numbers 22,20-35*. Other previous quotations are taken from: *1 King 13,1-5*; *2 King 1,15-16*.

ing the leper, by now completely cured, to be silent. And the last time they almost threaten him.

And he stops shouting for a moment, in order to speak to everybody, and replies: «And do you expect me not to glorify the great things which God has done to me? Do you want me not to bless Him?»

«Bless Him in your heart and be quiet» they reply angrily.

«No, I cannot be quiet. God puts the words on my lips», and he resumes in a louder voice: «People of the two border towns, and you who happen to pass here, stop and worship Him Who will reign in the name of the Lord. I used to laugh at so many word\*. But now I repeat them because I see that they have been fulfilled. All the peoples are moving and are coming towards the Lord rejoicing, across the sea and deserts, over mountains and hills. And we also, the people who have been walking in darkness, will go to the great light which has risen, towards Life, leaving the region of death. We who were like wolves, leopards and lions, we will be born to a new life in the Spirit of the Lord and will love one another in Him, in the shade of the Shoot of Jesse, which has grown into a cedar, under which will camp the nations gathered by Him at the four cardinal points of the Earth. Here comes the day when the jealousy of Ephraim will end, because there is no longer Israel and Judah, but one Kingdom only: the Kingdom of the Christ of the Lord. Well, I sing the praises of the Lord Who saved me and consoled me. Now, I say: praise Him and come to drink salvation at the fountain of the Saviour. Hosanna! Hosanna to the great things He works! Hosanna to the Most High Who put His Spirit among men and clothed Him with flesh, that He might become the Redeemer!»

He is inexhaustible. <sup>483.9</sup> The crowds increase in number, they throng and obstruct the road. Those who were behind rush forward, those who were ahead come back. The people of a little village, which is now close at hand, join the passers-by.

«Please make him keep quiet, Lord. He is a Samaritan. That is what the people say. Since You do not allow even us to go ahead of You preaching You, he must not speak of You!» say the angry apostles.

\* many words, those of: *Isaiah 11-12*.

«My dear friends, I will repeat to you the words\* \* which Moses spoke to Joshua the son- of Nun when he complained because Eldad and Medad were prophesying in the camp: "Are you jealous on my account? Oh! if only the whole people of Yahweh were prophets, and Yahweh gave His Spirit to them all! ". However, I will stop and dismiss him to make you happy. »

And He stops turning around and calling the cured leper, who runs towards Him and prostrates himself before Jesus kissing the ground.

«Stand up. And where are the others? Were you not ten in all? The other nine did not feel it was necessary to thank the Lord. What? Out of ten lepers, among whom one only was a Samaritan, not one, except this foreigner, felt it was his duty to come back and give glory to God, before going back to life and to his family. And they say that he is a "Samaritan". So the Samaritans are no longer intoxicated, as they do not see double and they come to the way of Salvation without staggering? Does the Word speak a foreign language if foreigners understand Him and His countrymen do not! »

He turns His wonderful eyes on the crowds from every place in Palestine present there. And those flashing, eyes are unsustainable... Many lower their heads and spur their mounts or walk away...

483. 10 <sup>10</sup>Jesus lowers His eyes on the Samaritan kneeling at his feet and looks at him most kindly. He raises His hand, which was hanging loosely along His side, to bless him and says: «Stand up and go away. Your faith has saved in you something which is more than your flesh. Proceed in the Light of God. Go. »

The man kisses the ground again and before standing up he asks: «Give me a name, Lord. A new name because everything is new in me and forever. »

«In which part of the country are we now? »

«In Ephraim. »

«And Ephrem is from now onwards your name, because Life has given you life twice\*\*. Go. »

And the man stands up and goes away.

The local people and some pilgrims would like to hold Jesus

\* the words, indicated in: *Numbers 11, 26-30.*

\*\* twice, as Ephrem means "double *fruit*".

back. But He subdues them with a glance, which is not severe, on the contrary it is very gentle, but it must express such a power that no one attempts to detain Him.

And Jesus leaves the road without going into the little village, He walks through a field, He then crosses a little stream and a path and climbs the eastern hillock, all covered with woods, which He enters with His disciples saying: «We will follow the road walking in the wood, so that we shall not get lost. After that bend the road runs along this mountain. We will find a grotto in which we can sleep and at dawn we shall be beyond Ephraim... »

484. An obliged stop in Ephraim.  
The parable of the pomegranate.

31<sup>st</sup> August 1946.

<sup>1</sup>And Jesus in fact thinks that He will be able to get past Ephraim at the first light of dawn, while the town is silent and its streets deserted, without being seen by anybody. He prudently goes round the town, without entering it, despite the very early hour. 484. 1

But when, coming from the little lane at the rear of the village, they arrive at the main road, they find the whole village, I would say, waiting for them, together with other people from other towns, through which they passed previously, and the latter crowd point out Jesus to the people of Ephraim as soon as they see Him. Fortunately there are no Pharisees, scribes or the like.

The people of Ephraim send on the notables of the town, and one of them, after a solemn greeting, says on behalf of everybody: «We heard that You were here and that You did not disdain to have mercy on anybody. We already knew that You had been merciful to the people of Shechem and so we wished to have You. Now, He Who knows the thoughts of men has led You among us. Stay and speak to us, because we also are children of Abraham. »

«I am not allowed to stop... »

«Oh! we are aware that they are looking for You. But not here. This town is at the border of the desert and of the mountains of blood. They do not come here willingly. And in this occasion, after the first ones, we have not seen any more. »

<sup>2</sup>«I cannot stop... »

«The Temple is waiting for You. We know. But believe us. We are considered by you as outlaws because we do not bend our heads to the Pontiffs of Israel. But is the Pontiff perhaps God? We are far from you. But not so far as not to know that your priests are as worthless as ours. And we think that God can no longer be with them. No. The Most High no longer conceals Himself in the cloud of incense. They could stop burning it, and they could enter the Holy of Holies without any fear of being reduced to ashes by the splendour of God standing in His glory. And we worship God feeling that He is outside the deserted stones of the empty temples. And we do not say that our temple is more empty than yours, if you wish to accuse us of having a temple of idols. You can see that we are impartial. So listen to us. »

And he continues in a solemn tone: «It would be better If You stopped here to worship the Father among those who at least admit that they have a spirit of religion devoid of truth like the others who will not admit it and they offend us. Although alone, avoided like lepers, without prophets and doctors, we have at least been able to be united, feeling that we were brothers. And it is our law not to betray, because it is written\*: “You must not take the side of the greater number in wrong doing, nor side with the majority and give evidence in a lawsuit in defiance of justice”. It is written: “See that the man who is innocent and just is not done to death for I cannot bear impious people. You must not accept a bribe: for a bribe blinds clear-sighted men and is the ruin of a just man’s cause. Do not oppress the stranger because you know what it means to be strangers in a foreign country”. And in the blessings\*\* pronounced on Gerizim, a mountain dear to the Lord if He chose it as a mountain of blessings, all sorts of good things are promised to those who conform to the true Law which is in the Pentateuch. Now if we reject the words of men as if they were idols, but we keep those of God, can people say that we are idolaters? The curse\*\*\* of God is upon him who secretly strikes his neighbour and accepts a reward to sentence an innocent to death. We do not want to be cursed by God because of our

\* it is written, in: *Exodus 22, 20; 23, 2-3, 7-9; Deuteronomy 16, 19.*

\*\* blessings, that are in: *Deuteronomy 28, 1-14.*

\*\*\* curse, in: *Deuteronomy 27, 24-25.*

actions. Because we shall not be cursed for being Samaritans, as God is Just and He rewards righteousness wherever it is. That is our reliance in the Lord. »

He reflects for a moment, and then he resumes: «That is why we say to You: it would be better for You to stay with us. The Temple hates You and tries to grieve You. And not only the Temple: You will always be too long among those who reject You as a disgrace. No love will come to You from the Jews. »

<sup>3</sup>«I cannot stay here. But I will remember your words. In the meantime I tell you to persevere in the observance of the laws of justice which you have recalled, and which ensue from the precept of love of our neighbour. The precept, which with that of the love of God, forms the main commandment of the old Religion and of Mine. The path to Heaven is not far from those who live righteously. One step only will take onto the way to the Kingdom of God those who are on the nearby path and who are separated only by obstinacy, by now, rather than by conviction. »

484. 3

«To Your Kingdom! »

«To Mine. But not the Kingdom as men imagine, the kingdom of fair temporal power, which may be even violent to be mighty. But the Kingdom which begins in the hearts of men, to whom the spiritual King gives a spiritual code and will give a spiritual reward. He will give the Kingdom, in which there will not be exclusively Judaeans or Galileans or Samaritans, but all those who on the Earth had one faith only: Mine, and in Heaven will have one name only: saints. Races, and divisions among races remain on the Earth and are confined to it. In My Kingdom there will not be different races, but only the race of the children of God. The children of One Only Father can but be of one descent. <sup>4</sup>Now let Me go. I still have a long way to go before night. »

484. 4

«Are You going to Jerusalem? »

«To En-shemesh. »

«We will then show you a road, which only we know, to go to the ford without having to stop and without risks. You can take it as you have no heavy loads or carts. You will be at Your destination at the ninth hour. And it will be a good thing for You to know that path. But rest here with us for an hour and accept our bread and salt and give us Your word in exchange. »

«Let it be done as you wish. But let us stay where we are. It is



such a pleasant day and this place is beautiful. »

They are in fact in a little valley overspread with orchards and in the middle of it there is a little stream, which has been nourished by the first rains and flows babbling and shining in the sun towards the Jordan amid large stones, which break its water into pearly foam. The shrubs which have survived the summer heat seem to enjoy the pulverised foam on the two banks and they shine quivering in a mild breeze which brings the smell of ripe apples and fermenting musts.

Jesus goes near the stream, He sits on a huge stone with His head in the light shade of a willow tree while the stream flows merrily down the valley. The people sit down on the grass which is beginning to grow again on the two banks.

From the village they bring bread, new milk, cheese, fruit and honey, and they offer everything to Jesus for Himself and for His disciples. And they look at Him, while He eats, after offering and blessing the food, so simple as a human being, so supremely handsome and spiritually imposing as a god. He is wearing a white tunic shading into ivory like the hue of homespun wool and a dark blue mantle which is thrown over His shoulder. The sun, filtering through the willow, lights His hair with golden shafts which shift continuously as the light leaves of the willow move. And a sunbeam caresses His left cheek turning the soft curl at the end of the tuft falling along His cheek into a skein of spun gold and the same hue somewhat paler, can be seen on His soft not excessively thick beard covering His chin and the lower part of His face. His skin, of an ancient ivory hue, shows in the sunshine the delicate embroidery of the veins on His cheeks and temples and one that runs across His smooth high forehead, from His nose up to His hair...

I think that it was just from that vein that I saw so much blood stream, because a thorn had pierced it during His Passion...

Every time I see Jesus so handsome and tidy in His virile composure, I remember the state to which He was reduced by his suffering and the insults of men...

484. 5 <sup>5</sup>While eating Jesus smiles at some children who have pressed around Him, resting their heads on His knees, or looking at Him eating, as if they saw I do not know what. And when Jesus arrives at the fruit and honey, He gives them some, putting grapes

and soft crumbs dipped into liquid honey into the mouths of the younger ones, as if they were nestlings.

A little boy runs away through the crowds towards an orchard and comes back holding his arms tightly folded against his chest forming thus a live little basket, in which there are three wonderful big beautiful pomegranates - he certainly likes them and hopes to have some - and he offers them insistently to Jesus.

Jesus takes the fruit, He opens two making one part for each of His little friends, to whom He hands them out. Then, He takes the third one in His hand, stands up and begins to speak holding the beautiful pomegranate in the palm of His left hand, so that everybody may see it.

<sup>6</sup>«To what shall I compare the world in general, and Palestine in particular, once united as one Nation, also in accordance with God's thought, and subsequently divided by an error and by the obstinate hatred of brothers? To what shall I compare Israel as she is now reduced through her own will? I will compare her to this pomegranate. And I solemnly tell you that the variances existing between Judaeans and Samaritans, are found, in different form and measure but with the same substantial hatred, among all the nations in the world and at times among the provinces of the same nation. And they are said to be insuperable, as if they were things created by God. No. The Creator did not make as many Adams and Eves as there are races, adverse to one another, or as many as the tribes and families which are hostile to one another. He made *one only Adam and one only Eve, from whom all men descended*, and they spread to fill the Earth with people, as if it were one only house which becomes richer and richer in rooms as the children grow up and get married procreating grandchildren for their parents. So, why so much hatred among men, why so many barriers and incomprehensions? You said: "We know how to be united, feeling like brothers". But it is not enough. You must love also those who are not Samaritans.

484. 6

Look at this fruit. You know its flavour besides its beauty. Closed as it is, it already promises you the sweet juice inside it. If you open it, it is also a pleasant sight with its serried rows of acini similar to rubies enclosed in a coffer. But woe to the imprudent person who should bite it without removing the very bitter partitions between the families of acini. He would poison his lips

and bowels and would throw it away saying: "It is poison". Likewise the separations and the hatred existing between one people and another, between one tribe and another; turn into "poison" what was created to be sweetness. Such separations are of no use, and as in this fruit, they do nothing but create limitations which take away space and cause anxiety and sorrow. They are bitter and they give bitterness which poisons the spirits of those who feed on them, that is those who bite their neighbours whom they do not love but they offend and grieve. Are they indelible? No. Goodwill cancels them as the hand of a child can remove these partitions of bitterness in the sweet fruit, which the Creator made for the delight of His children.

And the first to have goodwill is the same Sole Lord, Who is God, of Judaeans as well as Galileans, Samaritans and Idumaeans. And He proves that by sending the Unique Saviour Who will save them all without asking them anything but faith, in His Nature and Doctrine. The Saviour Who is speaking to you will pass by knocking down the useless barriers, cancelling the past which has divided you, to replace it with a present time which makes you all brothers in His Name. All you and those beyond the border have to do is to follow Him, and hatred will vanish and the dejection which gives rise to rancour will also vanish, as well as the pride which brings about injustice.

This is My commandment: that all men love one another as brothers, which they are. That they love one another as the Father in Heaven loves them and as the Son of man loves them, as He through the human nature which He took upon Himself feels He is the brother of men, and through His Paternity He knows He has the power to defeat Evil with all its consequences. You said: "It is our law not to betray". In that case, as first thing, do not betray your souls depriving them of Heaven. Love one another, love one another in Me, and peace will come to the spirits of men, as was promised. And the Kingdom of God will come, which is Kingdom of peace and love for all those who want to serve the Lord their God with upright will.

484. 7 7I leave you. May the Light of God enlighten your hearts... Let us go... »

He wraps Himself in His mantle, He throws His bag across His shoulder and is the first to set out, with Peter on one side and

the notable who spoke at the beginning, on the other. The apostles are behind Him and farther back, as it is not possible to proceed in a group on the narrow road along the stream, are some young men from Ephraim...

485. Arrival with the apostles in Bethany  
where there are already some disciples with Marjiam.  
Shrewdness of the Iscariot.

2<sup>nd</sup> September 1946.

<sup>1</sup>The varied green shades of the countryside around Bethany <sup>485. 1</sup> come into sight as soon as one climbs over a spur of the mountain and sets foot on the southern slope, descending along a zig-zag path towards Bethany. The silvery green of olive-trees, the bright green of apple-orchards with a few yellow leaves showing early here and there the ruffled and more yellowish green hue of vines, the dark dense green of oaks and carob-trees mixed with the brown of fields already ploughed and waiting to be sown and with the fresh green of kitchen gardens and of meadows in which new grass is growing, look like a multicoloured carpet to anyone overlooking Bethany and its surroundings. And towering over the green below, the fanshaped leaves of date-palms, always elegant and reminiscent of the East.

The little town of En-shemesh, lying in the middle of the greenery and all lit up by the sun which is beginning to set, is soon overcome, and also the large fountain rich in water a little to the north of Bethany is also left behind, then the first houses appear amid the green... They have arrived after a long tiring journey. And although they are very tired, they seem to regain strength simply by being near the friendly house in Bethany.

The little town is quiet, almost empty. Many inhabitants must have already moved to Jerusalem for the feast. So Jesus is unnoticed until He arrives near Lazarus' house. Only when He is near the garden which has now grown wild - where all the stilt-birds were - He meets two men who recognise and greet Him and then ask: «Are You going to see Lazarus, Master? You are doing a good thing because he is very ill. We are coming from his house after taking him the milk of our asses, as it is the only food, to-

gether with a little fruit juice and honey, which his stomach still accepts. His sisters do nothing but weep. They are worn out with watching at his bedside and with grief... And he does nothing but pine for You. I think that he would be already dead, if his keen desire to see You had not kept him alive so far. »

«I am going at once. God be with you. »

«And... will You cure him?» they ask inquisitively.

«The will of God will be revealed on him together with the power of the Lord» replies Jesus perplexing them and He hastens towards the gate of the garden.

485.2 <sup>2</sup>A servant sees Him and rushes to open it, but without any exclamation of joy. As soon as the gate is opened he kneels down venerating Jesus and says in a sorrowful voice: «You have come at the right moment, Lord! And may Your arrival bring joy to this house full of tears. Lazarus, my master... »

«I know. Be resigned, all of you, to the will of the Lord. He will reward you for sacrificing your wills to His. Go and call Martha and Mary. I will wait for them in the garden. »

The servant hurries away and Jesus follows him slowly after saying to the apostles: «I am going to Lazarus. You can have a rest, as you need it... »

In fact, while the two sisters appear at the door and have difficulty in recognising the Lord, so tired are their eyes with watching and weeping, and the sun shining into their eyes makes it more difficult for them to see, other servants come out of a side door to meet the apostles and they take them away.

«Martha! Mary! It is I. Do you not recognise Me?»

«Oh! the Master!» exclaim the two sisters and they run towards Him prostrating themselves at His feet stifling their sobs with difficulty. Kisses and tears fall upon Jesus' feet as previously\* in the house of Simon, the Pharisee.

But this time Jesus, while receiving the streaming tears of Martha and Mary, does not remain stiff as He did then. Now He bends down, He touches their heads blessing them and compels them to stand up saying: «Come. Let us go under the jasmine pergola. Can you leave Lazarus?»

More by nodding than by words, while sobbing, they say yes.

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\* as previously in 2 3 6. 2.

And they go under the shady bower on whose dark leafy branches a few persistent jasmine little stars are still white and fragrant.

<sup>3</sup>«Now, tell Me... »

485.3

«Oh! Master! You have come to a really sad house! We are dazed with grief. When the servant said to us: “There is someone looking for you” we did not think of You. And when we saw You, we did not recognise You. See? Tears have scalded our eyes. Lazarus is dying!... » and fresh tears interrupt the words of the two sisters who have been speaking alternately.

«And I have come... »

«To cure him?! Oh! my Lord! » says Mary, her eyes shining with hope through her tears.

«Ah! I said so! If He comes... » says Martha joining her hands in a joyful gesture.

«Oh! Martha! Martha! What do you know of God's acts and decrees? »

«Alas, Master! Will You not cure him?! » they both exclaim plunging back into grief.

«I say to you: have unlimited faith in the Lord. Persevere in having it despite innuendoes and events, and you will see great things when your hearts no longer have any reason to hope to see them. What does Lazarus say? »

«He echoes Your words. He says to us: “Do not doubt God's kindness and power, no matter what may happen. He will intervene on your and on my behalf, and on behalf of many, of all those who, like me and you, will remain faithful to the Lord”. And when he is fit to do so, he explains the Scriptures to us, he does not read anything else nowadays, and he speaks to us of You, and he says that he will die in a happy period of time because the era of peace and forgiveness has begun. But You will hear him... because he says also other things which make us weep even more than we do for our brother... » says Martha.

«Come, Lord. Every minute that passes is stolen from Lazarus' hope. He used to count the hours and would say: “He will certainly be in Jerusalem for the feast and He will come... ”. We know many things which we do not tell Lazarus in order not to grieve him, and we did not have so much hope, because we thought that You would not come to avoid those who are looking

for You... Martha was fully convinced of that. I was not so sure... because if I were You, I would face my enemies. I am not a woman who is afraid of men. And now I am not even afraid of God. For I know how good He is to repentant souls... » says Mary and she casts a loving glance at Him.

«Are you not afraid of anything, Mary?» asks Jesus.

«Of sin... and of myself... I am always afraid of falling again into evil. I think that Satan must have a mortal hatred of me. »

«You are right. You are one of the souls most hated by Satan.

But you are also one of the most loved by God. Bear that in mind. »

«Oh! I do. And that remembrance is my strength! I remember what You said in Simon's house. You said: "Many sins are forgiven her because she has loved much", and You said to me: "Your sins are forgiven. Your faith has saved you. Go in peace". You said "your sins". Not many. *All of them*. And so I think that You loved me, my God, without limit. Now if my poor faith of those days, the faith of a soul laden with faults, achieved so much from You, will my present faith not be able to defend me from Evil? »

«Yes, Mary. Be vigilant and watch over yourself. It is humbleness and prudence. But have faith in the Lord. He is with you. »

485. 4 They go into the house. Martha goes to her brother. Mary would like to serve Jesus. But Jesus wants to go to Lazarus first. And they enter the semi-dark room, where the sacrifice is being consumed.

«Master! »

«My friend! »

Lazarus lifts his emaciated arms, while Jesus lowers His to embrace the body of His languishing friend. A long embrace. Then Jesus lays the invalid down again on the cushions and gazes at him compassionately. But Lazarus smiles. He is happy. In his ravaged face only his hollow eyes shine brightly, lit by the joy of having Jesus there.

«See? I have come. And I shall be staying with you for a long time. »

«Oh! You cannot, my Lord. They do not tell me everything. But I know enough to be able to tell You that You cannot. To the sorrow they give You, they have added mine, my part, by not allowing me to die in Your arms. But since I love You I cannot be

so selfish as to detain You here with me, in danger. You... I have already seen to it... You must change places continually. All my houses are open to You. The guardians have been given instructions and also the stewards of my lands. But do not go to Gethsemane to stay there. They keep a strict watch over it. I mean the house. You can go among the olive-trees, particularly the upper ones, and You can go there along many paths, without them finding out. Marjiam, do You know that he is already here? He was questioned by some people when he was in the oil-mill with Marcus. They wanted to know where You were and whether You would be coming. The boy gave them a very clever reply: "He is an Israelite and will come. Which way I do not know, as I left Him at Merom". So he did not give them the opportunity to say that You are a sinner and he did not lie. »

«Thank you, Lazarus. I will listen to you. But we will often meet just the same. » And He gazes at him again.

«Are You looking at me, Master? Can't you see what has become of me? Like a tree which in autumn is stripped of its leaves, I am despoiled of my flesh, my strength and of the hours of my life. But I speak the truth when I say that, if I am sorry that I shall not live long enough to see Your triumph, I rejoice at departing so that I shall not see the hatred which is increasing against You, powerless as I am to check it. »

«You are not powerless; you never are. You see to your Friend, even before He arrives. I have two houses of peace, and I can say that they are equally dear to Me: the one in Nazareth and this one. If My Mother is there: the celestial love almost as great as Heaven for the Son of God, here I have the love of men for the Son of man. The friendly, faithful, venerating love... Thanks, My friends! »

«Will Your Mother never come? »

«At the beginning of springtime. »

«Oh! then I shall never see Her again... »

«Yes, you will. I am telling you and you must believe Me. »

«I believe everything, Lord. Also what facts disproves

«Where is Marjiam? »

«In Jerusalem with the disciples. But he comes here in the evening. He will be here shortly. And Your apostles? Are they not with You? »



«They are with Maximinus who is succouring them as they are tired and exhausted. »

«Have you walked much? »

«Yes, very much, without stopping. I will tell you about it... But rest now. I bless you for the time being. » And Jesus blesses him and withdraws.

485. 5 <sup>5</sup>The apostles are now with Marjiam and with almost all the shepherds and they are speaking of the insistence of the Pharisees to find out about Jesus. They say that such inquisitiveness aroused their suspicions, so much so that their disciples decided to guard each road leading into Jerusalem in order to warn the Master.

«In fact» says Isaac «we are scattered along all the roads a few stadia from the Gates and we watch one night each in turns. This is our turn. »

«Master» says Judas laughing «they say that at the Joppa Gate there was half of the Sanhedrin and they were quarrelling because some of them remembered the words I spoke at Engannim, some swore that they heard that You had been to Dathan, some instead said that they had seen You near Ephraim, and thus they were furious because they did not know where You were... » and he laughs thinking of the trick he had played on Jesus' enemies.

«They will see Me tomorrows

«No. We will go tomorrow. We have already made our plans: all in a group and making ourselves conspicuous. »

«I do not want that. You would tell lies. »

«I swear to You that I will not lie. If they say nothing to me I will say nothing to them. If they ask me whether You are with us, I will reply: "Can't you see that. He is not here? ", and if they wish to know where You are I will say: "Look for Him yourselves. How do you expect me to know where the Master is just now? ". In fact I will certainly not be in a position to know whether You are in the house, here, or in the orchards, or I do not know where. »

«Judas, Judas, I told you... »

«And I say that You are right. But my behaviour perhaps is not the simplicity of a dove, but it is the prudence of a serpent. You are the dove, I the serpent. And together we will form the

perfection which You taught us\*. » He assumes the attitude of Jesus when He teaches and imitating the Master to perfection he says: «I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves. Be therefore as wise as serpents and as simple as doves... Do not worry about what to say, as the words will then be put on your lips, because it is not you that speak, but the Spirit speaks in you... When they persecute you in one town, flee into another until the Kingdom of the Son of man comes... ». I remember them and it is now time to put them into practices

«I did not say them thus, *neither did I say only those*» objects Jesus.

«Oh! at present it is necessary to remember only those and to speak them thus. I know what You mean. But until faith in You is confirmed, and it is a stone in Your Kingdom, it is better not to surrender to the enemies. Later... we will say and do the rest... » And Judas' expression is so brightly intelligent and impish that he conquers everybody, except Jesus, Who sighs. Judas is really the seducer who lacks nothing to triumph over men.

Jesus is pensive and sighs... But He surrenders as He feels that Judas' precaution is not entirely wicked. And the Iscariot expounds his plan triumphantly.

«So we will go tomorrow and the day after tomorrow until the day after the Sabbath. And we will stay in a hut made with branches, in the valley of the Kidron, like perfect Israelites. They will get tired waiting for You... and then You will come. In the meantime You will stay here, in peace and You will rest. You are exhausted, my Master. And we do not want that. When the gates are closed one of us will come and tell You what they do. Oh! it will be lovely to see them disappointed! »

They all agree and Jesus does not offer any resistance. Perhaps the fact that He is really dead tired, perhaps His desire to give comfort to Lazarus, all possible comfort before the final struggle, contribute to His yielding. Perhaps also the real necessity of being free until He can accomplish all the necessary deeds, so that Israel may have no doubt about His Nature before condemning Him... He says: «Let it be so. But avoid discussions and lies. Be silent, but do not lie. Now let us go, because Martha

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\* taught us, in 265. 7/9.

is calling us. Come, Marjiam. I find you in better form... » and He goes away speaking to the boy, with one arm around his shoulder.

486. At the Temple for the feast of the Tabernacles.  
Sermon on the nature of the Kingdom.

3<sup>rd</sup> September 1946.

486. 1 <sup>1</sup> Jesus goes into the Temple. He is with His apostles and with a very large number of disciples, whom I know at least by sight. And behind them all, but united to the group, as if they wanted to be considered as followers of the Master, there are new faces, all unknown to me, with the exception of the shrewd one of the Greek\* from Antioch. He is speaking to other people, perhaps Gentiles like himself, and while Jesus and His disciples go on and enter the Court of Israel, he stops in the Court of the Gentiles with those with whom he is conversing.

Of course, Jesus' entrance into the overcrowded Temple does not pass unnoticed. A fresh murmur rises, as if it were a disturbed beehive drowning the voices of the doctors teaching under the Porch of the Gentiles. The lessons are interrupted as though by magic, and the pupils of the scribes run in all directions with the news of Jesus' arrival, so that when He goes through the inner enclosure into the Court of Israel, several Pharisees, scribes and priests are scattered about watching Him. But they do not say anything to Him while He prays and they do not even go near Him. They watch Him only.

Jesus goes back to the Court of the Gentiles. They follow Him. And the train of the ill-intentioned people increases in number, like that of the curious and well-meaning ones. And words uttered under one's breath spread among the crowds. Now and again a louder voice can be heard saying: «Are you convinced now that He would come? He is a just man. He could not fail to come to the feast. » Or: «Why has He come? To mislead the people farther? » Or: «Are you happy now? Can you see where He is now? You have asked for Him so keenly! »

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\* Greek, called Nicolaus, met for the first time in 355. 6.

Isolated remarks at once choked in throats by the meaningful glances of the disciples and followers who threaten the rancorous enemies with their very love. Ironical poisonous voices of enemies who squirt poison and then quiet down because they are afraid of the crowd. And the crowds are silent after an impressive demonstration in favour of the Master, because they are afraid of the reprisals of the mighty ones. The realm of mutual fear...

The only one who is not afraid is Jesus. He walks slowly and with stateliness towards the place where He wants to go, somewhat absorbed but ready to come out of His absorption to caress a child offered to Him by a mother, or to smile at an old man who greets and blesses Him.

<sup>2</sup>In the Porch of the Gentiles, standing in the middle of a group of disciples, there is Gamaliel. With his arms folded across his chest, in his magnificent snow-white very wide garment which looks even whiter against the thick deep red carpet laid under his feet, Gamaliel seems to be engrossed in thought, with bowed head, and not to be interested in what is happening. His disciples, on the contrary, are most excited with keen curiosity. One of them, who is very short, climbs on to a high stool, to have a better view. 486. 2

But when Jesus is opposite Gamaliel, the rabbi looks up and his deep eyes under his forehead of a thinker stare for a moment at Jesus' peaceful face. An inquisitive, tormenting and tormented glance. Jesus perceives it and turns around. He looks at him. The two flashes: that of the very dark eyes and that of the sapphire ones, meet. Jesus' eyes are meek, open to being scrutinised; Gamaliel's are impenetrable, anxious to know and to get to the heart of the mystery of truth - the Galilean Rabbi is in fact a mystery to him - but he is pharisaically jealous of his thought, so that he is closed to every survey which does not concern God. They look at each other just for a moment. Then Jesus goes on and Gamaliel lowers his head again, without listening to the frank anxious questions of some of the people around him, or to the sly spiteful ones of others: «Is it Him, master? What do you think of Him? », «Well! What is your opinion? Who is He? »

Jesus goes to the spot which He has chosen. Oh! there are no carpets under His feet! He is not even under the porch. He is

simply leaning against a column, standing on the top step, at the end of the porch. It is the lowest spot. Around Him there are the apostles, disciples, followers and curious people; farther back there are Pharisees, scribes, priests, rabbis. Gamaliel remains where he was.

486. 3 <sup>3</sup>Jesus begins to preach for the hundredth time the advent of the Kingdom of God and the preparation for it. And I could say that He repeats the same concepts, enhanced in power, which He expounded almost in the same place, twenty years previously\*. He speaks of Daniel's prophecy, of the Precursor foretold by the prophets, He recalls the star of the Wise Men, the slaughter of the Innocents. And after these preliminary recollections to demonstrate the signs of Christ's coming on to the Earth, in order to confirm His coming, He mentions the present signs which characterise Christ Teacher, as the others previously characterised the Advent of Christ Incarnate, that is, He recalls the contradiction which coexists with Him, the death of the Precursor, and the miracles which take place continuously, confirming that God is with His Christ. He never attacks His antagonists. He does not even seem to see them. He speaks to confirm His followers in their faith, to enlighten on the truth those who, through no fault of theirs, are still in complete ignorance of the truth...

A hoarse voice is heard from the far end of the crowd: «How can God be in Your miracles if You work them on forbidden days? Even yesterday You cured a leper on the Bethphage road. »

Jesus looks at His interrupter but does not reply. He continues to speak of the liberation from the domination which oppresses men, and of the establishment of the eternal, invincible, glorious, perfect Kingdom of Christ.

«And when will that happen? » asks a scribe sneeringly. And he adds: «We know that You want to make Yourself king. But a king like You would be the ruin of Israel. Where is Your royal power? Where are Your troops, Your treasures, Your alliances? You are mad! » And many like him shake their heads laughing and mocking at Him.

486. 4 <sup>4</sup>A Pharisee says: «Don't behave like that. In that way we will never know what He means by kingdom, which laws it will have

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\* twenty years previously, that is in the dispute with the doctors, in 41. 1/9.

and how it will reveal itself. What? Was the ancient kingdom of Israel perfect at once as in the days of David and Solomon? Don't you remember the many uncertainties and hard times before the royal splendour of the perfect king? In order to have the first king it was necessary to form the man who would anoint him, and thus remove the barrenness of Anne of Elkanah and inspire her to offer the fruit of her womb. Meditate on Anne's song. It is a lesson to our hardness and blindness: "There is none as holy as the Lord... Do not speak and speak with haughty words, being proud of them... The Lord gives death and life... He raises the poor... He safeguards the steps of His faithful, but the wicked vanish in darkness, because it is not through his strength that man is strong, but through the strength which comes to him from God". Oh! remember! "The Lord will judge the ends of the Earth, He will endow His king with power and will exalt the horn of His Christ". Was the Christ of the prophecies not to be of the stock of David? So what was foretold from Samuel's birth onwards, is it not to be referred to the kingdom of the Christ? You, Master, are You not of David's issue, born in Bethlehem? » he finally asks Jesus directly.

«Yes, what you said is true» replies Jesus briefly.

«Oh! Gratify then our minds. You see that silence is not a good thing because it excites the clouds of doubt in hearts. »

«Not the clouds of doubt, but of pride, which is even more serious. »

«What? To be in doubt about You is not so serious as being proud? »

«Yes. Because pride is the lust of the mind. And it is a greater sin, because it is the same sin as Lucifer's. God forgives many things, and His Light shines lovingly to enlighten ignorance and dispel doubts. But He does not forgive pride which scoffs at Him pretending to be greater than He is. »

«Which of us says that he is greater than God? We do not blaspheme... » several of them shout.

«You do not say so with your lips. But you confirm it with your deeds. You want to say to God: "It is not possible for the Christ to be a Galilean, a man of the people. It is not possible for this man to be Him". What is impossible to God? »

Jesus' voice resounds like thunder. If previously He looked

somewhat modest, leaning like a beggar against His column, now He has straightened Himself, He moves away from the pillar, He raises His head solemnly and crushes the crowd with the glare of His refulgent eyes. He is still standing on the step, but He looks as if He were on a high throne, so regal is His appearance. The people withdraw, they are almost frightened and no one replies to His last question.

486. 5 <sup>5</sup>Then a rabbi, a small wrinkled man, whose soul is certainly as ugly as his looks, preceding his question with a false clucking sly laugh, asks: «It takes two people to accomplish lust. With whom does the mind accomplish it? The mind is not corporeal. So, how can it commit a sin of lust? As it is incorporeal, with whom does it copulate to sin? » and he laughs drawling his words and sly laugh.

«With whom? With Satan. The mind of the proud man fornicates with Satan against God and against love. »

«And with whom did Lucifer fornicate to become Satan, if Satan did not yet exist? »

«With himself. With his own intelligent and disordered thought. Scribe, what is lust? »

«But... I told You! Who does not know what is lust? We have all experienced it... »

«You are not a wise rabbi, because you do not know the true essence of this universal sin, the trine fruit of Evil. As the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are the Trine Form of Love. O scribe, lust is disorder. Disorder led by a free conscious intelligence, which is aware that its desire is evil, but wants to satisfy it just the same. Lust is disorder and violence against natural laws, against justice and love for God, for ourselves, for our brothers. All lust: the lust of the flesh as that aiming at the riches and power of the Earth, as well as that of those who would like to prevent Christ from accomplishing His mission, because they intrigue with immoderate ambition which is afraid of being struck by Me. »

A great murmur runs through the crowd. Gamaliel, who is all alone on his carpet, raises his head again and casts a sharp glance at Jesus.

486. 6 <sup>6</sup>«So, when will the Kingdom of God come? You have not replied... » urges again the previous Pharisee.

«When the Christ will be on the throne which Israel is preparing for Him, higher than any other throne, higher than this Temple. »

«But where is it being prepared, as no preparation is evident? Is it possible that Rome will allow Israel to rise again? Have the eagles become so blind that they cannot see what is being prepared? »

«The Kingdom of God does not come with pomp. Only the eye of God can see it being formed, because the eye of God reads inside men. So do not go looking for this Kingdom, where it is being prepared. And do not believe those who say: "They are plotting in Batanaea, they are conspiring in the caves in the desert of Engedi, and on the shores of the sea". The Kingdom of God is in you, within you, in your spirits which receive the Law that came from Heaven, as the law of the true Fatherland, the law, which, when practised, makes one the citizen of the Kingdom. That is why John came before Me to prepare the ways to the hearts of men so that My Doctrine could enter them. The ways have been prepared through penance; through love the Kingdom will rise and the slavery of sin, which interdicts the Kingdom of Heaven to men, will fall. »

«This man is really great! And you say that He is an artisan? » says in a loud voice a man who was listening attentively. And others, apparently Judaeans judging by their garments, probably instigated by Jesus' enemies, gaze at one another dumbfounded and then approach their instigators asking: «What have you insinuated to us? Who can say that this man is leading the people astray? » And others ask: «We are wondering and would like you to tell us this: if it is true that none of you has taught Him, how can He be so wise? Where did He learn so much wisdom if He never studied with a master? » And they address Jesus asking: «Tell us. Where did You find Your doctrine? »

7Jesus looks up full of inspiration and says:

486. 7

«I solemnly tell you that this doctrine is not mine, but it is of He Who sent Me among you. I solemnly tell you that no teacher taught Me it, neither did I find it in any living book or parchment or stone monument. I solemnly tell you that I prepared for this hour listening to the Living Being speak to My spirit. The hour has now come for Me to give the people of God the Word which



has come from Heaven. And I do so, and I will do so to the end, and after I have taken My last breath the stones, which heard Me and did not soften, will experience a fear of God greater than that which Moses felt on Sinai, and in such fear, with the voice of truth, blessing or cursing, the words of My rejected doctrine will be engraved on stones. And those words will never be deleted. The Sign will remain: light for those who will receive it, at least then, with love; absolute darkness for those who not even then will understand that it is the Will of God that sent Me to establish His Kingdom. At the beginning of Creation it was said: "Let there be light". And there was light in the chaos. At the beginning of My life it was said: "Peace to men of goodwill". A goodwill is the one which does the will of God and does not oppose it. Now he who does the will of God and does not oppose it, feels that he cannot fight against Me because he feels that My doctrine comes from God and not from Myself. Do I perhaps seek My own glory? Do I perhaps say that I am the Author of the Law of grace and of the era of forgiveness? No. I do not take the glory which is not Mine, but I give glory to the Glory of God, the Maker of all good things. My glory is to do what the Father wants Me to do, because that gives glory to Him. He who speaks on His behalf in order to be praised, seeks his own glory. But He Who can receive glory from men, even without seeking it, for what He does or says, but rejects it saying: "It is not My glory, created by Me, but it proceeds from the glory of the Father as I proceed from Him", is in the truth and there is no injustice in Him, as He gives each person what belongs to them without keeping for Himself what is not His own. I am, because He wanted Me. »

486.8 <sup>8</sup>Jesus stops for a moment. He scans the crowd prying into consciences. He reads in them and weighs them. He resumes speaking: «You are silent. Half of you admire Me, the other half are wondering how they can make Me be silent. Whose are the ten Commandments? Whence do they come? Who gave them to you? »

«Moses! » shouts the crowd.

«No. The most High. Moses, His servant, brought them to you. But they come from God. You have the formulae, but you do not have the faith, and you say in your hearts: "We did not see God. Neither we nor the Hebrews at the foot of Sinai". Oh! not even

the thunderbolts which set the mountain on fire while God shone thundering in the presence of Moses, are sufficient to make you believe that God was present. Not even thunderbolts and earthquakes serve to make you believe that God is among you to write the eternal Pact of salvation and of condemnation. You will see a fresh dreadful epiphany very soon within these walls. And the holy secret places will come out of darkness because the Kingdom of the Light begins and the Holy of Holies will be extolled in the presence of the world and will no longer be concealed under the triple veil. And you will not believe yet. What is therefore needed to make you believe? That the thunderbolts of Justice may strike your bodies? But Justice will be appeased then and flashes of love will descend. And yet, not even they will write the Truth in your hearts, in all your hearts, neither will they give rise to Repentance and then to Love... »

Gamaliel's strained eyes are now gazing at Jesus...

«But you know that Moses was a man among men and the chroniclers of his days left you a description of him. And yet, although you know who he was, from Whom and how he received the Law, do you comply with it? No, none of you observe it. »

The crowds howl protesting.

Jesus imposes silence: «Are you saying that it is not true? That you observe it? Why then do you want to kill Me? Does the fifth commandment not forbid to kill a man? Do you not recognise Me as the Christ? But you cannot deny that I am a man. So why are you trying to kill Me? »

«You are mad! You are possessed! A demon is speaking in You and makes You rave and tell lies! None of us are thinking of killing You! Who wants to kill You? » shout those who actually want just that.

«Who? You. And you are trying to find excuses to do so. And you reproach Me for false faults. You blame Me, and it is not the first time, for curing a man on the Sabbath. Does Moses not say\* that we must be compassionate to a donkey or an ox which has fallen as it is of value to your brother? And should I not have mercy on the diseased body of a brother for whom his recovered health is material comfort and a spiritual means to bless

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\* say, in: *Deuteronomy 22, 4.*

the Lord and love Him because of His kindness? And do you not practise also on Sabbaths the circumcision which Moses gave you having\* received it from the patriarchs. If by circumcising a man on the Sabbath the Mosaic Law is not infringed because it makes a child a son of the Law, why do you remonstrate loudly with Me if on a Sabbath I cured a man completely, both his body and his soul, and I made him a son of God? Do not judge from appearances or to the letter. But judge with sound judgement and according to the spirit, because the letter, formulae and appearances are dead things, painted sceneries but not real life, whereas the spirit of words and of appearances is real life and source of eternity. But you do not understand these things because you do not want to understand them. <sup>9</sup>Let us go. » And He turns around and goes towards the exit, followed and surrounded by His apostles and disciples, who look at Him feeling pity for Him and indignation for His enemies.

Jesus is pale, but He smiles and says to them: «Do not be sad. You are My friends. And you are doing the right thing in being so, because My time is coming to its end. The time will soon come when you will be wishing to see one of these days of the Son of man. But you will no longer be able to see it. It will then be a consolation for you to say: “We loved Him and were faithful to Him while He was among us”. And to laugh at you and make you look like fools, they will say to you: “The Christ has come back. He is here! He is there! ”. Do not listen to those voices. Do not go and do not follow those lying scoffers. The Son of man, once He has gone away, will not come back again until His Day. And His manifestation will be like lightning flashing across the sky, so fast that the eye can hardly follow it. You, and not only you, but no man could follow Me when I will finally appear to gather together all those who were, are or will be. But before that happens the Son of man must suffer much. He must suffer everything. All the grief of Mankind, and farther, He is to be rejected by this generation. »

«Then, my Lord, You will suffer all the evil with which this generation will be able to strike You» remarks Matthias, the shepherd.

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\* you having, in: *Genesis 17, 9-14; Leviticus 12, 3.*

«No. I said: "All the grief of Mankind". It existed before this generation and will exist, through generations, after this one. And it will always sin. And the Son of man will relish all the bitterness of past, present and future sins, down to the last sin, in His spirit, before being the Redeemer. And after His glory He will still suffer in His spirit of Love seeing that Mankind tramples on His Love. You cannot understand now... Let us go into this house. It is a friendly one. »

He knocks at a door which is opened letting Him go in, while the door-keeper does not seem to be seized with astonishment seeing the number of people going in after Jesus.

487. At the Temple for the feast of the Tabernacles.

Lecture on the nature of Christ.

4<sup>th</sup> September 1946.

<sup>1</sup>The Temple is even more crowded than on the previous day. <sup>487.1</sup>

And among the excited crowd filling the first court I see many Gentiles, many more than yesterday. They are all waiting anxiously, both the Israelites and the Gentiles. And the Gentiles are speaking to Gentiles, and the Hebrews to Hebrews, in small groups, scattered here and there, without losing sight of the doors.

The doctors under the porches are busy raising their voices to draw the attention of people and show off their eloquence. But the people are not paying attention and they are preaching to few pupils. Gamaliel is there, in his usual place. But he is not speaking. He is walking up and down on his magnificent carpet, with folded arms, lowered head, meditating, and his long tunic and longer mantle which he has unfastened and is hanging held by two silver rosettes, form a train which he pushes aside with his foot every time he retraces his steps. His disciples, the most faithful ones leaning against the wall, look at him in silence, intimidated as they are, and they respect the meditation of their master.

Some Pharisees and priests seem to be very busy and they come and go... The people, who are aware of their real intentions, point them out and an occasional remark goes off like a

rocket on fire to burn their hypocrisy. But they feign they do not hear. They are few in number compared with the many who do not hate Jesus and on the contrary hate them, so they deem it wise not to react.

487. 2      2«There He is! There He is! He is coming from the Golden Gate today! »

«Let us run! »

«I am staying here. He will come and speak here. I am not going to lose my place. »

«Neither am I, nay, those who are going away are making room for us. »

«But will they let Him speak? »

«If they have allowed Him to come in!... »

«Yes, but it is a different matter. As a son of the Law, they cannot prevent Him from entering. But as a rabbi, they can drive Him out if they wish so. »

«How many discriminations! If they let Him speak to God, why should they not let Him speak to men? » says a Gentile.

«That is true» replies another Gentile. «As we are impure, you do not let us go there, but we can stay here, as you hope that we will become circumcised... »

«Be quiet, Quintus. That is why they let Him speak to us. They hope to prune us as if we were trees. Instead we come here to graft His ideas like scions into our wild minds. »

«You are quite right. He is the only one who does not loathe us! » «Oh! When we go shopping with purses full of money, the others do not loathe us either. »

«Look! We Gentiles are the only ones left here. We shall hear Him well and see Him better! I like to see the faces of His enemies. By Jove! A battle of faces... »

«Be quiet! Don't let anyone hear you mentioning Jupiter. It is forbidden here. »

«Oh! Between Jove and Jehovah there is only a tiny difference. And between gods there will be no ill-feeling... I have come urged by a good desire to hear Him. Not to laugh at Him. They speak highly of the Nazarene everywhere! So I said: the weather is fine and I will go and listen to Him. Many people go farther to hear the oracles... »

«Where have you come from? »

«From Perga. And you? »

«From Tarsus. »

«I am almost Jewish. My father was a Hellenist from Iconium. But he married a Roman from Antioch in Cilicia and he died before I was born. But the seed is Hebrew. »

«He is late... Will they have caught Him? »

«Be not afraid. The shouts of the crowd would tell us. These Jews shout like restless magpies, always... »

«Oh! there He is, over there. Will He really come here? »

«Don't you see that they have taken all the places on purpose, except this corner? Can't you hear how many frogs are croaking pretending to teach? »

«But that one over there is silent. Is it true that he is the greatest doctor in Israel? »

«Yes, but... how pedantic he is! I listened to him one day, but to digest his science I had to drink many goblets of Falernian wine at Titus' in Bezetha. » They both laugh.

<sup>3</sup>Jesus approaches slowly. He passes before Gamaliel, who does not even raise his head, and then He goes to the same place as yesterday. 487. 3

The crowd, now a mixture of Israelites, proselytes and Gentiles, understand that He is about to speak and they whisper: «He is now going to speak in public, and no one says anything to Him. »

«Perhaps the Princes and the Chiefs have recognised Him as the Christ. After the Galilean went away yesterday, Gamaliel spoke to the Elders for a long time. »

«Is it possible? How could they recognise Him all of a sudden, if only a short time ago they considered that He deserved to be put to death? »

«Perhaps Gamaliel had some proof... »

«What proof? What proof do you expect him to have in favour of that man? » asks a man angrily.

«Be quiet, jackal. You are only the last of the scribes. Who spoke to you? » and they make fun of him.

He goes away. But others take his place, they do not belong to the Temple, but they are certainly incredulous Jews: «We have the proof. We know where He is from. But when the Christ comes no one will know where He comes from. We will not know His

origin. But this one!!! He is the son of a carpenter of Nazareth, and the whole village can witness against us if we are telling lies... »

In the meantime the voice of a Gentile is heard saying: «Master, speak a little to us today. We have been told that You say that all men come from one God only, Yours. So much so, that You call them the children of the Father. Some of our Stoic poets had a similar idea. They said: “We are descendants of God”. Your fellow-countrymen say that we are more impure than animals. How can You reconcile the two trends? »

The question is put according to the custom of philosophical debates, at least I think so. And Jesus is about to reply, when the incredulous Jews and the believing ones begin to dispute more furiously and a shrill voice repeats: «He is a common man. The Christ will not be like him. Everything will be exceptional in Him: His figure, nature, origin... »

487. 4 <sup>4</sup>Jesus looks in that direction and says in a loud voice: «So you know Me and you know where I come from? Are you sure? And the little you know, does it not mean anything to you? Does it not confirm the prophecies? But you do not know everything about Me, I solemnly tell you that I did not come by Myself and from where you think that I came. It is the very Truth, Whom you do not know, Who sent Me. »

A cry of indignation rises from the enemies.

«The very Truth, Whose deeds you do not know. Neither do you know His way, along which I came. Hatred cannot be acquainted with the ways and deeds of Love. Darkness cannot stand the sight of Light. But I know Him Who sent Me because I belong to Him, I am part of Him and one Whole with Him. And He sent Me to fulfil what His Thoughts yearn. »

There is an uproar. His enemies rush upon Him to lay hands on Him, to capture and hit Him. The apostles, disciples, people, Gentiles, proselytes react to defend Him. Some rush to help the former and would perhaps succeed in doing so, but Gamaliel, who so far seemed remote from everything around him, departs from his carpet and comes towards Jesus, and as he is driven back by those defending Him under the porch, he shouts: «Leave Him. I want to hear what He says. »

Gamaliel's voice achieves more than the squad of legionar-

ies who have come from the Antonia to put down the riot. The tumult drops like a whirl that breaks and the outcry abates to a whisper. The legionaries remain as a precaution - quite unnecessary now near the external enclosure.

«Speak» Gamaliel orders Jesus. «Reply to those accusing You. » His tone is peremptory, but not mocking.

<sup>5</sup>Jesus moves forward, towards the Court. He calmly resumes speaking. Gamaliel remains where he is and his disciples are busy taking the carpet and stool to him, so that he may be comfortable. But he remains standing, with his arms folded, his head lowered, his eyes closed, engrossed in listening. 487. 5

«You have accused Me unfairly, as if I had blasphemed instead of speaking the truth. I am speaking, not to defend Myself, but to give you Light, so that you may know the Truth. And I am not speaking on My own behalf, but recalling the words in which you believe and on which you swear. They bear witness to Me. I know that you see in Me nothing but a man like yourselves, inferior to yourselves. And you think that it is impossible for a man to be the Messiah. Or at least you think that the Messiah ought to be an angel, that his origin should be so mysterious that he should king only by the authority excited by the mystery of his origin. But whenever in the history of our people, in the books forming that history, and which will last as long as the world, because doctors of all countries and all times will draw from them corroboration for their science and their researches into the past by means of the enlightenment of truth, whenever in those books is it said that God spoke to one of His Angels to say to him\*: “From now on you will be My Son because I begot you”? »

I see that Gamaliel has a tablet and some parchments given to him and he sits down writing..

<sup>6</sup>«The angels, spiritual creatures, servants of the Most High and His messengers, were created by Him, as man, as animals and everything that was created. But they were not begotten by Him. Because God begets only another Himself, as the Perfect One could but beget another Perfect One, another being like Himself, in order not to lower His perfection by begetting a creature inferior to Himself. Now, if God cannot beget the angels or 487. 6

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\* to say to him, as in *Psalms 2, 7.*



elevate them to the dignity of sons of His, what will the Son be to Whom He says: "You are My Son. I begot You today" And of what nature will He be, if begetting Him, He says\* pointing Him out to His angels: "And let all the angels of God adore Him"? And what will this Son be like to deserve to hear the Father say to Him\*\*, the Father by Whose grace men can mention His name with their hearts humbled in adoration: "Sit at My right hand and I will make Your enemies a footstool for You"? That Son can but be God like His Father, with Whom He shares attributes and power, and with Whom He enjoys the Charity which gladdens them in the ineffable and unknowable love of Perfection itself.

But if God did not find it appropriate to elevate an angel to the rank of Son, could He ever have said of a man what He said of Him Who is now speaking to you here - and many of you who now oppose Me were present when He said so - at the ford of Betharabah two years ago? You heard Him and trembled. Because the voice of God is unmistakable, and without His special grace it crushes those who hear it and shakes their hearts. What is therefore the Man Who is speaking to you? Is He perhaps one born of human seed and by the will of man like all of you? And could the Most High have placed His Spirit to dwell in a body, devoid of grace, like those of men born of carnal will? And could the Most High be satisfied with the sacrifice of a man to make amends for the great Sin? Consider this: He does not choose an angel to be the Messiah and Redeemer, can He therefore elect a man? And could the Redeemer be only the Son of the Father without assuming human nature, but with means and power exceeding human limitations? And could the First-Born of the Father have parents if He is the eternal First-Born? Are your proud thoughts not upset by such questions which rise towards the realms of Truth, closer and closer to it, and find a reply only in a humble heart full of faith?

Who is to be the Christ? An angel? More than an angel. A man? More than a man. A God? Yes, a God. But joined to human flesh that it may complete the expiation of the guilty flesh. Everything is to be redeemed through the same matter by which it sinned. So God should have sent an angel to expiate the sins of the fallen

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\* says, in *Psalm 97, 7*

\*\* say to Him, in *Psalm 110, 1*.

angels, to expiate on behalf of Lucifer and his angelic followers. Because, as you are aware, Lucifer also sinned. But God did not send an angelic spirit to redeem the angels of darkness. They did not worship the Son of God, and God does not forgive the sin against His Word begotten of His Love. But God loves man and He sends the Man, the only perfect Man, to redeem man and obtain peace with God. And it is according to justice that only a Man-God may fulfil the redemption of man and appease God.

<sup>7</sup>And the Father and the Son loved and understood each other. <sup>487.7</sup> And the Father said: "I want". And the Son said: "I want". And then the Son said: "Give Me". And the Father said: "Take", and the Word was made flesh, the formation of which is mysterious and this flesh was named Jesus Christ, the Messiah, He Who is to redeem men, lead them to the Kingdom, defeat the demon, crush slavery.

To defeat the demon! An angel could not, cannot accomplish what the Son of man can do. That is why God does not call angels but the Man to accomplish the great work. Here is the Man Whose origin you doubt, you deny or are worried about. Here is the Man. The Man acceptable to God. The Man representing all His brothers. The Man like you in appearance, superior to and different from you by origin, begotten not of man but of God and consecrated to His ministry, is in front of the high altar to be Priest and Victim for the sins of the world, supreme eternal Pontiff, High Priest of the order of Melchizedek. Be not afraid! I am not stretching out My hand toward the pontifical tiara. Another crown is awaiting Me. Do not worry! I will not take the Rational away from you. Another one is ready for Me. Fear only that the Sacrifice of the Man and the Mercy of the Christ be of no avail to you. I have loved you so much, I love you so much that I obtained from the Father to annihilate Myself. I have loved you and I love you so much that I asked to consume all the Sorrow of the world in order to give you eternal salvation.

<sup>8</sup>Why do you not want to believe Me? Can you not believe <sup>487.8</sup> yet? Is it not said\* of the Christ: "You are Priest of the order of Melchizedek forever"? But when did priesthood begin? Perhaps in the days of Abraham? No. And you know. Does the King of

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\* said in *Psalms 110, 4.*

Justice and Peace, who appears to announce Me, with prophetic figure, at the dawn of our people, not warn you that there is a more perfect priesthood coming directly from God, just as Melchizedek, whose origin was never ascertained by anybody and who is called "the priest" and priest he will remain forever? Do you no longer believe inspired words? And if you believe that, why, doctors, can you not give an acceptable explanation of the words which say, and they refer to Me: "You are Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek"? There is, therefore, another priesthood, before and beside Aaron's. And it is said of it "you are". Not "you were". Not "you will be". You are priest forever. So this sentence announces that the eternal Priest will not belong to the well known stock of Aaron or to any other sacerdotal stock. But it will be of new origin, as mysterious as Melchizedek's. It is of such origin. And if the power of God sends it, it means that He wants to renew the Priesthood and the rite so that they may become useful to Mankind.

Do you know My origin? No. Do you know My deeds? No. Do you realise which effects they will produce? No. You know nothing of Me. So you can see that also thus I am the "Christ" Whose Origin, Nature and Mission are not to be known until it pleases God to reveal them to men. Blessed are those who will be able to believe and do believe before the dreadful Revelation of God crushes them on the ground with its weight, and nails them there, striking them with the dazzling powerful truth thundered from Heaven, howled from the Earth: "He was the Christ of God". You say: "He is from Nazareth. Joseph was His father. Mary was His Mother". I have no father who begot Me as man. I have no mother who gave birth to Me as God. And yet I have a body which I assumed through the mysterious deed of the Spirit, and I came among you passing through a holy tabernacle. And I will save you, after forming Myself according to the will of God, I will save you, by letting My true self come out from the Tabernacle of My Body to consume the great Sacrifice of a God Who immolates Himself to save men.

487. 9 <sup>o</sup>Father, My Father! I told You at the beginning of time: "Here I am to obey Your Will". And I told You at the hour of grace before departing from You to take on a body to be able to suffer: "Here I am to obey Your Will". And I tell You once again to sanc-

tify those for whom I came: "Here I am to obey Your Will". And I will always tell You until Your Will is accomplished... »

Jesus, Who had raised His arms towards heaven, praying, now lowers them and folds them across His chest, He bends His head, closes His eyes and becomes engrossed in secret prayer.

The people whisper. Not everybody has understood, nay most of them (including myself) have not understood. We are too ignorant. But we realise that He has enunciated great things. And we are silent, full of admiration.

The evil-minded people, who have not understood or did not want to understand, sneer: «He is raving!» But they dare not say more and they move aside or go to the gates shaking their heads. I think that so much prudence is due to the Roman lances and daggers shining in the sunshine against the outer walls.

<sup>10</sup>Gamaliel elbows his way through those who have stayed. He <sup>487 10</sup> arrives near Jesus, Who is still absorbed in prayer, far from the crowd and the place, and calls Him: «Rabbi Jesus!»

«What do you want, rabbi Gamaliel?» asks Jesus looking up, His eyes still absorbed in an internal vision.

«An explanation from You.»

«Tell Me.»

«Go away, all of you!» orders Gamaliel, and in such a tone that apostles, disciples, followers, curious people and Gamaliel's very disciples, move aside quickly. Jesus and Gamaliel are alone, facing each other. And they look at each other. Jesus is, as usual, meek and kind, Gamaliel unintentionally authoritative and proud looking. A countenance certainly due to years of exaggerated homage.

«Master... Some words of Yours have been related to me. You spoke them at a banquet... of which I disapproved because it was not a genuine one. I fight or I do not fight, but always openly... I meditated on those words. I compared them with the ones which are in my memory... And I have been waiting for You, *here*, to ask You about them... But first I wanted to hear You speak... They have not understood. I hope I will be able to understand. I wrote Your words while You were speaking, so that I may meditate on them, not to injure You. Do You believe me?»

«Yes, I do. And may the Most High make them blaze in your spirit.»

«Let it be so. Listen. The stones which are to vibrate, are they perhaps those of our hearts? »

«No rabbi. These (and He points at the walls of the Temple with a rotary motion of His hand). Why are you asking Me. »

«Because my heart vibrated when the words You spoke at the banquet and Your replies to the tempters were related to me. I thought that throbbing was the sign... »

«No rabbi. The throbbing of your heart and of the hearts of a few more people is too little to be the sign which leaves no doubts... Even if you, with rare judgement of humble knowledge of yourself, define your heart: stone. Oh! Rabbi Gamaliel, can you really not make of your petrified heart a bright altar receiving God? Not for My benefit, rabbi. But that your Justice may be complete... »

And Jesus looks kindly at the elderly master who ruffles his beard and inserts his fingers under his head-dress pressing his forehead and whispering with his head lowered: «I cannot... Not yet... But I hope... Will You still give that sign? »

«Yes, I will. »

«Goodbye, Rabbi Jesus. »

«May the Lord come to you, rabbi Gamaliel. »

They part. Jesus nods to His disciples and leaves the Temple with them.

487. 11 «Scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees, disciples, rabbis rush like vultures around Gamaliel who is putting into his large belt the sheets he has written.

«Well? What do you think of Him? Is He mad? You did the right thing in writing His follies. We will need them. Have you made up your mind? Yesterday... today... More than is needed to convince you. » They are speaking in an uproar and Gamaliel is silent while he adjusts his belt, he taps the ink-pot hanging from it, he hands back to his disciple the tablet on which he leaned to write on the parchments.

«Are you not answering? You have not spoken since yesterday... » insists one of his colleagues.

«I am listening, not to you, to Him. And I am trying to recognise in His present words the word which He spoke to me one day, here. »

«And are you successful? » many of them say laughing.

«Like a thunder, which sounds differently, according to whether it is closer or farther away. But still the roar of thunders

«So, an inconclusive sound» jeers one.

«Do not laugh, Levi. The voice of God may be found also in thunder, and we may be so stupid as to think that it is the noise of clouds being rent... And you, Helkai, and you, Simon, stop laughing, lest the thunder should change into a thunderbolt and reduce you to ashes... »

«So... you... are almost saying that the Galilean is that boy whom you and Hillel thought a prophet, and that the boy and the man are the Messiah... » some of them ask scoffingly, although slyly, because Gamaliel commands respect.

«I am not saying *anything*. I am saying that the roar of thunder is always the roar of thunders

«Closer or farther away? »

«Alas! The words are stronger, as befits His age. But the twenty years which have gone by have made my intellect twenty times more closed on the treasure which it possesses. And the sound penetrates more weakly... » And Gamaliel droops his head on his chest, meditating.

«Ha! Ha! Ha! You are getting old and foolish, Gamaliel! You are mistaking phantoms for realities. Ha! Ha! Ha's they all say laughing.

Gamaliel shrugs his shoulders scornfully. He gathers his mantle which was hanging from his shoulders, he wraps himself in it several times, so large it is, he turns his back on everybody, without replying one word, full of contempt in his silence.

488. At the Temple for the feast of the Tabernacles.

The secret departure for Nob after prayer.

5<sup>th</sup> September 1946.

Without worrying about other people's malevolence Jesus <sup>488. 1</sup> goes back to the Temple for the third day. But He cannot have slept in Jerusalem because His sandals are very dusty. Perhaps He spent the night on the hills around the city. And His brothers James and Judas with Joseph, the shepherd, and Solomon must

have been with Him. He meets the other apostles and disciples near the eastern wall of the Temple.

«They came, You know? Both to us and to the best known disciples. It's a good job You were not there! »

«We must always do that. »

« All right. But we shall talk about it later. Let us go. »

«Many have preceded us extolling Your miracles. How many have become convinced and believe in You! Your brothers were right, with regards to that» says John, the apostle.

«They went even to Annaleah's looking for You, You know? ». «And to Johanna's mansion. But they only found Chuza... and in a temper! He drove them away like dogs saying that in his house he does not want spies and that he has had enough of them. We were told by Jonathan, who is here with his master» says Daniel, the shepherd.

«You know? The scribes wanted to disperse those who were waiting for You, by convincing them that You are not the Christ. But they replied: "He is not the Christ? And who is He then? Will another man ever be able to work the miracles which He works? Did the others who said that they were the Christ, work them? No. One hundred, one thousand impostors may rise, perhaps created by you, saying that they are the Christ, but whoever may come will never work miracles like Him and as many as He works". And as the scribes and Pharisees maintained that You work them because You are a Beelzebub, they replied: "Oh! in that case you should work striking ones, because you are certainly Beelzebubs, compared with the Holy One» says Peter and he laughs and they all laugh remembering the witty remark of the crowd and the scandalised scribes and Pharisees, who had gone away full of indignation.

488. 2 <sup>2</sup>They are now within the Temple and are at once surrounded by a crowd which is even larger than it was the previous days. «Peace to You, Lord! Peace! Peace! » shout the Israelites.

«Hail Master! » greet the Gentiles.

«May peace and light come to you» replies Jesus in one greeting.

«We were afraid that they might have caught You, or that You were not coming out of prudence or disgust. And we would have spread out looking for You everywhere» say many.

Jesus smiles lightly and asks: «So you do not want to lose Me? »

«And if we lose You, Master, who will give us the lessons and the graces which You give us? »

«My lessons will remain in you and you will understand them better when I have gone away... And the fact that I am no longer present among men will not prevent graces from descending upon those who pray with faith. »

«Oh! Master! But do You really want to go away? Tell us where You are going and we will follow You. We are in such need of You. »

«The Master is saying so to find out whether we love Him. But where can the Rabbi of Israel go, but here in Israel? »

«I solemnly tell you that I shall remain with you for only a short time and I will go to those to whom the Father has sent Me. Afterwards you will look for Me and you will not find Me. And where I am you will not be able to come. <sup>3</sup>But now let Me go. Today I will not speak in here. I have some poor people who are waiting for Me elsewhere and they cannot come here because they are seriously ill. After the prayer I shall go to them. » And with the help of His disciples He pushes through the crowd going towards the Court of Israel. 488. 3

Those who remain look at one another.

«Where will He be going? »

«Certainly to His friend Lazarus. He is very ill. »

«I was saying: where will He go, not today, but when He leaves us for good. Did you not hear that He said that we will not be able to find Him? »

«Perhaps He will go to gather Israel together, evangelizing those of our country who are scattered among the various nations. The Diaspora hopes in the Messiah as we do. »

«Or perhaps He will go and teach the heathens to lead them to His Kingdom. »

«No. That's not possible. We would always be able to find Him even if He were in remote Asia, or in central Africa or in Rome or Gaul, Iberia, Thrace or among the Sarmatians. If He says that we would not find Him even if we looked for Him it means that He will not be in any of those places. »

«Of course! What do His words mean: "You will look for Me



and you will not find Me, and where I am you cannot come”? “I am...”. Not: “J shall he...”. So where is He? Is He not here among us? »

«I am telling you, Judas! He looks like a man but He is a spirit! »

«Certainly not! Among the disciples there are some who saw Him when He was a new-born baby. Even more! They saw His Mother pregnant with Him a few hours before He was born. »

«But is He really that child, who has now become a man? Who can assure us that He is not a different person? »

«No! He could be another person and the shepherds could be mistaken. But what about His Mother, his brothers and the whole village?! »

«Did the shepherds recognise the Mother? »

«Of course they did... »

«Well... Then, why does He say: “Where I am you will not be able to come?”. For us there is a future: you will be able. For Him it is a present: I am. So has this Man no future? »

«I don't know what to say. It is so. »

«I am telling you. He is mad. »

«Perhaps you are mad, you spy of the Sanhedrin. »

«Me spy? I am a Judaeon who admires Him. And did you say that He is going to Lazarus? »

«We have not said anything, old spy. We know nothing. And even if we knew we would not tell you. Go and tell those who sent you to look for Him themselves. You are a spy, a corrupted spy!... »

The man sees that things are taking a bad turn and he slinks away.

«But we are staying in here! If we had gone out, perhaps we would have seen Him. Run this way! Run that way!... Tell us which way He went. Tell Him not to go to Lazarus. »

Those with good legs run away... And they come back... «He is no longer here... He mingled in the crowd, and no one can say... »

The disappointed crowd slowly disperses...

488. 4 4... But Jesus is much closer than they thought. After going out through one of the gates, He went around the Antonia and came out of town through the Sheep Gate, descending into the valley of the Kidron which has very little water in the central part

of the riverbed. Jesus crosses it jumping on the stones emerging from the water and begins to climb the Mount of Olives. The olive-trees are very thick in that part and are mingled with the bushes which make this side of Jerusalem gloomy, I would say funereal, closed as it is between the dark walls of the Temple which dominates on that side with all its mountain, and the Mount of Olives on the other. Farther south the valley brightens up and widens out, whereas here it is very narrow: the scratch of a gigantic claw which has dug a deep furrow between Mount Moriah and the Mount of Olives.

Jesus is not going towards Gethsemane, He is going in the opposite direction, northwards, walking all the time on the mountain which widens out into a wild valley, where, close to a low circular range of wild hills covered with stones, flows the torrent forming a bend to the north of the town. The olive-trees are replaced there by sterile, thorny, twisted, ruffled little trees, mingled with bushes the tentacles of which spread in all directions. It is a very sad and solitary place. It gives the impression of an infernal apocalyptical place. There are a few sepulchres, and nothing else, not even lepers. And this solitude, contrasting with the crowds of the town so close and so full of people and noise, is strange indeed. With the exception of the murmur of the water among the pebbles, and the rustle of the wind among the plants which have grown in the midst of stones, no other noise is heard. There is not even the cheerful chirping of birds, which are so numerous among the olive-trees of Gethsemane and of Mount Olivet. The rather strong wind blowing from northeast, raising little vortices of dust, drives back the noise of the town, and silence, the silence of a place of death, reigns oppressively, almost frighteningly.

<sup>5</sup>«But is this the way?» Peter asks Isaac.

488. 5

«Yes, it is. One can get there also along other routes, starting from Herod's Gate and better still from the Damascus one. But it is better for you to know the less frequented paths. We have been round all the outskirts to find them and show them to you. You will thus be able to go wherever you wish, in the neighbourhood, without taking the usual ways.»

«And... can we trust those of Nob?» asks Peter again.

«As you can trust your own family. Thomas last winter, Nic-

odemus all the time, his disciple John the priest, and others have won the little village over. »

«And you did more than all the rest» says Benjamin the shepherd.

«Oh! me!! If I have done anything, then everybody has been at it. But You can be sure, Master, that You have safe places all around the town... »

«Ramah also... » says Thomas who is proud of his town. «My father and my brother-in-law thought of You with Nicodemus, »

«In that case also Emmaus» says a man who is not new to me, but I cannot say exactly who he is, also because I found more than one Emmaus in Judaea, without taking into account the place near Tarichea.

«It is too far to go and come as I do now. But I will come there sometime, without fail. »

«And to my house» says Solomon.

«I will certainly come there at least once to greet the old man. »

«There is also Bethel. »

«And Bethzur. »

«I will not go to the houses of the women disciples, but when necessary I will send for them. »

«I have a loyal friend near En-Rogel. His house is open to You.

And none of those who hate You will think that You are so close to them» says Stephen.

«The gardener of the royal gardens can give You hospitality. He is hand in glove with Manaen who got him that job... and then... You cured him one day... »

«Did I? I don't know him... »

«He was among the poor people whom You cured in Chuzza'\* house at Passover. A cut by a scythe soiled with manure was causing his leg to putrefy and his former master had dismissed him because of that. He was begging for his children. And You cured him. Then Manaen got him a job in the Gardens, in a good moment of Antipa. He now does everything Manaen tells him. And for You... » says Matthias, the shepherd.

488. 6 «I have never seen Manaen with you... » says Jesus staring

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\* in Chuzza's, in 370. 24.

at Matthias, who changes colour and becomes excited. «Come ahead with Me. »

The disciple follows Him. «Speak! »

«Lord... Manaen made a mistake... and he is suffering very much and Timoneus and a few more people with him. They cannot set their minds at rest because You... »

«They surely do not think that I hate them... »

«No! But... They are afraid of Your words and of Your face. »  
«Oh! What a mistake! Just because they made a mistake they should come to the Remedy. Do you know where they are now? »

«Yes, Master, I do. »

«Well, go to them and tell them that I will be waiting for them at Nob. »

Matthias goes away without wasting time.

The mountain path rises so that the whole of Jerusalem can be seen from the north... Jesus with His disciples turns around and goes in the opposite direction.

489. In Nob. The parable of the king who was not appreciated by his subjects. The miracle on the wind.

6<sup>th</sup> September 1946.

1It is a fairly well kept village, with houses grouped together. 489. 1  
The inhabitants are all in their houses, because a strong wind is blowing. But when the disciples go and inform them that Jesus is there, all the women, children and old people whom age had compelled to stay at home, crowd around Jesus, Who had stopped in the main little square. As the village is on an elevation, the air is clear also on a dull day, one's eyes rove towards Jerusalem to the south and towards Ramah to the north (I say Ramah because it is written on a milestone with the indication of the miles).

The people are deeply moved. It is such a new and touching situation for them to have the privilege of giving hospitality to the Lord!... An old man, a real patriarch, says so on behalf of everybody and the women nod assent.

As they are accustomed to being crushed by the pride of priests and Pharisees, they are timid... But Jesus sets them at

once at their ease by taking in His arms a little girl, who is taking her first steps, and caressing the old man, saying: «Had you not seen Me before? »

«From far away... passing by... some people at the Temple. But for us who are close to the town, it is even more difficult to have what other people coming from afar have» says the old man.

489. 2 «It is always so, father. What seems to make things easy, makes them difficult, because everybody relies on the idea that it is easy. But we shall now get to know one another. <sup>2</sup>Go home, father. The autumn winds are blowing, and they are not propitious to patriarchs. »

«Oh! I am all alone! Days no longer count for me... »

«His daughter got married far from here and his wife died at the feast of the Dedication» explains a woman.

«John, you must not say that, since you have the Rabbi with you today. You were so anxious to have Him! » a little old woman says to him.

«It's true. But... You are the Messiah, are You not? »

«Yes, father, I am. »

«Well, then, what can I desire farther, now that I have seen Him and I see fulfilled the promise made to Abraham? An old man, he was then old, sang one day in the Temple, and I was there, because on that day my Leah became purified of her only childbirth, and I was near her, and before us, a woman, little more than a girl had fulfilled the rite... an old man sang kissing the New-Born of that Girl: "Now, Lord, let your servant go in peace, because my eyes have seen the Saviour". So You were that New-Born. Oh! how blessed I am! I then prayed the Lord saying: "Let me also die after I have met Him". Now I know You. You are here. The hand of the Lord is resting on my head. His voice has spoken to me. The Eternal God has heard me. And what shall I say but the words of the old learned and just Simeon? I say them: "Let, Lord, your servant go in peace, because my eyes have known Your Christ! "»

«Do you not want to wait and see His Kingdom? » asks a woman. «No, Mary. Feasts are not for old people. And I do not believe what most people say. I remember the words of Simeon... He promised a sword in the heart of that girl because the world will

not love the Saviour completely... He said that fall and resurrection would come to many through Him... and there is Isaiah... and there is David... No. I prefer to die and await His grace in the world to come... And His Kingdom in the world to come... »

«Father, you see better than young people. My Kingdom is the Kingdom of Heaven. But My coming is not ruin for you because you know how to believe in Me. <sup>3</sup>Let us go to your house. I am staying with you» and led by the old man He goes to a little white house in a lane between kitchen gardens, which the strong wind is divesting of their leaves, and He goes in with Peter and the two sons of Alphaeus and John. 489. 3

The others spread among other houses... to come back after some time to cram the little house, the kitchen garden, the terrace on the roof, and they even climb on the dry-stone wall separating one side of the kitchen garden from the road, on a huge walnut-tree and on a robust apple-tree, heedless of the wind which is becoming stronger and stronger, raising clouds of dust. They want to hear Jesus. And Jesus hesitates for a moment, then He begins to speak standing on the threshold of the kitchen so that His voice spreads both inside and outside the house.

<sup>4</sup>«A mighty king, whose kingdom was very vast, one day wanted to go to visit his subjects. He lived in a sublime palace from which, through servants and messengers, he sent his orders and favours to his subjects, who were thus aware of his existence, of his love for them, of his intentions, but they did not know him personally, neither did they know his voice and language. Briefly, they knew that he was there and was their Lord, but nothing else. And, as is often the case because of such situation, many of his laws and providential initiatives were distorted, either through evil will or failure to understand them, so that the interests of the subjects and the desires of the king, who wanted them to be happy, suffered damage. He at times was compelled to punish them and suffered thereby more than they did. And punishments did not bring about improvements. He then said: "I will go. I will speak to them directly. I will make myself known. They will love me, they will follow me more diligently and will be happy". And he departed from his sublime abode to come among his people. 489. 4

His coming caused great surprise. The people were touched

and became excited, some with joy, some with terror, some with anger, some with distrust, some with hatred. The king without ever tiring, began to patiently approach those who loved him as well as those who feared him or hated him. He explained his law, he listened to his subjects, he assisted them and put up with them. And many ended by loving him, by no longer avoiding him because he was too great; some, only a few, stopped mistrusting and hating. They were the best. But many remained what they were as they had no goodwill. But as the king was very wise he endured also that, taking shelter in the affection of the better ones as a reward for his fatigue.

But what happened? It happened that not all the better ones understood him. He came from so far! His language was so new. His will was so different from that of his subjects! And he was not understood by everybody... Nay some grieved him, and caused him sorrow and damage, or risked doing so, as they misunderstood him. And when they realised that they had grieved and hurt him, they were distressed and ran away from his presence and they never went back to him, as they were afraid of his word.

But the king read their hearts and everyday he called them lovingly, he prayed eternal God to grant him to find them again so that he might say to them: "Why are you afraid of me? It is true. Your incomprehension has grieved me, but I saw that there is no malice in it, it is only the consequence of your inability to understand my language which differs so much from yours. What distresses me is your being afraid of me. Which means that you have not understood me only as your king, but also as your friend. Why do you not come? Do come back. What you did not understand through the joy of loving me, has become clear to you through your sorrow for grieving me. Oh! come, do come, my friends. Do not increase your ignorance by staying away from me, your darkness by hiding yourselves, your bitterness by depriving yourselves of my love. See? Both you and I are suffering by being separated. And I more than you. So come and give me joy".

That is what the king wanted to say. And that is what he says. God also speaks thus to those who sin. And the Saviour speaks thus to those who may have made a mistake. And the King of Is-

rael speaks thus to His subjects. The true King of Israel, He Who from the little kingdom of the Earth wants to take His subjects to the great Kingdom of Heaven. Those who do not follow the King, those who do not learn to understand His words and His thought cannot enter His Kingdom. But how can you learn if you avoid the Master at the first error?

Let no man lose heart if he has sinned and repented, if he has made a mistake and admits his error. Let him come to the Fountain which obliterates errors and grants light and wisdom, which burns with the desire to quench his thirst and which has come from Heaven to give itself to men. »

<sup>5</sup>Jesus is silent. Only the wind can be heard howling louder <sup>489 5</sup> and louder. On the top of the little mountain where Nob is, it rages so furiously that trees creak frighteningly.

The people are compelled to go back to their houses. But when they have dispersed and Jesus goes into the house closing the door, Matthias, followed by Manaen and Timoneus, comes out from behind the little wall and goes into the kitchen garden and knocks at the door.

Jesus Himself comes to open it. «Master, here they are!... » says Matthias pointing at the two who feeling ashamed, have remained at the edge of the kitchen garden and dare not raise their faces to look at Jesus.

«Manaen! Timoneus! My friends! » exclaims Jesus going out into the kitchen garden and closing the door to make those inside the house understand that they are not to come forth, out of curiosity. And He goes towards the two men, with arms stretched out ready to embrace them.

The two look up, touched by the love vibrating in the Master's voice, they see His face and eyes full of love, and their fear vanishes, they rush forward with a cry made hoarse by their tears: «Master! » and they fall at His feet embracing His ankles, kissing His bare feet and wetting them with tears.

«My friends! Not there. Here on My heart. I have waited for you so long! And I have understood so much! Come!... » and He tries to lift them up.

«Forgive us! Oh! forgive us!... Do not say no, Master. We have suffered so much! »

«I know. But if you had come earlier, I would have said to you



earlier: "I love you". »

«You love us? Master?! As before?! » Timoneus is the first to ask looking up inquiringly.

«More than before, because now you are cured of all humanity in your love for Me. »

«It is true! Oh! my Master! » and Manaen springs to his feet as he can resist no longer. He throws himself on Jesus' chest and Timoneus imitates him...

«See how comfortable it is to be here? Is it not better here than in a poor palace? Where could you have Me more, and more powerful, kind, rich in treasure without end, than having Me as your Saviour, Redeemer, spiritual King and loving Friend? »

«That is true! Very true! Oh! They had seduced us. And we thought we were honouring You and that their idea was a just one! »

«Think no more about it. It is passed. It belongs to the past. Let time, which flies by as fast as the whirlwind now assailing  
489. 6 us, carry it far away and disperse it forever... 6But let us go in. It is not possible to stay here... »

In fact a real hurricane swoops down on the village from the north. Branches crash to the ground, tiles fly, low walls fall from terraces with a crash. The walnut and the apple-trees twist about as if they wanted to be uprooted.

They go into the house and the four apostles are amazed looking at the disciples' faces still wet with tears in contrast with the smiles on their lips. But they do not say anything.

«I'm afraid there is going to be a disaster» says old John.

«Yes. I don't know what those living in huts will do... » says Peter.

The wind is so strong that the three flames of a lamp, lit to give light to the closed room, flicker although the doors are closed.

The noise of the wind, which is growing stronger and stronger and strikes the house with dust and grains of rubble, which sound like small hailstones, mingles with the cries of women, who can be heard closer and closer. They are frightened wives and anguished mothers: «Our husbands! Our children! They are on the way. We are frightened. The wall of a deserted house has collapsed... Lord Jesus! Mercy! »

<sup>7</sup>Jesus stands up, with some difficulty He opens the door, <sup>489-7</sup> against which the wind blows with all its violence. Some women, bent to resist the wind - a real tornado under a frightening sky - are moaning with their arms stretched out.

«Come in. Be not afraid! » says Jesus. And He looks at the sky and at the trees on the point of crashing.

«Come back in, Jesus! Do You not see how branches are breaking off and roof-tiles are falling? It is not wise to stay outside» shouts Judas of Alphaeus.

«Poor olive-trees! These are hailstones. Where they fall, it is the end of the harvest» states Peter.

Jesus does not go back in. On the contrary, He goes right, outside where the wind wrings his clothes and ruffles His hair. He stretches out His arms, prays and then orders: «That's enough! I want it! » and He goes back into the house.

The wind howls for the last time then suddenly drops. The silence after so much noise is impressive. It is such that amazed faces look out from houses. The signs of the tornado are there: leaves, broken branches, shreds of curtains. But everything is quiet. The vault of heaven replies to the Earth, which is no longer upset, by dissipating the clouds, which from dark become clear and spread out without causing any harm, pouring a drizzle which purifies the air of so much dust.

«What happened? »

«How did it stop like that? »

«It looked like the end of the world and now it is clearing up? »  
Voices ask from house to house.

The women who had rushed towards Jesus, come out hurriedly-

«The Lord! The Lord is with us! He worked the miracle! He stopped the wind! He dispersed the clouds! Hosanna! Hosanna! Praise to the Son of David. Peace! Blessings! Christ is with us! The Blessed One is with us! The Holy One! The Holy One! The Holy One! The Messiah is with us! Hallelujah! »

The village pours out all its usual inhabitants and the occasional ones, that is, the apostles and disciples, who all rush to the little house where Jesus is staying. Everybody wants to kiss, touch and exalt Him.

«Praise the Most High Lord. He is the Master of winds and

waters. If He listened to His Son, He did so to reward the faith and love you had for Him. »

And He would like to dismiss them. But who can calm a village wild with joy and excited because of an obvious miracle? Particularly if the village is full of women? Jesus' efforts are useless. He smiles patiently while the old man who gave Him hospitality washes His left hand with tears and kisses it.

489. 8 <sup>8</sup>Here are the first men who have come back from Jerusalem: they are panting and frightened. They are afraid of I do not know what misfortune. They see the people rejoicing. «What is the matter? What happened? But did you not have a storm here? From the mountain we could see the town disappear under clouds of dust. We thought it had collapsed. Instead everything is in order here! »

«The Lord! The Lord! He came in time to save us from ruin. Only the cursed house has collapsed, some tiles and a few branches. And what about you? What happened in Jerusalem? »

Questions and answers are exchanged. But the men elbow their way towards the Saviour to venerate Him. Only later they explain that everybody in town was afraid because of the impending storm and people ran away from the huts into houses and the owners of olive-groves were already grieving for the loss of the harvest... when the wind suddenly dropped, the sky cleared up... with little rain... and the whole town was amazed. And as imagination becomes immediately lively in certain cases, men relate that while people were running away, many who had been in the Temple on the previous days, seeing that the hill of Moriah was hit the most by the gusts, so much so that the benches of the moneychangers had been turned over and the house of the Pontiff had been damaged, said that it was a punishment from God for the insults to His Messiah. And so on... The more people arrive, the more the story is embellished. It almost becomes more apocalyptic than the recount of Good Friday...

490. In the camp of the Galileans with  
His cousin apostles. Doubts on the Iscariot.  
Conversion of the Levite Zaccharias.

10<sup>th</sup> September 1946.

<sup>1</sup>Judas and James, come with Me. »

490 1.

The two sons of Alphaeus do not need to be told twice. They get up at once and go out with Jesus from a little house in a suburb to the south of Jerusalem, where they have been given hospitality today.

«Where are we going, Jesus?» asks James.

«To greet the Galileans on the Mount of Olives. »

They walk for some time towards Jerusalem, then they pass close to some little hills with houses among the greenery, obviously manor-houses, they cross the road to Bethany and Jericho, the southern one ending at Tophet and Siloam, they go around another hill which is a ramification of the Mount of Olives, they cross the other road which goes directly to Bethany from the Mount of Olives and along a little path among the olive-trees they climb to the camp of the Galileans. Many tents have already been dismantled, and in remembrance of the crowding, there remain withered branches thrown on the ground, the remains of fires which have scorched the grass, ashes, brands, litter, as always happens where there has been a camp. The cold and precociously wet season has speeded up the departure of pilgrims. Caravans of women and children are departing even now. Men, particularly those still strong, have stayed to terminate the feast.

<sup>2</sup>The Galileans who believe in the Lord must have been warned <sup>490 2</sup> by some disciple perhaps, because I see them all and from every village known to me. Nazareth with the two disciples, Alphaeus, whom Jesus forgave after his mother's death, and a few more. But I do not see Simon or Joseph of Alphaeus. But, as compensation there are others, among whom the head of the synagogue, who is visibly embarrassed in greeting Jesus with deference after thwarting Him so much. But he helps himself out of the difficult situation by saying that Jesus' relatives are staying with «that friend You know», because of the children who suffered from the wind at night. And Cana is present with Susanna's husband, her father and other people, and also Nain is present with

the man brought back to life and others, and Bethlehem of Galilee with many citizens and the western lake-towns with their inhabitants...

«Peace to you! Peace to you! » greets Jesus passing among them, caressing the children still present, His little friends from Galilean places, listening to Jairus who tells Him that he is sorry he was absent the last time.

Jesus asks whether the widow from Aphek has settled at Capernaum and has taken in the orphan from Giscala. «I do not know, Master. Perhaps I had already left... » says Jairus.

«Yes. A woman has come and she gives lots of honey and caresses to children. And she bakes cakes for us. And the children who used to come to You, always go to her house to eat. And the last time she showed us a tiny little baby. She bought two goats to have milk. And she told us that the baby is the son of Heaven and of the Lord. And she did not come to the feast, as she would have liked to do, because she could not travel with such a little baby. And she asked us to tell You that she will love him with justice and that she blesses You. »

The children of Capernaum twitter like little sparrows around Jesus and they are proud that they know what not even the head of the synagogue knows, and that they have to act as ambassadors to the good Master, Who listens to them with the same attention as He would listen to adults, and Who replies: «And you will tell her that I bless her as well and that she is to love children for My sake. And you must love her and not take advantage of the fact that she is good, do not love her only because she gives you honey and cakes, but because she is good. She is so good and kind that she has understood that those who love children in My name make Me happy. And you are to imitate her, all of you, both you children and you adults, always bearing in mind that he who receives a child in My name, has his place allotted in Heaven. Because mercy is always rewarded, even if it is only a cup of water given in My name, but mercy on behalf of children, saving them not only from hunger, thirst and cold, but from the corruption of the world, receives an infinite reward...

490. 3 I have come to bless you before you depart. You will take My blessing to your women, to your homes... »

«But are You not coming back to us, Master? »

«I shall come back... But not now. After Passover... »

«Oh! If You are going to stay away for such a long time, You will forget about the promise... »

«Be not afraid. The sun may stop shining before Jesus forgets those who hope in Him. » «It will be a long time!... » «And sad! »

«If we are taken ill... »

«If we have trouble... »

«If death should descend upon our houses... »

«Who will help us? » say several people from different places.

«God will. He is with you if you remain in Me with your will. »

«And what about us? We have believed in You only for a short time. We admit it. So will we have no comfort? And yet now, after seeing You work miracles and hearing You speak in the Temple, oh! we believe You... »

«And it is a great joy to Me, because it is My greatest desire that My fellow citizens should be on the way of Salvation. »

«Do You love us so much? But for a long time we have offended and ridiculed You!... »

«That is in the past. It is no longer so. Be faithful in the future and I solemnly tell you that your past is cancelled both on the Earth and in Heaven. »

«Are You staying with us? We shall share our bread as we did many times at Nazareth, when we were all equal and on Sabbaths we rested in the olive-groves, or when You were just Jesus and You used to come with us and like us to Jerusalem for feasts... » There is regret and desire for past times in the voices of the Nazarenes who now believe in Jesus.

«I wanted to go to Joseph and Simon. But I will go later. You are all My brothers in God, and spirit and faith are of greater value to Me than flesh and blood, because the latter perish whilst the former are immortal. »

<sup>4</sup>And while some get busy preparing fires to roast the meat, using bits of olive branches to cook the food, the more elderly people and those of higher rank, from every place in Galilee, gather around Jesus asking Him why that morning and the previous day He was not at the Temple, and whether He would be going the following day, which was the last one of the feast. 490. 4

«I was not there... But I will certainly be there tomorrows

«And will You speak? »

«Yes, if I can... »

Alphaeus of Sarah, looking about himself, whispers in a low voice to Jesus: «Your brothers have gone to secure assistance for You in town... That fellow is aware of many things because he is a relative of one of the Temple through the relationship of some women... Joseph is worried about You, You know? After all... he is good. »

«I know. And he will become better and better when he is spiritually good. »

More Galileans arrive from town. The number of those around Jesus increases, to the regret of the children who are pushed back by the adults and cannot make their way towards Jesus until He sees the innocent sulky group and He says smiling: «Let the little children come to Me. »

Then while the circle breaks up, once again as happy as a flight of birds, they run towards Jesus, Who caresses them and goes on speaking to the adults. And His long hand, which is still brown after so much exposure to the sun in summer, passes again and again on the little dark and brown heads, with an occasional golden one among so many dark ones, all pressing against Him as much as they can, hiding their faces among His clothes, under His mantle, embracing His knees and sides, eager for His caresses, utterly happy when they receive them.

490. 5 <sup>5</sup>They eat sitting in a circle after Jesus has blessed the food and handed it out, in a serene friendly union of hearts. The others, who are not Jesus' followers, look from afar, derisively and incredulously. But no one minds them...

The meal is over. Jesus is the first to get up and He calls Jairus, Alphaeus, Daniel of Nain, Elias of Korozim, Samuel (the cripple, I do not know from where), then a certain Uriah, one of the many Johns, one of the many Simons, a Levi, an Isaac, Abel of Bethlehem etc., in brief, one from each village, and with the help of His cousins He divides into equal parts the money of two very full purses and He gives one part to each man He called for the poor of each village.

Then, when He is penniless, He blesses everybody and takes His leave. He would like to depart from them heading for Gethsemane, to enter the town by the Sheep Gate. But almost everyone follows Him, children in particular, who hold on to His tu-

nic and the hem of His mantle, and certainly annoy Him, but He does not stop them...

<sup>6</sup>And the little boy of Magdala, Benjamin, who one day very clearly said\* what he thought of Judas of Kerioth, plucks His tunic until Jesus bends to listen to him in particular. <sup>490.6</sup>

«Have You still got that bad man with You?»

«Which bad man? There are none with Me...» says Jesus to him smiling.

«Of course there are! That tall dark man who laughed... You know, the one whom I told that he was handsome outside and ugly inside... he is bad.»

«He is talking of Judas» says Thaddeus who is behind Jesus and has heard.

«I know» replies Jesus turning around, and then He says to the child: «Of course that man is still with Me. He is one of My apostles. But now he is very good... Why are you shaking your head? You must not have a bad opinion of your neighbour, particularly of people you do not know.»

The boy lowers his head and becomes silent.

«Are you not replying to Me?»

«You do not want me to tell lies... and I promised You not to tell any and I kept my promise. But now if I say to You that I think that he is good, I would say something which is not true, because I think that he is bad. I can keep my mouth closed to please You, but I cannot close my mind not to think.»

His remark is so impetuous and logical in its simplicity, although childish, that all those who hear him cannot help laughing. Everyone, except Jesus, Who sighs and says: «Well, you must do one thing. If he really seems bad to you, you must pray that he may become good. You must be his angel. Will you do that? I will be happier if he becomes good. So if you pray for that, you will pray that I may be happy.»

«I will. But if he is bad and does not become kind to You, my prayer will be of no avail.»

<sup>7</sup>Jesus puts an end to the argument by stopping and bending to kiss the children. He then orders everybody to go back... <sup>490.7</sup>

When they are alone, Jesus and His two cousins, Judas of AI-

\* said, in 184.7.



phaeus, after a short silence, as if he had been so far thinking about it, says concluding: «He is right! He is quite right! I also am of his opinion. »

«But who are you speaking of? » asks his brother James, who, engrossed in thought, was walking a little ahead of him on a narrow path which allows one person to pass at a time.

«I am speaking of Benjamin. And of what he said. And... but You will not hear of it, and I tell You that Judas is... He is not a true apostle... He is not sincere, he does not love You, he does not... » «Judas! Judas! Why grieve Me? »

«My dear Brother, because I love You. And I am afraid of the Iscariot, I'm more afraid of him than of a snake... »

«You are unfair. If it had not been for him, perhaps I would have been captured by now. »

«Jesus is right. Judas has done very much. He has profusely drawn hatred and derision upon himself, and has worked and still works for Jesus» says James.

«I cannot believe that you are a fool or a liar... And I wonder why you support Judas. I am not speaking out of jealousy or out of hatred. I am speaking because I feel that he is bad, that he is not sincere... All I can admit, for Your sake, is that he is mad. A poor madman raving one way today, and a different way tomorrow. But he is definitely not good. Don't trust him, Jesus! Don't!... None of us is good. But look at us carefully. Our eyes are limpid. Watch us diligently. Our behaviour is constant. Does it not mean anything to You that the Pharisees do not make him pay for mocking them? That those of the Temple do not react to his words? That he always has friends among those whom he apparently offends? That he always has plenty of money? I am not speaking about us two, but even Nathanael, who is rich, even Thomas, who does not lack means, have only what is necessary. He... Oh!... »

Jesus is silent.

James says: «My brother is partly right. It is a fact that Judas always finds the way to be alone, to go by himself... to... But I do not want to grumble or judge. You know... »

«Yes. I know. And that is why I say that I do not want you to pass judgement. When you are in the world replacing Me, you will find people who are stranger than Judas. What kind of apos-

ties would you be, if you should eliminate them because they are strange? Nay, just because they are strange, you will have to love them patiently to make them lambs of the Lord. <sup>8</sup>Let us go to Joseph and Simon now. You heard the news, did you not? They are working secretly on My behalf. Family love, you may say. True. But still love. You did not part friends the last time. Make it up now. Both you and they are right and wrong. Let everyone acknowledge ~~his~~ fault, let no one raise his voice to assert his rights. »

«He offended me seriously by offending You very seriously» says James.

«You are very much like My father Joseph. And your brother Joseph is like your father Alphaeus. Well: Joseph was often criticised by his elder brother, but he bore with him and always forgave him. Because My father was a great just man! Be the same yourself. »

«And if he should reproach me as if I were still a little child? You know that when he is upset he will not listen to reason... »

«In that case be silent. It is the only remedy to appease one's anger. Be humbly and patiently silent, and if you feel that you can no longer be silent without being rude, go away. To be able to be quiet! To be able to run away! Not out of cowardice, or lack of words, but out of virtue, out of prudence, charity, humbleness. It is so difficult to keep justice in debates! And the peace of the spirit. Something always descends into the depth of one's heart distorting, confounding, making an uproar. And the image of God reflected in every good spirit is obscured, it vanishes and its words can no longer be heard. Peace! Peace among brothers. Peace also with enemies. If they are our enemies, they are Satan's friends. But shall we also become Satan's friends by hating those who hate us? How can we lead them to love if we are out of love ourselves? You may say to Me: "Jesus, You have already said so many a time and that is what You do, but they always hate You". I will always say so. When I am no longer with you, I will inspire it into you from Heaven. And I also tell you not to count defeats, but victories. Let us praise the Lord for them! No month goes by without some conquest being made. That is what the workman of the Lord must take notice of, rejoicing in the Lord, without the anger of worldly people when they lose one of their poor victories. If you do so... »

9«Peace to You, Master. Do You not recognise Me? » says a young man who from town was going up towards Gethsemane.

«You?.. You are the levite who was with us\* last year together with the priest. »

«It is I. How did You recognise me, since You see a whole world around You? »

«I do not forget the distinctive features of faces and spirits. »  
«Which is the feature of my spirit? »

«A good one. But unsatisfied. You are tired of what surrounds you. Your spirit tends to better things. You feel that they exist. You realise that it is time to make up your mind for an eternal Good. You are aware that beyond darkness there is a Sun, the Light. You want the Light. »

The young man throws himself on his knees: «Master, You have said it! It is true. That is what I have in my heart. And I could not make up my mind. Jonathan, the old priest, believed, then he died. He was old. But I am young. I heard You speak in the Temple... Do not reject me, Lord, because not everybody there hates You and I am one of those who love You. Tell me what I must do, considering that I am levite... »

«Do your duty until the new times. Meditate, because by coming to Me you will not be going towards earthly glory, but towards sorrow. If you persevere, you will receive glory in Heaven. Study My doctrine. Be firm in it... »

«How? »

«Heaven itself will confirm you with its signs. My disciples will help you to be confirmed again and to have a deeper and deeper knowledge of what I taught and to practise it. Do that and you will achieve eternal life. »

«I will, Lord. But... can I still serve in the Temple? » «I told you: until the new times. »

«Bless me, Master. It will be my new consecration. »

Jesus blesses and kisses him. They part.

490. 10 10«See? Such is the life of the workers of the Lord. A year ago the seed fell into that heart. But it did not appear to be a victory, because he did not come to us at once. But here he comes now, after a year, to corroborate the words I spoke a little while ago. A

\* who was with us, in 281. 11 and 281. 14/16.

victory. And does that not make the day a beautiful one for us? »

«You are always right, Jesus... But beware of Judas! It is silly of me to tell You. I know. You are aware... But I have this torment in my heart... I am not telling the others, but it's there... and I am sure that the others have it as well. »

Jesus does not reply. He says: «I am glad that Joseph and Nicodemus gave Me that money. I can now send some assistance to My poor people in Galilee... »

They have arrived at the Gate and they go in mingling with the crowd.

491. At the Temple on the last day of the feast  
of the Tabernacles. Sermon on the living Water.

13<sup>th</sup> September 1946.

The temple is really crowded with people. But there are not many women and children. The persistence of a windy season with heavy though short showers must have dissuaded women from setting out with children. But men from all over Palestine and proselytes from the Diaspora are literally crowding the Temple for the last prayers and offerings and to listen to the last lessons of the scribes. 491. 1

The Galilean followers of Jesus are all there, with the most important chiefs in the first row, and Joseph of Alphaeus, highly conscious of his position as a relative, is in the middle of the group with his brother Simon. Another thick group which is waiting is that of the seventy two disciples, I mean the disciples chosen by Jesus to evangelize, a group which has changed in number and faces, because some of the older ones are no longer in it, after the defection following the sermon\* on the Bread of Heaven, whilst new ones, such as Nicolaus of Antioch have joined it. A third group which is also compact and numerous is that of the Judaeans, among whom I see the archsynagogues of Emmaus, Hebron and Kerioth; from Juttah there is Sarah's husband and from Bethzur Eliza's relatives.

They are near the Beautiful Gate and they clearly intend to

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\* defection following the sermon, both in chapter 354.

surround the Master as soon as He appears. In fact Jesus cannot take one step inside the walls without being pressed around by these three groups which almost isolate Him from evil-minded people and even from people who are simply curious.

Jesus heads towards the Court of Israel to pray there, and the others follow Him compactly, as far as the over-crowding allows them, deaf to the discontent of those who have to move aside and make room for the large number of people around Jesus. He is between His brothers. And the glances of Joseph of Alphaeus, who looks meaningfully at some Pharisees, are not so kind as Jesus' neither is his bearing so humble...

They pray and then go back to the Court of the Gentiles. Jesus sits humbly on the floor with His back to the wall of the porch and with a semicircle, which is becoming thicker and thicker with people, drawing up behind the rows closer to Him, sitting down or thronging together standing up: a multitude of faces and glances converging on one Face only. The curious and evil-minded people and those who have come from afar and are unacquainted with the Master are beyond the barrier of believers and they strive to see stretching their necks, standing on the tips of their toes.

Jesus in the meantime listens to this one and that one asking Him for advice or relating information. Eliza's relatives speak of her, asking whether she may come to serve the Master. And He replies: «I am not staying here. She will come later. » And the relative of Mary of Simon, the mother of Judas of Kenoth, says that he remained to look after the farm, whereas Mary is almost always with Johanna's mother. Judas opens his eyes wide in amazement but does not speak. And Sarah's husband says that he will soon have another son and asks what name he should give it. Jesus replies: «John, if it is a boy, Anne if a girl. » And the old archsynagogue of Emmaus whispers a case of conscience and Jesus replies in a low voice. And so on.

491.2 <sup>2</sup>In the meantime the crowd grows larger and larger. Jesus raises His head and looks around. As the porch is a few steps higher than the floor of the court, although He is sitting, He commands a large part of the court, on that side and can thus see many faces.

He stands up and in loud voice, at the top of His well tuned

strong voice, He says: «Let those who are thirsty come to Me and drink! Rivers of living water will spring from the bosoms of those who believe in Me. »

His voice fills the wide court, the splendid arcades, it is certainly heard beyond those on this side and spreads elsewhere, it overwhelms every other voice, like a harmonious thunder full of promises. He speaks and then is silent for a moment, as if He wanted to enunciate the theme of His speech and then give time to those not interested in listening to Him, to go away without disturbing later. The scribes and doctors become silent, that is, they lower their voices to a murmur, which is certainly malevolent. I do not see Gamaliel.

Jesus moves forward, through the semicircle which opens out as He approaches it, and then closes up behind Him changing from a semicircle to a ring. He walks slowly, majestically. He seems to be gliding on the polychrome marbles of the floor: with His mantle slightly loose forming a kind of train behind Him. He goes to the corner of the porch, on the step overlooking the court, and stops there. He thus commands two sides of the first enclosure. He raises His right arm in the gesture customary to Him when He begins to speak, while with His left hand on His chest He holds His mantle.

He repeats His initial words:

«Let those who are thirsty come to Me and drink! Rivers of living water will spring from the bosoms of those who believe in Me!

<sup>3</sup>He who saw the theophany\* of the Lord, the great Ezekiel, a priest and prophet, after he had prophetically seen the impure acts in the desecrated house of the Lord, and after he had seen, once again in a prophetic way, that only those marked with the Tau will be living in the true Jerusalem, whilst the others will know more than one slaughter, more than one condemnation more than one punishment - and the time is close at hand, O you who are listening to Me, It is close at hand, closer than you may think, so that I, as Master and Saviour, exhort you not to delay farther to mark yourselves with the Sign that saves, not to delay farther to put the Light and Wisdom into yourselves, not to delay

\* the theophany and subsequent quotations refer to: *Ezekiel 1; 8-10; 37, 1-14; 47, 1-19.*

farther to repent and weep, on your own and other people's behalf, so that you may save yourselves - Ezekiel, after seeing all that and even more, speaks of a terrible vision. That of the dry bones.

The day will come when on a dead world, under a dark vault of heaven, bones and bones of dead people will appear at the angelical blare. Like a womb that opens to give birth, the Earth will eject from its bowels every bone of man who died on it and is buried in its mud, from Adam down to the last man. And then it will be the resurrection of the dead for the great supreme judgement after which, like an apple of Sodom, the world will become empty, turning into nullity and the vault of heaven with its stars will come to an end. Everything will come to an end, with the exception of two things which are eternal, remote, at the extremes of two abysses of immeasurable depth, in complete antithesis with regards to form, aspect and way in which the power of God will continue forever in them: Paradise: light, joy, peace, love; Hell: darkness, sorrow, horror, hatred.

491. 4 <sup>4</sup>But do you think that the immense field of the Earth is not covered with lifeless, very dry, inert, separated, dead bones, simply because the world is not yet dead and the angelical trumpets are not sounding to gather the dead? I solemnly tell you that it is so. Among the living, because they still breathe, there are numberless people who are like corpses: like the dry bones seen by Ezekiel. Who are they? Those who do not possess the life of the spirit.

Such people are in Israel, and all over the world. And it is natural that among Gentiles and idolaters there are but dead people awaiting to be vitalised by the Life, and it grieves only those who possess true Wisdom, because It makes them understand that the Eternal Father created human creatures for Himself and not for Idolatry and He grieves at seeing so many dead. But if the Most High has such sorrow, and it is great indeed, what will His sorrow be like for those of His People who are white, lifeless, spiritless bones?

Why should those chosen, beloved, protected, nourished, taught by Him directly or by His servants and prophets be culpably dry bones, as He always trickled a fine stream of vital water from Heaven for them and nourished them with the water of

Life and Truth? Why did they dry up, considering that they were planted in the Land of the Lord? Why did their spirits die when the Eternal Spirit put a full sapiential treasure at their disposal, that they might draw from it and live? Who, and by which prodigy, will be able to come back to Life, if they left the springs, the pastures, the lights granted by God and are groping in darkness, are drinking at impure sources and are feeding on unholy food?

50 will they never become alive again? Yes, they will. I swear to it in the name of the Most High. Many will rise again. God has the miracle ready, nay, it is already active, it has already been worked on some, and arid bones have been re clothed with life because the Most High, Who is forbidden nothing, has kept and keeps His promise and completes it more and more. From the height of Heaven He shouts to these bones awaiting Life: "Now, I shall infuse the spirit into you and you shall live". And He took His Spirit, He took Himself, and He formed flesh to clothe His Word, and He sent Him to these dead people, so that by speaking to them, Life should be infused into them once again.

How many times Israel has shouted throughout ages: "Our bones are dried up, our hope is dead, we are separated! ". But every promise is sacred, every prophecy is true. Now, the time has come when the Messenger of God opens tombs to draw the dead out and vivify them and lead them to the true Israel, to the Kingdom of the Lord, to the Kingdom of your Father and Mine.

<sup>51</sup> I am Resurrection and Life! I am the Light which came to enlighten those lying in darkness! I am the Fountain which spurts eternal Life. 491. 5

Those who come to Me will not know Death. Let those who thirst after Life come to Me and drink. Let those who want to possess Life, that is, God, believe in Me and rivers of living water, not drops, will flow from their bosoms. Because those who believe in Me will form with Me the new Temple from which the wholesome water, of which Ezekiel speaks, flows.

Come to Me, peoples! Come to Me, creatures! Come and form one only Temple, because I do not reject anybody, but out of love, I want you with Me, in My work, in My merits, in My glory.

"And I saw the waters flow from under the door of the house eastwards... And the waters flowed from under the right side, south of the altar".



The believers in the Messiah of the Lord, in the Christ, in the New Law, in the Doctrine of the time of Salvation and Peace, are that Temple. As the walls of this Temple are built with stones, so the mystical walls are formed with living spirits and it will live forever and will rise from the Earth to Heaven, like its Founder, after the struggle and the test.

That altar from which the water spouts, that altar facing east is I. And My waters spring from the right hand side, because that side is the place for those elected to the Kingdom of God. They spring from Me to flow into those I have elected, to enrich them with the vital waters, that they may bear them and spread them to the north, south, east and west, to give Life to the Earth in its people who are waiting for the hour of Light, the hour that will come, will definitely come for every place before the Earth ceases being.

My waters spring and spread out mingled with those which I personally gave and will give to My followers, and although they are spread out to better the Earth, they will be united in only one river of Grace, which will become deeper and deeper, wider and wider, growing day by day, step by step, with the waters of the new followers, until it becomes like a sea that will wash every place to sanctify the whole Earth.

491.6 <sup>6</sup>God wants that and does that. A deluge\* washed the world killing sinners. A new deluge, of a different liquid from rain, will wash the world giving Life. And through a mysterious act of grace, men will be able to take part in that sanctifying deluge, by joining their wills to Mine, their fatigue to Mine, their sufferings to Mine.. And the world will become acquainted with the Truth and Life. And those who want to participate in it, will be able to do so. And only those who do not want to be nourished with the waters of Life will become a marshy pestiferous place, or will remain such, and will not know the rich harvest of the fruits of grace, wisdom, health, with which those living in Me will be acquainted.

I solemnly tell you once again that those who are thirsty and come to Me, will drink and will never be thirsty again, because My Grace will open springs and rivers of living water in them.

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\* deluge, as narrated in *Genesis* from 6, 5 to 9, 17.

And those who do not believe in Me will perish like a saline where life cannot exist.

I solemnly tell you that the Fountain will not cease after Me, because I shall not die, but I will live, and after I have gone, gone but not dead, to open the Gates of Heaven, Another will come, Who is like Me, and will complete My work making you understand what I told you and setting you on fire to make you “lights”, because you received the Light. »

Jesus is silent.

<sup>7</sup>The crowd, so far silent, held spellbound by the speech, now <sup>4917</sup> whispers making different comments.

Some say: «What words! He is a real prophet! »

Some say: «He is the Christ. I am telling you. Not even John spoke like that. And no prophet is so strong. »

«And He makes us understand the prophets, even Ezekiel, whose symbols are so obscure. »

«Did you hear that? The waters! The altar! It is evident! »

«And the dry bones?! Did you see how the scribes, Pharisees and priests became upset? They understood the psalm! »

«Of course! And they sent the guards, who... forgot to capture Him and remained like children to whom angels appear. Look at them over there! They seem to be dumbfounded. »

«Look! Look! An official is calling them and reproaching them. Let us go and hear him! »

Meanwhile Jesus is curing some sick people who have been brought to Him and does not pay attention to anything else until He is reached by a group of priests and Pharisees, elbowing their way through the crowd, led by a man about thirty or thirty five years old, whom everybody shuns so fearfully that they seem to be terrified.

«Are You still here? Go away! In the name of the High Priest! »

Jesus straightens up - He was bent over a paralytic - and looks at them calmly and mildly. He then bends again to impose His hands on the invalid.

«Go away! Have You understood? You seducer of crowds. Or we will have You arrested. »

«Go and praise the Lord living holily» says Jesus to the invalid who stands up cured and that is His only reply, while those threatening Him spit venom and the crowds warn them with

their hosannas not to harm Jesus.

But if Jesus is meek, Joseph of Alphaeus is not and straightening up and throwing his head back to look taller, he shouts: «Eleazar, since you and the like of you would like to overthrow the sceptre of the chosen Son of God and David, you had better know that you are cutting down every tree, beginning with your own, of which you are so proud. Because your wickedness agitates the sword of the Lord over your head! » and he would go on speaking, but Jesus lays His hand on his shoulder saying: «Peace, peace, My brother! » and Joseph, purple with anger, becomes silent.

491. 8 <sup>8</sup>They go towards the exit. And when they are outside the enclosure Jesus is informed that the chiefs of the priests and the Pharisees had reproached the guards for not arresting Him and that they had justified themselves saying that no one had ever spoken like Jesus and that the chiefs of the priests and the Pharisees, among whom there were many members of the Sanhedrin, had been driven wild by their reply. So much so that, to prove to the guards that only stupid people could be allured by a madman, they wanted to come and arrest Him under the charge of blasphemy, also to teach the crowds to understand the truth. But Nicodemus, who was present, opposed their decision saying: «You cannot proceed against Him. Our Law prohibits us from condemning a man before hearing him and seeing what he does. And in His case we have only heard and seen things which are not condemnable. » And that caused Jesus' enemies to disburden their wrath upon Nicodemus by means of threats, insults and mockery, as if he were a fool and a sinner. And Eleazar ben Ananias had gone personally with the most furious ones to drive Jesus out, as he did not dare to do anything else, owing to the feelings of the crowds.

Joseph of Alphaeus is furious. Jesus looks at him and says: «See, brother? » He does not say anything else... but those words mean so much! They are a warning that He is right whether He speaks or is silent, they are a reminder of His words, they are an indication of what the most important castes in Judaea are, of what the Temple is and so forth.

Joseph lowers his head and says: «You are right... » He becomes silent and thoughtful, then, all of a sudden, he throws his arms around Jesus' shoulders and weeps on His chest saying:

«My poor Brother! Poor Mary! Poor Mother! » I think that Joseph realised just then, and very clearly, what was Jesus' destiny...

«Don't weep! Do, as I do, the will of our Father! » says Jesus comforting him and kissing him at the same time to console him.

<sup>9</sup>When Joseph has calmed down a little, they set out towards the house where Jesus is given hospitality and they kiss each other goodbye. Joseph is deeply moved and his last words are: «Go in peace, Jesus! Don't worry about anything. I repeat to You what I told You near Nazareth, and I repeat it even more firmly. Go in peace. Take care of Your work only. I will see to the rest. Go and may God comfort You. » And he kisses Him again with paternal attitude, caressing His head, as if he were giving the blessing of the head of the family. 491. 9

Then Joseph says goodbye to his brothers. He greets Simon as well. But I notice that James, I do not know why, is rather stiff with Joseph, and vice versa. Instead with Simon there is more tenderness. Joseph's last question to James is: «So, have I to say that I lost you? »

«No, brother. You must say that you know where I am and therefore it is up to you to find me. Without ill-feeling. On the contrary, with many prayers for you. But in spiritual matters one must not take two paths at the same time. You know what I mean... »

«You can see that I defend Him... »

«You defend the man and the relative. That is not enough to give you the rivers of Grace of which He was speaking. Defend the Son of God, without any fear of the world, without considering advantages, and you will be perfect. Goodbye. Look after our mother and Mary of Joseph... »

Jesus -1 do not know whether He has heard them, as He was intent on greeting the other Nazarenes and Galileans. when the greetings are over says: «Let us go to the Mount of Olives. Then from there we shall go to some other place... »

14<sup>th</sup> September 1946.

492. 1 *✓* A sadder and sadder but always pleasant house in Bethany...

The presence of friends and disciples does not remove the sadness of the house. There is Joseph with Nicodemus, Manaen, Ehza and Anastasica; as far as I can understand, the two women could not put up with being far from Jesus and they apologise as if they had disobeyed, although they are quite decided not to go away. And Eliza explains her good reasons which are: the impossibility for Lazarus' sisters to follow the Master and take womanly care of Him and of the apostles, as is necessary with a group of men alone and, furthermore, persecuted.

«We are the only ones who can do that. Because Martha and Mary cannot leave their brother. Johanna is not here. Annaleah is too young to come with us. It is better for Nike to stay where she is, so that she may receive You there. My white hair will prevent disparagement. I shall precede You wherever You go, or I shall stay where You tell me, and You will always have a mother near You, and I shall feel as if I still had a son. I will do what You want, but allow me to serve You. »

Jesus agrees when He hears that they all think that it is the right thing to do. Perhaps, in the deep bitterness of His heart, He wishes to have a motherly heart close at hand, to find in it reflections of His Mother's kindness...

Eliza is triumphant in her joy.

Jesus says: «I shall often be at Nob. You will stay in the house of old John. He told Me that I can stay there when I stop at Nob. I shall find you there every time we come back... »

492. 2 *2*«Are You thinking of going away in spite of the wet weather? » asks Joseph of Arimathea.

«Yes, I am. I want to go towards Perea, stopping in Solomon's house. Then I will go towards Jericho and Samaria. Oh! I would like to go to many more places... »

«Master, don't go too far away from roads and towns garrisoned by a centurion. They are undecided. And the others are undecided as well. Two fears. Two surveillances. Concerning You. And in turn. But You may be sure that, as far as You are concerned, the Romans are less dangerous... »

«They have abandoned us!... » remarks Judas of Kerioth bluntly.

«Do you think so? No. Among those Gentiles who listen to the Master can you perhaps see those sent by Claudia or by Pontius? Among the freedmen of the former and of her lady friends there are many who could speak in the Bel Nidras, if they were Israelites. Don't forget that there are learned people everywhere, that Rome enslaves the world, that her patricians love to take the best booty to adorn their houses. If gymnasiarchs and circus managers choose what can give them profit and glory, patricians select those whose learning or beauty may adorn and gratify their houses and themselves... <sup>3</sup>Master, this subject reminds me of something... May I ask You a question? » 492. 3

« Speak up. »

«That woman, that Greek woman, who was here last year... and was a charge against You, where is she? Many have tried to find out... not for a good purpose. But I have no evil wish... Only... I don't think it is possible that she has gone back to the wrong doctrine. She was gifted with a great intelligence and sincere justice. But she is no longer about... »

«In a part of the Earth, she, a heathen woman, has been able to practise for a persecuted Israelite the charity which Israelites did not have. »

«Are You referring to John of Endor? Is he with her? »

«He is dead. »

«Dead? »

«Yes, and they could have let him die near Me... There was not a long time to wait... Those, and they are many, who worked to have him sent away, committed murder, as if they had raised their hands armed with knives against him. They broke his heart. And although they know that that is why he died, they do not consider themselves homicides. They do not feel remorse for being so. *Brothers can be killed in many ways. With weapons and with words or with some wicked deed,* such as informing a persecutor of the place where the persecuted person is, or depriving a poor wretch of his refuge of comfort... Oh! in how many ways one can kill... But man does not feel remorse for that. *Man, and that is the sign of his spiritual decline, has killed remorse*

Jesus is so severe in speaking those words, that no one has the courage to speak. They look at one another stealthily, with lowered heads, and even the best and most innocent ones are embarrassed.

After a moment's silence Jesus says: «No one need inform the enemies of the dead man and Mine of what I said, to give them a satanic joy. But should anyone question you, you may reply that John is at peace, with his body in a far away sepulchre and his soul in expectation of Me. »

«Did that grieve You much, Lord? » asks Nicodemus.

«What? His death? »

«Yes. »

«No, it did not. His death gave Me peace because it was his peace. I was grieved, deeply grieved by those who through low feelings informed the Sanhedrin of his presence among the disciples and brought about his departure. But every man has his systems and only a great goodwill can change instincts and systems. But I say: "He who denounced, will denounce again. He who brought about death, will bring about death again". But woe to him. He thinks he is winning whereas he is losing. And the judgement of God is awaiting him. »

«Why are You looking at me thus, Master? » asks John of Zebedee, becoming uneasy and blushing, as if he were guilty.

«Because if I look at you, nobody, not even the most wicked person, will think that you may have hated a brother of yours. »

«It must have been a Pharisee or a Roman... He supplied them with eggs... » says Judas of Kerioth.

«It was a demon. But he did him good whilst wishing to harm him. He hastened his complete purification and peace. »

492. 4 «How do You know? Who brought You the news? » asks Joseph.

«Does the Master need to have news brought to Him? Does He not see the actions of men? Did He not go and call Johann\* that she might come to Him and be cured? What is impossible to God? » says Mary of Magdala passionately.

«That is true, woman. But few people have your faith... And that is why I asked a silly question. »

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\* Did He not go and call Johanna, as narrated in 102. 4.

«A11 right. But come, now, Master. Lazarus has awaked and is waiting for You... »

And she takes Him away abruptly and resolutely, cutting short any farther conversation or question.

493. Preaching near the fountain of En Rogel,  
a stopping place for the three Wise Men.

16<sup>th</sup> September 1946.

<sup>1</sup> Jesus comes back from Bethany along the lower road (I mean the longer one, which does not go through the Mount of Olives, but enters the town through the suburb of Tophet). 493. 1

He stops first to assist the lepers who ask Him for nothing but bread, then He goes straight to a large quadrangular basin, covered and closed on all sides but one. A well, a large covered well, the largest I have seen. It is larger than the well of the Samaritan woman\*, and it must also be rich in water because the ground around it is nourished by it and looks very fertile, in contrast with the arid sepulchral Hinnom valley, a glimpse of which can be caught to the north-west. Only a solid stone building like that of the well and its roof covering could resist the dampness of the ground. And the dark huge stones, which even without being an expert one realises are ancient, resist protecting the precious water.

Although it is a dull day and the sepulchres of the lepers are close at hand, and they always diffuse much sadness in the neighbourhood, the place is pleasing both because of its rich fertility and because behind it, to the north, there are large gardens with all kinds of trees raising their thick tops towards the grey sky which hangs low over the town, and in front of it, to the south the Kidron, widens its bed and becomes richer in water, as the valley becomes brighter and richer in light, following for a good stretch the road which goes to Bethany and Jericho.

There are many people: women with amphorae, ass drivers with buckets, caravans arriving or departing, are stopping near the well and drawing water. A large strip of ground is damp be-

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\* than the well of the Samaritan woman, in 143. 1/2.



cause of the water dripping from buckets while filling containers. Calm sweet voices of women, trilling voices of children, deep hoarse strong voices of men, braying of donkeys and wild cries of camels which lying down under their loads are awaiting the return of the camel driver with water.

It is a typical scene at a hazy sunset when the sky is stained with an unnatural sudden yellow which spreads a strange light on everything, while higher up heavy leaden clouds pile up one on top of the other. The upper parts of the town look ghastly in the strange light against the leaden sky marked with streaks the colour of sulphur.

493. 2    2«It looks like water and wind... » says Peter sententiously, and he asks: «Where are we going this evening? »

«To the gardener's. I am going up to the Temple tomorrow and... »

«Again? Watch what You are doing! You had better accept the invitation of the freedmen near the synagogue» suggests Simon Zealot.

«Then, as one synagogue is as good as another, there are many more, which have manifested that they want Him! But why they? » says Judas of Kerioth.

«Because they are the safest. And there is no need to explain why» replies the Zealot.

«Safe!!! What makes you so sure? »

«The fact that they remained faithful notwithstanding all they suffered. »

493. 3    «Do not quarrel. Tomorrow I am going up to the Temple. That is decided. 3Let us stay here for a little while. It is always a good place where one may evangelize. »

«Not better than any other. I don't know why You prefer it. »  
«Why, Judas? For many reasons which I will explain to those who gather here, and for one which I will tell you all in particular. The three Wise Men from the East stopped uncertain and disappointed at this well of the fountain of Rogel, as the Star that had guided them from so far had disappeared. Any other man would have mistrusted God and himself. They prayed until dawn near their tired camels, the only ones to be awake among the sleeping servants, and then at dawn they got up and set out towards the gates, daring the danger of being considered mad

and instigators and daring also the danger of their lives. Herod, the blood-thirsty king, then reigned, remember that. And much less than what they, the Wise Men, wanted to tell him was enough for him to condemn them to death. But they were looking for Me. They were not seeking glory, riches, honours. They were looking for Me, for Me only. A Baby: their Messiah, their God. The research for God, being good, always gives assistance and courage. Fears, low things are the inheritance of those who dream of base things. They yearned to worship God. They were strong in their love, which, after a few hours was rewarded, as the Star appeared once again to their eyes, here, in the moonlit night. Those who seek God with justice and love are never without the star of God. The three wise Men! They could have rested among the false honours which Herod wanted to give them after the response of the chief priests, scribes and doctors. They were so tired!... But they did not stop even for one night and before the gates were closed they came out and stopped here until dawn. Then... not the dawn of the sun but the dawn of God appeared again to make the way as bright as silver; the Star called them with its light and they came to the Light. Blessed! Blessed they and those who know how to imitate them! »

The apostles and Marjiam with Isaac are intent on listening with the blissful look their faces always have when Jesus recalls His birth, and Isaac, enraptured, sighs, smiles, remembering... with an ecstatic face, remote from time and place, having gone back over thirty years, to that night, that Star that he saw when he was with his herd...

<sup>4</sup>More people have come near, because the road is busy, and <sup>493 4</sup> they listen, and some recollect the wonderful caravan, and the news brought by them... and its consequences.

«This is always a place of meditation. History always repeats itself. This is always a place of trial. For good and for bad people. But *the whole life is a trial for the faith and justice of man.*

I remind you\* of Hushai, Zadox and Abiathar, of Jonathan and Ahimaaz, who left from this place to save their king and were protected by God because they were acting according to justice.

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\* I remind you... the episodes indicated in: *2 Samuel 17; 1 King 1.*

I will remind you of an event connected to this same place but did not have a happy outcome because it was an outrage and thus it was not blessed by God. Near the Zoheleth stone, close to the fountain of En-Rogel, Adonijah conspired against the will of his father and got the men of his party to proclaim him king. But the abuse was of no avail to him, because before the banquet was over the hosannas sung in Gihon informed him, even before Jonathan of Abiathar spoke, that Solomon was the king and that he, who wanted to usurp the throne, had to rely only on Solomon's mercy. Too many people repeat the deed of Adonijah and fight against the true King or plot against Him following the party which seems the strongest one. And too many, by doing so, will be able to cling to the altar horns begging forgiveness and trusting in God's mercy.

Now that we have considered three events that took place near this well, can we say that this place is subject to good or bad influences? No. Not the place. Not the time. Not the events, but it is the will of man that upsets the actions of man. En-Rogel saw the loyalty of David's servants and Adonijah's sin, as it saw the faith of the three Wise Men. It is the same well. Jonathan and Ahimaaz, like Adonijah and his followers, like the three Wise Men leaned on its stones and quenched their thirst with its water. But the water and the stones saw three different things: loyalty to king David, betrayal of king David, and loyalty to God and the King of kings. It is always the will of man that brings about good or evil. And the Will of God throws its light on the will of man and the will of Satan its poisonous vapours. It is up to man to accept the light or the poison and become just or sinner.

A guardian is placed at that well so that no one may infect the water. And in addition to the guardian it was given walls and a roof, so that the wind might not blow into it leaves and dirt, which might defile the precious water. Also to man God gave a guardian: the intelligent and conscious will of man; and He gave him protections: the commandments and angelical advice, so that the spirit of man might not be corrupted consciously or unconsciously. But when man corrupts his conscience, his intellect, he does not listen to the inspirations from Heaven, he tramples on the Law, he is like a guardian who leaves the well unguarded, or like a madman who dismantles its defences. He leaves the

field open to devilish enemies, to the concupiscence of the world and of the flesh, and to temptations, which, even if they are not yielded to, are to be prudently watched and rejected.

<sup>5</sup>Children of Jerusalem, Hebrews, proselytes, wayfarers who <sup>493 5</sup> have come here by chance to listen to the voice of God, be wise with true wisdom, which consists in defending one's ego from deeds disgracing man.

I see many Gentiles here. I point out to them that not only riches and merchandise are to be purchased, but there is another thing to be acquired, and that is the life of one's soul; because man has a soul in himself, that is something impalpable, but it makes him live, a thing that does not die when his flesh dies, a thing that is entitled to live its true life, an eternal life, but cannot live it if man kills his true self by means of his evil deeds.

Idolatry and Gentilism can be overcome. A wise man meditates and says: "Why must I follow idols and live without the hope of a better life, whereas by going to the true God I can achieve eternal joy? ". Man is frugal of his days and death horrifies him. The more he is shrouded in the darkness of false religions or in disbelief, the more he fears death. But he who comes to the true Faith is no longer terrified of death because he knows that beyond death there is an eternal life where spirits will meet again and where there will be no more pains or separations. It is not difficult to follow the way of Life. It is sufficient to believe in the only true God, to love our neighbour and love honesty in every action.

You people of Israel are aware of what is commanded and what is forbidden. But I will repeat such things for these people who are listening to My words and will take them far away... (and He says the Decalogue). True religion consists in that, not in vain pompous sacrifices. It is necessary to obey the precepts of perfect morals, of faultless virtue, to be merciful, to avoid what dishonours man, to give up vanities, deceptive divinations, false augurs, the dreams of the wicked, as the sapiential book say\*, to make use of the gifts of God with justice, that is health, wealth, riches, intellect, power, not to be proud, as pride is a sign of stupidity because man is alive, healthy, rich, wise, powerful as long

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\* says, in: *Sirach 34, 1-8*.

as God grants him it, not to cherish immoderate desires that often lead one even to commit crimes. Summing up, one must live as a man and not as a brute, also out of respect for oneself.

It is easy to descend, it is difficult to rise. But who would like to live in a putrid abyss only because he has fallen into it, and would not try to come out of it climbing back to the flowery summits bright with sunlight? I solemnly tell you that the life of a sinner is placed in an abyss and likewise a life in error. But those who receive the Word of truth and come to the Truth climb to the tops of the Light.

You may now go to your destinations. And remember that near the fountain of En-Rogel, the Source of Wisdom gave you its water to drink so that you may thirst for it again and you may come back to it. »

Jesus makes His way and sets out towards the town, leaving the people to make comments, to ask questions and reply to them.

493. 6     <sup>6</sup>Jesus says: «You will put here the vision of the Adulterous Woman of 20<sup>th</sup> March 1944. »

#### 494. The adulterous woman and the hypocrisy of her accusers. Various teachings.

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

494. 1     <sup>X</sup>I see the inside of the enclosure of the Temple, that is, one of the many courts surrounded by porches. And I see also Jesus, Who, well wrapped in his mantle that covers his tunic - the latter is dark red and not white, and seems to be made of a heavy woollen cloth - is speaking to a crowd of people standing around Him.

I would say that it is a winter day because I notice that everybody is muffled up, and that it must be rather cold because people, instead of standing, are walking fast as if they wished to warm themselves. The wind is blowing shaking mantles and raising dust in the courts.

The group pressing around Jesus, the only one to be still, whilst all the others standing around this or that master are

walking up and down, opens out to let a small group of gesticulating venomous scribes and Pharisees pass. They are spurning venom from their eyes, their livid faces and mouths. What vipers they are! Rather than lead they are dragging a woman, about thirty years old; her hair is ruffled and her dress untidy and she is weeping, as if she had been ill-treated. They throw her at Jesus' feet as if she were a bundle of rags or a dead body. And she remains there crouched, with her face resting on her arms, which hide it and are like a cushion between it and the ground.

«Master, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Her husband loved her and ensured that she lacked nothing. She was the queen in her house. And she has been unfaithful to him because she is a vicious ungrateful sinner and profaner. She is an adulteress and as such she is to be stoned. Moses ordered so. In his law he orders us to stone such women like unclean animals. And they are unclean. Because they betray faith and the man who loves them and takes care of them and because like earth never sated, they always crave for lust. They are worse than prostitutes because without the sting of need they give themselves to satisfy their lewdness. They are corrupted and corrupters. They are to be sentenced to death. Moses said so. What have You to say, Master? »

<sup>2</sup>Jesus, Who had stopped speaking at the tumultuous arrival of the Pharisees and had looked at the pack of angry men with piercing eyes and then had lowered them on the depressed woman thrown at His feet, is silent. Still sitting, He has bent, and with His finger He begins to write on the stones of the porch covered with the dust raised by the wind. While they speak He writes. 494. 2

«Master? We are speaking to You. Listen to us. Reply to us. Have You not understood? This woman has been caught in the very act of committing adultery. In her house. In the bed of her husband. She has polluted it with her lechery. »

Jesus is writing.

«But this man is a fool! Don't you see that He does not understand anything and that He is drawing signs on the dust like a poor fool? »

«Master for the sake of Your name, speak. Let Your wisdom reply to our question. We repeat it: this woman lacked nothing.

She had clothes, food, love. And she has been unfaithful. »

Jesus is writing.

«She lied to the man who trusted her. With mendacious lips she greeted him and went to the door with him, smiling, she then opened the secret door and let her lover in. And while her husband was away working for her, like an unclean animal, she wallowed in her lewdness. »

«Master, she is a desecrator of the Law as well as of her nuptial bed. She is a rebel, an impious person, a blasphemer. »

Jesus is writing. He writes and cancels with His sandal-shod foot what He has written and writes farther on, turning around slowly to find more room. He looks like a little boy playing. But what He writes are not playful words. He has written successively: «Usurer», «False», «Irreverent son», «Fornicator», «Murderer», «Desecrator of the Law», «Thief», «Libidinous», «Usurper», «Unworthy husband and father», «Blasphemer», «Rebellious to God», «Adulterer». The words are written over and over again while new accusers speak.

«Well, Master! Your opinion. The woman is to be judged. She must not contaminate the Earth with her weight. Her breath is poison that upsets hearts. »

494. 3 <sup>3</sup>Jesus stands up. Good gracious! What a face! His eyes flash like lightning striking the accusers. He holds His head so upright that He looks even taller. And He is so severe and solemn that He seems a king on his throne. His mantle has fallen off one shoulder forming a short train behind Him. But He does not mind that. With stern countenance and not even the least trace of a smile on His lips or in His eyes, He glares with such eyes at the crowds which withdraw as they would before two sharp blades. He stares at them one by one. With such searching intensity that frightens. Those who are stared at try to withdraw into the crowd and hide there. The circle thus widens and breaks up as if it were mined by an occult power.

He finally speaks: «If there is one of you who has not sinned, let him be the first to throw a stone at her. » And His voice sounds like thunder while His eyes flash even more brightly. Jesus has folded His arms across His chest and remains thus: as straight as a judge, awaiting. His eyes give no peace: they search, penetrate and accuse.

First one, then two, then five, then in groups, all the people present go away with lowered heads. Not only the scribes and the Pharisees, but also those who were previously around Jesus, and others who had approached Him to hear His opinion and the sentence, and both the former and the latter had (earlier) joined together to abuse the guilty woman and demand her lapidation.

Jesus is left alone with Peter and John. I do not see the other apostles.

Jesus has resumed writing, while the flight of the accusers is taking place, and He now writes: «Pharisees», «Vipers», «Sepulchres of rottenness», «Liars», «Traitors», «Enemies of God», «Revilers of His Word»...

<sup>4</sup>When the court is completely empty and there is a solemn silence in it - only the rustling of the wind and the murmur of a little fountain in a corner can be heard - Jesus raises His head and looks. His countenance is now placid. He is sad, but no longer angry. He casts a look at Peter, who has moved away a little, leaning against a column, and one at John, who almost behind Jesus looks at Him with his loving eyes. Jesus smiles slightly looking at Peter and more brightly when He looks at John. Two different smiles.

494. 4

He then looks at the woman, still prostrated and weeping at His feet. He gets up, He adjusts His mantle as if He were about to set off. He beckons to the two apostles to go to the exit.

When He is alone He calls the woman. «Woman, listen to Me.

Look at Me. » He repeats His order because she dare not look up. «Woman, we are alone. Look at Me. »

The poor wretch raises her face that tears and dust have turned into a mask of dejection.

«Woman, where are now those who were accusing you? » Jesus is speaking in a low voice, with gravity full of pity. His head and body are lightly bent forward, toward so much misery, and His eyes are full of an indulgent restoring expression. «Did no one condemn you? »

The woman replies sobbing: «No one, Master. »

«Neither do I condemn you. Go. And do not sin anymore. Go home. And behave in such a way that you may be forgiven by God and by the man you offended. And do not trespass on the benignity of the Lord. Go. »



And He helps her to get up taking her by the hand. But He does not bless, neither does He greet her with the greeting of peace. He looks at her going away, her head lowered and slightly staggering in her shame, and when she disappears, He sets off Himself with the two disciples.

494. 5     <sup>5</sup>Jesus says:

«What hurt Me was the lack of charity and sincerity in the accusers. Not because they lied in accusing. The woman was really guilty. But they were insincere being scandalised at something they had committed thousands of times and that only greater cunning and better luck had allowed to remain concealed. The woman, at her first sin, had not been so cunning and lucky. But none of the accusers, both male and female - because also women accused her in their hearts even if they did not raise their voices - were free from sin.

He is an adulterer who commits the act and he who desires the act and craves for it with all his might. Both he who sins and he who wishes to sin are lustful. It is not sufficient not to do evil. It is also necessary not to desire to do it. Remember, Mary, the first word\* of your Master, when I called you from the edge of the precipice where you were: "It is not sufficient not to do evil. It is also necessary not to desire to do it" He who cherishes sensual thoughts and excites sensual feelings by means of literature and performances sought for such purpose and through pernicious habits, is equally impure as he who commits the sin materially. I dare say: he is more guilty. Because with his thoughts he goes against nature, not only against morals. I am not referring to those who commit real acts against nature. The only extenuating circumstance for such person is an organic disease or mental illness. He who does not have such an extenuating circumstance is inferior to the filthiest beast by ten degrees.

One ought to be free from sin in order to condemn with justice. I refer you to past dictations, when I speak of the essential conditions to be a judge.

I was not unaware of the hearts of those Pharisees and scribes, or of the hearts of those people who had joined them in insult-

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\* WORD, as indicated in the *Autobiography*, first chapter of the third part.

ing the guilty woman. Sinners against God and their neighbour, they had sinned against faith, against their parents, against their neighbour and above all they had committed many sins against their wives. If by means of a miracle I had ordered their blood to write their sins on their foreheads, among the many charges that of "adulterers" by deed or by desire would have reigned supreme. <sup>6</sup>I said\*: "It is what comes from the heart that contaminates man". And with the exception of My heart there was no one among the judges whose heart was pure. They lacked sincerity and charity. Not even their being like her in their hunger for lust induced them to be charitable.

494. 6

It was I Who was charitable to the dejected woman. I, the Only One, Who should have been disgusted with her. But remember this: "The kinder one is, the more compassionate one is to culprits". One is not lenient to the fault itself. No. But one is indulgent to weak people who have not resisted temptation.

Man! Oh! More than a fragile reed and a thin bearbire, he is easily inclined to yield to temptation and to cling to whatever may make him hope to find solace. Because many times sin is committed, particularly by the weaker sex, owing to such search for comfort. I therefore say that he who has no love for his wife, or for his own daughter, is ninety per cent responsible for the sin of his wife or of his daughter and will have to answer for them. Both the stupid love, which is nothing but foolish slavery imposed by a man on his wife or by a father on his daughter, and the neglect of love or even worse, a sin of lechery which leads a man to other love affairs and parents to other cares than their children, are incentives to adultery and prostitution and are condemned by Me as such.

You are beings gifted with reason and guided by a divine law and by a moral law. To degrade yourselves to the behaviour of savages or of brutes should horrify your great pride. But pride, which in this case would be also useful, is used by you for completely different matters.

<sup>7</sup>I looked at Peter and John in different ways, because I wanted to say to the former: "Peter, make sure you are not lacking in charity and sincerity as well", and I also wanted to say to him

494. 7

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\* said, in 300. 9 and in 301. 5/6.

as My future Pontiff: "Remember this hour and in future judge as your Master did"; whilst to the latter, a young man with the soul of a child, I wanted to say: "You can judge, but you do not, because your heart is like Mine. Thank you, My beloved, for being so much Mine, as to be a second I". I sent the two disciples away before calling the woman as I did not wish to increase her mortification with the presence of two witnesses. Learn, o pitiless men. No matter how guilty a man is, he is to be treated with respect and charity. You must not rejoice at his annihilation, you must not be pitiless, not even with curious glances. Have mercy on those who fall!

I pointed out to the guilty woman the way; she should follow to redeem herself: to go back to her house, to ask humbly to be forgiven and to obtain forgiveness through an upright life; not to yield any more to the flesh; not to trespass on divine Goodness and human kindness in order not to expiate more severely than at present for two or many sins. God forgives and He forgives because He is Goodness. But man, although I said\*: "Forgive your brother seventy times seven", is not capable of forgiving twice.

I did not wish her peace and I did not give her My blessing because she was not fully detached from her sin, as is required to be forgiven. In her flesh and unfortunately not even in her heart there was no nausea for sin. When Mary of Magdala savoured My Word, she became disgusted with sin and came to Me, full of goodwill to change completely. But this woman still hesitated between the voices of the flesh and those of the spirit. And in the excitement of the moment, she had not yet been able to use the axe against the stump of the flesh and cut it off in order to go, once she was mutilated of her greedy weight, to the Kingdom of God. Mutilated of what is ruin, but increased with what is salvation.

Do you want to know whether she was saved? I was not the Saviour for everybody. I wanted to be so, but I was not because not everyone wanted to be saved. And that was one of the most piercing arrows in My agony at Gethsemane.

Go in peace, Mary of Mary, and do not sin anymore, not even

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\* said, in 278. 3 and in 423. 8.

in trifles. Under Mary's mantle there is nothing but pure things.  
Bear that in mind.

[... ]»

495. A lesson on mercy. The reply to the objections  
of forgiveness of the adulteress. Parting  
of the disciples along the road to Bethany.

17<sup>th</sup> September 1946.

<sup>1</sup>Jesus has joined the ten apostles and the main disciples at the <sup>495 1</sup> foot of the Mount of Olives, near the fountain of Siloam. When they see Jesus coming, walking with vigorous strides between Peter and John, they go towards Him and they meet just near the fountain.

«Let us go up to the Bethany road. I am leaving the town for some time. While walking I will tell you what you have to do» orders Jesus.

Among the disciples there are also Manaen and Timoneus, who, now cheerful again, have come back to their place. And there are Stephen and Hermas, Nicolaus, John of Ephesus, John the priest, in short, all the ones who are more notable because of their wisdom, besides others, simple men, but so active by the grace of God and their own goodwill.

«Are You leaving the town? Has anything happened? » ask many.

«No. But there are places waiting for... »

<sup>2</sup>«What have You done this morning? »

495 2

«I spoke... The prophets... Once again. But they do not understand... »

«No miracle, Master? » asks Matthew.

«No. I forgave and defended a person. »

«Who was it? Who was offending? »

«Those who think that they are without sin were accusing a woman who had sinned. I saved her. »

«But if she was a sinner, they were right. »

«Her body was that of a sinner. Her soul... There are many things I should say about souls. And I would not call sinners only those whose guilt is obvious. Also those are guilty, who instigate

others to sin. And to a more cunning sin. They play the part of the Serpent and of the Sinner at the same time. »

«But what had the woman done? »

« Adultery. »

«Adultery?! And You saved her?! You shouldn't!! » exclaims Judas Iscariot.

Jesus stares at him then He asks: «Why not? »

«Because... It may be detrimental to You. You know how they hate You and try to find charges against You! Certainly... To save an adulteress is to go against the Law. »

«I did not say that I wanted to save her. I only said that those who were without sin should throw the stones. And no one struck her, because no one was without sin. So I confirmed the Law that inflicts lapidation on adulterers, but I also saved the woman because not one lapidator could be found. »

«But You... »

«Did you want Me to stone her to death? It would have been justice, because I could have stoned her. But it would not have been mercy. »

«Ah! She had repented! She implored You and You... »

«No... She was not even repentant. She was only dejected and frightened. »

«Then!... Why?... I no longer understand You! Previously I was still able to understand why You forgave Mary of Magdala, John of Endor, also... in short many sin... »

«You may as well say Matthew. I don't take it amiss. On the contrary I will be grateful to you for reminding me of my debt of gratitude to my Master» says Matthew calm and dignified.

«Yes, also Matthew... But they repented their sins, their dissolute lives. But this woman!... I do not understand You any more! And I am not the only one who doesn't... »

«I know. You do not understand Me... You have never understood Me well. And you are not the only one. But that does not change My behaviour. »

«Forgiveness is to be granted to those who ask for it. »

«Oh! If God should forgive only those who ask to be forgiven!

And strike at once those who do not repent after sinning! Have you never felt that you had been forgiven before repenting? Can you really say that you repented and that is why you have

been forgiven? »

«Master, I... »

<sup>3</sup>«Listen to Me, all of you, because many among you think that I made a mistake and that Judas is right. Peter and John are here. They heard what I said to the woman and they can repeat it to you. I was not foolish in forgiving. I did not say what I said to other souls whom I had forgiven because they were fully repentant. But I gave that soul time and possibility to arrive at repentance and holiness, if she wishes to reach them. Bear that in mind when you are the masters of souls. 495 3

It is essential to possess two things to be true masters and worthy of being masters. The first thing: an austere life for oneself, so that one may judge without the hypocrisy of condemning in other people what one forgives oneself. The second thing: patient mercy to give souls the time to recover and fortify themselves.

Not every soul recovers instantaneously from its wounds. Some do so by successive stages, which are often slow and subject to relapses. It does not befit a spiritual doctor to reject, condemn, frighten them. If you drive them away, they will bound back and throw themselves again into the arms of false friends and masters. Always open your arms and hearts to poor souls, so that they may find in you true and holy confidants, on whose knees they do not feel ashamed to weep. If you condemn them depriving them of spiritual assistance, you will make them more and more unhealthy and weak. If you cause them to be frightened of you and of God, how will they be able to raise their eyes to you and to God?

Man meets man as his first judge. Only he who lives a spiritual life knows how to meet God first. But the creature who has arrived at living spiritually, does not fall into serious sins. His human side may be still weak, but his strong spirit is vigilant and his weaknesses do not become serious faults. Whereas the man who is still subject to flesh and blood commits sin and meets man. Now, if the man who should point out God to him and instruct his spirit, frightens him, how can the guilty person yield completely to him? And how can he say: "I humble myself because I believe that God is good and forgives", if he sees that one of his fellow-creatures is not good?

You are to be the term of comparison, the measure of what God is just as a farthing is the part that makes one understand the value of a talent. But if you are cruel to souls, you tiny parts who are part of the Infinite and you represent Him, what will they think that God is? What intolerant harshness will they ascribe to Him?

495. 4 <sup>4</sup>Judas, since you are a severe judge, if just now I said to you: "I will denounce you to the Sanhedrin for magic practices...". »

«Lord! You will not do that! It would be... it would be... You know that it is... »

«I know and I do not know. But you can see how you cry at once for mercy for yourself... *and you know that you would not be condemned by them because...* »

«What do You mean, Master? Why do You say that? » asks Judas excitedly, interrupting Jesus.

And Jesus, very calmly but with a glance that pierces Judas' heart, and at the same time curbs the upset apostle, who is being gazed at by the other eleven apostles and by many disciples, says: «Because they love you. You have good friends in there. You have said so many a time. »

Judas heaves a sigh of relief, wipes his perspiration, which is strange in a cold windy day, and says: «That is true. Old friends. But I don't think that if I sinned... »

«And is that why you ask for mercy? »

«Yes. I am still imperfect and I want to become perfect. »

«You have spoken the truth. Also that woman is very imperfect. »

«I gave her time to become good, if she wishes. »

Judas does not reply any more.

495. 5 <sup>5</sup>They are now on the Bethany road, at a good distance from Jerusalem. Jesus stops and says: «Have you given the poor what I gave you? Have you done everything I told you? »

«Everything, Master» reply the apostles and disciples.

«Well, listen. I will now bless you and dismiss you. You will spread out, as usual, through Palestine. You will gather here again for Passover. Do not fail to come... and during these next months fortify your hearts and the hearts of those who believe in Me. Be more and more just, unselfish, patient. Be what I taught you to be. Go round towns, villages, secluded houses. Shun no

one. Put up with everything. You are not serving your own egos, as I do not serve the *ego* of Jesus of Nazareth, but I serve My Father. Serve your Father as well. Thus, His interests, not yours, are to be sacred to you, even if they bring sorrow or detriment to *your* human interests. Be guided by the spirit of self-denial and obedience. I may send for you or I may tell you to remain where you are. Do not judge My instructions. Obey them, whatever they may be, with the firm belief that they are good and given for your good. And do not be jealous if I send for some and not for others. You know... Some have departed from Me... and I suffered because of that. They were the ones who still wanted to act according to their own wills. *Pride is the lever that overturns spirits and the magnet that tears them away from Me.* Do not curse those who left Me. Pray that they may come back... My shepherds will be staying by twos in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem. Isaac is coming with Me for the time being together with Marjiam. Love one another. And help one another. My dear friends, may your spirits tell you all the rest, reminding you of what I taught you, and may your angels repeat it to you. I bless you. »

They all prostrate themselves while Jesus recites the Mosaic blessing. They then crowd around Jesus greeting Him. They then depart while He with the twelve apostles, Isaac and Marjiam proceeds along the Bethany road.

«We shall now stop just long enough to greet Lazarus and then we shall go on towards the Jordan. »

«Are we going to Jericho? » asks Judas with interest. «No. To Betharabah. »

«But... night... »

«There is no shortage of houses and villages from here to the river... »

No one speaks any more and apart from the rustling of olive-trees and the shuffling of feet, no other noise can be heard.

496. Unexpected turmoil of Judas Iscariot  
during a stop at the house of Solomon.

18<sup>th</sup> September 1946.

<sup>1</sup>In order not to be seen by people they go into the village <sup>496.1</sup>



where Solomon's house is, walking along the bank of the river. But I would say that the precaution was quite unnecessary, because it gets dark early in November or end of October evenings and people are already at home. There is no one, absolutely no one in the street and if some bleatings were not heard, one would say that the place is deserted.

They shake the little gate. It is closed. Well closed at the entrance of the little kitchen garden, which looks very tidy in the half-light. «Call him! He is in the kitchen. A thread of light is stealing through the shutters» says Jesus.

Thomas takes upon himself to call with his powerful voice the old man who opens the door at once and looks towards the street. He is uncertain because of the dim light outside, particularly because he comes from the kitchen where there is a fire on and a lamp is lit.

But when Jesus says: «It is us», the old man recognises the voice at once and shouts: «The Master! » and descending the rustic step he runs to open.

«My Lord! Come in, come into Your house, and may this day be blessed because it ends with Your coming! » he says bustling with the lock of the gate and he explains: «I am alone and I close the gate well. The robbers are capable of anything. There are some who cause damage now in one place now in another, and they come down from the Gilead mountains. It is not that I am afraid for my life. But I had prepared for You and... Here, Master. Come. It is a damp evening. Your hair is wet with dew... \*»

«And you are more diligent than the bride of the Song of Songs, father. The trouble you take to welcome the Pilgrim is no burden to you» says Jesus smiling.

«Trouble? How long this time has been! One day after the other, one after the other. I had sown your seed and I saw the vegetables grow beautifully. I used to say: "If He came, He would certainly like this". But they ripened and You did not come... And I saw the fruit colour up on the trees and I ate them sadly, because You did not have any. That ewe gave me a lamb, a completely white one. I kept it for such a long time to eat it with You. I was hoping to see You before the Tabernacles. Then... a lamb

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\* is wet with dew, as the hair of the groom in: *Song of Songs* 5. 2.

all for me... Too much! I changed it for a little sheep, and they were good to me, because they did not want anything to balance the deal. But I have kept as much fruit and cheese as I could for You, as well as some dried fish and legumes and I still have a few melons. And a little wine... I don't drink any, but I made some for You for winter time. »

<sup>2</sup>He is speaking while cleaning the table, he lays the kitchenware on it and pokes the fire, he adds water to the pot and he busies himself happily. He no longer looks like the poor old man of a few months previously. 496. 2

He goes out and comes back with some milk and he says apologising: «It is only a little because only one ewe gives some milk. But they will be two shortly. It is enough for You, however. »

He is fatherly; devoted and fatherly at the same time. He has taken the damp mantles and the dirty sandals and has taken them elsewhere. He has come back with some apples and pomegranates and grapes and also some figs half dried and he says: «I dried them like that, just to make You taste them. I thought... I thought of my Ananias who was so fond of them when they were prepared like that!... » His voice, previously serene, lowers to a sad tone while saying these words and he concludes: «and... I thought that You would like them and while I was preparing them I felt as if I were preparing them for the son of my son. » He shakes his head, he strives to smile, with his eyes shining with tears.

Jesus, Who had sat down at the table, stands up, and laying one arm around his shoulders, He draws him to Himself saying: «I like them very much. They remind Me of My childhood... and of My father. But you should not deprive yourself of so many things because of Me. They are good for old people. You must remain healthy and strong to be able to welcome Me thus every time I come. It is so pleasant to find a home like this, with a father waiting for us. Is that right, My dear friends? »

«It is certainly right. It is so beautiful that we grow lazy instead of helping Ananias» says Peter and he stands up exclaiming: «Come on, let us go and make our beds while Jesus speaks to him. »

«Oh! It is not necessary! They are always ready. And everything is clean... The only thing is... that they are not enough. You

are more than twelve. But I will go and lie on the hay and... »

«You will certainly not, father. In that case I will go» says John.

«No, I will» say Andrew and others.

«There is no need for that. I will sleep here on this table. It is certainly not harder than the bottom boards of my boat, and Marjiam... » says Peter.

«... will sleep with Me» says Jesus interrupting him.

«Or with me, if you wish so... as little Ananias used to do» says the old man with imploring eyes.

«Yes, Master. You always have me. He... I will go with him» says Marjiam.

Jesus caresses him appreciating his gesture.

496. 3 3«They have come several times looking for You after Pentecost. Then they stopped coming» says the old man.

«Who was looking for Him? »

«Pharisees, hey! And others like them. They wanted to question You. But I said: "He has gone to His village. He is not here, and I don't know when He will be coming here... ". That was the truth. And they got tired of coming. And they were looking for another man, a certain John, and they said that he was with You and they perhaps thought that he was hiding here. I said to them: "But that's His apostle and he is with Him". They replied: "Was His apostle blind in one eye? Was he old, sick, dying? ". I realised that it was not you and I replied: "I know only John, the apostle, a young man who is kinder than a child and has a wholesome heart and body". They threatened me. But what else could I say? That is the truth... »

«Yes. That is the truth. And be always truthful; even if you should harm Me, father, never tell a lie. »

«Lord, my hair has grown grey and I have always striven to obey the Lord. And among the commandments to be obeyed, there is also not to tell lies. But... why are they looking for You, Lord? I was blind. So I did not go to Jerusalem any more. I went back now... Only for the rite. Because I wanted to be here waiting for You... And I perceived hatred and love around You... and I thought there was more hatred than love among the chiefs of the people. I was in the Temple that morning when they wanted to offend You... and I ran away as I was distressed and I came

here to wait for You and weep. Why is man so wicked? »

«Because he has killed his spirit. And with his spirit his capability to feel remorse for being unjust. »

«That is true!... And are they looking for You to hurt You? »

«Yes, they are. »

«Yes!! Israel wants to injure her King? How horrible! Israel is condemning herself to the prophesied punishments!... Oh! I am glad, now, that my son is dead... and I would like to die myself not to see the sin of Israel... »

<sup>4</sup>There is dead silence. Only the crackle of the wood burning <sup>496 4</sup> in the fireplace can be heard.

«Let us speak of something else! We speak of nothing but death, hatred, betrayal! Enough of that! I cannot stand that! » says the Iscariot, who is upset, surly, agitated and is moving about the kitchen gesticulating excitedly with his legs, his arms, his whole body.

«Judas is right» many say.

«The fact that one does not want to hear, is of no avail. What helps is not to consent» says Jesus, opening His hands on the rustic table, with His palms upwards, in a gesture of resignation.

«What do You mean? To consent! Who consents to that? » Judas, bending over the table, almost lying across it to approach the Master, shakes his fists almost in His face.

«Who? All those who already dream of seeing Me perish in My blood. Blood! The blood of your Messiah! Blood on you, o Earth, who do not want your Lord! A blood brighter than those flames! Blood, a fire in the ice and darkness of a criminal world! They hope to kill the Light by depriving it of its blood. But Light is spirit; blood is still matter. Matter weighs down the spirit. The blood spread on a sheet of mica dims the light, does it not? Well, I solemnly tell you that as that wood did not shine until it became fire and its resins catching fire turned into brightness, and it is now an incandescent glare, so when everything is completed and the blood and flesh are consumed by the sacrifice, then, like that fire over there, which has changed everything into light, My spirit will shine more brightly than ever on the world and I shall be more than ever the Light. Such a Light that it will dazzle forever those who hate the Light and kill it. Such a Light that the golden gates of Heaven will melt after being closed to Mankind

for ages and Heaven will be open to the just. Such a Light that it will pierce the stones forming the vault of the Abyss and the fierce fire of Hell will become extremely fierce under the thunderbolts of My rays. And woe to those who will have laid snares to the Light! Blood and Light! Those two things will be in front of them until they are driven mad and to despair. Demons! »

Jesus, Who had stood up when saying «I solemnly tell you» and was frightening, so imposing He looked in the low dark-walled kitchen, as the brightness of the flames of the fireplace formed a halo around His head, sits down and becomes silent.

496.5 <sup>5</sup>They all look at one another, with the exception of Judas, who seems to be hypnotised looking at the firewood ablaze... Hypnotised and frightened. A fright that depicts a dreadful mask on his face, of a ghastly greenish paleness, which the burning wood tinges with red. It reminds me of his terrible fact on Good Friday. He then turns suddenly around and shouts: «Be quiet! Be quiet! Why are You tormenting us?! » and he goes out slamming the door...

«His way, that is true. But he loves You very much... and he suffers hearing certain words» says Thomas. And he concludes: «They hurt us so much as well! But we are not so strange, let us say... strange... »

No one speaks. Jesus also is silent...

«The vegetables are cooked, the milk is warm... » says the old man in a low voice, as he is intimidated and he almost does not dare say such common words after the incident...

«Call Judas and let us have supper» orders Jesus.

John goes out and calls his companion. They come back in... Judas looks tortured. But a torture without peace... But he sits at the table and he stands up with the others when Jesus offers and blesses and he looks stealthily at Him when He hands out the portions keeping the last one for Himself.

Everyone would like to dispel the sadness reigning in the room, but no one succeeds until Jesus addresses the old man asking him whether the little village and nearby places have received the word of the Lord.

«Yes, Master. And they received it very well. I would say better here than on the other side of the river. You know... the Baptist still lives in everybody's memory here, and his disciples, who

are now Yours, keep it green and through his words they make You known. And then... here... there are not many Pharisees in Perea and in the Decapolis, so... »

497. An hour of discomfort for Simon Peter.

20<sup>th</sup> September 1946.

<sup>1</sup>I do not know where I am. Certainly no longer in the Jordan valley, but in mountains bordering on it, because I can see the green valley and the lovely blue river below, whilst peaks of quite high mountains emerge from the vast plateau stretching east of the Jordan. <sup>497 1</sup>

I see Peter, all alone on a little rising of ground, staring north-east and sighing sadly. There is some firewood at his feet and it has certainly been picked up in the woods covering this hill. A little village nestles among the greenery. Peter is really down-hearted. He ends up by sitting on his bundle of sticks holding his head in his hands, all curled up. He remains thus, forgetful of time and of everything, so absorbed that not even some children who pass by with some whimsical little goats arouse him. The boys look at him and then run away, after their goats, towards the village. The sun is setting slowly and Peter does not stir.

<sup>2</sup>Jesus is proceeding along the path which climbs from the village to the hillock. He is walking slowly and avoids making any noise. He thus reaches the spot where Peter is sitting. And He calls him standing upright in front of him: «Simon! » <sup>497 2</sup>

«Master! » Peter starts, he raises his head and looks upset while uttering that word.

«What were you doing, Simon? All your companions have come back. You were the only one missing and we were worried. So much so that your brother and the sons of Zebedee with Thomas and Judas have scattered through the mountains, while My brothers with Isaac and Marjiam have gone down towards the plain. »

«I'm sorry... I'm sorry for causing pain and trouble... »

«Your companions are fond of you... Judas was the first one to become anxious and he reproached Marjiam for letting you go by yourself. »

«H'm!... »

«Simon, what is the matter with you? »

«Nothing, Master. »

«What were you doing here, all alone on this hillock, while it is getting dark? »

«I was looking... »

«You may have been looking, Simon. But you were not looking *just now*... Some boys passed near you and they almost feared that you were dead because you were so bent on yourself. They ran to the fold that gave us hospitality and they told Me. I came... What were you looking at, Simon? »

«I was looking... I was looking towards Ramoth Gilead, towards Gerasa, Bozrah, Arbela... our trip of last year, so beautiful, so... The Mother was with us! The women disciples... John of Endor. The merchant... Even he was kind and helped to make the journey pleasant... How many things have changed! How much difference... and how much grief!... That is what I was looking at: the past. »

«And the future, My dear Simon. » Jesus sits on the bundle of sticks beside Peter and lays an arm on his shoulders speaking to him: «You were looking at the horizon... and sadness dimmed it. The present, like a whirl, raised frightening clouds and concealed the serene memory full of promises and hope from you, and it frightened you. Simon, you are subjected to one of those hours of sadness and boredom, which our human nature meets on its way. No one is free from them, because those hours are brought about by him who hates man. And the more a man serves God, the more Satan tries to frighten and tire him to detach him from his ministry. You also are subjected to an hour of tiredness. You are fatigued by the persistent persecutions against your Master. And finally - and you do not know that it is not you, but it is the Tempter - you listen to a voice that whispers to you: "And tomorrow? What will happen tomorrow?... "»

497. 3     <sup>3</sup>«Lord, it is true. You are reading my heart. But You also see that if I ask that question, it is not because I am afraid for myself. It's because... No. I could never bear to see You tormented... You often speak of crime, of betrayal. I... Oh! not only I! How many, particularly old people, have asked You to let them die before seeing their King offended? And I!... I, You know, You are

everything for me. I am not interested in anything but You. It is not as Judas says, nostalgia for my boat and for my wife... Look: You can see whether I am telling the truth. I insisted so much to have Marjiam. My human nature wanted at least an adoptive son in place of the children that my wife did not give me, mortifying my virility that wanted to be perpetuated. But now, but at present I... I do love him. But if You should take him away from me, I would not react. I would only say to You... No! I would not say anything! »

«You would only say to Me? Go on. »

«It is no use, Master. »

«Tell Me! »

«I would say: "Give him to someone who would bring him up as a just man, better than I could". Nothing else! Or rather... and I am saying this to You, weeping, for him, for myself, for my brother, and also for John and James... and also for the others, but we... we are Your first ones... » Peter falls on his knees, leaning against Jesus' knees, with raised hands, palms upwards, imploring, while tears stream down his cheeks and disappear in his beard... «... I am saying this for ourselves: let us die, take us away before we... Oh! I was thinking, I have always been thinking, for months - and You can see whether it is a thought that tortures me and makes me old it is an uninterrupted fear that does not even leave me when I sleep - I think that, if it is going to be as You say, I could be the traitor, or Andrew, or John, or James, or Marjiam... And if we don't go to that extent, it might be one of those You mentioned also three evenings ago at Ananias', one of those who go to the extent of wanting to take Your Blood, one, also one of those who, out of cowardice, cannot oppose that and they consent to evil for fear of evil... I... if I should consent only by not reacting, out of fear... Master, oh! my dear Master, I would kill myself to punish myself, or... I would kill Your murderers, if I should meet them. I... if You do not want that, let me die before, at once, here... Life is nothing, but to fail to love You... To be one of those... to be... to see and not... » He is so excited that he lacks even words. He bends with his face on Jesus' knees weeping bitter tears, the tears of a coarse elderly man, not accustomed to weeping, upset by too many feelings.

<sup>4</sup>Jesus lays His hands on Peter's head as if He wished to calm <sup>497</sup> 4



his grief and dispel every perturbing thought and He says: «My dear friend, and do you think that even if you were... not to be perfect at that hour; the Lord, Who is just, would not weigh your mistake with the weight of your love and your present goodwill? And are you afraid that this golden love and will may weigh less than your temporary imperfection, and may be insufficient to obtain for you indulgence from God, and with that indulgence all the assistance to become yourself again, My beloved Peter? »

«Let me die! Save me! I'm afraid! »

«You are My Stone, Simon. Can I crumble the Stone on which I will found Her who is to perpetuate Me on the Earth? »

«I am not worthy of that. I feel it. I am a poor ignorant man a sinner. All evil tendencies are in me. I am not worthy, I am not worthy! I shall become perverse. A murderer. All the worst... Let me die. Do You realise that if I should find out who hates You... »

«All the world hates Me, Simon. We must forgive... »

«I am speaking of the main culprit. There must be a main one and... »

«There will be many ones, and each will have his main task... »

«Which task? That of... Oh! Don't let me say it! But I... »

«But you must forgive, like Me and with Me. Why are you so upset, Simon, thinking of what you might do to punish? Leave that task to the Lord. You must love and forgive, be indulgent and forgive. They, all those who will offend against your Jesus, need *so much* to be helped to be forgiven! »

«There is no forgiveness for them. »

«Oh! how severe you are with your brothers, Simon! Of course there is forgiveness also for them, if they mend their ways. It would be dreadful if all My offenders were not to be forgiven! <sup>497. 5</sup>Come on, stand up, Simon. Your companions will be more worried now, seeing that I am not at the fold either. But even at the cost of letting them suffer a little farther, let us pray before going to them. Let us pray together. There is nothing else to be done to regain peace, spiritual strength, love, pity... also for ourselves. Prayer dispels Satan's phantoms, and makes us feel closer to God. And with God near us, we can face and put up with everything justly and meritoriously. Let us pray thus, you and I together, here, from this mountain, from which so much of

our Fatherland can be seen, as the Promised Land was seen by Moses from mount Nebo. We are luckier than he was, because we are taking the Word and Salvation to the Land which will belong to the Christ. I first, then you. Look! The Judaeen mountains can still be seen in the last light. But beyond them there is the plain, the sea, then other lands, the world... They are waiting for you, Peter. They are waiting for you to learn that there is a true God. A God Who will give the true light to the souls groping in the darkness of Gentilism and idolatry. Look: the earthly light is growing dim. How could wayfarers not lose their way in a lightless night? But there is the Pole-star. It is rising already to guide wayfarers. My Religion will be the star that guides spiritual wayfarers on the way to Heaven. And you will be so united to it as to be one light only with Me and My Doctrine, My dear Peter, My blessed Stone. Let us pray for that hour when men will be saved through My Name. "Our Father Who art in Heaven"... »

He says the «*Our Father*» slowly, holding Peter by the hand, and He seems to be presenting him to the Father, as He raises His arms and hands, with the apostle's left hand in His right one.

<sup>6</sup>«And now let us go down. And let us leave here any useless <sup>497</sup> <sup>6</sup> sadness and worries about tomorrow. Together with our daily bread the Father will give us His help for tomorrow and for every morrow. Are you convinced, Simon? »

«Yes, Master, I believe that» says Peter resolutely; he no longer looks upset, but austere, as he has been for some months, so that he seems to be quite different from the coarse facetious fisherman of the first two years.

They go down, Jesus ahead, followed by Peter with his bundle of sticks and almost at the first house of the village they meet the worried apostles.

«But where had you gone? » they ask Peter shouting.

«We would have been here some time ago, but I stopped with him, speaking and looking towards Gerasa... » replies Jesus on his behalf.

They go to the right, to the ruins of a half-demolished sheep-fold.

Inside a wooden fence, half of which has collapsed and the rest is mouldy and tottering, there is a dry-wall shed, badly covered and badly closed on three sides by walls and on the fourth

by boards. There is nothing inside it, except some straw on the floor and a primitive fireplace in a corner. I think that the village did not give them hospitality and they took shelter there...

498. Admonition of Thaddeus and James of Zebedee following a disagreement with the Iscariot.

21<sup>st</sup> September 1946.

498.1 «Do You really want to go along this road? For a number of reasons I don't think it is wise... » objects the Iscariot.

«Which? Did men from these villages not come to Me, as far as Capernaum, seeking health and wisdom? Are they not creatures of God, too? »

«Yes... But... It is not wise for You to go too close to Machaerus... It's an inauspicious place for Herod's enemies. »

«Machaerus is far away. And I have no time to go so far. I would like to go to Petra and beyond... But I shall be able to go half that distance, perhaps less. In any case, let us go... »

«Joseph advised You... »

«To remain on guarded roads. This is the road that takes one beyond the Jordan and is strictly watched over by the Romans. I am not cowardly, Judas, or imprudent. »

«I would not trust it. I would not go away from Jerusalem. I... »

«Leave the Master alone. He is the Master and we are His disciples. When have you heard of a disciple giving advice to his master? » says James of Zebedee.

«When? It is not years ago that your brother told\* the Master not to go to Achor and He listened to him. Let Him listen to me now. »

«You are jealous and overbearing. If my brother spoke and was listened to, it means that what he said was right and was to be heeded. It was enough to look at John that day, to understand that it was justice to agree with him! »

«Oh! with all his wisdom he was never able to defend Him, and he never will. Instead what I did coming to Jerusalem is a

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\* told, in 379. 2 (the episode already remember by the same Iscariot in 422. 6).

recent event. »

«You did your duty. My brother also would have done it, if he had had the opportunity, and in a different way, because he is not capable of telling lies, not even for a good purpose, and I am glad of that... »

«You are offending me. You are calling me a liar... »

«Hey! Do you want me to say that you are sincere, if you lied so skilfully, without changing colour? »

«I was doing it... »

«I know. I know! To save the Master. But I don't like it, and none of us does. We prefer the simple reply of the old man\*. We prefer to be silent and to be considered stupid, and even maltreated, rather than lie. One begins for a good purpose and ends up with a bad one. »

«When one is wicked. But I am not. When one is a fool. But I am not. »

<sup>2</sup>«That is enough! Even if you are right, you end up by being wrong, not with regards to what you were throwing at each other's face but because of your lack of charity. You *all* know what My opinion is on sincerity. I insist on that also in respect of charity. Let us go. Your disputes grieve Me more than the insults of My enemies. » 498. 2

Jesus is obviously upset and He begins to walk with a rapid step, all alone, along a road which, without being an archaeologist, one understands was built by the Romans. It runs southwards, almost straight as far as the eye can see, between two ranges of high mountains. A monotonous road, dark because of the woody slopes enclosing it and preventing one's eyes from roving over the horizon, but well kept. Now and again there is a Roman bridge across torrents or little rivers, which flow towards the Jordan or the Dead Sea. I am not sure which, because the mountains obstruct the view on the western side where the river and the sea must be. There are some caravans on the road, coming up perhaps from the Red Sea and going goodness knows where, with many camels, camel drivers and merchants of a race clearly different from the Jewish one.

Jesus is always ahead, lonely. Behind, in two groups, the apos-

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\* the simple reply of the old man, that is of Ananias, in 496. 3.

ties are talking to one another in low voices. The Galileans are in front the Judaeans behind, with Andrew and John and the two disciples who have joined them. One group is trying to comfort James, who is dejected after the Master's reproach, the other is endeavouring to persuade Judas not to be always so obstinate and aggressive. And both groups agree in advising the two reproached apostles to go to the Master and make peace with Him.

«Me? I will go at once. I know I am right. I know what my actions are. It was not I who insinuated evil. And I am going» says the Iscariot. He is bold, I would say: shameless. He quickens his step to catch up with Jesus. I wonder once again whether in those days he was already prepared to betray the Christ and was conspiring with His enemies...

James, instead, who after all is less guilty is so depressed for grieving the Master that he has not got the courage to approach Him. He looks at his Master, Who is now speaking to Judas... He looks at Him and his desire for His forgiving word is clearly visible on his face. But his very love, so sincere, firm and deep, makes him feel that his misdeed is unpardonable.

498. 3 <sup>3</sup>The two groups are now together and also Simon Zealot, Andrew, Thomas and James say: «Cheer up! I know Him so well! He has already forgiven you! » and with keen perspicacity, the elderly and Wise Bartholomew, laying his hand on James' shoulder says: «I am telling you: to avoid farther storms He impartially reproached both of you. But in His heart He meant Judas only. »

«It is so, Bartholomew! My Brother is worrying Himself putting up with that man, whom He insists in wanting to reform and He tires trying to make him appear... as we are. He is the Master, and I... am I... But if I were Him, oh! the man of Kerioth would not be with us! » says Thaddeus while his beautiful eyes, which recall those of Jesus, flash with anger.

«Do you think so? Are you suspicious? Of what? » ask many. «Nothing. Nothing definite. But I don't like that man. »

«You never liked him, brother. An absurd repugnance that arose at your first meeting. You admitted it to me. It is against charity. You ought to overcome it, even if it were only to give joy to Jesus» says James of Alphaeus calmly and persuasively.

498. 4 «You are right, but... I am not able. <sup>4</sup>Come, James, let us go to my Brother together» and Judas of Alphaeus takes the arm of

James of Zebedee resolutely and drags him away.

Judas hears them coming, turns around, then says something to Jesus, Who stops waiting for them. Judas looks at the mortified apostle with mischievous eyes.

«Excuse me, move over a little. I must speak to my Brother» says Thaddeus. The words are polite, but the tone is very cold.

The Iscariot giggles, then shrugging his shoulders he retraces his steps joining the others.

«Jesus, we are sinners... » says Judas Thaddeus.

«I am a sinner, not you» whispers James with lowered head. «We are sinners, James, because I thought of what you did, I approved of it, I have it in my heart. So I am a sinner as well. Because my judgment against Judas comes from my heart and contaminates my charity... Jesus, are You not saying anything to Your disciples who acknowledged their sins? »

«What shall I say that you do not already know? Will you change your attitude towards your companion because of My words? » «No. Not more than he changes because of the words You speak to him» His cousin replies with sincerity for himself and for the others.

«Never mind, Judas, never mind! I made the mistake. I am involved and I have to look after myself, not after the others. Master, don't be annoyed with me... »

<sup>5</sup>«James, I would like one thing from you, from all of you. I am so grieved, because of the many incomprehensions I meet... because of so much stubborn resistance. You are aware of it... For every place that gives Me joy, there are three that refuse Me and they drive Me away like an evil-doer. But I would like to receive at least from you that comprehension and adherence which other people deny Me. That the world should not love Me, that I should feel suffocated by all this hatred, this aversion, enmity, suspicion around Me, by all kinds of base actions, by selfishness, by everything that only My infinite love for man makes Me put up with, is painful. But I endure it with patience. I have come to suffer that from those who hate Salvation. But you! No, I cannot stand that! That you are not able to love one another and thus understand Me. That you do not adhere to My spirit, striving to do what I do.

Do you all think I do not see Judas' errors, and I am unac-

quainted with his deeds? Oh! be convinced that it is not so. If I had wanted beings that were perfect in their spirits, I would have got angels to become incarnate and I would have surrounded Myself with them. I could have done that. Would it really have been a good thing? No. On My side it would have been selfishness and contempt. I would have avoided the grief caused by your imperfections and I would have despised men created by My Father and so much loved by Him as to send Me to save them. And on man's side it would have been detrimental to his future. When My mission is completed and I ascend once again to Heaven with My angels, what and who would actually be left to continue My mission? Which man would have been able to try and do what I say, if only a God and angels had set the example for a new life guided by the spirit? It was necessary for Me to take a human body to persuade man that if he wishes so, he can be chaste and holy in every way. And it was also necessary for Me to take men, as they are, whose spirits replied to My spirit, without taking into account whether they were rich or poor, learned or ignorant, citizens or countrymen. It was necessary for Me to take them as I found them, and for My will and theirs to transform them slowly into masters of other men.

Man can believe man, the man he sees. But it is difficult for man, who has fallen so low, to believe in God, Whom he does not see. Sinai was still blazing with fire and idolatry had already begun at the foot of the mountain... Moses was not yet dead, and they were already committing sins against the Law, although they could not look at his face. But when you are transformed into masters and you are like an example, a witness, like yeast among men, they will no longer be able to say: "They are gods who have descended among men and we cannot imitate them". They will have to say:

"They are men like us. They have the same instincts, incentives and reactions as we have, and yet they are able to resist their incentives and instincts, and their reactions are completely different from our brutal ones". And they will be convinced that man can be divinised, if he only wishes to follow the ways of God. Look at the Gentiles and idolaters. Are they made any better by all their Olympus and all their gods? No. Because if they are incredulous, they say that their gods are a fable; if they are

believers they say: "They are gods and I am a man" and they do not strive to imitate them. You therefore must strive to be like Me. And do not be in a hurry. Man evolves slowly from a reasonable animal into a spiritual being. And bear with one another! No one, except God, is perfect.

<sup>6</sup>And it is all over now, is it not? Improve yourselves with firm will, imitating Simon of Jonas, who in less than one year has made rapid progress. And yet... Who among you was more materially human than Simon with all the defects of a very material humanity? »

«That is true, Jesus. I never stop studying him. And he surprises me» confesses Thaddeus.

«Yes. I have been with him since my childhood. I know him as if he had been my brother. But now I have a different Simon in front of me. I must admit that when You said that he was our chief, I, and I was not the only one, was perplexed. He seemed to be the least suitable of all of us. Simon as compared to the other Simon and Nathanael! Simon in comparison with my brother and with Your brothers! Above all with regards to those five! I really thought it was a mistake... I now say that You were right. »

«And you only see the surface of Simon! But I see his depth. He has still much to do and to suffer to be perfect. But I would like to see his goodwill, his simplicity, humbleness and love in everyone... » Jesus is looking in front of Himself and seems to be seeing I do not know what. He is absorbed in thought and smiles at what He sees. He then lowers His eyes and looks at James smiling.

«So... am I forgiven?! »

«I would like to forgive everybody as I forgive you... There, that town must be Heshbon. The man said so: the town is after the bridge with three arches. Let us wait for the others and go into town all together. »

#### 499. Escape from Heshbon. A meeting with a merchant from Petra.

22<sup>nd</sup> September 1946.

<sup>XI</sup>I cannot see the town of Heshbon. Jesus and His apostles <sup>499 1</sup> are coming out of it and from their looks I realise that they are



disappointed. They are followed, or rather chased, a few metres away, by a bawling threatening crowd...

«These places around the Dead Sea are cursed like the sea itself» says Peter.

«This place! It is still the same as in Moses' days and You are too kind to punish it as it was punished\* then. But that is what is needed: to subdue the people with the power of Heaven or with that of the Earth, all of them, to the last man and the last place» says Nathanael angrily, his sunken eyes flashing with wrath. The Jewish race shows up remarkably in the lean elderly apostle in his outburst of indignation and makes him look very much like the many rabbis and Pharisees who always oppose Jesus.

And the Master turns around and lifting His arm He says: «Peace! Peace! They will be drawn to the Truth as well. But peace is necessary. And compassion. We have never been here. They do not know us. Other places were like that the first time, they then changed. »

«The trouble is that these places are like Masada\*\*. Corrupt-ed! Let us go back to the Jordan» says Peter insisting. '

But Jesus proceeds southwards along the main road, which they have taken again. Those who are most enraged with Him continue to follow Him, drawing the attention of wayfarers all the time.

499. 2      <sup>2</sup>One, who must be a rich merchant or employed by a merchant, and is driving a long caravan going northwards, watches with astonishment and stops his camel. All the others stop at the same time. He looks at Jesus, he looks at the apostles, whose appearance is so defenceless and benign, he looks at the bawling crowds which arrive threateningly and he asks them what it is all about. I cannot hear his words, but I hear those shouted in reply: «He is the cursed Nazarene, the mad possessed Nazarene. We don't want Him within our walls! »

The man does not ask any farther question. He turns the camel round, he shouts something to one of his men who was following him closely and he goads his animal which, with few curvets, reaches the apostles. «In the name of your God, which of you is Jesus the Nazarene? » he asks the apostles Matthew, Philip, Si-

\* was punished, as narrated in: *Genesis 19, 23-29; Deuteronomy 29, 22.*

\*\* like Masada, in 392.

mon Zealot and Isaac, who are in the last group.

«Why do you want to know? Do you want to molest Him as well?

Are His fellow-countrymen not enough? Do you want to start, too? » says Philip quite worriedly.

«I am not as bad as they are. And I am seeking grace. Do not reject me. I beg you in the name of your God. »

Something in the man's voice convinces the four apostles and Simon says: «The one ahead of everybody, with the two youngest ones. »

The man goads his camel again because Jesus, Who was ahead, has gone even farther away during the short conversation of which He is unaware.

<sup>3</sup>«Lord!... Listen to an unhappy man... » he says, as soon as he catches up with Him. 499. 3

Jesus, John and Marjiam turn around quite astonished.

«What do you want? »

«I come from Petra, Lord. I carry goods coming from the Red Sea as far as Damascus, on behalf of other people. I am not poor. But I am just as unhappy. I have two children, Lord, and a disease has affected their eyes and they are blind; one, who was taken ill first, is completely blind, the other is almost blind and will soon lose his sight completely. Doctors do not work miracles, but You do. »

«How do you know? »

«I know a rich merchant who knows You. He often stops in my enclosure and at times I serve him. When he saw my sons he said to me: "Only Jesus of Nazareth could cure them. Look for Him". I would have looked for You. But I do not have much time and I have to follow the most suitable roads, »

«When did you see Alexander? »

«Between your two springtime festivals. Since then I have made two trips but I never met You. Lord, have mercy! »

«Man, I cannot go down as far as Petra, and you cannot leave the caravan... »

«Of course I can. Arisa is a reliable man. I will tell him to go on slowly. I will fly to Petra. My camel is faster than the wind in the desert and more agile than a gazelle. I will take my children and another faithful servant. I will catch up with You. You will

cure them... Oh! light in their dark eyes as beautiful as stars, now dimmed by a thick cloud! Then I will carry on, while they go back to their mother. I see that You are going on, Lord. Where are You going? »

«I was going to Dibon... »

«Don't go there. It is full of those... of Machaerus. Cursed places, Lord. Don't abandon unhappy people, Lord, to give Yourself to those who are cursed. »

«Just what I was thinking» mutters Bartholomew into his beard, and many say that he is right.

499.4 <sup>4</sup>By now all the people are around Jesus and the man from Petra. On the contrary, the citizens of Heshbon, seeing that the caravan is well disposed to the persecuted Master, retrace their steps. The caravan, standing still, is awaiting the outcome and the decision.

«Man, if I do not go to the towns in the south, I will go back to the north. But that does not mean that I will listen to you. »

«I know that I am contemptible for you Israelites. I am un^ircumcised and I do not deserve being listened to. But You are the King of the world, and we are in the world, too... »

«That is not the point. The matter is... How can you believe that I can do what doctors were not able to do? »

«Because You are the Messiah of God and they are men. You are the Son of God. Misace told me and I believe it. You can do everything, also for a poor man like me. » His reply is a resolute one and the man completes it by sliding down to the ground, without even getting his camel to kneel down, and he prostrates himself in the dust.

«Your faith is greater than that of many. Go. Do you know where mount Nebo is? »

«Yes, Lord. That is mount Nebo. We also have heard of Moses. A great man! Too great to be ignored. But You are greater. The comparison between You and Moses is like that between a mountain and a stone. »

«Go to Petra. I will be waiting for you on mount Nebo... »

«There is a village at the foot of the mountain for visitors. And there are hotels... I shall be there in ten days' time at the most. I will force my camel and if He Who sends You protects me, I shall not meet any storm. »

«Go and come back as soon as possible. I must go to other places... »

«Lord! I... am not circumcised. My blessing is a dishonour for You. But the blessing of a father is never so. I bless You and I am off. »

He takes a silver whistle and blows it three times. The man at the head of the caravan comes back at a gallop. They speak to each other and then say goodbye. The man goes back to the caravan which sets off. The other man mounts his camel again and departs southwards at a gallop.

<sup>5</sup>Jesus and His apostles set forth again. «Are we really going <sup>499</sup> 5 to mount Nebo? »

«Yes, and we shall leave the towns and climb the slopes of the Abarim mountains. There will be many shepherds. And we shall learn from them the road to mount Nebo and we shall teach them the Way to the mountain of God. And we shall stop there for a few days, as we did on the mountains of Arbela and near mount Cherit. »

«Oh! how lovely it will be! And we shall become better. We were always stronger and better when we came down from those places» says John.

«And You will speak to us of everything that Nebo reminds us of. Brother, do You remember, when we were children, that one day\* you played Moses who blessed Israel before dying? » says Judas of Alphaeus.

«Yes. And Your Mother uttered a cry seeing You lie down as if You were dead? Now we are really going to mount Nebo» says James of Alphaeus.

«And You will bless Israel. You are the true Leader of the people of God! » exclaims Nathanael.

«But You will not die there. You will never die, will You, Master? » asks Judas of Kerieth with a strange giggle.

«I shall die and rise as it has been stated. Many men will die without being dead on that day. And while the just will rise again, even if they have been dead for years, those living in their bodies but whose spirits are definitely dead, shall not rise again. Make sure you are not one of them. »

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\* that one day..., in 38. 3/5.

«And You make sure that no one hears You repeat that You will rise again. They say it is blasphemy» replies Judas of Kerioth. «It is the truth. And I say it. »

«What faith that man has! And that Misace! » says the Zealot trying to make a digression.

«But who is Misace? » ask those who last year did not take part in the journey beyond the Jordan\*. And they go away speaking of those events, while Jesus resumes with Marjiam and John the thread of their interrupted discourse.

#### 500. Reflections of Bartholomew and John after a retreat on mount Nebo.

23<sup>rd</sup> September 1946.

500.1 X«I shall always regret this mountain and this rest in the Lord» says Peter while they are getting ready to descend from a very wild hillside to the valley.

They are in a range of very high mountains. To the east, beyond the valley, there are more mountains, and there are mountains to the south and even higher ones to the north. To north-west there is the green valley of the Jordan which flows into the Dead Sea. To the west there is first the gloomy sea and then, beyond it, the arid stony desert, interrupted only by the wonderful Engedi oasis, and then the Judaeen mountains. An imposing wide view. One's eyes can reach as far as they wish, forgetting in the vision of so much vegetable life, which one supposes or knows it is inhabited the gloomy sight of the Dead Sea, devoid of sails and life, still gloomy even in sunshine, sad also in the low peninsula which almost halfway along the eastern side, projects into it. How dreadful are the paths descending to the valley! Only wild animals can feel at their ease on them. If they were not able to hold on to trunks and bushes it would be impossible for them to descend, and that makes the Iscariot grumble.

«And yet, I would like to go back again» replies Peter.

«You have queer tastes. This place is worse than the first and the second one. »

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\* beyond the Jordan, in chapters 286-294.

«But not worse than the place where our Master prepared for his mission of a preacher» remarks John objecting.

«Eh! Everything seems beautiful to you... »

«Yes. Everything around my Master is beautiful and good and I love it. »

«Be careful, I also am in that everything... and also Phari-sees, Sadducees, scribes and Herodians are often in it... Do you love them as well? »

«He loves them. »

«And what about you? ha! ha! are you doing what He does? But He is He, and you are you. I don't know whether you will always be able to love, as you grow pale whenever you hear someone speak of betrayal and death, or you see someone who wishes such things. »

«Which means that I am very imperfect, if I become upset out of fear for Him or out of anger towards culprits. »?

«Ah! so anger also upsets you? I didn't think so... So, if one day you should by chance see someone really hurting the Master, what would you do? »

«Me?! Why ask me? The Law says: "Eye for eye, tooth for tooth". My hands would become tongs round his throat. »

«Oh! But He says that one must forgive! Has meditation improved you so much? »

«Leave me alone, you disturber! Why are you tempting and disturbing me? What have you got in your heart? I would like to see it... »

<sup>2</sup>«The mystery of the bottom of the Dead Sea is not revealed to those prying into its waters. Those waters are like a sepulchral stone covering the rottenness they have received» says behind them Bartholomew, who is at the rear. The others are all ahead and have not heard, but Bartholomew did. And he intervenes in their conversation and his glance is an admonition. 500. 2

«Oh! the wise Bartholomew! But you are not going to say that I am like the Dead Sea! »

«I was speaking to John, not to you. Come with me, son of Zebedee I shall not upset you» and he takes John by the arm, as if he, an elderly man, were seeking the support of his young agile companion.

Judas is left last and makes an ugly gesture of wrath behind

their backs. He seems to be swearing something to himself, or to be threatening...

«What did Judas mean? And what did you mean?» John asks elderly Nathanael.

500. 3

«Forget about it, my dear friend, instead let us think of what the Master explained to us during the past days. How well we understood Israel!»

«True. I don't understand why the world does not realise it!»  
«We do not understand it fully either, John. We don't want to understand. See how difficult it is for us to accept His Messianic idea?»

«Yes, we believe Him blindly in everything, except that. As you are a learned man, can you tell me why? Since we find the rabbis to be dull-minded as compared with the Christ, why do we also fail to attain the perfect idea of a spiritual regality of the Messiah?»

«I have wondered many a time myself. Because I would like to arrive at what you call a perfect idea. And I think I can set my mind, at rest by saying to myself that what opposes such acceptance in us, who are willing to follow Him not only materially and doctrinally, but also spiritually, are all the ages before us... and within us. Within us: See? Look eastwards, southwards, westwards. Every stone has a recollection and a name. Every stone, every fountain, every path, every village or castle, every town, every river, every mountain... what do they remind us of, and what do they shout to us? The promise of a Saviour. The mercy of God on His people. Like a drop of oil from a leaking goatskin the little initial group, the nucleus of the future people of Israel spread with Abraham over the world, as far as remote Egypt, and then, more and more numerous, came back with Moses to the land of father Abraham, rich in greater and more certain promises and in the signs of. God's paternity, established as a true People because it was provided with a Law, which is the holiest in existence. But what happened later? What happened to that summit which a little while ago was shining in the sun? Look at it now. It is enveloped in clouds that change its appearance. If we did not know that it is there and we were to identify it to direct our steps towards a safe road, would we be able to do so, disfigured as it is by thick clouds that look like

rounded hills and mountain ridges? That is what happened to us. The Messiah is what God told our fathers the patriarchs and the prophets. Immutable. But what we have added of our own, to... explain Him, according to our poor human wisdom, has created such a Messiah, such a false moral figure of the Messiah, that we can no longer recognise the true Messiah. And with the ages and generations behind us, we believe in the Messiah we have conceived, in the Avenger, in the very human King, and we are not able to conceive the Messiah and King as He really is as thought of and wanted by God, although we say that we do believe in Him. That's the situation, my dear friend! »

<sup>500. 4</sup>  
4«But shall we, at least we, never succeed in seeing, believing, wanting the real Messiah? »

«Yes, we shall succeed. If we were not to succeed, He would not have chosen us. And if Mankind were not to benefit by the Messiah, the Most High would not have sent Him. »

«But He will redeem the Sin also without the help of Mankind! Through His own merit only. »

«My dear friend, the redemption from the original Sin would be a great one, but would not be complete. We have other sins in addition to the original one. And to be cleansed, they need the Redeemer and the faith of those who apply to Him as their Salvation. I think that Redemption will be active until the end of the world. The Christ will not be inactive for a moment, when He becomes the Redeemer and gives Mankind the Life that is in Him, just as a fountain unceasingly gives its water to those who are thirsty one day after the other, one month after the other, one year after the other, one century after the other. Mankind will always be in need of Life. He cannot cease giving it to those who hope and believe in Him with wisdom and justice. »

«You are a learned man, Nathanael. I am a poor ignorant fellow

«You do by spiritual instinct what I do with difficulty by means of mental reflection: our transformation from Israelites into Christians. But you will reach your goal sooner because you can love more than you can reflect. Love carries you off and transforms you. »

«You are kind, Nathanael. If we were all like you! » says John with a deep sigh.



«Forget about it, John! Let us pray for Judas» says the elderly apostle, who has understood John's sighing...  
500.5 <sup>5</sup>«Oh! You are here as well! We were looking at you coming. What were you talking about so earnestly? » asks Thomas smiling.

«We were speaking of ancient Israel. Where is the Master? »

«He has gone ahead with His brothers and Isaac to see a sick shepherd. He told us to proceed along this road until we come to the one climbing up to the mountain. »

«Let us go, then. »

They are going down now on a path which is not so steep until they arrive at a real mule-track which goes up mount Nebo. There is a small group of houses in the wood. Farther down, almost in the valley, there are the white houses of a true and proper town on the slopes which are now almost flat. From the road where they are they can see people entering the town.

«Shall we wait for the man from Petra over there? » asks Peter.

«Yes, that is the town. Let us hope he has come. If so, tomorrow we will go back towards the Jordan. I don't know. I don't feel at all happy here» says Matthew.

«The Master had told us to go much farther on» says the Iscariot.

«Yes, but I hope He will convince Himself of the opposite. »

«But what are you afraid of? Of Herod? Of his bravoos? »

«Bravoos are not only at Herod's service. Oh! Here is the Master! The shepherds are numerous and happy. These have been conquered. They are nomads. They will go and spread the good news that the Messiah is on the Earth» says Matthew again.

Jesus joins them with a train of shepherds and herds.

«Let us go. We shall be just in time to arrive at the village. These men will give us hospitality, they are known. » Jesus is happy to be among simple people who are capable of believing in the Lord.