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Paper 120

The Bestowal of Michael on Urantia

Assigned by Gabriel to supervise the restatement of the life of Michael when on Urantia and in the likeness of a mortal, the Melchizedek director of the revelatory commission entrusted with this task was authorized to present a narrative of certain events which immediately preceded the Local Universe Creator's arrival on Urantia to embark on the terminal phase of the universe bestowal experience. To live such identical lives as the intelligent beings of the universe and to be bestowed in the likeness of various orders of created beings is a part of the price which every Local Universe Creator must pay for the full and supreme sovereignty of the universe of things and beings.

Before the events about to be delineated, Michael of Nebadon had been bestowed six times as six differing orders of diverse intelligent beings. Then Michael prepared to descend on Urantia in the likeness of a mortal, the lowest order of intelligent will creatures, and, as a human of the material realm, to execute the final act in the drama of the acquirement of universe sovereignty in accordance with the mandates of the divine Paradise Rulers of the universe of universes.

In the course of each of these preceding bestowals Michael not only acquired the finite experience of one group of created beings, but also an essential experience in Paradise co-operation which would, in and of itself, further contribute to being constituted the sovereign of the universe. At any moment throughout all past local universe time, Michael could have asserted personal sovereignty as a Local Universe Creator and as such could have ruled the universe. In such an event, Immanuel and the associated Paradise Beings would have taken leave of the universe. But Michael did not wish to rule Nebadon merely as a Local Universe Creator, instead desiring through actual experience in co-operative subordination to the Paradise Trinity, to become qualified to rule the universe and administer its affairs with that perfection of insight and wisdom of execution which will eventually be characteristic of the exalted rule of the Supreme Being. Michael aspired, not to perfection of rule as a Local Universe Creator, but to supremacy of administration as the embodiment of the universe wisdom and the divine experience of the Supreme Being.

Michael, therefore, had a double purpose in making these seven bestowals upon the various orders of universe creatures: First, to complete the required experience in creature understanding which is demanded of all Local Universe Creators before they assume complete sovereignty. At any time a Local Universe Creator may rule the universe, but can rule as the supreme representative of the Paradise Trinity only after passing through the seven universe-creature bestowals. Second, Michael was aspiring to the privilege of representing the maximum authority of the Paradise Trinity which can be exercised in the direct and personal administration of a local universe. Accordingly, Michael, during the experience of each universe bestowal, successfully and acceptably became voluntarily subordinate to the variously constituted wills of the diverse associations of the persons of the Paradise Trinity. That is, on the first bestowal Michael was subject to the combined will of the Universal Source, Eternal Spirit, and Infinite Mind; on the second bestowal to the will of the Universal Source and the Eternal Spirit; on the third bestowal to the will of the Universal Source and the Infinite Mind; on the fourth bestowal to the will of the Eternal Spirit and the Infinite Mind; on the fifth bestowal to the will of the Infinite Mind; on the sixth bestowal to the will of the Eternal Spirit; and during the seventh and final bestowal, on Urantia, to the will of the Universal Source.

Michael, therefore, combines the divine will of the sevenfold phases of the universal Creators with the understanding experience of the local universe creatures. In this way Michael's administration has become representative of the greatest possible power and authority although divested of all arbitrary assumptions. Michael's power is unlimited since it is derived from experienced association with the Paradise Deities; Michael's authority is unquestioned inasmuch as it was acquired through actual experience in the likeness of universe creatures; Michael's sovereignty is supreme since it embodies at the same time the sevenfold viewpoint of Paradise Deity with the creature viewpoint of time and space.

Having determined the time of the final bestowal and having selected the planet on which this extraordinary event would take place, Michael held the usual prebestowal conference with Gabriel and then came before Immanuel, the Paradise counselor. All powers of universe administration which had not previously been conferred upon Gabriel, Michael now assigned to the custody of Immanuel. And just before Michael's departure for the Urantia incarnation, Immanuel, in accepting the custody of the universe during the time of the Urantia bestowal, proceeded to impart the bestowal counsel which would serve as the incarnation guide for Michael, who would presently grow up on Urantia as a mortal of the realm.

In this connection it should be borne in mind that Michael had elected to execute this bestowal in the likeness of a mortal, subject to the will of the Paradise Creator. The Local Universe Creator required instructions from no one in order to effect this incarnation for the sole purpose of achieving universe sovereignty, but embarked upon a program of the revelation of the Supreme which involved co-operative functioning with the diverse wills of the Paradise Deities. Thus Michael's sovereignty, when finally and personally acquired, would actually be all-inclusive of the sevenfold will of Deity as it culminates in the Supreme. Michael had, therefore, six times previously been instructed by the personal representatives of the various Paradise Deities and their associations; and now was instructed by the Union of Days, ambassador of the Paradise Trinity to the local universe of Nebadon, acting on behalf of the Universal Source.

There were immediate advantages and tremendous compensations resulting from the willingness of this mighty Local Universe Creator to once more voluntarily become subordinate to the will of the Paradise Deities, this time to that of the Universal Source. By this decision to effect such associative subordination, Michael would experience in this incarnation, not only the nature of a mortal, but also the will of the Paradise Creator. And further, Michael could enter this unique bestowal with the complete assurance, not only that Immanuel would exercise the full authority of the Paradise Creator in the administration of the universe during Michael's absence on the Urantia bestowal, but also with the comforting knowledge that the Ancients of Days of the superuniverse had decreed the safety of the realm throughout the entire bestowal period.

And this was the setting of the momentous occasion when Immanuel presented the seventh bestowal commission. And the following are excerpts from this prebestowal charge of Immanuel to the universe ruler who subsequently became Jesus of Nazareth on Urantia, restated according to the principles set out for this edition:

1. The Seventh Bestowal Commission

“Michael, I am about to witness your seventh and final universe bestowal. You have executed the six previous commissions most faithfully and perfectly, and I have no doubt that you will be equally triumphant on this, your terminal sovereignty bestowal. Previously you have appeared on your bestowal spheres as a fully developed being of the order of your choosing. Now you are about to appear on Urantia, the disordered and disturbed planet of your choice, not as a fully developed mortal, but as a helpless baby. This, my friend, will be a new and untried experience for you. You are about to pay the full price of bestowal and to experience the complete enlightenment of the incarnation of a Creator in the likeness of a creature.

“Throughout each of your former bestowals you have voluntarily chosen to subject yourself to the will of the three Paradise Deities and their divine interassociations. Of the seven phases of the will of the Supreme you have, in your previous bestowals, been subject to all but the personal will of the Universal Source. Now that you have elected to be wholly subject to the Creator’s will throughout your seventh bestowal, I, as the personal representative of our Creator Parent, assume the unqualified jurisdiction of your universe for the time of your incarnation.

“In entering the Urantia bestowal, you have voluntarily divested yourself of all extraplanetary support and special assistance such as might be rendered by any creature of your own creation. Just as your created children of Nebadon are wholly dependent upon you for safe conduct throughout their universe careers, you must now become wholly and unreservedly dependent upon your Paradise Creator for safe conduct throughout the unrevealed vicissitudes of your ensuing mortal career. And when you have finished this bestowal experience, you will know in truth the full meaning and the rich significance of that faith-trust which you so unvaryingly require all your creatures to master as a part of their intimate relationship with you as their local universe Creator and Parent.

“Throughout your Urantia bestowal you need to be concerned with only one thing, the unbroken communion between you and your Paradise Creator; and it will be by the perfection of such a relationship that the world of your bestowal, even the entire universe of your creation, will experience a new and more understandable revelation of our Creator Parent, the Universal Creator of all. Your concern, therefore, has only to do with your personal life on Urantia. I will be fully and efficiently responsible for the security and unbroken administration of your universe from the moment of your voluntary relinquishment of authority until you return to us as Universe Sovereign, confirmed by Paradise, and receive back from my hands, not the vicegerent authority which you now surrender to me, but, instead, the supreme power over, and jurisdiction of, your universe.

“And so that you may know with assurance that I am empowered to do all that I am now promising (knowing full well that I am the assurance of all Paradise for the faithful performance of my word), there has just been communicated to me a mandate of the Ancients of Days on Uversa which will prevent all spiritual jeopardy in Nebadon throughout the period of your voluntary bestowal. From the moment you surrender consciousness, upon the beginning of the mortal incarnation, until you return to us as supreme and unconditional sovereign of this universe of your own creation and organization, nothing of serious importance can happen in all Nebadon. In this interim of your incarnation, I hold the orders of the Ancients of Days which unqualifiedly mandate the instantaneous and automatic extinction of any being guilty of

rebellion or presuming to instigate insurrection in the universe of Nebadon while you are absent on this bestowal. My friend, in view of the authority of Paradise inherent in my presence and augmented by the judicial mandate of Uversa, your universe and all its loyal creatures will be secure during your bestowal. You may proceed upon your mission with only a single thought — the enhanced revelation of our Creator Parent to the intelligent beings of your universe.

“As in each of your previous bestowals, I would remind you that I am the recipient of your universe jurisdiction as a trustee. I exercise all authority and wield all power in your name. I function as our Paradise Creator would, and in accordance with your explicit request that I act on your behalf. And all this delegated authority is yours to exercise again at any time you may requisition its return. Your bestowal is, throughout, wholly voluntary. As a mortal incarnate in the realm you are without celestial endowments, but all of your relinquished power may be had at any time you may choose to reinvest yourself with universe authority. If you should choose to reinstate yourself in power and authority, remember, it will be wholly for *personal* reasons since I am the living and supreme pledge whose presence and promise guarantee the safe administration of your universe in accordance with your Creator Parent’s will. Rebellion, such as has occurred three times in Nebadon, cannot take place during your absence from Salvington on this bestowal. For the period of the Urantia bestowal the Ancients of Days have decreed that rebellion in Nebadon will be invested with the automatic seed of its own annihilation.

“As long as you are absent on this final and extraordinary bestowal, I pledge (with Gabriel’s co-operation) the faithful administration of your universe; and as I commission you to undertake this ministry of divine revelation and to undergo this experience of perfected human understanding, I act on behalf of our Creator Parent and offer you the following counsel, which should guide you in the living of your earth life as you become progressively self-conscious regarding the divine mission of your continued sojourn on Urantia:

2. The Bestowal Limitations

“1. In accordance with the usages and in conformity with the technique of Sonarington — in compliance with the mandates of the Eternal Spirit of Paradise — I have provided in every way for your immediate entrance into this mortal bestowal in harmony with the plans formulated by you and placed in my keeping by Gabriel. You will grow up on Urantia as a child, complete your human education — all the while subject to the will of your Paradise Creator Parent — live your life on Urantia as you have determined, terminate your planetary sojourn, and prepare for ascension to the Universal Creator to receive the supreme sovereignty of your universe.

“2. Apart from your earth mission and your universe revelation, but incidental to both, I advise that you assume, after you are sufficiently self-conscious of your divine identity, the additional task of technically terminating the Lucifer rebellion in the system of Satania, and that you do all this as the *Child of Humanity*; thus, as a mortal creature of the realm, in weakness made powerful by faith-submission to the will of your Creator Parent, I suggest that you graciously achieve all you have repeatedly declined to arbitrarily accomplish by the power and might with which you were endowed at the time of the inception of this sinful and unjustified rebellion. I would regard it as a fitting climax of your mortal bestowal if you should return to us as the Child of Humanity, Planetary Administrator of Urantia, as well as the Child of the Creator, supreme sovereign of your universe. As a mortal, the lowest type of intelligent creature in

Nebadon, meet and adjudicate the blasphemous pretensions of Caligastia and Lucifer and, in your assumed humble estate, forever end the shameful misrepresentations of these fallen children of light. Having steadfastly declined to discredit these rebels through the exercise of your creator prerogatives, now it would be fitting that you should, in the likeness of the lowest creatures of your creation, wrest dominion from the hands of these fallen Beings; and so your whole local universe would in all fairness clearly and forever recognize the justice of your doing in the role of a mortal those things which mercy admonished you not to do by the power of arbitrary authority. And having by your bestowal established the possibility of the sovereignty of the Supreme in Nebadon, you will in effect have brought to a close the unadjudicated affairs of all preceding insurrections, notwithstanding the greater or lesser time lag involved in the realization of this achievement. By this act the pending dissensions of your universe will be in substance liquidated. And with the subsequent endowment of supreme sovereignty over your universe, similar challenges to your authority can never recur in any part of your great personal creation.

“3. When you have succeeded in terminating the Urantia secession, as you undoubtedly will, I counsel you to accept from Gabriel the title of ‘Planetary Administrator of Urantia’ as the eternal recognition by your universe of your final bestowal experience; and that you further do any and all things, consistent with the purpose of your bestowal, to atone for the sorrow and confusion brought upon Urantia by the Caligastia betrayal and the subsequent Edenic default.

“4. In accordance with your request, Gabriel and all concerned will co-operate with you in the expressed desire to end your Urantia bestowal with the pronouncement of a dispensational judgment, accompanied by the termination of an age, the resurrection of the sleeping mortal survivors, and the establishment of the dispensation of the Spirit of Truth.

“5. As concerns the planet of your bestowal and the immediate generation of mortals living there at the time of your mortal sojourn, I counsel you to function largely in the role of a teacher. Give attention, first, to the liberation and inspiration of humanity’s spiritual nature. Next, illuminate the darkened human intellect, heal the souls of mortals, and emancipate their minds from age-old fears. And then, in accordance with your mortal wisdom, minister to the physical well-being and material comfort of your siblings. Live the ideal religious life for the inspiration and edification of your entire universe.

“6. On Urantia, set rebellion-segregated mortals spiritually free. Make a further contribution to the sovereignty of the Supreme, extending the establishment of this sovereignty throughout the broad domains of your personal creation. In this, your material bestowal, you are about to experience the final enlightenment of a time-space Creator, the dual experience of working within the nature of mortals with the will of your Paradise Creator. In your temporal life the will of the finite creature and the will of the infinite Creator are to become as one, even as they are also uniting in the evolving Deity of the Supreme Being. Pour out on the planet of your bestowal the Spirit of Truth and make all normal mortals on that isolated sphere immediately and fully accessible to the ministry of the segregated presence of our Paradise Creator, the Thought Adjusters.

“7. In all that you may perform on the world of your bestowal, bear constantly in mind that you are living a life for the instruction and edification of your entire universe. You are *bestowing* this life of mortal incarnation upon Urantia, but you are to *live* such a life for the spiritual inspiration of every human and

superhuman intelligence that has lived, now exists, or may yet live on every inhabited world which has formed, now forms, or may yet form a part of the vast galaxy of your administrative domain. Your earth life shall not be lived to constitute an *example* for the mortals of Urantia in the days of your earthly sojourn nor for any subsequent generation of human beings on Urantia or on any other world. Rather your life on Urantia shall be the *inspiration* for all lives upon all Nebadon worlds throughout all generations in the ages to come.

“8. Your great mission to be realized and experienced in the mortal incarnation is embraced in your decision to live a life wholeheartedly motivated to do the will of your Paradise Creator, to *reveal* your Creator Parent, and especially to the mortal creatures. At the same time you will also *interpret*, with a new enhancement, our Parent to the supermortal beings of all Nebadon. Equally with this ministry of new revelation and augmented interpretation of the Paradise Creator to the human and the superhuman type of mind, you will also function to make a new revelation of mortals to the Creator. Exhibit in your one short life, as it has never before been seen in all Nebadon, the transcendent possibilities attainable by a Creator-knowing human during the short career of mortal existence, and make a new and illuminating *interpretation* of humans and the vicissitudes of their planetary life to all the superhuman intelligences of all Nebadon, and for all time. You are to go to Urantia, and living as a mortal in your day and generation, you will function to show your entire universe the ideal of perfected technique in the supreme engagement of the affairs of your vast creation: The achievement of the Creator seeking mortals and finding them, and the phenomenon of mortals seeking and finding the Creator; and doing all of this to mutual satisfaction and during one short material lifetime.

“9. I caution you to always bear in mind that, while in fact you are to become an ordinary human, in potential you will remain a Local Universe Creator. Throughout this incarnation, although you will live and act as a Child of Humanity, the creative attributes of your personal divinity will follow you from Salvington to Urantia. It will always be within your power to terminate the incarnation at any moment subsequent to the arrival of your Thought Adjuster. Prior to the arrival and reception of the Adjuster I will vouch for your personality integrity. But subsequent to the arrival of your Adjuster and concomitant with your progressive recognition of the nature of your bestowal mission, you should refrain from the formulation of any superhuman will-to-attainment, achievement, or power in view of the fact that your creator prerogatives will remain associated with your mortal personality because of the inseparability of these attributes from your personal presence. But no superhuman repercussions will attend your earthly career apart from the will of the Paradise Creator unless you should, by an act of conscious and deliberate will, make an undivided decision which would terminate in whole-personality choice.

3. Further Counsel and Advice

“And now, my friend and sibling, in taking leave of you as you prepare to depart for Urantia and after counseling you regarding the general conduct of your bestowal, allow me to present certain advice that has been arrived at in consultation with Gabriel, and which concerns minor phases of your mortal life. We further suggest:

“1. That, in the pursuit of the ideal of your mortal earth life, you also give some attention to the realization and exemplification of some things that are practical and immediately helpful to your created children.

“2. As concerns family relationships, give precedence to the accepted customs of family life as you find them established in the day and generation of your bestowal. Live your family and community life in accordance with the practices of the people among whom you have elected to appear.

“3. In your relations to the social order we advise that you confine your efforts largely to spiritual regeneration and intellectual emancipation. Avoid all entanglements with the economic structure and the political commitments of your day. More especially devote yourself to living the ideal religious life on Urantia.

“4. Under no circumstances and not even in the least detail, should you interfere with the normal and orderly progressive evolution of the Urantia races. But this prohibition must not be interpreted as limiting your efforts to leave behind you on Urantia an enduring and improved system of *positive religious ethics*. As a dispensational Being you are granted certain privileges pertaining to the advancement of the *spiritual* and *religious* status of the world’s peoples.

“5. As you may see fit, you are to identify yourself with existing religious and spiritual movements as they may be found on Urantia but in every possible manner seek to avoid the formal establishment of an organized cult, a crystallized religion, or a segregated ethical grouping of mortal beings. Your life and teachings are to become the common heritage of all religions and all peoples.

“6. To the end that you may not unnecessarily contribute to the creation of subsequent stereotyped systems of Urantia religious beliefs or other types of nonprogressive religious loyalties, we advise you still further: Leave no writings behind you on the planet. Refrain from all writing on permanent materials; enjoin your associates to make no images or other likenesses of yourself. See that nothing potentially idolatrous is left on the planet at the time of your departure.

“7. While you will live the normal and average social life of the planet, you will probably not enter the marriage relation, although that relation would be wholly honorable and consistent with your bestowal; but I must remind you that one of the incarnation mandates of Sonarington forbids the leaving of human offspring behind on any planet by a bestowal Being of Paradise origin.

“8. In all other details of your bestowal we would commit you to the leading of the indwelling Adjuster, the teaching of the ever-present divine spirit of human guidance, and the reason-judgment of your expanding human mind of hereditary endowment. Such an association of creature and Creator attributes will enable you to live the perfect life of mortals on the planetary spheres, not necessarily perfect as regarded by any one mortal in any one generation on any one world (much less on Urantia) but wholly and supremely replete as evaluated on the more highly perfected and perfecting worlds of your universe.

“And now, may our Creator Parent, who has sustained us in all past performances, guide and sustain you and be with you from the moment you leave us and achieve the surrender of your consciousness of personality, throughout your gradual return to recognition of your divine identity incarnate in human form, and then on through your bestowal experience on Urantia until your deliverance and ascension to the Universal Creator. When I see you again on Salvington, we will welcome your return to us as the supreme and unconditional sovereign of this universe of your own making, serving, and completed understanding.

“I now reign in your place. I assume jurisdiction of all Nebadon as acting sovereign during the time of your seventh and mortal bestowal on Urantia. And to you, Gabriel, I commit the safekeeping of the incarnated Child of Humanity until Michael returns to me as the Child of Humanity and the Child of the Creator. And, Gabriel, I am your sovereign until Michael returns.”

Then, immediately, in the presence of all Salvington, Michael disappeared from our midst until returning as the supreme and personal ruler of the universe, subsequent to the completion of the bestowal career on Urantia.

4. The Incarnation – Making Two One

And so certain unworthy children of Nebadon, who had accused Michael of selfishly seeking rulership and indulged the insinuation that the Local Universe Creator was arbitrarily and autocratically upheld in power by virtue of the unreasoning loyalty of a deluded universe of subservient creatures, were to be silenced forever and left confounded and disillusioned by the life of self-forgetful service which the Child of the Creator now entered upon as the Child of Humanity — all the while subject to the will of the Paradise Creator.

But make no mistake; Michael, while truly a dual-origin being, was not a double personality; was not Deity in association *with* mortals but, rather, Deity *incarnate* in a mortal. And Michael was always just that combined being. The only progressive factor in such a non-understandable relationship was the progressive self-conscious realization and recognition (by the human mind) of this fact of being both Deity and mortal.

Michael did not progressively become Deity. Deity did not, at some vital moment in the earth life of Jesus, become mortal. Jesus was Deity *and* mortal — always and forever. And this Deity and this mortal were, and now are, *one*, even as the Paradise Trinity of three beings is in reality *one* Deity.

Never lose sight of the fact that the supreme spiritual purpose of the Michael bestowal was to enhance the *revelation of the Creator*.

Urantia mortals have varying concepts of the miraculous, but to those of us who live as citizens of the local universe there are few miracles, and of these by far the most intriguing are the incarnational bestowals of the Paradise Beings. The appearance in and on your world, by apparently natural processes, of a divine Being, we regard as a miracle — the operation of universal laws beyond our understanding. Jesus of Nazareth was a miraculous person.

In and through all this extraordinary experience, The Creator chose to become manifest as always — *in the usual way* — in the normal, natural, and dependable way of divine acting.

Paper 121

The Times of Michael's Bestowal

Acting under the supervision of a commission of twelve members of the United Urantia Midwayers, conjointly sponsored by the presiding head of their order and the Melchizedek of record, the secondary midwayer of onetime attachment to the Apostle Andrew was authorized to place on record the narrative of the life transactions of Jesus of Nazareth as they were observed by the secondary midwayers, and as they were subsequently partially recorded by the human subject of temporal guardianship. Knowing how the Master so scrupulously avoided leaving written records behind, Andrew steadfastly refused to multiply copies of the written narrative. A similar attitude on the part of the other apostles of Jesus greatly delayed the writing of the story of Jesus' life.

1. The Occident of the First Century C.E.

Jesus did not come to this world during an age of spiritual decadence; at the time of Jesus' birth Urantia was experiencing a revival of spiritual thinking and religious living as it had not known in all its previous post-Edenic history nor has experienced in any era since. When Michael incarnated on Urantia, the world presented the most favorable conditions for the Local Universe Creator's bestowal that had ever previously prevailed or has since existed. In the centuries just prior to these times Greek culture and the Greek language had spread over the Occident and near Orient, and the Jews, being a Levantine race, in nature part Occidental and part Oriental, were eminently fitted to utilize such cultural and linguistic settings for the effective spread of a new religion to both East and West. These most favorable circumstances were further enhanced by the tolerant political rule of the Mediterranean world by the Romans.

This entire combination of world influences is well illustrated by the activities of Paul, who, being in religious culture a Hebrew, proclaimed the news of a Jewish Messiah in the Greek tongue, and was a Roman citizen.

Nothing like the civilization of the times of Jesus has been seen in the Occident before or since those days. European civilization was unified and coordinated under an extraordinary threefold influence:

1. The Roman political and social systems.
2. The Grecian language and culture — and philosophy to a certain extent.
3. The rapidly spreading influence of Jewish religious and moral teachings.

When Jesus was born, the entire Mediterranean world was a unified empire. Good roads, for the first time in the world's history, interconnected many major centers. The seas were cleared of pirates, and a great era of trade and travel was rapidly advancing. Europe did not enjoy another such period of travel and trade until the nineteenth century C.E.

Notwithstanding the internal peace and superficial prosperity of the Greco-Roman world, a majority of the inhabitants of the empire languished in squalor and poverty. The small upper class was rich; while a

miserable and impoverished lower class embraced the rank and file of humanity. There was no happy and prosperous middle class in those days; it had just begun to make its appearance in Roman society.

The first struggles between the expanding Roman and Parthian states had been concluded in the recent past, leaving Syria in the hands of the Romans. In the times of Jesus, Palestine and Syria were enjoying a period of prosperity, relative peace, and extensive commercial interaction with the lands to both the East and the West.

2. The Jewish People

The Jews were a part of the older Semitic race, which also included the Babylonians, the Phoenicians, and the more recent enemies of Rome, the Carthaginians. During the early part of the first century C.E., the Jews were the most influential group of the Semitic peoples, and they happened to occupy an unusually strategic geographic position in the world as it was at that time ruled and organized for trade.

Many of the great highways joining the nations of antiquity passed through Palestine, which became the meeting place, or crossroads, of three continents. The travel, trade, and armies of Babylonia, Assyria, Egypt, Syria, Greece, Parthia, and Rome successively swept over Palestine. From time immemorial, many caravan routes from the Orient passed through some part of this region to the few good seaports of the eastern end of the Mediterranean, from which ships carried their cargoes to all of the maritime Occident. And more than half of this caravan traffic passed through or near the little town of Nazareth in Galilee.

Although Palestine was the home of Jewish religious culture and the birthplace of Christianity, the Jews were abroad in the world, dwelling in many nations and trading in every province of the Roman and Parthian states.

Greece provided a language and a culture, Rome built the roads and unified an empire, but the dispersion of the Jews, with their more than two hundred synagogues and well-organized religious communities scattered throughout the Roman world, provided the cultural centers in which the new teachings about the Creator found initial reception, and from which they subsequently spread to the uttermost parts of the world.

Each Jewish synagogue tolerated a fringe of gentile followers, and it was among this fringe of proselytes that Paul made the bulk of the early converts to Christianity. Even the temple at Jerusalem possessed its ornate court of the gentiles. There was a very close connection between the culture, commerce, and worship of Jerusalem and Antioch. In Antioch Paul's disciples were first called "Christians."

The centralization of the Jewish temple worship at Jerusalem constituted both the secret of the survival of their monotheism and the promise of the nurture and sending forth to the world of a new and enlarged concept of that one Deity of all nations and Parent of all mortals. The temple service at Jerusalem represented the survival of a religious cultural concept in the face of the downfall of a succession of gentile national overlords and persecutors.

The Jewish people of this time, although under Roman control, enjoyed a considerable degree of self-government and, remembering the recent heroic exploits of deliverance executed by Judas Maccabee, were

vibrant with the expectation of the immediate appearance of a still greater deliverer, the long-expected Messiah.

The secret of the survival of Palestine, the land of the Jews, as a semi-independent state was contained in the foreign policy of the Roman government, which desired to maintain control of the Palestinian highway of travel between Syria and Egypt as well as of the western terminals of the caravan routes between the Orient and the Occident. Rome did not want any power to arise in the Levant which might curb its future expansion in these regions. The policy of intrigue which had as its object the pitting of Seleucid Syria and Ptolemaic Egypt against each other necessitated the fostering of Palestine as a separate and independent state. Roman policy, the degeneration of Egypt, and the progressive weakening of the Seleucids before the rising power of Parthia, explain why a small and unpowerful group of Jews was able to maintain its independence against both Seleucids to the north and Ptolemies to the south for several generations. This fortuitous liberty and independence of the political rule of surrounding and more powerful peoples the Jews attributed to the fact that they were the “chosen people,” and therefore to the direct interposition of Yahweh. Such an attitude of racial superiority made it all the more difficult for them to endure Roman control when it finally fell on their land. But even in that sad hour the Jews refused to learn that their world mission was spiritual, not political.

The Jews were unusually apprehensive and suspicious during the times of Jesus because they were ruled by an outsider, Herod the Idumean, who had seized control of Judea by cleverly cultivating the Roman rulers. And Herod, although professing loyalty to the Hebrew ceremonial observances, still proceeded to build temples for many strange gods.

The friendly relations of Herod with the Roman rulers made the world safe for Jewish travel and opened the way for increased Jewish penetration of distant portions of the Roman Empire and of foreign treaty nations with the new teachings about the Creator. Herod’s reign also contributed much toward the further blending of Hebrew and Hellenistic philosophies.

Herod built the harbor of Caesarea, which further aided in making Palestine the crossroads of the civilized world. Herod died in 4 B.C.E, and was succeeded by Herod Antipas who governed Galilee and Perea during Jesus’ youth and ministry until C.E. 39. Antipas was a great builder, and rebuilt many of the cities of Galilee, including the important trade center of Sepphoris.

The Galileans were not regarded with full favor by the Jerusalem religious leaders and rabbinical teachers. Galilee was more gentile than Jewish when Jesus was born.

3. Among the Gentiles

Although the social and economic condition of the Roman state was not of the highest order, the widespread domestic peace and prosperity was propitious for the bestowal of Michael. In the first century C.E. the society of the Mediterranean world consisted of five well-defined strata:

1. *The aristocracy.* The upper classes with money and official power, the privileged and ruling groups.

2. *The business groups.* The merchants and the bankers, the traders — the big importers and exporters — the international merchants.

3. *The small middle class.* Although this group was small, it was very influential and provided the moral backbone of the early Christian church, which encouraged them to continue in their various crafts and trades. Among the Jews many of the Pharisees belonged to this class.

4. *The free proletariat.* This group had little or no social standing. Though proud of their freedom, they were placed at great disadvantage because they were forced to compete with slave labor. The upper classes regarded them disdainfully, considering them useless except for “breeding purposes.”

5. *The slaves.* Half the population of the Roman state were slaves; many were superior individuals and quickly made their way up among the free proletariat and even among the middle class. Slavery, even of superior peoples, was a feature of Roman military conquest. The power of the master over the slave was unqualified. The early Christian church was largely composed of the lower classes and these slaves.

Superior slaves often received wages and by saving their earnings were able to purchase their freedom. Many such emancipated slaves rose to high positions in state, religion, and the business world. And it was just such possibilities that made the early Christian church so tolerant of this modified form of slavery.

There was no widespread social problem in the Roman Empire in the first century C.E. The major portion of the populace regarded themselves as belonging in that group into which they happened to be born. There was always the open door through which talented and able individuals could ascend from the lower to the higher strata of Roman society, but the people were generally content with their social rank. They were not class conscious, neither did they look at these class distinctions as being unjust or wrong. Christianity was in no sense an economic movement having for its purpose the amelioration of the miseries of the depressed classes.

4. Gentile Philosophy

Present in the hearts of the nobler gentiles there was abundant soil of natural goodness and potential human affection in which it was possible for the seed of Christianity to sprout and bring forth an abundant harvest of moral character and spiritual achievement. The gentile world was dominated by four great philosophies, all more or less derived from the earlier Platonism of the Greeks. These schools of philosophy were:

1. *The Epicurean.* This school of thought was dedicated to the pursuit of happiness. The more advanced Epicureans were not given to sensual excesses. At least this doctrine helped to deliver the Romans from a more deadly form of fatalism; it taught that people could do something to improve their terrestrial status. It did effectually combat ignorant superstition.

2. *The Stoic.* Stoicism was the superior philosophy of the higher classes. The Stoics believed that a controlling Reason-Fate dominated all nature. They taught that the soul was divine; that it was imprisoned in the evil body of physical nature. A mortal's soul achieved liberty by living in harmony with nature, with Deity; thus virtue came to be its own reward. Stoicism ascended to a sublime morality, ideals never since transcended by any purely human system of philosophy. While the Stoics professed to be the “offspring of

Deity,” they failed to know, and therefore find, the Creator. Stoicism remained a philosophy; it never became a religion. Its followers sought to attune their minds to the harmony of the Universal Mind, but they failed to envisage themselves as the children of a loving Parent. Paul leaned heavily toward Stoicism when writing, “I have learned to be content in whatever state I am.”

3. *The Cynic*. Although the Cynics traced their philosophy to Diogenes of Athens, they derived much of their doctrine from the remnants of the teachings of Machiventa Melchizedek. Cynicism had formerly been more of a religion than a philosophy. At least the Cynics made their religio-philosophy democratic. In the fields and in the marketplaces they continually preached their doctrine that “people could save themselves if they would.” They preached simplicity and virtue and urged people to meet death fearlessly. These wandering Cynic preachers did much to prepare the spiritually hungry populace for the later Christian missionaries. Their plan of popular preaching was similar to the pattern, and in accordance with the style, of Paul’s Epistles.

4. *The Skeptic*. Skepticism asserted that knowledge was fallacious, and that conviction and assurance were impossible. It was a purely negative attitude and never became widespread.

These philosophies were semireligious; they were often invigorating, ethical, and ennobling but were usually above the common people. With the possible exception of Cynicism, they were philosophies for the strong and the wise, not religions of salvation for the poor and the weak.

5. The Gentile Religions

Throughout preceding ages religion had chiefly been an affair of the tribe or nation; it had not often been a matter of concern to the individual. Deities were tribal or national, not personal. Such religious systems afforded little satisfaction for the individual spiritual longings of the average person.

In the times of Jesus the religions of the Occident included:

1. *The pagan cults*. These were a combination of Hellenic and Latin mythology, patriotism, and tradition.
2. *Emperor worship*. This deification of a mortal as the symbol of the state was seriously resented by the Jews and the early Christians and led directly to the bitter persecutions of both religions by the Roman government.
3. *Astrology*. This pseudo-science of Babylon developed into a religion throughout the Greco-Roman Empire. Even in the twenty-first century people have not been fully delivered from this superstitious belief.
4. *The mystery religions*. On a spiritually hungry world a flood of mystery cults had broken, new and strange religions from the Levant, which had enamored the common people and had promised them *individual* salvation. These religions rapidly became the accepted belief of the lower classes of the Greco-Roman world. They did much to prepare the way for the rapid spread of the vastly superior Christian teachings, which presented a majestic concept of Deity, associated with an intriguing theology for the intelligent and a profound offer of salvation for all, including the uneducated but spiritually hungry average person of those days.

The mystery religions spelled the end of national beliefs and resulted in the birth of the numerous personal cults. The mysteries were many, but were all characterized by:

1. Some mythical legend, a mystery — therefore their name. As a rule this mystery pertained to the story of some god's life and death and return to life, as illustrated by the teachings of Mithraism, which, for a time, were contemporary with, and a competitor of, Paul's rising cult of Christianity.
2. The mysteries were nonnational and interracial. They were personal and familial, giving rise to numerous religious and sectarian societies.
3. They were, in their services, characterized by elaborate ceremonies of initiation and impressive sacraments of worship. Their secret rites and rituals were sometimes gruesome and revolting.
4. But no matter what the nature of their ceremonies or the degree of their excesses were, these mysteries invariably promised their devotees *salvation*, "deliverance from evil, survival after death, and enduring life in blissful realms beyond this world of sorrow and slavery."

But do not make the mistake of confusing the teachings of Jesus with the mysteries. The popularity of the mysteries reveals humanity's quest for survival, portraying a desire for personal religion and individual righteousness. Although the mysteries failed to adequately satisfy this longing, they did prepare the way for the subsequent appearance of Jesus, who brought true religion to this world.

Paul, in an effort to utilize the widespread adherence to the higher types of the mystery religions, made certain adaptations of the teachings of Jesus so as to render them more acceptable to a larger number of prospective converts. But even Paul's compromise of Jesus' teachings (Christianity) was superior to the mysteries in that:

1. Paul taught a moral redemption, an ethical restoration. Christianity pointed to a new life and proclaimed a new ideal. Paul forsook magic rites and ceremonial enchantments.
2. Christianity presented a religion which grappled with final solutions of the human problem, for it not only offered escape from sorrow and even from death, but it also promised deliverance from sin followed by the endowment of a righteous character of eternal survival qualities.
3. The mysteries were built on myths. Christianity, as Paul preached it, was founded on a historic fact: the bestowal of Michael, the Child of the Creator, on humanity.

Morality among the gentiles was not necessarily related to either philosophy or religion. Outside of Palestine it not always occurred to people that a priest was supposed to lead a moral life. Jewish religion and subsequently the teachings of Jesus and the later evolving Christianity of Paul were the first European religions to promote morals and ethics, insisting that religionists pay some attention to both.

Into such a generation, dominated by incomplete systems of philosophy and confused by complex cults of religion, Jesus was born in Palestine, and to this same generation subsequently taught personal religion — a direct relationship with a loving Creator.

6. The Hebrew Religion

By the close of the first century B.C.E. the religious thought of Jerusalem had been tremendously influenced and somewhat modified by Greek cultural teachings and even by Greek philosophy. In the long contest between the views of the Eastern and Western schools of Hebrew thought, Jerusalem and the rest of the Occident and the Levant in general adopted the Western Jewish or modified Hellenistic viewpoint.

In the days of Jesus three languages prevailed in Palestine: The common people spoke some dialect of Aramaic; the priests and rabbis spoke Hebrew; the educated classes and the higher strata of Jews in general spoke Greek. The early translation of the Hebrew scriptures into Greek at Alexandria was responsible in no small measure for the subsequent predominance of the Greek wing of Jewish culture and theology, and the writings of the Christian teachers were soon to appear in the same language. The renaissance of Judaism dates from the Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures. This was a vital influence which later determined the drift of Paul's Christian cult toward the West instead of toward the East.

Though the Hellenized Jewish beliefs were little influenced by the teachings of the Epicureans, they were materially affected by the philosophy of Plato and the self-abnegation doctrines of the Stoics. The great inroad of Stoicism is exemplified by the Fourth Book of the Maccabees; the penetration of both Platonic philosophy and Stoic doctrines is exhibited in the Wisdom of Solomon. The Hellenized Jews brought to the Hebrew scriptures such an allegorical interpretation that they found no difficulty in conforming Hebrew theology with their revered Aristotelian philosophy. But this led to disastrous confusion until these problems were taken in hand by Philo of Alexandria, who proceeded to harmonize and systemize Greek philosophy and Hebrew theology into a compact and fairly consistent system of religious belief and practice. And it was this later teaching of combined Greek philosophy and Hebrew theology that prevailed in Palestine when Jesus lived and taught, and which Paul utilized as the foundation on which to build the more advanced and enlightening cult of Christianity.

Philo was a great teacher; not since Moses had anyone lived who exerted such a profound influence on the ethical and religious thought of the Occidental world. In the matter of the combination of the better elements in contemporaneous systems of ethical and religious teachings, there have been seven outstanding human teachers: Sethard, Moses, Zoroaster, Lao-tse, Buddha, Philo, and Paul.

Many, but not all, of Philo's inconsistencies resulting from an effort to combine Greek mystical philosophy and Roman Stoic doctrines with the legalistic theology of the Hebrews, Paul recognized and wisely eliminated from pre-Christian basic theology. Philo led the way for Paul to more fully restore the concept of the Paradise Trinity, which had long been dormant in Jewish theology. In only one matter did Paul fail to keep pace with Philo or to transcend the teachings of this wealthy and educated Jew of Alexandria, and that was the doctrine of the atonement; Philo taught deliverance from the doctrine that forgiveness could be obtained only by the shedding of blood. Philo also possibly glimpsed the reality and presence of the Thought Adjusters more clearly than Paul. But Paul's theory of original sin, the doctrines of hereditary guilt and innate evil and redemption, was partially Mithraic in origin, having little in common with Hebrew theology, Philo's philosophy, or Jesus' teachings. Some phases of the teachings regarding original sin and the atonement were original with Paul.

The Gospel of John, the last of the narratives of Jesus' earth life, was addressed to the Western peoples and presents its story much in the light of the viewpoint of the later Alexandrian Christians, who were also disciples of the teachings of Philo.

At about the time of Jesus a strange reversion of feeling toward the Jews occurred in Alexandria, and from this former Jewish stronghold a virulent wave of persecution went forth, extending even to Rome, from which many thousands were banished. But this campaign of misrepresentation was short-lived; very soon the imperial government fully restored the curtailed liberties of the Jews throughout the empire.

Throughout the whole world, no matter where the Jews found themselves dispersed by commerce or oppression, they all with one accord kept their hearts centered on the holy temple at Jerusalem. Jewish theology did survive as it was interpreted and practiced at Jerusalem, notwithstanding that it was saved from oblivion several times by the timely intervention of certain Babylonian teachers.

As many as two and one-half million of these dispersed Jews used to come to Jerusalem for the celebration of their national religious festivals. And no matter what the theologic or philosophic differences were of the Eastern (Babylonian) and the Western (Hellenic) Jews, they all agreed on Jerusalem as the center of their worship and in looking forward to the coming of the Messiah.

7. Jews and Gentiles

By the times of Jesus the Jews had arrived at a settled concept of their origin, history, and destiny. They had built up a rigid wall of separation between themselves and the gentile world; they looked upon all gentile ways with utter contempt. They worshiped the letter of the law and indulged in a form of self-righteousness based on the false pride of descent. They had formed preconceived notions regarding the promised Messiah, and most of these expectations envisaged a Messiah who would come as a part of their national and racial history. To the Hebrews of those days Jewish theology was irrevocably settled, forever fixed.

The teachings and practices of Jesus regarding tolerance and kindness ran counter to the long-standing attitude of the Jews toward other peoples whom they considered heathen. For generations the Jews had nourished an attitude toward the outside world which made it impossible for them to accept the Master's teachings about the spiritual family of humanity. They were unwilling to share Yahweh on equal terms with the gentiles and were similarly unwilling to accept as divine one who taught such new and strange doctrines.

The scribes, the Pharisees, and the priesthood held the Jews in a terrible bondage of ritualism and legalism, a bondage far more real than that of the Roman political rule. The Jews of Jesus' time were not only held in subjugation to the *law* but were equally bound by the slavish demands of the *traditions*, which involved and invaded every domain of personal and social life. These minute regulations of conduct pursued and dominated every loyal Jew, and it is not strange that they promptly rejected one of their number who presumed to ignore their sacred traditions, and who dared to flout their long-honored regulations of social conduct. They could hardly regard with favor the teachings of one who did not hesitate to clash with dogmas which they regarded as having been ordained by Abraham. Moses had given them their law and they would not compromise.

By the time of the first century C.E. the spoken interpretation of the law by the recognized teachers, the scribes, had become a higher authority than the written law itself. And all this made it easier for certain religious leaders of the Jews to array the people against the acceptance of Jesus' new teachings.

These circumstances rendered it impossible for the Jews to fulfill their divine destiny as carriers of the new message of religious freedom and spiritual liberty. They could not break the fetters of tradition. But when the Jewish religion of good works and slavery to law fell victim to the stagnation of traditionalistic inertia, the motion of religious evolution passed westward to the European peoples.

And so a different people were called upon to carry an advancing theology to the world, a system of teaching embodying the philosophy of the Greeks, the law of the Romans, the morality of the Hebrews, and the idea of personality sanctity and spiritual liberty formulated by Paul and based on the teachings of Jesus.

Paul's cult of Christianity exhibited its morality as a Jewish birthmark. The Jews viewed history as the providence of Yahweh at work. The Greeks brought to the new teaching clearer concepts of the eternal life. Paul's doctrines were influenced in theology and philosophy not only by Jesus' teachings but also by Plato and Philo. In ethics Paul was inspired not only by Jesus but also by the Stoics.

The teachings of Jesus, as they were embodied in Paul's cult of Antioch Christianity, became blended with the following teachings:

1. The philosophic reasoning of the Greek proselytes to Judaism, including some of their concepts of the eternal life.
2. The appealing teachings of the prevailing mystery cults, especially the Mithraic doctrines of redemption, atonement, and salvation by the sacrifice made by some god.
3. The sturdy morality of the established Jewish religion.

The Mediterranean Roman Empire, the Parthian domain, and the adjacent peoples of Jesus' time all held crude and primitive ideas regarding the geography of the world, astronomy, health, and disease; and naturally they were amazed by the new and startling pronouncements of the carpenter of Nazareth. The ideas of spirit possession, good and bad, applied not merely to human beings, but every rock and tree was viewed by many as being spirit possessed. This was an enchanted age, and everybody believed in miracles as commonplace occurrences.

8. Previous Written Records

As far as possible, consistent with our mandate, we have endeavored to utilize and to some extent co-ordinate the existing records having to do with the life of Jesus on Urantia. Although we have enjoyed access to the lost record of the Apostle Andrew and have benefited from the collaboration of a vast host of celestial beings who were on earth during the times of Michael's bestowal (notably Michael's now Personalized Adjuster), it has been our purpose to also make use of the so-called Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

These New Testament records had their origin in the following circumstances:

1. *The Gospel by Mark.* John Mark wrote the earliest (except for the notes of Andrew), briefest, and most simple record of Jesus' life. Mark presented the Master as a minister, as a mortal among mortals. Although Mark lingered about many of the scenes, this record is in reality the Gospel according to Simon Peter. Mark was early associated with Peter; later with Paul. Mark wrote this record at the instigation of Peter and on the earnest petition of the church at Rome. Knowing how consistently the Master refused to write when on earth, Mark, like the apostles and other leading disciples, was hesitant to put them in writing. But Peter felt the church at Rome required the assistance of such a written narrative, and Mark consented to undertake its preparation. Mark made many notes before Peter died in C.E. 67, and in accordance with the outline approved by Peter and for the church at Rome, began writing soon after Peter's death. The Gospel was completed near the end of C.E. 68. Mark wrote entirely from memory and from Peter's memory. The record has since been considerably changed, numerous passages having been taken out and some later matter added at the end to replace the latter one fifth of the original Gospel, which was lost from the first manuscript before it was ever copied. This record by Mark, in conjunction with Andrew's and Matthew's notes, was the written basis of all subsequent Gospel narratives which sought to portray the life and teachings of Jesus.

2. *The Gospel of Matthew.* The so-called Gospel according to Matthew is the record of the Master's life which was written for the edification of Jewish Christians. The author of this record constantly seeks to show in Jesus' life that much which Jesus did was that "it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet." Matthew's Gospel portrays Jesus as a descendent of David, picturing Jesus as showing great respect for the law and the prophets.

The Apostle Matthew did not write this Gospel. It was written by Isador, one of Matthew's disciples, who had as a help in this work not only Matthew's personal remembrance of these events but also a certain record which the latter had made of the sayings of Jesus directly after the crucifixion. This record by Matthew was written in Aramaic; Isador wrote in Greek. There was no intent to deceive in accrediting the production to Matthew. It was the custom in those days for pupils to honor their teachers in that way.

The original record was edited and added to in C.E. 40 just before Matthew left Jerusalem to engage in evangelistic preaching. It was a private record, the last copy having been destroyed in the burning of a Syrian monastery in C.E. 416.

Isador escaped from Jerusalem in C.E. 70, taking to Pella a copy of Matthew's notes. In the year 71, while living at Pella, Isador wrote the Gospel according to Matthew. Isador also had the first four fifths of Mark's narrative.

3. *The Gospel by Luke.* Luke, the physician of Antioch in Pisidia, was a gentile convert of Paul, and wrote quite a different story of the Master's life. Luke began to follow Paul and learn of the life and teachings of Jesus in C.E. 47. Luke presents the Master as "the friend of publicans and sinners." Luke did not formulate the Gospel until after Paul's death. Luke wrote in the year C.E. 82 in Achaia and planned three books dealing with the history of Christ and Christianity but died in C.E. 90 just before finishing the second of these works, the "Acts of the Apostles."

As material for the compilation of the Gospel, Luke first depended on the story of Jesus' life as Paul had related it. Luke's Gospel is, therefore, in some ways the Gospel according to Paul. But Luke had other sources of information. Luke not only interviewed scores of eyewitnesses to the numerous episodes of Jesus' life, but also had a copy of Mark's Gospel, that is, the first four fifths, Isador's narrative, and a brief record made in the year C.E. 78 at Antioch by a follower named Cedus. Luke also had a mutilated and much-edited copy of some notes purported to have been made by the Apostle Andrew.

4. *The Gospel of John.* The Gospel according to John relates much of Jesus' work in Judea and around Jerusalem which is not contained in the other records. This is the so-called Gospel according to John Zebedee, who did not write it but did inspire it. Since its first writing it has been edited several times to make it appear to have been written by John. When this record was made, John had the other Gospels, and saw that much had been omitted; accordingly, in the year C.E. 101 John encouraged an associate, Nathan, a Greek Jew from Caesarea, to begin the writing. John supplied material from memory and by reference to the three records already in existence. John had no personal written records. The Epistle known as "First John" was written by John as a covering letter for the work which Nathan executed under John's direction.

All these writers presented honest pictures of Jesus as they saw, remembered, or had learned, and as their concepts of these distant events were affected by their subsequent espousal of Paul's theology of Christianity. And these records, imperfect as they are, have been sufficient to change the course of the history of Urantia for almost two thousand years.

[Acknowledgment by the Original Author: In carrying out my commission to restate the teachings and retell the doings of Jesus of Nazareth, I have drawn freely upon all sources of record and planetary information. My ruling motive has been to prepare a record which will not only be enlightening to the generation of people now living, but which may also be helpful to all future generations. From the vast store of information made available to me, I have chosen that which is best suited to the accomplishment of this purpose. As far as possible I have derived my information from purely human sources. Only when such sources failed, have I resorted to those records which are superhuman. When ideas and concepts of Jesus' life and teachings have been acceptably expressed by a human mind, I invariably gave preference to such apparently human thought patterns. Although I have sought to adjust the verbal expression the better to conform to our concept of the real meaning and the true import of the Master's life and teachings, as far as possible, I have adhered to the actual human concept and thought pattern in all my narratives. I well know that those concepts which have had origin in the human mind will prove more acceptable and helpful to all other human minds. When unable to find the necessary concepts in the human records or in human expressions, I have next resorted to the memory resources of my own order of earth creatures, the midwayers. And when that secondary source of information proved inadequate, I have unhesitatingly resorted to the superplanetary sources of information.

The memoranda which I have collected, and from which I have prepared this narrative of the life and teachings of Jesus — aside from the memory of the record of the Apostle Andrew — embrace thought gems and superior concepts of Jesus' teachings assembled from more than two thousand human beings who have lived on earth from the days of Jesus down to the time of the inditing of these revelations, more correctly restatements. The revelatory permission has been utilized only when the human record and human concepts failed to supply an adequate thought pattern. My revelatory commission forbade me to resort to extrahuman

sources of either information or expression until such a time as I could testify that I had failed in my efforts to find the required conceptual expression in purely human sources.

While I, with the collaboration of my eleven associate fellow midwayers and under the supervision of the Melchizedek of record, have portrayed this narrative in accordance with my concept of its effective arrangement and in response to my choice of immediate expression, nevertheless, the majority of the ideas and even some of the effective expressions which I have thus utilized had their origin in the minds of the mortals who have lived on earth during the intervening generations, right on down to those who are still alive at the time of this undertaking. In many ways I have served more as a collector and editor than as an original narrator. I have unhesitatingly appropriated those ideas and concepts, preferably human, which would enable me to create the most effective portraiture of Jesus' life, and which would qualify me to restate Jesus' matchless teachings in the most strikingly helpful and universally uplifting phraseology. In behalf of the United Midwayers of Urantia, I most gratefully acknowledge our indebtedness to all sources of record and concept which have been hereinafter utilized in the further elaboration of our restatement of Jesus' life on earth.]

Paper 122

Birth and Infancy of Jesus

It will hardly be possible to fully explain the many reasons which led to the selection of Palestine as the land for Michael's bestowal, and especially as to just why the family of Joseph and Mary should have been chosen as the immediate setting for the appearance of this Child of the Creator on Urantia.

After a study of the special report on the status of segregated worlds prepared by the Melchizedeks, in counsel with Gabriel, Michael finally chose Urantia as the planet on which to enact the final bestowal. Subsequent to this decision Gabriel made a personal visit to Urantia, and, as a result of this study of human groups and a survey of the spiritual, intellectual, racial, and geographic features of the world and its peoples, decided that the Hebrews possessed those relative advantages which warranted their selection as the bestowal race. Upon Michael's approval of this decision, Gabriel appointed and dispatched to Urantia the Family Commission of Twelve — selected from among the higher orders of universe personalities — which was entrusted with the task of making an investigation of Jewish family life. When this commission ended its task, Gabriel was present on Urantia and received the report nominating three prospective unions as being, in the opinion of the commission, equally favorable as bestowal families for Michael's projected incarnation.

From the three couples nominated, Gabriel made the personal choice of Joseph and Mary, subsequently making a personal appearance to Mary and imparting the glad tidings that she had been selected to become the earth parent of the bestowal child.

1. The Parents of Jesus

Joseph was a Hebrew of the Hebrews, although carrying many non-Jewish racial strains which had been added to the ancestral tree. That ancestry went back to the days of Abraham and from there to the earlier lines of inheritance leading to the Sumerians and Nodites and, through the southern tribes of the ancient blue race, to the original twins. David and Solomon were not in the direct line of Joseph's ancestry, neither did the lineage go directly back to Eden. Joseph's immediate ancestors were mechanics — builders, carpenters, masons, and smiths. Joseph was a carpenter and later a contractor whose family belonged to a long and illustrious line of the nobility of the common people, accentuated by the appearance of unusual individuals who had distinguished themselves in connection with the evolution of religion on Urantia.

Mary was a descendant of a long line of unique ancestors embracing many of the most remarkable people in the history of Urantia. Although Mary was an average person, possessing a fairly normal temperament, her ancestors included such well-known individuals as Annon, Tamar, Ruth, Bathsheba, Ansie, Cloa, Eve, Enta, and Ratta. No Jewish person of that day had a more illustrious lineage of common progenitors or one extending back to more auspicious beginnings. Mary's ancestry, like Joseph's, was characterized by the predominance of strong but average individuals, relieved now and then by numerous outstanding personalities in the march of civilization and the progressive evolution of religion. Racially considered, it is hardly proper to regard Mary as a Jew. In culture and belief she was a Jew, but in hereditary endowment was more a composite of Syrian, Hittite, Phoenician, Greek, and Egyptian stocks whose racial inheritance was more general than that of Joseph.

Of all couples living in Palestine at about the time of Michael's projected bestowal, Mary and Joseph possessed the most ideal combination of widespread hereditary connections and superior average of personality endowments. It was the plan of Michael to appear on earth as an *average* individual, someone

whom the common people might understand and receive; and so Gabriel selected Joseph and Mary to become the bestowal parents.

2. Gabriel Appears to Elizabeth

Jesus' lifework on Urantia was really begun by John the Baptist. John's parents were Zacharias and Elizabeth. Zacharias belonged to the Jewish priesthood, while Elizabeth was a member of the more prosperous branch of the same large family group to which Mary also belonged. Elizabeth and Zacharias, though they had been married many years, were childless.

It was late in the month of June, 8 B.C.E., about three months after the marriage of Mary and Joseph, that Gabriel appeared to Elizabeth at noon one day and said:

"While Zacharias stands before the altar in Jerusalem, and while the assembled people pray for the coming of a deliverer, I, Gabriel, have come to announce that you will shortly bear a child who will be the forerunner of this divine teacher, and you shall call your child John. John will grow up dedicated to the Divine Creator, and when fully mature, will gladden your heart by turning many souls to the Creator, also proclaiming the coming of the soul-healer of your people and the spirit-liberator of all humankind. Your cousin Mary will be the parent of this child of promise, and I will also appear to Mary."

This vision greatly frightened Elizabeth, who long pondered the sayings of the majestic visitor after Gabriel's departure, but did not speak of the revelation to anyone except Zacharias until a subsequent visit with Mary in early February of the following year.

For five months, however, Elizabeth withheld this secret even from Zacharias. On the disclosure of the story of Gabriel's visit, Zacharias was very skeptical and for weeks doubted the entire experience, only consenting halfheartedly to believe the story when it could no longer be questioned that Elizabeth was expectant with child. Zacharias was much perplexed regarding their prospective parenthood, but did not doubt Elizabeth's integrity. It was not until about six weeks before John's birth that Zacharias, as the result of an impressive dream, became fully convinced that they were to become the parents of a child of destiny, one who was to prepare the way for the coming of the Deliverer.

Gabriel appeared to Mary about the middle of November, 8 B.C.E. Later on, after becoming fully aware of being pregnant, Mary decided to undertake a journey to visit Elizabeth in the City of Judah, in the hills four miles west of Jerusalem. Gabriel had informed each of these parents-to-be of making an appearance to the other. Naturally they were anxious to get together, compare experiences, and talk over the probable futures of their children. Elizabeth, with whom Mary remained for three weeks, did much to strengthen Mary's faith in the vision of Gabriel, so that Mary returned home more fully dedicated to the call to parent the child of destiny who would so soon be presented to the world as a helpless babe, an average and normal infant of the realm.

John was born in the City of Judah, March 25, 7 B.C.E. Zacharias and Elizabeth rejoiced in the realization that a child had come to them as Gabriel had promised, and when on the eighth day they presented the baby for circumcision, they formally named the child John, as they had been directed. A relative of Zacharias had already departed for Nazareth, carrying the message from Elizabeth to Mary proclaiming that a child had been born whose name was to be John.

From earliest infancy Elizabeth and Zacharias judiciously stressed the idea of John's becoming a spiritual leader and religious teacher. And the soil of John's heart was always responsive to the sowing of such

suggestive seeds. Even as a child John was frequently at the temple during the times of Zacharias' service, and was tremendously impressed with the significance of all that took place.

3. Gabriel's Announcement to Mary

One evening about sundown, before Joseph had returned home, Gabriel appeared to Mary by the side of a low stone table and, after Mary had recovered from the surprise, said: "I come at the bidding of one who is my Master and whom you shall love and nurture. To you, Mary, I bring glad tidings when I announce that the conception within you has been ordained on high, and that in due time you will become the parent of a child; this child, whom you shall call Joshua, shall inaugurate the realm of the Creator on earth and among all people. Do not speak of this matter except to Joseph and to Elizabeth, your cousin, to whom I have also appeared, and who will presently also bear a child, whose name shall be John, and who will prepare the way for the message of deliverance which Joshua will proclaim with great power and deep conviction. And do not doubt my word, Mary, for this home has been chosen as the mortal habitat of the child of destiny. My benediction rests upon you, the power of the Most Highs will strengthen you."

Mary pondered this visitation secretly for many weeks until being certain of the pregnancy, before daring to disclose these unusual events to Joseph. Joseph, on hearing all about this, although having great confidence in Mary, was much troubled and could not sleep for many nights. At first Joseph had doubts about the Gabriel visitation. Then when becoming persuaded that Mary had really heard the voice and saw the form of the divine messenger, Joseph was torn while considering how such things could be. How could the offspring of human beings be a child of divine destiny? Joseph could never reconcile these conflicting ideas until, after several weeks of thought, they both reached the conclusion that they had been chosen to become the parents of the Messiah, though it had hardly been the Jewish concept that the expected deliverer was to be of divine nature. Upon arriving at this momentous conclusion, Mary quickly departed for a visit with Elizabeth.

On returning, Mary went to visit with family. Mary's relatives were always very skeptical about the divine mission of Jesus, though, of course, at this time they knew nothing of the Gabriel visitation. But Mary did confide to one sibling, Salome, that the child was destined to become a great teacher.

Gabriel's announcement to Mary was made the day following the conception of Jesus and was the only event of supernatural occurrence connected with Mary's entire experience of carrying and bearing the child of promise.

4. Joseph's Dream

Joseph did not become reconciled to the idea that Mary was to become the parent of an extraordinary child until after experiencing a very impressive dream. In this dream a brilliant celestial messenger appeared and, among other things, said: "Joseph, I appear by command of One who now reigns on high, and I am directed to instruct you concerning the child whom Mary shall bear, and who will become a great light in the world. In this child will be life, and this life shall become the light of humanity. This child will first come to your people, but will hardly be received; but to as many as will be receptive, to them will be revealed that they are the children of the Creator." After this experience Joseph never again wholly doubted Mary's story of Gabriel's visit and of the promise that the unborn child was to become a divine messenger to the world.

In all these visitations nothing was said about the house of David. Nothing was ever intimated about Jesus' becoming a "deliverer of the Jews," not even that Jesus was to be the long-expected Messiah. Jesus was not the Messiah that the Jews had anticipated, but was the *world's deliverer*. Jesus' mission was to all peoples, not to any one group.

Joseph was not of the line of King David. Mary had more of the Davidic ancestry than Joseph. True, Joseph did go to the City of David, Bethlehem, to be registered for the Roman census, but that was because, six generations previously, Joseph's ancestor of that generation, being an orphan, was adopted by one Zadoc, who was a direct descendant of David; therefore Joseph was also counted as of the "house of David."

Most of the so-called Messianic prophecies of the Hebrew scriptures were made to apply long after Jesus' life on earth. For centuries the Hebrew prophets had proclaimed the coming of a deliverer, and these promises had been construed by successive generations as referring to a new Jewish ruler who would sit on the throne of David and, by the reputed miraculous methods of Moses, proceed to establish the Jews in Palestine as a powerful nation, free from all foreign domination. Again, many figurative passages found throughout the Hebrew scriptures were subsequently misapplied to the life mission of Jesus. Many of these sayings were so distorted as to appear to fit some episode of the Master's earth life. Jesus publicly denied any connection with the royal house of David. This was also true of the many genealogies of both Joseph and Mary which were constructed subsequent to Michael's career on earth. Many of these lineages contain much of the Master's ancestry, but on the whole they are not genuine and may not be depended on as factual. The early followers of Jesus all too often succumbed to the temptation to make all the olden prophetic statements appear to find fulfillment in the life of their Master.

5. Jesus' Earth Parents

Joseph was a mild-mannered person, extremely conscientious, and in every way faithful to the religious conventions and practices of the Jewish people. Joseph talked little but thought much, the sorry plight of the Jewish people producing much sadness. As a youth among eight siblings, Joseph had been more cheerful, but in the earlier years of married life (during Jesus' childhood) was subject to periods of mild spiritual discouragement. These temperamental manifestations were greatly improved just before Joseph's untimely death and after the economic condition of the family had been enhanced by an advancement from the rank of carpenter to the role of a prosperous contractor.

Mary's temperament was quite opposite to that of Joseph. Mary was usually cheerful, was very rarely downcast, and possessed an ever-sunny disposition. Mary indulged in free and frequent expression of emotional feelings and was never observed to be sorrowful until after the sudden death of Joseph. And Mary had hardly recovered from this shock when anxieties and questionings were aroused by the extraordinary career of Jesus, which was so rapidly unfolding. But throughout all of this unusual experience Mary was composed, courageous, and fairly wise in the relationship with this strange and little-understood first-born child.

Jesus derived much unusual gentleness and marvelous sympathetic understanding of human nature from Joseph, and inherited the gift as a great teacher and a tremendous capacity for righteous indignation from Mary. In emotional reactions to the adult-life environment, Jesus was at one time like Joseph, meditative and worshipful, sometimes characterized by apparent sadness; but more often drove forward in the manner of Mary's optimistic and determined disposition. All in all, Mary's temperament tended to dominate Jesus' career. In some particulars Jesus blended both parents' traits, but in other respects exhibited the traits of one in contrast with those of the other.

From Joseph Jesus secured strict training in the usages of the Jewish ceremonials and an unusual acquaintance with the Hebrew scriptures; from Mary Jesus derived a broader viewpoint of religious life and a more liberal concept of personal spiritual freedom.

The families of both Mary and Joseph were well educated for their time. The couple were educated far above the average for their day and station in life. Mary was a planner, expert in adaptation and practical in

immediate execution, while Joseph was a thinker. Joseph was a black-eyed brunet; Mary, a brown-eyed blond type.

Joseph would have undoubtedly become a firm believer in the divine mission of Jesus. Mary alternated between believing and doubting, being greatly influenced by the position taken by the other children and by friends and relatives, but was always steadied by the memory of Gabriel's appearance immediately after the child was conceived.

Mary was an expert weaver and skilled in most of the household arts of that day, being a good housekeeper and a superior homemaker. Both Mary and Joseph were good teachers, and they saw to it that their children were well versed in the learning of that day.

Joseph, when young, was employed by Mary's family in the work of building an addition to their house, and it was when Mary brought Joseph a cup of water, during a noontime meal, that the courtship of the pair who were destined to become the parents of Jesus really began.

Mary and Joseph were married, in accordance with Jewish custom, at Mary's home in the environs of Nazareth when Joseph was twenty-one years old. This marriage concluded a normal courtship of almost two years' duration. Shortly thereafter they moved into their new home in Nazareth, which had been built by Joseph. The house was located near the foot of the near-by elevated land which so charmingly overlooked the surrounding countryside. In this home, especially prepared, these young and expectant parents had thought to welcome the child of promise, little realizing that this momentous event of a universe was to transpire while they would be absent from home in Bethlehem of Judea.

The larger part of Joseph's family became believers in the teachings of Jesus, but very few of Mary's people ever believed until after Jesus departed from this world. Joseph leaned more toward the spiritual concept of the expected Messiah, but Mary held to the idea of the Messiah as a temporal deliverer and political ruler. Mary's ancestors had been prominently identified with the Maccabean activities of recent times.

Mary leaned strongly toward the more liberal and broader Western, or Hellenistic, interpretation of the law and the prophets. Joseph held vigorously to the Eastern, or Babylonian, views of the Jewish religion.

6. The Home at Nazareth

The home of Jesus was not far from the high hill in the northerly part of Nazareth, some distance from the village spring, which was in the eastern section of the town. Jesus' family dwelt in the outskirts of the city, and this made it all the easier for Jesus to subsequently enjoy frequent strolls in the country and to make trips up to the top of this near-by highland, the highest of all the hills of southern Galilee except for the Mount Tabor range to the east and the hill of Nain, which was about the same height. Their home was located a little to the south and east of the southern promontory of this hill and about midway between the base of this elevation and the road leading out of Nazareth toward Cana. Aside from climbing the hill, Jesus' favorite stroll was to follow a narrow trail winding about the base of the hill in a northeasterly direction to a point where it joined the road to Sepphoris.

The home of Joseph and Mary was a one-room stone structure with a flat roof and an adjoining building for housing the animals. The furniture consisted of a low stone table, earthenware and stone dishes and pots, a loom, a lampstand, several small stools, and mats for sleeping on the stone floor. In the back yard, near the animal annex, was the shelter which covered the oven and the mill for grinding grain. It required two persons to operate this type of mill, one to grind and another to feed the grain. As a small child Jesus often fed grain to this mill while Mary turned the grinder.

In later years, as the family grew in size, they would all squat about the enlarged stone table to enjoy their meals, helping themselves from a common dish, or pot, of food. During the winter, at the evening meal the table would be lighted by a small, flat clay lamp, which was filled with olive oil. After the birth of Martha, Joseph built an addition to this house, a large room, which was used as a carpenter shop during the day and as a sleeping room at night.

7. The Trip to Bethlehem

In the month of March, 8 B.C.E. (the month Joseph and Mary were married), Caesar Augustus decreed that all inhabitants of the Roman Empire should be numbered, that a census should be made which could be used for effecting better taxation. The Jews had always been greatly prejudiced against any attempt to “number the people,” and this, in connection with the serious domestic difficulties of Herod, Ruler of Judea, had conspired to cause the postponement of the taking of this census for one year. Throughout all the Roman Empire this census was registered in the year 8 B.C.E., except in the Palestinian dominion of Herod, where it was taken in 7 B.C.E., one year later.

It was not necessary that Mary should go to Bethlehem for enrollment — Joseph was authorized to register for the family — but Mary, being an adventurous and aggressive person, insisted on going along. Mary feared being left alone in case the child was born while Joseph was away, and again, Bethlehem being not far from the City of Judah, Mary foresaw a possible pleasurable visit with Elizabeth.

Joseph virtually forbade Mary to go, but it was of no avail; when the food was packed for the trip of three or four days, Mary prepared double rations for the journey. But before they actually left, Joseph was reconciled to Mary’s going along, and they cheerfully departed from Nazareth at the beginning of the next day.

Joseph and Mary were poor, and since they had only one beast of burden, Mary, being large with child, rode with the provisions while Joseph walked, leading the animal. And so this Jewish couple left their humble home early on the morning of August 18, 7 B.C.E., on their journey to Bethlehem.

Their first day of travel carried them around the foothills of Mount Gilboa, where they camped for the night by the river Jordan and engaged in many speculations as to what sort of a child would be born to them, Joseph adhering to the concept of a spiritual teacher and Mary holding to the idea of a Jewish Messiah, a deliverer of the Hebrew nation.

Bright and early the morning of August 19, Mary and Joseph were again on their way. They ate their noontide meal at the foot of Mount Sartaba, overlooking the Jordan valley, and journeyed on, making Jericho for the night, where they stopped at an inn on the highway on the outskirts of the city. Following the evening meal and after much discussion concerning the oppressiveness of Roman rule, Herod, the census enrollment, and the comparative influence of Jerusalem and Alexandria as centers of Jewish learning and culture, the Nazareth travelers retired for the night’s rest. Early in the morning of August 20 they resumed their journey, reaching Jerusalem before noon, visiting the temple, and going on to their destination, arriving at Bethlehem in midafternoon.

The inn was overcrowded, and Joseph accordingly sought lodgings with distant relatives, but every room in Bethlehem was filled to overflowing. On returning to the courtyard of the inn, Joseph was informed that the caravan stables, hewn out of the side of the rock and situated just below the inn, had been cleared of animals and cleaned up for the reception of lodgers. Leaving the donkey in the courtyard, Joseph shouldered their bags of clothing and provisions and with Mary descended the stone steps to their lodgings below. They

found themselves located in what had been a grain storage room to the front of the stalls and mangers. Tent curtains had been hung, and they counted themselves fortunate to have such comfortable quarters.

Joseph had thought to go out at once and enroll, but Mary was weary, was considerably distressed, and begged Joseph to remain.

8. The Birth of Jesus

All that night Mary was restless so that neither of them slept much. By the break of day the pangs of childbirth were well in evidence, and at noon, August 21, 7 B.C.E., with the help and kind ministrations of other travelers, Mary was delivered of a child. Jesus of Nazareth was born into the world, was wrapped in the clothes which Mary had brought along for such a possible contingency, and laid in a near-by manger.

In just the same manner as all babies before that day and since have come into the world, the promised child was born; and on the eighth day, according to the Jewish practice, was circumcised and formally named Joshua (Jesus).

The next day after the birth of Jesus, Joseph made enrollment. Meeting a person they had talked with two nights previously at Jericho, Joseph was taken to a well-to-do friend who had a room at the inn, and who would gladly exchange quarters with the Nazareth couple. That afternoon they moved up to the inn, where they lived for almost three weeks until they found lodgings in the home of a distant relative of Joseph.

The second day after the birth of Jesus, Mary sent word to Elizabeth that the child had come and received word in return inviting Joseph to Jerusalem. The following week Joseph went to Jerusalem to confer with Zacharias. Both Zacharias and Elizabeth had become possessed with the sincere conviction that Jesus was to become the Jewish deliverer, the Messiah, and that John was to be Jesus' chief of aides. And since Mary held these same ideas, it was not difficult to prevail on Joseph to remain in Bethlehem, the City of David, so that Jesus might grow up to become the successor of David on the throne of all Israel. Accordingly, they remained in Bethlehem more than a year, Joseph meantime working as a carpenter.

At the birth of Jesus the seraphim of Urantia, assembled under their directors, did sing anthems of glory over the Bethlehem manger, but these songs of praise were not heard by human ears. No shepherds nor any other mortal creatures came to pay homage to the babe of Bethlehem until the day of the arrival of certain priests from Ur, who were sent from Jerusalem by Zacharias.

These priests from Mesopotamia had been told sometime before by a strange religious teacher of their country of a dream in which "the light of life" was about to appear on earth as a baby and among the Jews. And these three teachers went looking for this "light of life." After many weeks of futile search in Jerusalem, they were about to return to Ur when Zacharias met them and disclosed the belief that Jesus was the object of their quest and sent them on to Bethlehem, where they found the baby and left their gifts with Mary. Jesus was almost three weeks old at the time of their visit.

These priests saw no star to guide them to Bethlehem. The beautiful legend of the star of Bethlehem originated in this way: Jesus was born August 21 at noon, 7 B.C.E. On May 29, 7 B.C.E., there was an extraordinary conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn in the constellation of Pisces. And it is a remarkable astronomic fact that similar conjunctions occurred on September 29 and December 5 of the same year. Upon the basis of these extraordinary but wholly natural events the well-meaning zealots of the succeeding generation constructed the appealing legend of the star of Bethlehem and the adoring Magi who were led to the manger, where they found and worshiped the newborn babe. Asian and near-Asian minds delight in fairy stories, and they are continually spinning such beautiful myths about the lives of their religious leaders

and political heroes. In the absence of printing, when most human knowledge was passed by word of mouth from one generation to another, it was very easy for myths to become traditions and for traditions to eventually become accepted as facts.

9. The Presentation in the Temple

Moses had taught the Jews that every first-born child belonged to Yahweh, and that, in lieu of its sacrifice as was the custom among the heathen nations, such a child might live provided the parents would redeem it by the payment of five shekels to any authorized priest. Accordingly, Joseph and Mary went to the temple at Jerusalem in person to present Jesus to the priests.

Two remarkable characters lingered constantly about the courts of the temple, Simeon a singer and Anna a poet. Simeon was a Judean, but Anna was a Galilean. This couple were frequently in each other's company, and both were intimates of the priest Zacharias, who had confided the secret of John and Jesus to them. Both Anna and Simeon longed for the coming of the Messiah, and their confidence in Zacharias led them to believe that Jesus was the expected deliverer of the Jewish people.

Zacharias knew the day Mary and Joseph were expected to appear at the temple with Jesus, and had prearranged with Simeon and Anna to indicate to them which one in the procession of first-born children was Jesus.

For this occasion Anna had written a poem which Simeon proceeded to sing, much to the astonishment of Joseph, Mary, and all who were assembled in the temple courts.

On the way back to Bethlehem, Joseph and Mary were silent — confused and overawed. Mary was much disturbed by the farewell salutation of Anna, the aged poet, and Joseph was not in harmony with this premature effort to make Jesus out to be the expected Messiah of the Jewish people.

10. Herod Acts

But the watchers for Herod were not inactive. When they reported the visit of the priests of Ur to Bethlehem, Herod summoned these Chaldeans and inquired diligently about the new “ruler of the Jews,” but they gave Herod little satisfaction, explaining that the child had recently been born of a couple who had come to Bethlehem for the census enrollment. Herod, not being satisfied with this answer, sent them out with a purse and directed that they should find the child, indicating a desire to come and worship it since they had declared that the child's domain was to be spiritual, not temporal. But when the priests did not return, Herod grew suspicious. As Herod considered these things, the informers returned and made full report of the recent occurrences in the temple, bringing a copy of parts of the Simeon song which had been sung at the redemption ceremonies of Jesus. But they had failed to follow Joseph and Mary, and Herod was very angry with them when they could not say where the pair had taken the child. Herod then dispatched searchers to locate the family. Knowing that Herod pursued them, Zacharias and Elizabeth remained away from Bethlehem. The baby was secreted with Joseph's relatives.

Joseph was afraid to seek work, and their small savings were rapidly disappearing. Even at the time of the purification ceremonies at the temple, Joseph deemed the family sufficiently poor to warrant an offering of only two young pigeons as Moses had directed.

When, after more than a year of searching, Herod's spies had not located Jesus, and because of the suspicion that the child was still concealed in Bethlehem, Herod prepared an order directing that a systematic search be made of every house in Bethlehem, and that all babies under two years of age should be killed. In this

manner Herod hoped to make sure that this child who was to become “ruler of the Jews” would be destroyed. And so in one day sixteen babies perished in Bethlehem of Judea. But intrigue and murder were common occurrences at the court of Herod.

The massacre of these infants took place about the middle of October, 6 B.C.E., when Jesus was a little over one year of age. But there were believers in the coming Messiah even among Herod’s court attachés, and one of these, learning of the order to slaughter the Bethlehem babies, communicated with Zacharias, who in turn dispatched a messenger to Joseph; and the night before the massacre Joseph and Mary left Bethlehem for Alexandria in Egypt. In order to avoid attracting attention, they journeyed alone with Jesus. They went to Alexandria on funds provided by Zacharias, and Joseph worked there while Mary and Jesus lodged with well-to-do relatives of Joseph’s family. They sojourned in Alexandria two full years, not returning to Bethlehem until after the death of Herod.

Paper 123

The Early Childhood of Jesus

Owing to the uncertainties and anxieties of their sojourn in Bethlehem, Mary did not wean the baby until they had arrived safely in Alexandria, where the family was able to settle down to a normal life. They lived with relatives, and Joseph was able to support the family, securing work shortly after their arrival. Joseph was employed as a carpenter for several months and was then elevated to the position of supervisor of a large group of workers employed on one of the public buildings in process of construction. This new experience gave Joseph the idea of becoming a contractor and builder after their return to Nazareth.

All through these early years of Jesus' helpless infancy, Mary maintained one long and constant vigil in case anything should happen to the child which might jeopardize the welfare or in any way interfere with the future mission of Jesus on earth; no parent was ever more devoted to a child. In the home where Jesus was living there were two other children about the same age, and among the near neighbors there were six others whose ages were sufficiently near Jesus' own to make them acceptable playmates. At first Mary was disposed to keep Jesus close, fearing something might happen while playing in the garden with the other children, but Joseph, with the assistance of the relatives, was able to convince Mary that such a course would deprive Jesus of the helpful experience of learning how to adjust to children of the same age. And Mary, realizing that such a program of undue sheltering and unusual protection might tend to make Jesus self-conscious and somewhat self-centered, finally agreed to the plan of permitting the child of promise to grow up just like any other child; and Mary, while agreeing with this decision, was always watchful while the children were at play about the house or in the garden. Only an affectionate parent can know the burden that Mary carried for the safety of her child during these years of infancy and early childhood.

Throughout the two years of their stay at Alexandria, Jesus enjoyed good health and continued to grow normally. Aside from a few friends and relatives no one was told about Jesus' being a "child of promise." One of Joseph's relatives revealed this to a few friends in Memphis, descendants of the distant Ikhnaton, and they, with a small group of Alexandrian believers, assembled at the palatial home of Joseph's relative-benefactor a short time before the family's projected return to Palestine to wish them well and to pay their respects to the child. On this occasion the assembled friends presented Jesus with a complete copy of the Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures and prevailed on the family to remain in Egypt, but this copy of the Jewish sacred writings was not placed in Joseph's hands until the invitation to remain had finally been declined. These believers had insisted that the child of destiny would be able to exert a far greater world influence as a resident of Alexandria than of any designated place in Palestine. These persuasions delayed the family's departure for Palestine for some time after they received the news of Herod's death.

Mary and Joseph finally left Alexandria on a boat belonging to their friend Ezraeon, bound for Joppa, arriving at that port late in August of the year 4 B.C.E. They went directly to Bethlehem, where they spent the entire month of September in counsel with their friends and relatives concerning whether they should remain there or return to Nazareth.

Mary had never fully given up the idea that Jesus ought to grow up in Bethlehem, the City of David. Joseph did not really believe that their child was to become a ruler of Israel. Besides, Joseph was not really a descendant of David; being included among the offspring of David only due to the adoption of an ancestor into the Davidic line of descent. Mary, of course, thought the City of David the most appropriate place in which the new candidate for David's throne could be reared, but Joseph preferred to take chances with Herod Antipas rather than with Archelaus. Joseph entertained great fears for the child's safety in Bethlehem or in any other city in Judea, and surmised that Archelaus would be more likely to pursue the menacing policies of Herod than would Antipas in Galilee. And besides all these reasons, Joseph was outspoken about

having a preference for Galilee as a better place in which to rear and educate the child, but it required three weeks to overcome Mary's objections.

By the first of October Joseph had convinced Mary and all their friends that it was best for them to return to Nazareth. Accordingly, early in October, 4 B.C.E., they departed from Bethlehem for Nazareth, going by way of Lydda and Scythopolis. They left early one Sunday morning, Mary and the child riding on their newly acquired beast of burden, while Joseph and five accompanying relatives proceeded on foot; Joseph's relatives refused to permit them to make the trip to Nazareth alone. They feared to go to Galilee by Jerusalem and the Jordan valley, and the western routes were not altogether safe for two lone travelers with a child of tender years.

1. Back in Nazareth

On the fourth day of the journey the party reached its destination in safety. They arrived unannounced at the Nazareth home, which had been occupied for more than three years by one of Joseph's married siblings, who was surprised to see them; so quietly had they gone about their business that neither the family of Joseph nor that of Mary knew they had even left Alexandria. The next day Joseph's relatives moved, and Mary, for the first time since Jesus' birth, settled down to enjoy life in their own home. In less than a week Joseph secured work as a carpenter, and they were supremely happy.

Jesus was about three years and two months old at the time of their return to Nazareth, having stood all these travels very well and being in excellent health and full of childish glee and excitement at having premises to run about in and to enjoy, but greatly missing the association of the Alexandrian playmates.

On the way to Nazareth Joseph had persuaded Mary that it would be unwise to spread the word among their Galilean friends and relatives that Jesus was a child of promise. They agreed to refrain from all mention of these matters to anyone. And they were both very faithful in keeping this promise.

Jesus' entire fourth year was a period of normal physical development and of unusual mental activity. Meantime Jesus had formed a very close attachment for a neighbor of about the same age named Jacob. Jesus and Jacob were always happy in their play, and they grew up to be great friends and loyal companions.

The next important event in the life of this Nazareth family was the birth of their second child, James, in the early morning hours of April 2, 3 B.C.E. Jesus was thrilled by the thought of having a new baby sibling, and would stand around by the hour just to observe the child's early activities.

It was midsummer of this same year that Joseph built a small workshop close to the village spring and near the caravan resting place, and after this did very little carpenter work by the day. Joseph had as associates two relatives and several other mechanics, who were sent out to work while Joseph remained at the shop making yokes and plows and doing other woodwork. Joseph also did some work in leather and with rope and canvas. And Jesus, growing up, when not at school, spent about equal time between helping Mary with home duties and watching Joseph work at the shop, meanwhile listening to the conversation and gossip of the caravan conductors and passengers from the four corners of the earth.

In July of this year, one month before Jesus was four years old, an outbreak of malignant intestinal trouble spread over all Nazareth from contact with the caravan travelers. Mary, becoming alarmed by the danger of Jesus being exposed to this epidemic of disease, bundled up both children and fled to the country home of a relative, several miles south of Nazareth on the Megiddo road near Sarid. They did not return to Nazareth for more than two months. Jesus greatly enjoyed this first experience on a farm.

2. The Fifth Year (2 B.C.E.)

In something more than a year after the return to Nazareth Jesus arrived at the age of the first personal and wholehearted moral decision; and a Thought Adjuster came to abide with Jesus, a divine gift of the Paradise Creator, which had previously served with Machiventa Melchizedek, thereby gaining the experience of functioning in connection with the incarnation of a supermortal being living in the likeness of a mortal. This event occurred on February 11, 2 B.C.E. Jesus was no more aware of the coming of the divine Monitor than the millions of other children who, before and since that day, have also received these Thought Adjusters to indwell their minds and work for the ultimate spiritualization of these minds and the eternal survival of their evolving immortal souls.

On this day in February the direct and personal supervision of the Universe Rulers, as it was related to the integrity of the childlike incarnation of Michael, terminated. From that time on throughout the human unfolding of the incarnation, the guardianship of Jesus was destined to rest in the keeping of this indwelling Adjuster and the associated seraphic guardians, supplemented from time to time by the ministry of midway creatures assigned for the performance of certain definite duties in accordance with the instruction of their planetary superiors.

Jesus was five years old in August of this year, and we will, therefore, refer to this as Jesus' fifth (calendar) year of life. In this year, 2 B.C.E., a little more than one month before turning five, Jesus was made very happy by the coming of baby Miriam, who was born on the night of July 11. During the evening of the following day Jesus had a long talk with Joseph concerning the manner in which various groups of living things are born into the world as separate individuals. The most valuable part of Jesus' early education was secured from both parents in answer to thoughtful and searching inquiries. Joseph never failed in taking pains and spending time answering Jesus' numerous questions. Between the ages of five and ten, Jesus was one continuous question mark. While Mary and Joseph could not always answer Jesus' questions, they never failed to fully discuss these inquiries and in every other possible way to assist Jesus in reaching a satisfactory solution of the problem.

Since returning to Nazareth, theirs had been a busy household, and Joseph had been unusually occupied building a new shop and getting a business started again. So fully was Joseph occupied that there was no time to build a cradle for James, but this was corrected long before Miriam came, so that Miriam had a very comfortable crib. And the child Jesus heartily entered into all these natural and normal home experiences, greatly enjoying the new babies and being of great help to Mary in their care.

There were few homes in the gentile world of those days that could give a child a better intellectual, moral, and religious training than the Jewish homes of Galilee. These Jews had a systematic program for rearing and educating their children. They divided a child's life into seven stages:

1. The newborn child, the first to the eighth day.
2. The suckling child.
3. The weaned child.
4. The period of dependence on the home, lasting up to the end of the fifth year.
5. The beginning independence of the child and the continuation of its education.
6. The adolescent youths.

7. The young adults.

This fifth year Jesus entered the fifth stage of a Galilean Jewish child's career, and on August 21, 2 B.C.E., Mary formally turned Jesus over to Joseph for further instruction.

Though Joseph was now assuming the direct responsibility for Jesus' intellectual and religious education, Mary still took responsibility for Jesus' home training, especially how to care for the vines and flowers growing about the garden walls which completely surrounded the home plot. Mary also provided on the roof of the house (the summer bedroom) shallow boxes of sand in which Jesus worked out maps and did much early practice at writing Aramaic, Greek, and later on, Hebrew, for in time Jesus learned to read, write, and speak, fluently, all three languages.

Jesus appeared to be a well-developed child physically and continued to make normal progress mentally and emotionally. In the latter part of this fifth (calendar) year Jesus experienced a mild digestive upset, the first minor illness.

Though Mary and Joseph often talked about the future of their eldest child, had you been there, you would only have observed the growing up of a normal, healthy, carefree, but exceedingly inquisitive child of that time and place.

3. Events of the Sixth Year (1 B.C.E.)

Already, with Mary's help, Jesus had mastered the Galilean dialect of the Aramaic language; and now Joseph began teaching Jesus Greek. Mary spoke little Greek, but Joseph was a fluent speaker of both Aramaic and Greek. The textbook for the study of the Greek language was the copy of the Hebrew scriptures — a complete version of the law and the prophets, including the Psalms — which had been presented to them on leaving Egypt. There were only two complete copies of the Scriptures in Greek in all Nazareth, and the possession of one of them by the carpenter's family made Joseph's home a much-sought place and enabled Jesus, while growing up, to meet an almost endless procession of earnest students and sincere truth seekers. Before this year ended, Jesus had assumed custody of this priceless manuscript, having been told that the sacred book had been presented by Alexandrian friends and relatives. And in a very short time Jesus could read it readily.

The first great shock of Jesus' young life occurred when not quite six years old. It had seemed to the youngster that Joseph — at least both parents together — knew everything. Imagine, therefore, the surprise of this inquiring child, when asking about the cause of a mild earthquake which had just occurred, to hear Joseph say, "I really do not know." Thus began that long and disconcerting disillusionment in the course of which Jesus found out that earthly parents were not all-wise and all-knowing.

Joseph's first thought was to tell Jesus that the earthquake had been caused by Yahweh, but in a moment's reflection realized that such an answer would immediately be provocative of further and still more embarrassing inquiries. Even at an early age it was very difficult to answer Jesus' questions about physical or social phenomena by thoughtlessly saying that Yahweh or an evil spirit was responsible. In harmony with the prevailing belief of the Jewish people, Jesus was willing to accept the doctrine of good spirits and evil spirits as the possible explanation of mental and spiritual phenomena, but very soon became doubtful that such unseen influences were responsible for the physical happenings of the natural world.

Before Jesus was six years of age, in the early summer of 1 B.C.E., Elizabeth, Zacharias and John came to visit the Nazareth family. Jesus and John had a happy time during this, their first visit within their memories. Although the visitors could remain only a few days, the parents talked over many things, including the

future plans for their children. While they were thus engaged, the children played with blocks in the sand on top of the house and in many other ways enjoyed themselves.

Having met John, who came from near Jerusalem, Jesus began to evince an unusual interest in the history of Israel and to inquire in great detail as to the meaning of the Sabbath rites, the synagogue sermons, and the recurring feasts of commemoration. Joseph explained the meaning of all these seasons. The first was the midwinter festive illumination, lasting eight days, starting with one candle the first night and adding one each successive night; this commemorated the dedication of the temple after the restoration of the Mosaic services by Judas Maccabee. Next came the early springtime celebration of Purim, the feast of Esther and Israel's deliverance. Then followed the solemn Passover, which the adults celebrated in Jerusalem whenever possible, while at home the children would remember that no leavened bread was to be eaten for the whole week. Later came the feast of the first-fruits, the harvest gathering; and last, the most solemn of all, the feast of the new year, the day of atonement. While some of these celebrations and observances were difficult to understand, Jesus pondered them seriously and then entered fully into the joy of the feast of tabernacles, the annual vacation season of the whole Jewish people, the time when they camped out in leafy booths and gave themselves up to joy and pleasure.

During this year Joseph and Mary had trouble with Jesus about prayers. Jesus insisted on talking to a personal heavenly Parent in a similar way as conversing with Mary and Joseph. This departure from the more solemn and reverent modes of communication with Deity was a bit disconcerting to them, especially to Mary, but there was no persuading Jesus to change. Jesus would say prayers just as having been taught, and then insisted on having "just a little talk with my Creator Parent."

In June of this year Joseph turned the shop in Nazareth over to relatives and formally began work as a builder. Before the year was over, the family income had more than tripled. Never again, until after Joseph's death, did the Nazareth family feel the pinch of poverty. The family grew larger and larger, and they spent much money on extra education and travel, but Joseph's increasing income always kept pace with the growing expenses.

The next few years Joseph did considerable work at Cana, Bethlehem (of Galilee), Magdala, Nain, Sepphoris, Capernaum, and Endor, as well as much building in and near Nazareth. As James grew up to be old enough to help with the housework and care of the younger children, Jesus made frequent trips away from home with Joseph to these surrounding towns and villages. Jesus was a keen observer and gained much practical knowledge from these trips away from home, assiduously storing up knowledge regarding the way people lived on earth.

This year Jesus made great progress in adjusting strong feelings and vigorous impulses to the demands of family co-operation and home discipline. Mary was a loving parent but a fairly strict disciplinarian. In many ways, however, Joseph exerted greater control over Jesus, fully explaining the real and underlying reasons for the necessity of disciplinary curtailment of personal desires in deference to the welfare and tranquility of the entire family. Jesus was always intelligently and willingly co-operative with parental wishes and family regulations when the situation had been explained.

Much of Jesus' spare time — when Mary did not require help about the house — was spent studying the flowers and plants by day and the stars by night. Jesus evinced a troublesome penchant for gazing wonderingly up into the starry heavens long after bedtime in this well-ordered Nazareth household.

4. The Seventh Year (C.E. 1)

This was an eventful year in Jesus' life. Early in January a great snowstorm occurred in Galilee. Snow fell two feet deep, the heaviest snowfall Jesus had ever seen and one of the deepest at Nazareth in a hundred years.

The play life of Jewish children in the times of Jesus was rather circumscribed; all too often the children played at the more serious things they observed their elders doing. They played much at weddings and funerals, ceremonies which they so frequently saw and which were so spectacular. They danced and sang but had few organized games, such as children of later days so much enjoy.

Jesus, in company with a neighbor and later with James, delighted to play in the far corner of the family carpenter shop, where they had great fun with the shavings and the blocks of wood. Jesus always found it difficult to comprehend the harm of certain sorts of play which were forbidden on the Sabbath, but never failed to conform to parental wishes. Jesus had a capacity for humor and play which was afforded little opportunity for expression in the environment of that day and generation, but up to the age of fourteen was cheerful and lighthearted most of the time.

Mary maintained a dovecote on top of the animal house adjoining the home, and they used the profits from the sale of doves as a special charity fund, which Jesus administered after deducting the tithe and turning it over to the officer of the synagogue.

The only real accident Jesus had up to this time was a fall down the back-yard stone stairs which led up to the canvas-roofed bedroom. It happened during an unexpected July sandstorm from the east. The hot winds, carrying blasts of fine sand, usually blew during the rainy season, especially in March and April. It was extraordinary to have such a storm in July. When the storm came up, Jesus was on the housetop playing, for during much of the dry season this was an accustomed playroom. Jesus was blinded by the sand when descending the stairs and fell. After this accident Joseph built a balustrade up both sides of the stairway.

There was no way in which this accident could have been prevented. It was not chargeable to neglect by the midway temporal guardians, one primary and one secondary midwayer having been assigned to the watch care of the child; neither was it chargeable to the guardian seraphim. It simply could not have been avoided. But this slight accident, occurring while Joseph was absent in Endor, caused Mary to unwisely keep Jesus very close for some months.

Material accidents, commonplace occurrences of a physical nature, are not arbitrarily interfered with by celestial personalities. Under ordinary circumstances only midway creatures can intervene in material conditions to safeguard people of destiny, and even in special situations these beings can act only in obedience to the specific mandates of their superiors.

And this was only one of a number of such minor accidents which subsequently befell this inquisitive and adventurous youth. If you envisage the average childhood and youth of an aggressive child, you will have a fairly good idea of this youthful career, and you will be able to imagine just how much anxiety was caused Jesus' parents, particularly Mary.

The fourth member of the Nazareth family, Joseph, was born Wednesday morning, March 16, C.E. 1.

5. School Days in Nazareth

Jesus was now seven years old, the age when Jewish children were supposed to begin their formal education in the synagogue schools. Accordingly, in August of this year Jesus began an eventful school life at Nazareth. Already a fluent reader, writer, and speaker of two languages, Aramaic and Greek, Jesus was now to become acquainted with the task of learning to read, write, and speak the Hebrew language. And Jesus was truly eager for the new school life ahead.

For three years — until age ten — Jesus attended the elementary school of the Nazareth synagogue. For these three years Jesus studied the rudiments of the Book of the Law as it was recorded in Hebrew, and for the following three years studied in the advanced school and committed to memory, by the method of repeating aloud, the deeper teachings of the sacred law. Jesus graduated from this school at age thirteen and was turned over to Mary and Joseph by the synagogue rulers as an educated “child of the commandment,” a responsible citizen of the commonwealth of Israel, all of which entailed attendance at the Passovers in Jerusalem. Accordingly, Jesus attended Passover that year in the company of Joseph and Mary.

At Nazareth the pupils sat on the floor in a semicircle while their teacher, the chazan, an officer of the synagogue, sat facing them. Beginning with the Book of Leviticus, they passed on to the study of the other books of the law, followed by the study of the Prophets and the Psalms. The Nazareth synagogue possessed a complete copy of the Scriptures in Hebrew. Nothing but the Scriptures was studied prior to the twelfth year. In the summer months the hours for school were greatly shortened.

Jesus soon became a master of Hebrew, and when no visitor of prominence happened to be staying in Nazareth, would often be asked to read the Hebrew scriptures in the synagogue at the regular Sabbath services.

These synagogue schools, of course, had no textbooks. In teaching, the chazan would utter a statement while the pupils would repeat it in unison. When having access to the written books of the law, the students learned lessons by reading aloud and by constant repetition.

Next, in addition to more formal schooling, Jesus began to make contact with human nature from the four quarters of the earth as people from many lands passed in and out of Joseph’s repair shop. When older, Jesus mingled freely with the caravans as they lingered near the spring for rest and nourishment. Being a fluent speaker of Greek, Jesus had little trouble in conversing with the majority of the caravan travelers and conductors.

Nazareth was a caravan way station and crossroads of travel and largely gentile in population; at the same time it was widely known as a center of liberal interpretation of Jewish traditional law. In Galilee the Jews mingled more freely with the gentiles than in Judea. And of all the cities of Galilee, the Jews of Nazareth were most liberal in their interpretation of the social restrictions based on the fears of contamination as a result of contact with the gentiles. And these conditions gave rise to the common saying in Jerusalem, “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?”

Jesus received moral training and spiritual culture chiefly at home, securing much intellectual and theological education from the chazan. But real education — that equipment of mind and heart for the actual test of grappling with the difficult problems of life — Jesus obtained by mingling with others. It was this close association with people, young and old, Jew and gentile, that provided the opportunity to know the human race. Jesus was highly educated, thoroughly understanding people and devotedly loving them.

Throughout these years at the synagogue Jesus was a brilliant student, possessing a great advantage by being conversant with three languages. On the occasion of Jesus' finishing the course, the chazan remarked to Joseph that "I learned more from Jesus' searching questions" than I had "been able to teach the child."

Throughout the course of study Jesus learned much and derived great inspiration from the regular Sabbath sermons in the synagogue. It was customary to ask distinguished visitors, stopping over the Sabbath in Nazareth, to address the synagogue. Growing up, Jesus heard many great thinkers of the entire Jewish world expound their views, and many also who were hardly orthodox Jews since the synagogue of Nazareth was an advanced and liberal center of Hebrew thought and culture.

When entering school at seven years (at this time the Jews had just inaugurated a compulsory education law), it was customary for the pupils to choose their "birthday text," a sort of golden rule to guide them throughout their studies, one on which they often expatiated at their graduation when thirteen years old. The text which Jesus chose was from the Prophet Isaiah: "The spirit of Yahweh is upon me, for Yahweh has anointed me, sending me to bring good news to the meek, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and to set the spiritual prisoners free."

Nazareth was one of the twenty-four priest centers of the Hebrew nation. But the Galilean priesthood was more liberal in the interpretation of the traditional laws than were the Judean scribes and rabbis. And at Nazareth they were also more liberal regarding the observance of the Sabbath. It was therefore the custom for Joseph to take Jesus out for walks on Sabbath afternoons, one of their favorite jaunts being to climb the high hill near their home, from which they could obtain a panoramic view of all Galilee. To the northwest, on clear days, they could see the long ridge of Mount Carmel running down to the sea; and many times Jesus heard Joseph relate the story of Elijah, one of the first of that long line of Hebrew prophets, who reproved Ahab and exposed the priests of Baal. To the north Mount Hermon raised its snowy peak in majestic splendor and monopolized the skyline, almost 3,000 feet of the upper slopes glistening white with perpetual snow. Far to the east they could discern the Jordan valley and, far beyond, the rocky hills of Moab. Also to the south and the east, when the sun shone on their marble walls, they could see the Greco-Roman cities of the Decapolis, with their amphitheatres and pretentious temples. And when they lingered toward the going down of the sun, to the west they could make out the sailing vessels on the distant Mediterranean.

From four directions Jesus could observe the caravan trains as they wended their way in and out of Nazareth, and to the south could overlook the broad and fertile plain country of Esdraelon, stretching off toward Mount Gilboa and Samaria.

When they did not climb the heights to view the distant landscape, they strolled through the countryside and studied nature's various moods in accordance with the seasons. Jesus' earliest training, aside from that of the home hearth, had to do with a reverent and sympathetic contact with nature.

Before the age of eight, Jesus learned to milk the family cow and care for the other animals, and during this and the following year also learned to make cheese and to weave. At the age of ten, Jesus was an expert loom operator. It was about this time that Jesus and a neighbor, Jacob, became great friends of the potter, Nathan, who worked near the flowing spring; and as they watched Nathan's deft fingers mold the clay on the potter's wheel, many times both of them determined to be potters when they grew up. Nathan was very fond of the children and often gave them clay to play with, seeking to stimulate their creative imaginations by suggesting competitive efforts in modeling various objects and animals.

6. The Eighth Year (C.E. 2)

This was an interesting year at school. Jesus was not an unusual student, but was a diligent pupil and belonged to the more progressive third of the class, doing the work so well that one week out of each month was excused from attendance. This week Jesus usually spent either with an uncle on the shores of the Sea of Galilee near Magdala or on the farm of another uncle five miles south of Nazareth.

Mary, who had become unduly anxious about Jesus' health and safety, gradually became reconciled to these trips away from home. A lively competition ensued among Jesus' relatives to secure the company of the child for these monthly visits throughout this and subsequent years. The first week's sojourn on a relative's farm (since infancy) was in January of this year; the first week's fishing experience on the Sea of Galilee occurred in the month of May.

About this time Jesus met a teacher of mathematics from Damascus, and learning some new techniques of numbers, spent much time on mathematics for several years. Jesus developed a keen sense of numbers, distances, and proportions.

Jesus began to enjoy James very much and by the end of this year had begun to teach James the alphabet.

Jesus had an unusual liking for everything musical, and this year made arrangements to exchange dairy products for lessons on the harp, later on doing much to promote an interest in vocal music among some youthful associates. By age eleven, Jesus was a skillful harpist and greatly enjoyed entertaining both family and friends with extraordinary interpretations and able improvisations.

While Jesus continued to make enviable progress at school, all did not run smoothly for either parents or teachers. Jesus persisted in asking many embarrassing questions concerning both science and religion, particularly regarding geography and astronomy, and was especially insistent on finding out why there was a dry season and a rainy season in Palestine. Repeatedly Jesus sought the explanation for the great difference between the temperatures of Nazareth and the Jordan valley, never ceasing to ask such intelligent but disturbing questions.

Simon was born on Friday evening, April 14, of this year, C.E. 2.

In February, Nahor, one of the teachers in a Jerusalem academy of the rabbis, came to Nazareth to observe Jesus, having been on a visit to Zacharias's home near Jerusalem and coming to Nazareth at Zacharias' instigation. Nahor, while at first somewhat shocked by Jesus' frankness and unconventional manner of relating to things religious, attributed it to the remoteness of Galilee from the centers of Hebrew learning and culture and advised Mary and Joseph to allow Jesus to be taken back to Jerusalem for the advantages of education and training at the center of Jewish culture. Mary was half persuaded to consent, being convinced that Jesus was to become the Messiah, the Jewish deliverer; Joseph hesitated, being equally persuaded that Jesus was to grow up to become a figure of destiny, but what that destiny would prove to be was profoundly uncertain. But Joseph never really doubted that Jesus was to fulfill some great mission on earth. The more Joseph thought about Nahor's advice, the more questionable the wisdom of the proposed sojourn in Jerusalem became.

Because of this difference of opinion between Joseph and Mary, Nahor requested permission to lay the whole matter before Jesus. Jesus listened attentively, talked with Joseph, Mary, and a neighbor, Jacob the stone mason, and then, two days later, reported that since there was such a difference of opinion among everyone, and not feeling competent to assume the responsibility for such a decision, not feeling strongly one way or the other, in view of the whole situation, had finally decided to "talk with my Creator Parent."

Jesus, while not perfectly sure about the answer, felt that remaining at home “with my parents,” was the best choice adding, “they who love me so much should be able to do more for me and guide me more safely than strangers who can only view my body and observe my mind but can hardly truly know me.” They all marveled, and Nahor left, going back to Jerusalem. And it was many years before the subject of Jesus’ going away from home came up for consideration again.

Paper 124

The Later Childhood of Jesus

Jesus might have enjoyed a better opportunity for schooling at Alexandria than in Galilee, but could not have had such a splendid environment for working out life problems with a minimum of educational guidance, at the same time enjoying the great advantage of constantly contacting with such a large number of all classes of people coming from every part of the civilized world. The education of Jesus at Alexandria would have been directed by Jews and along exclusively Jewish lines. The education and training Jesus secured at Nazareth provided an understanding of the gentiles, and a better and more balanced idea of the relative merits of the Eastern, or Babylonian, and the Western, or Hellenic, views of Hebrew theology.

1. Jesus' Ninth Year (C.E. 3)

Jesus, who was never seriously ill, did have some of the minor ailments of childhood this year, along with the other children in the family.

Jesus was still a favored pupil at school, had one week each month at liberty, and continued to divide the time about equally between trips to neighboring cities with Joseph, sojourns on a family farm south of Nazareth, and fishing excursions out from Magdala.

The most serious trouble as yet to come up at school occurred in late winter when Jesus dared to challenge the chazan regarding the teaching that all images, pictures, and drawings were idolatrous in nature. Jesus delighted in drawing landscapes as well as in modeling a great variety of objects in potter's clay. Everything of that sort was strictly forbidden by Jewish law, but up to this time Jesus had managed to disarm Mary and Joseph's objection to such an extent that they had permitted these activities to continue.

But trouble was again stirred up at school when another pupil discovered Jesus drawing a charcoal picture of the teacher on the floor of the schoolroom. There it was, plain as day, and many of the elders had viewed it before the committee went to call on Jesus' parents to demand that something be done to suppress this lawlessness. And though this was not the first time complaints had come to Joseph and Mary about the doings of their versatile and aggressive child, this was the most serious of all the accusations which had been lodged so far. Jesus listened to the indictment of these artistic efforts for some time, being seated on a large stone just outside the back door, and finally marched in, fearlessly confronting the accusers. The elders were thrown into confusion. Some were inclined to view the episode humorously, while one or two seemed to think the child was sacrilegious if not blasphemous. Joseph was unnerved, Mary indignant, but Jesus insisted on being heard, courageously defending a reasonable viewpoint, and with consummate self-control announced that from now on he would abide by the decision of Mary and Joseph in this as in all other controversial matters. And the committee of elders departed in silence.

Mary was inclined to permit modeling in clay at home, provided Jesus promised not to carry on any of these questionable activities at school, but Joseph felt impelled to rule that the rabbinical interpretation of the second commandment should prevail. And so Jesus did not draw or model the likeness of anything from

that day on, although still unconvinced of the wrong of this activity, and finding that giving up such a favorite pastime constituted a great trial.

In the latter part of June, Jesus, in company with Joseph, first climbed to the summit of Mount Tabor. It was a clear day and the view was superb. It seemed that this nine-year-old was really gazing on the entire world except for India, Africa, and Rome.

Baby Martha was born Thursday night, September 13. Three weeks after the arrival of Martha, Joseph, who was home for a while, started building an addition to their house, a combined workshop and bedroom. A small workbench was built for Jesus, who for the first time possessed a personal set of tools. At odd times for many years Jesus worked at this bench and became highly expert in the making of yokes.

This winter and the next were the coldest in Nazareth for many decades. Jesus had seen snow on the mountains, and several times it had fallen in Nazareth, remaining on the ground only a short time; but not until this winter had the people seen ice. The fact that water could be a solid, a liquid, and a vapor — Jesus had long pondered over the escaping steam from the boiling pots — caused the child to think a great deal about the physical world and its constitution; and yet the personality embodied in this growing youth was all this while the actual creator and organizer of all these things throughout a vast universe.

The climate of Nazareth was not severe. January was the coldest month, the temperature averaging around 50° F. During July and August, the hottest months, the temperature would vary from 75° to 90° F. From the mountains to the Jordan and the Dead Sea valley the climate of Palestine ranged from the frigid to the torrid. And so, in a way, the Jews were prepared to live in about any and all of the world's varying climates.

Even during the warmest summer months a cool sea breeze usually blew from the west from 10:00 A.M. until about 10:00 P.M. But every now and then terrific hot winds from the eastern desert would blow across all Palestine. These hot blasts usually came in February and March, near the end of the rainy season. In those days the rain fell in refreshing showers from November to April, but it did not rain steadily. There were only two seasons in Palestine, summer and winter, the dry and rainy seasons. In January the flowers began to bloom, and by the end of April the whole land was one vast flower garden.

In May of this year, on a family farm, Jesus helped with the harvest of the grain for the first time. Before reaching the age of thirteen, Jesus had managed to find out something about practically everything that people worked at around Nazareth except metal working, but spent several months in a smith's shop when older, after the death of Joseph.

When work and caravan travel were slack, Jesus made many trips with Joseph on pleasure or business to near-by Cana, Endor, and Nain, also frequently visiting Sepphoris, only a little over three miles from Nazareth to the northwest, and from 4 B.C.E. to about C.E. 25 the capital of Galilee and one of the residences of Herod Antipas.

Jesus continued to grow physically, intellectually, socially, and spiritually. The trips away from home did much to provide a better and more generous understanding of the family, and by this time even Mary and Joseph were beginning to learn from as well as to teach Jesus, who was an original thinker and a skillful

teacher, even as a youth. In constant collision with the so-called “oral law,” Jesus always sought to adapt to the practices of the family. Jesus got along fairly well with other children, but often grew discouraged with their slow-acting minds. Before age ten, Jesus had become the leader of a group of seven children who formed themselves into a society for promoting the acquirements of adulthood — physical, intellectual, and religious. Among these playmates Jesus succeeded in introducing many new games and various improved methods of physical recreation.

2. The Tenth Year (C.E. 4)

It was the fifth of July, the first Sabbath of the month, when Jesus, while strolling through the countryside with Joseph, first gave expression to feelings and ideas which indicated the beginnings of self-consciousness of the unusual nature of the bestowal mission. Joseph listened attentively but made few comments; volunteering no information. The next day Jesus had a similar but longer talk with Mary, who likewise listened to these pronouncements, but volunteered no information. It was almost two years before Jesus again spoke to Mary and Joseph concerning this increasing inner revelation.

Jesus entered the advanced school of the synagogue in August, constantly creating trouble by persistently asking questions. Increasingly Jesus kept all Nazareth in more or less of a hubbub. Joseph and Mary were loath to forbid the asking of these disquieting questions, and the chief teacher was greatly intrigued by the child’s curiosity, insight, and hunger for knowledge.

The other children saw nothing supernatural in the conduct of Jesus, who in most ways was altogether like themselves. Jesus, whose interest in study was somewhat above the average but not wholly unusual, did ask more questions at school than others in the class.

Perhaps Jesus’ most unusual and outstanding trait was an unwillingness to fight. Being such a well-developed youth, it seemed strange to the other children that Jesus was disinclined towards self-defense even from injustice or when subjected to personal abuse. As it happened, Jesus did not suffer much on account of this trait because of the friendship of Jacob, a neighbor, who was one year older. Jacob was the child of the stone mason, a business associate of Joseph. Jacob was a great admirer of Jesus and made sure that no one was permitted to impose on this aversion to physical combat. Several times older and uncouth youths attacked Jesus, but they always suffered swift and certain retribution at the hands of Jacob, Jesus’ self-appointed champion and ever-ready defender.

Jesus was the generally accepted leader of the Nazareth youths who stood for the higher ideals of their day and generation, being really loved by these youthful associates, not only for being fair, but also for possessing a rare and understanding sympathy that betokened love and bordered on discreet compassion.

This year Jesus began to show a marked preference for the company of older persons, delighting in talking over things cultural, educational, social, economic, political, and religious with older minds, and Jesus’ depth of reasoning and keenness of observation so charmed these adult associates that they were always more than willing to engage in these conversations. Joseph and Mary were constantly seeking to influence Jesus to associate with those of similar age rather than with older and better-informed individuals.

Late this year Jesus had a fishing experience of two months on the Sea of Galilee, and was very successful. Before attaining adulthood, Jesus had become an expert in fishing.

As physical development continued, Jesus was an advanced and privileged pupil at school, while getting along fairly well with all the siblings at home, having the advantage of being three and one-half years older than the oldest of the other children. Jesus was well thought of in Nazareth except by the parents of some of the duller children, who often spoke of Jesus as being too self-assured, as lacking in proper humility and youthful reserve. Jesus manifested a growing tendency to direct the play activities of youthful associates into more serious and thoughtful channels, and simply could not refrain from so functioning, even when supposedly engaged in play.

Joseph began to instruct Jesus in the diverse means of gaining a livelihood, explaining the advantages of agriculture over industry and trade. Galilee was a more beautiful and prosperous district than Judea, and it cost only about one fourth as much to live there as in Jerusalem and Judea. It was a province of agricultural villages and thriving industrial cities, containing more than two hundred towns of over five thousand population and thirty of over fifteen thousand.

When on the first trip with Joseph to observe the fishing industry on the lake of Galilee, Jesus had just about decided to make a living by fishing, but was also influenced by close association with Joseph's vocation to become a carpenter, while still later a combination of influences led to the final choice of becoming a religious teacher of a new order.

3. The Eleventh Year (C.E. 5)

Throughout this year Jesus continued to make trips away from home with Joseph, but also frequently visited a relative's farm and occasionally went over to Magdala to engage in fishing with another relative who lived near that city.

Joseph and Mary were often tempted to show some special favoritism for Jesus or otherwise to betray their knowledge that Jesus was a child of promise, a child of destiny. But both parents were extraordinarily wise and sagacious in all these matters. The few times they did in any manner exhibit any preference for Jesus, even in the slightest degree, the child was quick to refuse all such special consideration.

Jesus spent considerable time at the caravan supply shop, and by conversing with the travelers from all parts of the world, acquired a store of information about international affairs that was amazing. This was the last year in which Jesus enjoyed much free play and youthful joyousness. From this time on difficulties and responsibilities rapidly multiplied in the life of this youth.

On Wednesday evening, June 24, C.E. 5, Jude was born. Complications attended the birth of this, the seventh child. Mary was so very ill for several weeks that Joseph remained at home. Jesus was very much occupied with errands and with many duties occasioned by Mary's serious illness. Never again did this youth find it possible to return to the childlike attitude of earlier years. From the time of Mary's illness — just before becoming eleven years old — Jesus was compelled to assume the responsibilities of the first-born child and to do all this one or two full years before these burdens should normally have occurred.

The chazan spent one evening each week helping Jesus to master the Hebrew scriptures, being greatly interested in the progress of this promising pupil and therefore willing to assist Jesus in many ways. This Jewish pedagogue exerted a great influence upon this growing mind, but was never able to comprehend why Jesus was so indifferent to all suggestions regarding the prospects of going to Jerusalem to be educated under the learned rabbis.

About the middle of May Jesus accompanied Joseph on a business trip to Scythopolis, the chief Greek city of the Decapolis, the ancient Hebrew city of Beth-shean. On the way Joseph recounted much of the history of King Saul, the Philistines, and the subsequent events of Israel's turbulent history. Jesus was tremendously impressed with the clean appearance and well-ordered arrangement of this so-called heathen city, marveling at the open-air theater and admiring the beautiful marble temple dedicated to the worship of the "heathen" gods. Joseph was much perturbed by Jesus' enthusiasm and sought to counteract these favorable impressions by extolling the beauty and grandeur of the Jewish temple at Jerusalem. Jesus had often gazed curiously upon this magnificent Greek city from the hill of Nazareth and had many times inquired about its extensive public works and ornate buildings, but Joseph had always sought to avoid answering these questions. Now they were face to face with the beauties of this gentile city, and Joseph could not gracefully ignore Jesus' inquiries.

It so happened that just at this time the annual competitive games and public demonstrations of physical prowess between the Greek cities of the Decapolis were in progress at the Scythopolis amphitheater. Jesus was insistent that they go to see the games, and was so insistent that Joseph hesitated to deny the request. Jesus was thrilled with the games and entered most heartily into the spirit of the demonstrations of physical development and athletic skill. Joseph was inexpressibly shocked to observe Jesus' enthusiasm as they watched these exhibitions of "heathen" vaingloriousness. After the games were finished, Joseph received an unwanted surprise when hearing Jesus express approval of the games and suggest that it would be good for the youths of Nazareth if they could be similarly benefited by wholesome outdoor physical activities. Joseph talked earnestly and long with Jesus concerning the evil nature of such practices, but well knew that Jesus was unconvinced.

The only time Jesus ever experienced Joseph's anger was that night in their room at the inn when, in the course of their discussions, the youth so far forgot the trends of Jewish thought as to suggest that they go back home and work for the building of an amphitheater at Nazareth. Joseph, upon hearing such un-Jewish sentiments, seized Jesus by the shoulder, angrily exclaiming, "Never again let me hear you give utterance to such an evil thought as long as you live." Jesus was startled by Joseph's display of emotion, having never before been made to feel the personal sting of Joseph's indignation, and was astonished and shocked beyond expression, only replying, "Very well, it will be so." And never again did the youth even in the slightest manner allude to the games and other athletic activities of the Greeks as long as Joseph lived.

Later on, Jesus saw the Greek amphitheater at Jerusalem and learned how hateful such things were from the Jewish point of view, nevertheless continuing a lifelong endeavor to personally adopt the idea of wholesome recreation, and, as far as Jewish practice would permit, to incorporate it into the later program of regular activities for the twelve apostles.

At the end of this eleventh year Jesus was a vigorous, well-developed, moderately humorous, and fairly lighthearted youth, but from this year on was more and more given to unusual seasons of profound meditation and serious contemplation. Jesus was much given to thinking about how to carry out obligations to the family and at the same time be obedient to the call of the bestowal mission, already conceiving that this mission was not to be limited to the betterment of the Jewish people.

4. The Twelfth Year (C.E. 6)

This was an eventful year. Jesus continued to make progress at school and was indefatigable in the study of nature, while increasingly prosecuting the study of the methods by which people make a living. Jesus began doing regular work in the home carpenter shop and was permitted to manage those earnings, a very unusual arrangement for a Jewish family. This year Jesus also learned the wisdom of keeping such matters a secret within the family, becoming conscious of the way in which they had caused trouble in the village, and from then on became increasingly discreet in concealing everything which might result in being regarded as different from the other children.

Throughout this year Jesus, whose naturally developing human mind did not yet fully grasp the reality of having a dual nature, experienced many periods of uncertainty. The fact that Jesus had a single personality rendered it difficult to recognize the double origin of the factors which composed the nature associated with that personality.

From this time on Jesus became more successful in getting along with the family, becoming increasingly tactful, always compassionate and considerate of their welfare and happiness, and enjoying good relations with them up to the beginning of the public ministry. To be more explicit: Jesus got along with James, Miriam, and the two younger (as yet unborn) children, Amos and Ruth, most excellently, and with Martha fairly well, but the main trouble at home largely arose out of friction with Joseph and Jude, particularly the latter.

It was a trying experience for Mary and Joseph to undertake the rearing of this unprecedented combination of divinity and humanity, and they deserve great credit for so faithfully and successfully discharging their parental responsibilities. Increasingly Jesus' parents realized that there was something superhuman resident within this eldest child, but they never even faintly dreamed that this child of promise was indeed and in truth the actual creator of this local universe of things and beings. Joseph and Mary lived and died without ever learning that Jesus really was the Universe Creator incarnate as a mortal.

This year Jesus paid more attention than ever to music, and continued to teach the home school for the other children. It was at about this time that Jesus became keenly conscious of the difference between the viewpoints of Mary and Joseph regarding the nature of the bestowal mission, pondering much over their differing opinions, and often overhearing their discussions late at night. More and more Jesus inclined to the view of Joseph, so that Mary's guidance in matters having to do with the bestowal mission was gradually rejected. And, as the years passed, this breach of understanding widened. Mary comprehended the significance of Jesus' mission less and less, and was increasingly hurt by having unfulfilled expectations.

Joseph entertained a growing belief in the spiritual nature of Jesus' mission, and but for other and more important reasons it does seem unfortunate that Joseph could not have lived to see the fulfillment of Jesus' bestowal on earth.

Jesus, during the final year at school when twelve years of age, remonstrated with Joseph and Mary about the Jewish custom of touching the bit of parchment nailed on the doorpost each time on going into, or coming out of, the house and then kissing the finger that touched the parchment. As a part of this ritual it was customary to say, "Yahweh shall preserve our going out and our coming in, from this time forth and even forevermore." Joseph and Mary had repeatedly instructed Jesus as to the reasons for not making images or drawing pictures, explaining that such creations might be used for idolatrous purposes. Jesus, while failing to fully grasp their proscriptions against images and pictures, possessed a high concept of consistency and therefore pointed out the essentially idolatrous nature of this habitual obeisance to the doorpost parchment. And the parchment was removed.

As time passed, Jesus did much to modify their practice of religious forms, such as the family prayers and other customs. And it was possible to do many such things at Nazareth, for its synagogue was under the influence of a liberal school of rabbis, exemplified by the renowned Nazareth teacher.

Throughout this and the two following years Jesus suffered great mental distress as the result of a constant effort to adjust personal views of religious practices and social amenities to the established beliefs of Joseph and Mary. Jesus was distraught by the conflict between the urge to be loyal to personal convictions and the conscientious admonition of dutiful submission to Mary and Joseph, the supreme conflict being between two great commands which were uppermost. The one was: "Be loyal to the dictates of your highest convictions of truth and righteousness." The other was: "Honor your parents, for they have given you life and nurture." However, Jesus never shirked the responsibility of making the necessary daily adjustments between these realms of loyalty to one's personal convictions and duty toward one's family, and achieved the satisfaction of effecting an increasingly harmonious blending of personal convictions and family obligations into a masterful concept of group solidarity based upon loyalty, fairness, tolerance, and love.

5. The Thirteenth Year (C.E. 7)

In this year Jesus passed from childhood to the beginning of young adulthood, experiencing a changing voice and other features of mind and body that gave evidence of the oncoming status of adulthood.

On Sunday night, January 9, C.E. 7, Amos was born. Jude was not yet two years of age, and baby Ruth was yet to come; so it may be seen that Jesus had a sizable family of small children left to care for when Joseph met an accidental death the following year.

It was about the middle of February that Jesus became humanly assured of having a destiny to perform a mission on earth for the enlightenment of mortals and the revelation of the Creator. Momentous decisions, coupled with far-reaching plans, were formulating in the mind of Jesus, who was, to outward appearances, an average Jewish youth of Nazareth. The intelligent life of all Nebadon looked on with fascination and amazement as all this began to unfold in the thinking and acting of this adolescent.

On the first day of the week, March 20, C.E. 7, Jesus graduated from the course of training in the local school connected with the Nazareth synagogue. This was a great day in the life of any ambitious Jewish family, the day when the first-born was pronounced a “child of the commandment.”

Friday of the week before, Joseph had come over from Sepphoris, having been in charge of the work on a new public building, to be present on this glad occasion. Jesus’ teacher confidently believed that this alert and diligent pupil was destined to some outstanding career, some distinguished mission. The elders, notwithstanding all their trouble with Jesus’ nonconformist tendencies, were very proud of the youth and had already begun laying plans which would enable Jesus to go to Jerusalem to continue an education in the renowned Hebrew academies.

Jesus, on hearing these plans discussed from time to time, became increasingly sure that going to Jerusalem to study with the rabbis would never take place, but little dreamed of the tragedy, so soon to occur, which would ensure the abandonment of all such plans by imposing the responsibility for the support and direction of a large family, presently to consist of eight siblings as well as Mary. Jesus had a larger and longer experience rearing this family than was accorded to Joseph, and did measure up to the standard to become a wise, patient, understanding, and effective teacher and eldest sibling to this family so suddenly sorrow-stricken and so unexpectedly bereaved.

6. The Journey to Jerusalem

Jesus, having now reached the threshold of young adulthood and having been formally graduated from the synagogue schools, was qualified to proceed to Jerusalem to participate in the celebration of the Passover. The Passover feast of this year fell on Saturday, April 9, C.E. 7. A considerable company (103) prepared to depart from Nazareth early Monday morning, April 4, for Jerusalem. They journeyed south toward Samaria, but on reaching Jezreel, they turned east, going around Mount Gilboa into the Jordan valley in order to avoid passing through Samaria. The family would have enjoyed going down through Samaria by way of Jacob’s well and Bethel, but since the Jews disliked to deal with the Samaritans, they decided to go with their neighbors by way of the Jordan valley.

The much-dreaded Archelaus had been deposed, and they had little to fear in taking Jesus to Jerusalem. Twelve years had passed since the first Herod had sought to destroy the child of Bethlehem, and no one would now think of associating that affair with this obscure youth of Nazareth.

Before reaching the Jezreel junction, and as they journeyed on, very soon, on the left, they passed the ancient village of Shunem, and Jesus heard again about the wonderful works Elisha performed there. In passing by Jezreel, Jesus’ parents recounted the doings of Ahab and Jezebel and the exploits of Jehu. In passing around Mount Gilboa, they talked much about Saul, who died on the slopes of this mountain, and the associations of this historic spot.

As they rounded the base of Gilboa, the pilgrims could see the Greek city of Scythopolis on the right. They gazed on the marble structures from a distance but did not go near the gentile city lest they so defile themselves that they could not participate in the forthcoming solemn and sacred ceremonies of the Passover

at Jerusalem. Mary could not understand why neither Joseph nor Jesus would speak of Scythopolis. Mary did not know about their controversy of the previous year as they had never revealed this episode.

The road now led immediately down into the tropical Jordan valley, and soon Jesus was to experience the crooked and ever-winding Jordan with its glistening and rippling waters as it flowed down toward the Dead Sea. They laid aside their outer garments as they journeyed south in this tropical valley, enjoying the luxurious fields of grain and the beautiful oleanders laden with their pink blossoms, while massive snow-capped Mount Hermon stood far to the north, in majesty looking down on the historic valley. A little over three hours' travel from opposite Scythopolis they came upon a bubbling spring, and here they camped for the night, out under the starlit heavens.

On their second day's journey they passed by where the Jabbok, from the east, flows into the Jordan, and looking east up this river valley, they recounted the days of Gideon, when the Midianites poured into this region to overrun the land. Toward the end of the second day's journey they camped near the base of the highest mountain overlooking the Jordan valley, Mount Sartaba, whose summit was occupied by an Alexandrian fortress.

The third day they passed by two villages which had been recently built by Herod and noted their superior architecture and their beautiful palm gardens. By nightfall they reached Jericho, where they remained overnight. That evening Joseph, Mary, and Jesus walked a mile and a half to the site of the ancient Jericho, where Joshua, for whom Jesus was named, had performed renowned exploits according to Jewish tradition.

By the fourth and last day's journey the road was a continuous procession of pilgrims. They now began to climb the hills leading up to Jerusalem. As they neared the top, they could look across the Jordan to the mountains beyond and south over the sluggish waters of the Dead Sea. About halfway up to Jerusalem, Jesus saw the Mount of Olives, and Joseph pointed out that the Holy City lay just beyond this ridge, and the youth's heart beat fast with joyous anticipation of soon seeing the city and house of Yahweh.

On the eastern slopes of Olivet they paused for rest in the borders of a little village called Bethany. The hospitable villagers poured out to minister to the pilgrims, and it happened that Jesus' family had stopped near the house of one Simon, who had three children about the same age as Jesus — Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. They invited the Nazareth family in for refreshment, and a lifelong friendship sprang up between the two families. Many times afterward, Jesus stopped in this home.

They pressed on, soon standing on the brink of Olivet, and Jesus saw for the first time the Holy City, the pretentious palaces, and the inspiring temple of Yahweh. Jesus had never experienced such a purely human thrill as when standing there on this April afternoon on the Mount of Olives, drinking in this first view of Jerusalem. And in later years, Jesus stood on this same spot and wept over the city which was about to reject its last and greatest prophet.

But they hurried on to Jerusalem. It was now Thursday afternoon. On reaching the city, they journeyed past the temple, and Jesus, who had never seen such throngs of human beings, meditated deeply on how these Jews had assembled here from the uttermost parts of the known world.

Soon they reached the place prearranged for their accommodation during the Passover week, the large home of a well-to-do relative of Mary's, one who knew something of the early history of both John and Jesus, through Zacharias. The following day, the day of preparation, they made ready for the appropriate celebration of the Passover Sabbath.

While all Jerusalem was stirring in preparation for the Passover, Joseph found time for them to visit the academy where it had been arranged for Jesus to attend two years later, as soon as reaching the required age of fifteen. Joseph was truly puzzled when observing how little interest Jesus evinced in all these carefully laid plans.

Jesus was profoundly impressed by the temple and all the associated services and other activities. For the first time since being four years old, Jesus was too preoccupied to ask many questions, but did, however, ask Joseph several embarrassing questions (as on previous occasions) as to why the Creator required the slaughter of so many innocent and helpless animals. And Joseph knew from the expression on Jesus' face that all answers and attempts at explanation were unsatisfactory to this deep-thinking and keen-reasoning youth.

On the day before the Passover Sabbath, flood tides of spiritual illumination swept through the mortal mind of Jesus, whose human heart was filled to overflowing with affectionate pity for the spiritually blind and morally ignorant multitudes assembled for the celebration of the ancient Passover commemoration. This was one of the most extraordinary days that the Child of the Creator spent on Urantia; and during the night, for the first time, an assigned messenger appeared from Salvington, commissioned by Immanuel, who said: "The hour has come. It is time that you began to be about your Creator Parent's business."

And so, even before the heavy responsibilities of the Nazareth family descended upon Jesus, the celestial messenger arrived to remind this youth, not quite thirteen years of age, that the hour had come to begin the resumption of the responsibilities of a universe. This was the first act of a long succession of events which finally culminated in the completion of Michael's bestowal on Urantia.

As time passed, the mystery of the incarnation became, to all of us, more and more unfathomable. We could hardly comprehend that this youth of Nazareth was the creator of all Nebadon. Neither do we now understand how the spirit of this same Local Universe Creator and the spirit of the Paradise Creator are associated with the souls of humankind. With the passing of time, we could see that the human mind of Jesus was increasingly aware of having the responsibility for a universe while living as a mortal.

Thus ends the career of the Nazareth child, and begins the narrative of that adolescent youth — the increasingly self-conscious divine human — who now begins the contemplation of a world career while striving to integrate this expanding life purpose with the desires of Mary and Joseph and the obligations to the family and the society of this day and age.

Paper 125

Jesus at Jerusalem

No incident in all Jesus' eventful earth career was more engaging, more humanly thrilling, than this first remembered visit to Jerusalem. Jesus was especially stimulated by the experience of attending the temple discussions alone, and it stood out as the great event of Jesus' later childhood and early youth. This was the first opportunity to enjoy a few days of independent living, the exhilaration of going and coming without restraint and restrictions. This brief period of undirected living, during the week following the Passover, was the first complete freedom from responsibility Jesus had ever enjoyed. And it was many years subsequent to this before a period of freedom from all sense of responsibility, even for a short time, happened again.

From the time they left Nazareth until they reached the summit of the Mount of Olives, Jesus experienced one long stress of expectant anticipation. All through a joyful childhood Jesus had reverently heard of Jerusalem and its temple, but now was soon to experience them in reality. From the Mount of Olives and from the outside, on closer inspection, the temple had been all and more than Jesus had expected; but when entering its sacred portals, the great disillusionment began.

In company with Mary and Joseph, Jesus passed through the temple precincts on the way to join that group of new youths who were about to be consecrated as citizens of Israel. Jesus was a little disappointed by the general demeanor of the temple throngs, but aside from a few remarks of protest to Joseph, said nothing, but thought, and thought deeply, as questions to the scribes and teachers a week later disclosed.

Jesus passed through the consecration rituals but was disappointed by their perfunctory and routine natures, missing that personal interest which characterized the ceremonies of the synagogue at Nazareth. Jesus then returned to greet Mary and prepared to accompany Joseph on a trip about the temple and its various courts, galleries, and corridors. The temple precincts could accommodate over two hundred thousand worshipers at one time, and the vastness of these buildings — in comparison with any Jesus had ever seen — were extremely impressive. Jesus was even more intrigued by the contemplation of the spiritual significance of the temple ceremonies and their associated worship.

Jesus was touchingly impressed by many of the beautiful and symbolic temple rituals, but was always disappointed by the explanation of the real meanings of these ceremonies which Joseph and Mary would offer. Jesus simply would not accept explanations of worship and religious devotion which involved belief in the wrath of Yahweh or the anger of the Almighty. In further discussion of these questions, after the conclusion of the temple visit, when Joseph became mildly insistent that acceptance of the orthodox Jewish beliefs be acknowledged, Jesus turned suddenly and, looking appealingly into Joseph's eyes, said: "it cannot be true — the Creator cannot regard the erring children on earth that way. The Creator cannot love those children less than you love me. And I know, no matter what unwise thing I might do, you would never pour out wrath on me nor vent anger against me. If you, my earthly parent, possess such human reflections of the Divine, how much more must the Creator be filled with goodness and overflowing with mercy. I refuse to believe that my Creator Parent loves me less than you."

When Joseph and Mary heard these words of their first-born child, they held their peace, and never again did they seek to change Jesus' mind about the love and the mercifulness of the Creator.

1. Jesus Views the Temple

Jesus was shocked and sickened by the spirit of irreverence that could be observed throughout the temple courts, deeming the conduct of the temple throngs to be inconsistent with their presence in the Creator's house. But the greatest shock occurred when escorted by Joseph into the court of the gentiles with its noisy jargon, loud talking and cursing, mingled indiscriminately with the bleating of sheep and the babble of noises which betrayed the presence of the money-changers and the vendors of sacrificial animals and other commercial commodities.

Jesus admired the sentiment and service of the temple, but was shocked by the spiritual emptiness on the faces of so many of the unthinking worshipers.

They now passed down to the priests' court beneath the rock ledge in front of the temple, where the altar stood, to observe the killing of the droves of animals and the washing away of the blood from the hands of the officiating slaughter priests at the bronze fountain. The bloodstained pavement, the gory hands of the priests, and the sounds of the dying animals were more than this nature-loving youth could stand. The terrible sight sickened Jesus, who clutched Joseph's arm and begged to be taken away. They walked back through the court of the gentiles, and even the coarse laughter and profane jesting were a relief from what Jesus had just seen.

Joseph saw how Jesus had sickened at the sight of the temple rites and wisely went around to view the "gate beautiful," the artistic gate made of Corinthian bronze. But Jesus had had enough of this first visit to the temple. They returned to the upper court for Mary and walked about in the open air and away from the crowds for an hour, viewing the Asmonean palace, the stately home of Herod, and the tower of the Roman guards. During this stroll Joseph explained that only the inhabitants of Jerusalem were permitted to witness the daily sacrifices in the temple, and that the people of Galilee came only three times a year to participate in the temple worship: at the Passover, at the feast of Pentecost (seven weeks after Passover), and at the feast of tabernacles in October. These feasts were established by Moses. They then discussed the two later established feasts of the dedication and of Purim. Afterward they went to their lodgings and made ready for the celebration of the Passover.

2. Jesus and the Passover

Five Nazareth families were guests of, or associates with, the family of Simon of Bethany in the celebration of the Passover, Simon having purchased the paschal lamb for the group. It was the slaughter of these lambs in such enormous numbers that had so affected Jesus on the temple visit. It had been the plan to eat the Passover with Mary's relatives, but Jesus persuaded Joseph and Mary to accept the invitation to go to Bethany.

That night they assembled for the Passover rites, eating the roasted meat with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. Jesus, being a new citizen of the covenant, recounted the origin of the Passover, but somewhat

disconcerted Mary and Joseph by the inclusion of numerous remarks mildly reflecting the impressions made by the things so recently seen and heard. This was the beginning of the seven-day ceremonies of the feast of the Passover.

Even at this early date, though saying nothing about such matters to Mary and Joseph, Jesus had begun to consider the propriety of celebrating the Passover without the slaughtered lamb. Jesus felt assured that the Creator was not pleased with this spectacle of sacrificial offerings, and as the years passed, became increasingly determined to someday establish the celebration of a bloodless Passover.

Jesus slept very little that night, being greatly disturbed by revolting dreams of slaughter and suffering. The inconsistencies and absurdities of the theology of the whole Jewish ceremonial system caused much disturbance in Jesus' mind and heart. Joseph and Mary also slept little. They were greatly disconcerted by the events of the day just ended. They were completely upset in their own hearts by Jesus', to them, strange and determined attitude. Mary became nervously agitated during the early part of the night, but Joseph remained calm, although equally puzzled. Both of them feared to talk frankly with Jesus about these problems, though Jesus would gladly have talked with them if they had dared to welcome the conversation.

The next day's services at the temple were more acceptable and did much to relieve the unpleasant memories of the previous day. The following morning young Lazarus took Jesus in hand, and they began a systematic exploration of Jerusalem and its environs. Before the day was over, Jesus discovered the various places where teaching and question conferences were in progress, and aside from a few visits to the holy of holies to gaze in wonder as to what really was behind the veil of separation, spent most of the time about the temple at these teaching conferences.

Throughout the Passover week, Jesus remained among the new citizens of the commandment, and this meant sitting outside the rail which segregated all persons who were not full citizens of Israel. Conscious of the limitations of youth, Jesus refrained from asking many questions; at least until the Passover celebration had ended and these restrictions on the newly consecrated youths were lifted.

On Wednesday of the Passover week, Jesus was permitted to go home with Lazarus to spend the night at Bethany. This evening, Lazarus, Martha, and Mary heard Jesus discuss things temporal and eternal, human and divine, and from that night on they all three loved Jesus as a member of their own family.

By the end of the week, Jesus saw less of Lazarus, who was not eligible for admission to even the outer circle of the temple discussions, but attended some of the public talks delivered in the outer courts. Lazarus was the same age as Jesus, but in Jerusalem youths were seldom admitted to the consecration of citizens of the law until they were a full thirteen years of age.

Again and again, during the Passover week, Mary and Joseph would find Jesus sitting alone, head in hands, profoundly thinking. Not knowing how much Jesus was confused in mind and troubled in spirit by recent experiences, they were very concerned; they did not know what to do. They welcomed the passing of the days of the Passover week and longed to have their strangely acting child safely back in Nazareth.

Day by day Jesus was thinking through these problems, and by the end of the week had made many adjustments; but when the time came to return to Nazareth, this youthful mind was still filled with a host of unanswered questions and unsolved problems.

Before Joseph and Mary left Jerusalem, in consultation with Jesus' Nazareth teacher, they made definite arrangements for Jesus to return when reaching the age of fifteen to begin a long course of study in one of the best-known academies of the rabbis. While Jesus accompanied Mary and Joseph and the teacher on their visits to the school, they were all distressed to observe how indifferent Jesus seemed to all they said and did. Mary was deeply pained at Jesus' reactions to the Jerusalem visit, and Joseph was profoundly puzzled at the youth's strange remarks and unusual conduct.

After all, Passover week had been a great event for Jesus, who had enjoyed the opportunity of meeting scores of young people about the same age, other candidates for the consecration, and Jesus utilized such contacts as a means of learning how people lived in Mesopotamia, Turkestan, and Parthia, as well as in the Far-Western provinces of Rome. Jesus was already fairly conversant with the way in which the youth of Egypt and other regions near Palestine grew up. There were thousands of young people in Jerusalem at this time, and Jesus personally met, and more or less extensively interviewed, more than one hundred and fifty, being particularly interested in those who came from the Far-Eastern and the remote Western countries. As a result of these contacts Jesus began to entertain a desire to travel the world for the purpose of learning how the various groups of people toiled for their livelihood.

3. Departure of Joseph and Mary

It had been arranged that the Nazareth party should gather in the region of the temple at mid-morning on the first day of the week after the Passover festival had ended. This they did and started out on the return journey to Nazareth. Jesus had gone into the temple to listen to the discussions while Mary and Joseph awaited the assembly of the other travelers. Presently the company prepared to depart. Jesus had gone to Jerusalem in company with Mary. As a young citizen of the consecration, Jesus was supposed to journey back to Nazareth in company with Joseph. But as the Nazareth party moved on toward Bethany, Jesus was completely absorbed in the discussion of angels in the temple, being wholly unmindful of the passing of the time for the departure of the Nazareth group, and was not aware of being left behind until the noontime adjournment of the temple conferences.

The Nazareth travelers did not miss Jesus, who Mary surmised journeyed with Joseph, while Joseph thought Jesus traveled with Mary. They did not discover Jesus' absence until they reached Jericho and prepared to stay for the night. After making inquiry of the last of the party to reach Jericho and learning that none of them had seen Jesus, they spent a sleepless night, turning over in their minds what might have happened, recounting many of Jesus' unusual reactions to the events of Passover week, and mildly chiding each other for not seeing to it that their child was in the group before they left Jerusalem.

4. First and Second Days in the Temple

In the meantime, Jesus had remained in the temple throughout the afternoon, listening to the discussions and enjoying the more quiet and decorous atmosphere, the great crowds of Passover week having about

disappeared. Jesus did not participate in any of the afternoon discussions, and at their conclusion, left for Bethany, arriving just as Simon's family made ready to partake of their evening meal. The three youngsters were overjoyed to greet Jesus, who remained in Simon's house for the night. Jesus visited very little during the evening, spending much of the time alone in the garden meditating.

Early the next day Jesus was up and on the way to the temple. On the brow of Olivet Jesus paused and wept over the sight — a spiritually impoverished people, tradition bound and living under the surveillance of the Roman legions. Early morning found Jesus in the temple, having decided to take part in the discussions. Meanwhile, Joseph and Mary had also arisen with the early dawn with the intention of retracing their steps to Jerusalem. First, they hastened to the house of their relatives, where they had lodged as a family during the Passover week, but inquiry elicited the fact that no one had seen Jesus. After searching all day and finding no trace of their child, they returned to their relatives for the night.

At the second conference Jesus had boldly asked questions, and in a very amazing way had participated in the temple discussions but always in a manner consistent with being so young. Sometimes those pointed questions were somewhat embarrassing to the learned teachers of the Jewish law, but Jesus evinced such a spirit of candid fairness, coupled with an evident hunger for knowledge, that the majority of the temple teachers responded with every consideration. But when Jesus presumed to question the justice of putting to death a drunken gentile who had wandered outside the court of the gentiles and unwittingly entered the forbidden and reputedly sacred precincts of the temple, one of the more intolerant teachers grew impatient with the youth's implied criticisms and, glowering down, asked how old Jesus was. Jesus replied, "thirteen years lacking a trifle more than four months." "Then," rejoined the now irate teacher, "why are you here, since you are not of age as a citizen of the law?" Jesus described having received consecration during the Passover, and being a finished student of the Nazareth schools, and the teachers with one accord derisively replied, "We might have known; the youth is from Nazareth." But the leader insisted that Jesus was not to be blamed for being approved for graduation by the rulers of the synagogue at Nazareth at age twelve instead of thirteen, and notwithstanding that several of the detractors got up and left, it was ruled that the youth might continue undisturbed as a pupil of the temple discussions.

When this, the second day in the temple, was finished, Jesus went back to Bethany for the night, and again went out in the garden to meditate and pray. It was apparent that Jesus' mind was concerned with the contemplation of weighty problems.

5. The Third Day in the Temple

Jesus' third day with the scribes and teachers in the temple witnessed the gathering of many spectators who, having heard of this youth from Galilee, came to enjoy the experience of seeing a young person confuse the wise elders of the law. Simon also came down from Bethany to see what the youth was up to. Throughout this day Joseph and Mary continued their anxious search, even going several times into the temple but never thinking to scrutinize the several discussion groups, although they once came almost within hearing distance of Jesus' fascinating voice.

Before the day had ended, the entire attention of the chief discussion group of the temple had become focused on the questions being asked by Jesus. Among these many questions were:

1. What really exists in the holy of holies, behind the veil?
2. Why should the temple worshipers be segregated by gender?
3. If Yahweh is a parent who loves all children, why is all this slaughter of animals necessary to gain divine favor — has the teaching of Moses been misunderstood?
4. Since the temple is dedicated to the worship of the Creator, is it consistent to permit the presence of those who engage in secular barter and trade?
5. Is the expected Messiah to become a temporal prince to sit on the throne of David, or to function as the light of life in the establishment of a spiritual realm?

And all the day through, those who listened marveled at these questions, and none was more astonished than Simon. For more than four hours this Nazareth youth plied these Jewish teachers with thought-provoking and heart-searching questions. Jesus conveyed teachings by these questions, but made few comments on the remarks of the elders. By the deft and subtle phrasing of a question Jesus would at one and the same time challenge their teaching and suggest an alternative. In the manner of asking a question there was an appealing combination of sagacity and humor which were endearing even to those who more or less felt resentment. Jesus was always eminently fair and considerate in the asking of these penetrating questions, and on this eventful afternoon in the temple, exhibited that same reluctance to take unfair advantage of an opponent which characterized the entire subsequent public ministry. As a youth, and later on as an adult, Jesus seemed to be utterly free from all egoistic desire to win an argument merely to experience logical triumph over others, being interested supremely in just one thing: to proclaim everlasting truth and thereby effect a fuller revelation of the eternal Creator.

When the day was over, Simon and Jesus went back to Bethany. For most of the distance both of them were silent. Again Jesus paused on the brow of Olivet, but this time while viewing the city and its temple did not weep, and only remained in silent devotion.

After the evening meal at Bethany Jesus again declined to join the others but instead went to the garden, lingering long into the night, vainly endeavoring to develop some definite plan of approach to the problem of the bestowal mission and to decide how best to reveal to the spiritually blinded people a more beautiful concept of the loving Creator and so set them free from their terrible bondage to law, ritual, ceremonial, and musty tradition. But the clear light did not come to the truth-seeking youth.

6. The Fourth Day in the Temple

Jesus was strangely unmindful of Mary and Joseph. Even at breakfast, when Lazarus's parents remarked that they must be about home by that time, Jesus did not seem to comprehend that they would be somewhat worried.

Again Jesus journeyed to the temple, but did not pause to meditate at the brow of Olivet. In the course of the morning's discussions much time was devoted to the law and the prophets, and the teachers were

astonished that Jesus was so familiar with the Scriptures, in Hebrew as well as Greek. But they were amazed by Jesus' youth even more than they were of this knowledge.

At the afternoon conference they had hardly begun to answer the question relating to the purpose of prayer when the leader invited the youth to come forward and asked Jesus to comment regarding prayer and worship.

The evening before, Jesus' parents had heard about this strange youth who so deftly sparred with the expounders of the law, but it had not occurred to them that this was their child. They had about decided to journey out to the home of Zacharias as they thought Jesus might have gone there to see Elizabeth and John. Thinking Zacharias might perhaps be at the temple, they stopped there on their way to the City of Judah. As they strolled through the courts of the temple, imagine their surprise and amazement when they recognized the voice of the missing youth and saw Jesus seated among the temple teachers.

Joseph was speechless, but Mary gave vent to long-pent-up fear and anxiety when, rushing up to Jesus, now standing to greet them, Mary said: "My child, why have you treated us like this? It is now more than three days that we have searched for you. Whatever possessed you to desert us?" It was a tense moment. All eyes were turned on Jesus to hear the response. Joseph looked reprovingly but said nothing.

It should be remembered that Jesus was supposed to be a young adult, having finished the regular schooling of a child, and had been recognized as a citizen of the law, receiving consecration as a citizen of Israel. And yet Mary more than mildly upbraided Jesus before all the people assembled, right in the midst of this most serious and sublime effort, bringing to an inglorious termination one of the greatest opportunities ever to be granted Jesus to function as a teacher of truth, a preacher of righteousness, and a revealer of the loving character of the Creator Parent.

But the youth was equal to the occasion. When you take into fair consideration all the factors which combined to make up this situation, you will be better prepared to fathom the wisdom of Jesus' reply to Mary's unintended rebuke. After a moment's thought, Jesus answered Mary, saying: "Why is it that you have so long sought me? Would you not expect to find me in the Creator's house since the time has come when I should be about my Creator Parent's business?"

Everyone was astonished at the youth's manner of speaking. Silently they all withdrew and left Jesus standing alone with Mary and Joseph. Presently Jesus relieved the embarrassment of all three, quietly saying: "Come, my parents, no one has done anything but that which we thought best. Our Creator Parent has ordained these things; let us go home."

In silence they started out, arriving at Jericho for the night. Only once did they pause, and that on the brow of Olivet, when Jesus raised a staff and, quivering from head to foot under the surging of intense emotion, said: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, and all of your people, what slaves you are — subservient to the Roman yoke and victims of your own traditions — but I will return to cleanse the temple and deliver my people from this bondage!"

On the three days' journey to Nazareth Jesus said little; neither did Joseph and Mary say much. They were truly at a loss to understand the conduct of their first-born child, but they did treasure in their hearts Jesus' sayings, even though they could not fully comprehend their meanings.

On reaching home, Jesus made a brief statement to Joseph and Mary, reassuring them and implying that they need not suffer anxiety, concluding this momentous statement by saying: "While I must do the will of my Creator Parent, I will also be obedient to my parents on earth. I will await my hour."

Though Jesus would many times refuse to *consent* to the well-intentioned but misguided efforts of Mary and Joseph, still, in every manner consistent with a dedication to the doing of the Creator's will, Jesus did most gracefully *conform* to the their desires and to the usages of the family. Jesus would do everything possible to conform even when unable to consent. Jesus was an artist in the matter of adjusting dedication to duty and obligations of family loyalty and social service.

Joseph was puzzled, but Mary, reflecting on these experiences, gained comfort, eventually viewing Jesus' utterance on Olivet as prophetic of the Messianic mission as Israel's deliverer. Mary set to work with renewed energy to mold Jesus' thoughts into patriotic and nationalistic channels, and in every other way took on the challenge of preparing this first-born to assume the leadership of those who would restore the throne of David and forever cast off the gentile yoke of political bondage.

Paper 126

The Two Crucial Years

Of all Jesus' earth-life experiences, the fourteenth and fifteenth years were the most crucial. These two years, after initially becoming self-conscious of divinity and destiny and before achieving a large measure of communication with the indwelling Adjuster, were the most trying. It is this period of two years which should be called the great test, the real temptation. No human youth, in passing through the early confusions and adjustment problems of adolescence, ever experienced a more crucial testing than that which Jesus passed through during the transition from childhood to young adulthood.

This important period in Jesus' youthful development began with the conclusion of the Jerusalem visit and the return to Nazareth. At first Mary was happy to be back home once more, hoping to have more influence over Jesus' plans. But Mary was not to bask for long in this sunshine of maternal delusion and unrecognized family pride, and very soon was to be more completely disillusioned. More and more Jesus was in the company of Joseph and less and less came to Mary with problems, while increasingly both parents failed to comprehend Jesus' frequent alternation between the affairs of this world and contemplation of the bestowal mission. Frankly, they did not understand, but did truly love Jesus.

Jesus' pity and love for the Jewish people deepened, but with the passing years a growing righteous resentment developed for the presence in the Creator's temple of the politically appointed priests. Jesus had great respect for those Pharisees and honest scribes who were sincere, but held the Pharisees and the theologians who were dishonest in great contempt, looking with disdain upon all those hypocritical religious leaders. When scrutinizing the leadership of Israel, Jesus was sometimes tempted to look with favor on the possibility of becoming the Messiah of Jewish expectation, but never yielded to the temptation.

The story of Jesus' exploits among the elders of the temple in Jerusalem was gratifying to all Nazareth, especially to the teachers in the synagogue school. For a time Jesus' praise was on everybody's lips. All the village recounted Jesus' childhood wisdom and praiseworthy conduct and predicted that Jesus was destined to become a great leader in Israel. At last a really great teacher was to come out of Nazareth in Galilee. And they all looked forward to the time when Jesus would be fifteen years of age and might be permitted to regularly read the Scriptures in the synagogue on the Sabbath day.

1. The Fourteenth Year (C.E. 8)

This is the calendar year of Jesus' fourteenth birthday. Jesus had become a good yoke maker, worked well with both canvas and leather, and was also rapidly developing into an expert carpenter and cabinetmaker. This summer Jesus made frequent trips to the top of the hill to the northwest of Nazareth for prayer and meditation and was gradually becoming more self-conscious of the nature of the bestowal mission on earth.

This hill, a little more than one hundred years previously, had been the "high place of Baal," and now it was the site of the tomb of Simeon, a reputed prophet of Israel. From the summit of the hill Jesus looked out over Nazareth and the surrounding country, gazing at Megiddo and recalling the story of the Egyptian army winning its first great victory in Asia, and how, later on, another such army defeated the Judean king Josiah. Not far away Jesus saw Taanach, where Deborah and Barak defeated Sisera, and in the distance viewed the hills of Dothan, where Joseph was sold into Egyptian slavery. Jesus would then look over to Ebal and Gerizim and recall the traditions of Abraham, Jacob, and Abimelech, recalling the historic and traditional events of Joseph's people.

Jesus continued to carry on advanced courses of reading under the synagogue teachers, and also continued to teach the other children of the family as they grew up to suitable ages.

Early this year Joseph arranged to set aside the income from the Nazareth and Capernaum property to pay for Jesus' long course of study at Jerusalem, it having been planned that Jesus should go to Jerusalem in August of the following year at fifteen years of age.

By the beginning of this year both Joseph and Mary entertained frequent doubts about the destiny of their first-born. Jesus was indeed a brilliant and lovable child, but was so difficult to understand, so hard to fathom, and again, nothing extraordinary or miraculous ever happened. Scores of times Mary had stood in breathless anticipation, expecting to see Jesus engage in some superhuman or miraculous performance, but was always disappointed. And all this was discouraging, even disheartening. The devout people of those days truly believed that prophets and those of promise always demonstrated their calling and established their divine authority by performing miracles and working wonders. But Jesus did none of these things, and the confusion of Mary and Joseph steadily increased as they contemplated the future.

The improved economic condition of the Nazareth family was reflected in many ways about the home and especially in the increased number of smooth white boards which were used as writing slates, the writing being done with charcoal. Jesus was also permitted to resume music lessons and was very fond of playing the harp.

The prospects of the family seemed good; the future was bright.

2. The Death of Joseph

All did go well until that fateful day of Tuesday, September 25, when a runner from Sepphoris brought to this Nazareth home the tragic news that Joseph had been severely injured by the falling of a derrick while at work on the governor's residence. The messenger from Sepphoris had stopped at the shop on the way to Joseph's home, informing Jesus of Joseph's accident, and they went together to the house to break the sad news to Mary. Jesus wanted to go immediately to Joseph, but Mary decided to be the one to go, accompanied by James, who was then ten years of age, while Jesus remained home with the younger children. Mary did not know how seriously Joseph had been injured, but Joseph died before Mary arrived. Joseph was brought to Nazareth, and on the following day was laid to rest.

Just at the time when prospects were good and the future looked bright, an apparently cruel hand struck down the head of this Nazareth household, the affairs of this home were disrupted, and every plan for Jesus' future education was demolished. This young carpenter, now just past fourteen years of age, awakened to the realization of not only having to fulfill the bestowal mission to reveal the divine nature on earth, but also to shoulder the responsibility of caring for the family — and another yet to be born. This youth of Nazareth now became the sole support and comfort of this so suddenly bereaved family. And so those occurrences of the natural order of events on Urantia were permitted which would force this young person of destiny to so early assume these heavy but highly educational and disciplinary responsibilities attendant upon becoming the head of a human family, of becoming a parent, of supporting and protecting Mary, and of functioning as guardian of their home, the only home Jesus was to know while on this world.

Jesus cheerfully accepted the responsibilities so suddenly encountered and carried them faithfully to the end. At least one great problem and anticipated difficulty in Jesus' life had been tragically solved — there would be no study under the rabbis in Jerusalem. Jesus was always willing to learn from even the humblest of little children, but never derived authority to teach truth from human sources.

Jesus still knew nothing of the Gabriel visit to Mary, only learning of this from John on the day of baptism, at the beginning of the public ministry.

As the years passed, this young carpenter of Nazareth increasingly measured every institution of society and every usage of religion by the unvarying test: What does it do for the human soul? Does it bring the Creator to mortals? Does it bring mortals to the Creator? This youth did not wholly neglect the recreational and social aspects of life but more and more devoted time and energies to just two purposes: the care of the family and the preparation to do the Creator's will.

This year it became the custom for the neighbors to drop in during the winter evenings to hear Jesus play the harp, to listen to stories (for the youth was a master storyteller), and to hear readings from the Greek scriptures.

The economic affairs of the family continued to run fairly smoothly as there was quite a sum of money on hand at the time of Joseph's death. Jesus demonstrated the possession of keen business judgment and financial sagacity, was liberal but frugal, was saving but generous, and proved to be a wise and efficient administrator of Joseph's estate.

But in spite of all that Jesus and the Nazareth neighbors could do to bring cheer into the home, Mary, and even the children, were overcast with sadness. Joseph was gone. Joseph was an unusual parent and was greatly missed.

3. The Fifteenth Year (C.E. 9)

By the middle of this fifteenth year — and we are determining time in accordance with the twenty-first century calendar, not by the Jewish year — Jesus had taken a firm grasp on the management of the family. Before this year had passed their savings had about disappeared, and they were face to face with the necessity of disposing of one of the Nazareth houses which Joseph and their neighbor Jacob owned in partnership.

On Wednesday evening, April 17, C.E. 9, Ruth, the baby of the family, was born, and Jesus endeavored to take the place of Joseph in comforting and ministering to Mary during this trying and particularly sad ordeal. For almost a score of years (until the beginning of the public ministry) no parent could have loved and nurtured a child any more affectionately and faithfully than Jesus cared for little Ruth. And Jesus was an equally good parent to all the other members of the family.

During this year Jesus first formulated the prayer which was subsequently taught to the apostles, and which to many has become known as "The Lord's Prayer." In a way it was an evolution of the family altar; they had many forms of praise and several formal prayers. After Joseph's death Jesus tried to teach the older children to express themselves individually in prayer but they could not grasp this concept and would invariably fall back on their memorized prayer forms. It was in this effort to stimulate the older siblings to say individual prayers that Jesus would endeavor to lead them along by suggestive phrases, and presently, without intention, it developed that they were all using a form of prayer which was largely built up from these suggestive lines which Jesus had taught them.

Jesus finally gave up the idea of having each member of the family formulate spontaneous prayers, and one evening in October, sat down by the little squat lamp on the low stone table, and, on a piece of smooth cedar board about eighteen inches square, with a piece of charcoal, wrote out the prayer which became from that time on the standard family petition.

This year Jesus was much troubled with confused thinking. Family responsibility had quite effectively removed all thought of immediately carrying out any plan for responding to the Jerusalem visitation declaring that it was time to be about the Creator's business. Jesus rightly reasoned that the care of Joseph's family must take precedence of all duties; that the support of the family must become the first obligation.

In the course of this year Jesus had thoroughly considered the idea of the Jewish Messiah and was firmly convinced of not becoming that Messiah. Jesus longed to help the Jewish people, but never expected to lead Jewish armies in overthrowing the foreign domination of Palestine. Jesus knew it would never be possible to sit on the throne of David at Jerusalem, believing that the bestowal mission was that of a spiritual deliverer or moral teacher not solely to the Jewish people. In no sense, therefore, could this life mission be the fulfillment of the intense longings and supposed Messianic prophecies of the Hebrew scriptures; at least, not as the Jews understood these predictions of the prophets.

But when the time came for Jesus to become a world teacher, what title would be used? What claim should be made for the bestowal mission? What title would the people use who would become followers?

While considering all these problems, Jesus found in the synagogue library at Nazareth, among the apocalyptic books, a manuscript called "The Book of Enoch." Jesus, while certain that it had not been written by Enoch of old, found it very intriguing, and read and reread it many times. There was one passage that was particularly impressive, a passage describing the work that would be done on earth by a deliverer. This deliverer, before coming to this earth, had been with the Creator of all; and had relinquished all this grandeur and glory to come to earth to proclaim the good news of a new age to needy mortals. Jesus read these passages (well understanding that much of the Eastern mysticism which had become mixed with these teachings was erroneous), recognizing that of all the Messianic predictions of the Hebrew scriptures and of all the theories about the Jewish deliverer, none was so near the truth as this story tucked away in this only partially accredited Book of Enoch. Jesus had an unerring ability for the recognition of truth, and never hesitated to embrace the truth, no matter from what source it appeared.

By this time Jesus had quite thoroughly settled many things about the forthcoming work for the world, but said nothing of these matters to Mary, who still held stoutly to the idea of Jesus being the Jewish Messiah.

The great confusion of Jesus' younger days now arose. Having settled something about the nature of the bestowal mission on earth, to show forth the Creator's loving nature to all humankind — Jesus began to ponder again the many statements in the Scriptures referring to the coming of a national deliverer, a Jewish teacher or ruler. To what event did these prophecies refer? Was Jesus a Jew and of the house of David? Mary thought so but Joseph did not. Jesus sided with Joseph. But had the prophets confused the nature and mission of the Messiah?

After all, could it be possible that Mary was right? Mary, in most matters, when differences of opinion had arisen in the past, had been right. If Jesus were a new teacher and *not* the Messiah, then how would the Jewish Messiah be known if one should appear in Jerusalem during the time of the bestowal mission; and, further, what should their relationship be? And what should be Jesus' relation to the family after embarking on the bestowal mission? to the Jewish commonwealth and religion? to the Roman Empire? to the gentiles and their religions? Each of these momentous problems this young Galilean seriously pondered while continuing to work at the carpenter's bench, laboriously making a living for the family.

Before the end of this year Mary saw the family funds diminishing, turned the sale of doves over to James, bought a second cow, and with the aid of Miriam began the sale of milk to their Nazareth neighbors.

Jesus' profound periods of meditation, frequent journeys to the hilltop for prayer, and expression of many strange ideas thoroughly alarmed Mary, who would then remember that Jesus was, after all, a child of promise and in some manner different from other youths.

But Jesus was learning not to speak of every thought and not to present every idea to the world, not even to Mary. From this year on, Jesus spoke less about things which an average person could not grasp, and which would lead to being regarded as peculiar or different from ordinary people. To all appearances Jesus became commonplace and conventional, although longing for a confidential and understanding friend. The problems of the bestowal mission were simply too complex for human associates to comprehend. The uniqueness of the unusual situation compelled Jesus to bear these burdens alone.

4. First Sermon in the Synagogue

On becoming fifteen years of age, Jesus could officially occupy the synagogue pulpit on the Sabbath day. Many times before, in the absence of speakers, Jesus had been asked to read the Scriptures, but could now, according to law, conduct the service. Therefore, the chazan arranged for Jesus to conduct the morning service of the synagogue on the first Sabbath after becoming fifteen. And when all the faithful in Nazareth had assembled, the youth, having made a selection of Scriptures, stood up and began to read:

"The spirit of the Eternal Source is upon me, for the Creator has anointed me, has sent me to bring good news to the meek, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and to set the spiritual prisoners free, to comfort all mourners, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy in the place of mourning, a song of praise instead of the spirit of sorrow.

"Seek good and not evil that you may live, and so the Creator shall be with you. Hate the evil and love the good; establish judgment in the gate, and perhaps the Creator will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.

"Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; put away the evil of your doings from before my eyes; cease to do evil and learn to do good; seek justice, relieve the oppressed. Defend the orphans.

"How shall I come before the Creator, to bow myself before the Ruler of all the earth? Shall I come with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will the Creator be pleased with thousands of rams, ten thousand sheep, or with rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? No! for the Creator has showed us what is good. And what does the Creator require of you but to deal justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your Divine Parent?

"To whom, then, will you liken the Creator who sits upon the circle of the earth? Lift up your eyes and behold who has created all these worlds, who brings forth their host by number and calls them all by their names, who does all these things by greatness. The Creator gives power to the weak, and increases strength to those who are weary. Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I will strengthen you and I will help you; yes, I will uphold you with the right hand of my righteousness, for I am the Eternal Source. And I will hold your right hand, saying to you, fear not, for I will help you.

"And you are my witness, says the Creator, and my servant whom I have chosen that all may know and believe me and understand that I am the Eternal Source. I, even I, am the Creator, and beside me there is no savior."

And Jesus, having read, sat down, and the people went to their homes, pondering over the words which had so graciously been read to them. Never had the townspeople seen Jesus so magnificently solemn, nor speak as earnestly and sincerely; or so decisively and authoritatively.

This Sabbath afternoon Jesus climbed the Nazareth hill with James and, when they returned home, wrote out the Ten Commandments in Greek on two smooth boards in charcoal. Subsequently Martha colored and decorated these boards, and for a long time they hung on the wall over James' small workbench.

5. The Financial Struggle

Gradually Jesus' family returned to the simple life of their earlier years. Their clothes and even their food became simpler. They had plenty of milk, butter, and cheese. In season they enjoyed the produce of their garden, but each passing month necessitated the practice of greater frugality. Their breakfasts were very plain; they saved their best food for the evening meal. However, among these Jews lack of wealth did not imply social inferiority.

Jesus had already encompassed the comprehension of how people lived, and well understood life in the home, field, and workshop. This was shown by Jesus' subsequent teachings, which so repletely reveal intimate contact with all phases of human experience.

The Nazareth chazan continued to cling to the belief that Jesus was to become a great teacher, probably the successor of the renowned Gamaliel at Jerusalem.

Apparently all Jesus' plans for a career were thwarted. The future did not look bright as matters now developed. But Jesus did not falter, and was not discouraged. Jesus lived on, day by day, doing well the present duty and faithfully discharging the *immediate* responsibilities for the family. Jesus' life is the everlasting comfort of all disappointed idealists.

The pay of a common day-laboring carpenter was slowly diminishing. By the end of this year Jesus could earn very little, even by working early and late. By the next year they found it difficult to pay the civil taxes, not to mention the synagogue assessments and the temple tax of one-half shekel. During this year the tax collector tried to squeeze extra revenue out of Jesus, even threatening to take the harp.

Fearing that the copy of the Greek scriptures might be discovered and confiscated by the tax collectors, Jesus, at age fifteen, presented it to the Nazareth synagogue library as a maturity offering.

The great shock of this fifteenth year came when Jesus went to Sepphoris to receive the decision of Herod regarding the appeal in the dispute about the amount of money due Joseph at the time of death. Jesus and Mary had hoped for the receipt of a considerable sum of money when the treasurer at Sepphoris had offered them a paltry amount. Joseph's siblings had taken an appeal to Herod, and now Jesus stood in the palace and heard Herod decree that Joseph had nothing due at the time of death. And for such an unjust decision Jesus never again trusted Herod Antipas. It is not surprising that Jesus once alluded to Herod as "that fox."

The close work at the carpenter's bench during this and subsequent years deprived Jesus of the opportunity of mingling with the caravan passengers. The family supply shop had already been taken over by a relative, and Jesus worked exclusively in the home shop to be close by to help Mary with the family. About this time Jesus began sending James to the camel lot to gather information about world events in order to keep in touch with the news of the day.

Jesus, growing up to adulthood, passed through all those conflicts and confusions which the average young persons of previous and subsequent ages have undergone. And the rigorous experience of supporting the family was a sure safeguard against having too much time for idle meditation or the indulgence of mystic tendencies.

This was the year that Jesus rented a considerable piece of land just to the north of their home, which was divided up as a family garden plot. Each of the older children had an individual garden, and they entered into keen competition in their agricultural efforts. Jesus spent some time with them in the garden each day during the season of vegetable cultivation. Jesus, while working with the young children in the garden, many times entertained the wish that they were all located on a farm out in the country where they could enjoy the liberty and freedom of an unhampered life. Jesus had faintly hoped to be able to gather up sufficient means, provided they could collect the considerable sum of money due to Joseph for work on Herod's palace, to warrant undertaking the purchase of a small farm. But when Herod refused to pay them any of the funds due Joseph, they gave up the ambition of owning a home in the country, and Jesus, being a thoroughly practical youth as well as an idealist, intelligently and vigorously attacked this problem and did everything possible to adjust to the realities of their situation and to adapt their condition to the highest possible satisfaction of their individual and collective longings.

As it was, they contrived to enjoy much of the experience of farm life as they now had three cows, four sheep, a flock of chickens, a donkey, and a dog, in addition to the doves. Even the youngest children had their regular duties to perform in the well-regulated scheme of management which characterized the home life of this Nazareth family.

With the close of this fifteenth year Jesus completed the traversal of that dangerous and difficult period in human existence, that time of transition between the more complacent years of childhood and the consciousness of approaching adulthood with its increased responsibilities and opportunities for the acquirement of advanced experience in the development of a noble character. The growth period for mind and body had ended, and now the real career of this youth of Nazareth began.

Paper 127

The Adolescent Years

Jesus, upon entering the adolescent years, became the head and sole support of a large family. Within a few years after Joseph's death all their property was gone. As time passed, Jesus became increasingly conscious of having a pre-existence, and at the same time began to understand that the reason for being present on earth was for the express purpose of revealing the Paradise Creator to mortals.

No adolescent who has lived or ever will live on this world or any other world has had or ever will have more weighty problems to resolve or more intricate difficulties to untangle. No youth of Urantia will ever be called on to pass through more testing conflicts or more trying situations than Jesus endured during those strenuous years from fifteen to twenty.

Having tasted the actual experience of living these adolescent years on a world beset by evil and distraught by sin, Jesus became possessed of full knowledge about the life experience of the youth of all the realms of Nebadon, and forever became the understanding refuge for the distressed adolescents of all ages and on all worlds throughout the local universe.

Slowly, but certainly and by actual experience, this divine Being is *earning* the right to become sovereign of the universe, the unquestioned and supreme ruler of all created intelligences on all local universe worlds, the understanding refuge of the beings of all ages and of all degrees of personal endowment and experience.

1. The Sixteenth Year (C.E. 10)

The incarnated Local Universe Creator passed through infancy and experienced an uneventful childhood, and then, emerging from that testing and trying transition stage between childhood and young adulthood, became the adolescent Jesus.

This year Jesus attained full physical growth, becoming increasingly sober and serious, but a kind and sympathetic person whose smile was always engaging and reassuring. Jesus' voice was musical but authoritative, cordial but unaffected. Always, even in the most commonplace of contacts, there seemed to be the touch of a twofold nature in evidence, the human and the divine. Jesus always displayed this combination of the sympathizing friend and the authoritative teacher. And these personality traits began to become manifest even in these adolescent years.

This physically strong and robust youth also acquired the full growth of human intellect, not the full experience of human thinking but the fullness of capacity for such intellectual development. Jesus possessed a healthy and well-proportioned body, a keen and analytical mind, a kind and sympathetic disposition, and a somewhat fluctuating but aggressive temperament, all of which were becoming organized into a strong, striking, and attractive personality.

As time went on, it became more difficult for the other children of the family to understand Jesus' sayings and actions. They were unable to comprehend their eldest sibling's life because Mary had led them to

understand that Jesus was destined to become the deliverer of the Jewish people. After they had received such intimations as family secrets, imagine their confusion when Jesus would make frank denials of all such ideas and intentions.

This year Simon started school, and they were compelled to sell another house. James now took charge of the teaching of the younger children, two of whom were old enough to begin serious study. When grown up, Ruth was taken in hand by Miriam and Martha.

Throughout this year Jesus was closely confined to the workbench, fortunately finding plenty of work. Possessing superior skill, Jesus was never idle no matter how slack work might be in that region, having so much to do that at times James would be needed to assist.

By the end of this year Jesus had just about decided to, after rearing the family and seeing them married, publicly begin work as a teacher of truth and as a revealer of the Paradise Creator to the world. Jesus, realizing that becoming the expected Jewish Messiah was not the bestowal plan, concluded that it was next to useless to discuss these matters with Mary, and tolerated whatever ideas Mary might choose to entertain. From this year on Jesus talked less and less with Mary, or anyone else, about these problems. This bestowal was such an unusual mission that no one living on earth could provide advice concerning its prosecution.

Jesus was a real though young parent to the family, spending every possible hour with the children. Mary grieved to see Jesus work so hard, laboring day by day at the carpenter's bench earning a living for the family instead of being, as they had so fondly planned, at Jerusalem studying with the rabbis. While there was much about Jesus that Mary could not understand, she loved her child, and most thoroughly appreciated the willing manner in which Jesus shouldered the responsibility of the home.

2. The Seventeenth Year (C.E. 11)

At about this time there was considerable agitation, especially at Jerusalem and in Judea, in favor of rebellion against the payment of taxes to Rome. A strong nationalist party was coming into existence, presently to be called the Zealots. The Zealots, unlike the Pharisees, were not willing to wait for the coming of the Messiah. They proposed to bring things to a head through political revolt.

A group of Zealot organizers from Jerusalem arrived in Galilee and were making good headway until they reached Nazareth. Jesus listened carefully to them and asked many questions but refused to join the party, declining to fully disclose the reasons for not enlisting, and this refusal had the effect of keeping out many of the other youths in Nazareth.

Mary tried to induce Jesus to enlist, going so far as to intimate that any refusal to espouse the nationalist cause was insubordination, a violation of the pledge made on their return from Jerusalem to be subject to Mary and Joseph. But in answer to this insinuation Jesus only laid a loving hand on Mary's shoulder and said: "How could you?" And Mary withdrew the request.

One of Jesus' relatives, Simon, had already joined this group, subsequently becoming an officer in the Galilean division. And for several years there was something of an estrangement between Jesus and Simon.

But trouble began to brew in Nazareth. Jesus' attitude in these matters had resulted in creating a division among the Jewish youths of the city. About half had joined the nationalist organization, and the other half began the formation of an opposing group of more moderate patriots, expecting Jesus to assume the leadership. They were amazed when Jesus refused the honor, pleading as an excuse heavy family responsibility, which they all allowed. But the situation was still further complicated when, presently, a wealthy Jew, Isaac, a moneylender to the gentiles, came forward and agreed to support the family if Jesus would assume leadership of these Nazareth patriots.

Jesus, then scarcely seventeen years of age, was confronted with one of the most delicate and difficult situations of this youthful life. Patriotic issues, especially when complicated by tax-gathering foreign oppressors, are always difficult for spiritual leaders to relate themselves to, and it was doubly so in this case since the Jewish religion was involved in all this agitation against Rome.

This position was made more difficult because Mary, Simon, and James all urged Jesus to join the nationalist cause. Many Jews of Nazareth had enlisted, and those young people who had not joined the movement would all enlist the moment Jesus accepted leadership. Jesus had only one wise counselor in all Nazareth, the chazan, who counseled Jesus about how to reply to the citizens' committee of Nazareth when they came to ask for an answer to the public appeal which had been made. Jesus had never before consciously resorted to public strategy, previously depending on a frank statement of truth to clarify the situation, but now could not declare the full truth of being more than an ordinary mortal, and could not disclose the bestowal mission which awaited the attainment of adulthood. Despite these limitations Jesus' religious fealty and national loyalty were directly challenged. The family was in a turmoil, friends were in division, and the entire Jewish contingent of the town was in an uproar. And to think that Jesus was to blame for it all in spite of having been innocent of all intention to make trouble of any kind, much less a disturbance of this sort.

Something had to be done. Jesus had to state a position, and did this bravely and diplomatically to the satisfaction of many, but not all. Maintaining that the primary duty was to the family, that they needed something more than mere money could buy — the physical necessities of life — but were entitled to care and guidance, Jesus could not in clear conscience abandon the obligation which a cruel accident had thrust on them, reiterating that loyalty to the deceased Joseph precluded leaving the family no matter how much money was forthcoming for their material support, and making the never-to-be-forgotten statement that "money cannot love." In the course of this address Jesus made several veiled references to having a "life mission" but explained that, regardless of whether or not it might be inconsistent with the military idea, it, along with everything else, had been given up in order to faithfully discharge the obligation to the family. Everyone in Nazareth knew Jesus was a good parent, and this was a matter so near the heart of every noble Jew that Jesus' plea found an appreciative response in the hearts of many; and some of those who were not in agreement were disarmed by a speech made by James, which, while not on the program, was delivered at this time. That very day the chazan had rehearsed James in this speech, but that was their secret.

James told the crowd that, if they would only consent to allow Jesus to remain "with us, to be our parent and teacher, then you will have not just one leader from our family, but presently you will have five loyal nationalists, for are there not five of us to grow up and come forth from Jesus' guidance to serve our nation?" And so the youth brought to a fairly happy ending a very tense and threatening situation.

The crisis was over for the time being, but this incident was never forgotten in Nazareth. The agitation persisted; never again was Jesus in universal favor; the division of sentiment was never fully overcome. And this, augmented by other and subsequent occurrences, was one of the chief reasons why Jesus moved to Capernaum in later years. From now on Nazareth maintained a division of sentiment regarding this child of destiny.

James graduated at school this year and began full-time work at home in the carpenter shop, becoming a clever worker with tools and now taking over the making of yokes and plows while Jesus began to do more house finishing and expert cabinet work.

This year Jesus made great progress in gradually bringing the divine and human natures together, accomplishing all of this organization of intellect by the force of *decisions* and with only the aid of the indwelling Monitor, just such a Monitor as all normal mortals on all post bestowal worlds have within their minds. So far, nothing supernatural had happened in this young adult's career except for the visit of a messenger, dispatched by Immanuel, who once appeared during the night at Jerusalem.

3. The Eighteenth Year (C.E. 12)

In the course of this year all of the family property, except the home and garden, was disposed of. The last piece of Capernaum property (except an equity in one other), already mortgaged, was sold. The proceeds were used for taxes, to buy some new tools for James, and to make a payment on the old family supply and repair shop near the caravan lot, which Jesus now proposed to buy back since James was old enough to work at the house shop and help Mary about the home. With the financial pressure eased for the time being, Jesus decided to take James to the Passover. They went to Jerusalem a day early, to be alone, going by way of Samaria. They walked, and Jesus told James about the historic places en route as Joseph had described them on a similar journey five years before.

In passing through Samaria they saw many strange sights. On this journey they talked over many of their problems, personal, family, and national. James was a very religious type of youth, and while not fully agreeing with Mary regarding the plans concerning Jesus' lifework, James did look forward to being able to assume responsibility for the family so that Jesus could begin the bestowal mission. James was very appreciative of being able to go with Jesus to the Passover, and they talked over the future more fully than ever before.

Jesus did much thinking as they journeyed through Samaria, particularly at Bethel and when drinking from Jacob's well. They discussed the traditions of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Jesus did much to prepare James for what they were about to witness at Jerusalem, seeking to lessen the shock experienced on Jesus' first visit to the temple. But James was not so sensitive to some of these sights, commenting on the perfunctory and heartless manner in which some of the priests performed their duties but on the whole greatly enjoying the sojourn at Jerusalem.

Jesus took James to Bethany for the Passover supper. Simon had been laid to rest, and Jesus presided over this household as the head of the Passover family, having brought the paschal lamb from the temple.

After the Passover supper Mary sat down to talk with James while Martha, Lazarus, and Jesus talked together far into the night. The next day they attended the temple services, and James was received into the commonwealth of Israel. That morning, as they paused on the brow of Olivet to view the temple, while James exclaimed in wonder, Jesus gazed on Jerusalem in silence. James could not comprehend Jesus' demeanor. That night they again returned to Bethany and would have left for home the next day, but James was insistent on their going back to visit the temple, expressing a desire to hear the teachers. And while this was true, James actually wanted to hear Jesus participate in the discussions. Accordingly, they went to the temple and heard the discussions, but Jesus asked no questions. It all seemed so immature and insignificant to this awakening mind of mortal and Deity — Jesus could only pity them. James was disappointed that Jesus said nothing. To James' inquiries Jesus only replied, "My hour has not yet come."

The next day they journeyed home by Jericho and the Jordan valley, and Jesus recounted many things by the way, including a former trip taken over this road while thirteen years of age.

On returning to Nazareth, Jesus began work in the old family repair shop and was greatly cheered by being able to meet so many people each day from all parts of the country and surrounding districts. Jesus truly loved people — just common folks. Each month Jesus made payments on the shop and, with James's help, continued to provide for the family.

Several times a year, when visitors were not present, Jesus continued to read the Sabbath scriptures at the synagogue and many times offered comments on the lesson, but usually selected the passages so that comment was unnecessary. Jesus was skillful, arranging the order of the reading of the various passages so that one would illuminate the other. Jesus never failed, weather permitting, to take the family out on Sabbath afternoons for their nature strolls.

About this time the chazan inaugurated a club for philosophic discussion which met at the homes of different members, and Jesus became a prominent member of this group. By this means Jesus was enabled to regain some of the local prestige which was lost at the time of the recent nationalistic controversies.

Jesus, whose social life was restricted but not wholly neglected, had many warm friends and admirers among the young people of Nazareth.

In September, Elizabeth and John came to visit the Nazareth family. John intended to return to the Judean hills to engage in agriculture and sheep raising unless Jesus advised remaining in Nazareth to take up carpentry or some other line of work. They did not know that the Nazareth family was practically penniless. The more Mary and Elizabeth talked about their children, the more they became convinced that it would be good for the two to work together and see more of each other.

Jesus and John had many talks together; and they talked over some very intimate and personal matters. When they had finished this visit, they decided not to see each other again until they met in their public service after "the Creator should call" them to their work. John was tremendously impressed by the visit to Nazareth and decided to return home and labor for the support of Elizabeth. John became convinced about being a part of Jesus' life mission, but saw that Jesus was to occupy many years with the rearing of family; so John was much more content to return home and settle down to the care of their little farm and to minister

to the needs of Elizabeth. And John and Jesus never saw each other again until that day by the Jordan when Jesus was baptized.

On Saturday afternoon, December 3, death for the second time struck at this Nazareth family. Little Amos died after a week's illness with a high fever. After passing through this time of sorrow, Mary at last and in the fullest sense recognized Jesus as the real head of the family.

For four years their standard of living had steadily declined; year by year they felt the pinch of increasing poverty. By the close of this year they faced one of the most difficult experiences of all their uphill struggles. James had not yet begun to earn much, and the expenses of a funeral on top of everything else staggered them. But Jesus would only say: "Mary, sorrow will not help us; we are all doing our best, and your smile might even inspire us to do better. Day by day we are strengthened for these tasks by our hope of better days ahead." Jesus' sturdy and practical optimism was truly contagious; all the children lived in an atmosphere of anticipation of better times and better things. And this hopeful courage contributed mightily to the development of strong and noble characters, in spite of the depressiveness of their poverty.

Jesus possessed the ability to effectively mobilize all powers of mind, soul, and body on the task immediately at hand, concentrating on the one problem which needed to be solved, and this, in connection with untiring *patience*, enabled Jesus to serenely endure the trials of a difficult mortal existence — to live in faith.

4. The Nineteenth Year (C.E.13)

By this time Jesus and Mary were getting along much better. Mary regarded Jesus less as a child and more as a parent to the children. Each day's life swarmed with practical and immediate difficulties. Less frequently they spoke of Jesus' lifework, for, as time passed, all their thought was mutually devoted to the support and upbringing of their family.

By the beginning of this year Jesus had fully won Mary to the acceptance of new methods of child training — the positive injunction to do good in place of the older Jewish method of forbidding to do evil. In their home and throughout the public-teaching career Jesus invariably employed the *positive* form of exhortation, always saying, "You shall do this — you should do that." Jesus never employed the negative mode of teaching derived from the ancient taboos, refraining from placing emphasis on evil by forbidding it, while exalting the good by commanding its performance. Prayer time in this household was the occasion for discussing anything and everything relating to the welfare of the family.

Jesus began wise discipline with the children at such an early age that little or no punishment was ever required to secure their prompt and wholehearted obedience. The only exception was Jude, on whom Jesus found it necessary on occasion to impose penalties for infractions of the rules of the home. On three occasions when it was deemed wise to punish Jude for self-confessed and deliberate violations of the family rules of conduct, the punishment was fixed by the unanimous decree of the older children and was assented to by Jude before it was inflicted.

While Jesus was most methodical and systematic in everything, in all administrative rulings there was also a refreshing elasticity of interpretation and an individuality of adaptation that greatly impressed all the children with the spirit of justice which motivated their older sibling. Jesus never arbitrarily disciplined the children, and such uniform fairness and personal consideration greatly endeared Jesus to the entire family.

James and Simon grew up trying to follow Jesus' plan of placating their bellicose and sometimes irate playmates by persuasion and nonresistance, and they were fairly successful; but Joseph and Jude, while assenting to such teachings at home, made haste to defend themselves when assailed by others. Jude in particular was guilty of violating the spirit of these teachings. But nonresistance was not a *rule* of the family. No penalty was attached to the violation of personal teachings.

In general, all of the children would consult Jesus about their childhood troubles, just as they would have an affectionate parent.

James was growing up to be a well-balanced and even-tempered youth, but was not so spiritually inclined as Jesus. Miriam was well-balanced and level-headed, with a keen appreciation of things noble and spiritual. Joseph was a plodder and not up to the intellectual level of the other children. Simon was well-meaning but too much of a dreamer, being slow in getting settled down in life, and was the cause of considerable anxiety to Jesus and Mary. But Simon was always good and well-intentioned. Martha was slow in thought and action but a very dependable and efficient child. Jude was a firebrand, having the highest of ideals but unstable in temperament. Jude had all and more of Mary's determination and aggressiveness, but lacked much of Mary's sense of proportion and discretion. Baby Ruth was the sunshine of the home, and though thoughtless of speech, was most sincere of heart, and just about worshiped Jesus.

As time passed, Jesus did much to liberalize and modify the family teachings and practices related to Sabbath observance and many other phases of religion, and to all these changes Mary gave hearty assent. By this time Jesus had become the unquestioned head of the house.

This year Jude started to school, and it was necessary for Jesus to sell the harp in order to defray these expenses, losing the last of the recreational pleasures of life. Jesus had loved to play the harp when tired in mind and weary in body, but was comforted by the thought that at least it was safe from seizure by the tax collector.

5. Rebecca, the Child of Ezra

Jesus' social standing in Nazareth was in no way impaired because of poverty. As one of the foremost young people of the city, Jesus was very highly regarded by most of the young adults. Since Jesus was such a robust and intellectual person, and also had a reputation as a spiritual leader, it was not strange that Rebecca, the eldest child of Ezra, a wealthy merchant and trader of Nazareth, should have been slowly falling in love with Jesus. Rebecca first confided this affection to Miriam, and Miriam in turn talked all this over with Mary, who was intensely concerned. Was Mary about to lose Jesus, now the indispensable head of the family? Would troubles never cease? What could happen next? And then Mary paused to contemplate what effect marriage would have upon Jesus' future career; not often, but at least sometimes, recalling the fact that Jesus was a "child of promise." After talking this matter over with Miriam, they decided to make

an effort to stop it before Jesus learned about it, by going directly to Rebecca, laying out the whole story, and honestly revealing their belief that Jesus was destined to become a great religious leader, perhaps the Messiah.

Rebecca listened intently, was thrilled with the recital and more than ever determined to share Jesus' career of leadership. Rebecca argued that Jesus would all the more need a faithful and efficient partner, interpreting Mary's efforts as a natural reaction to the dread of losing the head and sole support of the family. Knowing that Ezra approved, Rebecca rightly assumed that Ezra would gladly supply the family with sufficient income to fully compensate for the loss of Jesus' earnings. When Ezra agreed to such a plan, Rebecca had further conferences with Mary and Miriam, and failing to win their support, went directly to Jesus. This was done with the co-operation of Ezra, who invited Jesus to their home for the celebration of Rebecca's seventeenth birthday.

Jesus listened attentively and sympathetically to the recital of these things, first by Ezra, then by Rebecca, replying kindly to the effect that no amount of money could take the place of the obligation to family, to "fulfill the most sacred of all human trusts — loyalty to one's own family." Ezra was deeply touched by Jesus' words of family devotion and retired from the conference, declaring that "Jesus is too noble for us."

Then that eventful talk with Rebecca began. So far, Jesus had made little distinction regarding the gender of others, being much too occupied with the pressing problems of practical earthly affairs and the intriguing contemplation of being "about the Creator's business" to have given serious consideration to the consummation of personal love in human marriage. But now Jesus was face to face with another of those problems which every average human being must confront and resolve, being "tested in all points as you are."

After listening attentively, Jesus sincerely expressed appreciation for Rebecca's admiration, adding, "it shall comfort me all the days of my life." Jesus described not being able to enter into relations other than those of simple and pure friendship, making it clear that the rearing of family was of paramount importance, and marriage could not be a consideration until that responsibility was accomplished; and then added: "If I am a person of destiny, I must not assume obligations of lifelong duration until such a time as my destiny will be made manifest."

Rebecca was heartbroken and refused to be comforted, begging Ezra to leave Nazareth. Ezra finally consented to move to Sepphoris. In later years, to the many who proposed marriage, Rebecca declined, having decided to wait for the time when the greatest person who ever lived would begin a career as a teacher of living truth. And Rebecca followed Jesus devotedly through the eventful years of public labor, was present that day when Jesus rode triumphantly into Jerusalem, and stood by the side of Mary on that fateful and tragic afternoon when Jesus was crucified.

6. The Twentieth Year (C.E. 14)

Because the story of Rebecca's love for Jesus was whispered about Nazareth and later on at Capernaum, Jesus never again had to reject a personal offer of marriage. From this time on human affection for Jesus took on more of the nature of worshipful and adoring regard. People loved Jesus devotedly without any

tinge of self-satisfaction or desire for affectionate possession. But for many years, whenever the story of Jesus' human personality was recited, the devotion of Rebecca was recounted.

Miriam, knowing fully about the affair of Rebecca and knowing how Jesus had forsaken marriage, came to idealize and love Jesus with a touching and profound affection.

Although they could hardly afford it, Jesus had a strange longing to go to Jerusalem for the Passover. Mary, knowing of the recent experience with Rebecca, wisely supported the journey. Jesus was not markedly conscious of it, but actually wanted most to have an opportunity to talk with Lazarus and to visit with Martha and Mary.

In making this trip to Jerusalem, Jesus went by way of Megiddo, Antipatris, and Lydda, in part covering the same route traversed by the family on returning to Nazareth from Egypt. Jesus spent four days going to the Passover and thought much about the past events which had transpired in and around Megiddo, the international battlefield of Palestine.

Jesus passed through Jerusalem, only pausing to look at the temple and the gathering throngs of visitors, having had a strange and increasing aversion to this Herod-built temple with its politically appointed priesthood. Most of all, Jesus wanted to see Lazarus, Martha, and Mary. Jesus and Lazarus were the same age and Lazarus was now head of the house. Martha was a little over one year older than Jesus, while Mary was two years younger. And Jesus was idolized by all three of them.

Not knowing Jesus was coming, Lazarus had arranged to celebrate the Passover with friends in an adjoining village down the Jericho road. Jesus now proposed that they celebrate the feast where they were, at Lazarus's house. "But," said Lazarus, "we have no paschal lamb." And then Jesus entered on a prolonged and convincing dissertation to the effect that the Creator was not truly concerned with such childlike and meaningless rituals. After solemn and fervent prayer they rose, and Jesus said: "Let the childlike and darkened minds of my people serve Yahweh as Moses directed; it is better that they do, but let us who have seen the light of life no longer approach our Creator Parent by the darkness of death. Let us be free in the knowledge of the truth of our Parent's eternal love."

That evening about twilight these four sat down and ate the first Passover feast ever to be celebrated by devout Jews without the paschal lamb. The unleavened bread and the wine had been made ready for this Passover, and these emblems, which Jesus termed "the bread of life" and "the water of life," were served. It was Jesus' custom to engage in this sacramental ritual whenever paying subsequent visits to Bethany. On returning home, Jesus told all this to Mary, who was shocked at first but gradually came to understand. Nevertheless, Mary was greatly relieved when Jesus promised not to introduce this new idea of the Passover in their family. At home they continued, year by year, to eat the Passover "according to the law of Moses."

It was during this year that Mary had a long talk with Jesus about marriage, frankly asking if freedom from family responsibilities would make marriage possible. Jesus described having given the subject little thought, and, expressing doubt about ever entering the marriage state, said that all such things must await "my hour," the time when "my Creator Parent's work must begin." Having decided not to become a parent of mortal children, Jesus gave very little thought to the subject of human marriage.

This year Jesus began again the task of further weaving the mortal and divine natures into a simple and effective *human individuality*, continuing to grow in moral status and spiritual understanding.

Although all their Nazareth property (except their home) was gone, this year they received a little financial help from the sale of an equity in a piece of property in Capernaum. This was the last of Joseph's entire estate. This real estate deal in Capernaum was with a boatbuilder named Zebedee.

Joseph graduated at the synagogue school this year and prepared to begin work at the small bench in the home carpenter shop. Although Joseph's estate was exhausted, there were prospects that they would successfully fight off poverty since three of them were now regularly at work.

Jesus is rapidly becoming an adult, having learned to bear responsibility and to carry on in the face of disappointment, bearing up bravely when plans were thwarted and purposes temporarily defeated. Jesus has learned how to be fair and just even in the face of injustice, and is learning how to adjust ideals of spiritual living to the practical demands of earthly existence. Jesus is learning how to plan for the achievement of a higher and distant goal of idealism while working earnestly for the attainment of a nearer and immediate goal of necessity, steadily acquiring the art of adjusting aspirations to the commonplace demands of the human condition. Jesus has very nearly mastered the technique of utilizing the energy of the spiritual drive to turn the mechanism of material achievement, and is slowly learning how to live the spiritual life while continuing with the earthly existence, more and more depending on the ultimate guidance of the Creator while assuming the parental role of guiding and directing the children at home. Jesus is becoming experienced in the skillful wresting of victory from the very jaws of defeat, learning how to transform the difficulties of time into the triumphs of eternity.

And so, as the years pass, Jesus continues to experience life as it is lived as a mortal on the worlds of time and space, living a full, representative, and replete life on Urantia. Jesus left this world ripe in the experience which all mortals pass through during the short and strenuous years of their first life. And all this human experience is an eternal possession of the Universe Sovereign. Michael of Nebadon is our understanding sibling, sympathetic friend, experienced sovereign, and merciful parent.

As a child Jesus accumulated a vast body of knowledge; as a youth sorted, classified, and correlated this information; and now as an adult begins to organize these mental possessions in preparation for utilization in subsequent teaching, ministry, and service on behalf of all mortals on this world and on all other spheres of habitation throughout the entire universe of Nebadon.

Born into the world as a baby, Jesus has lived a childhood life and passed through the successive stages of youth, now standing on the threshold of full adulthood, rich in the experience of human living, replete in the understanding of human nature, and full of sympathy for the frailties of the human condition. Jesus is becoming expert in the divine art of revealing the Paradise Creator to all ages and stages of mortal creatures.

And now as a full-grown adult Jesus prepares to continue the supreme mission of revealing the Creator to mortals and leading mortals to the Creator.

Paper 128

Jesus' Early Adulthood

Jesus, when entering the early years of adult life, had lived, and continued to live, a normal and average human life on earth. Jesus came into this world just as other children come. Michael of Nebadon did choose this particular world as the planet on which to carry out the seventh and final bestowal, an incarnation in the likeness of a mortal, but otherwise entered the world in a natural manner, growing up as a child and wrestling with the vicissitudes of life just as other mortals do on this and on similar worlds.

Always be mindful of the twofold purpose of Michael's bestowal on Urantia:

1. The mastering of the experience of living the full life of a human creature, the completion of sovereignty in Nebadon.
2. The revelation of the Universal Creator to the mortal dwellers on the worlds of time and space and the more effective leading of these same mortals to a better understanding of the Universal Source.

All other creature benefits and universe advantages were incidental and secondary to these major purposes of the mortal bestowal.

1. The Twenty-First Year (C.E. 15)

With the attainment of adult years Jesus began in earnest and with full self-consciousness the task of completing the experience of mastering the knowledge of the life of the lowest form of intelligent creatures, thereby finally and fully earning the right of unqualified rulership of the universe. Jesus entered this stupendous task with the full realization of having a dual nature, but had already effectively combined these two natures into one.

Joshua ben Joseph was acutely aware of being mortal, laboring, growing weary, resting, sleeping, hungering and satisfying such cravings with food; thirsting and drinking water. Jesus experienced the full range of human feelings and emotions, was tested in all things, and suffered and died.

Jesus obtained knowledge, gained experience, and combined these into wisdom, just as other mortals do, using no supernatural power until after being baptized by John.

Jesus rejected all of the attributes of prehuman existence, being a true mortal among mortals. Prior to beginning the public work, Jesus' knowledge of people and events was wholly self-limited.

Jesus, having suffered and being tested and tried, is abundantly able to understand and minister to those who are confused and distressed.

The Nazareth carpenter now fully understood the work of the bestowal mission, but chose to live a human life in the channel of its natural flowing, and in some of these matters is indeed an example to all mortal creatures.

Jesus lived a mortal life just as all others of the human family may live theirs.

Jesus was never in doubt about having a human nature; it was self-evident and always consciously present. But of the divine nature there was always room for doubt and conjecture, at least this was true right up to the baptism. The self-realization of divinity was a slow and, from the human standpoint, a natural evolutionary revelation. This revelation and self-realization of divinity began in Jerusalem, when Jesus was not quite thirteen years old, with the first supernatural occurrence; and this experience of effecting the self-realization of the divine nature was completed at the time of the second supernatural experience while incarnated, the episode attendant on baptism by John in the Jordan, the event which marked the beginning of Jesus' public career of ministry and teaching.

Between these two celestial visitations, one in the thirteenth year and the other at the baptism, nothing supernatural or superhuman occurred in the life of this incarnated Creator. Notwithstanding this, the baby of Bethlehem, the child, youth, and adult of Nazareth, was in reality the incarnated Creator of a universe. But Jesus never once used any of this power, nor utilized the guidance of celestial personalities, aside from the attending guardian seraphim, in living the human life up to the day of baptism by John. And we know whereof we speak.

And yet, throughout all these years of life as a mortal, Jesus was truly divine, was actually a Local Universe Creator. When beginning the public career, subsequent to the technical completion of the purely mortal experience of sovereignty acquirement, Jesus did not hesitate to publicly admit to being divine.

After the baptism Jesus thought nothing of permitting sincere seekers and grateful followers to recognize this divinity. Even while wrestling with poverty and laboring to provide the necessities of life for the family, Jesus had a growing awareness of being divine, and being the maker of this very earth. And the hosts of celestial beings throughout the great and onlooking universe knew that this mortal of Nazareth was their beloved Sovereign and Creator-parent. A profound suspense pervaded the universe of Nebadon throughout these years; all celestial beings were continuously focused on Urantia — on Palestine.

This year Jesus went to Jerusalem with Joseph to celebrate the Passover. Having previously taken James to the temple for consecration, Jesus now decided to take Joseph. Jesus never exhibited any degree of partiality in dealing with anyone in the family. They went to Jerusalem by the usual Jordan valley route, but returned to Nazareth by the east Jordan way, which led through Amathus. Going down the Jordan, Jesus narrated Jewish history to Joseph and on the return trip talked about the experiences of the reputed tribes of Ruben, Gad, and Gilead that traditionally had dwelt in these regions east of the river.

Joseph asked Jesus many leading questions concerning the bestowal mission, but to most of these inquiries Jesus would only reply, "My hour has not yet come." However, in these intimate discussions many words were spoken which Joseph remembered during the stirring events of subsequent years. Jesus, with Joseph,

spent this Passover with the three friends at Bethany, which had become the custom when in Jerusalem attending these festival commemorations.

2. The Twenty-Second Year (C.E. 16)

This was one of several years during which Jesus' siblings were facing the trials and tribulations of adolescence. Jesus now had siblings ranging in ages from seven to eighteen, and was kept busy helping them to adjust themselves to the new awakenings of their intellectual and emotional lives. Jesus had to grapple with the many problems of adolescence as they became manifest in the lives of the other children.

This year Simon graduated from school and began work with Jesus' old childhood playmate and ever-ready defender, Jacob the stone mason. As a result of several family conferences it was decided that by diversifying their trades they would be prepared to take contracts for putting up entire buildings. Again, they had not all kept busy since three of them had been working as full-time carpenters.

Jesus continued this year at house finishing and cabinetwork but spent most of the time at the caravan repair shop. James was beginning to alternate in attendance at the shop. The latter part of this year, when carpenter work was slack in Nazareth, Jesus left James in charge of the repair shop and Joseph at the home bench, going to Sepphoris to work with a smith, working six months with metals and acquiring considerable skill at the anvil.

Before taking up new employment at Sepphoris, Jesus held a family conference and solemnly installed James, then just past eighteen years old, as acting head of the family, promising James hearty support and full co-operation and exacting formal promises of obedience to James from each member of the family. From this day James assumed full financial responsibility for the family, Jesus making weekly payments for the family support. Never again did Jesus take the responsibility out of James's hands. While working at Sepphoris Jesus could have walked home every night if necessary, but purposely remained away, assigning weather and other reasons. But the true motive was to train James and Joseph in the bearing of the family responsibility. Jesus had begun the slow process of weaning the family. Each Sabbath Jesus returned to Nazareth, and sometimes during the week when occasion required, to observe the working of the new plan, and to give advice and offer helpful suggestions.

Living much of the time in Sepphoris for six months afforded Jesus a new opportunity to become better acquainted with the gentile viewpoint of life; working with gentiles, living with gentiles, and in every possible manner making a close and painstaking study of their habits of living and of the gentile mind.

The moral standards of this home city of Herod Antipas were so far below those of even the caravan city of Nazareth that after six months' sojourn at Sepphoris Jesus was not averse to finding an excuse for returning to Nazareth. Jesus' employers were to become engaged in public work in both Sepphoris and the new city of Tiberias, and Jesus was disinclined to have anything to do with employment under the supervision of Herod Antipas. And there were still other reasons which made it wise to go back to Nazareth. When returning to the repair shop, Jesus did not again assume the personal direction of family affairs, working in association with James at the shop and as far as possible permitting James to continue oversight of the home, management of family expenditures, and administration of the home budget.

It was by just such wise and thoughtful planning that Jesus prepared the way for eventual withdrawal from active participation in the affairs of the family. When James had had two years' experience as acting head of the family — and two full years before being married — Joseph was placed in charge of the household funds and entrusted with the general management of the home.

3. The Twenty-Third Year (C.E. 17)

This year the financial pressure was slightly relaxed as four were at work. Miriam earned a significant amount of money by the sale of milk and butter; Martha had become an expert weaver. The purchase price of the repair shop was over one third paid. The situation was such that Jesus stopped work for three weeks to take Simon to Jerusalem for the Passover, and this was the longest period away from daily toil Jesus had enjoyed since Joseph's death.

They journeyed to Jerusalem by way of the Decapolis and through Pella, Gerasa, Philadelphia, Heshbon, and Jericho. They returned to Nazareth by the coast route, touching Lydda, Joppa, Caesarea, then around Mount Carmel to Ptolemais and Nazareth. This trip fairly well acquainted Jesus with the whole of Palestine north of the Jerusalem district.

At Philadelphia Jesus and Simon became acquainted with a merchant from Damascus who developed a great liking for them. Jesus spent much time talking with this well-educated and much-traveled individual. This merchant owned over four thousand caravan camels, had interests all over the Roman world and was now on the way to Rome. The merchant proposed that Jesus come to Damascus to join the Oriental import business, but Jesus did not feel justified in going so far away from the family just then. But on the way back home Jesus thought much about these distant cities and the even more remote countries of the Far West and the Far East, countries so frequently spoken of by the caravan passengers and conductors.

Simon greatly enjoyed the visit to Jerusalem and was duly received into the commonwealth of Israel at the Passover consecration of the new citizens of the commandment. While Simon attended the Passover ceremonies, Jesus mingled with the throngs of visitors and engaged in many interesting personal conferences with numerous gentile proselytes.

Perhaps the most notable of all these contacts was the one with a young Hellenist named Stephen, who happened to meet Jesus on Thursday afternoon of Passover week. While they both strolled about viewing the Asmonean palace, Jesus began the casual conversation that led to a four-hour discussion about the Creator. Stephen was tremendously impressed and never forgot Jesus' words.

And this was the same Stephen who subsequently became a believer in the teachings of Jesus, and whose boldness in preaching these teachings resulted in being stoned to death by irate Jews. Some of Stephen's extraordinary boldness was the direct result of this earlier interview with Jesus. But Stephen never faintly surmised that the conversation some fifteen years earlier was with the very same person whom Stephen later proclaimed the world's Savior, and for whom Stephen became the first martyr of the newly evolving Christian faith. When Stephen died as the price of an attack upon the Jewish temple and its traditional practices, Saul, a citizen of Tarsus stood by. And when seeing how this Greek could die with such faith,

emotions arose which eventually led Saul to espouse the cause for which Stephen died; later on becoming the aggressive and indomitable Paul, the philosopher, if not the sole founder, of the Christian religion.

On the Sunday after Passover week Simon and Jesus started on their way back to Nazareth. Simon never forgot Jesus' teachings on this trip, now beginning to know Jesus more deeply. They had many heart-to-heart talks as they journeyed through the country and prepared their meals along the way. They arrived home Thursday noon, and Simon kept the family up late that night relating the experiences of the journey.

Mary was upset by Simon's report that Jesus spent most of the time when in Jerusalem "visiting with the strangers, especially those from the far countries." The family never could comprehend Jesus' great interest in people or the urge to visit with them to learn about their way of living, and to find out what they were thinking about.

More and more the Nazareth family became engrossed with their immediate and human problems. Mention was not often made of the future mission of Jesus, who very seldom spoke of it. Mary rarely thought about Jesus being a child of promise, slowly giving up the idea that Jesus was to fulfill any divine mission on earth, yet at times Mary's faith was revived when pausing to recall the Gabriel visitation before the child was born.

4. The Damascus Episode

The last four months of this year Jesus spent in Damascus as the guest of the merchant whom they first met at Philadelphia when on their way to Jerusalem. A representative of this merchant had come to Nazareth to escort Jesus to Damascus. This part-Jewish merchant proposed to devote an extraordinary sum of money to the establishment of a school of religious philosophy at Damascus, planning to create a center of learning which would out-rival Alexandria, and proposed that Jesus should immediately begin a long tour of the world's educational centers preparatory to becoming the head of this new project. This was one of the greatest temptations that Jesus ever faced.

Presently this merchant brought before Jesus a group of twelve merchants and bankers who agreed to support this newly projected school. Jesus manifested deep interest in the proposed school, helped them plan for its organization, but always expressed the concern that other unstated but prior obligations would preclude accepting the direction of such a pretentious enterprise. The would-be benefactor was persistent, and profitably employed Jesus to do some translating while their family continued to pursue the offer. But Jesus would not consent, knowing that the bestowal mission was not to be supported by institutions of learning, and knowing that it would not be appropriate to become obligated to anyone no matter how well-intentioned.

This divine Being who was rejected by the Jerusalem religious leaders, even after demonstrating extraordinary leadership, was recognized and hailed as a master teacher by the entrepreneurs and bankers of Damascus, and all this while being an obscure and unknown carpenter of Nazareth.

Jesus never spoke about this offer to the family, and at the end of this year was back in Nazareth going about daily duties just as if the flattering propositions of the Damascus friends had never been tempting.

Neither did these friends of Damascus ever associate the later citizen of Capernaum with the former carpenter of Nazareth who had dared to refuse the honor which their combined wealth might have procured.

Jesus most cleverly and intentionally contrived to detach various personal episodes so that they never became, in the eyes of the world, associated together as the doings of a single individual, many times in subsequent years listening to the recital of this very story of the strange Galilean who declined the opportunity of founding a school in Damascus to compete with Alexandria.

One purpose which Jesus had in mind was to prevent the building up of such a versatile and spectacular career as would cause subsequent generations to venerate the teacher in place of the truth, recognizing that people would be tempted to formulate a religion *about* Jesus which might become a competitor of the teaching of truth to the world. Accordingly, Jesus consistently sought to suppress everything which might be made to serve this natural human tendency to exalt the teacher in place of the teachings.

This same motive also explains why Jesus permitted different titles to be used during various periods of the diversified life on earth. Jesus always refused to take undue or unfair advantage of the human mind, wanting people to be directly responsive to the spiritual realities revealed in these new teachings.

By the end of this year the Nazareth home was running fairly smoothly. The children were growing up, and Mary was becoming accustomed to Jesus' being away from home. Jesus continued to turn over funds to James for the support of the family, retaining only a small portion for immediate personal expenses.

As the years passed, it became more difficult to realize that this mortal was a Child of the Universal Source on earth. Jesus seemed to become quite like an individual of the realm, just another mortal among mortals. And it was ordained by the Creator that the bestowal should unfold in this very way.

5. The Twenty-Fourth Year (C.E. 18)

This was Jesus' first year of comparative freedom from family responsibility. James was very successful in managing the home with Jesus' help in counsel and finances.

The week following the Passover of this year a representative from Alexandria came to Nazareth to arrange for a meeting, later in the year, between Jesus and a group of Alexandrian Jews at some point on the Palestinian coast. This conference was set for the middle of June, and Jesus went to Caesarea to meet with five prominent Jews of Alexandria, who invited Jesus to become established in their city as a religious teacher, offering as an inducement to begin with, the position of assistant to the chazan in their chief synagogue.

The spokesperson for this committee explained to Jesus that Alexandria was destined to become the headquarters of Jewish culture for the entire world; that the Hellenistic trend of Jewish affairs had virtually outdistanced the Babylonian school of thought. They pointed to the ominous rumblings of rebellion in Jerusalem and throughout Palestine and assured Jesus that any uprising of the Palestinian Jews would be equivalent to national suicide, that the iron hand of Rome would crush the rebellion, and that Jerusalem would be destroyed and the temple demolished, that not one stone would be left standing.

Jesus listened to all they had to say, thanked them for their confidence, and, in declining to go to Alexandria, in substance said, “My hour has not yet come.” They were confused by Jesus’ apparent indifference to the honor they had sought to confer. Before taking leave, they presented Jesus with a purse in token of the esteem of these Alexandrian friends and in compensation for the time and expense of coming to Caesarea to confer with them. But Jesus refused the money, saying: “The house of Joseph has never received alms, and cannot eat another’s bread as long as I have strong arms and my family can labor.”

Jesus’ friends from Egypt set sail for home, and in subsequent years, when they heard rumors of the Capernaum boatbuilder who was creating such a commotion in Palestine, few of them surmised that this was the same strange-acting Galilean who had so unceremoniously declined the invitation to become a great teacher in Alexandria.

Jesus returned to Nazareth. The remainder of this year was uneventful. Jesus enjoyed this temporary respite from the usual program of problems to solve and difficulties to surmount, communing much with the Creator and making tremendous progress in the mastery of the human mind.

But human affairs on the worlds of time and space do not run smoothly for long. In December James had a private talk with Jesus about being in love with Esta, a young neighbor in Nazareth, and said that they would like to be married if it could be arranged. James pointed out that Joseph would soon be eighteen years old, and that it would be a good experience for Joseph to have a chance to serve as the acting head of the family. Jesus gave consent for James to be married two years later, provided that Joseph could be properly trained in the intervening time to assume direction of the home.

And now things began to happen — marriage was in the air. James’ success in gaining Jesus’ assent for the marriage emboldened Miriam to approach Jesus with similar plans. Jacob, the younger stone mason, onetime self-appointed champion of Jesus and now business associate of James and Joseph, had long sought to marry Miriam. Jesus, after Miriam had described their plans, directed that Jacob should make a formal request and promised to bless the marriage just as soon as Martha was competent to assume Miriam’s duties.

When at home, Jesus continued to teach the evening school three times a week and to read the Scriptures often in the synagogue on the Sabbath. Jesus visited with Mary, taught the children, and in general was a worthy and respected citizen of Nazareth in the commonwealth of Israel.

6. The Twenty-Fifth Year (C.E. 19)

This year the Nazareth family were all in good health and the finishing of the regular schooling of all the children was accomplished with the exception of certain work which Martha had to do for Ruth.

Jesus was a robust and refined human being whose mind was active, keen, and penetrating. It had developed gigantic proportions along with a spirit that was humanly divine.

The family finances were in the best condition since the disappearance of Joseph’s estate. The final payments had been made on the caravan repair shop; they owed no one and for the first time in years had some extra funds. This being the case, Jesus decided to accompany Jude (who had just graduated from the synagogue school) to the Passover ceremonies in Jerusalem for Jude’s first visit to the temple.

They went to Jerusalem and returned by the same route, the Jordan valley, as Jesus feared trouble if they went through Samaria. Already at Nazareth Jude had gotten into slight trouble several times because of a quick temper, coupled with strong patriotic sentiments.

They arrived at Jerusalem and were on their way for a first visit to the temple, the very sight of which had stirred and thrilled Jude, when they chanced to meet Lazarus of Bethany. While Jesus talked with Lazarus and sought to arrange for their joint celebration of the Passover, Jude started up real trouble for them all. Close at hand stood a Roman guard who made some improper remarks regarding a Jewish citizen who was passing. Jude flushed with fiery indignation and was not slow in expressing resentment of such an impropriety directly to and within hearing of the soldier. Now the Roman legionnaires were very sensitive to anything bordering on Jewish disrespect; so the guard promptly placed Jude under arrest. This was too much for the young patriot, who then expressed pent-up anti-Roman feelings, all of which only made a bad matter worse. Jude, with Jesus alongside, was taken at once to the military prison.

Jesus endeavored to obtain either an immediate hearing for Jude or else release in time for the Passover celebration that evening, but failed in these attempts. Since the next day was a “holy convocation” in Jerusalem, even the Romans would not presume to hear charges against a Jew. Accordingly, Jude remained in confinement until the morning of the second day after being arrested, and Jesus stayed at the prison during that time. They were not present in the temple at the ceremony of receiving the candidates into the full citizenship of Israel. Jude did not pass through this formal ceremony for several years, until the next visit to Jerusalem at a Passover and in connection with propaganda work on behalf of the Zealots, the patriotic organization to which Jude very actively belonged.

The morning following their second day in prison Jesus appeared before the military magistrate on behalf of Jude. By making apologies for Jude’s youth and by a further explanatory but judicious statement with reference to the provocative nature of the episode which had led up to the arrest, Jesus so handled the case that the magistrate expressed the opinion that the young Jew might have had some possible excuse for the violent outburst but warned Jude not to be guilty of such rashness again. Over the years Jude made considerable trouble for Jesus, and the trouble was always of this same nature — clashes with the civil authorities because of thoughtless and unwise patriotic outbursts.

Jesus and Jude walked to Bethany for the night, explaining why they had failed to keep their appointment for the Passover supper, and set out for Nazareth the following day. Jesus did not tell the family about Jude’s arrest at Jerusalem, but had a long talk with Jude about this episode some three weeks after their return. After this talk with Jesus Jude told the family, never forgetting the patience and forbearance Jesus manifested throughout this whole trying experience.

This was the last Passover Jesus attended with any member of the family. Increasingly Jesus was to become separated from close association with them.

This year Jesus’ times of deep meditation were often broken into by Ruth and the neighbor children. And Jesus was always ready to postpone contemplation of the bestowal mission for the world and the universe to share in the childish joy and youthful gladness of these youngsters, who never tired of listening to Jesus

relate the experiences of various trips to Jerusalem. They also greatly enjoyed stories about animals and nature.

The children were always welcome at the repair shop. Jesus provided sand, blocks, and stones by the side of the shop, and groups of youngsters flocked there to amuse themselves. When they tired of their play, the more intrepid ones would peek into the shop, and if its keeper were not busy, they would boldly go in and say, "Joshua, come out and tell us a big story." Then they would lead Jesus out to a seat on a favorite rock by the corner of the shop, with the children on the ground in a semicircle. And how the little children did enjoy Joshua. They were learning to laugh, and to laugh heartily. It was customary for one or two of the smallest of the children to climb up on Jesus' knees and sit there, looking up in wonderment. The children loved Jesus, and Jesus loved the children.

It was difficult for friends to comprehend how Jesus could so suddenly and so completely swing from the profound discussion of politics, philosophy, or religion to the lighthearted and joyous playfulness of these children. As the other members of the family grew up and there was more leisure before the grandchildren arrived, Jesus paid a great deal of attention to these little ones. But Jesus did not live on earth long enough to enjoy the grandchildren very much.

7. The Twenty-Sixth Year (C.E. 20)

As this year began, Jesus became strongly conscious of possessing a wide range of potential power, but was fully persuaded not to use this power until the bestowal mission began.

At this time Jesus thought much but said little about having a relationship with the Universal Creator. And the conclusion of all this thinking was expressed once in a prayer on the hilltop, "Regardless of who I am and what power I may or may not wield, I always have been, and always will be, subject to the will of my Paradise Parent."

All this year the family affairs ran smoothly except for Jude. For years James had trouble with Jude, who was not inclined to settle down to work nor to be depended upon for sharing the home expenses. While living at home, Jude was not conscientious about earning a fair share of the family upkeep.

Jesus was constantly embarrassed by Jude's belligerent exploits and numerous patriotic outbursts. James and Joseph were in favor of casting Jude out, but Jesus would not consent. When their patience would be severely tried, Jesus would only counsel: "Be patient. Be wise in your counsel and eloquent in your lives, that your young sibling may first know the better way and then be constrained to follow you in it." The wise and loving counsel of Jesus prevented a break in the family; they remained together. But Jude's behavior never changed until after being married.

Mary seldom spoke of Jesus' future mission. Whenever this subject was referred to, Jesus only replied, "My hour has not yet come." Jesus had about completed the difficult task of preparing the family for the day when it would be possible to leave this Nazareth home to begin the more active prelude to the bestowal mission.

Never lose sight of the fact that the prime mission of Jesus in the seventh bestowal was the acquirement of creature experience, the achievement of the sovereignty of Nebadon. And in the gathering of this very experience Jesus made the supreme revelation of the Paradise Creator to Urantia and to the entire local universe. Incidental to these purposes Jesus also undertook to untangle the complicated affairs of this planet as they were related to the Lucifer rebellion.

This year Jesus enjoyed more than usual leisure, and devoted much time to training James in the management of the repair shop and Joseph in the direction of home affairs. Mary sensed that Jesus was getting ready to leave them. Leave them to go where? To do what? Mary could not understand and simply could not fathom Jesus.

Jesus spent a great deal of time this year with the individual members of the family, taking them for long and frequent strolls up the hill and through the countryside. Before harvest Jesus took Jude to the relative's farm south of Nazareth, but Jude did not remain long after the harvest. Jude ran away, and was later found by Simon with people who were fishing at the lake. When Simon brought Jude back home, Jesus talked things over with the runaway youth and, since Jude wanted to fish, they went over to Magdala and Jesus put Jude in the care of a relative who fished for a living; and Jude worked fairly well and regularly from that time on until being married, and continued to fish afterward.

At last the day had come when the family was well established and the stage was being set for Jesus' departure from home.

In November a double wedding occurred. James and Esta, and Miriam and Jacob were married. It was truly a joyous occasion. Even Mary was once more happy except every now and then when realizing that Jesus was preparing to go away. Mary suffered under the burden of a great uncertainty, wishing that Jesus would only talk it over freely. But Jesus was consistently uncommunicative and was profoundly silent about the future.

James and Esta moved into a neat little home on the west side of town, a gift from Esta's family. James continued to support Mary's home but being married cut that support in half, and Joseph was formally installed by Jesus as head of the family. Jude was now very faithfully sending funds home each month. The weddings of James and Miriam had a very beneficial influence on Jude, and when leaving for the fishing grounds, the day after the double wedding, Jude said to Joseph "I promise to do my full duty, and more if it is needed." And that promise was kept.

Miriam lived next door to Mary in the home of Jacob, Jacob the elder having been laid to rest. Martha took Miriam's place in the home, and the new organization was working smoothly before the year ended.

The day after this double wedding Jesus held an important conference with James, confidentially revealing plans to leave home. Jesus presented full title to the repair shop to James, formally and solemnly abdicated as head of the household, and most touchingly established James as "head and protector of my family's house." A secret contract was drawn up, which they both signed, in which it was stipulated that, in return for the gift of the repair shop, James would assume full financial responsibility for the family, releasing Jesus from all further obligations in these matters. After the contract was signed, and after the budget was

arranged so that the actual expenses of the family would be met without any contribution from Jesus, Jesus said: "James, I will continue to send you something each month until my hour has come, but what I send should be used by you as the occasion demands. Apply my funds to the family necessities or pleasures as you see fit. Use them in case of sickness or apply them to meet the unexpected emergencies which may befall any individual member of the family."

And so Jesus prepared to enter on the second and home-detached phase of adult life before making public entrance on the bestowal mission.

Paper 129

The Later Adult Life of Jesus

Jesus had fully and finally become separated from the management of the domestic affairs of the Nazareth family and from the immediate direction of its individuals, although continuing right up to the event of the baptism to contribute to the family finances and to take a keen personal interest in the spiritual welfare of every member of the family. And Jesus was always ready to do everything humanly possible for Mary's comfort and happiness.

Jesus had now made every preparation for becoming permanently detached from the Nazareth home, and this was not easy to do. Jesus naturally loved people and especially members of the family, and this natural affection had been tremendously augmented by extraordinary devotion to them. The more fully we bestow ourselves upon others, the more we come to love them; and Jesus, having given so fully to the family, loved them with a great and fervent affection.

All the family had slowly awakened to the realization that Jesus was preparing to leave them. The sadness of the anticipated separation was only tempered by this graduated method of preparing them for the announcement of this intended departure. For more than four years they discerned that Jesus was planning for this eventual separation.

1. The Twenty-Seventh Year (C.E. 21)

In January of this year, C.E. 21, on a rainy Sunday morning, Jesus took unceremonious leave of the family, explaining that this was to be a visit to Tiberias and then to other cities about the Sea of Galilee. And Jesus left them, never again to be a regular member of that household.

Jesus spent one week at Tiberias, the new city which was soon to succeed Sepphoris as the capital of Galilee; and finding little of interest, passed on successively through Magdala and Bethsaida to Capernaum, stopping to pay a visit to Joseph's friend Zebedee. Zebedee's family were fishers but Zebedee was a boatbuilder. Jesus was an expert in both designing and building and was a master at working with wood; and Zebedee had long known of the skill of the Nazareth artisan. For a long time Zebedee had contemplated making improved boats, and now laid these plans before Jesus, inviting the visiting carpenter to join in the enterprise, and Jesus readily consented.

Jesus worked with Zebedee only a little more than one year, but during that time created a new style of boat and established entirely new methods of boatmaking. By superior technique and greatly improved methods of steaming the boards, Jesus and Zebedee began to build boats of a very superior type, craft which were far more safe for sailing the lake than the older types. For several years Zebedee had more work, turning out these new-style boats, than this small establishment could handle; in less than five years practically all the craft on the lake had been built in the shop of Zebedee at Capernaum. Jesus became well known to the Galilean fishers as the designer of the new boats.

Zebedee was moderately well-to-do, with boatbuilding shops on the lake to the south of Capernaum and a home situated down the lake shore near the fishing headquarters of Bethsaida. Jesus lived in Zebedee's home during the time spent at Capernaum. Jesus had long worked alone in the world, and greatly enjoyed this period of working with a parent-partner.

Zebedee was married to Salome, who was a relative of Annas, a former high priest at Jerusalem and still the most influential of the Sadducean group, having been deposed only eight years previously. Salome became a great admirer of Jesus, who was considered one of the family. The Zebedees had three children, James, John, and David, with whom Jesus often went out fishing, and who learned that Jesus was an expert at fishing as well as boatbuilding.

All this year Jesus sent money each month to James, returning to Nazareth in October to attend Martha's wedding, but was not again in Nazareth for over two years, returning again shortly before the double wedding of Simon and Jude.

Throughout this year Jesus built boats and continued to observe how people lived on earth. Jesus would frequently go down to visit at the caravan station, Capernaum being on the direct travel route from Damascus to the south. Capernaum was a strong Roman military post, and the garrison's commanding officer was a gentile believer in Yahweh, "a devout person," as the Jews were inclined to designate such proselytes. This officer belonged to a wealthy Roman family, and built a beautiful synagogue in Capernaum, which had been presented to the Jews a short time before Jesus came to live with the Zebedees. Jesus conducted the services in this new synagogue more than half the time this year, and some of the caravan people who happened to attend remembered Jesus as the carpenter from Nazareth.

When it came to the payment of taxes, Jesus registered as a "skilled artisan of Capernaum." From this day on Jesus was known as a resident of Capernaum, never claiming any other legal residence, although, for various reasons, permitting others to believe it was Damascus, Bethany, Nazareth, and even Alexandria.

At the Capernaum synagogue Jesus found many new books in the library chests, and spent at least five evenings a week at intense study. One evening was devoted to social life with the older people, and one evening was spent with the young people. There was something gracious and inspiring about the personality of Jesus which invariably attracted young people, always making them feel at ease. Perhaps Jesus' greatest secret in getting along with them consisted in being always interested in what they were doing, while seldom offering them advice unless they asked for it.

The Zebedee family almost worshiped Jesus, and they never failed to attend the conferences of questions and answers which Jesus conducted each evening after supper before departing for the synagogue to study. The youthful neighbors also came in frequently to attend these after-supper meetings. To these little gatherings Jesus gave varied and advanced instruction, just as advanced as they could comprehend, talking quite freely with them, expressing ideas and ideals about politics, sociology, science, and philosophy, but never presuming to speak with authoritative finality except when discussing religion — the relationship of mortals to the Creator.

Once a week Jesus held a meeting with the entire household, shop, and shore helpers, for Zebedee had many employees. And it was among these workers that Jesus, being loved by all of them, was first called “the Master.” Jesus enjoyed working with Zebedee in Capernaum, but missed the children playing out by the side of the Nazareth carpenter shop.

Of the children of Zebedee, James was the most interested in Jesus as a teacher, as a philosopher. John cared most for Jesus’ religious teaching and opinions. David respected Jesus as a mechanic but took little stock in the religious and philosophic teachings.

Frequently Jude came over on the Sabbath to hear Jesus talk in the synagogue and would stay to visit, becoming more and more convinced that Jesus was truly a person of destiny.

This year Jesus made great advances in the ascendant mastery of the human mind and attained new and high levels of conscious contact with the indwelling Thought Adjuster.

This was the last year of settled life for Jesus, who never again spent a whole year in one place or at one undertaking. The days of earth pilgrimages were rapidly approaching. Periods of intense activity were not far in the future, but a few years of extensive travel and highly diversified personal activity were now about to intervene between the simple but intensely active life of the past and the still more intense and strenuous public ministry of the future. Training as a mortal of the realm had to be completed before it would be possible for Jesus to begin a career of teaching and preaching as the perfected Creator-mortal of the divine and posthuman phases of the Urantia bestowal.

2. The Twenty-Eighth Year (C.E. 22)

In March, C.E. 22, Jesus took leave of Zebedee and of Capernaum, asking for a small sum of money to defray expenses to Jerusalem. Jesus had drawn only small amounts while working with Zebedee, sending them each month to the family at Nazareth. One month Joseph would come to Capernaum for the money; the next month Jude would come to Capernaum, get the money from Jesus, and take it up to Nazareth. Jude’s fishing headquarters was only a few miles south of Capernaum.

Jesus, on taking leave of Zebedee’s family, promised to remain in Jerusalem until Passover time, and they all agreed to be present for that event. They even arranged to celebrate the Passover supper together. They all sorrowed when Jesus left them.

Before leaving Capernaum, Jesus had a long talk with John Zebedee, a new-found friend and close companion. Jesus contemplated traveling extensively and asked John to send money to the family at Nazareth each month until the funds were exhausted. And John made this promise: “My Teacher, go about your business, do your work in the world; I will act for you in this or any other matter, and I will watch over your family even as I would foster my own. I will disburse your funds as you have directed and as they may be needed, and when your money has been expended, if I do not receive more from you, and if your family is in need, then I will share my own earnings with them. Go your way in peace. I will act on your behalf in all these matters.”

Therefore, after Jesus had departed for Jerusalem, John consulted with the elder Zebedee regarding the money due Jesus, and was surprised that it was such a large sum. As Jesus had left the matter so entirely in their hands, they agreed that it would be best to invest these funds in property and use the income for assisting the family at Nazareth; and Zebedee, who knew of a little house in Capernaum which carried a mortgage and was for sale, directed John to buy this house with Jesus' money and hold the title in trust. And John did this. For two years the rent from this house was applied on the mortgage, and this, augmented by a certain large fund which Jesus presently sent to John to be used as needed by the family, almost equaled the amount of this obligation; and Zebedee supplied the difference, so that John paid the remainder of the mortgage when it fell due, securing clear title to this two-room house. In this way Jesus became the owner of a house in Capernaum, but had not been told about it.

When the family at Nazareth heard that Jesus had departed from Capernaum, they, not knowing of this financial arrangement with John, believed the time had come for them to get along without any further help from Jesus. James remembered the contract with Jesus and, with the help of the other siblings, assumed full responsibility for the care of the family.

But let us go back to observe Jesus in Jerusalem. For almost two months Jesus spent a great deal of time listening to the temple discussions with occasional visits to the various schools of the rabbis. Most of the Sabbath days Jesus spent at Bethany.

Jesus had carried a letter from Salome, Zebedee's spouse, providing an introduction to the former high priest, Annas, as "one who is the same as my own child." Annas and Jesus spent much time together visiting the many academies of the Jerusalem religious teachers. Jesus thoroughly inspected these schools and carefully observed their methods of teaching, but never so much as asked a single question in public. Annas viewed Jesus as a great person, but was puzzled as to how to offer any advice. Annas recognized the foolishness of suggesting that Jesus enter any of the schools of Jerusalem as a student, and yet well knew Jesus would never be accorded the status of a regular teacher, having never been trained in these schools.

Presently the time of the Passover drew near, and along with the throngs from every quarter, Zebedee's entire family arrived at Jerusalem from Capernaum. They all stopped at the spacious home of Annas, where they celebrated the Passover as one happy family.

Before the end of this Passover week, by apparent chance, Jesus met a wealthy traveler who had brought a seventeen-year old offspring. These travelers hailed from India, and being on their way to visit Rome and various other points on the Mediterranean, they had arranged to arrive in Jerusalem during the Passover, hoping to find someone whom they could engage as interpreter for both and as tutor for the youth. The parent was insistent that Jesus consent to travel with them. Jesus said that it was, "hardly fair to leave my family for almost two years, during which time they might find themselves in need." At which point this traveler from the Orient proposed to advance to Jesus the wages of one year so that such funds could be entrusted for the safeguarding of the family against want. And Jesus agreed to make the trip.

Jesus turned this large sum over to John Zebedee, and you have been told how John applied this money toward the liquidation of the mortgage on the Capernaum property. Jesus confided to the elder Zebedee fully regarding this Mediterranean journey, asking that no one be told, and Zebedee never did disclose the

knowledge of Jesus' location during this period of almost two years. Before Jesus' return from this trip the family at Nazareth had just about given up hope. Only the assurances of Zebedee, who went to Nazareth with John on several occasions, kept anticipation alive in Mary's heart.

During this time the Nazareth family got along very well. Payments from Jude had considerably increased and these payments were maintained until Jude was married. In spite of the fact that they required little assistance, it was the practice of John Zebedee to take presents each month to Mary and Ruth, as Jesus had instructed.

3. The Twenty-Ninth Year (C.E. 23)

The whole of Jesus' twenty-ninth year was spent finishing the tour of the Mediterranean world. The main events, as far as we have permission to reveal these experiences, constitute the subjects of the narratives which immediately follow this paper.

Throughout this tour of the Roman world, for many reasons, Jesus was known as the *Damascus scribe* but was known at Corinth and other stops on the return trip as the *Jewish tutor*.

This was an eventful period in the life of Jesus, who made many contacts with people while on this journey. But this experience is a phase which was never revealed to any member of Jesus' family nor to any of the apostles. Jesus lived life and departed from this world without anyone (except Zebedee of Bethsaida) knowing about this extensive trip. Some friends thought Jesus had gone to Damascus; others to India. The family inclined to the belief that Jesus was in Alexandria, as they knew about the invitation to go there for the purpose of becoming an assistant chazan.

Jesus, on returning to Palestine, did nothing to change the opinion of the family about having gone from Jerusalem to Alexandria; permitting them to continue in the belief that all the time had been spent in that city of learning and culture. Only Zebedee, the boatbuilder of Bethsaida, knew the facts about these matters, and Zebedee told no one.

In all your efforts to decipher the meaning of Jesus' life on Urantia, you must be mindful of the motivation of the Michael bestowal. If you would comprehend the meaning of many of Jesus' apparently strange doings, you must discern the purpose of this sojourn on your world. Jesus was consistently careful not to build up an over-attractive and attention-consuming personal career, wanting to make no unusual or overpowering appeals to people. Jesus was dedicated to the work of revealing the Creator to humanity and at the same time was consecrated to the sublime task of living a mortal earth life while subject to the will of the same Paradise Creator.

It will also always be helpful in understanding Jesus' life on earth if all mortal students of this divine bestowal will remember that, while living this life of incarnation *on* Urantia, Jesus lived it *for* the entire universe. There was something special and inspiring associated with this life for every single inhabited sphere throughout the universe of Nebadon. The same is also true of all those worlds which have become habitable since the eventful times of this sojourn on Urantia. And it will also be equally true of all worlds which may become inhabited by will creatures in all the future history of this local universe.

Jesus, during the time and through the experiences of this tour of the Roman world, practically completed an educational contact-training with the diversified peoples of the world of that day and generation. Before returning to Nazareth, through the medium of this travel-training, Jesus had just about learned how people lived and wrought out their existence on Urantia.

The real purpose of this trip around the Mediterranean basin was to *know mortals*. Jesus came very close to hundreds of people on this journey, meeting and loving all manner of individuals, rich and poor, high and low, educated and uneducated, cultured and uncultured, animalistic and spiritual, religious and irreligious, moral and immoral, and of many races.

On this Mediterranean journey Jesus made great advances in the human task of mastering the material and mortal mind, and the indwelling Adjuster made great progress in the ascension and spiritual conquest of this same human intellect. By the end of this tour Jesus was virtually aware of — with all human certainty — being the Local Universe Creator and a child of the Universal Source. The Adjuster more and more was able to bring up in Jesus' mind shadowy memories of having had a Paradise experience in association with the Universal Source before ever coming to organize and administer this local universe of Nebadon. Thus the Adjuster, little by little, brought to Jesus' human consciousness those necessary memories of a former and divine existence in the various epochs of the eternal past. The last episode of this prehuman experience to be presented by the Adjuster was Michael's farewell conference with Immanuel of Salvington just before surrendering conscious personality to embark upon the Urantia incarnation. And this final memory picture of prehuman existence was made clear in Jesus' consciousness on the very day of baptism by John in the Jordan.

4. The Human Jesus

To the onlooking celestial intelligences of the local universe, this Mediterranean trip was the most enthralling of all Jesus' earth experiences, at least of the entire career right up to the crucifixion and mortal death. This was the fascinating period of *personal ministry* in contrast with the soon-following epoch of public ministry. This unique episode was all the more engrossing because Jesus was at this time still the carpenter of Nazareth, the boatbuilder of Capernaum, the scribe of Damascus. Jesus had not yet achieved the complete mastery of the human mind; the Adjuster had not fully mastered and counterparted the mortal identity. Jesus was still a mortal among mortals.

The purely human religious experience — the personal spiritual growth — of Jesus practically reached the apex of attainment during this, the twenty-ninth year. This experience of spiritual development was a consistently gradual growth from the moment of the arrival of the Thought Adjuster until the day of the completion and confirmation of that natural and normal human relationship between the material mind and the mind-endowment of the spirit — the phenomenon of the making of these two minds one, the experience which Jesus attained in completion and finality, as an incarnated mortal of the realm, on the day of baptism in the Jordan.

Throughout these years, while not appearing to engage in so many instances of formal communion with the Creator, Jesus perfected increasingly effective methods of personal communication with the indwelling spirit presence. Jesus lived a real life, a full life, and a truly normal, natural, and average life, and knows

from personal experience the equivalent of the actuality of the entire sum and substance of the living of the life of human beings on the material worlds of time and space.

Jesus, who experienced those wide ranges of human emotion which reach from superb joy to profound sorrow, was a child of joy and a being of rare good humor, but was also acquainted with grief. In a spiritual sense, Jesus lived through the mortal life from the bottom to the top, from the beginning to the end. From a material point of view, Jesus might appear to have escaped living through both social extremes of human existence, but intellectually became wholly familiar with the entire and complete experience of humankind.

Jesus knows about the thoughts and feelings, the urges and impulses, of the evolutionary and ascendant mortals, from birth to death. Jesus has lived the human life from the beginnings of physical, intellectual, and spiritual selfhood through infancy, childhood, youth, and adulthood — even to the human experience of death, and has not only passed through these usual and familiar human periods of intellectual and spiritual advancement, but has *also* fully experienced those higher and more advanced phases of human and Adjuster reconciliation which so few Urantia mortals ever attain. And so Jesus experienced the full life of a mortal, not only as it is lived on your world, but also as it is lived on all other evolutionary worlds of time and space, even on the highest and most advanced of all the worlds settled in light and life.

Although this perfect life may not have received the unqualified and universal approval of other mortals who chanced to be contemporaries on earth, still, the life which Jesus of Nazareth lived on Urantia did receive full and unqualified acceptance by the Universal Source as constituting at one and the same time, and in one and the same personality-life, the fullness of the revelation of the eternal Creator to mortals and the presentation of perfected human personality to the satisfaction of the Infinite Creator.

And this was the true and supreme purpose. Jesus did not come to live on Urantia as the perfect and detailed example for any child or adult, any mortal, in that age or any other. It is true that in this full, rich, beautiful, and noble life we may all find much that is exquisitely exemplary, divinely inspiring, but this is because Jesus lived a true and genuinely human life, not living this life on earth in order to set an example for all other human beings to copy. Jesus lived this life by the same mercy ministry that you may all live your lives on earth, setting the example for all of us to live our lives in our day and *as we are*. You may not aspire to live the same life, but you can resolve to *live your lives* even as, and by the same means that Jesus lived. Jesus may not be the technical and detailed example for all the mortals of all ages on all the realms of this local universe, but is everlastingly the inspiration and guide of all Paradise pilgrims from the worlds of initial ascension up through a universe of universes and on through Havona to Paradise. Jesus is the *new and living way* from mortal to Creator, from the partial to the perfect, from time to eternity.

By the end of the twenty-ninth year Jesus had virtually finished the living of the life required of mortals. Jesus came to earth in the fullness of the Creator to be manifest to mortals, and became the perfection of a mortal awaiting the occasion to become manifest to the Creator. And Jesus did all of this before the age of thirty.

Paper 130

On the Way to Rome

The tour of the Roman world consumed most of the twenty-eighth and the entire twenty-ninth year of Jesus' life on earth. Jesus and the two natives from India — Gonod and Ganid — left Jerusalem on a Sunday morning, April 26, C.E. 22. They made their journey according to schedule, and Jesus finally said good-bye to them in the city of Charax on the Persian Gulf on the tenth day of December the following year, C.E. 23.

The journey took them to the following places: From Jerusalem they went to Caesarea by way of Joppa. At Caesarea they took a boat for Alexandria. From Alexandria they sailed for Lasea in Crete. From Crete they sailed for Carthage, touching at Cyrene. At Carthage they took a boat for Naples, stopping at Malta, Syracuse, and Messina. From Naples they went to Capua, and from there they traveled by the Appian Way to Rome.

After their stay in Rome they went overland to Tarentum, where they set sail for Athens in Greece, stopping at Nicopolis and Corinth. From Athens they went to Ephesus by way of Troas. From Ephesus they sailed for Cyprus, putting in at Rhodes on the way. They spent considerable time visiting and resting on Cyprus and then sailed for Antioch in Syria. From Antioch they journeyed south to Sidon and then went over to Damascus. From there they traveled by caravan to Mesopotamia, passing through Thapsacus and Larissa. They spent some time in Babylon, visited Ur and other places, and then went to Susa. From Susa they journeyed to Charax, and from there Gonod and Ganid embarked for India.

It was while working for four months at Damascus that Jesus had picked up the rudiments of the language spoken by Gonod and Ganid, working much of the time on translations from Greek into one of the languages of India, and being assisted by a native of Gonod's home district.

On this Mediterranean tour Jesus spent about half of each day teaching Ganid and acting as interpreter during Gonod's business conferences and social contacts. The remainder of each day was devoted to making close personal contacts, those intimate associations with mortals which so characterized Jesus' activities during these years that just preceded the public ministry.

From firsthand observation and actual contact Jesus became acquainted with the material and intellectual civilization of the Occident and the Levant. From Gonod and Ganid Jesus learned a great deal about the civilization and culture of India and China, for Gonod, a citizen of India, had made three extensive trips to the empire of the yellow race.

Ganid learned much from Jesus during this long and intimate association. They developed a great affection for each other, and Gonod tried many times to persuade Jesus to return with them to India, but Jesus always declined, citing the necessity for returning to the family in Palestine.

1. At Joppa — Discourse on Jonah

During their stay in Joppa, Jesus met Gadiab, a Philistine interpreter who worked for a tanner named Simon. Gonod's agents in Mesopotamia had transacted much business with Simon, so Gonod and Ganid wanted to pay Gadiab a visit on their way to Caesarea. During their stay at Joppa, Jesus and Gadiab became warm friends. This young Philistine was a truth seeker. Jesus was a truth giver; Jesus *was* the truth for that generation on Urantia. When a great truth seeker and a great truth giver meet, the result is a liberating enlightenment born of the experience of new truth.

One day after the evening meal Jesus and the young Philistine strolled down by the sea, and Gadiab, not knowing that this "scribe of Damascus" was so well versed in the Hebrew traditions, pointed out to Jesus the ship landing from which it was reputed that Jonah had embarked on an ill-fated voyage to Tarshish. And Gadiab, when concluding these remarks, asked Jesus this question: "But do you suppose the big fish really did swallow Jonah?" Jesus perceived that this young person's life had been tremendously influenced by this tradition, and that its contemplation had impressed upon Gadiab the foolishness of trying to run away from duty. Jesus therefore said nothing that would suddenly destroy the foundations of Gadiab's present motivation for practical living. In answering this question, Jesus said: "My friend, we are all Jonahs with lives to live in accordance with the will of our Creator, and at all times when we seek to escape the present duty of living by running away to far-off enticements, we put ourselves in the immediate control of those influences which are not directed by the powers of truth and the forces of righteousness. The flight from duty is the sacrifice of truth. The escape from the service of light and life can only result in those distressing conflicts with the difficult whales of selfishness which lead eventually to darkness and death unless such Jonahs turn their hearts, even when in the very depths of despair, to seek after Truth. And when such disheartened souls sincerely seek for the Creator — hunger for truth and goodness — there is nothing that can hold them in further captivity. No matter into what great depths they may have fallen, when they seek the light with a whole heart, the spirit of the Creator will deliver them from their captivity; the evil circumstances of life will spew them out upon the dry land of fresh opportunities for renewed service and wiser living."

Gadiab was greatly moved by Jesus' teaching. They talked long into the night by the seaside, and before they went to their lodgings, they prayed together and for each other. This was the same Gadiab who listened to the later preaching of Peter, became a profound believer in Jesus, and held a memorable argument with Peter one evening at the home of Dorcas. And Gadiab had very much to do with the final decision of Simon, the wealthy leather merchant, to embrace Christianity.

Jesus' last visit with Gadiab had to do with a discussion of good and evil. This young Philistine was much troubled by a feeling of injustice because of the presence of evil in the world alongside the good. Gadiab said: "How can Yahweh, if Yahweh is infinitely good, permit us to suffer the sorrows of evil; after all, who creates evil?" It was still believed by many in those days that Yahweh creates both good and evil, but Jesus never taught such error. In answering this question, Jesus said: "My friend, the Creator is love; and therefore must be good, and this goodness is so great and real that it cannot contain the small and unreal things of evil. The Creator is so positively good that there is absolutely no place for negative evil. Evil is the immature choosing and the unthinking misstep of those who are resistant to goodness, rejecting of beauty, and disloyal to truth. Evil is only the misadaptation of immaturity or the disruptive and distorting influence of ignorance.

Evil is the inevitable darkness which follows upon the heels of the unwise rejection of light. Evil is that which is dark and untrue, and which, when consciously embraced and willfully endorsed, becomes sin.

“Your Creator Parent, by endowing you with the power to choose between truth and error, created the potential negative of the positive way of light and life; but such errors of evil are really nonexistent until an intelligent creature wills their existence by mis-choosing the way of life. And then such evils are later exalted into sin by the knowing and deliberate choice of such a willful and rebellious creature. This is why our Creator Parent permits the good and the evil to go along together until the end of life, just as nature allows the wheat and the tares to grow side by side until the harvest.” Gadiah was fully satisfied with Jesus’ answer to this question after their subsequent discussion had made clear the real meaning of these momentous statements.

2. At Caesarea

Jesus, Gonod, and Ganid stayed in Caesarea beyond the time expected because one of the huge steering paddles of the vessel on which they intended to embark was discovered to be in danger of cleaving. The captain decided to remain in port while a new one was being made. There was a shortage of skilled woodworkers for this task, so Jesus volunteered to assist. During the evenings they strolled about on the beautiful wall which served as a promenade around the port. Ganid greatly enjoyed Jesus’ explanation of the water system of the city and the technique by which the tides were utilized to flush the city’s streets and sewers. This youth of India was much impressed with the temple of Augustus, situated on an elevation and surmounted by a colossal statue of the Roman emperor. The second afternoon of their stay the three of them attended a performance in the enormous amphitheater which could seat twenty thousand people, and that night they went to a Greek play at the theater. Ganid, who had never witnessed exhibitions of this sort before, asked Jesus many questions about them. On the morning of the third day they paid a formal visit to the governor’s palace, for Caesarea was the capital of Palestine and the residence of the Roman procurator.

A merchant from Mongolia also lodged at their inn. Jesus had several long visits with this Far-Easterner, who spoke Greek fairly well. This merchant was much impressed with Jesus’ philosophy of life and never forgot Jesus’ words of wisdom. This merchant was a Taoist, a strong believer in the doctrine of a universal Deity, who upon returning to Mongolia began to teach these advanced truths to neighbors and business associates. As a direct result of such activities, the merchant’s eldest child decided to become a Taoist priest. This young person exerted a great influence on behalf of advanced truth throughout an entire lifetime and was followed by a child and a grandchild who were also devotedly loyal to the doctrine of the One Creator — the Supreme Ruler.

While the eastern branch of the early Christian church, having its headquarters at Philadelphia, held more faithfully to the teachings of Jesus than the Jerusalem community, it was regrettable that there was no one like Peter to go into China, or like Paul to enter India, where the spiritual soil was then so favorable for planting the seed of the new teachings. These very teachings of Jesus, as they were held by the Philadelphians, would have made an immediate and effective appeal to the minds of the spiritually hungry Asiatic peoples as the preaching of Peter and Paul did in the West.

One of the young people who worked with Jesus one day on the steering paddle became interested in the words which Jesus expressed from hour to hour as they labored in the shipyard. When Jesus intimated that the Creator was interested in the welfare of all children on earth, this young Greek, Anaxand, said: "If the Deities are interested in me, then why do they not remove the cruel and unjust supervisor of this workshop?" Anaxand was startled when Jesus replied, "Since you know the ways of kindness and value justice, perhaps the Deities have brought this erring supervisor near to you so that you may lead this person into a better way. Perhaps you are the salt which is to make this individual more agreeable to all others; that is, if you have not lost your savor. As it is, this overseer's evil ways unfavorably influence you. Why not assert your mastery of evil by virtue of the power of goodness and become the master of all relations between the two of you? I predict that the good in you could overcome the evil in this person if you gave it a fair and living chance. There is no adventure in the course of mortal existence more enthralling than to enjoy the exhilaration of becoming the material life partner with spiritual energy and divine truth in one of their triumphant struggles with error and evil. It is a marvelous and transforming experience to become the living channel of spiritual light to the mortal who sits in spiritual darkness. If you are more blessed with truth, this individual's need should challenge you. Surely you are not the coward who could stand by on the seashore and watch one who could not swim perish!

Anaxand was strongly moved by Jesus' words, and told the overseer what Jesus had said, and that night they both sought Jesus' advice as to the welfare of their souls. And later on, after the Christian message had been proclaimed in Caesarea, both of them, one a Greek and the other a Roman, believed Philip's teachings and became prominent members of the church which Philip founded. Later this young Greek was appointed the steward of a Roman centurion, Cornelius, who became a follower through Peter's ministry. Anaxand continued to minister light to those who sat in darkness until the days of Paul's imprisonment at Caesarea, finally perishing by accident in the great slaughter of twenty thousand Jews while ministering to the suffering and dying.

Ganid was, by this time, beginning to learn how Jesus spent leisure time in this unusual personal ministry to others, and the young Indian set about to find out the motive for these incessant activities. Ganid asked, "Why do you occupy yourself so continuously with these visits with strangers?" And Jesus answered: "Ganid, no one is a stranger to someone who knows the Creator. In the experience of finding the Universal Source you discover that all people are members of the same family, and does it seem strange that one should enjoy the exhilaration of meeting a newly discovered sibling? To become acquainted with others, to know their problems and to learn to love them, is the supreme experience of living."

This was a conference which lasted well into the night, in the course of which the youth requested Jesus to describe the difference between the will of the Creator and that human act of choosing which is also called will. In substance Jesus said: The will of the Creator is the way of the Creator. To do the will of the Creator, therefore, is the progressive experience of becoming more and more like the Creator, who is the source and destiny of all that is good and beautiful and true. The will of mortals is the way of mortals, the sum and substance of that which the mortal chooses to be and do. Will is the deliberate choice of a self-conscious being which leads to decision-conduct based on intelligent reflection.

That afternoon Jesus and Ganid had both enjoyed playing with a very intelligent shepherd dog, and Ganid wanted to know whether the dog had a soul, whether it had a will, and in response to Ganid's questions

Jesus said: “The dog has a mind which can know people, but cannot know the Creator, who is spirit; therefore the dog does not possess a spiritual nature and cannot enjoy a spiritual experience. The dog may have a will derived from nature and augmented by training, but such a power of mind is not a spiritual force, neither is it comparable to the human will, since it is not *reflective* —it is not the result of discriminating higher and moral meanings or choosing spiritual and eternal values. It is the possession of such powers of spiritual discrimination and truth choosing that makes a mortal a moral being, a creature endowed with the attributes of spiritual responsibility and the potential of eternal survival.” Jesus went on to explain that it is the absence of such mental powers in the animal which makes it forever impossible for the animal world to experience anything equivalent to personality survival in eternity. As a result of this day’s instruction Ganid never again entertained belief in the transmigration of the souls of mortals into the bodies of animals.

The next day Ganid talked all this over with Gonod, and it was in answer to Gonod’s question that Jesus explained that “human wills which are fully occupied only with temporal decisions having to do with the material problems of animal existence are doomed to perish in time. Those who make wholehearted moral decisions and unqualified spiritual choices are progressively identified with the indwelling and divine spirit, and are increasingly transformed into the values of eternal survival — unending progression of divine service.”

It was on this same day that we first heard that momentous truth which, stated in modern terms, would signify: “Will is that manifestation of the human mind which enables the subjective consciousness to express itself objectively and to experience the phenomenon of aspiring to be Deitylike.” And it is in this same sense that every reflective and spiritually minded human being can become *creative*.

3. At Alexandria

It had been an eventful visit at Caesarea, and when the boat was ready, Jesus, Gonod, and Ganid left at noon one day for Alexandria in Egypt.

The three enjoyed a pleasant passage to Alexandria. Ganid was delighted with the voyage and kept Jesus busy answering questions. As they approached the city’s harbor, Ganid was thrilled by the great lighthouse of Pharos, located on the island which Alexander had joined by a causeway to the mainland, creating two magnificent harbors and making Alexandria the maritime commercial crossroads of Africa, Asia, and Europe. This great lighthouse was one of the wonders of the world and was the forerunner of all subsequent lighthouses. They arose early in the morning to view this splendid lifesaving device, and amid the exclamations of Ganid Jesus said: “And you will be like this lighthouse when you return to India, even after Gonod is laid to rest; you will become like the light of life to those who sit about you in darkness, showing all who so desire the way to reach the harbor of salvation in safety.” And Ganid, squeezing Jesus’ hand, said, “I will.”

And again we remark that the early teachers of the Christian religion made a great mistake when they so exclusively turned their attention to the western civilization of the Roman world. The teachings of Jesus, as they were held by the Mesopotamian followers of the first century, would have been readily received by the various groups of Asiatic religionists.

By the fourth hour after landing they were settled near the eastern end of the long and broad avenue, one hundred feet wide and five miles long, which stretched out to the western limits of this city of one million people. After the first survey of the city's chief attractions — university (museum), library, the royal mausoleum of Alexander, the palace, temple of Neptune, theater, and gymnasium — Gonod addressed business while Jesus and Ganid went to the library, the greatest in the world. Assembled here were nearly a million manuscripts from all the civilized world: Greece, Rome, Palestine, Parthia, India, China, and even Japan. In this library Ganid saw the largest collection of Indian literature in all the world; and they spent some time here each day throughout their stay in Alexandria. Jesus told Ganid about the translation of the Hebrew scriptures into Greek at this place. And they discussed again and again all the religions of the world, Jesus endeavoring to point out to this young mind the truth in each, always adding: "But Yahweh is the Deity developed from the revelations of Melchizedek and the covenant of Abraham. The Jews were the offspring of Abraham and subsequently occupied the very land where Melchizedek had lived and taught, and from which teachers were sent to all the world; and their religion eventually portrayed a clearer recognition of Yahweh as the Universal Source than any other world religion."

Under Jesus' direction Ganid made a collection of the teachings of all those religions of the world which recognized a Universal Deity, even though they might also give more or less recognition to subordinate deities. After much discussion Jesus and Ganid decided that the Romans had no real Deity in their religion, that their religion was hardly more than emperor worship. The Greeks, they concluded, had a philosophy but hardly a religion with a personal Deity. They discarded the mystery cults because of the confusion of their multiplicity, and because their varied concepts of Deity seemed to be derived from other and older religions.

Although these translations were made at Alexandria, Ganid did not finally arrange these selections and add personal conclusions until near the end of their sojourn in Rome. Ganid was much surprised to discover that the best of the authors of the world's sacred literature all more or less clearly recognized the existence of an eternal Deity and were much in agreement with regard to this Deity's character and relationship with mortals.

Jesus and Ganid spent much time in the museum during their stay in Alexandria. This museum was not a collection of rare objects but rather a university of fine art, science, and literature. Learned professors gave daily lectures here, and in those times this was the intellectual center of the Occidental world. Day by day Jesus interpreted the lectures to Ganid. One day during the second week the youth exclaimed: "Teacher Joshua, you know more than these professors; you should stand up and tell them the great things you have told me; they are confused by too much thinking." Jesus smiled, saying: "You are an admiring pupil, but these teachers are not concerned that you and I should instruct them. The pride of unspiritualized learning is a treacherous thing in human experience. The true teacher maintains intellectual integrity by always remaining a learner."

Alexandria was the city of the blended culture of the Occident and next to Rome the largest and most magnificent in the world. The largest Jewish synagogue in the world was located here, the seat of government of the Alexandria Sanhedrin, the seventy ruling elders.

Among the many people with whom Gonod transacted business was a certain Jewish banker, Alexander, whose relative, Philo, was a famous religious philosopher of that time. Philo was engaged in the laudable but exceedingly difficult task of harmonizing Greek philosophy and Hebrew theology. Ganid and Jesus talked much about Philo's teachings and expected to attend some lectures, but throughout their stay at Alexandria this famous Hellenistic Jew lay sick in bed.

Jesus commended to Ganid much in the Greek philosophy and the Stoic doctrines, but impressed on the young person the truth that these systems of belief, like the indefinite teachings of some of the people of India, were religions only in the sense that they led people to find the Creator and to enjoy a living experience in knowing the Eternal.

4. Discourse on Reality

The night before they left Alexandria Ganid and Jesus had a long visit with one of the government professors at the university who lectured on the teachings of Plato. Jesus interpreted for the learned Greek teacher but injected no personal teaching in refutation of the Greek philosophy. Gonod was away on business that evening; so, after the professor had left, Jesus and Ganid had a long talk about Plato's doctrines. Jesus, while giving qualified approval of some of the Greek teachings which had to do with the theory that the material things of the world are shadowy reflections of invisible but more substantial spiritual realities, sought to lay a more trustworthy foundation for Ganid's thinking, beginning a long dissertation concerning the nature of reality in the universe. In substance Jesus said to Ganid:

The source of universe reality is the Infinite. The material things of finite creation are the time-space repercussions of the Paradise Pattern and the Infinite Mind of the Universal Source. Causation in the physical world, self-consciousness in the intellectual world, and progressing selfhood in the spirit world — these realities, projected on a universal scale, combined in eternal relatedness, and experienced with perfection of quality and divinity of value — constitute the *reality of the Supreme*. But in an ever-changing universe the Original Personality of causation, intelligence, and spirit experience is changeless, absolute. All things, even in an eternal universe of limitless values and divine qualities, may, and often do, change except the Absolutes and that which has attained the physical status, intellectual embrace, or spiritual identity which is absolute.

The highest level to which a finite creature can progress is the recognition of the Universal Source and the knowing of the Supreme. And even then, such beings of finality destiny go on experiencing change in the motions of the physical world and in its material phenomena. Likewise they remain aware of selfhood progression in their continuing ascension of the spiritual universe and of growing consciousness in their deepening appreciation of, and response to, the intellectual cosmos. Only in the perfection, harmony, and unanimity of will, can the creature become as one with the Creator; and such a state of divinity is attained and maintained only by the creature's continuing to live in time and eternity by consistently conforming the finite personal will to the divine will of the Creator. The desire to do the Creator's will must always be supreme in the soul and dominant over the mind of an ascending mortal.

A one-eyed person can never hope to visualize depth of perspective. Neither can single-eyed material scientists nor single-eyed spiritual mystics and allegorists correctly visualize and adequately comprehend

the true depths of universe reality. All true values of creature experience are concealed in depth of recognition.

Mindless causation cannot evolve the refined and complex from the crude and the simple, neither can spiritless experience evolve the divine characters of eternal survival from the material minds of the mortals of time. The one attribute of the universe which so exclusively characterizes the infinite Deity is this unending creative bestowal of personality which can survive in progressive Deity attainment.

Personality is that cosmic endowment, that phase of universal reality, which can coexist with unlimited change and at the same time retain its identity in the very presence of all such changes, and forever afterward.

Life is an adaptation of the original cosmic causation to the demands and possibilities of universe situations, and it comes into being by the action of the Infinite Mind and the activation of the spirit spark of the Creator who is spirit. The meaning of life is its adaptability; the value of life is its progressability — even to the heights of Creator-consciousness.

Misadaptation of self-conscious life to the universe results in cosmic disharmony. Final divergence of personality will from the trend of the universes terminates in intellectual isolation, personality segregation. Loss of the indwelling spirit pilot supervenes in spiritual cessation of existence. Intelligent and progressing life becomes then, in and of itself, an incontrovertible proof of the existence of a purposeful universe expressing the will of a divine Creator. And this life, in the aggregate, struggles toward higher values, having for its final goal the Universal Source.

Mortals possess mind above the animal level aside from the higher and quasi-spiritual ministrations of intellect only in degree. Therefore animals (not having access to worship and wisdom) cannot experience superconsciousness, consciousness of consciousness. The animal mind is only conscious of the objective universe.

Knowledge is the sphere of the material or fact-discerning mind. Truth is the domain of the spiritually endowed intellect that is conscious of knowing the Creator. Knowledge is demonstrable; truth is experienced. Knowledge is a possession of the mind; truth an experience of the soul, the progressing self. Knowledge is a function of the nonspiritual level; truth is a phase of the mind-spirit level of the universes. The eye of the material mind perceives a world of factual knowledge; the eye of the spiritualized intellect discerns a world of true values. These two views, synchronized and harmonized, reveal the world of reality, in which wisdom interprets the phenomena of the universe in terms of progressive personal experience.

Error (evil) is the result of imperfection. The qualities of imperfection or facts of misadaptation are disclosed on the material level by critical observation and by scientific analysis; on the moral level, by human experience. The presence of evil constitutes proof of the inaccuracies of mind and the immaturity of the evolving self. Evil is, therefore, also a measure of imperfection in universe interpretation. The possibility of making mistakes is inherent in the acquisition of wisdom, the scheme of progressing from the partial and temporal to the complete and eternal, from the relative and imperfect to the final and perfected. Error is the shadow of relative incompleteness which must of necessity fall across mortals' ascending

universe path to Paradise perfection. Error (evil) is not an actual universe quality; it is simply the observation of a relativity in the relatedness of the imperfection of the incomplete finite to the ascending levels of the Supreme and Ultimate.

Although Jesus used language best suited to Ganid's comprehension, at the end of the discussion Ganid had grown tired and was soon asleep. They rose early the next morning to go aboard the boat bound for Lasea on the island of Crete. But before they embarked, Ganid had still further questions to ask about evil, to which Jesus replied:

Evil is a relativity concept. It arises out of the observation of the imperfections which appear in the shadow cast by a finite universe of things and beings as such a cosmos obscures the living light of the universal expression of the eternal realities of the Infinite One.

Potential evil is inherent in the necessary incompleteness of the revelation of the Creator as a time-space-limited expression of infinity and eternity. The fact of the partial in the presence of the complete constitutes relativity of reality, creates necessity for intellectual choosing, and establishes value levels of spirit recognition and response. The incomplete and finite concept of the Infinite which is held by the temporal and limited creature mind is, in and of itself, *potential evil*. But the augmenting error of unjustified deficiency in reasonable spiritual rectification of these originally inherent intellectual disharmonies and spiritual insufficiencies, is equivalent to the realization of *actual evil*.

All static, dead, concepts are potentially evil. The finite shadow of relative and living truth is continually moving. Static concepts invariably retard science, politics, society, and religion. Static concepts may represent a certain knowledge, but they are deficient in wisdom and devoid of truth. But do not permit the concept of relativity to mislead you so that you fail to recognize the co-ordination of the universe under the guidance of the cosmic mind, and its stabilized control by the energy and spirit of the Supreme.

5. On the Island of Crete

The travelers had only one purpose in going to Crete, and that was to play, to walk about over the island, and to climb the mountains. At that time the residents of Crete did not enjoy an enviable reputation among the surrounding peoples. Nevertheless, Jesus and Ganid won many souls to higher levels of thinking and living and laid the foundation for the quick reception of the later teachings when the first missionaries from Jerusalem arrived. Jesus loved these people, notwithstanding the harsh words which Paul later spoke concerning them when subsequently sending Titus to the island to reorganize their churches.

On the mountainside in Crete Jesus had a long talk with Gonod regarding religion. And Gonod was much impressed, saying: "No wonder Ganid believes everything you say, but I never knew they had such a religion even in Jerusalem, much less in Damascus." It was during the island sojourn that Gonod first invited Jesus to go back to India with them, and Ganid was delighted with the thought that Jesus might consent to such an arrangement.

One day Ganid inquired as to why Jesus had not begun to work as a public teacher. Jesus responded: "Everything must await the coming of its time. You are born into the world, but no amount of anxiety and

no manifestation of impatience will help you to grow up. You must, in all such matters, wait upon time. Time alone will ripen the green fruit on the tree. Season follows season and sundown follows sunrise only with the passing of time. I am now on the way to Rome with you, and that is sufficient for today. My tomorrow is wholly in the hands of my Creator Parent.” And then Jesus told Ganid the story of Moses and the forty years of watchful waiting and continued preparation.

One thing happened on a visit to Fair Havens which Ganid never forgot; the memory of this episode always caused Ganid to consider doing something to change the caste system in India. A drunken degenerate was attacking a young slave on the public highway. Jesus, on seeing this, rushed forward and drew the slave away from the assault. The frightened child clung to Jesus, who held the infuriated attacker at a safe distance until the drunken bully became exhausted from beating the air with angry blows. Ganid felt a strong impulse to help Jesus handle the affair, but Gonod forbade it. Though they could not speak the slave’s language, the child could understand their act of mercy and expressed heartfelt appreciation. This was probably as near a personal encounter with people as Jesus ever had. But Jesus had a difficult task that evening trying to explain to Ganid the reason for not beating the drunken person. Ganid thought this individual should have been struck at least as many times as the slave had been.

6. The Youth Who Was Afraid

While they were up in the mountains, Jesus had a long talk with a young person who was fearful and downcast. Failing to derive comfort and courage from association with others, this youth had sought the solitude of the hills, growing up with a feeling of helplessness and inferiority. These natural tendencies had been augmented by numerous difficult circumstances which the youth had encountered while growing up, notably, the loss of a parent when twelve years of age. As they met, Jesus said: “Greetings, my friend! Why so downcast on such a beautiful day? If something has happened to distress you, perhaps I can in some manner assist you. At any rate it affords me real pleasure to offer my services.”

The young person was disinclined to talk, and so Jesus made a second approach, saying: “I understand you come up in these hills to get away from others; so, of course, you do not want to talk with me, but I would like to know whether you are familiar with these hills; do you know the direction of the trails? And could you inform me as to the best route to Phenix?” Now this youth was very familiar with these mountains, and became interested in telling Jesus the way to Phenix, marking out all the trails on the ground and fully explaining every detail, but becoming startled and made curious when Jesus, after saying good-bye, suddenly turned and said, “I know you wish to be left alone with your disconsolation; but it would be neither kind nor fair for me to receive such generous help from you as to how best to find my way to Phenix and then unthinkingly to go away from you without making the least effort to answer your appealing request for help and guidance regarding the best route to the goal of destiny which you seek in your heart while you spend your time here on the mountainside. As you know the trails to Phenix, having traversed them many times, so do I know the way to the city of your disappointed hopes and thwarted ambitions. And since you have asked me for help, I will not disappoint you.” The youth was almost overcome, but managed to stammer out, “But — I did not ask you for anything — ” And Jesus said, “No, not with words, but you appealed to my heart with longing looks. To one who loves others there is an eloquent appeal for help in your countenance of discouragement and despair. Sit down with me while I tell you of the trails of service

and happiness which lead from the sorrows of self to the joys of loving activities in the family of humanity and in the service of the Universal Creator.”

By this time the youth, who very much desired to talk with Jesus, asked for help to find the way of escape from this world of personal sorrow and defeat. Said Jesus: “My friend, you may be surrounded with small enemies and be retarded by many obstacles, but the real things of this world and the universe are on your side. The sun rises every morning to salute you just as it does the most powerful and prosperous person on earth. You have a strong body and powerful muscles. Of course, it is just about useless while you sit out here on the mountainside and grieve over your misfortunes, real and imagined. But you could do great things if you would go to where great things are waiting to be done. You are trying to run away from your unhappy self, but it cannot be done. You and your problems of living are real; you cannot escape them as long as you live. But look again, your mind is clear and capable. Your strong body has an intelligent mind to direct it. Set your mind at work to solve its problems; teach your intellect to work for you; refuse to be dominated by fear like an unthinking animal. Your mind should be your courageous ally in the solution of your life problems rather than your being, as you have been, its abject fear-slave and the servant of depression and defeat. But most valuable of all, your potential of real achievement is the spirit which lives within you, and which will stimulate and inspire your mind to control itself and activate the body if you will release it from the fetters of fear and enable your spiritual nature to begin your deliverance from the evils of inaction by the power-presence of living faith. And then this faith will vanquish fear by the compelling presence of that new and all-dominating *love of others* which will so soon fill your soul to overflowing because of the consciousness which has been born in your heart that you are a child of the Creator.

“This day you are to be reborn, re-established as a person of faith, courage, and devoted service to humanity. And when you become so readjusted to life within yourself, you become likewise readjusted to the universe; you have been born again — born of the spirit — and your whole life will become one of victorious accomplishment. Trouble will invigorate you; disappointment will spur you on; difficulties will challenge you; and obstacles will stimulate you. Let go of the life of cringing fear and fleeing cowardice. Go back to duty and live your life as a child of the Creator, a mortal dedicated to the ennobling service of humanity on earth and destined to the superb and eternal service of the Supreme in eternity.”

And this youth, Fortune, subsequently became the leader of the Christians in Crete and the close associate of Titus in working for the spiritual uplift of the people.

The travelers were truly rested and refreshed when they prepared at about noon one day to sail for Carthage in northern Africa, stopping for two days at Cyrene. It was here that Jesus and Ganid gave first aid to a youth named Rufus, who had been injured by the breakdown of a loaded oxcart. They carried Rufus home and Rufus’ parents little dreamed that the person whose cross Rufus subsequently bore by orders of a Roman soldier was the stranger who once befriended their child.

7. At Carthage — Discourse on Time and Space

Most of the time en route to Carthage Jesus talked with the other travelers about things social, political, and commercial; hardly a word was said about religion. For the first time Gonod and Ganid discovered that Jesus was a good storyteller, and kept Jesus busy telling tales about life in Galilee.

When Ganid inquired as to what one could do to make friends, having noticed that the majority of persons whom they chanced to meet were attracted to Jesus, the teacher said: "Become interested in others; learn how to love them and watch for the opportunity to do something for them which you are sure they want done."

At Carthage Jesus had a long and memorable talk with a Mithraic priest about immortality, about time and eternity. This Persian had been educated at Alexandria, and really desired to learn from Jesus. In substance Jesus said in answer to the priest's many questions:

Time is the stream of flowing temporal events perceived by creature consciousness. Time is a name given to the succession-arrangement by which events are recognized and segregated. The universe of space is a time-related phenomenon as it is viewed from any interior position outside of the fixed abode of Paradise. The motion of time is only revealed in relation to something which does not move in space as a time phenomenon. In the universe of universes Paradise and its Deities transcend both time and space. On the inhabited worlds, human personality (indwelt and oriented by the Paradise Creator's spirit) is the only physically related reality which can transcend the material sequence of temporal events.

Animals do not sense time as humans do, and even to humans, because of their sectional and circumscribed view, time appears as a succession of events. But as mortals ascend, as they progress inward, the enlarging view of this event procession is such that it is discerned more and more in its wholeness. That which formerly appeared as a succession of events will then be viewed as a whole and perfectly related cycle. In this way circular simultaneity will increasingly displace the onetime consciousness of the linear sequence of events.

There are seven different conceptions of space as it is conditioned by time. Space is measured by time, not time by space. Confusion grows out of failure to recognize the reality of space. Space is not merely an intellectual concept of the variation in relatedness of universe objects. Space is not empty, and the only thing mortals know which can even partially transcend space is mind. Mind can function independently of the concept of the space-relatedness of material objects. Space is relatively and comparatively finite to all beings of creature status. The nearer consciousness approaches the awareness of seven cosmic dimensions, the more the concept of potential space approaches ultimacy. But the space potential is truly ultimate only on the absolute level.

It must be apparent that universal reality has an expanding and always relative meaning on the ascending and perfecting levels of the cosmos. Ultimately, surviving mortals achieve identity in a seven-dimensional universe.

The time-space concept of a mind of material origin is destined to undergo successive enlargements as the conscious and conceiving personality ascends the levels of the universes. When mortals attain the mind intervening between the material and the spiritual planes of existence, their ideas of time-space will be enormously expanded both as to quality of perception and quantity of experience. The enlarging cosmic conceptions of an advancing spirit personality are due to augmentations of both depth of insight and scope of consciousness. And as personality passes on, upward and inward, to the transcendental levels of Deity-likeness, the time-space concept will increasingly approximate the timeless and spaceless concepts of the

Absolutes. Relatively, and in accordance with transcendental attainment, these concepts of the absolute level are to be envisioned by the children of ultimate destiny.

8. On the Way to Naples and Rome

The first stop on the way to Italy was at the island of Malta. Here Jesus had a long talk with a downhearted and discouraged young person named Claudus. This youth had contemplated committing suicide, but after talking with the scribe of Damascus, said: "I will face life courageously; I am through playing the coward. I will go back to my people and begin all over again." Shortly Claudus became an enthusiastic teacher of the Cynics, still later on joining with Peter in proclaiming Christianity in Rome and Naples, and after the death of Peter, continuing to teach in Spain, never knowing that the Jesus who Claudus would subsequently proclaim the world's Deliverer was the person who was so inspiring in Malta.

At Syracuse they spent a full week. The notable event of their stop here was the rehabilitation of Ezra, the backslidden Jew, who kept the tavern where Jesus and the others stopped. Ezra was charmed by Jesus' approach and expressed a desire to come back to the faith of Israel, although expressing hopelessness by saying, "I want to be a true child of Abraham, but I cannot find Yahweh." Said Jesus: "If you truly want to find the Creator, that desire is in itself evidence that you already have. Your trouble is not that you cannot find the Creator, who has already found you; your trouble is simply that you do not know the Creator." And Ezra found faith. Later, this Jew, in association with a well-to-do Greek proselyte, built the first Christian church in Syracuse.

At Messina they stopped for only one day, but that was long enough to change the life of a small child, a fruit vendor, from whom Jesus bought fruit and who, in turn, Jesus fed with the bread of life. The child never forgot the words of Jesus and the kindly look which went with them when, placing a hand on the child's shoulder, Jesus said: "Good-bye, be of good courage as you grow up to adulthood and after you have fed the body learn how to also feed the soul. And my Divine Parent will be with you and go before you." The child became a devotee of the Mithraic religion and later on turned to the Christian faith.

At last they reached Naples and felt they were not far from their destination, Rome. Gonod had much business to transact in Naples, and aside from the time required as interpreter, Jesus and Ganid spent their leisure visiting and exploring the city. Ganid was becoming adept at sighting those who appeared to be in need. They found much poverty in this city and distributed many alms. But Ganid never understood why Jesus, after giving a coin to a street beggar, refused to pause and speak comforting words. Said Jesus: "Why waste words on one who cannot perceive the meaning of what you say? The spirit of the Creator cannot teach and save one who is not of normal mind and lacks the ability to respond to spirit leading."

There was no outstanding experience in Naples. Jesus and Ganid thoroughly canvassed the city and spread good cheer with many smiles upon hundreds of people.

From here they went by way of Capua to Rome, making a stop of three days at Capua. By the Appian Way they journeyed on beside their pack animals toward Rome, all three being anxious to see this greatest city in all the world.

Paper 131

The World's Religions

During the Alexandrian sojourn Ganid spent much time and no small sum of Gonod's money making a collection of the teachings of the world's religions about Deity. Ganid employed more than sixty learned translators in the making of this abstract of the religious doctrines of the world. And it should be made plain in this record that all these writings portraying monotheism were largely derived, directly or indirectly, from the teachings of the missionaries of Machiventa Melchizedek, who went out from their Salem headquarters to spread the doctrine of the Most High to the ends of the earth.

Editors' Note: This paper goes on to present an abstract of Ganid's manuscript, which was prepared at Alexandria and Rome, and which was preserved in India for hundreds of years after Ganid's death. The editors have chosen to not include the remainder of this material in our restatement. Our reasons are as follows:

1. As described in the introductory paragraph, the religious doctrines that Ganid collected were limited to those statements which directly reflected the teachings of the Salem missionaries. This is consistent with the way Jesus selected only statements of truth when quoting scripture. As a description of the doctrines of the world's religions, however, much of what is today considered central to their belief systems is omitted. We feel that it would be difficult for adherents of those traditions to recognize some of the primary elements of their doctrines in the material found in this paper. While the concepts captured by Ganid may represent universal truth, they can hardly be considered a comprehensive and current representation of these religious belief systems.
2. We found that the language used to depict these concepts was almost impossible to translate into modern usage. For example, the use of Judeo/Christian terms for Deity was so pervasive that any attempt at substitution resulted in highly repetitious and awkward expression, and yet we know that these terms are not found in other traditions.
3. The use of masculine pronouns for deity was also overwhelming to the extent that we were not able to successfully eliminate them.

Therefore, for any reader interested in experiencing this collection of writings, we refer you to the original text of *The Urantia Book*.

Paper 132

The Sojourn at Rome

On the third day after their arrival in Rome, the three travelers appeared before Tiberius, the Roman ruler, since Gonod carried greetings from the governors of India. The morose emperor was unusually cheerful on this day and chatted for a long time with the trio. And when they had gone, the emperor, referring to Jesus, remarked to an aide, "If I had that regal bearing and gracious manner, I would be a real emperor, eh?"

While at Rome, Ganid had regular hours for study and for visiting places of interest about the city. Gonod had much business to transact, and wanting Ganid to grow up to become a worthy successor in the management of the family's vast commercial interests, thought the time had come to introduce Ganid to the business world. There were many citizens of India in Rome, and often one of Gonod's own employees would serve as interpreter so that Jesus would have whole days off. This provided time in which to become thoroughly acquainted with this city of two million inhabitants. Jesus was frequently to be found in the forum, the center of political, legal, and business life, often going to the Capitolium and pondering the bondage of ignorance in which these Romans were held while viewing this magnificent temple dedicated to Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva. Jesus also spent much time on Palatine hill, where the emperor's residence, the temple of Apollo, and the Greek and Latin libraries were located.

At this time the Roman Empire included all of southern Europe, Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt, and northwest Africa; and its inhabitants embraced the citizens of every country of the Eastern Hemisphere. The desire to study and mingle with this cosmopolitan aggregation of Urantia mortals was the chief reason why Jesus consented to make this journey.

Jesus learned much about people while in Rome, but the most valuable of all the manifold experiences of the six months' sojourn in that city was contact with, and influence on, the religious leaders of the empire's capital. Before the end of the first week in Rome Jesus had sought out, and had made the acquaintance of, selected leaders of the Cynics, the Stoics, and the mystery cults, in particular the Mithraic group. Whether or not it was apparent that the Jews were going to reject the bestowal mission, Jesus most certainly foresaw that messengers were presently coming to Rome to share the teachings; and therefore set about, in the most amazing manner, to prepare the way for the better and more certain reception of their message. Jesus selected five of the leading Stoics, eleven of the Cynics, and sixteen of the mystery-cult leaders and spent much time for almost six months in intimate association with these religious teachers. Jesus never once attacked their errors or even mentioned the flaws in their teachings, in each case selecting the truth in what they taught and then proceeding to embellish and illuminate this truth in their minds so that in a very short time this enhancement of the truth effectively crowded out the associated error; and so these Jesus-taught individuals were prepared for the subsequent recognition of additional and similar truths in the teachings of the early Christian missionaries. It was this early acceptance of the teachings which gave that powerful impetus to the rapid spread of Christianity in Rome and from there throughout the empire.

The significance of this remarkable activity can better be understood when we record the fact that, out of this group of thirty-two Jesus-taught religious leaders in Rome, only two were unfruitful; the thirty became pivotal individuals in the establishment of Christianity in Rome, and certain of them also aided in turning

the chief Mithraic temple into the first Christian church of that city. We who view human activities from behind the scenes and in the light of twenty centuries of time recognize just three factors of paramount value in setting the stage for the rapid spread of Christianity throughout Europe, and they are:

1. The choosing and holding of Simon Peter as an apostle.
2. The talk in Jerusalem with Stephen, whose death led to the winning of Saul of Tarsus.
3. The preliminary preparation of these thirty Romans for the subsequent leadership of the new religion in Rome and throughout the empire.

Through all their experiences, neither Stephen nor the thirty chosen leaders ever realized that they had once talked with the person whose name became the subject of their religious teaching. Jesus' work on behalf of the original thirty-two was entirely personal. In laboring for these individuals the scribe of Damascus never met more than three of them at one time, seldom more than two, while most often teaching them singly. And Jesus could do this great work of religious training because these people were not tradition bound; they were not victims of a settled preconception as to all future religious developments.

Many were the times in the years so soon to follow that Peter, Paul, and the other Christian teachers in Rome heard about this scribe of Damascus who had preceded them, and who had so obviously (and as they supposed unwittingly) prepared the way for their coming with the new teachings. Paul, though never really surmising the identity of this scribe of Damascus, did, a short time before dying, because of the similarity of personal descriptions, reach the conclusion that the "tentmaker of Antioch" was also the "scribe of Damascus." On one occasion, while preaching in Rome, Simon Peter, on listening to a description of the Damascus scribe, surmised that this individual might have been Jesus but quickly dismissed the idea, thinking that the Master had never been in Rome.

1. True Values

It was with Angamon, the leader of the Stoics, that Jesus had an all-night talk during the sojourn in Rome. This leader subsequently became a great friend of Paul and proved to be one of the strong supporters of the Christian church at Rome. In substance Jesus taught Angamon:

The standard of true values must be looked for in the spiritual world and on divine levels of eternal reality. To an ascending mortal all lower and material standards must be recognized as transient and partial. The scientist, as such, is limited to the discovery of the relatedness of material facts. Technically, the scientist has no right to assert being either materialist or idealist, for doing so means forsaking the attitude of a true scientist since any and all such assertions of attitude are the very essence of philosophy.

Unless the moral insight and the spiritual attainment of humankind are proportionately augmented, the unlimited advancement of a purely materialistic culture may eventually become a menace to civilization. A purely materialistic science harbors within itself the potential seed of the destruction of all scientific striving, for this very attitude presages the ultimate collapse of a civilization which has abandoned its sense of moral values and has repudiated its spiritual goal of attainment.

The materialistic scientist and the extreme idealist are destined to always be in disagreement. This is not true of those scientists and idealists who are in possession of a common standard of high moral values and spiritual test levels. In every age scientists and religionists must recognize that they are on trial before the bar of human need. They must reject all conflict between themselves while they strive to valiantly justify their continued survival by enhanced devotion to the service of human progress. If the so-called science or religion of any age is false, then it must either purify its activities or pass away before the emergence of a material science or spiritual religion of a truer and more worthy order.

2. Good and Evil

Mardus was the acknowledged leader of the Cynics of Rome, and became a great friend of the scribe of Damascus. Day after day Mardus conversed with Jesus, and night upon night listened to Jesus' supernal teaching. Among the more important discussions with Mardus was the one designed to answer this sincere Cynic's question about good and evil. In substance, Jesus said:

My friend, good and evil are merely words symbolizing relative levels of human comprehension of the observable universe. If you are ethically lazy and socially indifferent, you can take as your standard of good the current social usages. If you are spiritually indolent and morally unprogressive, you may take as your standards of good the religious practices and traditions of your contemporaries. But the soul that survives time and emerges into eternity must make a living and personal choice between good and evil as they are determined by the true values of the spiritual standards established by the divine spirit which the Creator has sent to dwell within the hearts of mortals. This indwelling spirit is the standard of personality survival.

Goodness, like truth, is always relative and unfailingly evil-contrasted. It is the perception of these qualities of goodness and truth that enables the evolving souls of mortals to make those personal decisions of choice which are essential to eternal survival.

The spiritually blind individual who logically follows scientific dictation, social usage, and religious dogma stands in grave danger of sacrificing moral freedom and losing spiritual liberty. Such a soul is destined to become an intellectual parrot, a social automaton, and a slave to religious authority.

Goodness is always growing toward new levels of the increasing liberty of moral self-realization and spiritual personality attainment — the discovery of, and identification with, the indwelling Adjuster. An experience is good when it heightens the appreciation of beauty, augments the moral will, enhances the discernment of truth, enlarges the capacity to love and serve others, exalts the spiritual ideals, and unifies the supreme human motives of time with the eternal plans of the indwelling Adjuster, all of which lead directly to an increased desire to do the Creator's will, thereby fostering the divine passion to find and be more like the Universal Source.

As you ascend the universe scale of creature development, you will find increasing goodness and diminishing evil in perfect accordance with your capacity for goodness-experience and truth-discernment. The ability to entertain error or experience evil will not be fully lost until the ascending human soul achieves final spirit levels.

Goodness is living, relative, always progressing, invariably a personal experience, and everlastingly correlated with the discernment of truth and beauty. Goodness is found in the recognition of the positive truth-values of the spiritual level, which must, in human experience, be contrasted with the negative counterpart — the shadows of potential evil.

Until you attain Paradise levels, goodness will always be more of a quest than a possession, more of a goal than an experience of attainment. But even as you desire righteousness, you experience increasing satisfaction in the partial attainment of goodness. The presence of goodness and evil in the world is in itself positive proof of the existence and reality of the personality, which identifies these values and is also able to choose between them.

By the time of the attainment of Paradise the ascending mortal's capacity for identifying the self with true spirit values has become so enlarged as to result in the attainment of the perfection of the possession of the light of life. Such a perfected spirit personality becomes so wholly, divinely, and spiritually unified with the positive and supreme qualities of goodness, beauty, and truth that there is no possibility remaining that such a righteous spirit would cast any negative shadow of potential evil when exposed to the searching luminosity of the divine light of the infinite Rulers of Paradise. In all such spirit personalities, goodness is no longer partial, contrastive, and comparative; it has become divinely complete and spiritually replete; it approaches the purity and perfection of the Supreme.

The *possibility* of evil is necessary to moral choosing, but not its actuality. A shadow is only relatively real. Actual evil is not necessary as a personal experience. Potential evil acts equally well as a decision stimulus in the realms of moral progress on the lower levels of spiritual development. Evil becomes a reality of personal experience only when a moral mind makes evil its choice.

3. Truth and Faith

Nabon was a Greek Jew and foremost among the leaders of the chief mystery cult in Rome, the Mithraic. This high priest of Mithraism held many conferences with the Damascus scribe, and was most permanently influenced by their discussion one evening of truth and faith. Nabon had thought to make a convert of Jesus, little realizing that Jesus was preparing Nabon to become one of the early converts to the bestowal teachings. The substance of Jesus' teaching was:

Truth cannot be defined with words, only by living. Truth is always more than knowledge. Knowledge pertains to things observed, but truth transcends such purely material levels in that it consorts with wisdom and embraces such imponderables as human experience, even spiritual and living realities. Knowledge originates in science; wisdom, in true philosophy; truth, in the religious experience of spiritual living. Knowledge deals with facts; wisdom, with relationships; truth, with reality values.

Mortals tend to crystallize science, formulate philosophy, and dogmatize truth because they are mentally lazy in adjusting to the progressive struggles of living, while they are also terribly afraid of the unknown. Natural mortals are slow to initiate changes in their habits of thinking and in their techniques of living.

Revealed truth, personally discovered truth, is the supreme delight of the human soul; it is the joint creation of the material mind and the indwelling spirit. The eternal progression of this truth-discerning and beauty-loving soul is assured by that desire for goodness which leads this mortal to develop a singleness of purpose to do the Creator's will, to find and become like the Creator. There is never conflict between true knowledge and truth, although there may be conflict between knowledge and human beliefs, beliefs colored with prejudice, distorted by fear, and dominated by the dread of facing new facts of material discovery or spiritual progress.

But truth can never become a mortal's possession without the exercise of faith. This is because mortals' thoughts, wisdom, ethics, and ideals will never rise higher than their faith, their sublime hope. And all such true faith is predicated on profound reflection, sincere self-criticism, and uncompromising moral consciousness. Faith is the inspiration of the spiritized creative imagination.

Faith acts to release the superhuman activities of the divine and immortal spark that lives within the minds of mortals, and which is the potential of eternal survival. Plants and animals survive in time by the technique of passing on from one generation to another identical particles of themselves. The human soul (personality) survives mortal death by identity association with this indwelling spark of divinity, and which functions to perpetuate the human personality on a continuing and higher level of progressive universe existence. The concealed seed of the human soul is an immortal spirit. The second generation of the soul is the first of a succession of personality manifestations of spiritual and progressing existences, terminating only when this divine entity attains the source of its existence, the personal origin of all existence, the Universal Source.

Human life continues — survives — because it has a universe function, the task of finding the Creator. The faith-activated souls of mortals cannot stop short of the attainment of this goal of destiny; and when they do achieve this divine goal, they can never cease to exist because they have become like the Creator — eternal.

Spiritual evolution is an experience of the increasing and voluntary choice of goodness attended by an equal and progressive diminution of the possibility of evil. With the attainment of finality of choice for goodness and of completed capacity for truth appreciation, a perfection of beauty and holiness comes into existence whose righteousness eternally inhibits the possibility of the emergence of even the concept of potential evil. Such a Creator-knowing soul casts no shadow of doubting evil when functioning on such a high spirit level of divine goodness.

The presence of the Paradise spirit in the minds of mortals constitutes the revelation promise and the faith pledge of an eternal existence of divine progression for every soul seeking to achieve identity with this immortal and indwelling spirit fragment of the Universal Source.

Universe progress is characterized by increasing personality freedom because it is associated with the progressive attainment of higher and higher levels of self-understanding and consequent voluntary self-restraint. The attainment of perfection of spiritual self-restraint equals completeness of universe freedom and personal liberty. Faith fosters and maintains mortals' souls in the midst of the confusion of their early orientation in such a vast universe, while prayer becomes the great unifier of the various inspirations of the

creative imagination and the faith urges of a soul trying to identify itself with the spirit ideals of the indwelling and associated divine presence.

Nabon was greatly impressed by these words, as by each of the talks with Jesus, and Nabon was of great assistance to the later arriving preachers of Jesus' teachings.

4. Personal Ministry

Jesus did not devote all of the leisure time while in Rome to this work of preparing people to become future disciples, spending much time gaining an intimate knowledge of all races and classes of people who lived in this, the largest and most cosmopolitan city of the world. In each of these numerous human contacts Jesus had a double purpose, wanting to learn their reactions to the life they were living, and also intending to say or do something to make that life richer and more worthwhile. Jesus' religious teachings during these weeks were no different than those which characterized the later teaching of the twelve and preaching to the multitudes.

The focus of Jesus' message was always the fact and truth of the Creator's love and mercy, coupled with the idea that mortals are the children of this same Creator. Jesus' usual technique of social contact was to draw people out and into conversation by asking them questions. Jesus was equally adept in teaching by either asking or answering questions, as a rule teaching the most by saying the least. Those who derived the most benefit from Jesus' personal ministry were overburdened, anxious, and dejected mortals who gained much relief because of the opportunity to unburden their souls to a sympathetic and understanding listener, and Jesus was all that and more. And, when hearing about the troubles of these maladjusted human beings, Jesus was always able to offer practical and immediately helpful suggestions toward the correction of their real difficulties, although not neglecting to speak words of present comfort and immediate consolation. And Jesus would invariably tell these distressed mortals about the love of the Creator and impart the information, by various methods, that they were the children of this loving Creator Parent.

In this manner, during the sojourn in Rome, Jesus personally came into affectionate and uplifting contact with upward of five hundred mortals of the realm, gaining a knowledge of the different races which never could have been acquired in Jerusalem and hardly even in Alexandria. Jesus always regarded this six months as one of the richest and most informative of any similar period of life while on earth.

As might have been expected, such a versatile and aggressive person could not function in this way for six months in the world's metropolis without being approached by numerous people who wanted to secure Jesus' services in connection with some business or, more often, for some project of teaching, social reform, or religious movement. More than a dozen such offers were made, and Jesus utilized each one as an opportunity for imparting some thought of spiritual ennoblement by well-chosen words or by some obliging service. Jesus was very fond of doing things — even little things — for all sorts of people.

Jesus talked about politics and governance with a Roman senator, who then spent a lifetime vainly trying to induce other legislators to change the course of the ruling policy from the idea of the government supporting and feeding the people to that of the people supporting the government. Jesus spent one evening with a wealthy slaveholder, talking about mortals as children of the Creator, and the next day this person,

Claudius, gave freedom to one hundred and seventeen slaves. Jesus visited at dinner with a Greek physician, telling the physician that patients had minds and souls as well as bodies, and led this able doctor to attempt a more far-reaching ministry to others. Jesus talked with all sorts of people in every walk of life, visiting every place in Rome except the public baths, refusing to go because of the sex promiscuity which prevailed there.

To a Roman soldier, as they walked along the Tiber, Jesus said: "Be brave of heart as well as of hand. Dare to do justice and show mercy. Compel your lower nature to obey your higher nature as you obey your superiors. Revere goodness and exalt truth. Choose the beautiful in place of the ugly. Love others and reach out for the Creator with a whole heart, for the Creator is your Divine Parent."

To the speaker at the forum Jesus said: "Your eloquence is pleasing, your logic is admirable, your voice is pleasant, but your teaching is hardly true. If you could only enjoy the inspiring satisfaction of knowing the Creator as your spiritual Parent, then you might employ your powers of speech to liberate others from the bondage of darkness and from the slavery of ignorance." This was the Marcus who heard Peter preach in Rome and became Peter's successor. When they crucified Simon Peter, it was this Marcus who defied the Roman persecutors and boldly continued to preach the new teachings.

Meeting a poor individual who had been falsely accused, Jesus went before the magistrate and, having been granted special permission to appear on this person's behalf, made a superb address, saying: "Justice makes a nation great, and the greater a nation is, the more solicitous it will be to see that injustice does not befall even its most humble citizen. Shame on any nation when only those who possess money and influence can secure ready justice before its courts! It is the sacred duty of a magistrate to acquit the innocent as well as to punish the guilty. On the impartiality, fairness, and integrity of its courts the endurance of a nation depends. Civil government is founded on justice, even as true religion is founded on mercy." The judge reopened the case, and when the evidence had been sifted, discharged the prisoner. Of all Jesus' activities during these days of personal ministry, this came the nearest to being a public appearance.

5. Counseling a Wealthy Person

A certain rich person, a Roman citizen and a Stoic, became greatly interested in Jesus' teaching, having been introduced by Angamon. After many intimate conferences this citizen asked what Jesus would do with wealth, and Jesus answered: "I would bestow material wealth for the enhancement of material life, even as I would minister knowledge, wisdom, and spiritual service for the enrichment of the intellectual life, the ennoblement of the social life, and the advancement of the spiritual life. I would administer material wealth as a wise and effective trustee of the resources of one generation for the benefit and ennoblement of the next and succeeding generations."

But the rich person was not fully satisfied with Jesus' answer, boldly asking again: "But what do you think a person in my position should do with wealth? Should I keep it, or should I give it away?" And Jesus, perceiving a desire to know more of the truth about loyalty to the Creator and duty to others, answered: "My good friend, I discern that you are a sincere seeker after wisdom and an honest lover of truth; therefore I will lay before you my view of the solution to your problems having to do with the responsibilities of wealth. I do this because you have *asked* for my counsel, and in giving you this advice, I am not concerned

with the wealth of any other rich person; I am offering advice only to you and for your personal guidance. If you honestly desire to regard your wealth as a trust, if you really wish to become a wise and efficient steward of your accumulated wealth, then I would counsel you to make the following analysis of the sources of your riches: Ask yourself, and do your best to find the honest answer, where did this wealth come from? And as a help in the study of the sources of your great fortune, I would suggest that you bear in mind the following ten different methods of amassing material wealth:

- “1. Inherited wealth — riches derived from parents and other ancestors.
- “2. Discovered wealth — riches derived from the uncultivated resources of the earth.
- “3. Trade wealth — riches obtained as a fair profit in the exchange and barter of material goods.
- “4. Unfair wealth — riches derived from the unfair exploitation or the enslavement of others.
- “5. Interest wealth — income derived from the fair and just earning possibilities of invested capital.
- “6. Genius wealth — riches accruing from the rewards of the creative and inventive endowments of the human mind.
- “7. Accidental wealth — riches derived from the generosity of others or taking origin in the circumstances of life.
- “8. Stolen wealth — riches secured by unfairness, dishonesty, theft, or fraud.
- “9. Trust funds — wealth lodged in your hands by others for some specific use, now or in the future.
- “10. Earned wealth — riches derived directly from your own personal labor, the fair and just reward of your own daily efforts of mind and body.

“And so, my friend, if you would be a faithful and just steward of your large fortune, before the Creator and in service to humanity, you must approximately divide your wealth into these ten grand divisions, and then proceed to administer each portion in accordance with the wise and honest interpretation of the laws of justice, equity, fairness, and true efficiency, although the Creator would not condemn you if you sometimes erred, in doubtful situations, on the side of merciful and unselfish regard for the distress of the suffering victims of the unfortunate circumstances of mortal life. When in honest doubt about the equity and justice of material situations, let your decisions favor those who are in need, those who suffer the misfortune of undeserved hardships.”

After discussing these matters for several hours and in response to the rich person’s request for further and more detailed instruction, Jesus went on to say, “While I offer further suggestions concerning your attitude toward wealth, I would admonish you to receive my counsel as given only to you and for your personal guidance. I speak only for myself and to you as an inquiring friend. I request that you not dictate how other rich people should regard their wealth. I would advise you:

“1. As steward of inherited wealth you should consider its sources. You are under moral obligation to represent the past generation in the honest transmittal of legitimate wealth to succeeding generations after subtracting a fair amount for the benefit of the present generation. But you are not obligated to perpetuate any dishonesty or injustice involved in the unfair accumulation of wealth by your ancestors. Any portion of your inherited wealth which turns out to have been derived through fraud or unfairness, you may disburse in accordance with your convictions of justice, generosity, and restitution. The remainder of your legitimate inherited wealth you may use in equity and transmit in security as the trustee of one generation for another. Wise discrimination and sound judgment should dictate your decisions regarding the bequest of riches to your successors.

“2. Everyone who enjoys wealth as a result of discovery should remember that one individual can live on earth for only a short time and should, therefore, make adequate provision for the sharing of these discoveries in helpful ways by the largest possible number of other people. The discoverer should not be denied all reward for efforts of discovery, but should also not selfishly presume to lay claim to all of the advantages and blessings to be derived from the uncovering of nature’s hoarded resources.

“3. As long as people choose to conduct the world’s business by trade and barter, they are entitled to a fair and legitimate profit. Every trader deserves wages for services. The fairness of trade and the honest treatment accorded others in the organized business of the world create many different sorts of profit wealth, and all these sources of wealth must be judged by the highest principles of justice, honesty, and fairness. The honest trader should not hesitate to take the same profit which would be accorded another trader in a similar transaction. While this sort of wealth is not identical with individually earned income when business dealings are conducted on a large scale, at the same time, such honestly accumulated wealth endows its possessor with a considerable equity as regards a voice in its subsequent distribution.

“4. No mortal who knows the Creator and seeks to do the divine will can stoop to engage in the oppressions of wealth. No noble person will strive to accumulate riches and amass wealth-power by the enslavement or unfair exploitation of others. Riches are a moral curse and a spiritual stigma when they are derived from the sweat of oppressed people. All such wealth should be restored to those who have been deprived or to their children and their children’s children. An enduring civilization cannot be built upon the practice of defrauding laborers of their hire.

“5. Honest wealth is entitled to interest. As long as people borrow and lend, that which is fair interest may be collected provided the capital lent was legitimate wealth. First clean your capital before you lay claim to the interest. Do not become so small and grasping that you would stoop to the practice of usury. Never permit yourself to be so selfish as to employ money-power to gain unfair advantage over struggling people. Do not yield to the temptation to take usury from others in financial distress.

“6. If you happen to secure wealth by flights of genius, if your riches are derived from the rewards of inventive endowment, do not lay claim to an unfair portion of such rewards. The genius owes something to both ancestors and progeny, and is also under obligation to the nation, remembering that these inventions were created in relation to the rest of humanity. It would be equally unjust to deprive the genius of all of the increment of wealth. And it will be impossible to establish rules and regulations applicable equally to all these issues of the equitable distribution of wealth. You must first recognize others as your siblings, and

if you honestly want to do for them as you would have them do for you, the commonplace dictates of justice, honesty, and fairness will guide you in the just and impartial settlement of every recurring problem of economic rewards and social justice.

“7. Except for the just and legitimate fees earned in administration, no one should lay personal claim to that wealth which time and chance may cause to fall into their hands. Accidental riches should be regarded somewhat in the light of a trust to be expended for the benefit of one’s social or economic group. The possessors of such wealth should be accorded the major voice in the determination of the wise and effective distribution of such unearned resources. Civilized people will not always consider all that they control as their personal and private possessions.

“8. If any portion of your fortune has been knowingly derived from fraud; if any of your wealth has been accumulated by dishonest practices or unfair methods; if your riches are the product of unjust dealings with others, make haste to restore all these ill-gotten gains to the rightful owners. Make full amends and clean your fortune of all dishonest riches.

“9. The trusteeship of the wealth of one person for the benefit of others is a solemn and sacred responsibility. Do not hazard or jeopardize such a trust. Take for yourself of any trust only that which all honest people would allow.

“10. That part of your fortune which represents the earnings of your own mental and physical efforts — if your work has been done in fairness and equity — is truly your own. No one can deny your right to hold and use such wealth as you may see fit provided your exercise of this right does not work harm on others.”

After being counseled by Jesus, this wealthy Roman rose from the couch and, in saying goodnight, made this promise: “My good friend, I perceive that you are a person of great wisdom and goodness, and tomorrow I will begin the administration of all my wealth in accordance with your counsel.”

6. Social Ministry

Here in Rome that touching incident also occurred in which the Creator of a universe spent several hours restoring a lost child to its anxious parents. This little one had wandered away from home, and Jesus found the child crying in distress. Jesus and Ganid were on their way to the libraries, but they devoted themselves to getting the child back home. Ganid never forgot Jesus’ comment: “You know, Ganid, most human beings are like the lost child. They spend much of their time crying in fear and suffering in sorrow when, in very truth, they are only a short distance from safety and security, even as this child was only a little way from home. And all those who know the way of truth and enjoy the assurance of knowing the Creator should consider it a privilege, not a duty, to offer guidance to others in their efforts to find the satisfactions of living. Did we not supremely enjoy this ministry of restoring the child its parents? So also those who lead mortals to the Creator experience the supreme satisfaction of human service.” And from that day forward, Ganid was continually on the lookout for lost children who might be restored to their homes.

There was the person with five children whose spouse had been accidentally killed. Jesus told Ganid about the loss of Joseph by an accident, and they went repeatedly to comfort this family, while Ganid sought

money from Gonod to provide food and clothing. They did not cease their efforts until they had found a position for the eldest child to help in the care of the family.

That night, Gonod, while listening to the recital of these experiences, said to Jesus, good-naturedly: "I propose to make a scholar or an entrepreneur of Ganid, and now you endeavor to make a philosopher or philanthropist of my child." And Jesus smilingly replied: "Perhaps we will make Ganid all four; to enjoy a fourfold satisfaction in life through the recognition of human melody by discerning four tones instead of one." Then said Gonod: "I perceive that you really are a philosopher. You must write a book for future generations." And Jesus replied: "Not a book — my mission is to live a life in this generation and for all generations. I —" but Jesus stopped and said to Ganid, "My pupil, it is time to retire."

7. Trips about Rome

Jesus, Gonod, and Ganid made five trips away from Rome to points of interest in the surrounding territory. On their visit to the northern Italian lakes Jesus had the long talk with Ganid concerning the impossibility of teaching someone about the Creator if they do not desire to know the Creator. They had casually met a thoughtless pagan while on their journey to the lakes, and Ganid was surprised that Jesus did not follow the usual practice of enlisting this person in conversation which would naturally lead to the discussion of spiritual questions. When Ganid asked why Jesus evinced so little interest in this pagan, Jesus answered:

"Ganid, this person was someone who was not hungry for truth, was not dissatisfied nor ready to ask for help, and whose eyes were not open to receive light for the soul. This was a person who was not ripe for the harvest, but must be allowed more time for the trials and difficulties of life to promote the reception of wisdom and higher learning. Or, this person could, by living with us, become attracted by our lives as children of the Creator and be motivated to inquire about our Divine Parent. You cannot reveal the Creator to those who do not seek for the Creator; you cannot lead unwilling souls into the joys of eternal life. People must become hungry for truth as a result of the experiences of living. They must desire to know the Divine Parent as the result of contact with the lives of those who are acquainted with the Creator before another human being can act as the means of leading such a mortal to the Source of all. If we know the Creator, our real business on earth is to live so as to permit the Creator to become revealed in our lives, and so all Creator-seeking persons will see the Divine Parent and ask for our help in finding out more about the Deity who in this manner finds expression in our lives."

It was on the visit to Switzerland, up in the mountains, that Jesus had an all-day talk with both Gonod and Ganid about Buddhism. Ganid had many times asked Jesus direct questions about Buddha, but had always received more or less evasive replies. Now, in the presence of Ganid, Gonod asked Jesus a direct question, and received a direct reply. Said Gonod: "I would really like to know what you think of Buddha." And Jesus answered:

"Your Buddha was much better than your Buddhism. Buddha was a great person, even a prophet to the people, but was an orphan prophet; by that I mean that Buddha lost sight of Deity. Buddha had a tragic experience, trying to live and teach as a messenger of Deity, but without Deity. Buddha guided the ship right up to the safe harbor, right up to the entrance to the haven of eternal life, and there, because of faulty charts of navigation, the good ship ran aground. There it has rested these many generations, motionless and

almost hopelessly stranded. And there many of your people have remained all these years. They live within hailing distance of the safe waters of rest, but they refuse to enter because the noble craft of the good Buddha met the misfortune of grounding just outside the harbor. And the Buddhist peoples never will enter this harbor unless they abandon the philosophy and grasp the noble spirit of their prophet. Had your people remained true to the spirit of Buddha, you would have long since entered your haven of spirit tranquility, soul rest, and assurance of eternal life.

“You see, Gonod, Buddha knew the Creator in spirit but failed to clearly discover the Creator in mind; the Jews discovered Yahweh in mind but largely failed to know Yahweh in spirit. Today, the Buddhists flounder in a philosophy without Deity, while my people are piteously enslaved to the fear of a Deity without a saving philosophy of life and liberty. You have a philosophy without a Deity; the Jews have a Deity but are largely without a related philosophy of living. Buddha, failing to envision the Creator as a spirit and as a Divine Parent, failed to provide the moral energy and the spiritual driving power which a religion must possess if it is to change humanity.”

Then Ganid exclaimed: “Teacher, let’s you and I make a new religion, one good enough for India and big enough for Rome, and maybe we can trade it to the Jews for Yahweh.” And Jesus replied: “Ganid, religions are not made. The religions of mortals grow up over long periods of time, while the revelations of Deity flash upon earth in the lives of the people who reveal the Creator to others.” But they did not comprehend the meaning of these prophetic words.

That night after they had retired, Ganid could not sleep, talking a long time with Gonod and finally saying, “You know, I sometimes think Joshua is a prophet.” And Gonod only sleepily replied, “There are others...”

From this day on, Ganid continued to evolve a personal religion. Ganid was greatly moved by Jesus’ broadmindedness, fairness, and tolerance. In all their discussions of philosophy and religion this youth never experienced feelings of resentment or reactions of antagonism.

What a scene for the celestial intelligences to observe, this spectacle of a youth proposing to the Creator of a universe that they make a new religion! And though the young person did not know it, they were making a new and everlasting religion right then and there, the revelation of the Creator to mortals through, and in, Jesus. That which the youth wanted most to do was unconsciously being done. That which the enlightened and reflective human imagination of spiritual teaching and leading wholeheartedly and unselfishly wants to do and be, becomes measurably creative in accordance with the degree of mortal dedication to the divine doing of the Creator’s will. When mortals go in partnership with the Creator, great things may, and do, happen.

Paper 133

The Return from Rome

Jesus left Rome without saying good-bye to anyone. The scribe of Damascus appeared in Rome without announcement and disappeared in the same way. When a year had gone by after this departure, small groups of those who had known Jesus found themselves drawn together by their common interest in the new teachings and through mutual memory of their good times together. And these small groups of Stoics, Cynics, and mystery cultists continued to hold these irregular and informal meetings right up to the time the first preachers of the Christian religion appeared in Rome.

Gonod and Ganid had purchased so many things in Alexandria and Rome that they sent all their belongings ahead by pack train to Tarentum, while the three travelers walked leisurely across Italy over the great Appian Way. On this journey they encountered all sorts of human beings. Many noble Roman citizens and Greek colonists lived along this road, and already the progeny of great numbers of slaves were beginning to make their appearance.

One day while resting at lunch, about halfway to Tarentum, Ganid asked Jesus a direct question about India's caste system. Jesus said: "Though human beings differ in many ways, one from another, before the Creator and in the spiritual world all mortals are equal. There are only two groups of mortals; those who desire to do the Creator's will and those who do not. As the universe looks at an inhabited world, it also discerns two great classes: those who know the Creator and those who do not. Those who cannot know the Creator are classed among the animals. Mortals can appropriately be divided into many classes in accordance with differing qualifications, as they may be viewed physically, mentally, socially, vocationally, or morally, but as these different classes of mortals appear before the judgment bar of Deity, they are equal; The Divine Parent is truly no respecter of persons. Although you cannot escape the recognition of differential human abilities and endowments in matters intellectual, social, and moral, you should make no such distinctions in the spiritual family of humanity."

1. Mercy and Justice

A very interesting incident occurred one afternoon by the roadside as they neared Tarentum. They observed a rough and bullying youth brutally attacking a smaller child. Jesus hastened to assist, and after rescuing the assaulted child, held on tightly to the offender until the smaller one had escaped. The moment Jesus released the attacker, Ganid pounced and began to soundly thrash the bully, and to Ganid's astonishment Jesus promptly interfered. After Jesus restrained Ganid and permitted the frightened bully to escape, Ganid excitedly exclaimed: "I cannot understand you, Teacher. If mercy requires that you rescue the smaller child, does not justice demand the punishment of the larger and offending youth?" In answering, Jesus said:

"Ganid, it is true, you do not understand. Mercy ministry is always the work of the individual, but justice punishment is the function of the social, governmental, or universe administrative groups. As an individual I am obliged to show mercy; I must go to the rescue of the assaulted child, and in all consistency I may employ sufficient force to restrain the aggressor. And that is just what I did. I achieved the deliverance of the assaulted one; that was the end of mercy ministry. Then I forcibly detained the aggressor a sufficient

length of time to enable the weaker party to escape, after which I withdrew from the affair. I did not proceed to sit in judgment on the aggressor, thereby passing upon the motive — to adjudicate all that entered into an attack on this person — and then undertake to execute the punishment which my mind might dictate as just compensation for this wrongdoing. Ganid, mercy may be lavish, but justice is precise. Can you not discern that no two persons are likely to agree as to the punishment which would satisfy the demands of justice? One would impose forty lashes, another twenty, while still another would advise solitary confinement as a just punishment. Can you not see that on this world such responsibilities had better rest with the group or be administered by chosen representatives of the group? In the universe, judgment is vested in those who fully know the antecedents of all wrongdoing as well as its motivation. In civilized society and in an organized universe the administration of justice presupposes the passing of a just sentence predicated on fair judgment, and such prerogatives are vested in the juridical groups of the worlds and in the all-knowing administrators of the higher universes of all creation.”

For days they talked about this problem of manifesting mercy and administering justice. And Ganid, at least to some extent, understood why Jesus would not engage in personal combat. But Ganid asked one last question, never receiving a fully satisfactory answer; and that question was: “But, Teacher, if a stronger and ill-tempered creature should attack you and threaten to destroy you, what would you do? Would you make no effort to defend yourself?” Jesus was not able to satisfactorily answer Ganid’s question, being unwilling to disclose to Ganid that the purpose of the bestowal mission was the exemplification of the Paradise Creator’s love to an onlooking universe, but did say this much:

“Ganid, I can well understand how some of these problems confuse you, and I will try to answer your question. First, in all attacks which might be made on my person, I would determine whether or not the aggressor was a child of the Creator — my sibling — and if I thought such a creature did not possess moral judgment and spiritual reason, I would unhesitatingly defend myself to the full capacity of my powers of resistance, regardless of consequences to the attacker. But I would not assault a person of spiritual status, even in self-defense. That is, I would not punish someone in advance and without judgment for an assault on me. I would, by every possible means, seek to prevent and dissuade them from making such an attack and to mitigate it in case of my failure to abort it. Ganid, I have absolute confidence in my Divine Parent’s care; I am consecrated to doing the will of my Parent. I do not believe that *real* harm can befall me; I do not believe that my lifework can really be jeopardized by anything my enemies might wish to inflict upon me, and surely we have no violence to fear from our friends. I am absolutely assured that the entire universe is friendly to me — this all-powerful truth I insist on believing with a wholehearted trust in spite of all appearances to the contrary.”

But Ganid was not fully satisfied. Many times they talked over these matters, and Jesus described some childhood experiences and also talked about Jacob, the defender. On learning how Jacob chose to defend Jesus, Ganid said: “Oh, I begin to see! In the first place very seldom would any normal human being want to attack such a kindly person as you, and even if anyone should be so unthinking as to do such a thing, there is pretty sure to be near at hand some other mortal who will fly to your assistance, even as you always go to the rescue of any person you observe to be in distress. In my heart, Teacher, I agree with you, but in my head I still think that if I had been Jacob, I would have enjoyed punishing those rude bullies who presumed to attack you just because they thought you would not defend yourself. I presume you are fairly safe in your journey through life since you spend much of your time helping others and ministering to those

in distress — well, most likely there will always be someone on hand to defend you.” And Jesus replied: “That test has not yet come, Ganid, and when it does, we will have to abide by the Creator’s will.” And that was about all Ganid could get Jesus to say on this difficult subject of self-defense and nonresistance. On another occasion Ganid did draw from Jesus the opinion that organized society had every right to employ force in the execution of its just mandates.

2. Embarking at Tarentum

While at the ship landing waiting for the boat to unload cargo, the travelers observed someone being mistreated by their spouse. Jesus intervened on behalf of the person subjected to attack, and stepping up behind and tapping gently on the shoulder of the irate attacker, said: “My friend, may I speak with you in private for a moment?” The angry person was puzzled by such an approach and, after a moment of embarrassing hesitation, stammered out — “er — why — yes, what do you want with me?” Jesus, leading this individual to one side, said: “My friend, I perceive that something terrible must have happened to you. Can you tell me what could happen to you to lead you to attack your spouse, and right out here before all eyes? I am sure you must feel that you have some good reason for this assault. What did your spouse do to deserve such treatment from you? As I look at you, I think I see in your face the love of justice if not the desire to show mercy. I venture to say that, if you found me out by the wayside, attacked by robbers, you would unhesitatingly rush to my rescue. I dare say you have done many such brave things in the course of your life. Now, my friend, tell me what is the matter? Was there something wrong, or did you foolishly lose your head and thoughtlessly attack?” It was not so much what Jesus said that touched this person’s heart as the kindly look and the sympathetic smile which Jesus bestowed at the conclusion of these remarks. Said the attacker: “I perceive that you are a priest of the Cynics, and I am thankful you restrained me. My spouse has done no great wrong and is a good person, but irritates me by picking on me in public, and I lose my temper. I am sorry for my lack of self-control, and I promise to try to live up to my former pledge to another priest who taught me the better way many years ago. I promise you.”

And then, in saying good-bye, Jesus said: “My friend, always remember that one has no rightful authority over another unless they have willingly and voluntarily given such authority. Your spouse has agreed to go through life with you, to help you fight its battles, and to assume an equal share of the burden of the family. The loving care and consideration which a person is willing to bestow on their family are the measure of that individual’s attainment of the higher levels of creative and spiritual self-consciousness. Do you not know that parents are partners with the Creator in that they co-operate to create beings who grow up to possess the potential of immortal souls? It is divine to share your life and all it entails on equal terms with the partner who so fully shares with you that divine experience of reproducing yourselves in the lives of your children. If you can only love your children as the Divine Parent loves you, you will love and cherish your partner as the Creator Parent honors and exalts the Infinite Mind, the parent of all the spirit children of a vast universe.”

As they went on board the boat, they looked back at the scene of the teary-eyed couple standing in silent embrace. Having heard the latter half of Jesus’ message, Gonod was occupied all day with meditating on it, and resolved to address it on returning to India.

The journey to Nicopolis was pleasant but slow as the wind was not favorable. The three spent many hours recounting their experiences in Rome and reminiscing about all that had happened to them since they first met in Jerusalem. Ganid was becoming imbued with the spirit of personal ministry, and began work on the steward of the ship, but on the second day, when getting into deep religious water, called on Joshua to help.

They spent several days at Nicopolis, the city which Augustus had founded some fifty years before as the “city of victory” in commemoration of the battle of Actium, this site being the land where Augustus camped with the army before the battle. They lodged in the home of one Jeramy, a Greek proselyte of the Jewish faith, whom they had met on shipboard. The Apostle Paul spent all winter in the same house in the course of the third missionary journey. From Nicopolis they sailed on the same boat for Corinth, the capital of the Roman province of Achaia.

3. At Corinth

By the time they reached Corinth, Ganid was becoming very interested in the Jewish religion, and so it was not strange that, one day as they passed the synagogue and saw the people going in, Ganid requested that they go to the service. That day they heard a learned rabbi discourse on the “Destiny of Israel,” and after the service they met one Crispus, the chief ruler of this synagogue. Many times they went back to the synagogue services, but chiefly to meet Crispus. Ganid grew to be very fond of all of Crispus’ family, and enjoyed observing how Jews conducted their family life.

While Ganid studied family life, Jesus was teaching Crispus the better ways of religious living. Jesus held more than twenty sessions with this forward-looking Jew. Years afterward Paul preached in this very synagogue. Paul’s message was rejected by the Jews and Paul was forbidden to preach there again, but Crispus’ entire family embraced the new religion, and Crispus became one of the chief supporters of the Christian church which Paul subsequently organized at Corinth.

Paul preached in Corinth for eighteen months, being later joined by Silas and Timothy, and Paul met many others who had been taught by the “Jewish tutor of the child of an Indian merchant.”

At Corinth they met people of every race coming from three continents. Next to Alexandria and Rome, it was the most cosmopolitan city of the Mediterranean empire. There was much to attract one’s attention in this city, and Ganid never grew tired of visiting the citadel which stood almost two thousand feet above the sea. Ganid also spent a great deal of time about the synagogue and in the home of Crispus.

Jesus and Ganid were often guests in another Jewish home, that of Justus and Martha, who lived alongside the synagogue. And many times, subsequently, the Apostle Paul, while sojourning in this home, listened to the recounting of these visits with the Indian youth and the Jewish tutor, while both Paul and Justus wondered whatever became of such a wise and brilliant Hebrew teacher.

When in Rome, Ganid observed that Jesus refused to accompany them to the public baths. Several times afterward the youth sought to induce Jesus to comment further about the relations of the sexes. Jesus, while answering the youth’s questions, never seemed disposed to discuss these subjects at great length. One evening as they strolled about Corinth out near where the wall of the citadel ran down to the sea, they were

accosted by two courtesans. Ganid had gotten the idea, and rightly, that Jesus was a person of high ideals, and abhorred everything which reflected uncleanness or evil. Accordingly Ganid spoke sharply to these courtesans and rudely motioned them away. Jesus, on seeing this, said to Ganid: "You mean well, but you should not presume to speak that way to the children of the Creator, even though they happen to be erring children. Who are we that we should sit in judgment on these people? Do you know all of the circumstances which led them to resort to such methods of obtaining a livelihood? Stop here with me while we talk about these matters." The courtesans were astonished at what Jesus said even more than Ganid was.

As they stood there in the moonlight, Jesus went on to say: "There lives within every human mind a divine spirit, the gift of the Universal Source. This good spirit always strives to lead us to the Creator Parent, to help us to find and to know the Creator; but within mortals there are also many natural physical tendencies which the Creator put there to serve the well-being of the individual and the human race. People often become confused in their efforts to understand themselves and to grapple with the manifold difficulties of making a living in a world so largely dominated by selfishness and sin. I perceive, Ganid, that neither of these courtesans is willfully wicked. I can tell by their faces that they have experienced much sorrow. They have suffered much at the hands of an apparently cruel fate and have not intentionally chosen this sort of life. They have, in discouragement bordering on despair, surrendered to pressure and accepted this distasteful means of obtaining a livelihood as the best way out of a situation that to them appeared hopeless. Ganid, some people are really wicked at heart; they deliberately choose to do mean things, but, tell me, as you look into these now tear-stained faces, do you see anything bad or wicked?" And as Jesus paused for a reply, Ganid, with choking voice, stammered out an answer: "No, Teacher, I do not. And I apologize for my rudeness to them — I crave their forgiveness." Then Jesus said: "And I speak for them that they have forgiven you as I speak for my Creator Parent who has forgiven them. Now all of you come with me to a friend's house where we will seek refreshment and plan for the new and better life ahead." Up to this time the amazed courtesans had not uttered a word; they looked at each other and silently followed.

Imagine the surprise of Martha when, at this late hour, Jesus appeared with Ganid and these two strangers, saying: "You will forgive us for coming at this hour, but Ganid and I would like a bite to eat, and we would share it with these new-found friends, who are also in need of nourishment; and besides all this, we come to you with the thought that you will be interested in counseling with us as to the best way to help these friends get a new start in life. They can tell you their story, but I surmise they have had much trouble, and their very presence here in your house testifies to how earnestly they crave to know good people, and how willingly they will embrace the opportunity to show all the world — and even the angels — what brave and noble people they can become."

When Martha had spread the food on the table, Jesus, taking unexpected leave of them, said: "As it is getting late, and since Gonod will be waiting for us, we ask to be excused while we leave you here together, the beloved children of the Most High. And I will pray for your spiritual guidance while you make plans for a new and better life on earth and eternal life in the great beyond."

And Jesus and Ganid took leave of them. So far the two courtesans had said nothing; Ganid was also speechless. And for a few moments so was Martha, who presently rose to the occasion and did everything for these strangers that Jesus had hoped for. The elder of these two died a short time afterward, with bright hopes of eternal survival, and the younger became a lifelong member of the first Christian church in Corinth.

Several times in the home of Crispus, Jesus and Ganid met one Gaius, who subsequently became a loyal supporter of Paul. During these two months in Corinth they held intimate conversations with scores of worth-while individuals, and as a result of all these apparently casual contacts more than half of the individuals they met became members of the subsequent Christian community.

Paul, on first going to Corinth, had not intended to make a prolonged visit, but did not realize how well the Jewish tutor had prepared the way. And furthermore, Paul discovered that great interest had already been aroused by Aquila and Priscilla, Aquila being one of the Cynics with whom Jesus had come in contact when in Rome. This couple were Jewish refugees from Rome, and they quickly embraced the teachings of Paul, who lived with them and worked with them, for they were also tentmakers. It was because of these circumstances that Paul's stay in Corinth was prolonged.

4. Personal Work in Corinth

Jesus and Ganid had many more interesting experiences in Corinth. They had close conversations with a great number of people who greatly profited by the instruction received from Jesus.

Jesus taught the miller about grinding up the grains of truth in the mill of living experience so as to render the difficult things of divine life readily receivable by even the weak and feeble among others. Said Jesus: "Give the milk of truth to those who are babes in spiritual perception. In your living and loving ministry serve spiritual food in attractive form and suited to the capacity of receptivity of each of your inquirers."

To the Roman centurion Jesus said: "The sincere service of the Creator and the loyal service of Caesar do not conflict unless Caesar should presume to arrogate that homage which alone can be claimed by Deity. Loyalty to the Creator would render you all the more loyal and faithful in your devotion to a worthy emperor."

To the earnest leader of the Mithraic cult Jesus said: "You do well to seek for a religion of eternal life, but you err to go in quest of such a glorious truth among human-made mysteries and human philosophies. Do you not know that the mystery of eternal life dwells within your own soul? Do you not know that the Creator's spirit has been sent to live within you, and that this spirit will lead all truth-loving and Creator-serving mortals out of this life and through the portals of death up to the eternal heights of light where the Universal Parent waits to receive all?"

To the Epicurean teacher Jesus said: "You do well to choose the best and esteem the good, but are you wise when you fail to discern the greater things of mortal life which are embodied in the spirit realms derived from the realization of the presence of the Creator in the human heart? The great thing in all human experience is the realization of knowing the Creator whose spirit lives within you and seeks to lead you on that long and almost endless journey of attaining the personal presence of our common Parent, the Source of all creation, the Ruler of universes."

To the Greek contractor and builder Jesus said: "My friend, as you build material structures, grow a spiritual character in the likeness of the divine spirit within your soul. Do not let your achievement as a temporal builder outrun your attainment as a spiritual child of the Divine Parent. While you build the mansions of

time for another, do not neglect to secure your title to the mansions of eternity for yourself. Always remember, there is a city whose foundations are righteousness and truth, and whose builder and maker is the Universal Source.”

To the Roman judge Jesus said: “As you judge people, remember that you yourself will also someday come to judgment before the bar of the Rulers of a universe. Judge justly and mercifully, even as you will crave merciful consideration at the hands of the Supreme Arbiter. Judge as you would be judged under similar circumstances, being guided by the spirit of the law as well as by its letter. And even as you accord justice dominated by fairness in light of the need of those who are brought before you, so you will have the right to expect justice tempered by mercy when you stand before the Judge of all the earth.”

To the owner of the Greek inn Jesus said: “Minister your hospitality as one who entertains the children of the Most High. Elevate the drudgery of your daily toil to the high levels of a fine art through the increasing realization that you minister to the Creator in those who are indwelt by the divine spirit which has descended to live within their hearts, seeking to transform their minds and lead their souls to the knowledge of the Paradise Parent of all these bestowed gifts of the spirit.”

Jesus had many visits with a Chinese merchant. In saying good-bye, Jesus said: “Worship only the original Deity, who is your true spirit ancestor. Remember that the Creator Parent’s spirit lives within you and always points your soul-direction toward Paradise. If you follow the unconscious leadings of this immortal spirit, you are certain to continue on in the uplifted way of finding the original Deity. And when you do attain this Deity, it will be because you have sought and become more and more like this Deity. And so farewell, but only for a time, for we will meet again in the worlds of light where the Parent of spirit souls has provided many delightful stopping-places for those who are Paradise-bound.”

To the traveler from Britain Jesus said: “My friend, I perceive that you are seeking for truth, and I suggest that the spirit of the Source of all truth may happen to dwell within you. Did you ever sincerely endeavor to talk with the spirit of your own soul? Such a thing is indeed difficult and seldom yields consciousness of success; but every honest attempt of the material mind to communicate with its indwelling spirit meets with certain success, notwithstanding that the majority of all such magnificent human experiences must long remain as superconscious registrations in the souls of such Creator-knowing mortals.”

To the runaway youth Jesus said: “Remember, there are two things you cannot run away from — your Creator Parent and yourself. Wherever you may go, you take yourself and the spirit of the Creator which lives within your heart. My friend, stop trying to deceive yourself; settle down to the courageous practice of facing the facts of life; lay firm hold on the assurances of a relationship with the Creator and the certainty of eternal life, as I have instructed you. From this day on decide to be a real adult, a person determined to face life bravely and intelligently.”

To the condemned criminal Jesus said at the last hour: “My friend, you have fallen on evil times. You lost your way; you became entangled in the meshes of crime. From talking to you, I know you did not plan to do the thing which is about to cost you your temporal life. But you did do this evil, and others have judged you guilty; they have determined that you shall die. You or I may not deny the state this right of self-defense in the manner of its own choosing. There seems to be no way of humanly escaping the penalty of your

wrongdoing. Your peers must judge you by what you did, but there is a Judge to whom you may appeal for forgiveness, and who will judge you by your real motives and better intentions. You need not fear to meet the judgment of Deity if your repentance is genuine and your faith sincere. The fact that your error carries with it the death penalty imposed by law does not prejudice the chance of your soul to obtain justice and enjoy mercy before the celestial courts.”

Jesus enjoyed many intimate talks with a large number of hungry souls, too many to find a place in this record. The three travelers enjoyed their sojourn in Corinth. Except for Athens, which was more renowned as an educational center, Corinth was the most important city in Greece during these Roman times, and their two months’ stay in this thriving commercial center afforded opportunity for all three of them to gain much valuable experience. Their sojourn in this city was one of the most interesting of all their stops on the way back from Rome.

Gonod had many interests in Corinth, but finally this business was finished, and they prepared to sail for Athens. They traveled on a small boat which could be carried overland from one of Corinth’s harbors to the other, a distance of ten miles.

5. At Athens — Discourse on Science

They shortly arrived at the olden center of Greek science and learning, and Ganid was thrilled with the thought of being in Athens, of being in Greece, the cultural center of the onetime Alexandrian empire, which had extended its borders even to India. There was little business to transact, so Gonod spent most of the time with Jesus and Ganid, listening to their interesting discussions and visiting the many points of interest together.

A great university still thrived in Athens, and the trio made frequent visits to its halls of learning. Jesus and Ganid had thoroughly discussed the teachings of Plato when they attended the lectures in the museum at Alexandria. They all enjoyed the art of Greece, examples of which were still to be found throughout the city.

Both Gonod and Ganid greatly enjoyed the discussion on science which Jesus had at their inn one evening with a Greek philosopher. After this scholar had talked for almost three hours and had finished the discourse, Jesus, in terms of modern thought, said:

Scientists may someday measure the energy, or force manifestations, of gravitation, light, and electricity, but these same scientists can never (scientifically) tell you what these universe phenomena *are*. Science deals with physical-energy activities; religion deals with eternal values. True philosophy grows out of the wisdom which does its best to correlate these quantitative and qualitative observations. The danger always exists that the purely physical scientist may become afflicted with mathematical pride and statistical egotism, not to mention spiritual blindness.

Logic is valid in the material world, and mathematics is reliable when limited in its application to physical things, but neither is to be regarded as wholly dependable or infallible when applied to life situations. Life embraces phenomena which are not wholly material. Arithmetic says that, if one person could shear a sheep

in ten minutes, ten people could shear it in one minute. That is sound mathematics, but it is not true, for the ten people could not do it; they would get in one another's way so badly that the work would be greatly delayed.

Mathematics asserts that, if one person stands for a certain unit of intellectual and moral value, ten persons would stand for ten times this value. But in dealing with human personality it would be nearer the truth to say that such a personality association is a sum equal to the square of the number of personalities concerned in the equation rather than the simple arithmetical sum. A social group of human beings in coordinated working harmony stands for a force far greater than the simple sum of its parts.

Quantity may be identified as a *fact*, becoming a scientific uniformity. Quality, being a matter of mind interpretation, represents an estimate of *values*, and must, therefore, remain an experience of the individual. When both science and religion become less dogmatic and more tolerant of criticism, philosophy will begin to achieve *unity* in the intelligent comprehension of the universe.

There is unity in the cosmic universe if you could only discern its workings in actuality. The real universe is friendly to every child of the eternal Parent. The real problem is: How can the finite minds of mortals achieve a logical, true, and corresponding unity of thought? This universe-knowing state of mind can be achieved only by conceiving that the quantitative fact and the qualitative value have a common causation in the Universal Source. Such a conception of reality yields a broader insight into the purposeful unity of universe phenomena; it even reveals a spiritual goal of progressive personality achievement. And this is a concept of unity which can sense the unchanging background of a living universe of continually changing impersonal relations and evolving personal relationships.

Matter and spirit and the state intervening between them are three interrelated and inter-associated levels of the true unity of the real universe. Regardless of how divergent the universe phenomena of fact and value may appear to be, they are, after all, unified in the Supreme.

Reality of material existence attaches to unrecognized energy as well as to visible matter. When the energies of the universe are so slowed down that they acquire the requisite degree of motion, then, under favorable conditions, these same energies become mass. And don't forget, the mind which can alone perceive the presence of apparent realities is itself also real. And the fundamental cause of this universe of energy-mass, mind, and spirit, is eternal — it exists and consists in the nature and reactions of the Universal Source.

They were all more than astounded at the words of Jesus, and the Greek, on taking leave of them, said: "At last I have met a Jew who thinks something besides racial superiority and talks something besides religion." And they retired for the night.

The sojourn in Athens was pleasant and profitable, but it was not particularly fruitful in its human contacts. Too many of the Athenians of that day were either intellectually proud of their reputation of another day or mentally deficient, being the offspring of the slaves of those earlier periods when there was glory in Greece and wisdom in the minds of its people. Even then, there were still many keen minds to be found among the citizens of Athens.

6. At Ephesus — Discourse on the Soul

On leaving Athens, the travelers went by way of Troas to Ephesus, the capital of the Roman province of Asia. They made many trips out to the famous temple of Artemis of the Ephesians, about two miles from the city. Artemis was the most famous deity of all Asia Minor and a perpetuation of the still earlier deity of ancient Anatolian times. The crude idol exhibited in the enormous temple dedicated to this deity's worship was reputed to have come from the divine. Ganid, whose early training to respect images as symbols of divinity had not entirely been eradicated, thought it best to purchase a little silver shrine in honor of this fertility god of Asia Minor. That night they talked at great length about the worship of things made with human hands.

Of all the large cities they visited on this tour of the Mediterranean, in Ephesus they accomplished the least of value to the subsequent work of the Christian missionaries. Christianity secured its start in Ephesus largely through the efforts of Paul, who lived here for more than two years, making tents for a living and conducting lectures on religion and philosophy each night in the main audience chamber of the school of Tyrannus.

There was a progressive thinker connected with this local school of philosophy, with whom Jesus had several profitable sessions. In the course of these talks Jesus had repeatedly used the word "soul." This learned Greek finally asked Jesus the meaning of "soul," and Jesus replied:

"The soul is the self-reflective, truth-discerning, and spirit-perceiving part of a mortal which forever elevates the human being above the level of the animal world. Self-consciousness, in and of itself, is not the soul. Moral self-consciousness is true human self-realization and constitutes the foundation of the human soul, and the soul is that part of a mortal which represents the potential survival value of human experience. Moral choice and spiritual attainment, the ability to know and be like the Creator, are the characteristics of the soul. The soul cannot exist apart from moral thinking and spiritual activity. A stagnant soul is a dying soul. But the soul is distinct from the divine spirit which dwells within the mind. The divine spirit arrives simultaneously with the first moral activity of the human mind, and that is the occasion of the birth of the soul.

"The saving or losing of a soul has to do with whether or not the moral consciousness attains survival status through eternal alliance with its associated immortal spirit endowment. Salvation is the spiritualization of the self-realization of the moral consciousness, which becomes possessed of survival value. All forms of soul conflict consist in the lack of harmony between the moral, or spiritual, self-consciousness and the purely intellectual self-consciousness.

"The human soul, when matured, ennobled, and spiritualized, approaches an advanced status where it comes near to being an entity intervening between the material and the spiritual, the material self and the divine spirit. The evolving soul of a human being is difficult to describe and more difficult to demonstrate because it is not discoverable by the methods of either material investigation or spiritual determination. Material science cannot demonstrate the existence of a soul, neither can pure spirit-testing. Notwithstanding the failure of both material science and spiritual standards to discover the existence of the human soul, all morally conscious mortals *know* of the existence of their *soul* as a *real* and actual personal experience."

7. The Sojourn at Cyprus — Discourse on Mind

Shortly the travelers set sail for Cyprus, stopping at Rhodes. They enjoyed the long water voyage and arrived at their island destination rested in body and refreshed in spirit.

It was their plan to enjoy a period of rest and play on this visit to Cyprus as their tour of the Mediterranean was drawing to a close. They landed at Paphos and at once began the assembly of supplies for their sojourn of several weeks in the near-by mountains. On the third day after their arrival they started for the hills with their well-loaded pack animals.

For two weeks the trio greatly enjoyed themselves, and then, without warning, young Ganid was suddenly taken grievously ill, suffering from a raging fever for two weeks and often becoming delirious. Both Jesus and Gonod were kept busy attending the sick youth. Jesus skillfully and tenderly cared for Ganid, and Gonod was amazed by both the gentleness and adeptness Jesus manifested in this ministry to the afflicted youth. They were far from human habitations, and Ganid was too ill to be moved, so they did the best they could where they were.

During Ganid's convalescence of three weeks Jesus taught many interesting things about nature. And what fun they had as they wandered over the mountains, Ganid asking questions, Jesus answering them, and Gonod marveling at the whole performance.

The last week of their sojourn in the mountains Jesus and Ganid had a long talk on the functions of the human mind. After several hours of discussion Ganid asked this question: "But, Teacher, what do you mean when you say that people experience a higher form of self-consciousness than the higher animals?" As restated, Jesus answered:

I have already told you much about the mind and the divine spirit that lives there, but now let me emphasize that self-consciousness is a *reality*. When any animal becomes self-conscious, it becomes a primitive human. Such an attainment results from a co-ordination of function between impersonal energy and spirit-conceiving mind, and it is this phenomenon which warrants the bestowal of an absolute focal point for the human personality, the spirit of the Creator.

Ideas are not simply a record of sensations; ideas are sensations plus the reflective interpretations of the personal self; and the self is more than the sum of one's sensations. Something of an approach to unity emerges in an evolving selfhood, and that unity is derived from the indwelling presence of a part of absolute unity which spiritually activates a self-conscious animal-origin mind.

No mere animal could possess a time self-consciousness. Animals possess a physiological co-ordination of associated sensation-recognition and memory, but none experience a meaningful recognition of sensation or exhibit a purposeful association of these combined physical experiences as is manifested in the conclusions of intelligent and reflective human interpretations. And this fact of self-conscious existence, associated with the reality of subsequent spiritual experience, constitutes a mortal a potential child of the universe and foreshadows eventual attainment of the Supreme Unity of the universe.

Neither is the human self merely the sum of the successive states of consciousness. Without the effective functioning of a consciousness sorter and associator there would not be sufficient unity to warrant the designation of a selfhood. An ununified mind could hardly attain conscious levels of human status. If the associations of consciousness were just an accident, the minds of all mortals would exhibit the uncontrolled and random associations of certain phases of mental madness.

A human mind, built solely out of the consciousness of physical sensations, could never attain spiritual levels. This kind of material mind would be utterly lacking in a sense of moral values and would be without a guiding sense of spiritual dominance which is so essential to achieving harmonious personality unity in time, and which is inseparable from personality survival in eternity.

The human mind soon begins to manifest qualities which are supermaterial; the truly reflective human intellect is not completely bound by the limits of time. That individuals differ in their life performances indicates, not only the varying endowments of heredity and the different influences of the environment, but also the degree of unification with the indwelling spirit of the Creator which has been achieved by the self, the measure of the identification of one with the other.

The human mind does not deal well with the conflict of double allegiance. It is a severe strain on the soul to undergo the experience of an effort to serve both good and evil. The supremely happy and efficiently unified mind is one that is wholly dedicated to the doing of the will of the Creator. Unresolved conflicts destroy unity and may terminate in mind disruption. But the survival character of a soul is not fostered by attempting to secure peace of mind at any price, by the surrender of noble aspirations, and by the compromise of spiritual ideals. Rather such peace is attained by the stalwart assertion of the triumph of that which is true, and this victory is achieved in the overcoming of evil with the potent force of good.

The next day they departed for Salamis, where they embarked for Antioch on the Syrian coast.

8. At Antioch

Antioch was the capital of the Roman province of Syria, and the imperial governor resided here. Antioch had half a million inhabitants; it was the third city of the empire in size and the first in wickedness and flagrant immorality. Gonod had considerable business to transact, so Jesus and Ganid were often by themselves. They visited everything about this polyglot city except the grove of Daphne. Gonod and Ganid visited this notorious shrine of shame, but Jesus declined to accompany them. Such scenes were not so shocking to Indians, but they were repellent to an idealistic Hebrew.

Jesus became sober and reflective on drawing nearer Palestine and the end of their journey, visiting with few people in Antioch and seldom going about in the city. After much questioning from Ganid about manifesting so little interest in Antioch, Jesus finally said: "This city is not far from Palestine; maybe I shall come back here sometime."

Ganid had a very interesting experience in Antioch. This young person had proved to be an apt pupil and already had begun to make practical use of some of Jesus' teachings. A certain Indian connected with Gonod's business in Antioch had become unpleasant and disgruntled. Ganid held a long conference with

this person, whose unpleasantness resulted from a feeling of having been placed in the wrong job. Ganid talked about the Creator Parent and in many ways expanded this individual's views of religion. But of all that Ganid said, the quotation of a Hebrew proverb did the most good, and that word of wisdom was: "Whatever your hand finds to do, do that with all your might."

After preparing their luggage for the camel caravan, they passed on to Sidon and then to Damascus, and after three days they prepared for the long trek across the desert sands.

9. In Mesopotamia

The caravan trip across the desert was not a new experience for this much-traveled trio. Ganid, after watching Jesus help with the loading of their twenty camels and volunteer to drive their own animal, exclaimed, "Teacher, is there anything that you cannot do?" Jesus only smiled, saying, "The teacher surely is not without honor in the eyes of a diligent pupil." And so they set forth for the ancient city of Ur.

Jesus was keenly interested in the early history of Ur, the birthplace of Abraham, and was equally fascinated with the ruins and traditions of Susa, so much so that Gonod and Ganid extended their stay for three weeks in order to afford Jesus more time to conduct investigations and also to provide a better opportunity to persuade Ganid's teacher to go back to India with them.

It was at Ur that Ganid had a long talk with Jesus regarding the difference between knowledge, wisdom, and truth. And Ganid was greatly charmed with the wise Hebrew saying: "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom. With all your quest for knowledge, get understanding. Wisdom, when exalted and embraced, will promote you and will bring you to honor."

At last the day came for the separation. They were all brave, especially Ganid, but it was a trying ordeal. They were tearful but courageous. In bidding Jesus farewell, Ganid said: "Good-bye, Teacher, but not forever. When I come to Damascus again, I will look for you. I love you, for I think the Creator must be something like you; at least I know you are much like what you have told me about our Creator Parent. I will remember your teaching, but most of all, I will never forget you." Said Gonod, "Good-bye to a great teacher, one who has made us better and helped us to know our Creator." And Jesus replied, "Peace be upon you, and may the blessing of the Creator ever abide with you." And Jesus stood on the shore and watched as the small boat carried them out to their anchored ship. Thus the Master left these friends from India at Charax, never to see them again in this world; nor were they, in this world, ever to know that the friend who later appeared as Jesus of Nazareth was this same person they had just taken leave of — Joshua, their teacher.

In India, Ganid grew up to become an influential person, a worthy successor of Gonod, spreading abroad many of Jesus' noble truths. Later on in life, when Ganid heard of the strange teacher in Palestine whose career was terminated on a cross, while recognizing the similarity between the teachings of this person and those of Jesus, never realized that the two were actually the same person.

And so ended that chapter in the life of the incarnated Local Universe Creator which might be termed: *The mission of Joshua the teacher.*

Paper 134

The Transition Years

During the Mediterranean journey Jesus had made a careful study of the people and the countries they encountered, and at about this time reached a final decision as to the remainder of the bestowal mission. Jesus had fully considered and now finally approved the plan to be born of Jewish parents in Palestine, and therefore deliberately returned to Galilee to await the start of a career as a public teacher of truth, laying plans for this to take place in the land of Joseph's people.

Jesus had found out through personal and human experience that Palestine was the best place in all the Roman world in which to enact the final scenes of the bestowal mission, and for the first time became fully satisfied with the program of revealing the divine identity among the Jews and gentiles of Palestine. Jesus definitely decided to finish life on earth and to complete the career of mortal existence in the same land where it began as a helpless baby. The Urantia career began among the Jews in Palestine, and Jesus chose to terminate it in Palestine and among the Jews.

1. The Thirtieth Year (C.E. 24)

After taking leave of Gonod and Ganid at Charax (in December of C.E. 23), Jesus returned by way of Ur to Babylon, joining a desert caravan that was on its way to Damascus, and then going on to Nazareth, stopping only a few hours at Capernaum to call on Zebedee's family. James was in Capernaum, having previously come over to work in Zebedee's boatshop. After talking with James and Jude (who also happened to be in Capernaum) and after turning over to James the little house which John Zebedee had managed to buy, Jesus went on to Nazareth.

At the end of the Mediterranean journey Jesus had received sufficient money to meet all living expenses almost up to the time of the beginning of the public ministry. But aside from Zebedee of Capernaum and the people who were encountered on this extraordinary trip, the world never knew about this journey. The family always believed that Jesus spent this time in study at Alexandria, and Jesus never confirmed or denied such misunderstandings.

During a stay of a few weeks at Nazareth, Jesus visited with family and friends and spent some time at the repair shop with Joseph, but primarily focused attention on Mary and with Ruth, who was then nearly fifteen years old.

Both Simon and Jude had for some time wanted to get married, but they had disliked to do this without Jesus' consent. Accordingly they had postponed these events, hoping for their eldest sibling's return. Though they all regarded James as the head of the family in most matters, when it came to getting married, they wanted the blessing of Jesus. So Simon and Jude were married at a double wedding in early March of this year, C.E. 24. All the older children were now married; only Ruth, the youngest, remained at home with Mary.

Jesus, while visiting with the individual members of the family quite normally and naturally, had so little to say when they were all together that they remarked about it among themselves. Mary was especially disconcerted by this unusual behavior.

About the time Jesus was preparing to leave Nazareth, the conductor of a large caravan which was passing through the city was taken violently ill, and Jesus volunteered to lead the caravan. Since this trip would necessitate being absent for a year, Jesus proposed that Mary and Ruth go to Capernaum to live in the home that now belonged to James. Accordingly, a few days after Jesus left with the caravan, Mary and Ruth moved to Capernaum, where they lived for the rest of Mary's life in the home that Jesus had provided. Joseph's family moved into the old Nazareth home.

This was one of the more unusual years in Jesus' inner experience; great progress was made in effecting working harmony between Jesus' human mind and the indwelling Adjuster. The Adjuster had been actively engaged in reorganizing Jesus' thinking for the great events which were in the not then distant future. The personality of Jesus was preparing for a great change in attitude toward the world. These were the in-between times, the transition stage of that being who began life as Deity appearing as mortal, and who was now preparing to complete the earth career as mortal appearing as Deity.

2. The Caravan Trip to the Caspian

It was the first of April, C.E. 24, when Jesus left Nazareth on the caravan trip to the Caspian Sea region. The caravan which Jesus joined as its conductor was going from Jerusalem by way of Damascus and Lake Urmia through Assyria, Media, and Parthia to the southeastern Caspian Sea region. It was a full year before Jesus returned from this journey.

For Jesus this caravan trip was another adventure of exploration and personal ministry. It provided an interesting experience with the caravan family — passengers, guards, and camel drivers. Scores of people residing along the route followed by the caravan lived richer lives as a result of their contact with Jesus, to them, the extraordinary conductor of a commonplace caravan. Not all who enjoyed these occasions of Jesus' personal ministry profited from it, but the vast majority were made better for the remainder of their natural lives.

Of all the world travels this Caspian Sea trip carried Jesus nearest to the Orient and enabled a better understanding of the Far-Eastern peoples. Jesus made intimate and personal contact with every one of the surviving races of Urantia except the red, equally enjoying a personal ministry to each of these varied races and blended peoples, and all of them were receptive to the living truth that they heard. The Europeans from the Far West and the Asians from the Far East alike gave attention to the words of hope and eternal life, and were equally influenced by the life of loving service and spiritual ministry which Jesus so graciously lived among them.

The caravan trip was successful in every way. This was a most interesting episode in the human life of Jesus, who functioned during this year in an executive capacity, being responsible for the caravan's goods and for the safe conduct of the travelers making up the caravan party. And Jesus most faithfully, efficiently, and wisely discharged these multiple duties.

Upon returning from the Caspian region, Jesus gave up the direction of the caravan at Lake Urmia, remaining there for slightly over two weeks. On a later caravan from Lake Urmia to Damascus, the owners of the camels invited Jesus to remain in their service. Declining this offer, Jesus journeyed on with the caravan train to Capernaum, arriving the first of April, C.E. 25. Capernaum had now become the home of Jesus, James, Mary, and Ruth, but Jesus never again lived with the family, staying instead with the Zebedees.

3. The Urmia Lectures

On the way to the Caspian Sea, Jesus had stopped several days for rest and recuperation at the old Persian city of Urmia on the western shores of Lake Urmia. On the largest of a group of islands situated a short distance offshore near Urmia a large building was located — a lecture amphitheater — dedicated to the “spirit of religion.” This structure was really a temple of the philosophy of religions.

This temple of religion had been built by a wealthy merchant citizen of Urmia, Cymboyton, who was descended from many diverse peoples.

The lectures and discussions in this school of religion began at ten o’clock every morning of the week. The afternoon sessions started at three o’clock, and the evening debates opened at eight o’clock. Cymboyton or one of Cymboyton’s three children always presided at these sessions of teaching, discussion, and debate. The founder of this unique school of religions lived and died without ever revealing any personal religious beliefs.

Jesus participated in these discussions on several occasions, and before leaving Urmia, agreed to remain with them for two weeks on returning to give twenty-four lectures on “The Family of Humanity,” and to conduct twelve evening sessions of questions, discussions, and debates on these lectures in particular and on the family of humanity in general.

In accordance with this arrangement, Jesus stopped off on the return trip and delivered these lectures. This was the most systematic and formal of all the Master’s teaching on Urantia. Never before or after did Jesus say so much on one subject as was contained in these lectures and discussions on the family of humanity. In reality these lectures were on the “Realm of the Creator” and the “Realms of Mortals.”

More than thirty religions were represented on the faculty of this temple of religious philosophy. These teachers were chosen, supported, and fully accredited by their respective religious groups. At this time there were about seventy-five teachers on the faculty, and they lived in cottages each accommodating about a dozen persons. Every month these groups were changed by the casting of lots. Intolerance, a contentious spirit, or any other disposition to interfere with the smooth running of the community would bring about the prompt and summary dismissal of the offending teacher, who would be unceremoniously dismissed, and an alternate in waiting would be immediately installed.

These teachers of the various religions made a great effort to show how similar their religions were with regard to the fundamental things of this life and the next. There was only one doctrine which had to be accepted in order to gain a seat on this faculty — every teacher must represent a religion which recognized

some sort of supreme Deity. There were five independent teachers on the faculty who did not represent any organized religion, and it was as such an independent teacher that Jesus appeared before them.

[When we, the midwayers, first prepared the summary of Jesus' teachings at Urmia, a disagreement arose between the seraphim of the religions and the seraphim of progress as to the wisdom of including these teachings in the Urantia Revelation. Conditions of the twentieth century, prevailing in both religion and human governments, are so different from those prevailing in Jesus' day that it was indeed difficult to adapt the Master's teachings at Urmia to the problems of the realm of the Creator and the realms of mortals as these world functions are existent in the twentieth century. We were never able to formulate a statement of the Master's teachings which was acceptable to both groups of these seraphim of planetary government. Finally, the Melchizedek chair of the revelatory commission appointed a commission of three of our number to prepare our view of the Master's Urmia teachings as adapted to twentieth-century religious and political conditions on Urantia. Accordingly, we three secondary midwayers completed such an adaptation of Jesus' teachings, restating the pronouncements as we would apply them to present-day world conditions, and we now present these statements as they stand after having been edited by the Melchizedek chair of the revelatory commission.]

[The editors of the present restatement have further updated the following material so that it applies as well to conditions in the twenty-first century.]

4. Sovereignty — Divine and Human

The family of humanity is founded on the parenthood of the Creator. The family of the Creator is derived from the love of the Creator — the Creator is love. The Creator Parent divinely loves every child.

The realm of the Creator, the divine government, is founded on the fact of divine sovereignty — the Creator is spirit. Since the Creator is spirit, this realm is spiritual. The realm of the Creator is neither material nor merely intellectual; it is a spiritual relationship between the Creator and mortals.

If different religions recognize the spirit sovereignty of the Universal Creator, then all such religions will remain at peace. When one religion assumes that it is in some way superior to all others, and that it possesses exclusive authority over other religions, then that religion will presume to be intolerant of other religions or dare to persecute other religious believers.

Religious peace can never exist unless all religions are willing to completely divest themselves of all ecclesiastical authority and fully surrender all concept of spiritual sovereignty. The Creator alone is spirit sovereign.

You cannot have equality among religions (religious liberty) without having religious wars unless all religions consent to the transfer of all religious sovereignty to some superhuman level, to the Universal Creator.

The realm of the Creator in the hearts of mortals will create religious unity (not necessarily uniformity) because any and all religious groups composed of such followers will be free from all notions of ecclesiastical authority — religious sovereignty.

The Creator is spirit, and gives a fragment of that spirit self to dwell in the hearts of mortals. Spiritually, all mortals are equal. The realm of the Creator is free from castes, classes, social levels, and economic groups. You are all siblings.

But the moment you lose sight of the spirit sovereignty of the Universal Creator, one religion will begin to assert its superiority over other religions; and then, instead of peace on earth and good will among all mortals, dissensions, recriminations, even religious wars will start, at least wars among religionists.

Freewill beings who regard themselves as equals, unless they mutually acknowledge themselves as subject to some super-sovereignty, some authority over and above themselves, sooner or later are tempted to try out their ability to gain power and authority over other persons and groups. The concept of equality never brings peace except in the mutual recognition of some overcontrolling influence of super-sovereignty.

The Urmia religionists lived together in comparative peace and tranquility because they had fully surrendered all their notions of religious sovereignty. Spiritually, they all believed in a sovereign Deity; socially, full and unchallengeable authority rested in their presiding head — Cymboyton. They knew what would happen to any teacher who assumed to lord it over the other teachers. There can be no lasting religious peace on Urantia until all religious groups freely surrender all their notions of divine favor, chosen people, and religious sovereignty. Only when the Universal Creator becomes supreme will mortals become religious siblings and live together in religious peace on earth.

5. Political Sovereignty

[While Jesus' teaching concerning the sovereignty of Deity is a truth — only complicated by the subsequent appearance of the religion about Jesus among the world's religions — the following presentations concerning political sovereignty are vastly complicated by the political evolution of nation life during the last two thousand years. In the times of Jesus there were only two great world powers — the Roman Empire in the West and the Han Empire in the East — and these were widely separated by the Parthian domain and other intervening lands of the Caspian and Turkestan regions. The following presentation departs more widely from the substance of the Master's teachings at Urmia concerning political sovereignty, and at the same time attempts to depict the import of such teachings as they are applicable to the stage of the evolution of political sovereignty in the twenty-first century.]

War on Urantia will never end as long as nations cling to the illusive notions of unlimited national sovereignty. There are only two levels of relative sovereignty on an inhabited world: the spiritual free will of the individual mortal and the collective sovereignty of humankind as a whole. Between the level of the individual human being and the level of the total of humankind, all groupings and associations are relative, transitory, and of value only so far as they enhance the welfare, well-being, and progress of the individual and the planetary grand total — human and humankind.

Religious teachers must always remember that the spiritual sovereignty of the Universal Creator overrides all intervening and intermediate spiritual loyalties. Someday civil rulers will learn that the Most Highs rule in the realms of mortals.

This rule of the Most Highs in the realms of mortals is not for the special benefit of any favored group. There is no such thing as a “chosen people.” The rule of the Most Highs, the over-controllers of political evolution, is a rule designed to foster the greatest good to the greatest number of *all* people and for the greatest length of time.

Sovereignty is power and it grows by organization. This growth of the organization of political power is good and proper, for it tends to encompass ever-widening segments of the total of humankind. But this same growth of political organizations creates a problem at every intervening stage between the initial and natural organization of political power — the family — and the final consummation of political growth — the government of all people, by all people, and for all people.

Starting with parental power in the family group, political sovereignty evolves by organization as families overlap into consanguineous clans which become united, for various reasons, into tribal units — super-consanguineous political groupings. And then, by trade, commerce, and conquest, tribes become unified as a nation, while nations themselves sometimes become unified by empire.

As sovereignty passes from smaller groups to larger groups, wars are lessened. That is, minor wars between smaller nations are lessened, but the potential for greater wars is increased as the nations wielding sovereignty become larger and larger. When all the world has been explored and occupied, when nations are few, strong, and powerful, when these great and supposedly sovereign nations come to touch borders, when only oceans separate them, then the stage is set for major wars, world-wide conflicts. So-called sovereign nations cannot rub elbows without generating conflicts and eventuating wars.

The difficulty in the evolution of political sovereignty from the family to all humankind lies in the inertia-resistance exhibited on all intervening levels. Families have, on occasion, defied their clan, while clans and tribes have often been subversive of the sovereignty of the territorial state. Each new and forward evolution of political sovereignty is (and has always been) embarrassed and hampered by the “scaffolding stages” of the previous developments in political organization. And this is true because human loyalties, once mobilized, are hard to change. The same loyalty which makes the evolution of the tribe possible, makes the evolution of the super-tribe — the territorial state — difficult. And the same loyalty (patriotism) which makes the evolution of the territorial state possible, vastly complicates the evolutionary development of the government of all humankind.

Political sovereignty is created out of the surrender of self-determinism, first by the individual within the family and then by the families and clans in relation to the tribe and larger groupings. This progressive transfer of self-determination from the smaller to ever larger political organizations has generally proceeded unabated in the East since the establishment of the Ming and the Mogul dynasties. In the West it existed right up to the end of the First World War, when an unfortunate retrograde movement temporarily reversed this normal trend by re-establishing the submerged political sovereignty of numerous small groups in Europe.

Urantia will not enjoy lasting peace until the so-called sovereign nations intelligently and fully surrender their sovereign powers into the hands of the family of humanity. Internationalism — leagues of nations — can never bring permanent peace to humanity. World-wide confederations of nations will effectively

prevent minor wars and acceptably control the smaller nations, but they will not prevent world wars nor control the three, four, or five most powerful governments. In the face of real conflicts, one of these world powers will withdraw from the league and declare war. You cannot prevent nations from going to war as long as they remain infected with the delusional virus of national sovereignty. Internationalism is a step in the right direction. An international police force will prevent many minor wars, but it will not be effective in preventing major wars, conflicts between the great military governments of earth.

As the number of truly sovereign nations (great powers) decreases, so both the opportunity and the need for world government increases. When there are only a few really sovereign (great) powers, either they must embark on the life and death struggle for national (imperial) supremacy, or else, by voluntary surrender of certain prerogatives of sovereignty, they must create the essential nucleus of super-national power which will serve as the beginning of the real sovereignty of all humankind.

Peace will not come to Urantia until every so-called sovereign nation surrenders its power to make war into the hands of a representative government of all humankind. Political sovereignty is innate with the peoples of the world. When all the peoples of Urantia create a world government, they have the right and the power to make that government SOVEREIGN; and when such a representative or democratic world power controls the world's military forces, peace on earth and good will can prevail — but not until then.

Citizens are not born for the benefit of governments; governments are organizations created and devised for the benefit of citizens. There can be no end to the evolution of political sovereignty short of the appearance of the government of the sovereignty of all people. All other sovereignties are relative in value, intermediate in meaning, and subordinate in status.

With scientific progress, wars are going to become more and more devastating until they become almost racially suicidal. How many world wars must be fought and how many leagues of nations must fail before people will be willing to establish the government of humankind and begin to enjoy the blessings of permanent peace and thrive on the tranquility of good will — world-wide good will — among all people?

6. Law, Liberty, and Sovereignty

If people crave freedom — liberty — they must remember that *all* others long for the same freedom. Groups of liberty-loving mortals cannot live together in peace without becoming subservient to laws, rules, and regulations that will grant each person freedom while at the same time safeguarding the same freedom for all others. And the relative nature of freedom is true socially, economically, and politically. Freedom is the gift of civilization made possible by the enforcement of LAW.

Religion makes it spiritually possible to realize the family of humanity, but it will require global government to regulate the social, economic, and political problems associated with the goal of human happiness and efficiency.

There will be wars just as long as the world's political sovereignty is divided and unjustly held by a group of nation-states. Global wars will go on until a global government is created. Global sovereignty will prevent global wars — nothing else can.

It is not a question of armaments or disarmament. Neither does the question of conscription or voluntary military service enter into these problems of maintaining world-wide peace. If you take every form of modern mechanical armaments and all types of explosives away from strong nations, they will fight with fists, stones, and clubs as long as they cling to their delusions of the divine right of national sovereignty.

War is not humanity's great and terrible disease; war is a symptom, a result. The real disease is the virus of national sovereignty.

Urantia nations have not possessed real sovereignty; they never have had a sovereignty which could protect them from the ravages and devastations of world wars. In the creation of a global government, the nations are not giving up sovereignty so much as they are actually creating a real, bona fide, and lasting world sovereignty which will be fully able to protect them from all war. Local affairs will be handled by local governments; national affairs, by national governments; international affairs will be administered by global government.

World peace cannot be maintained by treaties, diplomacy, foreign policies, alliances, balances of power, or any other type of makeshift juggling with the sovereignties of nationalism. World law must come into being and must be enforced by world government — the sovereignty of all humanity.

The individual will enjoy far more liberty under world government. Today, the citizens of the great powers are taxed, regulated, and controlled almost oppressively, and much of this present interference with individual liberties will vanish when the national governments are willing to trustee their sovereignty as regards international affairs into the hands of global government.

Under global government the national groups will be afforded a real opportunity to realize and enjoy the personal liberties of genuine democracy. The fallacy of self-determination will be ended. The new era of world-wide peace will come with global regulation of money and trade. Soon a global language may evolve, and there will be at least some hope of having a global religion — or religions with a global viewpoint.

Collective security will never afford peace until the collectivity includes all humankind.

The political sovereignty of representative global government will bring lasting peace on earth, and the spiritual family of humanity will insure good will among all people. And there is no other way by which peace and good will can be realized.

After the death of Cymboyton the program encountered great difficulties in maintaining a peaceful faculty. The repercussions of Jesus' teachings would have been much greater if the later Christian teachers who joined the Urmia faculty had exhibited more wisdom and exercised more tolerance.

Cymboyton's eldest child had appealed to Abner at Philadelphia for help, but Abner's choice of teachers was most unfortunate in that they turned out to be unyielding and uncompromising. These teachers sought to make their religion dominant over the other beliefs. They never suspected that the oft-referred-to lectures of the caravan conductor had been delivered by Jesus.

As confusion increased in the faculty, the three children of Cymboyton withdrew their financial support, and after five years the school closed. Later it was reopened as a Mithraic temple and eventually burned down in connection with one of their orgiastic celebrations.

7. The Thirty-First Year (C.E. 25)

Jesus, on returning from the journey to the Caspian Sea, knew that these world travels were about finished. Jesus made only one more trip outside of Palestine, and that was into Syria, visiting briefly in Capernaum and continuing on to Nazareth, stopping over for a few days. In the middle of April Jesus left Nazareth for Tyre, then journeyed north, spending a few days at Sidon but finally arriving at Antioch.

This is the year of solitary wanderings through Palestine and Syria, with Jesus being known by various names in different parts of the country throughout this year of travel: the carpenter of Nazareth, the boatbuilder of Capernaum, the scribe of Damascus, and the teacher of Alexandria.

Jesus lived at Antioch for over two months, working, observing, studying, visiting, ministering, and all the while learning how people live, how they think, feel, and react to the environment of human existence. For three weeks of this period Jesus worked as a tentmaker, remaining longer in Antioch than at any other place on this trip. Ten years later, the Apostle Paul was preaching in Antioch and heard people speak of the doctrines of the *Damascus scribe*, little knowing that they had heard the voice, and listened to the teachings, of the Master.

From Antioch Jesus journeyed south along the coast to Caesarea, staying for a few weeks, then continuing down the coast to Joppa. From Joppa Jesus traveled inland to Jamnia, Ashdod, and Gaza, taking the inland trail to Beersheba, and remaining there for a week.

Jesus then started the final tour, as a private individual, through the heart of Palestine, going from Beersheba in the south to Dan in the north, and stopping at Hebron, Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Beeroth, Lebonah, Sychar, Shechem, Samaria, Geba, En-Gannim, Endor, Madon. Passing through Magdala and Capernaum, Jesus journeyed on north; and going east of the Waters of Merom, went by Karahta to Dan, or Caesarea-Philippi.

The indwelling Thought Adjuster now led Jesus up to Mount Hermon to finish the work of mastering the human mind and complete the task of effecting full consecration to the remainder of the bestowal mission.

This was one of those unusual and extraordinary epochs in the Master's earth life on Urantia. Another and very similar one was the experience Jesus passed through when alone in the hills near Pella just subsequent to being baptized. This period of isolation on Mount Hermon marked the termination of Jesus' purely human career, that is, the technical termination of the mortal bestowal, while the later isolation marked the beginning of the more divine phase of the bestowal. And Jesus lived alone with the Creator for six weeks on the slopes of Mount Hermon.

8. The Sojourn on Mount Hermon

After spending some time in the vicinity of Caesarea-Philippi, Jesus secured a beast of burden and engaged a youth named Tiglath, and proceeded along the Damascus road to a village known as Beit Jenn in the

foothills of Mount Hermon. Here, near the middle of August, C.E. 25, Jesus left the supplies in the custody of Tiglath and ascended the lonely slopes of the mountain. This first day Tiglath accompanied Jesus up the mountain to a designated point about 6,000 feet above sea level, where they built a stone container in which Tiglath was to deposit food twice a week.

After leaving Tiglath, Jesus ascended the mountain only a short way and paused to pray, asking the Creator to send back the guardian seraphim to “be with Tiglath.” Jesus requested permission to go alone to the last struggle with the realities of mortal existence. And this request was granted. Jesus went into the great test with only the indwelling Adjuster for guidance.

The superhuman beings with whom Jesus wrestled in spirit, and defeated in power, were *real*; they were the archenemies in the system of Satania; they were not phantasms of the imagination evolved out of the intellectual vagaries of a weakened and starving mortal who could not distinguish reality from the visions of a disordered mind.

Jesus spent the last three weeks of August and the first three weeks of September on Mount Hermon, finishing the mortal task of achieving the circles of mind-understanding and personality-control. Throughout this period of communion with the Creator, the indwelling Adjuster also completed the assigned services. The mortal goal of this earth creature was attained. Only the final phase of mind and Adjuster attunement remained to be consummated.

After more than five weeks of unbroken communion with the Creator, Jesus became absolutely assured of having a divine nature and of the certainty of triumphing over the material levels of time-space personality manifestation. Jesus fully believed in, and did not hesitate to assert, the ascendancy of the divine nature over the human nature.

Near the end of the mountain sojourn Jesus asked the Creator for permission to hold conference with the Satania enemies as the child of humanity, as Joshua ben Joseph. This request was granted. During the last week on Mount Hermon the great temptation, the universe trial, occurred. Satan (representing Lucifer) and the rebellious Planetary Administrator, Caligastia, were present with Jesus and were made fully visible. And this “temptation,” this final trial of human loyalty in the face of the misrepresentations of rebel personalities, had nothing to do with food, temple pinnacles, or presumptuous acts. It had nothing to do with the domains of this world but with the sovereignty of a mighty and glorious universe. The symbolism of your records was intended for the backward ages of the world’s childlike thought. And subsequent generations should understand what a great struggle Jesus passed through that eventful day on Mount Hermon.

To the many proposals and counterproposals of the emissaries of Lucifer, Jesus only replied: “May the will of my Paradise Parent prevail, and you, my rebellious child, may the Ancients of Days judge you divinely. I am your Creator-parent; I can hardly judge you justly, and you have already spurned my mercy. I commit you to the adjudication of the Judges of a greater universe.”

To all the Lucifer-suggested compromises and makeshifts, to all such specious proposals about the incarnation bestowal, Jesus only replied, "The will of my Parent in Paradise be done." And when the trying ordeal was finished, the detached guardian seraphim returned and ministered to Jesus.

On an afternoon in late summer, amid the trees and in the silence of nature, Michael of Nebadon won the unquestioned sovereignty of the universe, on that day completing the task set for Local Universe Creators to live to the full the incarnated life in the likeness of a mortal on the evolutionary worlds of time and space. The universe announcement of this momentous achievement was not made until the day of Jesus' baptism, months afterward, but it all really took place that day on the mountain. And when Jesus came down from this sojourn on Mount Hermon, the Lucifer rebellion in Satania and the Caligastia secession on Urantia were virtually settled. Jesus had paid the last price required to attain the sovereignty of the universe, which in itself regulates the status of all rebels and determines that all such future upheavals (if they ever occur) may be dealt with summarily and effectively. Accordingly, it may be seen that the so-called "great temptation" of Jesus took place sometime before the baptism and not just after that event.

At the end of this sojourn on the mountain, as Jesus was descending, Tiglath was coming up to the rendezvous with food. Turning Tiglath back, Jesus said only: "The period of rest is over; I must return to the Creator's business." Jesus was a silent and much changed person as they journeyed back to Dan. Giving Tiglath the donkey, Jesus proceeded south by the same way they had come, to Capernaum.

9. The Time of Waiting

It was now near the end of the summer, about the time of the day of atonement and the feast of tabernacles. Jesus had a family meeting in Capernaum over the Sabbath and the next day started for Jerusalem with John Zebedee, going to the east of the lake, by Gerasa and down the Jordan valley. John noted a great change in Jesus while on this journey.

Jesus and John stopped overnight at Bethany with Lazarus, Martha and Mary, going early the next morning to Jerusalem. They spent almost three weeks in and around the city, at least John did. Many days John went into Jerusalem alone while Jesus walked about over the near-by hills and spent much time in spiritual communion with the Creator.

Jesus and John were both present at the solemn services of the day of atonement. John was much impressed by the ceremonies of this day of all days in the Jewish religious ritual, but Jesus remained a thoughtful and silent spectator, finding this performance pitiful and pathetic, viewing it all as misrepresentative of the character and attributes of the Creator, and looking at the doings of this day as a travesty on the facts of divine justice and the truths of infinite mercy. Jesus wanted to declare the real truth about the Creator's loving character and merciful conduct in the universe, but the faithful Monitor admonished that the hour had not yet come. But that night, at Bethany, Jesus did make numerous remarks which greatly disturbed John; and John never fully understood the real significance of what Jesus said that evening.

Jesus planned to remain throughout the week of the feast of tabernacles with John. This feast was the annual holiday of all Palestine; it was the Jewish vacation time. Jesus did not participate in the entertainment of

the occasion, but did derive pleasure and experience satisfaction while observing the lighthearted and joyous abandon of the young and the old.

In the midst of the week of celebration and before the festivities were finished, Jesus took leave of John, expressing a desire to retire to the hills in order to better commune with the Creator. John would have gone along, but Jesus insisted on going alone, saying: "It is not required of you to bear my burden; only the caretaker must keep vigil while the city sleeps in peace." Jesus did not return to Jerusalem, but after almost a week alone in the hills near Bethany, departed for Capernaum. On the way home Jesus spent a day and a night alone on the slopes of Gilboa, and on arriving at Capernaum, Jesus seemed more cheerful than after leaving John in Jerusalem.

The next morning Jesus went to the chest containing personal effects, which had remained in Zebedee's workshop, put on an apron, and reported for work, saying, "I need to keep busy while I wait for my hour to come." And Jesus worked in the boatshop along with James for several months, until January of the following year. After this period, no matter what doubts arose, James never again really and wholly gave up faith in Jesus' mission.

Jesus, during this final period of work at the boatshop, spent most of the time on the interior finishing of some of the larger craft, taking great pains with all this handiwork and seeming to experience the satisfaction of human achievement when completing a commendable piece of work. While wasting little time on trifles, Jesus was painstaking when it came to the essentials of any given undertaking.

As time passed, rumors came to Capernaum of one John who was preaching while baptizing people in the Jordan, and John preached: "The realm of the Creator is at hand; have faith and be baptized." Jesus listened to these reports as John slowly moved up the Jordan valley from the ford of the river nearest to Jerusalem. But Jesus worked on, making boats, until John had journeyed up the river to a point near Pella in the month of January of the next year, C.E. 26, when Jesus laid down the tools, declaring, "My hour has come," and presently went to John for baptism.

But a great change had been coming over Jesus. Few of the people who had enjoyed Jesus' visits and ministrations ever subsequently recognized in the public teacher the same person they had known and loved as a private individual in former years. And there was a reason for the failure of these early beneficiaries to recognize Jesus in this later role as a public and authoritative teacher. For long years this transformation of mind and spirit had been in progress, and it was finished during the eventful sojourn on Mount Hermon.

Paper 135

John the Baptist

John the Baptist was born March 25, 7 B.C.E., in accordance with the promise that Gabriel made to Elizabeth in June of the previous year. For five months Elizabeth kept Gabriel's visitation secret but did tell Zacharias, who was greatly troubled and fully believed the story only after having an unusual dream about six weeks before the birth of John. Except for the visit of Gabriel to Elizabeth and the dream of Zacharias, there was nothing unusual or supernatural connected with the birth of John the Baptist.

John grew up as an ordinary child, day by day and year by year, in the small village known in those days as the City of Judah, about four miles west of Jerusalem.

The most eventful occurrence in John's early childhood was the visit, in company with Elizabeth and Zacharias, to Jesus and the Nazareth family. This visit occurred in the month of June, 1 B.C.E., when John was a little over six years of age.

After their return from Nazareth John's parents began the systematic education of the child. There was no synagogue school in this little village; however, Zacharias being a priest was fairly well educated, and Elizabeth was far better educated than most and was also a descendant of the priesthood. Since John was an only child, they spent a great deal of time on mental and spiritual training. Zacharias had only short periods of service at the temple in Jerusalem and was able to spend time teaching John.

Zacharias and Elizabeth had a small farm on which they raised sheep. They hardly made a living on this land, but Zacharias received a regular allowance from the temple funds dedicated to the priesthood.

1. John Becomes a Nazarite

John had no school from which to graduate at the age of fourteen, but Elizabeth and Zacharias had selected this as the appropriate year for John to take the formal Nazarite vow. Accordingly, the couple took the youth to Engedi, down by the Dead Sea. This was the southern headquarters of the Nazarite community, and there John was inducted into this order for life. After these ceremonies and the making of the vows to abstain from all intoxicating drinks, to let the hair grow, and to refrain from touching the dead, the family proceeded to Jerusalem, where, before the temple, John completed the making of the offerings which were required of those taking Nazarite vows.

John took the same life vows that had been administered to Samson and the prophet Samuel. A life Nazarite was considered to be a sanctified and holy personality. The Jews regarded a Nazarite with almost the respect and veneration accorded the high priest, and Nazarites of lifelong consecration were the only persons, except high priests, who were ever permitted to enter the holy of holies in the temple.

John returned home from Jerusalem to tend the family sheep and grew up to be a strong person with a noble character.

When sixteen years old, John, as a result of reading about Elijah, became greatly impressed with the prophet of Mount Carmel and decided to adopt a similar style of dress. From that day on John always wore a hairy garment with a leather girdle. At sixteen John was more than six feet tall and almost fully grown, with flowing hair and a peculiar mode of dress, and was indeed a picturesque youth. And Zacharias and Elizabeth expected great things of their only child, a child of promise and a Nazarite for life.

2. The Death of Zacharias

After an illness of several months Zacharias died in July, C.E. 12, when John was just past eighteen years of age. This was a time of great embarrassment to John since the Nazarite vow forbade contact with the dead, even in one's own family. John, who had endeavored to comply with the restrictions of this vow regarding contamination by the dead, was in doubt about having been wholly obedient to the requirements of the Nazarite order; therefore, after Zacharias's burial, John went to Jerusalem and offered the sacrifices required for cleansing.

In September of this year Elizabeth and John made a journey to Nazareth to visit Mary and Jesus. John had just about decided to begin a public mission, but was admonished, by Jesus' words and example, to return home, take care of Elizabeth, and await the "coming of the Creator's hour." After bidding Jesus and Mary good-bye at the end of this enjoyable visit, John did not see Jesus again until the event of the baptism in the Jordan.

John and Elizabeth returned to their home and began to lay plans for the future. Since John refused to accept the priest's allowance due them from the temple funds, by the end of two years they had all but lost their home, so they decided to go south with the sheep herd. Accordingly, the summer that John was twenty years of age witnessed their move to Hebron. In the so-called "wilderness of Judea" John tended sheep along a brook that was a tributary to a larger stream which entered the Dead Sea at Engedi. The Engedi colony included not only Nazarites of lifelong and time-period consecration but numerous other ascetic herders who congregated in this region with their herds and socialized with the Nazarite community. They supported themselves by sheep raising and from gifts which wealthy Jews made to the order.

As time passed, John returned less often to Hebron, while making more frequent visits to Engedi. John was entirely different from the majority of the Nazarites and found it very difficult to fully socialize with the community. But John was very fond of Abner, the acknowledged leader and head of the Engedi colony.

3. The Life of a Shepherd

Along the valley of this little brook John built no less than a dozen stone shelters and night corrals, consisting of piled-up stones, in order to watch over and safeguard the herds of sheep and goats. John's life as a shepherd afforded a great deal of time for thought. John talked much with Ezda, an orphan youth who cared for the herds when John made trips to Hebron to see Elizabeth and to sell sheep, as well as when John went down to Engedi for Sabbath services. John and Ezda lived very simply, subsisting on mutton, goat's milk, wild honey, and the edible locusts of that region. This, their regular diet, was supplemented by provisions brought from Hebron and Engedi from time to time.

John, who was kept informed about Palestinian and world affairs by Elizabeth, became more and more convinced that the time was fast approaching when the old order was to end, and was increasingly aware of having a future role as the herald of the approach of a new age. This rugged shepherd was very partial to the writings of the Prophet Daniel, having read a thousand times Daniel's description of the great image, which Zacharias had said represented the history of the great civilizations of the world, beginning with Babylon, then Persia, Greece, and finally Rome. John perceived that Rome was already composed of such polyglot peoples and races that it could never become a strongly cemented and firmly consolidated empire, believing that Rome was even then divided, like Syria, Egypt, Palestine, and other provinces.

John was never able to completely rise above the confusion produced by what Zacharias and Elizabeth had said concerning Jesus and by passages from the book of Daniel, because the words of the prophet did not harmonize with what the couple had taught. Neither did the earlier conversation with Jesus correspond with these statements of Daniel. Notwithstanding this confusion, throughout all this time Elizabeth assured John that Jesus was the true Messiah, had come to sit on the throne of David, and that John was to become Jesus' advance herald and chief support.

From hearing of the vice and wickedness of Rome, the dissoluteness and moral barrenness of the empire, and the evil doings of Herod Antipas and the governors of Judea, John was inclined to believe that the end of the age was impending. It seemed to this rugged and noble child of nature that the world was ripe for the end of the age of mortals and the dawn of the new and divine age. It was becoming clear that John was to be the last of the old prophets and the first of the new. And John fairly vibrated with the mounting impulse to go forth and proclaim to everyone: "Get right with your Maker! Get ready for the end; prepare yourselves for the appearance of the new and eternal order of earth affairs."

4. The Death of Elizabeth

On August 17, C.E. 22, when John was twenty-eight years of age, Elizabeth suddenly passed away. Elizabeth's friends, knowing of the Nazarite restrictions regarding contact with the dead, even in one's own family, made all arrangements for the burial before sending for John. When receiving word of the death of Elizabeth, John directed Ezda to drive the herds to Engedi and started for Hebron.

On returning to Engedi from the funeral, John presented the flocks to the community and for a while, went away to fast and pray. John knew only of the old methods of approach to divinity, being familiar only with the records of such as Elijah, Samuel, and Daniel. Elijah was John's ideal prophet. Elijah was the first of the teachers of Israel to be regarded as a prophet, and John truly expected to be the last of this long and illustrious line of the messengers of the divine.

For two and a half years John lived at Engedi, and persuaded most of the community that "the end of the age was at hand"; that "the age of the Deliverer was about to appear." And all John's early teaching was based on the current Jewish idea and concept of the Messiah as the promised deliverer of the Jewish nation from the domination of their gentile rulers.

Throughout this period John read much in the sacred writings found at the Engedi home of the Nazarites. John was especially impressed by Isaiah and by Malachi, the last of the prophets up to that time, reading

and rereading the last five chapters of Isaiah, and believing these prophecies. And it was the promise of Malachi that Elijah would return that deterred John from going forth to preach about the coming new age and to exhort the Jews to flee from the wrath to come. While ripe for the proclamation of the message of the coming of Elijah, this expectation held John back for more than two years. What did Malachi mean? Was the prophecy literal or figurative? How could one know the truth?

It was the influence of Elijah that caused John to adopt methods of direct and blunt assault on the sins and vices of the people of that day. John sought to dress like Elijah, endeavored to talk like Elijah, and in every outward aspect was like the olden prophet. John was just such a stalwart and picturesque child of nature, just such a fearless and daring preacher of righteousness. John was not illiterate, knowing well the Jewish sacred writings, but was hardly cultured. John was a clear thinker, a powerful speaker, and a fiery denunciator. While hardly an example to this age, John was an eloquent rebuke.

At last John determined the method of proclaiming the new age, settling on becoming the herald of the Messiah, and sweeping aside all doubts, departed from Engedi one day in March of C.E. 25 to begin a short but brilliant career as a public preacher.

5. The Realm of the Creator

In order to understand the message of the new age, account should be taken of the status of the Jewish people at the time John appeared on the stage of action. For almost one hundred years all Israel had been in a quandary; they were at a loss to explain their continuous subjugation to gentile overlords. Had not Moses taught that righteousness was always rewarded with prosperity and power? Were they not Yahweh's chosen people? Why was the throne of David desolate and vacant? In the light of the Mosaic doctrines and the precepts of the prophets the Jews found it difficult to explain their long-continued national desolation.

About one hundred years before the days of Jesus and John a new school of religious teachers arose in Palestine, the apocalyptists. These new teachers evolved a system of belief that accounted for the sufferings and humiliation of the Jews on the ground that they were paying the penalty for the nation's sins. They fell back onto the well-known reasons assigned to explain the Babylonian and other captivities of former times. But, so taught the apocalyptists, Israel should take heart; the days of their affliction were almost over; the discipline of Yahweh's chosen people was about finished; Yahweh's patience with the gentile foreigners was about exhausted. The end of Roman rule was synonymous with the end of the age and, in a certain sense, with the end of the world. These new teachers leaned heavily on the predictions of Daniel, and they consistently taught that creation was about to pass into its final stage; the realms of this world were about to become the realm of the Creator. To the Jewish mind of that day this was the meaning of that phrase — the realm of the Creator — which runs throughout the teachings of both John and Jesus. To the Jews of Palestine the phrase "realm of the Creator" had only one meaning: an absolutely righteous state in which the Messiah would rule the nations of earth in perfection of power.

In the days of John all Jews were expectantly asking, "How soon will the new age come?" There was a general feeling that the end of the rule of the gentile nations was drawing near. Throughout all Jewry there was a lively hope and a keen expectation that the consummation of the desire of the ages would occur during the lifetime of that generation.

While the Jews differed greatly in their estimates of the nature of the coming new age, but they were alike in their belief that the event was impending, near at hand, even at the door. Many who read the scriptures literally looked expectantly for a new ruler in Palestine, for a regenerated Jewish nation delivered from its enemies and presided over by the successor of David, the Messiah who would quickly be acknowledged as the rightful and righteous ruler of all the world. Another, though smaller, group of devout Jews held a vastly different view of this realm of the Creator. They taught that the coming new age was not of this world, that the world was approaching its certain end, and that this new age was to be an everlasting dominion, that sin was to be ended, and that the citizens of the new age were to become immortal in their enjoyment of this endless bliss.

All were agreed that some drastic purging or purifying discipline would of necessity precede the establishment of the new age on earth. The literalists taught that a world-wide war would ensue which would destroy all unbelievers, while the faithful would sweep on to universal and eternal victory. The spiritualists taught that the new age would be ushered in by the great judgment of Yahweh which would relegate the unrighteous to their well-deserved judgment of punishment and final destruction, at the same time elevating the believing saints of the chosen people to high seats of honor and authority with the Messiah, who would rule over the redeemed nations in Yahweh's name. And this latter group even believed that many devout gentiles might be admitted to the new realm.

Some of the Jews held to the opinion that Yahweh might possibly establish this new realm by direct and divine intervention, but the vast majority believed that Yahweh would interpose some representative intermediary, the Messiah. And that was the only possible meaning the term Messiah could have had in the minds of the Jews of the generation of John and Jesus. *Messiah* could not possibly refer to one who merely taught the Creator's will or proclaimed the necessity for righteous living. To all such holy persons the Jews gave the title of *prophet*. The Messiah was to be more than a prophet; the Messiah was to bring in the establishment of the new age, the realm of the Creator. No one who failed to do this could be the Messiah in the traditional Jewish sense.

Who would this Messiah be? Again the Jewish teachers differed. The older ones clung to the doctrine of the descendant of David. The newer taught that, since the new age was a heavenly age, the new ruler might also be a divine personality, one who had come directly from Yahweh. And strange as it may appear, those who held this conception of the ruler of the new realm looked upon the Messiah as not a mere human, but as divine, long held in waiting to assume the rulership of the earth made new. Such was the religious background of the Jewish world when John went forth proclaiming: "Have faith, for the realm of the Creator is at hand!"

It becomes apparent, therefore, that John's announcement of the coming new age had not less than half a dozen different meanings in the minds of those who listened to this impassioned preacher. But no matter what significance they attached to the phrases which John employed, each of these various groups of expectants was intrigued by the proclamations of this sincere, enthusiastic, rough-and-ready preacher of righteousness and repentance, who so solemnly exhorted everyone to "flee from the wrath to come."

6. John Begins to Preach

Early in the month of March, C.E. 25, John journeyed around the western coast of the Dead Sea and up the river Jordan to opposite Jericho, the ancient ford over which Joshua and the children of Israel passed when they first entered the promised land; and crossing over to the other side of the river, John settled near the entrance to the ford and began to preach to the people who passed by on their way back and forth across the river. This was the most frequented of all the Jordan crossings.

It was apparent to all that John was more than a preacher. The great majority of those who listened to this strange person who had come up from the Judean wilderness went away believing that they had heard the voice of a prophet. No wonder the souls of these weary and expectant Jews were deeply stirred by such a phenomenon. Never in all Jewish history had the devout children of Abraham so longed for the “consolation of Israel” or more ardently anticipated “the restoration of the nation.” Never in all Jewish history could the message, “the realm of the Creator is at hand,” have made such a deep and universal appeal as at the very time John so mysteriously appeared on the bank of this southern crossing of the Jordan.

John came from herders like Amos, was dressed like Elijah of old, and thundered admonitions and poured forth warnings in the “spirit and power of Elijah.” It is not surprising that this strange preacher created a mighty stir throughout all Palestine as the travelers carried abroad the news of this preaching along the Jordan.

There was still another and a *new* feature about the work of this Nazarite preacher: John baptized every seeker in the Jordan “for the remission of sins.” Although baptism was not a new ceremony among the Jews, they had never seen it employed as John now made use of it. It had long been the practice to baptize the gentile proselytes to enter the outer court of the temple, but the Jews themselves had never been asked to submit to the baptism of repentance. Only fifteen months intervened between the time of preaching and baptizing and John’s arrest and imprisonment at the instigation of Herod Antipas, but in this short time considerably over one hundred thousand penitents had been baptized.

John preached four months at Bethany ford before starting north up the Jordan. Tens of thousands of listeners, some curious but many earnest and serious, came from all parts of Judea, Perea, and Samaria. A few even came from Galilee.

In May of this year, while John still lingered at Bethany ford, the priests and Levites sent a delegation out to inquire whether John claimed to be the Messiah, and also asked, “by whose authority do you preach?” John answered these questioners by saying: “Go tell your masters that you have heard ‘the voice of one crying in the wilderness,’ as spoken by the prophet, saying, ‘make ready the way of Yahweh.’”

John was a heroic but tactless preacher. One day while preaching and baptizing on the west bank of the Jordan, a group of Pharisees and a number of Sadducees came forward and presented themselves for baptism. Before leading them down into the water, John, addressing them as a group said: “Who warned you to flee, as vipers before the fire, from the wrath to come? I will baptize you, but I warn you to bring forth fruit worthy of sincere repentance if you would receive the remission of your sins.”

John conducted classes for all the disciples, instructing them in the details of their new life and endeavoring to answer their many questions. John counseled the teachers to instruct in the spirit as well as the letter of the law, and instructed the rich to feed the poor. To the tax gatherers John said, “Extort no more than that which is assigned you;” and to the soldiers said, “Do no violence and exact nothing wrongfully — be content with your wages,” while counseling all: “Make ready for the end of the age — the realm of the Creator is at hand.”

7. John Journeys North

John still had confused ideas about the coming realm and its ruler, but this intellectual uncertainty concerning the nature of the coming realm never in the least lessened the conviction of the certainty of its immediate appearance. In mind John might be confused, but in spirit never. John was in no doubt about the coming realm, but was far from certain as to whether or not Jesus was to be the ruler of that realm. As long as John held to the idea of the restoration of the throne of David, the teachings of Elizabeth and Zacharias that Jesus, born in the City of David, was to be the long-expected deliverer, seemed consistent; but at those times when leaning more toward the doctrine of a spiritual realm and the end of the temporal age on earth, John was sorely in doubt as to the part Jesus would play in such events. Sometimes John questioned everything, but not for long, really wanting to talk it all over with Jesus, but that was contrary to their expressed agreement.

John, while journeying north, thought much about Jesus, pausing at more than a dozen places while traveling up the Jordan. It was at Adam that John first made reference to “another one who is to come after me” in answer to the direct question which people asked, “Are you the Messiah?” And John went on to say: “There will come after me one who is greater than I, whose sandal straps I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose. I baptize you with water, but this person will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

In response to these questions John continued, from day to day, adding more that was helpful and comforting compared with the earlier cryptic message: “Have faith and be baptized.” By this time throngs were arriving from Galilee and the Decapolis. Scores of earnest seekers lingered with their adored teacher day after day.

8. Meeting of Jesus and John

By December of C.E. 25, John’s fame had extended throughout all Palestine, and had become the chief topic of conversation in all the towns about the lake of Galilee. Jesus had spoken favorably of John’s message, and this had caused many from Capernaum to join John’s cult of baptism. James and John Zebedee had gone down in December, soon after John took up a preaching position near Pella, and had offered themselves for baptism. They went to see John once a week and brought back to Jesus fresh, firsthand reports of the evangelist’s work.

Jesus’ siblings, James and Jude, had talked about going down to John for baptism; and now that Jude had come to Capernaum for the Sabbath services, they both, after listening to Jesus’ discourse in the synagogue, decided to consult Jesus concerning their plans. This was on Saturday night, January 12, C.E. 26. Jesus promised to give them an answer the following day, sleeping very little that night and being in close

communion with the Creator. That Sunday morning Jesus was working as usual in the boatshop. James and Jude had arrived with lunch and were waiting in the lumber room, as it was not yet time for the midday recess, and they knew that Jesus was very regular about such matters.

Just before the noon rest, Jesus stopped working, and merely announced to the three workers in the room, "My hour has come," going out to James and Jude, and repeating, "My hour has come — let us go to John." And they started immediately for Pella, eating their lunch as they journeyed. This was on Sunday, January 13. They rested for the night in the Jordan valley and arrived on the scene of John's baptizing about noon of the next day.

John had just begun baptizing the candidates for the day. Scores of seekers were standing in line awaiting their turn when Jesus, Jude and James took up their positions in this line of earnest people who had become believers in John's preaching of the coming realm. John was day by day expecting to see Jesus arrive on the scene, but had not expected to greet Jesus in the line of baptismal candidates.

Being engrossed with the details of rapidly baptizing such a large number of converts, John did not look up until Jesus stood right there. The ceremonies were halted for a moment while John greeted Jesus and asked, "But why do you come down into the water to greet me?" And Jesus answered, "To be subject to your baptism." John replied: "But I have need to be baptized by you. Why do you come to me?" And Jesus whispered to John: "Bear with me now, because we need to set this example for the others standing here with me, so that the people may know that my hour has come."

There was a tone of finality and authority in Jesus' voice. John was filled with emotion while preparing to baptize Jesus of Nazareth in the Jordan at noon on Monday, January 14, C.E. 26. John baptized Jesus, James and Jude. Having baptized these three, John dismissed the others for the day, announcing that baptisms would resume at noon the next day. As the people were departing, the four still standing in the water heard a strange sound, and presently there appeared for a moment an apparition immediately over the head of Jesus, and they heard a voice saying, "This is my beloved Child in whom I am well pleased." A great change came over the countenance of Jesus, who came up out of the water in silence and took leave of them, going toward the hills to the east. And no one saw Jesus again for forty days.

John, following Jesus a short distance, told the story of Gabriel's visit to Elizabeth before either had been born, having heard it so many times from Elizabeth. John allowed Jesus to continue on after saying, "Now I know of a certainty that you are the Deliverer." But Jesus made no reply.

9. Forty Days of Preaching

John, upon returning to the disciples (there were now some twenty-five or thirty in constant attendance), found them in earnest conference, discussing what had just happened in connection with Jesus' baptism. They were all the more astonished when John now made known to them the story of the Gabriel visitation to Mary before Jesus was born, and also that Jesus did not respond even after hearing about this. There was no rain that evening, and this group of thirty or more talked long into the starlit night wondering where Jesus had gone.

After the experience of this day John's preaching took on new and certain notes of proclamation concerning the coming realm and the expected Messiah. It was a tense time, these forty days of waiting for the return of Jesus. But John continued to preach with great power, and the disciples began at about this time to preach to the overflowing throngs which gathered around John at the Jordan.

In the course of these forty days of waiting, many rumors spread about the countryside and even to Tiberias and Jerusalem. Thousands came to see the new attraction in John's camp, the reputed Messiah, but Jesus was not to be seen. When the disciples of John asserted that Jesus had gone to the hills, many doubted the entire story.

About three weeks after Jesus had left them, a new deputation from the priests and Pharisees at Jerusalem arrived on the scene at Pella. They asked John directly, "Are you Elijah or the prophet that Moses promised?" and when John said, "I am not," they boldly asked, "Are you the Messiah?" and John answered, "I am not." Then these representatives from Jerusalem said: "If you are not Elijah, nor the prophet, nor the Messiah, then why do you baptize the people and create all this stir?" And John replied: "It should be for those who have heard me and received my baptism to say who I am, but I declare to you that, while I baptize with water, there has been one among us who will return to baptize you with the Spirit."

These forty days were a difficult period for John and the disciples. What was to be the relation of John to Jesus? A hundred questions came up for discussion. Politics and selfish preferment began to make their appearance. Intense discussions grew up around the various ideas and concepts of the Messiah. Would the Messiah become a military leader and a Davidic ruler, defeating the Roman armies as Joshua had the Canaanites, or come to establish a new spiritual realm? John decided, with the minority, that Jesus had come to establish the realm of the Creator, although not being altogether clear as to just what was to be embraced within this mission.

These were strenuous days in the experience of John, who prayed for the return of Jesus. Some of John's disciples organized scouting parties to go in search of Jesus, but John stopped them, saying: "Our times are in the hands of the Creator, who will direct Jesus."

It was early on Sabbath morning, February 23, that the company of John, engaged in eating their morning meal, looked up toward the north and saw Jesus coming to them. As Jesus approached them, John stood on a large rock and, shouted: "Behold the Messiah, the deliverer of the world! This is the one of whom I have said, 'After me there will come one who is preferred before me.' For this reason I came out of the wilderness to preach repentance and to baptize with water, proclaiming that the realm of the Creator is at hand. And now comes one who shall baptize you with the Spirit. And I saw the divine spirit descending, and I heard the voice of the Creator declare, 'This is my beloved Child in whom I am well pleased.'"

Jesus asked them to return to their food and sat down to eat with John, James and Jude having returned to Capernaum.

Early in the morning of the next day Jesus left John and the disciples, going back to Galilee. To John's inquiries about continuing the preaching and mission Jesus only said, "The Creator will guide you now and

in the future as in the past.” And these two separated that morning on the banks of the Jordan, never again to greet each other in this life.

10. John Journeys South

Since Jesus had gone north into Galilee, John felt led to return south. Accordingly, on Sunday morning, March 3, John and the remainder of the disciples began their journey south. About one quarter of John’s immediate followers had meantime departed for Galilee in quest of Jesus. There was a sadness of confusion about John, who never again preached in the same manner as before baptizing Jesus. John somehow no longer felt the responsibility for the coming new age, and was disconsolate and lonely, but preached, baptized, and journeyed on southward.

Near the village of Adam, John remained for several weeks, and here made a memorable criticism of Herod Antipas. By June of this year (C.E. 26) John was back at the Bethany ford of the Jordan. In the weeks following the baptism of Jesus, the character of John’s preaching gradually changed into proclaiming mercy for the common people, while denouncing with renewed vehemence the corrupt political and religious rulers.

Herod Antipas, in whose territory John had been preaching, became alarmed about the possibility of the people starting a rebellion. Herod also resented John’s public criticisms. In view of all this, Herod decided to put John in prison. Accordingly, very early in the morning of June 12, before the multitude arrived to hear the preaching and witness the baptizing, the agents of Herod placed John under arrest. As weeks passed and John was not released, the disciples scattered over all Palestine, many of them going into Galilee to join the followers of Jesus.

11. John in Prison

John had a lonely and somewhat bitter experience in prison. Few followers were permitted to visit. John longed to see Jesus but had to be content with hearing of the work through those of the followers who had become believers in Jesus, although often being tempted to doubt Jesus and the divine mission. If Jesus were the Messiah, why was nothing done to deliver John from this unbearable imprisonment of more than a year and a half. And this experience was a great test of faith in, and loyalty to, Jesus. Indeed, this whole experience was a great test of John’s faith even in the Creator.

After John had been in prison several months, a group of the disciples came and, after reporting concerning the public activities of Jesus, said: “So you see, Teacher, that Jesus, who was with you at the upper Jordan, prospers and receives all who come, even feasting with publicans and sinners. You were a courageous witness, and yet Jesus does nothing to save you.” But John answered: “Jesus can do nothing unless it has been ordained by the Creator. You remember that I said, ‘I am not the Messiah, but I am one sent on before to prepare the way.’ And that I did. This, my joy, therefore is fulfilled. Jesus must increase but I must decrease. I am of this earth and have declared my message. Jesus of Nazareth comes down to the earth and is above us all. Jesus has descended from the Creator, and will declare to you the words of the Creator. Those who believe in the Creator have eternal life. And these words which I speak are true and abiding.”

These disciples were amazed at John's pronouncement, so much so that they departed in silence. John was also much agitated, realizing that a prophecy had just been uttered. Never again did John wholly doubt the mission and divinity of Jesus. But it was a sore disappointment that Jesus sent no word, never visited, and exercised no great power to deliver John from prison. But knowing fully the great things in preparation for John after departing from this world, and also knowing that John's work on earth was finished, Jesus chose not to interfere in the natural outworking of the great preacher-prophet's career.

This long suspense in prison was humanly unbearable. Just a few days before dying John again sent trusted messengers to Jesus, inquiring: "Is my work done? Why do I languish in prison? Are you truly the Messiah, or shall we look for another?" And when these two disciples delivered this message, Jesus replied: "Go back to John and say that I have not forgotten. Tell John what you have seen and heard — that the poor have great news preached to them — and, finally, say that John will be abundantly blessed in the age to come." And John was comforted by this final message from Jesus, being stabilized in faith and prepared for the tragic end of this life which followed so soon after this memorable occasion.

12. Death of John the Baptist

John, who was working in southern Perea when arrested, was taken immediately to the prison of the fortress of Machaerus, and was incarcerated until being executed. Herod ruled over Perea as well as Galilee, and maintained residence at this time at both Julias and Machaerus in Perea. In Galilee the official residence had been moved from Sepphoris to the new capital at Tiberias.

Herod feared to either release or to put John to death in case the multitude might riot in the capital, for thousands of Pereans believed that John was holy, a prophet. Therefore Herod kept the Nazarite preacher in prison, not knowing what else to do. Several times John had been before Herod, but never would agree either to leave the domains of Herod or to refrain from all public activities if released. And this new agitation concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was steadily increasing, admonished Herod that it was no time to turn John loose. Besides, John was also a victim of the intense and bitter hatred of Herodias, Herod's unlawful spouse.

On numerous occasions Herod talked with John about the realm of the Creator, and while sometimes seriously impressed with this message, was still afraid to release John from prison.

Since much building was still going on at Tiberias, Herod spent considerable time at the Perean residences, and was partial to the fortress of Machaerus. It was a matter of several years before all the public buildings and the official residence at Tiberias were fully completed.

In celebration of Herod's birthday, a great feast was prepared in the Machaerian palace for the chief officers and others high in the councils of the government of Galilee and Perea. Herodias, having failed to bring about John's death by direct appeal to Herod, now set about the task of having John put to death by cunning planning.

In the course of the evening's festivities and entertainment, Herodias presented Salome to dance before the banqueters. Herod was very much pleased with the performance and said to Salome, "You are charming. I

am very pleased with you. Ask me for whatever you desire, and I will give it to you, even half of my realm.” And Herod said this while heavily intoxicated. Salome drew aside and asked Herodias what to request of Herod. Herodias said, “Go to Herod and ask for the head of John the Baptist.” And Salome, returning to the banquet table, said to Herod, “I request that you give me the head of John the Baptist on a platter.”

Herod was filled with fear and sorrow, but because of the promise made to Salome and because of all those nearby, would not deny the request. And Herod Antipas sent a soldier to bring the head of John. So John was beheaded that night in the prison, the soldier bringing the head of the prophet on a platter and presenting it to Salome, who then gave the platter to Herodias. When the disciples heard this news, they came to the prison for John’s body, and after laying it in a tomb, they went and told Jesus.

Paper 136

Baptism and the Forty Days

Jesus began public work at the height of the popular interest in John's preaching and at a time when the Jewish people of Palestine were eagerly looking for the appearance of the Messiah. There was a great contrast between John and Jesus. John was an eager and earnest worker, but Jesus was a calm and happy laborer; rarely being in a hurry. Jesus was a comforting consolation to the world and somewhat of an example; John was not a comfort or an example, preaching the realm of the Creator but hardly entering into the happiness of that realm. Jesus, while speaking of John as the greatest of the prophets of the old order, also said that the least of those who saw the great light of the new way and therefore entered into the realm of the Creator was greater than John.

When John preached the coming realm, the burden of that message was: Repent! flee from the wrath to come. When Jesus began to preach, the exhortation to repentance remained, but was always followed by the message of the joy and liberty of the new realm.

1. Concepts of the Expected Messiah

The Jews entertained many ideas about the expected deliverer, and each of these different schools of Messianic teaching was able to point to statements in the Hebrew scriptures as proof of their contentions. In a general way, the Jews regarded their national history as beginning with Abraham and culminating in the Messiah and the new age of the realm of Yahweh.

In the days of John and Jesus the more learned Jews had developed an idea of the coming Messiah as the perfected and representative Israelite, combining the threefold office of prophet, priest, and ruler.

The Jews devoutly believed that, as Moses had delivered their forebears from Egyptian bondage by miraculous wonders, so the coming Messiah would deliver the Jewish people from Roman domination by even greater miracles of power and marvels of triumph. The rabbis had gathered together almost five hundred passages from the Scriptures which, notwithstanding their apparent contradictions, they claimed were prophetic of the coming Messiah. And in the midst of all these details of time, technique, and function, they almost completely lost sight of the *personality* of the promised Messiah. They were looking for a restoration of Jewish national glory — Israel's temporal exaltation — rather than for the spiritual recovery of the world. It therefore becomes evident that Jesus of Nazareth could never satisfy this materialistic Messianic concept of the Jewish mind. Many of their reputed Messianic predictions, if they had only viewed these prophetic statements in a different light, would have very naturally prepared their minds for a recognition of Jesus as the terminator of one age and the inaugurator of a new and better dispensation of mercy and redemption for all nations.

The Jews had been brought up to believe in the doctrine of the *Shekinah*. But this reputed symbol of the Divine Presence was not to be seen in the temple. They believed that the coming of the Messiah would bring its restoration. They held confusing ideas about sin and the supposed evil nature of mortals. Some taught that original sin had cursed the human race, and that the Messiah would remove this curse and restore

humanity to divine favor. Others taught that Yahweh had put into mortals both good and evil natures; that Yahweh, on observing the outworking of this arrangement, was greatly disappointed. And those who taught this believed that the Messiah was to come in order to redeem mortals from this inherent evil nature.

The majority of the Jews believed that they continued to languish under Roman rule because of their national sins and because of the half-heartedness of the gentile proselytes. The Jewish nation had not wholeheartedly *repented*; therefore the Messiah was delayed in coming.

There was one feature of the bestowal of Michael which was utterly foreign to the Jewish conception of the Messiah, and that was the *union* of the two natures, the human and the divine. The Jews had variously conceived of the Messiah as perfected human, superhuman, and even as divine, but they never entertained the concept of the *union* of the human and the divine. And this was the great stumbling block of Jesus' early disciples. They grasped the human concept of the Messiah as the descendent of David, as presented by the earlier prophets; as the Child of Humanity, the superhuman idea of Daniel and some of the later prophets; and even as the Child of the Creator, as depicted by the author of the Book of Enoch and by certain contemporaries; but they had never entertained the true concept of the union in one earth personality of the two natures, the human and the divine. The incarnation of the Creator in the form of the creature had not been revealed beforehand. It was revealed only in Jesus; the world knew nothing of such things until the Local Universe Creator lived among the mortals of the realm.

2. The Baptism of Jesus

Jesus was baptized at the very height of John's preaching when Palestine was aflame with the expectancy of the message — "the realm of the Creator is here" — when all Jewry was engaged in serious and solemn self-examination. The Jewish sense of solidarity was very profound. The Jews not only believed that the sins of the parents might afflict the children, but they firmly believed that the sin of one individual might curse the nation. Accordingly, not all who submitted to John's baptism regarded themselves as being guilty of the specific sins which John denounced. Many devout souls were baptized by John for the good of Israel. They feared that some sin of ignorance on their part might delay the coming of the Messiah. They felt that they belonged to a guilty and sin-cursed nation, and they presented themselves for baptism so that they might manifest fruits of penitence. It is therefore evident that Jesus in no sense received John's baptism as a rite of repentance or for the remission of sins. In accepting baptism at the hands of John, Jesus was only following the example of many pious Israelites.

Jesus of Nazareth, on going down into the Jordan to be baptized, was a mortal who had attained the pinnacle of human evolutionary ascension in all matters related to the conquest of mind and to self-identification with the spirit. Jesus stood in the Jordan that day a perfected mortal of the evolutionary worlds of time and space. Perfect synchrony and full communication had become established between the mortal mind of Jesus and the indwelling spirit Adjuster, the divine gift of the Creator in Paradise. And just such an Adjuster indwells all normal beings living on Urantia since the ascension of Michael to the sovereignty of the universe, except that Jesus' Adjuster had been previously prepared for this special mission by similarly indwelling another incarnated superhuman, Machiventa Melchizedek.

Ordinarily, when a mortal attains such high levels of personality perfection, those preliminary phenomena of spiritual elevation occur which terminate in eventual fusion of the matured soul of the mortal with its associated divine Adjuster. And such a change was apparently due to take place in the personality experience of Jesus of Nazareth on that very day on going down into the Jordan to be baptized by John. This ceremony was the final act of Jesus' purely human life on Urantia, and many superhuman observers expected to witness the fusion of the Adjuster with its indwelt mind, but they were all destined to suffer disappointment. Something new and even greater occurred. As John laid hands on Jesus, the indwelling Adjuster took final leave of the perfected human soul of Joshua ben Joseph. And in a few moments this divine entity returned from Divinington as a Personalized Adjuster and chief of Adjusters throughout the entire local universe of Nebadon. Jesus observed this divine spirit descending on its return in personalized form, and heard this same spirit of Paradise origin now speak, saying, "This is my beloved Child in whom I am well pleased." And John, with James and Jude, also heard these words. John's disciples, standing by the water's edge, did not hear them, nor did they see the apparition of the Personalized Adjuster. Only Jesus saw the Personalized Adjuster.

When the Personalized Adjuster had spoken, all was silence. And while the four of them lingered in the water, Jesus, looking up to the near-by Adjuster, prayed: "My Creator Parent who reigns in Paradise, hallowed be your name. Your dominion come! Your will be done on earth, even as it is in Paradise." Jesus then saw the vision, presented by the now Personalized Adjuster, of the previous existence as Michael before coming to earth, and what that existence would be when the incarnated life is finished. This vision was seen only by Jesus.

It was the voice of the Personalized Adjuster that John and Jesus heard, speaking on behalf of the Universal Source, for the Adjuster is of, and as, the Paradise Creator. Throughout the remainder of Jesus' earth life this Personalized Adjuster was associated in all of the work to come; Jesus was in constant communion with this exalted Adjuster.

On being baptized, Jesus made no repentance or confession of sin. This was the baptism of consecration to the performance of the will of the Creator. At the baptism Jesus heard the unmistakable call of the Creator, the final summons to be about the Creator's business, and Jesus went away into private seclusion for forty days to think over these manifold problems. In retiring from active personality contact with the earthly associates, Jesus was following the very procedure that exists on the morontia worlds whenever an ascending mortal fuses with the inner presence of the Universal Source.

This day of baptism ended the purely human life of Jesus. The divine Being has found the Creator, the Universal Source has found the incarnated Child, and they speak directly to each other.

(Jesus was almost thirty-one and one-half years old when baptized. While Luke says that Jesus was baptized in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, which would be C.E. 29 since Augustus died in C.E. 14, it should be recalled that Tiberius was co-emperor with Augustus for two and one-half years before the death of Augustus, having had commemorative coins struck in October, C.E. 11. The fifteenth year of Tiberius' actual rule was, therefore, this very year of C.E. 26, that of Jesus' baptism. And this was also the year that Pontius Pilate began to rule as governor of Judea.)

3. The Forty Days

Jesus had endured the great temptation of the mortal bestowal after being on Mount Hermon for six weeks before the baptism. There, as an unaided mortal of the realm, Jesus had met and defeated the Urantia pretender, Caligastia, the administrator of this world. That eventful day, on the universe records, Jesus of Nazareth had become the Planetary Administrator of Urantia. And this new ruler of Urantia, so soon to be proclaimed supreme Sovereign of Nebadon, now went into forty days of retirement to formulate the plans and determine the technique of proclaiming the new realm of the Creator in the hearts of mortals.

After the baptism Jesus began the forty days of adjusting to the changed relationships of the world and the universe occasioned by the personalization of the Adjuster. During this isolation in the Perean hills Jesus determined the policy to be pursued and the methods to be employed in the new and changed phase of earth life which was about to be inaugurated.

Jesus did not go into retirement for the purpose of fasting or spiritually struggling. Jesus was not an ascetic, and came to forever destroy all such notions regarding the approach to the Creator. The reasons for seeking this retirement were entirely different from those which had actuated Moses and Elijah, and even John the Baptist. Jesus was at that time wholly self-conscious concerning the relation to this universe and also to the universe of universes, now fully recalling the bestowal charge and its instructions administered by Immanuel before the Urantia incarnation. Jesus now clearly and fully comprehended all these relationships, and desired to be away for a time of quiet meditation in order to formulate the plans and develop the procedures for the public labors on behalf of this world and for all other worlds in this local universe.

While wandering about in the hills, seeking a suitable shelter, Jesus encountered the universe chief executive, Gabriel, the Bright and Morning Star of Nebadon. Gabriel now re-established personal communication with the ruler of the universe; they met directly for the first time since Michael took leave of Salvington on going to Edentia preparatory to beginning the Urantia bestowal. Gabriel, by direction of Immanuel and on authority of the Uversa Ancients of Days, now imparted to Jesus information indicating that the bestowal experience on Urantia was practically finished so far as concerned the earning of the perfected sovereignty of this universe and the termination of the Lucifer rebellion. The former was achieved on the day of baptism when the personalization of the Adjuster demonstrated the perfection and completion of the bestowal, and the latter was a fact of history on that day when Jesus came down from Mount Hermon. Jesus was now informed, on the highest authority of the local universe and the superuniverse, that the bestowal work was finished in relation to sovereignty and rebellion. This assurance had already been received directly from Paradise in the baptismal vision and in the phenomenon of the personalization of the indwelling Thought Adjuster.

While Jesus was on the mountain talking with Gabriel, the Constellation Ruler of Edentia appeared to them in person, saying: "The records are completed. The sovereignty of Michael over the universe of Nebadon rests in completion with the Universal Source. I bring to you the bestowal release of Immanuel, your sponsor for the Urantia incarnation. You are at liberty now or at any subsequent time, in the manner of your own choosing, to terminate your incarnation bestowal, ascend to your Creator Parent, receive your sovereignty, and assume your well-earned unconditional rulership of all Nebadon. I also testify to the completion of the records of the superuniverse, by authorization of the Ancients of Days, having to do with

the termination of all sin-rebellion in your universe and endowing you with full and unlimited authority to deal with any and all such possible upheavals in the future. Technically, your work on Urantia and as a mortal creature is finished. Your course from now on is a matter of your own choosing.”

Jesus, when the Most High Ruler of Edentia had left, held a long conversation with Gabriel regarding the welfare of the universe, sent greetings to Immanuel, and offered to always be mindful of Immanuel’s counsel in connection with the work that was about to be undertaken on Urantia.

Throughout all of these forty days of isolation James and John Zebedee were engaged in searching for Jesus.

4. Plans for Public Work

Day by day, up in the hills, Jesus formulated the plans for the remainder of the Urantia bestowal, first deciding not to teach contemporaneously with John. Jesus planned to remain in comparative retirement until John’s work achieved its purpose, or until John was suddenly stopped by imprisonment. Jesus knew that John’s fearless and tactless preaching would presently arouse the fears and antagonism of the civil rulers. In view of John’s precarious situation, Jesus began to plan a program of public labors on behalf of the people of Palestine and the world, and on behalf of every inhabited world throughout this vast universe. Michael’s mortal bestowal was *on* Urantia but *for* all worlds of Nebadon.

The first thing Jesus did, after thinking through the general plan of co-ordinating with John’s movement, was to review the instructions of Immanuel, carefully reviewing the advice given regarding the methods of labor, and as to leaving no permanent writing on the planet. Never again did Jesus write on anything except sand. On the next visit to Nazareth, much to the sorrow of Joseph, Jesus destroyed all of the writing that was preserved on the boards about the carpenter shop, and which hung on the walls of the old home. And Jesus pondered Immanuel’s advice pertaining to the economic, social, and political attitude toward the world.

Jesus did not fast during this forty days’ isolation. The longest period without food was the first two days in the hills. Jesus was so engrossed with planning that all thought of eating was forgotten, and finally on the third day went in search of food. Neither was Jesus *tempted* during this time by any evil spirits or rebel personalities of station on this world or from any other world.

These forty days were the occasion of the final conference between the human and the divine minds, or rather the first real functioning of these two minds now made one. The results of this momentous time of meditation demonstrated conclusively that the divine mind has triumphantly and spiritually dominated the human intellect. The mortal mind has become the mind of the Creator from this time on, and though the selfhood of the mortal mind is always present, this spiritualized human mind consistently says, “Not my will but yours be done.”

The transactions of this eventful time were not the fantastic visions of a starved and weakened mind, neither were they the confused and immature symbolisms which afterward gained record as the “temptations of Jesus in the wilderness.” This was a season for thinking over the whole eventful and varied career of the

Urantia bestowal and for the careful laying of those plans for further ministry which would best serve this world while also contributing something to the betterment of all other rebellion-isolated spheres. Jesus reviewed the whole span of human life on Urantia, from the days of the original twins, through the Edenic default, and on to the ministry of the Melchizedek of Salem.

On the advice of Gabriel, Jesus was reminded that there were two ways to become manifest to the world if the choice was made to remain on Urantia for a time. And it was made clear to Jesus that this choice would have nothing to do with either universe sovereignty or the termination of the Lucifer rebellion. These two ways of world ministry were:

1. Jesus' personal way — the way that might seem most pleasant and profitable from the standpoint of the immediate needs of this world and the present edification of the universe.
2. The Creator's way — the exemplification of a farseeing ideal of creature life visualized by the high personalities of the Paradise administration of the universe of universes.

Each of these ways had something to be said in its favor as it might be regarded in the light of the immediate situation. Jesus clearly saw that the choice between these two modes of conduct would have nothing to do with universe sovereignty; that was a matter already settled and sealed on the records of the universe of universes and only needed to be claimed. But Gabriel indicated that it would afford Immanuel great satisfaction if Jesus should see fit to finish up the earth career of incarnation as it had so nobly begun, always subject to the Creator's will. On the third day of this isolation Jesus decided to go back to the world to finish the earth career, and that in a situation involving any two ways would always choose the Creator's will. And Jesus lived out the remainder of the earth life always true to that resolve, even to the bitter end invariably being subordinate to the will of the Creator.

The forty days in the mountain wilderness were not a period of great temptation but rather the period of the Master's *great decisions*. During these days of lone communion with the Creator's immediate presence — the Personalized Adjuster (Jesus no longer had a personal seraphic guardian) — one by one the great decisions were arrived at which were to control the policies and conduct for the remainder of the earth career. Subsequently the tradition of a great temptation became attached to this period of isolation through confusion with the fragmentary narratives of the Mount Hermon struggles, and further because it was the custom to have all great prophets and human leaders begin their public careers by undergoing these supposed times of fasting and prayer. It had always been Jesus' practice, when facing any new or serious decisions, to withdraw for communion with the Adjuster in order to seek to know the will of the Creator.

In all this planning for the remainder of the earth life, Jesus was always torn by two opposing courses of conduct:

1. The strong desire to win the Jewish people — and the whole world — to believe in and accept the new spiritual age. And Jesus well knew their ideas concerning the coming Messiah.
2. To live and work as the Creator would approve, to conduct the work on behalf of other worlds in need, and to continue, in the establishment of the new realm, to reveal the Creator's divine character of love.

Throughout these eventful days Jesus lived in an ancient rock cavern, a shelter in the side of the hills near a village called Beit Adis, drinking from the small spring which came from the side of the hill near this rock shelter.

5. The First Great Decision

On the third day after beginning this conference with the Personalized Adjuster, Jesus was presented with the vision of the assembled celestial hosts of Nebadon sent by their commanders to wait on the will of their beloved Sovereign. This mighty host embraced twelve legions of seraphim and proportionate numbers of every order of universe intelligence. And the first great decision of Jesus' isolation had to do with whether or not to make use of these mighty personalities in connection with the ensuing program of the public work on Urantia.

Jesus decided to not utilize a single personality of this vast assemblage unless it should become evident that this was *the Creator's will*. Notwithstanding this general decision, this vast host remained throughout the balance of Jesus' earth life, always in readiness to obey the least expression of their Sovereign's will. Although Jesus did not constantly see these attendant personalities with human eyes, the associated Personalized Adjuster could communicate with all of them.

Before coming down from the forty days' retreat in the hills, Jesus assigned the immediate command of this attendant host of universe personalities to the recently Personalized Adjuster, and for more than four years of Urantia time these selected personalities from every division of universe intelligences obediently and respectfully functioned under the wise guidance of this exalted and experienced Personalized Mystery Monitor. In assuming command of this mighty assembly, the Adjuster, being a onetime part and essence of the Paradise Source, assured Jesus that these superhuman agencies would in no case be permitted to serve, or manifest themselves in connection with, or on behalf of, Jesus' earth career unless it should develop that the Creator willed such intervention. Thus by one great decision Jesus voluntarily rejected all superhuman co-operation in all matters having to do with the remainder of the mortal career unless the Creator might independently choose to participate in some certain act or episode of these earth labors.

In accepting this command of the universe hosts, the Personalized Adjuster took great pains to point out to Jesus that, while such an assembly of universe creatures could be limited in their *space* activities by the delegated authority of their Local Universe Creator, such limitations were not operative in connection with their function in *time*. And this limitation was dependent on the fact that Adjusters are non-time beings when they are personalized. Accordingly Jesus was admonished that, while the Adjuster's control of the living universe intelligences would be complete and perfect as to all matters involving *space*, there could be no such perfect limitations imposed regarding *time*. Said the Adjuster: "I will, as you have directed, enjoin the employment of this attendant host of universe intelligences in any manner in connection with your earth career except in those cases where the Paradise Creator directs me to release such agencies in order that your choosing of the divine will may be accomplished, and in those instances where you may engage in any choice or act of your divine-human will which will only involve departures from the natural earth order as to *time*. In all such events I am powerless, and your creatures here assembled in perfection and unity of power are likewise helpless. If your united natures once entertain such desires, these mandates of your choice will be immediately executed. Your wish in all such matters will constitute the abridgment

of time, and the thing projected *is* existent. Under my command this constitutes the fullest possible limitation which can be imposed upon your potential sovereignty. In my self-consciousness time is nonexistent, and therefore I cannot limit your creatures in anything related to time.”

Thus Jesus became apprised of the working out of the decision to go on living as a mortal among mortals. By a single decision Jesus excluded all of the attendant universe hosts of varied intelligences from participating in the ensuing public ministry except in such matters as only concerned *time*. It therefore becomes evident that any possible supernatural or supposedly superhuman accompaniments of Jesus’ ministry pertained wholly to the elimination of time unless the Creator specifically ruled otherwise. No miracle, ministry of mercy, or any other possible event occurring in connection with Jesus’ remaining earth labors could possibly be of the nature or character of an act transcending the natural laws established and regularly working in the affairs of mortals as they live on Urantia *except* in this expressly stated matter of *time*. No limits, of course, could be placed on the manifestations of “the Creator’s will.” The elimination of time in connection with the expressed desire of this potential Sovereign of a universe could only be avoided by the direct and explicit act of the *will* of this superhuman personality to the effect that time, as related to the act or event in question, *should not be shortened or eliminated*. In order to prevent the appearance of apparent *time miracles*, it was necessary for Jesus to remain constantly time conscious. Any lapse of time consciousness in connection with the entertainment of definite desire was equivalent to the enactment of the thing conceived in the mind of this Local Universe Creator, and without the intervention of time.

Through the supervising control of the associated and Personalized Adjuster it was possible for Michael to perfectly limit personal earth activities with reference to space, but it was not possible to limit this new earth status as potential Sovereign of Nebadon as regards *time*. And this was the actual status of Jesus of Nazareth on beginning the public ministry on Urantia.

6. The Second Decision

Having settled the policy concerning all personalities of all classes of created intelligences, so far as this could be determined in view of the inherent potential of the new status of divinity, Jesus now thought about personal concerns. What would the now fully self-conscious creator of all things and beings existent in this universe do with these creator prerogatives in the recurring life situations which would immediately arise on returning to Galilee to resume working among the people? In fact, already, and right there in these lonely hills, this problem had forcibly presented itself in the matter of obtaining food. By the third day of solitary meditations the human body grew hungry. Should Jesus go in quest of food or merely exercise a creator’s normal powers and produce suitable bodily nourishment ready at hand? And this great decision of the Master has been portrayed to you as a temptation — as a challenge by supposed enemies to “command that these stones become loaves of bread.”

Jesus thus settled on another and consistent policy for the remainder of the earth labors. As far as personal necessities were concerned, and in general even in relations with other personalities, Jesus now deliberately chose to pursue the path of normal earthly existence, definitely deciding against a policy which would transcend or violate established natural laws. But Jesus could not be sure that these natural laws might not, in certain conceivable circumstances, be greatly *accelerated*. In principle, Jesus decided to organize and

prosecute all outward activity in accordance with natural law and in harmony with the existing social organization. The Master therefore chose a program of living which was the equivalent of deciding against miracles and wonders, again deciding in favor of “the Creator’s will” and surrendering everything to the Paradise Creator.

Jesus’ human nature dictated that the first duty was self-preservation; that is the normal attitude of the natural mortal on the worlds of time and space, and it is, therefore, a legitimate reaction of a Urantia mortal. Jesus was not concerned merely with this world and its creatures, but was living a life designed to instruct and inspire the manifold creatures of an entire universe.

Before the baptismal illumination Jesus had lived in perfect submission to the will and guidance of the Creator, emphatically deciding to continue on in just such implicit mortal dependence on the Creator’s will and intending to follow the unnatural course — not to seek self-preservation. In reaching this conclusion with regard to the appetite of the physical nature as expressed in hunger for food, Jesus made a final declaration concerning all other material urges and the natural impulses of human nature.

Jesus might possibly use superhuman power for others, but never for personal benefit. And Jesus pursued this policy consistently to the very end.

The Jews were expecting a Messiah who would do even greater wonders than Moses, who was reputed to have brought forth water from the rock in a desert place and to have fed their ancestors with manna in the wilderness. Jesus knew the sort of Messiah people expected, and had all the powers and prerogatives to measure up to their most sanguine expectations, but decided against such a magnificent program of power and glory. Jesus viewed such a course of expected miracle working as going back to the olden days of ignorant magic and the degraded practices of the savage shamans. Jesus might accelerate natural law for the sake of others, but would not transcend those laws, either for personal benefit or the overawing of the people. And the Master’s decision was final.

Jesus sorrowed for the people; fully understanding how they had been led to the expectation of the coming Messiah. The Jews believed that the Messiah would usher in an era of miraculous plenty. The Hebrews had long been nurtured on traditions of miracles and legends of wonders.

Jesus was not a Messiah coming to multiply bread and wine. Jesus did not come to minister only to temporal needs, but came to reveal the Creator to the children on earth, while seeking to lead these earth children to join in a sincere effort to live so as to do the will of the Universal Creator.

In this decision Jesus of Nazareth portrayed to an onlooking universe the folly and sin of prostituting divine talents and Creator-given abilities for personal aggrandizement or for purely selfish gain and glorification. That was the sin of Lucifer and Caligastia.

This great decision dramatically portrays the truth that selfish satisfaction and sensuous gratification, alone and of themselves, are not able to confer happiness on evolving human beings. There are higher values in mortal existence — intellectual mastery and spiritual achievement — which far transcend the necessary gratification of mortals’ purely physical appetites and urges. Mortals’ natural endowment of talent and

ability should be chiefly devoted to the development and ennoblement of their higher powers of mind and spirit.

Jesus revealed to the creatures of the universe the technique of the new and better way, the higher moral values of living and the deeper spiritual satisfactions of evolutionary human existence on the worlds of space.

7. The Third Decision

Having made the decisions regarding such matters as food and physical ministration to the material body, other problems remained to be solved. What would be the attitude to take when confronted by personal danger? Jesus decided to exercise normal watchcare over personal safety and to take reasonable precaution to prevent the untimely termination of the mortal career, but to refrain from all superhuman intervention when the crisis of this life should come. While formulating this decision, Jesus was seated under the shade of a tree on an overhanging ledge of rock overlooking a precipice, realizing that it would be possible to leap off the ledge and out into space, and that no harm could occur provided the first great decision not to invoke the interposition of any celestial intelligences in the prosecution of the bestowal mission were rescinded, along with the second decision concerning self-preservation.

Jesus knew that the Jews were expecting a Messiah who would be above natural law. Would this sort of presumption, this defiance of the Creator's laws of gravity, be justified in order to avoid possible harm or, perchance, to win the confidence of the mistaught and distracted people? But such a course, however gratifying to the sign-seeking Jews, would be, not a revelation of the Creator, but a questionable trifling with the established laws of the universe of universes.

Understanding all of this and knowing that the Master refused to work in defiance of the established laws of nature in so far as personal conduct was concerned, you know of a certainty that Jesus never walked on the water nor did anything else which was an outrage to the material order of administering the world; always, of course, bearing in mind that no way had, as yet, been found for Jesus to be wholly delivered from the lack of control over the element of time in connection with those matters put under the jurisdiction of the Personalized Adjuster.

Throughout the entire earth life career Jesus was consistently loyal to this decision. Whether taunted by the Pharisees for a sign, or dared to come down from the cross by the watchers at Calvary, Jesus steadfastly adhered to the decision of this time on the hillside.

8. The Fourth Decision

The next great problem with which Jesus wrestled and presently decided in accordance with the will of the Creator, concerned the question as to whether or not any superhuman powers should be employed for the purpose of attracting the attention and winning the adherence of the people. Should universe powers be used for the gratification of the Jewish expectation for the spectacular and the marvelous? Jesus decided not, but settled on a policy of procedure which eliminated all such practices as the method of bringing the bestowal mission to the notice of the people. And Jesus consistently lived up to this great decision. Even

when permitting the manifestation of numerous time-shortening ministrations of mercy, Jesus almost invariably admonished the recipients of healing ministry to tell no one about the benefits they had received, and always refused the taunting challenge of enemies to “show us a sign” in proof and demonstration of divinity.

Jesus very wisely foresaw that the working of miracles and the execution of wonders would call forth only outward allegiance by overawing the material mind; such performances would not reveal the Creator nor save mortals. Jesus refused to become a mere wonder-worker, resolving to become occupied with only a single task — the establishment of the realm of the Creator.

Throughout all this momentous dialogue, the human element of questioning and near-doubting was present, for Jesus was mortal as well as divine. It was evident that Jesus would never be received by the Jews as the Messiah without working wonders. Besides, consenting to do just one unnatural thing would result in the human mind knowing of a certainty that it was in subservience to a truly divine mind. Would it be consistent with “the Creator’s will” for the divine mind to make this concession to the doubting nature of the human mind? Jesus decided that it would not and cited the presence of the Personalized Adjuster as sufficient proof of divinity in partnership with humanity.

Jesus had traveled much and knew the methods of the world — how people gained their ends in politics and commerce by compromise and diplomacy. Could this knowledge be utilized in the furtherance of the bestowal mission? No! Jesus also decided against all compromise with the wisdom of the world and the influence of riches in the establishment of the new realm, again choosing to depend exclusively on the Creator’s will.

Jesus was fully aware of the many ways in which it would be possible to attract the attention of the nation and the whole world. Soon the Passover would be celebrated at Jerusalem; the city would be thronged with visitors. Jesus could ascend the pinnacle of the temple and in front of the bewildered multitude walk out on the air; that would be the kind of a Messiah they were looking for. But they would subsequently be disappointed since Jesus had not come to re-establish David’s throne, knowing the futility of the Caligastia method of trying to get ahead of the natural, slow, and sure way of accomplishing the divine purpose. Again, Jesus bowed obediently to the Creator’s way, the Creator’s will.

Jesus chose to establish the realm of the Creator in the hearts of humankind by natural, ordinary, difficult, and trying methods, just such procedures as others must subsequently follow in their work of enlarging and extending that realm. Jesus was now passing through the great test of civilized mortals, to have power and steadfastly refuse to use it for purely selfish or personal purposes.

In your consideration of Jesus’ life and experience, it should always be borne in mind that the Local Universe Creator was incarnate in the mind of a first-century human being, not in the mind of a twenty-first century or other-century mortal. By this we mean to convey the idea that the human endowments of Jesus were of natural acquirement. Jesus was the product of the hereditary and environmental factors of the time, plus the influence of training and education. Jesus’ humanity was genuine, natural, and wholly derived from the antecedents of, and fostered by, the actual intellectual status and social and economic conditions of that day and generation. While in the experience of this dual personality there was always the possibility that

the divine mind would transcend the human intellect, nonetheless, when, and as, the human mind functioned, it performed as would a true mortal mind under the conditions of the human environment of that day.

Jesus portrayed to all the worlds of the vast universe the folly of creating artificial situations for the purpose of exhibiting arbitrary authority or of indulging exceptional power for the purpose of enhancing moral values or accelerating spiritual progress. Jesus decided not to dedicate this mission on earth to a repetition of the disappointment of the reign of the Maccabees, refusing to prostitute divine attributes for the purpose of acquiring unearned popularity or for gaining political prestige. Jesus would not countenance the transmutation of divine and creative energy into national power or international prestige. Jesus of Nazareth refused to compromise with *evil*, much less to consort with sin. The Master triumphantly put loyalty to the Creator's will above every other earthly and temporal consideration.

9. The Fifth Decision

Having settled such questions of policy as pertained to personal relations to natural law and spiritual power, Jesus turned to the choice of methods to be employed in the proclamation and establishment of the new age. John had already begun this work; how might Jesus continue the message? How should John's mission be taken over? How should the followers be organized for effective effort and intelligent co-operation? Jesus was now reaching the final decision which would forbid further consideration of being the Jewish Messiah, at least as the Messiah was popularly conceived in that day.

The Jews envisaged a deliverer who would come in miraculous power to cast down Israel's enemies and establish the Jews as world rulers, free from want and oppression. Jesus knew that this hope would never be realized, that the realm of the Creator had to do with the overthrow of evil in the hearts of mortals, and that it was purely a matter of spiritual concern. Jesus considered the advisability of inaugurating the spiritual realm with a brilliant and dazzling display of power — and such a course would have been permissible and wholly within the jurisdiction of Michael — but fully decided against such a plan, being unwilling to compromise with the revolutionary techniques of Caligastia. Jesus had won the world in potential by submission to the Creator's will, and proposed to finish this work as it had begun, and as a mortal.

You can hardly imagine what would have happened on Urantia had Jesus, now in potential possession of all power in the universe and on earth, once decided to unfurl the banner of sovereignty, to marshal the wonder-working battalions in militant array! But Jesus would not compromise; would not embrace evil so that the worship of the Creator might presumably be served. Jesus would abide by the Creator's will.

As the days passed, with ever-increasing clarity Jesus perceived what the new role of truth-revealer would be, discerning that the Creator's way was not going to be the easy way, and, beginning to realize that the remainder of the human experience might possibly be bitter, resolved to experience it.

Even the human mind is saying good-bye to the throne of David. Step by step this human mind follows in the path of the divine. The human mind still asks questions but unfailingly accepts the divine answers as final rulings in this combined life of living as a mortal in the world while all the time submitting unqualifiedly to the doing of the Creator's eternal and divine will.

Rome was ruler of the Western world. Jesus, now in isolation and achieving these momentous decisions, in command of the hosts of heaven, represented the last chance of the Jews to attain world dominion. But this earthborn Jew, who possessed such tremendous wisdom and power, declined to use these universe endowments either for self-aggrandizement or for the enthronement of the Jewish people. Jesus understood “the governments of this world,” and possessed the power to take them. The Most Highs of Edentia had conferred all these powers but Jesus did not want them. The governments of earth were paltry things to interest the Creator and Ruler of a universe. Jesus had only one objective, the further revelation of the Creator to mortals, the establishment of the rule of the Creator in the hearts of humankind.

The idea of battle, contention, and slaughter was repugnant to Jesus, who would have none of it. Jesus would appear on earth to reveal a Deity of love. Before the baptism Jesus had again refused the offer of the Zealots to lead them in rebellion against the Roman oppressors.

At last, and finally, the human mind of Jesus made a clean sweep of all these Messianic difficulties and contradictions — Hebrew scriptures, parental training, chazan teaching, Jewish expectations, and human ambitious longings. Once and for all Jesus decided to return to Galilee and quietly begin the proclamation of the new realm and trust the Creator (the Personalized Adjuster) to work out the details of procedure day by day.

By these decisions Jesus set a worthy example for every person on every world throughout a vast universe when refusing to apply material tests to spiritual problems, when refusing to presumptuously defy natural laws. And Jesus set an inspiring example of universe loyalty and moral nobility when refusing to grasp temporal power as the prelude to spiritual glory.

If Jesus had any doubts about this mission and its nature when going up in the hills after the baptism, there were none following the forty days of isolation and decisions.

Jesus has formulated a program for the establishment of the Creator’s realm. It involved not catering to the physical gratification of the people, not dealing out bread to the multitudes as Jesus had so recently seen being done in Rome, not attracting attention by wonder-working, even though the Jews are expecting just that sort of a deliverer, and not seeking to win acceptance of a spiritual message by a show of political authority or temporal power.

In rejecting these methods of enhancing the coming realm in the eyes of the expectant Jews, Jesus made sure that any claims to authority and divinity would be rejected by these same Jews. Knowing all this, Jesus sought to prevent being considered the Messiah by the early followers.

Throughout the public ministry three constantly recurring situations occurred: the clamor to be fed, the insistence on miracles, and the desire to make Jesus ruler. But Jesus never departed from the decisions that were made during these days of isolation in the Perea hills.

10. The Sixth Decision

On the last day of this memorable isolation, before starting down the mountain to join John and the disciples, Jesus made a final decision, and communicated this decision to the Personalized Adjuster in these words,

“And in all other matters, as in these decisions, I pledge to you that I will be subject to the will of my Creator Parent.” And Jesus, having spoken, journeyed down the mountain, and shone with the glory of spiritual victory and moral achievement.

Paper 137

Waiting in Galilee

Early on Saturday morning, February 23, C.E. 26, Jesus came down from the hills to rejoin John's company encamped at Pella. All that day Jesus mingled with the multitude, ministering to a child who had been injured in a fall and journeying to the near-by village of Pella to deliver the youth safely home.

1. Choosing the First Four Apostles

During this Sabbath two of John's leading disciples spent much time with Jesus. Of all John's followers one named Andrew was the most profoundly impressed with Jesus; going along on the trip to Pella with the injured youth. On the way back to John's rendezvous Andrew asked Jesus many questions, and just before reaching their destination, the two paused for a short talk, during which Andrew said: "I have observed you ever since you came to Capernaum, and I believe you are the new Teacher, and though I do not understand all your teaching, I have fully made up my mind to follow you; I would sit at your feet and learn the whole truth about the new age." And Jesus, with hearty assurance, welcomed Andrew as the first of the apostles, that group of twelve who were to participate in the work of establishing the new realm of the Creator in the hearts of mortals.

Andrew was a silent observer of, and sincere believer in, John's work, along with a very able and enthusiastic sibling named Simon, who was one of John's foremost disciples. It would not be amiss to say that Simon was one of John's chief supporters.

Soon after Jesus and Andrew returned to the camp, Andrew confessed to Simon the belief that Jesus was the great Teacher. Andrew acknowledged having pledged to follow Jesus as a disciple, going on to say that Jesus had accepted this offer of service and Andrew suggested that Simon should also go to Jesus and offer to serve in establishing the new realm of the Creator. Simon said: "Ever since Jesus came to work in Zebedee's shop, I have believed this person was sent by Yahweh, but are we to forsake John? Is this the right thing to do?" At which point they agreed to go at once to consult John. John was saddened by the thought of losing two able advisers and most promising disciples, but bravely answered their inquiries, saying: "This is only the beginning; soon my work will end, and we will all become Jesus' disciples." Then Andrew announced to Jesus that Simon desired to join the service of the new realm. And in welcoming Simon as the second apostle, Jesus said: "Simon, your enthusiasm is commendable, but it is dangerous to the work of the new realm. I caution you to become more thoughtful in your speech. I would change your name to Peter."

The parents of the injured youth who lived at Pella had requested that Jesus spend the night with them, and Jesus had accepted the offer. Before leaving Andrew and Simon, Jesus said, "Early tomorrow we go into Galilee."

After Jesus had returned to Pella for the night, and while Andrew and Simon were still discussing the nature of their service in the establishment of the forthcoming realm, James and John Zebedee arrived on the scene, having just returned from their long and futile searching in the hills for Jesus. When they heard how Simon Peter and Andrew had become the first accepted counselors of the new realm, and that they were to leave

with their new Master the next day for Galilee, both James and John were sad. They had known and loved Jesus for some time. They had searched for Jesus many days in the hills, and now they returned to learn that others had been preferred before them. They hurried to find Jesus.

Jesus was asleep and woke up when they arrived. They said: “How is it that you, while we who have lived with you for so long and have been searching in the hills for you, have preferred others before us and chosen Andrew and Simon as your first associates in the new realm?” Jesus answered them, “Be calm and ask yourselves, ‘who directed that you should search for me when I was about the Creator’s business?’” After they had recited the details of their long search in the hills, Jesus further instructed them: “You should learn to search for the secret of the new realm in your hearts and not in the hills. That which you sought was already present in your souls. You are indeed my siblings — you did not need to be received by me — you were already of the new realm, and you should be content, making ready also to go with us tomorrow into Galilee.” John then boldly asked, “But, Master, will James and I be associates with you in the new realm, even as Andrew and Simon?” And Jesus, laying a hand on the shoulder of each of them, said: “My friends, you were already with me in the spirit of the new realm, even before these others requested to be received. You, my friends, have no need to request entrance into the realm; you have been with me from the beginning. To mortals, others may take precedence over you, but in my heart I also numbered you in the councils of the new realm, even before you thought to make this request of me. And even so you might have been first before others if you had not been absent engaged in the well-intentioned but self-appointed task of seeking for one who was not lost. In the coming realm, do not concern yourselves with those things which foster your anxiety, but rather only and at all times with doing the will of the Universal Creator.”

James and John received the rebuke in good grace and were never again envious of Andrew and Simon. They made ready, with their two associate apostles, to depart for Galilee the next morning. From this day on the term apostle was employed to distinguish the chosen family of Jesus’ advisers from the vast multitude of believing disciples who subsequently became followers.

Late that evening, James, John, Andrew, and Simon held a conversation with John the Baptist, and tearfully but with steady voice the stalwart Judean prophet surrendered two leading disciples to become the apostles of the Ruler of the coming realm.

2. Choosing Philip and Nathaniel

Sunday morning, February 24, C.E. 26, Jesus took leave of John the Baptist by the river near Pella, and they never saw each other again in this world.

That day, as Jesus and the four apostles departed for Galilee, there was a great tumult in the camp of John’s followers. The first great division was about to take place. The day before, John had made a positive pronouncement to Andrew and Ezra that Jesus was the Deliverer. Andrew decided to follow Jesus, but Ezra rejected the mild-mannered carpenter of Nazareth, proclaiming: “The Prophet Daniel declares that the Deliverer will come in power and great glory. This Galilean carpenter, this Capernaum boatbuilder, cannot be the Deliverer. Can such a gift of Yahweh come out of Nazareth? This Jesus is a relative of John, and through much kindness of heart our teacher has been deceived. Let us remain apart from this false Messiah.” Ezra, on being rebuked by John for these statements, drew away with many disciples and hurried south.

And this group continued to baptize in John's name and eventually founded a sect of those who believed in John but refused to accept Jesus. A remnant of this group persists in Mesopotamia even to this day.

While this trouble was brewing among John's followers, Jesus and the four apostles were well on their way toward Galilee. Before they crossed the Jordan, to go by way of Nain to Nazareth, Jesus, looking ahead and up the road, saw Philip of Bethsaida coming toward them. Philip had been known to Jesus before, and was also well known to all four of the new apostles. Philip was on the way with a friend, Nathaniel, to visit John at Pella to learn more about the reported coming of the realm of the Creator, and was delighted to greet Jesus. Philip had been an admirer ever since Jesus first came to Capernaum. But Nathaniel, who lived at Cana of Galilee, did not know Jesus. Philip went forward to greet these friends while Nathaniel rested under the shade of a tree by the roadside.

Peter took Philip to one side and proceeded to explain that the four of them had all become associates of Jesus in the new realm and strongly urged Philip to volunteer for service. Philip was in a quandary. Here, without a moment's warning — on the roadside near the Jordan — the most momentous question of a lifetime had come up for immediate decision. By this time Philip was in earnest conversation with Peter, Andrew, and John while Jesus was outlining to James the trip through Galilee and on to Capernaum. Finally, Andrew suggested to Philip, "Why not ask the Teacher?"

Philip, who realized that Jesus was a really great person, possibly the Messiah, decided to abide by Jesus' decision in this matter and went straight to Jesus, asking, "Teacher, shall I go down to John or shall I join my friends who follow you?" And Jesus answered, "Follow me." Philip was thrilled with the assurance of having found the Deliverer.

Philip now motioned to the group to remain where they were and hurried back to break the news of this decision to Nathaniel, who still waited under the mulberry tree, thinking over the many things which people had said concerning John the Baptist, the coming new age, and the expected Messiah. Philip broke in on these meditations, exclaiming, "I have found the Deliverer of whom Moses and the prophets wrote and whom John has proclaimed." Nathaniel, looking up, inquired, "Who is this teacher?" And Philip replied, "Jesus of Nazareth, the descendent of Joseph, the carpenter, more recently residing at Capernaum." And then, somewhat shocked, Nathaniel asked, "Can any such good thing come out of Nazareth?" But Philip said, "Come and see."

Philip led Nathaniel to Jesus, who, looking benignly into the face of the sincere doubter, said: "Behold a genuine Israelite, in whom there is no deceit. Follow me." And Nathaniel, turning to Philip, said: "You are right. Jesus is indeed a master. I will also follow, if I am worthy." And Jesus nodded to Nathaniel, again saying, "Follow me."

Jesus had now assembled one half of the future corps of intimate associates, five who had for some time been familiar and one stranger, Nathaniel. Without further delay they crossed the Jordan and, going by the village of Nain, reached Nazareth late that evening.

They all remained overnight with Joseph in Jesus' childhood home. The associates of Jesus little understood why their new-found teacher was so concerned with completely destroying every vestige of writing which

remained about the home in the form of the ten commandments and other mottos and sayings. But this proceeding, together with the fact that they never saw Jesus subsequently write — except upon the dust or in the sand — made a deep impression on their minds.

3. The Visit to Capernaum

The next day Jesus sent the apostles on to Cana, since all of them were invited to the wedding of a prominent person of that town, and prepared to pay a hurried visit to Mary at Capernaum, stopping at Magdala to see Jude.

Before leaving Nazareth, the new associates of Jesus told Joseph and other members of Jesus' family about the wonderful events of the then recent past and gave free expression to their belief that Jesus was the long-expected deliverer. And these members of Jesus' family talked all this over, and Joseph said: "Maybe Jesus really is the Messiah."

Jude was present at Jesus' baptism and, along with James, had become a firm believer in Jesus' mission on earth. Although both James and Jude were much confused as to the nature of Jesus' mission, Mary had resurrected all of the early hopes of Jesus as the Messiah, and encouraged the children to have faith in Jesus as the deliverer of Israel.

Jesus arrived in Capernaum Monday night, but did not go home, where James and Mary lived, but went directly to the home of Zebedee. All of the friends at Capernaum saw a great and pleasant change in Jesus, who once more seemed to be as comparatively cheerful as during the earlier years at Nazareth. For years previous to the baptism and the isolation periods just before and just after, Jesus had grown increasingly serious and self-contained, but was now once again lighthearted and joyful, although having gained something of a majestic import and exalted aspect.

Mary was thrilled with expectation, anticipating that the promise of Gabriel was nearing fulfillment. Mary expected that all Palestine would soon be startled and stunned by the miraculous revelation of Jesus as the supernatural ruler of the Jews. But to all of the many questions which Mary, James, Jude, and Zebedee asked, Jesus only smilingly replied: "It is better that I wait here for a while; I must do the will of my Creator Parent."

On the next day, Tuesday, they all journeyed over to Cana for the wedding which was to take place on the following day. And in spite of Jesus' repeated warnings that they tell no one "until the Creator's hour shall come," they insisted on quietly spreading the news that they had found the Deliverer. They each confidently expected that Jesus would inaugurate the assumption of Messianic authority at the forthcoming wedding at Cana, and would do so with great power and sublime grandeur. They remembered what had been told them about the phenomena attendant upon the baptism, and they believed that Jesus' future course on earth would be marked by increasing manifestations of supernatural wonders and miraculous demonstrations. Accordingly, the entire countryside was preparing to gather together at Cana for the wedding feast.

Mary had not been so joyous in years. Not since being thirteen years old had the family and friends seen Jesus so carefree and happy, so thoughtful and understanding of the wishes and desires of others, so

touchingly sympathetic. And so they all whispered among themselves, in small groups, wondering what was going to happen. What would this strange person do next? How would Jesus usher in the glory of the coming new age? And they were all thrilled with the thought that they were to be present to see the revelation of the might and power of Yahweh.

4. The Wedding at Cana

By noon on Wednesday almost a thousand guests had arrived in Cana, more than four times the number invited to the wedding feast. It was a Jewish custom to celebrate weddings on Wednesday, and the invitations had been sent for the wedding one month previously. In the morning and early afternoon it appeared more like a public reception for Jesus than a wedding. Everybody wanted to greet this near-famous Galilean, and Jesus was most cordial to all, young and old, Jew and gentile. And everybody rejoiced when Jesus consented to lead the preliminary wedding procession.

Jesus was now thoroughly self-conscious of having human existence, divine pre-existence, and the combined, or fused, human and divine natures. Jesus could, with perfect poise, at one moment enact the human role or immediately assume the personality prerogatives of the divine nature.

As the day wore on, Jesus became increasingly conscious that the people were expecting some wonder to be performed; and more especially recognized that the family and the six apostles were looking for an appropriate announcement of the forthcoming new era by some startling and supernatural manifestation.

Early in the afternoon Mary summoned James, and together they inquired of Jesus as to what hour and at what point in connection with the wedding ceremonies Jesus had planned to become manifest as the "supernatural one." No sooner had they spoken of these matters than they saw they had aroused Jesus' characteristic indignation. Jesus said only: "If you love me, then be with me while I wait upon the will of the Creator." But the eloquence of this rebuke lay in the expression of Jesus' face.

Mary's approach was a great disappointment to the human Jesus, who was sobered by having had such a reaction to the request to indulge in some outward demonstration of divinity. That was one of the very things Jesus had decided not to do when so recently isolated in the hills. For several hours Mary was depressed, saying to James: "I cannot understand Jesus; what can it all mean? Is there no end to this strange conduct?" James and Jude tried to comfort Mary, while Jesus withdrew for an hour's solitude, but then returned to the gathering and was once again lighthearted and joyous.

The wedding proceeded with a hush of expectancy, but the entire ceremony was finished and not a move, not a word, came from the honored guest. Then it was whispered about that the carpenter and boatbuilder, announced by John as "the Deliverer," would satisfy everyone's curiosity during the evening festivities, perhaps at the wedding supper. But all expectance of such a demonstration was effectually removed from the minds of the six apostles when Jesus called them together just before the wedding supper and, in great earnestness, said: "Do not think that I have come to this place to work some wonder for the gratification of the curious or for the conviction of those who doubt. Rather we are here to wait upon the will of the Creator." But when Mary and the others saw Jesus in consultation with the apostles, they were fully persuaded in

their own minds that something extraordinary was about to happen. And they all sat down to enjoy the wedding supper and the evening of good company.

The hosts had provided plenty of wine for all the guests invited to the marriage feast, but how were they to know that the wedding was to become an event so closely associated with the expected manifestation of Jesus as the Messianic deliverer? They were delighted to have the honor of numbering the celebrated Galilean among their guests, but before the wedding supper was over, the servants brought them the disconcerting news that the wine was running short. By the time the formal supper had ended and the guests were strolling about in the garden, they confided to Mary that the supply of wine was exhausted. And Mary confidently said: "Have no worry — Jesus will help us." And thus Mary presumed to speak, notwithstanding the rebuke of only a few hours before.

Throughout a period of many years, Mary had always turned to Jesus for help in every crisis of their home life at Nazareth so that it was only natural to do so at this time. But Mary had still other motives for appealing to Jesus on this occasion. As Jesus was standing alone in a corner of the garden, Mary approached, saying, "My child, they have no wine." And Jesus answered, "What have I to do with that?" Said Mary, "But I believe your hour has come; cannot you help us?" Jesus replied: "Again I declare that I have not come to do things this way. Why do you trouble me again with these matters?" And then, breaking down in tears, Mary entreated, "But, my child, I promised them that you would help us; won't you please do something for me?" And then spoke Jesus: "What have you to do with making such promises? See that you do not do it again. We must in all things wait upon the will of the Creator."

Mary was stunned! Seeing Mary standing there motionless with tears streaming down, the human heart of Jesus was overcome with compassion. Bending forward, Jesus laid a hand tenderly upon Mary's head, saying: "Now, now, Mary, do not grieve over my apparently hard sayings. Have I not many times told you that I have come only to do the will of the Creator? I would gladly do what you ask of me if it were a part of the Creator's will — " and Jesus stopped short and hesitated. Mary seemed to sense that something was happening, and leaping up, embraced Jesus and rushed off to the servants' quarters, saying, "Whatever Jesus says, do that." But Jesus said nothing, now realizing that too much had already been said — or rather desired.

Mary was dancing with glee, not knowing how the wine would be produced, but confidently believing that Jesus would dare to step forward and claim Messianic power. And, because of the presence and association of certain universe powers and personalities, of which all those present were wholly ignorant, Mary was not to be disappointed. The wine Mary desired and which Jesus humanly and sympathetically wished for, was forthcoming.

Near at hand stood six water pots of stone, filled with water, holding about twenty gallons each. This water was intended for subsequent use in the final purification ceremonies of the wedding celebration. The commotion of the servants about these huge stone vessels, under the busy direction of Mary, attracted Jesus' attention, who going over, observed that they were drawing wine out of them by the pitcher full.

It was gradually dawning on Jesus what had happened. Of all persons present at the marriage feast of Cana, Jesus was the most surprised. Others had expected wonders, but that was just what Jesus had decided not

to do. And then Jesus recalled the admonition of the Personalized Thought Adjuster in the hills, recounting how the Adjuster had warned about the inability of any power or personality to interfere with the creator prerogative of independence of time. On this occasion power transformers, midwayers, and all other required personalities were assembled near the water and other necessary elements, and in the face of the expressed wish of the Universe Creator Sovereign, there was no escaping the instantaneous appearance of *wine*. And this occurrence was made doubly certain since the Personalized Adjuster had signified that the execution of Jesus' desire was in no way a contravention of the Creator's will.

But this was in no sense a miracle. No law of nature was modified, abrogated, or even transcended. Nothing happened but the abrogation of *time* in association with the celestial assembly of the chemical elements requisite for the elaboration of the wine. At Cana on this occasion the agents of the Creator made wine just as they do by the ordinary natural processes *except* that they did it independently of time and with the intervention of superhuman agencies in the matter of the space assembly of the necessary chemical ingredients.

Furthermore it was evident that the enactment of this so-called miracle was not contrary to the will of the Paradise Creator, otherwise it would not have transpired, since Jesus had already become subject in all things to the Creator's will.

The servants drew this new wine and carried it to the "ruler of the feast," who tasted it and announced: "It is the custom to set out first the good wine and, when the guests have abundantly drunk, to bring forth the inferior fruit of the vine; but you have kept the best of the wine until the last of the feast."

Mary and the followers of Jesus rejoiced at the supposed miracle which they thought Jesus had intentionally performed, but Jesus withdrew to a sheltered nook of the garden and engaged in serious thought for a few brief moments, finally deciding that the episode was beyond personal control under the circumstances and, not being adverse to the Creator's will, was inevitable. The people were awed, regarding Jesus as the Messiah. But Jesus was sorely concerned, knowing that they believed only because of the unusual occurrence which they had just inadvertently experienced. Again, Jesus retired to the housetop in order to think it all over.

Jesus now fully comprehended that it would be necessary to constantly be on guard lest any indulgence of sympathy and pity become responsible for repeated episodes of this sort. Nevertheless, many similar events occurred before Jesus took final leave of this mortal life.

5. Back in Capernaum

Though many of the guests remained for the full week of wedding festivities, Jesus, with the newly chosen apostles — James, John, Andrew, Peter, Philip, and Nathaniel — left very early the next morning for Capernaum, going away without saying good-bye to anyone. Jesus' family and friends in Cana were upset at this sudden leave taking, and Jude set out in search of Jesus and the apostles, who went directly to the home of Zebedee at Bethsaida. On this journey Jesus talked over many things of importance to the coming new age with the newly chosen associates and especially warned them to make no mention of the turning of the water into wine, also advising them to avoid the cities of Sepphoris and Tiberias in their future work.

After supper that evening, in this home of Zebedee and Salome, one of the most important conferences of all Jesus' earthly career was held. Only the six apostles were present at this meeting; Jude arrived as they were about to separate. These six had journeyed from Cana to Bethsaida with Jesus, walking, as it were, on air. They were alive with expectancy and thrilled with the thought of having been selected as close associates of the Deliverer. But when Jesus started to make clear to them the bestowal mission and how it might possibly end, they were stunned. They could not grasp what they were being told. They were speechless; even Peter was crushed beyond expression. Only the deep-thinking Andrew dared to reply to Jesus' words of counsel. Jesus, perceiving that they did not comprehend what they were hearing and that their ideas of the Jewish Messiah were completely crystallized, sent them to their rest and went on to talk with Jude. And Jude, before taking leave of Jesus, said with much feeling: "I never have understood you. I do not know of a certainty whether you are what our parents taught us, and I do not fully comprehend the coming new age, but I do know you are a mighty prophet. I heard the voice at the Jordan, and I am a believer in you, no matter who you are." And Jude, having spoken, departed, going home to Magdala.

That night Jesus did not sleep, and sat out on the lake shore thinking until dawn of the next day. In the long hours of that night of meditation Jesus came to comprehend clearly that the apostles would never grasp any concept other than that of the long-expected Messiah, at last recognizing that there was no way to launch the message of the new age except as the fulfillment of John's prediction and as the one for whom the Jews were looking. After all, though not being the Davidic type of Messiah, Jesus was truly the fulfillment of the prophetic statements of the more spiritually minded of the olden seers. Never again did Jesus wholly deny being the Messiah, instead deciding to leave the final untangling of this complicated situation to the outworking of the Creator's will.

The next morning Jesus joined the others at breakfast, but they were a cheerless group. Jesus visited with them and at the end of the meal gathered them about, saying: "It is the Creator's will that we stay here for a while. You have heard that John came to prepare the way for the new age; therefore we need to wait for the completion of John's preaching. When John's work is finished, we will begin the proclamation of the new realm." Jesus directed the apostles to return to their nets, promising to see them the next day at the synagogue, and scheduling a conference with them that Sabbath afternoon.

6. The Events of a Sabbath Day

Jesus' first public appearance following the baptism was in the Capernaum synagogue on Sabbath, March 2, C.E. 26. The synagogue was crowded to overflowing. The story of the baptism in the Jordan was now augmented by the fresh news from Cana about the water and the wine. Jesus gave seats of honor to the six apostles, and seated with them were James and Jude. Mary, having returned to Capernaum with James the evening before, was also present. The entire audience was on edge; they expected to behold some extraordinary manifestation of supernatural power which would be a fitting testimony to the nature and authority of Jesus, who was to speak to them that day. But they were destined to disappointment. Jesus stood up, receiving the Scripture roll from the ruler of the synagogue, and read from the Prophet Isaiah.

On finishing this reading and handing the roll back to its keeper, Jesus simply said: "Be patient and you will see the glory of the Creator; and so it will be with all those who wait with me and learn to do the Creator's will." And the people went to their homes, wondering what was the meaning of all this.

That afternoon Jesus, with the apostles, James, and Jude, entered a boat and went down the shore a little way, where they anchored while Jesus talked to them about the coming new age. And they understood more than they had on Thursday night.

Jesus instructed them to take up their regular duties until “the hour of the new realm comes.” And to encourage them, Jesus set an example by going back to work regularly in the boatshop. In explaining that they should spend three hours every evening in study and preparation for their future work, Jesus further said: “We will all remain here until the Creator bids me to call you. Each of you must now return to work just as if nothing had happened. Tell no one about me and remember that my realm is not to come with noise and glamor, but rather it must come through the great change which the Creator will have caused in your hearts and in the hearts of those who will be called to join you. You are now my friends; I trust you and I love you; you are soon to become my personal associates. Be patient, be gentle. Always be obedient to the Creator’s will. Make yourselves ready for the call of the new realm. While you will experience great joy in the service of the Creator, you should also be prepared for trouble, for I warn you that it will be only through much tribulation that many will enter the new realm. But for those who have found this realm, their joy will be full, and they will be called the blessed of all the earth. But do not entertain false hope; the world will stumble at my words. Even you, my friends, do not fully perceive what I am unfolding to your confused minds. Make no mistake; we go forth to labor for a generation of sign seekers. They will demand wonder-working as the proof that I am sent by the Creator, and they will be slow to recognize, in the revelation of my Creator Parent’s *love*, the credentials of my mission.”

That evening, when they had returned to the shore, before they went their way, Jesus, standing by the water’s edge, prayed: “My Creator Parent, I thank you for these little ones who, in spite of their doubts, even now believe. And for their sakes have I set myself apart to do your will. And now may they learn to be one, even as we are one.”

7. Four Months of Training

For four long months — March, April, May, and June — this waiting time continued; Jesus held over one hundred long and earnest, though cheerful and joyous, sessions with these six associates and James. Owing to sickness in the family, Jude was seldom able to attend these classes. James did not lose faith in Jesus, but during these months of delay and inaction Mary’s faith, raised to such heights at Cana, now sank to new low levels. “I cannot understand Jesus. I cannot figure out what it all means,” Mary thought. But James’s spouse did much to bolster Mary’s courage.

Throughout these four months these seven followers were getting acquainted with Jesus; they were getting used to the idea of living with the Deliverer. Jesus possessed that matchless grace of personality which overcame their dismay at being with divinity. They found it really easy to be “friends with Deity,” Deity incarnate. This time of waiting severely tested the entire group. Nothing, absolutely nothing, miraculous happened. Day by day they went about their ordinary work, while night after night they sat at Jesus’ feet. And they were held together by Jesus’ matchless personality and by the gracious words which they heard spoken to them each evening.

This period of waiting and teaching was especially hard on Simon Peter, who repeatedly sought to persuade Jesus to launch the preaching of the new realm in Galilee while John continued to preach in Judea. But Jesus' reply to Peter was always: "Be patient, Simon. Make progress. We will be ready when the Creator calls." And Andrew would calm Peter now and then with seasoned and philosophic counsel. Andrew was tremendously impressed with the human naturalness of Jesus, never growing weary of contemplating how one who could live so near the Creator could be so friendly and considerate of mortals.

Throughout this entire period Jesus spoke in the synagogue only twice. By the end of these many weeks of waiting the reports about the baptism and the wine of Cana had begun to quiet down. And Jesus saw to it that no more apparent miracles happened during this time. But even though they lived so quietly at Bethsaida, reports of the strange doings of Jesus had been carried to Herod Antipas, who in turn sent spies to ascertain what it was all about. But Herod was more concerned about the preaching of John, and decided not to molest Jesus, whose work continued so quietly at Capernaum.

In this time of waiting Jesus endeavored to teach the apostles what their attitude should be toward the various religious groups and the political parties of Palestine. Jesus' words always were, "We are seeking to win all of them, but we are not *of* any of them."

The scribes and rabbis, taken together, were called Pharisees. In many ways they were the progressive group among the Jews, having adopted many teachings not clearly found in the Hebrew scriptures, such as belief in the resurrection of the dead, a doctrine only mentioned by a later prophet, Daniel.

The Sadducees consisted of the priesthood and certain wealthy Jews. They were not such sticklers for the details of law enforcement. The Pharisees and Sadducees were really religious parties, rather than sects.

The Essenes were a true religious sect, originating during the Maccabean revolt, whose requirements were in some respects more exacting than those of the Pharisees. They had adopted many Persian beliefs and practices, lived as a community in monasteries, refrained from marriage, and had all things in common. They specialized in teachings about angels.

The Zealots were a group of intense Jewish patriots. They advocated that any and all methods were justified in the struggle to escape the bondage of the Roman yoke.

The Herodians were a purely political party that advocated emancipation from direct Roman rule by a restoration of the Herodian dynasty.

In the very midst of Palestine lived the Samaritans, with whom "the Jews had no dealings," notwithstanding that they held many views similar to the Jewish teachings.

All of these parties and sects, including the smaller Nazarite community, believed in the coming of the Messiah. They all looked for a national deliverer. But Jesus was very positive in making it clear that the apostles would not become allied to any of these schools of thought or practice. Jesus was to be neither a Nazarite nor an Essene.

Jesus later directed that the apostles should go out, as John had, instructing seekers, and laid emphasis on the proclamation of the “doctrine of the realm of the Creator.” Jesus unfailingly impressed on these apostles that they must “show love, compassion, and sympathy,” teaching the followers that the new age was a spiritual experience having to do with the enthronement of the Creator in the hearts of mortals.

As they waited before embarking on their active public preaching, Jesus and the seven spent two evenings each week at the synagogue in the study of the Hebrew scriptures. In later years after times of intense public work, the apostles looked back on these four months as the most precious and profitable of all their association with the Master. Jesus taught them all they could assimilate, but did not make the mistake of overteaching them. Jesus did not precipitate confusion by the presentation of truth too far beyond their capacity to comprehend.

8. Sermon on the New Realm

On Sabbath, June 22, shortly before they went out on their first preaching tour and about ten days after John’s imprisonment, Jesus occupied the synagogue pulpit for the second time since bringing the apostles to Capernaum, preaching a sermon on “The New Realm,”

A few days before this, as Jesus was at work in the boatshop, Peter brought the news of John’s arrest. Jesus put away the tools and apron once more, and said to Peter: “The Creator’s hour has come. It is now time to proclaim the good news.”

Jesus last worked at the carpenter bench on this Tuesday, June 18, C.E. 26. Peter rushed out of the shop and by midafternoon had rounded up all of the apostles, and leaving them in a grove by the shore, went in quest of Jesus but was unsuccessful, for the Master had gone to a different grove to pray. And Jesus did not reappear until late that evening, returning to Zebedee’s house and asking for food. The next day Jesus sent James to ask for the privilege of speaking in the synagogue the coming Sabbath day. And the ruler of the synagogue was pleased that Jesus was again willing to conduct the service.

Jesus, before preaching this memorable sermon on the realm of the Creator, the first pretentious effort of the public career, read from the Scriptures, and after finishing the reading, Jesus said:

“I have come to proclaim the establishment of the Creator’s realm. And this realm will include the worshiping souls of Jew and gentile, rich and poor, free and bond, for my Creator Parent is no respecter of persons, and shows love and mercy to all.

“The Creator sends a divine spirit to indwell the minds of mortals, and when I have finished my work on earth, the Spirit of Truth will be poured out on all people. And the spirit of the Creator and the Spirit of Truth will establish you in the coming new age of spiritual understanding and divine righteousness. My realm is not of this world. I will not lead forth armies in battle for the establishment of a throne of power or a government of worldly glory. When my realm has come, you will know me as the Bringer of Peace, the revelation of the everlasting Creator. The children of this world fight for the establishment and enlargement of the governments of this world, but my disciples will enter the realm of the Creator by their moral

decisions and by their spirit victories; and when they once enter there, they will find joy, righteousness, and eternal life.

“Those who first seek to enter the new realm, thus beginning to strive for a nobility of character like that of the Creator, will presently possess all that is needed. But I say to you in all sincerity: Unless you seek entrance into the new realm with the faith and trusting dependence of a little child, you will not gain admission.

“Do not be deceived by those who come saying the new realm is here or there, for the Creator’s realm does not concern things visible and material. And this realm is even now among you, for where the spirit of the Creator teaches and leads the souls of mortals, there in reality is the realm of the Creator. And this realm is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Spirit.

“John baptized you in recognition of repentance and for the remission of your sins, but when you enter the new realm, you will be baptized with the Spirit.

“In the Creator’s realm there will be neither Jew nor gentile, only those who seek perfection through service, for I declare that whoever would be great in the Creator’s realm must first become server of all. If you are willing to serve others, you will join me in my realm, even as, by serving in the likeness of the creature, I will presently join my Creator Parent.

“This new realm is like a seed growing in the good soil of a field. It does not attain full fruit quickly. There is an interval between the establishment of the new realm in the souls of mortals and that time when the realm ripens into the full fruit of everlasting righteousness and eternal life.

“And this new realm is not a reign of power and plenty. The realm of the Creator is not a matter of meat and drink but rather a life of progressive righteousness and increasing joy in perfecting service. For has not the Creator said of mortals, ‘It is my will that they should eventually be perfect, even as I am perfect.’

“I have come to preach about the new realm. I have not come to add to the heavy burdens of those who would enter this realm. I proclaim the new and better way, and those who are able to enter will enjoy the divine rest. And whatever it will cost you in the things of the world, no matter what price you may pay to enter the realm of the Creator, you will receive far more joy and spiritual progress in this world, and eternal life in the age to come.

“Entrance into the realm of the Creator does not wait for marching armies, on overturned governments of this world, nor on the breaking of captive yokes. The realm of the Creator is at hand, and all who enter it will find abundant liberty and joyous salvation.

“This realm is an everlasting dominion. Those who enter it will ascend to the Creator; they will certainly attain Paradise. And all who enter this realm will become the children of the Creator, and in the age to come they will ascend to the Creator. And I have not come to call the would-be righteous, but sinners and all who hunger and thirst for the righteousness of divine perfection.

“John came preaching repentance to prepare you; now I have come proclaiming faith, the gift of the Creator, as the price of entrance into the new age. If you would only believe that the Creator loves you with an infinite love, then you are in the realm of the Creator.”

Jesus, having spoken, sat down. All who were there were astonished. The apostles marveled. But the people were not prepared to receive these words from the lips of this Deliverer. About one third believed the message even though they could not fully comprehend it; about one third prepared to reject such a purely spiritual concept of the expected realm, while the remaining one third could not grasp this teaching, many truly believing that Jesus was deluded.

Paper 138

Training the Messengers

After preaching the sermon on “The New Realm,” Jesus called the six apostles together that afternoon and began to disclose plans for visiting the cities around and about the Sea of Galilee. James and Jude were hurt because they were not called to this conference. Up to this time they had regarded themselves as belonging to Jesus’ inner circle of associates. But Jesus planned to have no close relatives as members of this corps of apostolic directors. This failure to include James and Jude among the chosen few, together with Jesus’ apparent aloofness from Mary ever since the experience at Cana, was the starting point of an ever-widening gulf between Jesus and the family. This situation continued throughout the public ministry and these differences were not fully resolved until after Jesus’ death and resurrection. Mary constantly wavered between attitudes of fluctuating faith and hope, and increasing emotions of disappointment, humiliation, and despair. Only Ruth, the youngest, remained unswervingly loyal to Jesus.

Until after the resurrection, Jesus’ entire family had very little to do with the public ministry.

1. Final Instructions

The next day, Sunday, June 23, C.E. 26, Jesus gave final instructions to the six, directing them to go out, two and two, to teach the glad tidings of the new age. Jesus forbade them to baptize and advised against public preaching, going on to explain that later they would be permitted to preach in public, but that for a while, and for many reasons, they needed to acquire practical experience in dealing personally with others. Jesus wanted to make their first tour entirely one of *personal work*. Although this announcement was something of a disappointment to the apostles, still they saw, at least in part, Jesus’ reason for beginning the proclamation of the new age in this way, and they started out in good heart and with confident enthusiasm. Jesus sent them out by twos, James and John going to Kheresa, Andrew and Peter to Capernaum, while Philip and Nathaniel went to Tarichea.

Before they began this first two weeks of service, Jesus spoke of eventually no longer being with them, and announced the desire to ordain a total of twelve apostles to continue the work of the new realm, authorizing each of them to choose one person from among the early converts for membership in the projected corps of apostles. John spoke up, asking: “But, Master, will these six share all things equally with those of us who have been with you since the Jordan and have heard all your teaching in preparation for this, our first work for the new realm?” And Jesus replied: “Yes, John, the people you choose will become one with us, and you will teach them all that pertains to the new realm, even as I have taught you.” After speaking, Jesus left them.

The six did not separate to go to their work until they had exchanged much discussion of Jesus’ instruction that each of them should choose a new apostle. Andrew’s counsel finally prevailed, and they began their efforts. In substance Andrew said: “The Master is right; we are too few to encompass this task. There is need for more teachers, and the Master has manifested great confidence in us, entrusting us with the choosing of these six new apostles.” This morning, as they separated to go to their work, there was a bit of

concealed depression in each one of them. They knew they were going to miss Jesus, and besides their fear and timidity, this was not the way they had pictured the realm of the Creator being inaugurated.

It had been arranged that the six were to work for two weeks, after which they were to return to the home of Zebedee for a conference. Meantime Jesus went to Nazareth to visit with Joseph and Simon and other members of the family living in that vicinity. Jesus did everything humanly possible, consistent with dedication to the doing of the Creator's will, to retain the confidence and affection of the family.

While the apostles were out on this mission, Jesus thought much about John, now in prison. It was a great temptation to use supernatural powers to release John, but once more Jesus affirmed the decision to "follow the Creator's will."

2. Choosing the Six

This first missionary tour of the six was eminently successful. They all discovered the great value of direct and personal contact. They returned to Jesus more fully realizing that, after all, religion is purely and wholly a matter of *personal experience*. They began to sense how hungry the common people were to hear words of religious comfort and spiritual good cheer. When they assembled about Jesus, they all wanted to talk at once, but Andrew assumed charge, calling on them one by one, and they made their formal reports to the Master and presented their nominations for the six new apostles.

Jesus, after each one had presented a selection for the new apostleships, asked all the others to vote on the nomination; in that way all six of the new apostles were formally accepted by all of the original six. Then Jesus announced that they would all visit these candidates and give them the call to service.

The newly selected apostles were:

1. *Matthew Levi*, the customs collector of Capernaum, who had an office just to the east of the city, near the borders of Batanea. Matthew was selected by Andrew.
2. *Thomas Didymus*, of Tarichea, who fished for a living and was once a carpenter and stone mason of Gadara. Thomas was selected by Philip.
3. *James Alpheus*, who fished and farmed in Kheresa, was selected by James Zebedee.
4. *Judas Alpheus*, the twin brother of James Alpheus, who also fished, was selected by John Zebedee.
5. *Simon Zelotes* was a high officer in the patriotic organization of the Zealots, giving up that position to join Jesus' apostles. Before joining the Zealots, Simon had been a merchant. Simon was selected by Peter.
6. *Judas Iscariot* was an only child of wealthy Jewish parents living in Jericho, but was disowned by those parents on becoming attached to John the Baptist. Judas was looking for employment in these regions when found by Jesus' apostles, and chiefly because of having experience with finances, was invited by Nathaniel to join their ranks. Judas Iscariot was the only Judean among the twelve apostles.

Jesus spent a full day with the six, answering their questions and listening to the details of their reports, for they had many interesting and profitable experiences to relate. They now saw the wisdom of the Master's plan of sending them out to labor in a quiet and personal manner before the launching of their more pretentious public efforts.

3. The Call of Matthew and Simon

The next day Jesus and the six went to call on Matthew, the customs collector. Matthew was waiting for them, having already arranged to turn over the affairs of the customs office. As they approached the toll house, Andrew stepped forward with Jesus, who, looking into Matthew's face, said, "Follow me." And Matthew went with Jesus and the apostles.

Matthew expressed a desire to give a banquet that evening to family and friends if Jesus would approve and consent to be the guest of honor. And Jesus nodded consent. Peter then took Matthew aside and explained that Simon had been invited to join the apostles and secured Matthew's consent that Simon also be asked to this feast.

After a luncheon at Matthew's house they all went with Peter to call upon Simon the Zealot, whom they found at Simon's old place of business. When Peter led Jesus up to Simon, the Master greeted the fiery patriot and only said, "Follow me."

They all returned to Matthew's home, where they talked about politics and religion until time for the evening meal. The Levi family had long been engaged in business and tax gathering; therefore many of the guests asked to this banquet by Matthew would have been considered "publicans and sinners" by the Pharisees.

In those days, when a reception-banquet of this sort was dedicated to a prominent individual, it was the custom for all interested persons to linger about the banquet room to observe and to listen to the conversation and speeches of the guests of honor. Accordingly, most of the Capernaum Pharisees were present on this occasion to observe Jesus' conduct at this unusual social gathering.

As the dinner progressed, the joy of the diners rose, and everybody was having such a good time that the onlooking Pharisees began to criticize Jesus for participating in such a lighthearted and carefree affair. Later in the evening, when they were making speeches, one of the more spiteful of the Pharisees went so far as to criticize Jesus' conduct to Peter, saying: "How dare you teach that this person is righteous who eats with publicans and sinners and participates in such scenes of careless pleasure making." Peter whispered this criticism to Jesus, who was about to speak the parting blessing on those assembled. And Jesus began to speak, saying: "In coming here tonight to welcome Matthew and Simon to our company, I am glad to witness your lightheartedness and social good cheer, but you should rejoice still more because many of you will find entrance into the coming new age of the spirit, in which you will more abundantly enjoy the good things of the realm of the Creator. And to you who stand about criticizing me in your hearts because I have come here to feast with these friends, let me say that I have come to proclaim joy to the socially downtrodden and spiritual liberty to the moral captives. Need I remind you that those who are whole do not need a physician, but rather those who are sick? I have come, not to call the righteous, but sinners."

And truly this was a strange sight in all Jewry: to see a person of righteous character and noble sentiments mingling freely and joyously with the common people, even with an irreligious and pleasure-seeking throng of publicans and reputed sinners. Simon Zelotes wanted to make a speech at this gathering in Matthew's house, but Andrew, knowing that Jesus did not want the coming age to become confused with the Zealots' movement, requested that Simon refrain from making any public remarks.

Jesus and the apostles remained that night in Matthew's house, and as the people went to their homes, they only spoke of one thing: the goodness and friendliness of Jesus.

4. The Call of the Twins

On the next day all nine of them went by boat to Kheresa to execute the formal calling of the next two apostles, James and Judas, the Alpheus twins, the nominees of James and John Zebedee. The twins were expecting Jesus and the apostles and were waiting for them on the shore. James Zebedee presented the Master to the twins, and Jesus, gazing on them, nodded and said, "Follow me."

That afternoon, which they spent together, Jesus instructed them concerning attendance at festive gatherings, concluding the remarks by saying: "All people are my siblings. My Creator Parent welcomes any creature of our making. The realm of the Creator is open to all people. No one may close the door of mercy in the face of any hungry soul who seeks to gain entrance. We will engage with all who desire to hear about the new age. As the Creator looks at people, they are all alike. Therefore do not refuse to break bread with Pharisee or sinner, Sadducee or publican, Roman or Jew, rich or poor, free or bond. The door of the new realm is wide open for all who desire to know the truth and to find the Creator."

That night at a simple supper at the Alpheus home, the twins were received into the apostolic family. Later in the evening Jesus gave the apostles their first lesson dealing with the origin, nature, and destiny of unclean spirits, but they could not comprehend the import of what they were told. They found it very easy to love and admire Jesus, but very difficult to understand many of the teachings they were given.

After a night of rest the entire party, now numbering eleven, went by boat to Tarichea.

5. The Call of Thomas and Judas

Thomas and Judas met Jesus and the apostles at the boat landing at Tarichea, and Thomas led the party home. Philip now nominated Thomas for apostleship and Nathaniel presented Judas Iscariot, the Judean, for similar honors. Jesus looked at Thomas and said: "Thomas, you lack faith; nevertheless, I receive you. Follow me." To Judas Iscariot the Master said: "Judas, we are all of one family, and as I receive you into our midst, I pray that you will always be loyal to your Galilean associates. Follow me."

When they had refreshed themselves, Jesus took the twelve apart for a time to pray with them and to instruct them in the nature and work of the Spirit, but again they largely failed to comprehend the meaning of those wonderful truths which Jesus endeavored to teach them. One would grasp one point and one would comprehend another, but none of them could encompass the whole teaching. They would always make the mistake of trying to fit Jesus' new teachings into their old forms of religious belief. They could not grasp

the idea that Jesus had come to proclaim a new age and to establish a new way of finding the Creator; they did not perceive that Jesus *was* a new revelation of the Eternal Source.

The next day Jesus left the twelve apostles alone, wanting them to become acquainted and desiring that they be alone to talk over what they had been taught. The Master returned for the evening meal, and during the after-supper hours talked to them about the ministry of seraphim, and some of the apostles comprehended this teaching. They rested for a night and the next day departed by boat for Capernaum.

Zebedee and Salome had gone to live with David so that their large home could be turned over to Jesus and the twelve apostles. Here Jesus spent a quiet Sabbath with these chosen messengers, carefully outlining the plans for proclaiming the new age and fully explaining the importance of avoiding any clash with the civil authorities, saying: "If the civil rulers are to be rebuked, leave that task to me. See that you make no denunciations of Caesar or the authorities." It was this same evening that Judas Iscariot took Jesus aside to ask why nothing was done to get John out of prison. And Judas was not wholly satisfied with Jesus' attitude.

6. The Week of Intensive Training

The next week was devoted to a program of intense training. Each day the six new apostles were put in the hands of their respective nominators for a thoroughgoing review of all they had learned and experienced in preparation for the work to come. The older apostles carefully reviewed, for the benefit of the newer six, Jesus' teachings up to that time. Evenings they all assembled in Zebedee's garden to receive Jesus' instruction.

It was at this time that Jesus established the mid-week holiday for rest and recreation. And they pursued this plan of relaxation for one day each week throughout the remainder of Jesus' material life. As a general rule, they never followed their regular activities on Wednesday. On this weekly holiday Jesus would usually leave them, saying: "My children, go for a day of play. Rest yourselves and enjoy the refreshment that comes from reverting to your former vocations or from discovering new sorts of recreational activity." Jesus, while not actually requiring this day of rest, conformed to this plan because it was best for these human associates. Jesus was the teacher — the Master; the associates were the pupils — apostles.

One of the lessons given to the apostles concerned the difference between Jesus' teachings and *life among them* on the one hand, and the teachings which might subsequently spring up *about* Jesus. This was expressed as: "My new realm and the doctrines related to it will be the focus of your message. Do not be sidetracked into preaching *about* me and *about* my teachings. Proclaim the new age and portray my revelation of the Creator but do not be misled into creating legends and building up a cult having to do with beliefs and teachings *about* my beliefs and teachings." But again they did not understand, and no one dared to ask why this was taught.

In these early teachings Jesus sought to avoid controversies with the apostles as far as possible except those involving wrong concepts of the Creator. In all such matters Jesus never hesitated to correct erroneous beliefs. There was just *one* motive in Jesus' postbaptismal life on Urantia, and that was a better and truer revelation of the Creator. Jesus was the pioneer of the new and better way to eternal life, the way of faith

and love. Always the exhortation to the apostles was: “Go seek for the sinners; find the downhearted and comfort the anxious.”

Jesus had a perfect grasp of the situation and possessed unlimited power which might have been utilized in the furtherance of the bestowal mission, but was wholly content with means and personalities which most people would have regarded as inadequate and would have viewed as insignificant. Jesus was engaged in a mission of enormous dramatic possibilities, but insisted on going about the Creator’s business in the most quiet and undramatic manner, studiously avoiding all display of power. And Jesus now planned to work quietly, at least for several months, with the twelve apostles around the Sea of Galilee.

7. Another Disappointment

Jesus had planned for a quiet missionary campaign of five months’ personal work, not telling the apostles how long this was to last; they worked from week to week. And early on this first day of the week, when Jesus was ready to announce this to the twelve apostles, Simon Peter, James Zebedee, and Judas Iscariot came to have a private conversation. Peter boldly said: “Master, we come at the request of our associates to inquire whether the time is not now ripe to enter into the new age. And will you proclaim it at Capernaum, or are we to move on to Jerusalem? And when will we learn, each of us, the positions we are to occupy with you in the establishment of the new realm — ” and Peter would have gone on asking further questions, but Jesus raised an admonitory hand, and beckoning the other apostles standing nearby to join them, Jesus said: “Have I not made it plain to you that my realm is not of this world? I have told you many times that I have not come to sit on David’s throne, and now how is it that you are inquiring which place each of you will occupy in the Creator’s realm? Can you not perceive that I have called you as ambassadors of a spiritual realm? Do you not understand that soon, very soon, you are to represent me in the world and in the proclamation of the new realm, even as I now represent my Creator Parent? Can it be that I have chosen you and instructed you as messengers, and yet you do not comprehend the nature and significance of this coming age of divine pre-eminence in the hearts of mortals? My friends, hear me once more. Banish from your minds this idea that my realm is a rule of power or a reign of glory. Yes, all power will presently be given into my hands, but it is not the Creator’s will that we use this divine endowment to glorify ourselves during this age. In another age you will sit with me, but it is necessary now to submit to the will of the Creator and to go forth in humble obedience to execute the Creator’s will on earth.”

Once more the associates were shocked, stunned. Jesus sent them away two and two to pray, asking them to return at noon. On this crucial morning they each sought to find the Creator, and each endeavored to cheer and strengthen the other, and they returned to Jesus as they had been asked.

Jesus now recounted for them the coming of John, the baptism in the Jordan, the marriage feast at Cana, the recent choosing of the six, and warned them that the enemy of the new realm would try to draw them away. After this short but earnest talk the apostles all rose, under Peter’s leadership, to declare their undying devotion to their Master and to pledge their unswerving loyalty to the new realm, as Thomas expressed it, “To this coming realm, no matter what it is and even if I do not fully understand it.” They all truly *believed in Jesus*, even though they did not fully comprehend the teachings.

Jesus now asked them how much money they had among them, and also inquired as to what provision had been made for their families. When it developed that they had hardly sufficient funds to maintain themselves for two weeks, Jesus said: "It is not the will of the Creator that we begin our work in this way. We will remain here by the sea for two weeks and fish or do whatever our hands find to do; and in the meantime, under the guidance of Andrew, the first chosen apostle, you will organize yourselves so as to provide for everything that is needed in your future work, both for the present personal ministry and also when I shall subsequently ordain you to preach and to instruct seekers." They were all greatly encouraged by these words; this was their first clear-cut and positive intimation that Jesus designed to enter later on upon more aggressive and pretentious public efforts.

The apostles spent the remainder of the day perfecting their organization and completing arrangements for boats and nets for embarking on the next day's activities, as they had all decided to devote themselves to fishing; most of them, including Jesus, were experienced with boats and fishing. Many of the boats which they used during the next few years had been built by Jesus' own hands. And they were good and trustworthy boats.

Jesus instructed them to devote themselves to fishing for two weeks. They fished in three groups, Jesus going out with a different group each night. They all loved Jesus, who was a cheerful companion and an inspiring friend, even more so the longer they worked together.

This plan of fishing two weeks and going out to do personal work for the new realm for two weeks was followed for more than five months, even to the end of this year of C.E. 26, until after the cessation of those special persecutions which had been directed against John's disciples after John had been imprisoned.

8. First Work of the Twelve

After disposing of the fish catches of two weeks, Judas Iscariot, the one chosen to act as treasurer of the twelve, divided the apostolic funds into six equal portions, funds for the care of dependent families having been already provided. And then near the middle of August, in the year C.E. 26, they went out two and two to the fields of work assigned by Andrew. The first two weeks Jesus went with Andrew and Peter, the second two weeks with James and John, and so on with the other pairs in the order of their choosing. In this way Jesus was able to go out at least once with each pair before calling them together for the beginning of their public ministry.

Jesus taught them to preach the forgiveness of sin through *faith* without penance or sacrifice, and that the Creator loves all children with the same eternal love. Jesus enjoined the apostles to refrain from discussing:

1. The work and imprisonment of John the Baptist.
2. The voice at the baptism. Jesus said: "Only those who heard the voice may refer to it. Repeat only what you have heard from me; not hearsay."
3. The turning of the water into wine at Cana. Jesus seriously charged them, saying, "Tell no one about the water and the wine."

They had wonderful times throughout these five or six months during which they fished every alternate two weeks, earning enough money to support themselves in the field for each succeeding two weeks of missionary work.

The common people marveled at the teaching and ministry of Jesus and the apostles. The rabbis had long taught the Jews that the ignorant could not be pious or righteous. But Jesus' apostles were both pious and righteous; yet they were cheerfully ignorant of much of the learning of the rabbis and the wisdom of the world.

Jesus made plain to the apostles the difference between the repentance of so-called good works as taught by the Jews and the change of mind by faith — the new birth — which was required as the price of admission to the new realm. Jesus taught the apostles that *faith* was the only requisite to entering the Creator's realm. John had taught them "repentance — to flee from the wrath to come." Jesus taught, "Faith is the open door for entering into the present, perfect, and eternal love of the Creator." Jesus did not speak like a prophet, one who comes to declare the word of the Universal Source, but seemed to speak as one having authority. Jesus sought to divert their minds from miracle seeking to the finding of a real and personal experience in the satisfaction and assurance of the indwelling of the spirit of love and saving grace.

The apostles learned that the Master had a profound respect and sympathetic regard for *every* human being, and they were tremendously impressed by this uniform and unvarying consideration which Jesus so consistently gave to all sorts of people. Jesus would pause in the midst of a profound discourse in order to go out in the road to speak words of comfort to a passing person laden with a burden of body and soul. Jesus would interrupt a serious conference with the apostles to play with an intruding child. Nothing ever seemed so important to Jesus as the *individual human* who happened to be immediately present. Jesus was master and teacher, but was more, being also an understanding friend.

Though Jesus' public teaching mainly consisted in parables and short discourses, the apostles were also taught by questions and answers. Jesus would always pause to answer sincere questions during the later public discourses.

The apostles were at first shocked by, but early became accustomed to, Jesus' treatment of both genders. Jesus made it very clear to them that everyone was to be accorded equal rights in the new realm.

9. Five Months of Testing

This somewhat monotonous period of alternate fishing and personal work proved to be a grueling experience for the twelve apostles, but they endured the test. With all of their grumblings, doubts, and transient dissatisfactions they remained true to their vows of devotion and loyalty to the Master. It was their personal association with Jesus during these months of testing that inspired them all (except Judas Iscariot) to remain loyal and true even in the dark hours of the trial and crucifixion. They simply could not actually desert a revered teacher who had lived so close to them and had been so devoted to them as Jesus had. Through the dark hours of the Master's death, in the hearts of these apostles all reason, judgment, and logic were set aside in deference to just one extraordinary human emotion — the supreme sentiment of friendship-loyalty. These five months of work led the apostles to regard Jesus as the best *friend* they had in all the

world. And it was this human sentiment, and not Jesus' superb teachings or marvelous doings, that held them together until after the resurrection and the renewal of the proclamation of the new realm.

Not only were these months of quiet work a great test to the apostles, a test which they survived, but this season of public inactivity was a great trial to Jesus' family. By the time Jesus was prepared to launch the public work, the entire family (except Ruth) had practically deserted. On only a few occasions did they attempt to make subsequent contact, and then it was to persuade Jesus to return home with them. They simply could not fathom Jesus' philosophy or teaching; it was all too much for them.

The apostles carried on their personal work in Capernaum, Bethsaida-Julias, Chorazin, Gerasa, Hippos, Magdala, Cana, Bethlehem of Galilee, Jotapata, Ramah, Safed, Gischala, Gadara, and Abila. Besides these towns they labored in many villages as well as in the countryside. By the end of this period the twelve had worked out fairly satisfactory plans for the care of their respective families. Most of the apostles were married, some had several children, but they had made such arrangements for the support of their families that, with some little assistance from the apostolic funds, they could devote their entire energies to the Master's work without having to worry about the financial welfare of their families.

10. Organization of the Twelve

The apostles organized themselves in the following manner:

1. Andrew, the first chosen apostle, was designated chair and director general of the twelve.
2. Peter, James, and John were appointed personal companions of Jesus, to minister to all Jesus' physical needs, and to go along on those night vigils of prayer and mysterious communion with the Creator.
3. Philip was made steward of the group, to provide food and to see that visitors, and even the multitude of listeners at times, had something to eat.
4. Nathaniel watched over the needs of the families of the twelve, receiving regular reports as to the requirements of each apostle's family and, making requisition to Judas, would send funds each week to those in need.
5. Matthew was the fiscal agent of the apostolic corps, seeing that the budget was balanced and the treasury replenished. If the funds for mutual support were not forthcoming, if donations sufficient to maintain the party were not received, Matthew was empowered to order the twelve back to their nets. But this was never necessary after they began their public work; there were always sufficient funds in the treasury to finance their activities.
6. Thomas was manager of the itinerary, arranging lodgings and in a general way selecting places for teaching and preaching, thereby insuring a smooth and expeditious travel schedule.
7. James and Judas Alpheus were assigned to the management of the multitudes. It was their task to deputize a sufficient number of assistant ushers to enable them to maintain order among the crowds during the preaching.

8. Simon Zelotes was given charge of recreation and play, managing the Wednesday programs and also seeking to provide for a few hours of relaxation and diversion each day.

9. Judas Iscariot was appointed treasurer. Judas carried the bag, paid all expenses and kept the books, also making budget estimates for Matthew from week to week and weekly reports to Andrew. Judas paid out funds on Andrew's authorization.

In this way the twelve functioned from their early organization up to the time of the reorganization made necessary by the desertion of Judas, the betrayer. The apostles went on in this simple manner until Sunday, January 12, C.E. 27, when Jesus called them together and formally ordained them as ambassadors and preachers of the new realm. And soon afterward they prepared to start for Jerusalem and Judea on their first public preaching tour.

Paper 139

The Twelve Apostles

It is an eloquent testimony to the charm and righteousness of Jesus' earth life that, in spite of repeatedly dashing to pieces the hopes of the apostles and tearing to shreds their every ambition for personal exaltation, only one deserted.

The apostles learned from Jesus about the realm of the Creator, and Jesus learned much from them about the realm of mortals, human nature as it lives on Urantia and on the other evolutionary worlds of time and space. These twelve represented many different types of human temperament, and they had not been made *alike* by schooling. Many of these Galileans carried heavy strains of gentile ancestry as a result of the forcible conversion of the gentile population of Galilee one hundred years previously.

Do not make the mistake of regarding the apostles as being altogether ignorant and unlearned. All of them, except the Alpheus twins, were graduates of the synagogue schools, having been thoroughly trained in the Hebrew scriptures and in much of the current knowledge of that day. Seven were graduates of the Capernaum synagogue schools, and there were no better Jewish schools in all Galilee.

When your records refer to these messengers as being "ignorant and unlearned," it was intended to convey the idea that they were common people, unlearned in the lore of the rabbis and untrained in the methods of rabbinical interpretation of the scriptures. They were lacking in so-called higher education. In modern times they would certainly be considered uneducated, and in some circles of society even uncultured. One thing is certain: They had not all been put through the same rigid and stereotyped educational curriculum. From adolescence on they had enjoyed separate experiences of learning how to live.

1. Andrew, the First Chosen

Andrew, chairman of the apostolic corps, was born in Capernaum, the oldest child in a family of five. Andrew was the child of a partner of Zebedee in the fish-drying business at Bethsaida, the fishing harbor of Capernaum. When becoming an apostle, Andrew was unmarried but lived with Simon Peter. Both were engaged in fishing and were partners of James and John Zebedee.

In C.E. 26, when chosen as an apostle, Andrew was 33, a full year older than Jesus and the oldest of the apostles. Andrew sprang from an excellent line of ancestors and was the ablest of the twelve. Except for oratory, Andrew was the peer of the other apostles in almost every imaginable ability. Jesus never gave Andrew a nickname, but even as the apostles soon began to call Jesus Master, they also designated Andrew by a term the equivalent of Chief.

Andrew was a good organizer but a better administrator. Although being one of the inner circle of four apostles, serving as the head of the apostolic group made it necessary for Andrew to remain on duty while the other three enjoyed very close communion with the Master. To the very end Andrew remained dean of the apostolic corps.

While never an effective preacher, Andrew was an efficient personal worker, being the pioneer missionary of the realm in that, as the first chosen apostle, Andrew immediately enlisted Simon Peter, who subsequently became one of the greatest preachers of the new age. Andrew was the chief supporter of Jesus' policy of utilizing the program of personal work as a means of training the twelve as messengers.

Whether Jesus privately taught the apostles or preached to the multitude, Andrew was usually conversant with what was going on. Andrew was an understanding executive and an efficient administrator, rendering a prompt decision on every matter. If a problem was beyond the domain of personal authority, Andrew would take it straight to Jesus.

Andrew and Peter were very unlike in character and temperament, but it must be recorded everlastingly to their credit that they got along together very well. Andrew was never jealous of Peter's oratorical ability. Not often will an older person of Andrew's type be observed exerting such a profound influence over a younger and talented sibling. Andrew and Peter never seemed to be in the least jealous of each other's abilities or achievements. Late on the evening of the day of Pentecost, when, largely through the energetic and inspiring preaching of Peter, two thousand souls were added to the new realm, Andrew said: "I could not do that, but I am glad I have someone who could." To which Peter replied: "And but for your bringing me to the Master and by your steadfastness in *keeping* me in the group, I would not have been here to do this." Andrew and Peter were the exceptions to the rule, proving that even siblings can live together peaceably and work together effectively.

After Pentecost Peter was famous, but it never irritated the older Andrew.

Of all the apostles, Andrew was the best judge of people. Andrew knew that trouble was brewing in the heart of Judas Iscariot even when none of the others suspected that anything was wrong with their treasurer, but Andrew told none of them about these fears. Andrew's great service was in advising Peter, James, and John concerning the choice of the first missionaries who were sent out, and also in counseling these early leaders about the organization of the administrative affairs of the new realm. Andrew had a great gift for discovering the hidden resources and latent talents of young people.

Very soon after Jesus' ascension, Andrew began writing a personal record of many of the sayings and doings of the departed Master. After Andrew's death other copies of this private record were made and circulated freely among the early teachers of the Christian church. These informal notes of Andrew's were subsequently edited, amended, altered, and added to until they made up a fairly consecutive narrative of the Master's life on earth. The last of these few altered and amended copies was destroyed by fire at Alexandria about one hundred years after the original was written by this first chosen of the twelve apostles.

Andrew was a person of clear insight, logical thought, and firm decision, whose great strength of character consisted in superb stability. Andrew's temperamental handicap was a lack of enthusiasm, many times failing to encourage the other apostles by judicious commendation. And this reticence to praise worthy accomplishments grew out of Andrew's abhorrence of flattery and insincerity. Andrew was one of those all-round, even-tempered, self-made, and successful people of modest affairs.

Every one of the apostles loved Jesus, but it remains true that each of the twelve was drawn toward Jesus because of some certain trait of personality which made a special appeal to the individual apostle. Andrew admired Jesus for having consistent sincerity — unaffected dignity.

When the later persecutions finally scattered the apostles from Jerusalem, Andrew journeyed through Armenia, Asia Minor, and Macedonia and, after bringing many thousands into the new realm, was finally apprehended and crucified in Patrae in Achaia. It was two full days before this robust individual expired on the cross, while throughout these tragic hours continuing to effectively proclaim the doctrine of the new age.

2. Simon Peter

Simon, when joining the apostles, was thirty years of age, was married, had three children, and lived with Andrew at Bethsaida, near Capernaum. Both Peter and Andrew were fishing partners of John and James Zebedee.

Simon had been known for some time by the Master before being presented by Andrew as the second of the apostles. Jesus, when giving Simon the name Peter, did it with a smile; it was to be a sort of nickname. Simon was well known as an erratic and impulsive person. True, later on, Jesus did attach a new and significant import to this lightly bestowed nickname.

Simon Peter was a person of impulse, an optimist. Simon had grown up indulging strong feelings and was constantly getting into difficulties by speaking without thinking. This sort of thoughtlessness also made incessant trouble for all of Simon's friends and associates and was the cause of many mild rebukes from the Master. The only reason Peter did not get into more trouble through thoughtless speaking was by learning to talk over various plans and schemes with Andrew before venturing to make public proposals.

Peter was a fluent speaker, eloquent and dramatic, and was also a natural and inspirational leader, a quick thinker but not a deep reasoner. Peter asked many questions, more than all the apostles put together, and while the majority of these questions were good and relevant, many of them were thoughtless and foolish. Peter did not have a deep mind, but knew that mind fairly well, being therefore a person of quick decision and sudden action. While others talked in their astonishment at seeing Jesus on the beach, Peter jumped in and swam ashore to meet the Master.

The one trait which Peter most admired in Jesus was supernal tenderness. Peter never tired of contemplating Jesus' forbearance, never forgetting the lesson about forgiving the wrongdoer, not only seven times but seventy times and seven. Peter thought much about these impressions of the Master's forgiving character during those dark and dismal days immediately after having made a thoughtless and unintended denial of Jesus in the high priest's courtyard.

Simon Peter was distressingly vacillating, suddenly swinging from one extreme to the other. One of the most inexplicable combinations of courage and cowardice that ever lived on earth, Peter's great strength of character was loyalty and friendship, and yet despite this towering strength of devotion, Peter denied Jesus when teased by a servant. Peter could withstand persecution and any other form of direct assault, but

withered and shrank before ridicule. A brave soldier when facing a frontal attack, Peter was a fear-cringing coward when surprised with an assault from the rear.

Peter was the first of Jesus' apostles to come forward to defend the work of Philip among the Samaritans and Paul among the gentiles, yet later on at Antioch retreated when confronted by ridicule, temporarily withdrawing from the gentiles only to suffer the fearless denunciation of Paul.

Peter was the first of the apostles to make wholehearted confession of Jesus' combined humanity and divinity and the first — except Judas — to deny Jesus. Peter was not much of a dreamer, but disliked to descend from the clouds of ecstasy and the enthusiasm of dramatic indulgence to the plain and matter-of-fact world of reality.

In following Jesus, literally and figuratively, Peter was either leading the procession or else trailing behind, but was the outstanding preacher of the twelve, doing more than anyone else, aside from Paul, to establish the new realm and send its messengers to the four corners of the earth in one generation.

After the rash denials of the Master Peter recovered, and with Andrew's sympathetic and understanding guidance, again led the way back to the fish nets while the apostles waited to find out what was to happen after the crucifixion. When Peter was fully assured of Jesus' forgiveness and reception back into the Master's fold, the fires of the Creator's realm burned brightly and Peter became a great and saving light to thousands who sat in darkness.

After leaving Jerusalem and before Paul became the leading spirit among the gentile Christian churches, Peter traveled extensively, visiting all the churches from Babylon to Corinth, even visiting and ministering to many of the churches which had been created by Paul. Although Peter and Paul differed much in temperament and education, even in theology, they worked together harmoniously for the upbuilding of the churches during their later years.

Something of Peter's style and teaching is shown in the sermons partially recorded by Luke and in the Gospel of Mark. Peter's vigorous style was better shown in the letter known as the First Epistle of Peter; at least this was true before it was subsequently altered by a disciple of Paul.

But Peter persisted in making the mistake of trying to convince the Jews that Jesus was, after all, really and truly the Jewish Messiah, continuing to suffer confusion between the concepts of the Jewish Messiah, Christ as the world's redeemer, and Jesus as the revealer of the Creator, the loving Parent of all humankind.

Peter's spouse was a very able person who for years labored as a follower of Jesus, and, when Peter was driven out of Jerusalem, went along on all the journeys to the churches as well as on all missionary excursions, and the day Peter died, was thrown to the wild beasts in the arena at Rome.

And so Peter, an intimate of Jesus, one of the inner circle, went forth from Jerusalem proclaiming the new age with power and glory until the fullness of this ministry had been accomplished; and Peter felt highly honored by dying as the Master had died — on the cross. Simon Peter was crucified in Rome.

3. James Zebedee

James, the older of the two Zebedee apostles, was thirty years old when becoming an apostle, was married, had four children, and lived on the outskirts of Capernaum, Bethsaida. James made a living by fishing in company with John Zebedee and in association with Andrew and Simon. James and John enjoyed the advantage of having known Jesus longer than any of the other apostles.

This able apostle was a temperamental contradiction, seeming to possess two natures, both of which were actuated by strong feelings. James was particularly vehement when indignant, had a fiery temper when it was adequately provoked, and when the storm was over, was always given to justify and excuse the anger under the pretense that it was wholly a manifestation of righteous indignation. Except for these periodic upheavals of wrath, James' personality was much like that of Andrew although lacking Andrew's discretion or insight into human nature. James was a much better public speaker than Andrew. Next to Peter, unless it was Matthew, James was the best public orator among the twelve.

James, while in no sense moody, could be quiet and taciturn one day and a very good talker and storyteller the next. James usually talked freely with Jesus, but among the twelve, for days at a time was silent. James' one great weakness was these spells of unaccountable silence.

The outstanding feature of James' personality was the ability to see all sides of a proposition. Of all the twelve, James came the nearest to grasping the real import and significance of Jesus' teaching. While slow at first to comprehend the Master's meaning, before they had finished their training James had acquired a superior concept of Jesus' message. James was able to understand a wide range of human nature, getting along well with the versatile Andrew, the impetuous Peter, and the self-contained John.

Though James and John had their troubles trying to work together, it was inspiring to observe how well they got along. They did not succeed quite as well as Andrew and Peter, but they did much better than would ordinarily be expected of two siblings, especially such headstrong and determined individuals. But, strange as it may seem, these two were much more tolerant of each other than they were of strangers. They had great affection for one another and had always been happy playmates. It was these two who wanted to call fire down from above to destroy the Samaritans who presumed to show disrespect for their Master. But the untimely death of James greatly modified the vehement temperament of John.

That characteristic of Jesus which James most admired was the Master's sympathetic affection. Jesus' understanding interest in the small and the great, the rich and the poor, made a great appeal to James.

James Zebedee was a well-balanced thinker and planner, and along with Andrew, was one of the more level-headed of the apostolic group. James was a vigorous individual but was never in a hurry, and was an excellent balance for Peter.

James was modest and undramatic, a daily server, an unpretentious worker, seeking no special reward when once grasping something of the real meaning of Jesus' teaching. And even in the story about Salome asking that James and John be granted places on the right hand and the left hand of Jesus, it should be remembered that it was Salome who made this request. And when they signified that they were ready to assume such

responsibilities, it should be recognized that they were cognizant of the dangers accompanying the Master's supposed revolt against the Roman power, and that they were also willing to pay the price. When Jesus asked if they were ready to accept the consequences, they replied that they were. And as concerns James, it was literally true. James did suffer with the Master, the first of the apostles to experience martyrdom, being put to death with the sword by Herod Agrippa. Herod Agrippa feared James above all the other apostles. James, while often quiet and silent, was brave and determined when aroused and challenged.

James lived life fully, and when the end came, exhibited such grace and fortitude that even the accuser and informer, who attended James' trial and execution, rushed away from the scene of James's death to join the disciples of Jesus.

4. John Zebedee

When becoming an apostle, John was twenty-four years old and was the youngest of the twelve. John was unmarried and lived at Bethsaida, fishing with James and in partnership with Andrew and Peter. Both before and after becoming an apostle, John functioned as the personal agent of Jesus in dealing with the Master's family, and continued to bear this responsibility as long as Mary lived.

John was the youngest of the twelve and closely associated with Jesus' family affairs. While John was very dear to the Master, it cannot be truthfully said that John was "the disciple whom Jesus loved." You would hardly suspect such a magnanimous personality as Jesus to be guilty of showing favoritism, of loving one of the apostles more than the others. The fact that John was one of the three personal aides of Jesus lent further color to this mistaken idea, not to mention the fact that John, along with James, had known Jesus longer than the others.

Peter, James, and John were assigned as personal aides to Jesus soon after they became apostles. Shortly after the selection of the twelve and at the time Jesus appointed Andrew to act as director of the group, Jesus said to Andrew: "And now I desire that you assign two or three of your associates to be with me and to remain by my side, to comfort me and to minister to my daily needs." And Andrew thought it best to select for this special duty the next three first-chosen apostles. Andrew would have liked to volunteer for such a blessed service personally, but in light of the Master's commission, immediately directed that Peter, James, and John attach themselves to Jesus.

John Zebedee had many lovely traits of character, but one which was not so lovely was an inordinate but usually well-concealed conceit. John's character went through many and great changes by virtue of long association with Jesus. This conceit was greatly lessened, but after John grew old and became more or less childish, this self-inflation reappeared to a certain extent, so that, when engaged in directing Nathan in the writing of the Gospel, the aged apostle did not hesitate repeatedly to adopt the designation as the "disciple whom Jesus loved." In view of the fact that John came nearer to being the close associate of Jesus than any other earth mortal, and was Jesus' chosen personal representative in so many matters, it is not strange that John should have chosen this description, having been the recipient of Jesus' frequent trust.

The strongest trait in John's character was dependability, being prompt and courageous, faithful and devoted. John's greatest weakness was this characteristic conceit. John was the youngest member of the

family and the youngest of the apostolic group, perhaps being just a bit spoiled and humored slightly too much. But the John of later years was a very different type of person than the self-admiring and arbitrary young person who joined the ranks of Jesus' apostles at twenty-four.

Those characteristics of Jesus which John most appreciated were the Master's love and unselfishness. These traits made such an impression that John's whole subsequent life became dominated by the sentiment of love and devotion. John talked about love and wrote about love, becoming the "apostle of love"; and at Ephesus, when the aged bishop was no longer able to stand in the pulpit and preach but had to be carried to church in a chair, and when at the close of the service was asked to say a few words, for years only uttered, "My little children, love one another."

John was a person of few words except when aroused by anger, thinking much but saying little. On growing older, this temper became more subdued, better controlled, but John never overcame the disinclination to talk, never fully mastering this reticence. But John was gifted with a remarkable and creative imagination.

There was another side to John that one would not expect to find in this quiet and introspective type. John was somewhat bigoted and inordinately intolerant, in this respect being much like James — they both wanted to call down fire from above on the heads of the disrespectful Samaritans. Encountering some strangers teaching in Jesus' name, John promptly forbade them. But John was not the only one of the twelve who was tainted with this kind of self-inflation and superiority consciousness.

John's life was tremendously influenced by the sight of Jesus' going about without a home, knowing how faithfully Jesus had made provision for the care of the family. John also deeply sympathized because of the family's withdrawal due to their failure to understand Jesus. This entire situation, together with Jesus' always deferring every wish to the will of the Creator and living a daily life of implicit trust, made such a profound impression on John that it produced marked and permanent character changes, changes which manifested themselves throughout John's entire subsequent life.

John had a cool and daring courage which few of the other apostles possessed, being the one apostle who followed along with Jesus the night of the arrest and dared to accompany the Master into the very jaws of death. John was present and near at hand right up to Jesus' last earthly hour and was found faithfully carrying out the trust with regard to Mary and ready to receive such additional instructions as might be given during the last moments of the Master's mortal existence. One thing is certain, John was thoroughly dependable. John usually sat on Jesus' right hand when the twelve were at meals. John was the first of the twelve really and fully to believe in the resurrection, and was the first to recognize the Master on the seashore after the resurrection.

John Zebedee was very closely associated with Peter in the early activities of the Christian movement, becoming one of the chief supporters of the Jerusalem church, and was the right-hand support of Peter on the day of Pentecost.

Several years after the martyrdom of James, John married James' surviving spouse. The last twenty years of life John was cared for by a loving grandchild.

John was in prison several times and was banished to the Isle of Patmos for a period of four years until another emperor came to power in Rome. Without having been tactful and sagacious, John would undoubtedly have been killed as was the more outspoken James. As the years passed, John learned to practice wise conciliation when appearing before the civil magistrates. John also learned to represent the church as a “spiritual community devoted to the social service of humankind” rather than as “the realm of the Creator,” teaching loving service rather than ruling power.

When in temporary exile on Patmos, John wrote the Book of Revelation, which you now have in greatly abridged and distorted form. This Book of Revelation contains the surviving fragments of a great revelation, large portions of which were lost, other portions of which were removed, subsequent to John’s writing. It is preserved in only fragmentary and adulterated form.

John traveled much, labored incessantly, and after becoming bishop of the Asia churches, settled down at Ephesus. John directed an associate, Nathan, in the writing of the so-called “Gospel according to John,” at Ephesus, when ninety-nine years old. Of all the twelve apostles, John Zebedee eventually became the outstanding theologian. John died a natural death at Ephesus in C.E. 103 when at one hundred and one years of age.

5. Philip the Curious

Philip was the fifth apostle to be chosen, being called when Jesus and the first four apostles were on their way from John the Baptist’s rendezvous on the Jordan to Cana of Galilee. Living at Bethsaida, Philip had for some time known of Jesus, but had not come to the conclusion that Jesus was a really great teacher until that day in the Jordan valley when Jesus said, “Follow me.” Philip was also somewhat influenced by the fact that Andrew, Peter, James, and John had accepted Jesus as the Deliverer.

Philip was twenty-seven years of age when joining the apostles, had recently been married, but had no children at this time. The nickname given by the apostles signified “curiosity.” Philip was always wanting to be shown, never seeming to see very far into any proposition. Philip was not necessarily dull, but lacked imagination, this lack of imagination being the great weakness of Philip’s character. Philip was a commonplace and matter-of-fact individual.

When the apostles were organized for service, Philip was made steward and given the duty to see that they were at all times supplied with provisions, ably carrying out this responsibility. Philip’s strongest characteristic was methodical thoroughness, being both mathematical and systematic.

Philip was next to the oldest in a family of seven, and after the resurrection, baptized the entire family. Philip was not a person who could be expected to do big things, but was one who could do little things in a big way, and do them well and acceptably. Only a few times in four years did Philip fail to have food on hand to satisfy the needs of all, being seldom unprepared even during the many emergency demands of the life they lived. The commissary department of the apostolic family was intelligently and efficiently managed.

The strong point about Philip was methodical reliability; the weak point was utter lack of imagination, the absence of the ability to put two and two together to obtain four. Philip was mathematical in the abstract but not constructive, being almost entirely lacking in certain types of imagination. Philip was the typical commonplace average person. There were a great many such people among the multitudes who came to hear Jesus teach and preach, and they derived great comfort from observing one like themselves elevated to an honored position in the councils of the Master; they derived courage from the fact that one like themselves had already found a high place in the affairs of the new age. And Jesus learned much about the way some human minds function while so patiently listening to Philip's foolish questions, and so many times complied with this steward's request to "be shown."

The one quality about Jesus which Philip so continuously admired was the Master's unfailing generosity. Philip could never find anything in Jesus which was small or stingy.

There was little about Philip's personality that was impressive. Philip was almost without discerning vision, and was unable to grasp the dramatic possibilities of a given situation. Philip was not pessimistic, but simply straightforward and was also greatly lacking in spiritual insight. Philip would not hesitate to interrupt Jesus in the midst of one of the Master's most profound discourses to ask an apparently foolish question. But Jesus never reprimanded Philip for such thoughtlessness, and was patient and considerate of Philip's inability to grasp the deeper meanings of the teaching. Jesus knew that, by rebuking Philip for asking these annoying questions, this honest soul would not only be wounded, but would never again feel free to ask questions. Jesus knew that on the worlds of space there were untold billions of similar slow-thinking mortals, and wanted to encourage them all to feel free to bring their questions and problems. After all, Jesus was really more interested in Philip's foolish questions than in expressing the discourse. Jesus was supremely interested in *people*, all kinds of people.

The apostolic steward was not a good public speaker, but was a very persuasive and successful personal worker. Philip was not easily discouraged but was a plodder and very tenacious in every undertaking, having that great and rare gift of saying, "Come." When Philip's first convert, Nathaniel, wanted to argue about the merits and demerits of Jesus and Nazareth, Philip's effective reply was, "Come and see." Philip was not a dogmatic preacher who exhorted the hearers to "Go" — do this and do that, but rather met all situations as they arose with "Come" — "come with me; I will show you the way." And that is always the effective technique in all forms and phases of teaching. Even parents may learn from Philip the better way of saying to their children *not* "Go do this and go do that," but rather, "Come with us while we show and share with you the better way."

The inability of Philip to adapt to a new situation was well shown when the Greeks came to Jerusalem, saying: "We desire to see Jesus." Now Philip would have said to any Jew asking such a question, "Come." But these people were foreigners, and Philip could remember no instructions regarding such matters. So the only alternative was to consult the chief, Andrew, and then they both escorted the inquiring Greeks to Jesus. Likewise, when going into Samaria preaching and baptizing as instructed by the Master, Philip refrained from laying hands on the converts in recognition of their having received the Spirit of Truth. This was done by Peter and John, who presently came down from Jerusalem to observe this work on behalf of the church.

Philip went on through the trying times of the Master's death, participated in the reorganization of the twelve, and was the first to win souls outside of the immediate Jewish ranks, being most successful in work with the Samaritans and in all subsequent labors on behalf of the teachings.

Philip's spouse, who was an efficient leader in the new realm, became actively associated with Philip's evangelistic work after their flight from the Jerusalem persecutions. Following their death, their eldest child, Leah, continued their work.

Philip, the onetime steward of the twelve, won many souls, and was finally crucified and buried at Hierapolis.

6. Honest Nathaniel

Nathaniel, the sixth and last of the apostles to be chosen by the Master, was brought to Jesus by Philip. Nathaniel had been associated in several business enterprises with Philip and, together, they were on the way down to see John the Baptist when they encountered Jesus.

Nathaniel, when joining the apostles, was twenty-five years old and was the next to the youngest of the group. Nathaniel was the youngest of a family of seven, was unmarried, and the only support of aged and infirm parents, living with them at Cana. The other children were either married or deceased, and none lived there. Nathaniel and Judas Iscariot were the best educated among the twelve. Nathaniel had thought to become a merchant.

Jesus did not personally give Nathaniel a nickname, but the twelve devised terms that signified honesty, sincerity, and "without guile." Nathaniel was both honest and sincere, but suffered from the weakness of pride; pride of family, city, reputation, and nation, all of which is commendable if not carried too far. But Nathaniel was inclined to go to extremes with personal prejudices, being disposed to prejudge individuals in accordance with personal opinions. Nathaniel was not slow to ask the question, even before meeting Jesus, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" But, while proud, Nathaniel was not obstinate, and was quick to reverse that comment after looking into Jesus' face.

In many respects Nathaniel was the odd genius of the twelve. Nathaniel was the apostolic philosopher and dreamer, but a very practical sort of dreamer, alternating between periods of profound philosophy and times of rare and droll humor. When in the proper mood, Nathaniel was probably the best storyteller among the twelve. Jesus greatly enjoyed hearing Nathaniel discourse on things both serious and frivolous. Nathaniel progressively took Jesus and the concept of the new age more seriously, but never became self-absorbed.

The apostles all loved and respected Nathaniel, who also got along with them splendidly, except for Judas Iscariot. Judas did not think Nathaniel took the apostleship sufficiently seriously and once had the temerity to go to Jesus secretly and lodge a complaint against Nathaniel. Jesus said: "Judas, watch your steps carefully; do not overmagnify your office. Who of us is competent to judge another? It is not the Creator's will that the universe children should partake only of the serious things of life. Let me repeat: I have come so that others may have joy, gladness, and life more abundantly. Do well with what has been entrusted to

you but leave the judgement of Nathaniel to the Creator.” And the memory of this, with that of many similar experiences, long lived in the self-deceiving heart of Judas Iscariot.

Many times, when Jesus was away on the mountain with Peter, James, and John, and things were becoming tense and tangled among the apostles, when even Andrew was in doubt about what to say to the other apostles, Nathaniel would relieve the tension by a bit of philosophy or a flash of humor; good humor, too.

Nathaniel’s duty was to look after the families of the twelve. On hearing that sickness or anything out of the ordinary had happened in one of the families, Nathaniel lost no time in getting to that home. The twelve rested securely in the knowledge that their families’ welfare was safe in the hands of Nathaniel.

Nathaniel most revered Jesus’ tolerance, broadmindedness and generous sympathy.

Shortly after Pentecost, this apostle went into Mesopotamia and India proclaiming the new age and baptizing seekers. The other apostles never knew what became of their onetime philosopher, poet, and humorist. But Nathaniel did much to spread the Master’s teachings, even while not participating in the organization of the subsequent Christian church. Nathaniel died in India.

7. Matthew Levi

Matthew, the seventh apostle, was chosen by Andrew. Matthew belonged to a family of tax gatherers, or publicans, but was a customs collector living in Capernaum. Matthew was thirty-one years old, was married, had four children and had moderate wealth, the only person of any means belonging to the apostolic corps. Matthew was good at business, a good social mixer, and gifted with the ability to make friends and to get along smoothly with a great variety of people.

Andrew appointed Matthew the financial representative of the apostles, to serve as fiscal agent and publicity spokesperson for the apostolic organization. Matthew was a keen judge of human nature and a very efficient propagandist. Although having a personality difficult to visualize, Matthew was a very earnest disciple and an increasing believer in the mission of Jesus and in the certainty of the new age. Jesus never gave Levi a nickname, but the other apostles chose the “money-getter.”

Levi’s strong point was wholehearted devotion to the cause. That a publican had been taken in by Jesus and the apostles was cause for overwhelming gratitude on the part of the former revenue collector. However, it required some time for the rest of the apostles, especially Simon Zelotes and Judas Iscariot, to become reconciled to the publican’s presence in their midst. The weakness that Matthew needed to overcome was a shortsighted and materialistic viewpoint of life, but great progress was made as the months went by. Of course, it was necessary for Matthew to be absent from many of the most precious times of instruction in order to keep the treasury replenished.

It was the Master’s forgiving disposition which Matthew most appreciated. Matthew would never cease to recount that only faith was necessary in order to find the Creator, always speaking of the new age as “this business of finding the Creator.”

Matthew, in spite of having a questionable past, did an excellent job, and as time went on the others became proud of the publican's performances. Matthew was one of the apostles who made extensive notes on the sayings of Jesus, and these notes were used as the basis of Isador's subsequent narrative of the sayings and doings of Jesus, which has become known as the Gospel according to Matthew.

The great and useful life of Matthew, the business person and customs collector of Capernaum, has been the means of leading thousands of other business people, public officials, and politicians, down through the subsequent ages, to also hear that engaging voice of the Master saying, "Follow me." Matthew really was a shrewd politician, but was intensely loyal to Jesus and supremely devoted to the task of seeing that the messengers of the coming new age were adequately financed.

The presence of Matthew among the twelve was the means of keeping the doors of the new realm wide open to hosts of downhearted and outcast souls who had regarded themselves as outside of the bounds of religious consolation. Outcast and despairing people flocked to hear Jesus, and were never turned away.

Matthew received freely tendered offerings from believing disciples and from the people who heard the Master's teachings, but never openly solicited funds from the multitudes. Matthew did all this financial work in a quiet and personal way and raised most of the money among the more substantial class of interested followers. Practically all of Matthew's modest personal fortune was given to the work of the Master and the apostles, but they never knew of this generosity, save Jesus, who knew all about it. Matthew hesitated to openly contribute to the apostolic funds for fear that Jesus and the others might regard this money as being tainted, so that much was given in the names of others. Matthew, knowing that being among them during the earlier months was more or less of a trial, was strongly tempted to let them know that these funds often supplied them with their daily bread, but never did. When evidence of the disdain of the publican would become manifest, Levi would burn to reveal this generosity to them, but always managed to keep still.

When the funds for the week were short of the estimated requirements, Levi would often draw heavily on personal resources. Also, sometimes when becoming greatly interested in Jesus' teaching, Matthew preferred to remain and hear the instruction in spite of knowing that it would be necessary to personally make up for the failure to solicit the required funds. Levi fervently wished that Jesus might know that much of the money came from personal finances, little realizing that the Master knew all about it. The apostles all died without knowing that Matthew was their benefactor to such an extent that, when going out to proclaim the new age after the beginning of the persecutions, Matthew was practically penniless.

When these persecutions caused the followers to leave Jerusalem, Matthew journeyed north, preaching the coming realm and baptizing seekers. Matthew was lost to the knowledge of the former apostolic associates, but went on, preaching and baptizing, through Syria, Cappadocia, Galatia, Bithynia, and Thrace. And it was in Thrace, at Lysimachia, that certain unbelieving Jews conspired with the Roman soldiers to cause Matthew's death. And this regenerated publican died triumphant in the faith of eternal life that was so surely learned from the teachings of the Master.

8. Thomas Didymus

Thomas was the eighth apostle and was chosen by Philip, in later times becoming known as “doubting Thomas,” although the other apostles hardly looked at Thomas as a chronic doubter. Thomas had a logical, skeptical type of mind, but also possessed a form of courageous loyalty which made it clear to intimate friends that Thomas was hardly a petty skeptic.

Thomas, on joining the apostles, was twenty-nine years old, was married, and had four children. Formerly Thomas had been a carpenter and stone mason, but more recently had begun fishing while residing at Tarichea, situated on the west bank of the Jordan where it flows out of the Sea of Galilee. And Thomas was regarded as the leading citizen of this little village. While having had little education, Thomas possessed a keen, reasoning mind and was the child of excellent parents who lived at Tiberias. Thomas had the one truly analytical mind of the twelve, being the real scientist of the apostolic group.

Early home life had been unfortunate; Thomas’ parents were not altogether happy in their married life, and this was reflected in the adult experience of Thomas, who grew up having a very disagreeable and quarrelsome disposition and a streak of suspicion which made it very difficult to get along with others. Peter was upset by Thomas at first, complaining to Andrew that Thomas was “mean, ugly, and always suspicious.” But the apostles eventually grew to like Thomas, who was superbly honest, unflinchingly loyal, perfectly sincere and unquestionably truthful, even while being a natural-born faultfinder and a real pessimist. Thomas’ analytical mind had become cursed with suspicion. When first becoming associated with the twelve, Thomas had been rapidly losing faith in people until coming in contact with the noble character of Jesus. This association with the Master began to immediately transform Thomas’s whole disposition and mental reactions to others.

Thomas’s great strength was a superb analytical mind coupled with unflinching courage — when finally making a decision. Thomas, whose great weakness was suspicious doubting, never fully overcame this difficulty throughout an entire lifetime.

In the organization of the twelve Thomas was assigned to arrange and manage the itinerary, ably directing the work and movements of the apostolic corps. Thomas was a good executive and had an excellent instinct for business, but was handicapped by many moods, being one person one day and another the next. Thomas was inclined toward melancholic brooding when first joining the apostles, but contact with Jesus and the others largely cured this morbid introspection.

Jesus enjoyed Thomas very much and they had many long, personal talks. Thomas’ presence among the apostles was a great comfort to all honest doubters and encouraged many troubled minds to join the new realm, even if they could not wholly understand everything about the spiritual and philosophic phases of the teachings of Jesus. Thomas’ membership in the twelve was a standing declaration that Jesus loved even honest doubters.

The other apostles held Jesus in reverence because of some special and outstanding trait, but Thomas revered the Master’s superbly balanced character. Increasingly Thomas admired and honored one who was so lovingly merciful yet so inflexibly just and fair; so firm but never obstinate; so calm but never indifferent;

so helpful and so sympathetic but never meddlesome or dictatorial; so strong but at the same time so gentle; so positive but never rough or rude; so tender but never vacillating; so pure and innocent but at the same time so aggressive and forceful; so truly courageous but never rash or foolhardy; such a lover of nature but so free from all tendency to revere nature; so humorous and so playful, but so free from levity and frivolity. It was this matchless symmetry of personality that charmed Thomas, who probably enjoyed the highest intellectual understanding and personality appreciation of Jesus of any of the twelve.

In the councils of the twelve Thomas was always cautious, advocating a policy of safety first, but if this conservatism was voted down or overruled, Thomas was always the first to fearlessly move out in execution of the program decided on. Again and again Thomas would stand out against some project as being foolhardy and presumptuous, and would debate it to the bitter end, but when Andrew would put the proposition to a vote and the others would vote in favor of it, Thomas was the first to say, "Let's go!" being a good loser and not holding grudges or nursing wounded feelings. Time and again Thomas opposed letting Jesus become exposed to danger, but when the Master would decide to take such risks, it was always Thomas who rallied the apostles with the courageous words, "Come on, friends, let's go and die with Jesus."

Thomas was in some respects like Philip, also wanting "to be shown." But these outward expressions of doubt were based on entirely different intellectual operations. Thomas was analytical, not merely skeptical. As far as personal physical courage was concerned, Thomas was one of the bravest among the twelve.

Thomas had some very bad days, being blue and downcast at times. The loss of a twin when Thomas was nine years old had occasioned much youthful sorrow and had added to the temperamental problems of later life. When Thomas would become despondent, sometimes it was Nathaniel who helped, sometimes Peter, and not infrequently one of the Alpheus twins. Thomas, when most depressed, unfortunately always tried to avoid coming in direct contact with Jesus. But the Master knew all about this and displayed an understanding sympathy when this apostle was afflicted with depression and harassed by doubts.

Sometimes Thomas would get permission from Andrew to go off alone for a day or two, but soon learned that such a course was not wise, finding that it was best, when downhearted, to stick close to the work and to remain near the associates. But no matter what happened emotionally, Thomas kept right on being an apostle. When the time actually came to move forward, it was always Thomas who said, "Let's go!"

Thomas is the great example of a human being who has doubts, faces them, and wins. Thomas had a great mind and was no complaining critic. Thomas was a logical thinker; the acid test of Jesus and the other apostles. If Jesus had not been genuine, a person like Thomas could not have been held from the start to the finish. Thomas had a keen and sure sense of *fact*. At the first appearance of fraud or deception Thomas would have forsaken them all. Scientists may not fully understand all about Jesus and the bestowal mission, but there was a person who lived and worked with the Master and the apostles whose mind was that of a true scientist — Thomas Didymus — and Thomas believed in Jesus of Nazareth.

Thomas had a trying time during the days of the trial and crucifixion, being in the depths of despair, but rallied the courage to stick with the apostles, and was present with them to welcome Jesus on the Sea of Galilee. For a while Thomas succumbed to doubting depression but eventually rallied faith and courage, giving wise counsel to the apostles after Pentecost and, when persecution scattered the followers, going to

Cyprus, Crete, the North African coast, and Sicily, preaching the new age and baptizing seekers. And Thomas continued preaching and baptizing until being apprehended by the agents of the Roman government and put to death in Malta. Just a few weeks before dying Thomas had begun the writing of the life and teachings of Jesus.

9. and 10. James and Judas Alpheus

James and Judas Alpheus, the twins living near Kheresa, were the ninth and tenth apostles and were chosen by James and John Zebedee. They were twenty-six years old and married, James having three children, Judas two.

There is not much to be said about these two commonplace fishers. They loved their Master and Jesus loved them, but they never interrupted Jesus' discourses with questions. They understood very little about the philosophical discussions or the theological debates of the other apostles, but they rejoiced to find themselves numbered among such a group of mighty individuals. These two were almost identical in personal appearance, mental characteristics, and extent of spiritual perception. What may be said of one should be recorded of the other.

Andrew assigned them to the work of managing the multitudes. They were the chief ushers of the preaching hours and, in fact, the general servants of the twelve. They helped Philip with the supplies, they carried money to the families for Nathaniel, and were always ready to lend a helping hand to any one of the apostles.

The multitudes of the common people were greatly encouraged to find two like themselves honored with places among the apostles. By their very acceptance as apostles these mediocre twins were the means of bringing a host of fainthearted seekers into the new realm. And, too, the common people took more kindly to the idea of being directed and managed by official ushers who were very much like themselves.

James and Judas, who were also called Thaddeus and Lebbeus, had neither strong points nor weak points. The nicknames given them by the disciples were good-natured designations of mediocrity. They were "the least of all the apostles," and they knew it and felt cheerful about it.

James Alpheus especially loved Jesus because of the Master's simplicity. These twins could not comprehend the mind of Jesus, but they did grasp the sympathetic bond between themselves and the heart of their Master. Their minds were not of a high order; they might even reverently be called simple, but they had a real experience in their spiritual natures. They believed in Jesus; they were children of the Creator and members of the new realm.

Judas Alpheus was drawn toward Jesus because of the Master's unostentatious humility. Such humility linked with such personal dignity made a great appeal to Judas. The fact that Jesus would always require silence regarding any unusual acts made a great impression on this simple child of nature.

The twins were good-natured, simple-minded helpers, and everybody loved them. Jesus welcomed these young people of one talent to positions of honor because there are untold millions of other such simple and fear-ridden souls on the worlds of space whom Jesus likewise wants to welcome into active and believing

community. Jesus does not look down on littleness, only on evil and sin. James and Judas were *little*, but they were also *faithful*. They were simple and ignorant, but they were also big-hearted, kind, and generous.

And how gratefully proud these humble beings were on that day when the Master only agreed to accept a certain rich person as an evangelist on the condition of selling everything and helping the poor. When the people heard this and saw the twins among the apostles, they knew of a certainty that Jesus was no respecter of persons. But only a divine institution — the realm of the Creator — could ever have been built on such a mediocre human foundation!

Only once or twice in all their association with Jesus did the twins venture to ask questions in public. Judas was once intrigued into asking Jesus a question when the Master had talked about becoming openly revealed to the world. Judas felt a little disappointed that there were to be no more secrets among the twelve, and boldly asked: “But, Master, when you do declare yourself to the world, how will you favor us with special manifestations of your goodness?”

The twins served faithfully until the end, until the dark days of trial, crucifixion, and despair. They never lost their faith in Jesus, and (except for John) they were the first to believe in the resurrection. But they could not comprehend the establishment of the new age. Soon after their Master was crucified, they returned to their families and nets; their work was done. They did not have the ability to go on in the more complex activities to come. But they lived and died conscious of having been honored and blessed with four years of close and personal association with the Deliverer, the sovereign maker of a universe.

11. Simon the Zealot

Simon Zelotes, the eleventh apostle, was chosen by Simon Peter. Simon was an able person of good ancestry, lived at Capernaum, and was twenty-eight years old when becoming attached to the apostles. Simon was a fiery agitator and was also someone who spoke much without thinking. Simon had been a merchant in Capernaum before becoming engaged with the patriotic organization of the Zealots.

Simon Zelotes was given charge of the diversions and relaxation of the apostolic group, and was a very efficient organizer of the play life and recreational activities of the twelve.

Simon’s strength was inspirational loyalty. When the apostles found someone who floundered in indecision about entering the new realm, they would send for Simon. It usually required only about fifteen minutes for this enthusiastic advocate of faith in the Creator to settle all doubts and remove all indecision, to see a new soul born into the “liberty of faith and the joy of eternal life.”

Simon’s great weakness was material-mindedness. Simon could not quickly change from being a Jewish nationalist to a spiritually minded internationalist. Four years was too short a time in which to make such an intellectual and emotional transformation, but Jesus was always patient with Simon.

The one thing about Jesus which Simon so much admired was the Master’s calmness, assurance, poise, and inexplicable composure.

Simon, although being a rabid revolutionist, a fearless firebrand of agitation, gradually subdued this fiery nature and became a powerful and effective preacher of “Peace on earth and good will among all people.” Simon was a great debater and liked to argue. And when it came to dealing with the legalistic minds of the educated Jews or the intellectual discussions of the Greeks, the task was always assigned to Simon.

While a rebel by nature and an iconoclast by training, Simon was won by Jesus for the higher concepts of the realm of the Creator. Simon had always identified with the party of protest, but now joined the party of progress, unlimited and eternal progression of spirit and truth. Simon was a person of intense loyalties and warm personal devotions, and profoundly loved Jesus.

Jesus was not afraid to identify with merchants, laborers, optimists, pessimists, philosophers, skeptics, publicans, politicians, and patriots.

The Master had many talks with Simon, but never fully succeeded in making an internationalist out of this ardent Jewish nationalist. Jesus often told Simon that it was proper to want to see the social, economic, and political orders improved, but then would always add: “That is not the business of the new age. We must be dedicated to the doing of the Creator’s will. Our business is to be ambassadors of a spiritual government, and we must not immediately concern ourselves with anything but the representation of the will and character of the divine Creator who stands at the head of the government whose credentials we bear.” While it was all difficult to comprehend, Simon gradually began to grasp something of the meaning of the Master’s teaching.

After the dispersion because of the Jerusalem persecutions, Simon went into temporary retirement and was literally crushed. As a nationalist patriot Simon had surrendered in deference to Jesus’ teachings; now all was lost. Simon was in despair, but in a few years rallied and went out to proclaim the new age.

Simon went to Alexandria and, after working up the Nile, penetrated into the heart of Africa, everywhere preaching the teachings of Jesus and baptizing seekers, laboring on until becoming old and feeble. And Simon died and was buried in the heart of Africa.

12. Judas Iscariot

Judas Iscariot, the twelfth apostle, was chosen by Nathaniel. Judas was born in Kerioth, a small town in southern Judea. Judas’ parents later moved to Jericho, where Judas lived and was employed in various business enterprises until becoming interested in the preaching and work of John the Baptist. Judas, whose parents were Sadducees, was disowned by them when joining John’s disciples.

When met by Nathaniel at Tarichea, Judas was seeking employment with a fish-drying enterprise at the lower end of the Sea of Galilee. Judas was thirty years of age and unmarried when joining the apostles, and was probably the best-educated among the twelve and the only Judean in the Master’s apostolic family. Judas had no outstanding trait of personal strength, while having many outwardly appearing traits of culture and habits of training. Judas was a good thinker but not always a truly *honest* thinker. Judas did not really understand nor was really sincere in dealing with personal issues.

Andrew appointed Judas treasurer of the twelve, that being a position which Judas was eminently fitted to hold. Up to the time of the betrayal of the Master Judas discharged the responsibilities of this office honestly, faithfully, and most efficiently.

There was no special trait about Jesus which Judas admired above the generally attractive and exquisitely charming personality of the Master. Judas was never able to rise above having Judean prejudices against the Galilean associates, even mentally criticizing many things about Jesus. Jesus, whom eleven of the apostles looked upon as the perfect human, this self-satisfied Judean often dared to criticize. Judas really entertained the notion that Jesus was timid and somewhat afraid to assert power and authority.

Judas was good at business. It required tact, ability, and patience, as well as painstaking devotion, to manage the financial affairs of such an idealist as Jesus, to say nothing of wrestling with the sometimes unpredictable business methods of some of the apostles. Judas really was a great executive, a farseeing and able financier, and a stickler for organization. None of the twelve ever criticized Judas. As far as they could see, Judas Iscariot was a matchless treasurer, a learned individual, a loyal (though sometimes critical) apostle, and in every sense of the word a great success. The apostles loved Judas, who was really one of them. Judas must have *believed* in Jesus, but we doubt whether Judas really *loved* the Master with a whole heart. It is altogether possible to fall victim to the peaceful deception of pleasant adjustment to the paths of sin and death. Be assured that Judas was always financially loyal to the Master and the other apostles. Money could never have been the motive for Judas' betraying the Master.

Judas was an only child of unwise parents, and when very young was pampered, petted and spoiled. After growing up, Judas had an exaggerated sense of self-importance. Judas was a poor loser, had loose and distorted ideas about fairness and was given to the indulgence of hate and suspicion. Judas was an expert at misinterpretation of the words and acts of others, all through life cultivating the habit of getting even with those who appeared to be guilty of mistreatment. Judas' sense of values and loyalties was defective.

To Jesus, Judas was a faith adventure. From the beginning the Master fully understood the weakness of this apostle and well knew the dangers of admitting Judas to apostleship. But it is the nature of the Children of the Creator to give every created being a full and equal chance for survival. Jesus wanted not only the mortals of this world but the onlookers of innumerable other worlds to know that, when doubts exist as to the sincerity and wholeheartedness of a creature's devotion, it is the invariable practice of the Judges of mortals to fully receive the doubtful candidate. The door of eternal life is wide open to all; "whoever will, may come." There are no restrictions or qualifications except the *faith* of the one who comes.

This is just the reason why Jesus permitted Judas to go on to the very end, always doing everything possible to transform and save this weak and confused apostle. But when light is not honestly received and lived up to, it tends to become darkness within the soul. Judas grew intellectually regarding Jesus' teachings, but did not make progress in the acquirement of spiritual character as did the other apostles. Judas failed to make satisfactory personal progress in spiritual experience.

Judas became increasingly a brooder over personal disappointment, and finally became a victim of resentment. Judas, whose feelings had many times been hurt, grew abnormally suspicious of the other

apostles and even of the Master, presently becoming obsessed with the idea of getting revenge, even considering the betrayal of the apostles and the Master.

But these wicked and dangerous ideas did not take definite shape until the day when a grateful follower broke an expensive box of incense at Jesus' feet. This seemed wasteful, and when Judas' public protest was so sweepingly disallowed by Jesus right there in the hearing of all, it was too much. That event determined the mobilization of all the accumulated hate, hurt, malice, prejudice, jealousy, and revenge of a lifetime. Judas decided to get even, and focused on the *one* innocent person in all this sordid drama just because Jesus happened to be the chief actor in the episode which marked Judas' passing from the progressive realm of light into that self-chosen domain of darkness.

The Master many times, both privately and publicly, had warned Judas about slipping, but divine warnings are usually useless in dealing with embittered human nature. Jesus did everything possible, consistent with a mortal's moral freedom, to prevent Judas' choosing to go the wrong way. The great test finally came. Judas failed, yielding to the sour and sordid dictates of a proud and vengeful mind of exaggerated self-importance, and swiftly plunged down into confusion, despair, and depravity.

Judas then entered into the base and shameful intrigue to betray the Master and quickly carried the nefarious scheme into effect. During the outworking of these anger-conceived plans of traitorous betrayal, Judas experienced moments of regret and shame, and in these lucid intervals faintheartedly conceived the idea that Jesus might possibly exert divine power and be delivered at the last moment.

When the sordid and sinful business was all over, this renegade mortal, who thought lightly of selling the Master to satisfy the long-nursed craving for revenge, rushed out and committed the final act in the drama of fleeing from the realities of mortal existence — suicide.

The eleven apostles were horrified, stunned. Jesus regarded the betrayer only with pity. The worlds have found it difficult to forgive Judas, whose name has become eschewed throughout the universe.

Paper 140

The Ordination of the Twelve

Just before noon on Sunday, January 12, C.E. 27, Jesus called the apostles together for their ordination as public preachers. The twelve were expecting to be called almost any day; so this morning they did not go out far from the shore to fish. Several of them were lingering near the shore repairing their nets and tinkering with their fishing paraphernalia.

Jesus started down the seashore calling the apostles, first Andrew and Peter, who were fishing near the shore; next James and John, who were in a boat nearby, mending their nets. Two by two Jesus gathered up the other apostles, and when all twelve were assembled, journeyed with them to the highlands north of Capernaum and proceeded to instruct them in preparation for their formal ordination.

For once all twelve of the apostles were silent; even Peter was in a reflective mood. At last the long awaited hour had come! They were going away to participate in some sort of solemn ceremony of personal consecration and collective dedication to the sacred work of representing their Master in the proclamation of the coming of the Creator's realm.

1. Preliminary Instruction

Before the formal ordination service Jesus sat and spoke to the twelve: "My friends, the time of the new age has come. I have brought you here with me to present you to the Creator as ambassadors of the new realm. Some of you heard me speak of this realm in the synagogue when you were first called. Each of you has learned more about the Creator's realm since you have been with me working in the cities around the Sea of Galilee. But just now I have something more to tell you concerning this realm.

"The new realm which the Creator is about to set up in the hearts of mortals is to be an everlasting dominion. There will be no end to this rule of the Creator in the hearts of those who desire to do the divine will. I declare to you that the Creator is not the exclusive ruler of Jew or gentile. Many will come from the east and from the west to join us in the Creator's realm, while many of the children of Abraham will refuse to enter this new family of the rule of the Creator's spirit in the hearts of mortals.

"The power of this new realm will consist, not in the strength of armies nor in the might of riches, but rather in the glory of the divine spirit that will come to teach the minds and rule the hearts of the reborn citizens of this divine realm, the children of the Creator. This is the community of love where righteousness reigns, and whose call will be: Peace on earth and good will to all people. This realm, which you are so soon to proclaim, is the desire of the good people of all ages, the hope of all the earth, and the fulfillment of the wise promises of all the prophets.

"But for you, my children, and for all others who would follow you into this realm, a severe test is set. Faith alone will pass you through its portals, but you must display the fruits of the Creator's spirit if you would continue to ascend in the progressive life of the divine family. Not everyone who says, 'Yahweh, Yahweh' will enter the realm of the Creator; but rather those who do the will of the Creator.

“Your message to the world will be: First seek the Creator’s realm and righteousness, and in finding these, all other things essential to eternal survival will be secured. And now I would make it plain to you that this realm of the Creator will not come with an outward show of power. You are not to go out in the proclamation of the new realm, saying, ‘it is here’ or ‘it is there,’ for this realm of which you preach is the Creator within you.

“Whoever would become great in the Creator’s realm will become a minister to all; and whoever would be first among you, will become the server of others. But when you are truly received as citizens in the realm of the Creator, you are no longer servants but children, children of the living Source. And so this realm will progress in the world until it breaks down every barrier and brings all people to know the Creator and believe in the truth which I have come to declare. Even now the new age is at hand, and some of you will not die until you have seen the reign of the Creator come.

“And this small beginning of twelve commonplace people will multiply and grow until eventually the whole earth will be filled with the love of the Creator. And it will not be so much by the words you speak as by the lives you live that others will know you have been with me and have learned of the realities of the new realm. And while I would lay no heavy burdens on your minds, I am about to put on your souls the solemn responsibility of representing me in the world when I will presently leave you, as I now represent my Creator Parent in this life.” And standing up, Jesus finished speaking.

2. The Ordination

Jesus now instructed the twelve mortals who had just listened to this declaration to kneel in a circle. Then the Master touched the head of each apostle, beginning with Judas Iscariot and ending with Andrew, and having blessed them, prayed:

“My Creator Parent, I now bring to you these people, my messengers. From among our children on earth I have chosen these twelve to represent me as I came to represent you. Love them and be with them as you have loved and been with me. And now, give these people wisdom as I place all the affairs of the coming new realm in their hands. And I would, if it is your will, stay on earth a while to help them in their labors. And again, I thank you for these people, and I commit them to your keeping while I go on to finish the work you have given me to do.”

When Jesus had finished praying, the apostles remained bowed in place. And it was many minutes before even Peter dared look at the Master. One by one they embraced Jesus, but no one said anything. A great silence pervaded the place while a host of celestial beings looked down on this solemn and sacred scene — the Creator of a universe placing the affairs of the divine family of humanity under the direction of human minds.

3. The Ordination Sermon

Then Jesus spoke, saying: “Now that you are ambassadors of the Creator’s realm, you have become a class separate and distinct from all other people on earth. You are not now as mortals among mortals but as the enlightened citizens of another realm among the creatures of this dark world. It is not enough that you live

as you were before this time, but you must now live as those who have tasted the glories of a better life and have been sent back to earth as ambassadors of the Sovereign of that new and better world. Of the teacher more is expected than of the pupil; of the master more is exacted than of the servant. Of the citizens of the divine realm more is required than of the citizens of the earthly rule. Some of the things which I am about to say to you may seem hard, but you have elected to represent me in the world even as I now represent the Creator; and as my agents on earth you will be obligated to abide by those teachings and practices which are reflective of my ideals of mortal living on the worlds of space, and which I exemplify in my earth life of revealing the Creator.

“I send you to proclaim liberty to the spiritual captives, joy to those in the bondage of fear, and to heal the sick in accordance with the will of the Creator. When you find my children in distress, speak encouragingly to them, saying:

“Happy are the poor in spirit, the humble, for theirs are the treasures of the realm of the Creator.

“Happy are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

“Happy are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

“Happy are the pure in heart, for they will see the Universal Source.

“And even so speak to my children these further words of spiritual comfort and promise:

“Happy are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Happy are those who weep, for they will receive the spirit of rejoicing.

“Happy are the merciful, for they will obtain mercy.

“Happy are the peacemakers, for they will be called the children of the Creator.

“Happy are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the realm of eternal life. Happy are you when people will revile you and persecute you and will say all manner of evil against you falsely. Rejoice, for great is your reward in the life to come.

“My friends, as I send you forth, you are the salt of the earth, salt with a saving savor. But if this salt has lost its savor, where will it be salted? It is good for nothing but to be cast out and trampled underfoot.

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a candle and put it under a basket, but on a candlestick; and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before people so that they may see your good works and be led to glorify your Creator.

“I am sending you out into the world to represent me and to act as ambassadors of the Creator’s realm, and as you go out to proclaim this new doctrine, put your trust in the Creator whose messengers you are. Do not forcibly resist injustice; do not put your trust in physical violence. If your neighbor strikes you on the

right cheek, turn the other cheek. Be willing to suffer injustice rather than to go to law among yourselves. In kindness and with mercy minister to all who are in distress and in need.

“Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you. And whatever you believe that I would do to others, do also.

“Your Creator makes the sun shine on the evil as well as on the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust. You are the children of the Creator; even more, you are now the ambassadors of the Creator’s realm. Be merciful, even as the Creator is merciful, and in the eternal future you will be perfect, even as your Creator is perfect.

“You are commissioned to save people, not to judge them. At the end of your earth life you will all expect mercy; therefore I require that you show mercy to all others during your mortal life. Do not make the mistake of trying to pluck a speck out of another’s eye when there is a beam in your own eye. Having first cast the beam out of your own eye, you can better see to cast the speck out of the other’s eye.

“Discern the truth clearly; live the righteous life fearlessly; and you will be my apostles and the Creator’s ambassadors. You have heard it said: ‘If the blind lead the blind, they will both fall into the pit.’ If you would guide others into the new realm, you must walk in the clear light of living truth. In all the business of the new realm I urge you to show just judgment and keen wisdom. Do not cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample your gems underfoot.

“I warn you against false prophets who will come to you in sheep’s clothing, while on the inside they are as ravening wolves. By their fruits you will know them. Do people gather grapes from thorns or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree produces good fruit, but the corrupt tree bears evil fruit. A good tree cannot yield evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree produce good fruit. Every tree that does not produce good fruit is presently cut down and thrown into the fire. In gaining an entrance into the realm of the Creator, it is the motive that counts. The Creator looks into people’s hearts and judges them by their inner longings and their sincere intentions.

“In the great day of judgment, many will say to me, ‘Did we not prophesy in your name and by your name do many wonderful works?’ But I will be compelled to say to them, ‘I never knew you; leave me you who are false teachers.’ But everyone who hears this charge and sincerely executes the commission to represent me before others even as I have represented the Creator to you, will find an entrance into my service and into the Creator’s realm.”

The apostles had never heard Jesus speak in this way before, for Jesus had spoken to them as one having supreme authority. They came down from the mountain about sundown, but no one asked Jesus a question.

4. You Are the Salt of the Earth

This sermon is not the doctrine of Jesus. It does contain much helpful instruction, but it was Jesus’ ordination charge to the twelve apostles. It was the personal commission to those who were to go on preaching the doctrine of the new age and aspiring to represent Jesus in the world of mortals even as Jesus was so eloquently and perfectly representative of the Creator.

“You are the salt of the earth, salt with a saving savor. But if this salt has lost its savor, where will it be salted? It is good for nothing but to be cast out and trampled underfoot.”

In Jesus’ time salt was precious. It was even used for money. The modern word “salary” is derived from salt. Salt not only flavors food, but it is also a preservative. It makes other things more tasty, and it serves by being spent.

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a candle and put it under a basket, but on a candlestick; and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before people so that they may see your good works and be led to glorify your Creator.”

While light dispels darkness, it can also be so “blinding” as to confuse and frustrate. We are admonished to let our light *so* shine that others will be guided into new and divine paths of enhanced living. Our light should so shine as to not attract attention to self. Even one’s vocation can be utilized as an effective “reflector” for the dissemination of this light of life.

Strong characters are not derived from *not* doing wrong but rather from actually doing right. Unselfishness is the badge of human greatness. The highest levels of self-realization are attained by worship and service. The happy and effective person is motivated, not by fear of wrongdoing, but by love of right doing.

“By their fruits you will know them.” Personality is basically changeless; that which changes — grows — is the moral character. The major error of modern religions is negativism. The tree which bears no fruit is “cut down and thrown into the fire.” Moral worth cannot be derived from mere repression — obeying the injunction “Thou shall not.” Fear and shame are unworthy motivations for religious living. Religion is valid only when it reveals the parenthood of the Creator and enhances the family of humanity.

An effective philosophy of living is formed by a combination of cosmic insight and the total of one’s emotional reactions to the social and economic environment. While inherited urges cannot be fundamentally modified, emotional responses to such urges can be changed; therefore the moral nature can be modified, character can be improved. In the strong character emotional responses are integrated and coordinated, and a unified personality is produced. Deficient unification weakens the moral nature and produces unhappiness.

Without a worthy goal, life becomes aimless and unprofitable, and much unhappiness results. Jesus’ discourse at the ordination of the twelve constitutes a master philosophy of life. Jesus exhorted the followers to exercise experiential faith, admonishing them to not depend on mere intellectual assent, credulity, and established authority.

Education should be a technique of learning (discovering) the better methods of gratifying our natural and inherited urges, and happiness is the resulting total of these enhanced techniques of emotional satisfactions. Happiness is dependent very little on environment, though pleasing surroundings may greatly contribute to it.

Every mortal really craves to be a complete person, to be perfect even as the Creator is perfect, and such attainment is possible because in the last analysis the “universe is truly a family.”

5. Parental and Familial Love

From the ordination sermon to the discourse of the last meal with the apostles, Jesus taught them to manifest *parental* love rather than *familial* love. Familial love would love your neighbor as you love yourself, and that would be adequate fulfillment of the “golden rule.” But parental affection would require that you should love others as Jesus loves you.

Jesus loves humankind with a dual affection, living on earth as a twofold personality — human and divine. As a divine being Jesus loves mortals with a parental love — as a Creator, their universe parent. As a mortal, Jesus loves other mortals as a sibling — a mortal among mortals.

Jesus did not expect the apostles to achieve an impossible manifestation of familial love, but did expect them to strive to be like the Creator — to be perfect even as the Creator is perfect — so that they could begin to see mortals as the Creator sees them and therefore could begin to love mortals as the Creator loves them — to show the beginnings of a parental affection. In the course of these exhortations to the twelve apostles, Jesus sought to reveal this new concept of *parental love* as it is related to certain emotional attitudes concerned in making numerous environmental social adjustments.

The Master introduced this momentous discourse by calling attention to four *faith* attitudes as the prelude to the subsequent portrayal of four transcendent and supreme reactions of parental love in contrast to the limitations of mere familial love.

Jesus first talked about those who were poor in spirit, hungered after righteousness, endured meekness, and who were pure in heart. Such spirit-discerning mortals could be expected to attain such levels of divine selflessness as to be able to attempt the amazing exercise of *parental* affection; that even as mourners they would be empowered to show mercy, promote peace, and endure persecutions, and throughout all of these trying situations to love even unlovely humankind with a parent’s love. A parent’s affection can attain levels of devotion that immeasurably transcend a familial affection.

The faith and the love of these beatitudes strengthen moral character and create happiness. Fear and anger weaken character and destroy happiness. This momentous sermon started out on the note of happiness.

1. “*Happy are the poor in spirit — the humble.*” To a child, happiness is the satisfaction of immediate pleasure craving. The adult is willing to sow seeds of self-denial in order to reap subsequent harvests of augmented happiness. In Jesus’ times and since, happiness has all too often been associated with the idea of the possession of wealth. In the story of the Pharisee and the publican praying in the temple, the one felt rich in spirit — egotistical; the other felt “poor in spirit” — humble. One was self-sufficient; the other was teachable and truth-seeking. The poor in spirit seek for goals of spiritual wealth — for the Creator. And such seekers after truth do not have to wait for rewards in a distant future; they are rewarded *now*. They find the realm of the Creator within their own hearts, and they experience such happiness *now*.

2. “*Happy are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.*” Only those who feel poor in spirit will ever hunger for righteousness. Only the humble seek for divine strength and crave spiritual

power. But it is most dangerous to knowingly engage in spiritual fasting in order to improve one's appetite for spiritual endowments.

Experiential righteousness is a pleasure, not a duty. Jesus' righteousness is a dynamic love — parental-familial affection. It is not the negative or thou-shalt-not type of righteousness. How could one ever hunger for something negative — something “not to do”?

It is not so easy to teach a child mind these first two of the beatitudes, but the mature mind should grasp their significance.

3. *“Happy are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.”* Genuine meekness has no relation to fear. It is rather an attitude of co-operating with the Creator — “Your will be done.” It embraces patience and forbearance and is motivated by an unshakable faith in a lawful and friendly universe. It masters all temptations to rebel against the divine leading. Jesus was the ideal meek person of Urantia, and inherited a vast universe.

4. *“Happy are the pure in heart, for they will see the Universal Source.”* Spiritual purity lacks suspicion and revenge. In discussing purity, Jesus was referring to that faith which mortals should have in others; that faith which parents have in their children, and which enables them to love others even as a parent would love them. Parental love has singleness of purpose, and it always looks for the best in a person; that is the attitude of a true parent.

To see the Creator — by faith — means to acquire true spiritual insight. Spiritual insight enhances Adjuster guidance, and this in the end augments Creator-consciousness. When you know the Creator, you are confirmed in the assurance of a divine relationship, and you can increasingly love each of your siblings, not only as a sibling — with familial love — but also as a parent — with parental affection.

It is easy to teach this admonition even to a child. Children are naturally trustful, and parents should see to it that they do not lose that simple faith. In dealing with children, avoid all deception and refrain from suggesting suspicion. Wisely help them to choose their heroes and select their lifework.

And then Jesus went on to instruct the apostles in the realization of the chief purpose of all human struggling — perfection — even divine attainment, always admonishing them: “Be perfect, even as the Creator is perfect.” Jesus did not press the twelve to love their neighbors as they loved themselves; that would have been a worthy achievement and would have indicated the achievement of familial love. Jesus rather admonished the apostles to love others as “I have loved you” — to love with a *parental* as well as a familial affection. And Jesus illustrated this by pointing out four supreme reactions of parental love:

1. *“Happy are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.”* So-called common sense or the best of logic would never suggest that happiness could be derived from mourning. But Jesus did not refer to outward or ostentatious mourning, instead alluding to an emotional attitude of tenderheartedness. Being sensitive and responsive to human need creates genuine and lasting happiness, while such kindly attitudes safeguard the soul from the destructive influences of anger, hate, and suspicion.

2. *“Happy are the merciful, for they will obtain mercy.”* Mercy here denotes the height and depth and breadth of the truest friendship — loving-kindness. Mercy sometimes may be passive, but here it is active and dynamic. Loving parents experience little difficulty in forgiving their child, even many times. And in an unspoiled child the urge to relieve suffering is natural. Children are normally kind and sympathetic when old enough to appreciate actual conditions.

3. *“Happy are the peacemakers, for they will be called the children of the Creator.”* Jesus’ hearers were longing for military deliverance, not for peacemakers. But Jesus’ peace is not of the negative kind. In the face of trials and persecutions Jesus said, “My peace I leave with you.” “Do not let your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” This is the peace that prevents ruinous conflicts. Personal peace integrates personality. Social peace prevents fear, greed, and anger. Political peace prevents inter-group antagonisms, national suspicions, and war. Peacemaking is the cure of distrust and suspicion.

Children can easily be taught to function as peacemakers. They enjoy team activities; they like to play together.

4. *“Happy are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the realm of eternal life. Happy are you when people revile you and persecute you and say all manner of evil against you falsely. Rejoice, for great is your reward in the life to come.”*

So often persecution does follow peace. But young people and brave adults never shun difficulty or danger. And parental love can freely do all these things — things which familial love can hardly encompass. And progress has always been the final harvest of persecution.

Children always respond to the challenge of courage. Youth is ever willing to “take a dare.” And every child should learn to sacrifice.

And so it is revealed that the beatitudes of the ordination sermon are based on faith and love and not on law — ethics and duty.

Parental love delights in returning good for evil — doing good in response to injustice.

6. The Evening of the Ordination

Sunday evening, on reaching the home of Zebedee from the highlands north of Capernaum, Jesus and the twelve ate a simple meal. Afterward, while Jesus went for a walk along the beach, the twelve talked among themselves. After a brief conference, while the twins built a small fire to give them warmth and more light, Andrew went out to find Jesus, and when overtaking Jesus, Andrew said: “Master, we are unable to comprehend what you have said about the new realm. We do not feel able to begin this work until you have given us further instruction. I have come to ask you to join us in the garden and help us to understand the meaning of your words.” And Jesus went with Andrew to meet with the apostles.

Jesus, when entering the garden, gathered the apostles and taught them further, saying: “You find it difficult to receive my message because you would build the new teaching directly upon the old, but you must be reborn. You must start out fresh as little children and be willing to trust my teaching and believe in the

Creator. The doctrine of the new age cannot be made to conform to that which is. You have wrong ideas of me and my mission on earth. But do not make the mistake of thinking that I have come to set aside the law and the prophets; I have not come to destroy but to fulfill, to enlarge and illuminate. I come not to transgress the law but rather to instill these new commandments in your hearts.

“I demand of you a righteousness that will exceed the righteousness of those who seek to obtain the Creator’s favor by almsgiving, prayer, and fasting. If you would enter the new realm, you must have a righteousness that consists in love, mercy, and truth — the sincere desire to do the will of the Creator.”

Then Simon Peter said: “Master, if you have a new commandment, we would like to hear it. Reveal the new way to us.” Jesus answered Peter: “You have heard it said by those who teach the law: ‘Do not kill; that whoever kills will be subject to judgment.’ But I look beyond the act to uncover the motive. I say to you that everyone who is angry with another is in danger of condemnation. Anyone who nurses hatred and plans vengeance stands in danger of judgment. You must judge others by their deeds; the Creator judges by the intent.

“You have heard the teachers of the law say, ‘Do not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that everyone who looks at another with lust has already committed adultery. You can only judge people by their acts, but the Creator looks into the hearts of mortals and in mercy judges them in accordance with their intent and real desire.”

Jesus intended to go on discussing the other commandments when James Zebedee interrupted, asking: “Master, what shall we teach the people regarding divorce?” And Jesus, on hearing this question, said: “I have not come to legislate but to enlighten. I have not come to reform the governments of this world but rather to establish the realm of the Creator. It is not the will of the Creator that I should yield to the temptation to teach you rules of government, trade, or social behavior, which, while they might be good for today, would be far from suitable for the society of another age. I am on earth solely to comfort the minds, liberate the spirits, and save the souls of mortals. But I will say, concerning this question of divorce, that, while Moses looked with favor upon such things, it was not so in the days of the Garden.”

After the apostles had talked among themselves for a short time, Jesus went on to say: “You must always recognize the two viewpoints of all mortal conduct — the human and the divine; the ways of matter and the way of the spirit; the estimate of time and the viewpoint of eternity.” And though the twelve could not comprehend all they were taught, they were truly helped by this instruction.

And then said Jesus: “But you will stumble over my teaching because you are inclined to interpret my message literally; you are slow to discern the spirit of my teaching. Again, you must remember that you are my messengers; you are obligated to live your lives as I have in spirit lived mine. You are my personal representatives, but do not make the mistake of expecting all others to live as you do in every way. Also, you must remember that I have sheep not of this flock, and that I am obliged to them also, to the end that I must provide for them the pattern of doing the will of the Creator while living the life of the mortal nature.”

Then Nathaniel asked: “Master, should we give no place to justice? The law of Moses says, ‘An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.’ What should we say?” And Jesus answered: “You will return good for evil.

My messengers must not strive with others, but be gentle toward all. Measure for measure will not be your rule. Such laws may exist on earth, but not in the realm of the Creator; mercy will always determine your judgments and love inform your conduct. And if these are hard sayings, you can even now turn back. If you find the requirements of apostleship too hard, you may return to the less rigorous pathway of discipleship.”

On hearing these startling words, the apostles drew apart by themselves for a while, but they soon returned, and Peter said: “Master, we would go on with you; not one of us would turn back. We are fully prepared to pay the extra price. We would be apostles, not merely disciples.”

Jesus, on hearing this, said: “Be willing, then, to take up your responsibilities and follow me. Do your good deeds in secret. When you give alms, do not let the left hand know what the right hand does. And when you pray, go apart by yourselves and do not use vain repetitions and meaningless phrases. Always remember that the Creator knows what you need even before you ask. And do not fast with a sad countenance to be seen by others. As my chosen apostles, now set apart for the service of the new age, do not accumulate treasures for yourselves on earth, but by your unselfish service create treasures for yourselves in your future lives, for where your treasures are, there your hearts will also be.

“The lamp of the body is the eye. If, therefore, your eye is generous, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is selfish, the whole body will be filled with darkness. If the very light which is in you is turned to darkness, how great is that darkness!”

And then Thomas asked Jesus if they should “continue having everything in common.” Said the Master: “Yes, my friends, I want us to live together as one understanding family. You are entrusted with a great work, and I crave your undivided service. You know that it has been said: ‘No one can serve two masters.’ You cannot sincerely worship the Creator and at the same time wholeheartedly serve your material life. Having now enlisted unreservedly in the work of the new realm, do not be anxious for your lives; much less concerned with what you will eat or drink; nor even for your bodies, what clothing you will wear. Already you have learned that willing hands and earnest hearts will not go hungry. And now, when you prepare to devote all of your energies to the work of the new realm, be assured that the Creator will not be unaware of your needs. Seek first the realm of the Creator, and when you have found the entrance to that realm, all things that you need will be given you. Do not be, therefore, unduly anxious for tomorrow. The trouble for today is sufficient.”

Jesus, on seeing that they were likely to stay up all night to ask questions, said to them: “My friends, you are earthen vessels; it is best for you to go to sleep to be ready for tomorrow’s work.” But they were not able to sleep. Peter ventured to request of Jesus that “I have just a little private talk with you. Not that I have secrets from the others, but I have a troubled spirit, and if I deserve a rebuke from my Master, I could endure it better if I were alone with you.” And Jesus said, “Come with me, Peter” — leading the way into the house. When Peter returned from the presence of the Master much cheered and greatly encouraged, James decided to go in to talk with Jesus. And so on through the early hours of the morning, the other apostles went in one by one to talk with the Master. When they had all held personal conferences with Jesus except for the twins, who had fallen asleep, Andrew went in and said: “Master, the twins have fallen asleep in the garden by the fire; should I wake them to ask if they would also like to talk with you?” And Jesus

smilingly said to Andrew, “They do well — do not trouble them.” And now the night was passing; the light of another day was dawning.

7. The Week Following the Ordination

After a few hours’ sleep, when the twelve were assembled for a late breakfast, Jesus said: “Now you must begin your work of preaching and instructing seekers. Get ready to go to Jerusalem.” After Jesus had spoken, Thomas mustered up courage to say: “I know, Master, that we should be ready to begin the work, but I am concerned that we are not yet able to accomplish this great undertaking. Would you consent for us to stay here for just a few days more before we start?” And Jesus, seeing that all of the apostles were possessed by this same concern, said: “I will grant your request; we will remain here over the Sabbath day.”

For weeks and weeks small groups of earnest truth seekers, together with curious spectators, had been coming to Bethsaida to see Jesus. Already word had spread over the countryside; inquiring groups had come from cities as far away as Tyre, Sidon, Damascus, Caesarea, and Jerusalem. Up to this point Jesus had greeted these people and taught them, but the Master now turned this work over to the twelve. Andrew would assign one of the apostles to each group of visitors, and sometimes all twelve of them were engaged.

For two days they worked, teaching by day and holding private conferences late into the night. On the third day Jesus visited with Zebedee and Salome while sending the apostles off to “go fishing, seek carefree change, or perhaps visit your families.” On Thursday they returned for three more days of teaching.

During this week of rehearsing, Jesus many times repeated to the apostles the two great motives of the upcoming postbaptismal mission on earth:

1. To reveal the Creator to mortals.
2. To lead mortals to faith-realize that they are the children of the Most High.

One week of this varied experience did much for the twelve; some even became over-confident. At the last conference, the night after the Sabbath, Peter and James came to Jesus, saying, “We are ready — let us now begin.” To which Jesus replied, “May your wisdom equal your zeal and your courage atone for your ignorance.”

Though the apostles failed to comprehend much of the teaching, they did not fail to grasp the significance of the charmingly beautiful life Jesus lived with them.

8. Thursday Afternoon on the Lake

Jesus knew that the apostles were not fully assimilating the teachings, and decided to give some special instruction to Peter, James, and John, hoping they would be able to clarify the ideas of their associates. Jesus saw that, while some features of the idea of a spiritual realm were being grasped by the twelve, they steadfastly persisted in attaching these new spiritual teachings directly onto their old and entrenched literal concepts of the Messianic age as a restoration of David’s throne and the re-establishment of Israel as a temporal power on earth. Accordingly, on Thursday afternoon Jesus went out from the shore in a boat with

Peter, James, and John to talk over the affairs of the new age. This was a four hour teaching conference, embracing scores of questions and answers, and may most profitably be put in this record by reorganizing the summary of this momentous afternoon as it was given by Simon Peter to Andrew the following morning:

1. *Doing the Creator's will.* Jesus' teaching about trust in the care of the Creator was not a blind and passive fatalism. Jesus' precepts about trusting the Creator must not be judged by the social or economic conditions of modern times or any other age, but embraces the ideal principles of living near the Creator in all ages and on all worlds.

Jesus made clear to the three the difference between the requirements of apostleship and discipleship, and even then did not forbid the exercise of prudence and foresight by the twelve. What Jesus preached against was not forethought but anxiety and worry, teaching the active and alert submission to the Creator's will. In answer to many of their questions regarding frugality and thriftiness, Jesus simply described having worked in carpentry, boatmaking, and fishing, and to the careful organization of the twelve, seeking to make it clear that the world is not to be regarded as an enemy; that the circumstances of life constitute a divine dispensation for working along with the children of the Creator.

It was difficult for these apostles to understand the practice of nonresistance. Jesus absolutely refused to engage in self-defense, and it appeared to the apostles that they were being asked to pursue the same policy. Jesus taught them to not resist evil nor to combat injustice or injury, but did not teach passive tolerance of wrongdoing. And it was made clear on this afternoon that Jesus approved of the social punishment of evildoers and criminals, and that the civil government must sometimes employ force for the maintenance of social order and in the execution of justice.

Jesus never ceased to warn the apostles against the evil practice of *retaliation*, making no allowance for revenge, the idea of getting even. Jesus deplored the holding of grudges and disallowed the idea of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, discounting the whole concept of private and personal revenge and assigning these matters to civil government, on the one hand, and to the judgment of the Creator on the other. Jesus made it clear to the three that these teachings applied to the *individual*, not the state, summarizing the instructions up to that time regarding these matters, as:

Love your enemies — remember the moral claims of the human family.

The futility of evil: A wrong is not righted by vengeance. Do not make the mistake of fighting evil with its own weapons.

Have faith — confidence in the eventual triumph of divine justice and eternal goodness.

2. *Political attitude.* Jesus cautioned the apostles to be discreet in their remarks concerning the strained relations then existing between the Jewish people and the Roman government, forbidding them to become embroiled in these difficulties in any way. Jesus was always careful to avoid the political snares of enemies, always making the reply, "Render to Caesar the things which are Caesar's and to the Creator the things which are the Creator's." Jesus refused to be distracted from the mission of establishing a new age, and was not willing to be concerned about anything else. Jesus was always duly observant of all civil laws and

regulations, and in all of the public teachings the civic, social, and economic realms were ignored. Jesus was concerned only with the principles of the inner and personal spiritual lives of mortals.

Jesus was not, therefore, a political reformer, not coming to reorganize the world, and even so, it would have been applicable only to that day and generation. Nevertheless, Jesus did demonstrate the best way of living, and no generation is exempt from the task of discovering how to best adapt Jesus' life to its own situation. But never make the mistake of identifying Jesus' teachings with any political or economic theory, or with any social system.

3. *Social attitude.* The Jewish rabbis had long debated the question: Who is my neighbor? Jesus came presenting the idea of active and spontaneous kindness, a love of others so genuine that it expanded the neighborhood to include the whole world, thereby making all people one's neighbors. But with all this, Jesus was interested only in the individual, not the collective. Jesus was not a sociologist, but did labor to break down all forms of selfish isolation, teaching pure sympathy, compassion. Michael of Nebadon is a mercy-dominated Being whose very nature is compassion.

The Master did not say that people should never entertain their friends, but did say that they should make feasts for the poor and the unfortunate. Jesus had a firm sense of justice tempered with mercy, and so did not teach the apostles that they were to be imposed on by social parasites or professional alms-seekers. The nearest Jesus came to making sociological pronouncements was to say, "Judge not, so that you are not judged."

Jesus made it clear that indiscriminate kindness may be blamed for many social evils, the following day definitely instructing Judas that no apostolic funds were to be given out as alms without personal approval or upon the joint request of two of the apostles, in all these matters saying, "Be as wise as serpents but as harmless as doves." It seemed to be Jesus' purpose in all social situations to teach patience, tolerance, and forgiveness.

The family occupied the very center of Jesus' philosophy of life — here and hereafter. Jesus based teachings about the Creator on the family, while seeking to correct the Jewish tendency to unduly honor ancestors. Jesus exalted family life as the highest human duty but made it plain that family relationships must not interfere with religious obligations, calling attention to the fact that the family is a temporal institution; that it does not survive death. Jesus did not hesitate to give up the family when they ran counter to the Creator's will, teaching the new and larger family of humanity — the family of the Creator. In those times divorce practices were lax in Palestine and throughout the Roman Empire. Jesus repeatedly refused to lay down laws regarding marriage and divorce, but many of the early followers had strong opinions on divorce and did not hesitate to attribute them to Jesus. All of the New Testament writers held to these more stringent and advanced ideas about divorce except John Mark.

4. *Economic attitude.* Jesus worked, lived, and traded in the world as it existed and was not an economic reformer. Jesus, although frequently calling attention to the injustice of the unequal distribution of wealth, did not offer any suggestions by way of remedy, making it plain to the three that, while the apostles were not to hold property, there was nothing inherently wrong with wealth and property, merely its unequal and

unfair distribution. Jesus recognized the need for social justice and industrial fairness, but offered no rules for their attainment.

Jesus never taught that all people should avoid earthly possessions, only the twelve apostles. Luke, the physician, was a strong believer in social equality, and did much to interpret Jesus' sayings in harmony with personal beliefs. Jesus never personally directed people to adopt a communal mode of life, making no pronouncement of any sort regarding such matters.

Jesus frequently warned listeners against greed, declaring that "people's happiness does not consist in the abundance of their material possessions," and constantly reiterating, "What will it profit someone if they gain the whole world and lose their own soul?" Jesus made no direct attack on the possession of property, but did insist that it is eternally essential that spiritual values come first. In later teachings Jesus sought to correct many erroneous Urantia views of life by telling numerous parables in the course of the public ministry. Jesus never intended to formulate economic theories, knowing that each age must evolve its own remedies for existing problems. And Jesus, if on earth today, would disappoint the majority of good people by not taking sides in present-day political, social, or economic disputes, remaining aloof while teaching you how to perfect your inner spiritual life so as to render you much more competent to address the solution of your purely human problems.

Jesus would make all people Creatorlike and then stand by sympathetically while they solve their own political, social, and economic problems. It was not wealth that Jesus denounced, but what wealth does to the majority of its devotees. On this Thursday afternoon Jesus first told the associates that "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

5. *Personal religion.* You, as did the apostles, should better understand these teachings by Jesus' life. Jesus lived a perfected life on Urantia, and these unique teachings can only be understood when that life is visualized in its immediate background. It is Jesus' life, and not the lessons to the twelve or the sermons to the multitudes, that will assist most in revealing the Creator's divine character and loving personality.

Jesus did not attack the teachings of the Hebrew prophets or the Greek moralists. The Master recognized the many good things which these great teachers stood for, but had come to earth to teach something *additional*, "the voluntary conformity of a mortal's will to the Creator's will." Jesus did not want to simply produce a *religious person*, a mortal wholly occupied with religious feelings and actuated only by spiritual impulses. If you could have had only one look at Jesus, you would have seen that this was someone with great experience in the things of this world. The teachings of Jesus in this respect have been grossly perverted and much misrepresented all through the centuries of the Christian era. You have also held perverted ideas about the Master's meekness and humility. What Jesus aimed at appears to have been a *superb self-respect*, only advising people to humble themselves so that they might become truly exalted. What Jesus really aimed at was true humility toward the Creator, placing great value upon sincerity — a pure heart. Fidelity was a cardinal virtue in Jesus' estimate of character, while *courage* was the very heart of the teachings. "Fear not" was the watchword, and patient endurance the ideal of strength of character. The teachings of Jesus constitute a religion of valor, courage, and heroism. And this is just why Jesus chose as personal representatives twelve commonplace individuals.

Jesus had little to say about the social vices of that day, seldom making reference to moral delinquency. Jesus was a positive teacher of true virtue and studiously avoided the negative method of imparting instruction, refusing to advertise evil. Jesus was not even a moral reformer, well knowing, and teaching the apostles, that the sensual urges of humans are not suppressed by either religious rebuke or legal prohibitions. Jesus' few denunciations were largely directed against pride, cruelty, oppression, and hypocrisy.

Jesus did not vehemently denounce even the Pharisees, as did John. Jesus knew that many of the scribes and Pharisees were basically honest but also understood their enslaving bondage to religious traditions. Jesus laid great emphasis on "first making the tree good," instructing the three to value the whole life, not just a certain few special virtues.

The one thing which John gained from this day's teaching was that the heart of Jesus' religion consisted in the acquirement of a compassionate character coupled with a personality motivated to do the will of the Creator.

Peter grasped the idea that the teachings they were about to proclaim were really a fresh beginning for the whole human race, and subsequently conveyed this impression to Paul.

James grasped the thrilling truth that Jesus wanted the people on earth to live as though they were already citizens of the completed realm of the Supreme.

Jesus knew people were different, and taught this to the apostles, constantly urging them to refrain from trying to mold the disciples and followers according to some set pattern. Jesus sought to allow each soul to develop in its own way, a perfecting and separate individual before the Creator. In answer to one of Peter's many questions, the Master said: "I want to set people free so that they can start fresh as little children in the new and better life." Jesus always insisted that true goodness must be unconscious, in bestowing charity not allowing the left hand to know what the right hand does.

The three apostles were shocked this afternoon when they realized that their Master's religion made no provision for spiritual self-examination. All religions before and after the times of Jesus, even Christianity, carefully provide for conscientious self-examination. But not so with the religion of Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus' philosophy of life is without religious introspection. Jesus never taught character *building* but taught character *growth*, although saying nothing which would proscribe self-analysis as a prevention of conceited egotism.

The right to enter the realm of the Creator is conditioned by faith, personal belief. The cost of remaining in the progressive ascent of this realm is the pearl of great price, which in order to possess it, people sell all that they have.

The teaching of Jesus is a religion for everybody, not only for weaklings and slaves. Jesus' religion never became crystallized (during that time) into creeds and theological laws. Not a line of writing was left behind. Jesus' life and teachings were bequeathed to the universe as an inspirational and idealistic inheritance suitable for the spiritual guidance and moral instruction of all ages on all worlds. And even today, Jesus' teaching stands apart from all religions, as such, although it is the living hope of every one of them.

Jesus did not teach the apostles that religion is humanity's only earthly pursuit, that was the Jewish idea of serving Yahweh, but did insist that religion was the exclusive business of the twelve. Jesus taught nothing to deter followers from the pursuit of genuine culture, only detracting from the tradition-bound religious schools of Jerusalem. Jesus was liberal, big-hearted, learned, and tolerant. Self-conscious piety had no place in Jesus' philosophy of righteous living.

The Master offered no solutions for the nonreligious problems of that age nor for any subsequent age. Jesus wanted to develop spiritual insight into eternal realities and to stimulate initiative in the originality of living, being concerned exclusively with the underlying and permanent spiritual needs of the human race. Jesus revealed a goodness equal to that of the Creator, exalting love — truth, beauty, and goodness — as the divine ideal and the eternal reality.

The Master came to bring a new spirit, a new will — to impart a new capacity for knowing the truth, experiencing compassion, and choosing goodness — the will to be in harmony with the Creator's will, coupled with the eternal urge to become perfect, even as the Creator is perfect.

9. The Day of Consecration

The next Sabbath day Jesus devoted to the apostles, journeying back to the highland where they had been ordained; and there, after a long and beautifully touching personal message of encouragement, engaged in the solemn act of the consecration of the twelve. This Sabbath afternoon Jesus assembled the apostles on the hillside and gave them into the hands of the Creator in preparation for leaving them alone in the world. There was no new teaching on this occasion, just visiting and communion.

Jesus reviewed many features of the ordination sermon, delivered on this same spot, and then, calling them one by one, commissioned them to go out into the world as representatives of the new age. The Master's consecration charge was: "Go into the world and preach the new doctrine. Liberate spiritual captives, comfort the oppressed, and minister to the afflicted. Freely you have received, freely give."

Jesus advised them not to take money or extra clothing, saying: "I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves; therefore be as wise as serpents and as harmless as doves. But be careful, for your enemies will bring you up before their councils, while in their synagogues they will castigate you. You will be brought before governors and rulers because you believe these teachings, and your very testimony will be a witness for me to them. And when they lead you to judgment, do not be anxious about what you will say, for the spirit of the Creator indwells you and will at such a time speak through you. Some of you will be put to death, and before you establish the new realm on earth, you will be hated by many people because of these teachings; but do not be afraid; I will be with you, and my spirit will go before you into all the world. And the Creator's presence will be with you while you go first to the Jews, then to the gentiles."

And when they came down from the mountain, they journeyed back to their home in Zebedee's house.

10. The Evening After the Consecration

That evening while teaching in the house, for it had begun to rain, Jesus talked at great length, trying to show the twelve what they must *be*, not what they must *do*. They knew only a religion that imposed

the *doing* of certain things as the means of attaining righteousness — salvation. But Jesus would reiterate, “In the new realm you must *be* righteous in order to do the work,” many times repeating, “*Be* you perfect, even as your Creator is perfect.” All the while the Master was explaining to the bewildered apostles that eternal life was to be had only by *believing*, by simple and sincere faith. Jesus said: “John preached a baptism of repentance, sorrow for the old way of living. You are to proclaim the baptism of communion with the Creator. Preach repentance to those who stand in need of such teaching, but to those already seeking sincere entrance to the new realm, open the doors wide and invite them to enter into the joyous family of the children of the Creator.” But it was a difficult task to persuade these Galileans that, in the new realm, *being* righteous, by faith, must precede *doing* righteousness in daily life.

Another great handicap in this work of teaching the twelve was their tendency to take highly idealistic and spiritual principles of religious truth and remake them into concrete rules of personal conduct. Jesus would present to them the beautiful spirit of the soul’s attitude, but they insisted on translating such teachings into rules of personal behavior. Many times, when they did make sure to remember what the Master said, they were almost certain to forget what was *not* said. But they slowly assimilated this teaching because Jesus *was* all that was taught. What they could not gain from verbal instruction, they gradually acquired by living with Jesus.

It was not apparent to the apostles that their Master was engaged in living a life of spiritual inspiration for every person of every age on every world of a vast universe. Notwithstanding what Jesus told them from time to time, the apostles did not grasp the idea that the work was being done *on* this world but *for* all other worlds. Jesus lived on Urantia, not to set a personal example of mortal living for the people of this world, but rather to create a *high spiritual and inspirational ideal* for all mortal beings on all worlds.

This same evening Thomas asked Jesus: “Master, you say that we must become as little children before we can gain entrance to the Creator’s realm, and yet you have warned us not to be deceived by false prophets nor to become guilty of casting our pearls before swine. Now, I am honestly puzzled. I cannot understand your teaching.” Jesus replied to Thomas: “You insist on making all that I teach literal. When I asked you to become as little children as the price of entering the new realm, I did not refer to ease of deception, mere willingness to believe, or to quickly trust in pleasing strangers. What I wanted was that you should understand the child-parent relationship. You are the child, and it is *your* Parent’s domain that you seek to enter. The natural affection between every normal child and its parent insures an understanding and loving relationship, and forever precludes all disposition to bargain for the Parent’s love and mercy. And the doctrine you are going to preach has to do with the faith-realization of this very and eternal child-parent relationship.”

The one characteristic of Jesus’ teaching was that the *morality* of this philosophy originated in the personal relation of the individual to the Creator — this child-parent relationship. Jesus placed emphasis on the *individual*, not on the nation. While eating supper, Jesus had a talk with Matthew, explaining that the morality of any act is determined by the individual’s motive. Jesus’ morality was always positive. The golden rule as restated by Jesus demands active social contact; the older negative rule could be obeyed in isolation. Jesus stripped morality of all rules and ceremonies and elevated it to majestic levels of spiritual thinking and truly righteous living.

This new religion of Jesus was not without its practical implications, but whatever there is to be found of practical political, social, or economic value in this teaching is the natural outworking of this inner experience of the soul as it manifests the fruits of the spirit in the spontaneous daily ministry of genuine personal religious experience.

After Jesus and Matthew had finished talking, Simon Zelotes asked, “But, Master, are *all* people the children of the Creator?” And Jesus answered: “Yes, Simon, all people are the children of the Creator, and that is what you are going to proclaim.” But the apostles could not grasp such a doctrine; it was a new, strange, and startling announcement. And it was because of the desire to impress this truth on them that Jesus taught the apostles to treat all people as family.

Jesus taught morality, not from the *nature* of mortals, but from the *relation* of mortals to the Creator.

John asked Jesus, “Master, what is the realm of the Creator?” And Jesus answered: “The realm of the Creator consists in these three essentials: first, recognition of the fact of the sovereignty of the Creator; second, belief in the truth of relationship with the Creator; and third, faith in the effectiveness of the supreme human desire to do the will of the Creator — to be like the Creator. And this is the great news: that by faith every mortal may have all these essentials of eternal life.”

And now the week of waiting was over, and they prepared to leave the next day for Jerusalem.

Paper 141

Beginning the Public Work

On the first day of the week, January 19, C.E. 27, Jesus and the twelve apostles made ready to leave their headquarters in Bethsaida. The twelve knew nothing of their Master's plans except that they were going to Jerusalem to attend the Passover feast in April, and that it was Jesus' intention to journey by way of the Jordan valley. They did not get away from Zebedee's house until near noon because the families of the apostles and others of the disciples had come to say good-bye and wish them well in the new work they were about to begin.

Just before it was time to leave, the Master was nowhere to be seen, and Andrew went out to search, finding Jesus sitting in a boat down the beach, and Jesus was weeping. The twelve had often seen their Master seeming to grieve, and they had observed brief times of serious preoccupation of mind, but none of them had ever seen Jesus weep. Andrew was somewhat startled to see the Master affected this way on the eve of their departure for Jerusalem, and ventured to approach Jesus and ask: "On this great day, Master, when we are to depart for Jerusalem to proclaim the Creator's realm, why is it that you weep? Which of us has offended you?" And Jesus, going back with Andrew to join the twelve, answered: "No one of you has grieved me. I am saddened only because none of my family have remembered to come over to say good-bye." At this time Ruth was on a visit to Joseph at Nazareth. Other members of the family were kept away by pride, disappointment, misunderstanding, and petty resentment indulged as a result of hurt feelings.

1. Leaving Galilee

Capernaum was not far from Tiberias, and the fame of Jesus had begun to spread over all of Galilee and even to parts beyond. Jesus knew that Herod would soon begin to take notice of this work; and thought it best to journey south and into Judea with the apostles. A company of over one hundred followers wanted to go with them, but Jesus spoke to them and asked them not to accompany the apostolic group on their way down the Jordan. Though they consented to remain behind, many of them followed after the Master within a few days.

The first day Jesus and the apostles only journeyed as far as Tarichea, where they rested for the night. The next day they traveled to a point on the Jordan near Pella where John had preached about one year before, and where Jesus had received baptism. Here they stayed for more than two weeks, teaching and preaching. By the end of the first week several hundred people had assembled in a camp near where Jesus and the twelve stayed, and they had come from Galilee, Phoenicia, Syria, the Decapolis, Perea, and Judea.

Jesus did no public preaching. Andrew divided the multitude and assigned the preachers for the morning and afternoon assemblies. After the evening meal Jesus talked with the twelve, teaching them nothing new but reviewing former teaching and answering their many questions. On one of these evenings Jesus told the twelve something about the forty days spent in the hills near this place.

Many of those who came from Perea and Judea had been baptized by John and were interested in finding out more about Jesus' teachings. The apostles made much progress in teaching the disciples of John since

they did not in any way detract from John's preaching, and since they did not at this time even baptize their new disciples. But it was always a stumbling block to John's followers that Jesus did nothing to get John out of prison. John's disciples never could understand why Jesus did not prevent the cruel death of their beloved leader.

From night to night Andrew carefully instructed the other apostles in the delicate and difficult task of getting along smoothly with the followers of John the Baptist. During this first year of Jesus' public ministry more than three fourths of the believers had previously followed John and had received John's baptism. This entire year of C.E. 27 was spent in quietly taking over John's work in Perea and Judea.

2. The Law and the Will of the Creator

The night before they left Pella, Jesus gave the apostles some further instruction with regard to the new realm, saying: "You have been taught to look for the coming of the realm of the Creator, and now I am announcing that this long-looked-for realm is near at hand, even that it is already here and in our midst. In every dominion there must be a ruler decreeing the laws. And you have developed a concept of the realm of the Creator as a glorified rule of the Jewish people over all the peoples of the earth with the Messiah sitting on David's throne and from this place of miraculous power promulgating the laws of all the world. But, my children, you do not see with the eye of faith, and you do not hear with the understanding of the spirit. I tell you that the realm of the Creator is the realization and acknowledgment of the Creator's rule within the hearts of mortals. True, there is a ruler in this dominion, and that ruler is my Parent and your Parent. We are indeed loyal subjects, but far transcending that fact is the transforming truth that we are the children of this ruler. In my life this truth is to become manifest to all. The eternal dwelling place of the Creator is the universe of universes. The Creator fills all things and proclaims laws to all creation. And the Creator also rules within the hearts of the children on earth by the spirit which lives within the souls of mortals.

"When you are the subjects of this realm, you hear the law of the Universe Ruler; but when, because of the doctrine which I have come to declare, you faith-discover yourselves as children of the Creator, you do not consider yourselves as law-subject creatures of an all-powerful ruler but as privileged children of a loving and divine Parent. When the Creator's will is your *law*, you are hardly in the realm. But when the Creator's will becomes truly your *will*, then you are in truth in the realm because the realm has become an established experience in you. When the Creator's will is your law, you are noble subjects; but when you believe in this new doctrine of the divine family, the Creator's will becomes your will, and you are elevated to the high position of the free children of the Creator, liberated children of the realm."

Some of the apostles grasped something of this teaching, but none of them comprehended the full significance of this tremendous announcement, unless it was James Zebedee. But these words sank into their hearts and uplifted their ministry during later years of service.

3. The Sojourn at Amathus

The Master and the apostles remained near Amathus for almost three weeks. The apostles continued to preach twice daily to the multitude, and Jesus preached each Sabbath afternoon. It became impossible to

continue the Wednesday playtime; so Andrew arranged that two apostles should rest each day of the six days in the week, while all were on duty during the Sabbath services.

Peter, James, and John did most of the public preaching. Philip, Nathaniel, Thomas, and Simon did much of the personal work and conducted classes for special groups of inquirers. The twins continued their general crowd supervision, while Andrew, Matthew, and Judas developed into a general managerial committee of three, although each of these three also did considerable religious work.

Andrew was mostly occupied with the task of adjusting the constantly recurring misunderstandings and disagreements between the disciples of John and the newer followers of Jesus. Serious situations would arise every few days, but Andrew, with the assistance of the apostolic associates, managed to induce the contending parties to come to some sort of agreement, at least temporarily. Jesus refused to participate in any of these conferences, nor to give any advice about the proper adjustment of these difficulties. Jesus never once offered a suggestion as to how the apostles should solve these problems. Jesus, when Andrew would bring these questions, would always say: "It is not wise for the host to participate in the family troubles of the guests; a wise parent never takes sides in the quarrels of the children."

The Master displayed great wisdom and manifested perfect fairness in all dealings with the apostles and with all of the disciples. Jesus was truly a master of people, exercising great influence over others with a combination of charm and force of personality. There was a subtle commanding influence in Jesus' rugged, nomadic, and homeless life. There was intellectual attractiveness and spiritual drawing power in Jesus' authoritative manner of teaching, lucid logic, strength of reasoning, sagacious insight, alertness of mind, matchless poise, and sublime tolerance. Jesus was simple, honest, and fearless. With all of this physical and intellectual influence manifest in the Master's presence, there were also all those spiritual charms of being which have become associated with Jesus' personality — patience, tenderness, gentleness, and humility.

Jesus of Nazareth was indeed a strong and forceful personality, an intellectual power and a spiritual stronghold. Jesus' personality not only appealed to the spiritually minded among the followers, but also to the educated and intellectual Nicodemus and to the hardy Roman soldier, the captain stationed on guard at the cross, who, when watching the Master die, said, "Truly, this person was from the Creator." And red-blooded, rugged Galileans called Jesus Master.

The pictures of Jesus have been most unfortunate. These paintings have exerted a deleterious influence on youth. The temple merchants would hardly have fled before the Jesus your artists usually have depicted. Jesus was good, but natural and did not pose as a mild, sweet, gentle, and kindly mystic. Jesus' teaching was thrillingly dynamic. Jesus not only *meant well*, but went about actually *doing good*.

The Master never said, "Come to me all you who are indolent and all who are dreamers." But many times did say, "Come to me all you who *labor*, and I will give you rest — spiritual strength." The Master's way is easy, but even so, it is never imposed; every individual must take this path freely.

Jesus portrayed conquest by sacrifice, the sacrifice of pride and selfishness. By showing mercy, Jesus meant to portray spiritual deliverance from all grudges, grievances, anger, and the lust for selfish power and revenge. And Jesus, when saying, "Do not resist evil," later explained that this did not mean to condone sin

or to associate with iniquity. Jesus intended to teach forgiveness, to “not resist evil treatment of one’s personality, evil injury to one’s feelings of personal dignity.”

4. Teaching About the Creator

While staying at Amathus, Jesus spent much time with the apostles instructing them in the new concept of the Creator; again and again impressing upon them that *the Creator is a Parent*, not a great and supreme bookkeeper who is chiefly engaged in making damaging entries against the erring children on earth, recordings of sin and evil to be used against them when subsequently sitting in judgment upon them as the just Judge of all creation. The Jews had long conceived of Yahweh as a ruler over all, but never before had large numbers of mortals held the idea of the Creator as a loving Parent of the *individual*.

In answer to Thomas’s question, “Who is this Creator?” Jesus replied: “The Creator is *your* Parent, and religion — my teaching — is nothing more nor less than the believing recognition of the truth that you are the Creator’s child. And I am here among you to make clear both of these ideas in my life and teachings.”

Jesus also sought to free the minds of the apostles from the idea of offering animal sacrifices as a religious duty, but having been trained in the religion of the daily sacrifice, they were slow to comprehend the meaning of this teaching. Nevertheless, the Master did not grow weary in teaching them. When failing to reach the minds of all of the apostles by means of one illustration, Jesus would restate the message and employ another type of parable for purposes of illumination.

At this same time Jesus began to teach the twelve more fully concerning their mission “to comfort the afflicted and minister to the sick.” The Master taught them much about the whole person — the union of body, mind, and spirit to form the individual. Jesus told these associates about the three forms of affliction they would meet and went on to explain how they should minister to all who suffer the sorrows of human sickness, teaching them to recognize:

1. Diseases of the body — those afflictions commonly regarded as physical sickness.
2. Troubled minds — those nonphysical afflictions which were subsequently looked upon as emotional and mental difficulties and disturbances.
3. The possession of evil spirits.

Jesus explained to the apostles on several occasions the nature, and something concerning the origin, of these evil spirits, at that time often also called unclean spirits. The Master knew the difference between the possession of evil spirits and insanity, but the apostles did not. Neither was it possible, in view of their limited knowledge of the early history of Urantia, for Jesus to undertake to make this matter fully understandable. But many times Jesus said to them, alluding to these evil spirits: “They will no longer molest people when I have ascended to the Creator, and after I have poured out my spirit on all people in those times when the new realm will come in great power and spiritual glory.”

From week to week and from month to month, throughout this entire year, the apostles paid more and more attention to the healing ministry of the sick.

5. Spiritual Unity

One of the most eventful of all the evening conferences at Amathus was the session having to do with the discussion of spiritual unity. James Zebedee had asked, “Master, how will we learn to see alike and thereby enjoy more harmony among ourselves?” Jesus replied: “James, when did I teach you that you should all see alike? I have come into the world to proclaim spiritual liberty to the end that mortals may be empowered to live individual lives of originality and freedom before the Creator. I do not want social harmony and peace to be purchased by the sacrifice of free personality and spiritual originality. What I require of you, my apostles, is *spirit unity* — and that you can experience in the joy of your united dedication to the wholehearted doing of the will of the Creator. You do not have to see alike or feel alike or even think alike in order spiritually to *be alike*. Spiritual unity is derived from the consciousness that each of you is indwelt, and increasingly dominated, by the spirit gift of the Creator. Your apostolic harmony must grow out of the fact that the spirit hope within each of you is identical in origin, nature, and destiny.

“In this way you may experience a perfected unity of spirit purpose and spirit understanding growing out of the mutual consciousness of the identity of each of your indwelling Paradise spirits; and you may enjoy all of this profound spiritual unity in the very face of the utmost diversity of your individual attitudes of intellectual thinking, temperamental feeling, and social conduct. Your personalities may be refreshingly diverse and markedly different, while your spiritual natures and spirit fruits of divine worship and love may be so unified that all who observe your lives will be aware of this spirit identity and soul unity; they will recognize that you have been with me and have learned how to do the will of the Creator. You can achieve the unity of the service of the Creator even while you render such service in accordance with the technique of your own original endowments of mind, body, and soul.

“Your spirit unity implies two things, which will always be found to harmonize in the lives of individual seekers: First, you possess a common motive for life service; you all desire above everything to do the will of the Creator. Second, you all have a common goal of existence; you all strive to find the Creator, thereby proving to the universe that you have become like the Creator.”

Many times during the training of the twelve Jesus reverted to this theme, repeatedly telling them that those who believe should not become dogmatized and standardized in accordance with the religious interpretations of even good people, again and again warning the apostles against the formulation of creeds and the establishment of traditions as a means of guiding and controlling followers in the new realm.

6. Last Week at Amathus

Near the end of the last week at Amathus, Simon Zelotes brought Teherma, a Persian doing business at Damascus, to Jesus. Teherma had come to Capernaum to see Jesus, and learning that the apostles had gone down the Jordan on the way to Jerusalem, set out to find them. Andrew had presented Teherma to Simon for instruction. Simon viewed the Persian as a “fire worshiper,” although Teherma took great pains to explain that fire was only the visible symbol of the Pure and Holy One. After talking with Jesus, the Persian signified an intention of remaining for several days to hear the teaching and listen to the preaching.

When Simon Zelotes and Jesus were alone, Simon asked the Master: “Why is it that I could not persuade Teherma? Why did Teherma resist me and so readily respond to you?” Jesus answered: “Simon, how many times have I instructed you to refrain from all efforts to take something *out* of the hearts of those who are seeking? How often have I told you to only put something *into* these hungry souls? Lead people into the new realm, and the great and living truths of that realm will presently drive out all serious error. When you have presented to mortals the truth that the Creator is their Parent, you can more easily persuade them that they are in reality children of the Creator. And having done that, you have brought the light to the one who sits in darkness. Simon, when I first came to you, did I come denouncing Moses and the prophets and proclaiming a new and better way of life? No. I did not come to take away that which you had from your forebears but to show you the perfected vision of that which your ancestors saw only in part. Then Simon, continue teaching and preaching, and when you have a person safely and securely within the new realm, then is the time, when that person will come to you with inquiries, to impart instruction having to do with the progressive advancement of the soul.”

Simon was astonished at these words, but did as Jesus had instructed, and Teherma, the Persian, was numbered among those who entered the new realm.

That night Jesus spoke to the apostles about the new life in the realm of the Creator, saying in part: “When you enter the new realm, you are reborn. You cannot teach the deep things of the spirit to those who have been born only of the body; first see that people are born of the spirit before you seek to instruct them in the advanced ways of the spirit. Do not undertake to show people the beauties of the temple until you have first taken them into the temple. Introduce people to the Creator and *as* the children of the Creator before you discourse on the doctrines of the parenthood of the Creator and the family of humanity. Do not strive with people — always be patient. It is not your realm; you are only ambassadors. Simply proclaim: This is the realm of the Creator — the Creator is your Parent and you are the children of this Creator, and this doctrine, if you wholeheartedly believe it, *is* your eternal life.”

The apostles made great progress during the stay at Amathus. But they were very disappointed that Jesus would give them no suggestions about dealing with John’s disciples. Even in the important matter of baptism, all that Jesus said was: “John did baptize with water, but when you enter the new realm, you will be baptized with the Spirit.”

7. At Bethany Beyond Jordan

On February 26, Jesus, the apostles, and a large group of followers journeyed down the Jordan to the ford near Bethany in Perea, the place where John first proclaimed the coming new realm. Jesus, with the apostles, remained here teaching and preaching for four weeks before they went on to Jerusalem.

The second week at Bethany beyond Jordan, Jesus took Peter, James, and John into the hills across the river and south of Jericho for three days’ rest. The Master taught these three many new and advanced truths about the realm of the Creator. For the purpose of this record we will reorganize and classify these teachings as follows:

Jesus endeavored to make clear that followers, having tasted of the good spirit realities of the new realm, should live in the world so that others, by *seeing* their lives, would become spirit conscious and be led to inquire about the ways of the new realm. All such sincere seekers for the truth are always glad to *hear* about the faith gift which insures admission to the new realm with its eternal and divine spirit realities.

The Master sought to impress on all the teachers that their only business was to reveal the Creator to individuals as their Parent — to lead people to become Creator-conscious; then to present these same people to the Creator as faith children. Both of these essential revelations are accomplished in Jesus. The religion of Jesus was wholly based on the living of the bestowal life on earth. Jesus, on departing from this world, left behind no books, laws, or other forms of human organization affecting the religious life of the individual.

Jesus made it plain that the purpose of the bestowal was to establish personal and eternal relations with mortals which should forever take precedence over all other human relationships, emphasizing that this intimate spiritual gift was to be extended to all people of all ages and of all social conditions. The only reward which Jesus held out was: in this world — spiritual joy and divine communion; in the next world — eternal life in the progress of the divine spirit realities of the Paradise Creator.

Jesus laid great emphasis on the two truths of greatest importance in the teachings of the new realm, and they are: the attainment of eternal life by faith, and faith alone, associated with the revolutionary teaching of the attainment of human liberty through the sincere recognition of truth. Jesus was the truth made manifest, promising to send the Spirit of Truth into the hearts of all people after returning to the Creator.

The Master was teaching these apostles the essentials of truth for an entire age on earth, and although they were the ones who listened to these teachings, in reality they were intended for the inspiration and edification of other worlds. Jesus exemplified a new and original plan of life. From the human standpoint Jesus was a Jew, but lived for all the world as a mortal of the realm.

To insure the recognition of the Creator in the unfolding of the plan of the new realm, Jesus explained why it was desirable to begin the work with the poor, the very class which had been so neglected by most of the evolutionary religions of preceding times. Despising no one, Jesus' plan was world-wide, even universal. Jesus was so bold and emphatic in these announcements that even Peter, James, and John were concerned.

Jesus sought to impart to these apostles the truth that the bestowal mission was not intended to set an example for a few earth creatures, but to establish and demonstrate a standard of human life for all peoples on all worlds throughout the entire universe. And this standard approached the highest perfection, even the final goodness of the Universal Creator. But the apostles could not grasp the meaning of these words.

Jesus had come to function as a teacher, a teacher sent to present spiritual truth to the material mind. And this is exactly what Jesus did; Jesus was a teacher, not a preacher. From the human viewpoint Peter was a much more effective preacher. Jesus' approach was effective through having such a unique personality, not so much because of compelling oratory or emotional appeal. Jesus spoke directly to people's souls and was a teacher of a person's spirit through the mind. Jesus lived with people.

It was on this occasion that Jesus intimated to Peter, James, and John that this work on earth was in some respects to be limited by the commission of an “associate on high,” referring to the prebestowal instructions of Immanuel. Jesus explained having come to do the Creator’s will and only the Creator’s will. Being motivated by a wholehearted singleness of purpose, Jesus was not anxiously bothered by the evil in the world.

The apostles were beginning to recognize the unaffected friendliness of Jesus. The Master, while easy of approach, always lived independent of, and above, all human beings, not for one moment being dominated by any purely mortal influence or subject to frail human judgment. Jesus paid no attention to public opinion, was uninfluenced by praise, seldom paused to correct misunderstandings or to resent misrepresentation, and never asked anyone for advice or made requests for prayers.

James was astonished at how Jesus seemed to see the end from the beginning. The Master rarely appeared to be surprised, was never excited, vexed, or disconcerted, and never apologized to anyone. Jesus was at times saddened, but never discouraged.

John more clearly recognized that Jesus was human notwithstanding having divine endowments. Jesus lived as a mortal among mortals and understood, loved, and knew how to manage people. Personally Jesus was so human and yet so faultless, and was always unselfish.

Although Peter, James, and John could not understand very much of what Jesus said on this occasion, these gracious words lingered in their hearts, and after the crucifixion and resurrection came forth to greatly enrich and uplift their subsequent ministry. No wonder these apostles did not fully comprehend the Master’s words, for they were projecting the plan of a new age.

8. Working in Jericho

Throughout the four weeks’ stay at Bethany beyond Jordan, several times each week Andrew would assign apostolic couples to go to Jericho for a day or two. John had many followers in Jericho, and the majority of them welcomed the more advanced teachings of Jesus and the apostles. On these Jericho visits the apostles began more specifically to carry out Jesus’ instructions to minister to the sick; they visited every house in the city and sought to comfort every afflicted person.

The apostles did some public work in Jericho, but their efforts were chiefly of a more quiet and personal nature. They now made the discovery that the doctrine of the new realm was very comforting to the sick; that their message carried healing for the afflicted. And it was in Jericho that Jesus’ commission to the twelve to preach the new doctrine and minister to the afflicted was first fully carried into effect.

They stopped in Jericho on the way to Jerusalem and were overtaken by a delegation from Mesopotamia that had come to confer with Jesus. The apostles had planned to spend only a day here, but when these truth seekers from the East arrived, Jesus spent three days with them, and they returned to their various homes along the Euphrates happy in the knowledge of the new truths of the realm of the Creator.

9. Leaving for Jerusalem

On Monday, the last day of March, Jesus and the apostles began their journey up the hills toward Jerusalem. Lazarus of Bethany had been to the Jordan twice to see Jesus, and every arrangement had been made for the Master and the apostles to make their headquarters with Lazarus, Martha and Mary at Bethany as long as they might want to stay in Jerusalem.

The disciples of John remained at Bethany beyond the Jordan, teaching and baptizing the multitudes, so that Jesus was accompanied only by the twelve when arriving at Lazarus's home. Here Jesus and the apostles stayed for five days, resting and refreshing themselves before going on to Jerusalem for the Passover.

On Sunday morning, April 6, Jesus and the apostles went to Jerusalem; and this was the first time the Master and all of the twelve had been there together.

Paper 142

The Passover at Jerusalem

Jesus and the apostles worked in Jerusalem the month of April, going out of the city each evening to spend the night at Bethany. Jesus spent one or two nights each week in Jerusalem at the home of Flavius, a Greek Jew, where many prominent Jews came in secret for personal interviews.

The first day in Jerusalem Jesus called on Annas, the onetime high priest and relative of Salome who had been hearing about Jesus' teachings. Jesus, on calling at the high priest's home, was received with much reserve, and perceiving Annas' coldness, Jesus left immediately, saying: "Fear is a person's chief enslaver and pride the great weakness. Will you betray yourself into bondage to both of these destroyers of joy and liberty?" But Annas did not reply, and the Master did not see Annas again until the trial.

1. Teaching in the Temple

Throughout this month Jesus or one of the apostles taught each day in the temple. When the Passover crowds were too great to find entrance to the temple teaching, the apostles conducted many teaching groups outside the sacred precincts. The essence of their message was:

1. The realm of the Creator is at hand.
2. By faith in the parenthood of the Creator you may enter the new realm, becoming the children of the Creator.
3. Love is the rule of living within the new realm — supreme devotion to the Creator while loving your neighbor as yourself.
4. Obedience to the will of the Creator, yielding the fruits of the spirit in one's personal life, is the law of the new realm.

The multitudes who came to celebrate the Passover heard this teaching of Jesus, and hundreds of them gladly received it. The chief priests and rulers of the Jews became much concerned about Jesus and the apostles and debated among themselves as to what should be done with them.

Besides teaching in and about the temple, the apostles and other followers were engaged in doing much personal work among the Passover throngs. These interested followers carried the news of Jesus' message from this Passover celebration to the uttermost parts of the Roman Empire and also to the East. This was the beginning of the spread of the doctrine of the new realm to the outside world. The work of Jesus was no longer to be confined to Palestine.

2. Yahweh's Wrath

Jacob, a wealthy Jewish trader from Crete, was in attendance at the Passover festivities in Jerusalem and came to Andrew requesting to see Jesus privately. Andrew arranged this secret meeting at Flavius's home

the evening of the next day. Jacob could not comprehend the Master's teachings, and came to inquire more fully about the realm of the Creator. Jacob said to Jesus: "But, Rabbi, Moses and the olden prophets tell us that Yahweh is a jealous Deity, a Deity of great wrath and fierce anger. The prophets say that Yahweh hates evildoers and takes vengeance on those who do not obey the law. You and your disciples teach us that the Creator is a kind and compassionate Parent who loves all mortals and would welcome them into this new realm, which you proclaim is so near at hand."

When Jacob finished speaking, Jesus replied: "Jacob, you have accurately stated the teachings of the olden prophets who taught the children of their generation in accordance with the light of their day. Our Parent in Paradise is changeless, but the concept of the divine nature has enlarged and grown from the days of Moses down through the times of Amos and even to the generation of the prophet Isaiah. And now I have come to reveal the Creator in new glory and to show forth the Creator's love and mercy to all people on all worlds. As the doctrine of this new realm will spread over the world with its message of joy and good will to all, improved and better relations will grow among the families of all nations. As time passes, parents and their children will love each other more, and a better understanding will be brought about of the love of the Creator for the mortal children on earth. Remember, Jacob, that a good and true parent not only loves the family as a whole — as a family — but also truly loves and affectionately cares for each *individual* member."

After considerable discussion of the Creator's character, Jesus paused to say: "You, Jacob, being a parent of many, know the truth of my words." And Jacob said: "But, Master, who told you I was the parent of six children? How did you know this about me?" And the Master replied: "Suffice it to say that the Creator and I know all things, for we see all. Loving your children as a parent on earth, you must now accept as a reality the love of the Creator for *you* — not just for all the children of Abraham, but for you, your individual soul."

Then Jesus went on to say: "When your children are very young and immature, and when you must chastise them, they may reflect that their parent is angry and filled with resentful wrath. Their immaturity cannot penetrate beyond the punishment to discern the parent's farseeing and corrective affection. But when these same children become adults, would it not be foolish for them to cling to these earlier and misconceived notions regarding their parent? As adults they should now discern their parent's love in all these early disciplines. And should not humankind, as the centuries pass, come to better understand the true nature and loving character of the Creator? What profit do you have from successive generations of spiritual illumination if you persist in viewing Yahweh as Moses and the prophets did? I say to you, Jacob, under the bright light of this hour you should see the Creator as none of those who have gone before ever did. And you should rejoice to enter the realm in which such a merciful Parent rules, and you should seek to have the Creator's will of love dominate your life from now on."

And Jacob answered: "Rabbi, I believe; I would like you to lead me into the Creator's realm."

3. The Concept of the Creator

The twelve apostles, most of whom had listened to this discussion of the character of the Creator, asked Jesus many questions that night. The Master's answers to these questions can best be presented by the following summary:

Jesus mildly upbraided the twelve, in substance saying: Do you not know the traditions of Israel relating to the growth of the idea of Yahweh, and are you ignorant of the teaching of the Scriptures concerning the doctrine of Deity? And then the Master proceeded to instruct the apostles about the evolution of the concept of Deity throughout the course of the development of the Jewish people, calling attention to the following phases of the growth of the idea:

1. *Yahweh* — the god of the Sinai clans. This was the primitive concept of Deity. The Creator never fails to accept the sincere worship of the children on earth, no matter how crude their concept of Deity or by what name they symbolize the divine nature.

2. *The Most High*. This concept was proclaimed by Melchizedek to Abraham and was carried far from Salem by those who subsequently believed in this enlarged and expanded idea of Deity. Abraham left Ur because of the establishment of sun worship, and became a believer in Melchizedek's teaching of El Elyon — the Most High, which was a composite concept of Deity, consisting in a blending of their older Mesopotamian ideas and the Most High doctrine.

3. *El Shaddai*. During these early days many of the Hebrews worshiped El Shaddai, the Egyptian concept of Deity, which they learned about during their captivity in the land of the Nile. Long after the times of Melchizedek all three of these concepts became joined together to form the doctrine of the creator Deity, the God of Israel.

4. *Elohim*. From the times of Eden the teaching of the Paradise Trinity has persisted. Do you not recall how the Scriptures begin by asserting that "In the beginning the Deities created the heavens and the earth"? This indicates that when that record was made the Trinity concept of three Deities in one had found a place in the religion of our forebears.

5. *The Supreme Yahweh*. By the times of Isaiah these beliefs had expanded into the concept of a Universal Creator who was simultaneously all-powerful and all-merciful. And this evolving and enlarging concept virtually supplanted all previous ideas of Deity in our ancestors' religion.

6. *The Universal Source*. And now we know the Source as our Creator Parent. Our teaching provides a religion in which all people *are* children of the Creator. That is the doctrine of the realm. Coexistent with the Universal Source are the Eternal Spirit and the Infinite Mind, and the revelation of the nature and ministry of these Paradise Deities will continue to enlarge and brighten throughout the endless ages of the eternal spiritual progression of the ascending children of the Creator. At all times and during all ages the true worship by any human being — as concerns individual spiritual progress — is recognized by the indwelling spirit as homage rendered to the Universal Source.

Never before had the apostles been so shocked as they were on hearing this recounting of the growth of the concept of Deity in the Jewish minds of previous generations; they were too bewildered to ask questions. As they sat before Jesus in silence, the Master continued: "And you would have known these truths had you read the Scriptures. Have you not read in Samuel where it says: 'And the anger of Yahweh was kindled against Israel, and Yahweh moved David against them, saying, go number Israel and Judah'? And this was not strange because in the days of Samuel the children of Abraham really believed that Yahweh created

both good and evil. But a later writer who narrated these events, subsequent to the enlargement of the Jewish concept of the nature of Deity, did not dare attribute evil to Yahweh; and therefore said: ‘And Satan stood up against Israel and provoked David to number Israel.’ Can you not discern that such records in the Scriptures clearly show how the concept of the nature of Deity continued to grow from one generation to another?

“Again you should have discerned the growth of the understanding of divine law in perfect keeping with these enlarging concepts of divinity. When the children of Israel came out of Egypt in the days before the enlarged revelation of Yahweh, they had ten commandments which served as their law right up to the times when they were encamped before Sinai. And these ten commandments were:

“1. You shall worship no other deity, for Yahweh is a jealous Deity.

“2. You shall not make molten deities.

“3. You shall not neglect to keep the feast of unleavened bread.

“4. Of all the children or cattle, the first-born are mine, says Yahweh.

“5. Six days you may work, but on the seventh day you shall rest.

“6. You shall not fail to observe the feast of the first fruits and the feast of the harvest at the end of the year.

“7. You shall not offer the blood of any sacrifice with leavened bread.

“8. The sacrifice of the feast of the Passover shall not be left until morning.

“9. The first of the first fruits of the ground you shall bring to the house of Yahweh.

“10. You shall not boil a kid in milk.

“And then, amid the thunders and lightnings of Sinai, Moses gave them the new ten commandments, which you will all allow are more worthy to accompany the enlarging Yahweh concepts of Deity. And did you not take notice of these commandments as twice recorded in the Scriptures, that in the first case deliverance from Egypt is assigned as the reason for Sabbath keeping, while in a later record the advancing religious beliefs of our forebears demanded that this be changed to the recognition of the fact of creation as the reason for Sabbath observance?

“And then you will remember that once again — in the greater spiritual enlightenment of Isaiah’s day — these ten negative commandments were changed into the great and positive law of love, the injunction to love the Creator supremely and your neighbor as yourself. And it is this supreme law of love for the Creator and for mortals that I also declare to you as constituting the whole duty of humanity.”

And when Jesus had finished speaking, no one asked a question and they went to sleep for the night.

4. Flavius and Greek Culture

Flavius, the Greek Jew, was a proselyte of the gate, having been neither circumcised nor baptized; and being a great lover of the beautiful in art and sculpture, the house which Flavius occupied while in Jerusalem was a beautiful edifice. This home was exquisitely adorned with priceless treasures which had been gathered up here and there throughout the world. Flavius, when first thinking of inviting Jesus home, feared that the Master might take offense at the sight of these so-called images, but was agreeably surprised when Jesus, on entering the home, instead of issuing a rebuke for having these supposedly idolatrous objects scattered about the house, manifested great interest in the entire collection and asked many appreciative questions about each object while going from room to room with Flavius.

The Master saw that Flavius was bewildered at this friendly attitude toward art; therefore, when they had finished the survey of the entire collection, Jesus said: "Because you appreciate the beauty of things created by my Parent and fashioned by the artistic hands of mortals, why should you expect to be rebuked? Because Moses once sought to combat idolatry and the worship of false deities, why should everyone frown on the reproduction of grace and beauty? I say to you, Flavius, Moses' children have misunderstood, and now they make false deities of even the prohibitions of images and the likeness of things. But even if Moses taught such restrictions to the darkened minds of those days, what has that to do with this day when the Creator is revealed as the universal Spirit Ruler over all? And, Flavius, in the coming new realm they will no longer teach, 'Do not worship this and do not worship that'; no longer will they concern themselves with commands to refrain from this and take care not to do that, but rather all will be concerned with one supreme duty. And this duty is expressed in two great privileges: sincere worship of the infinite Creator, the Paradise Parent, and loving service bestowed on others. If you love your neighbor as you love yourself, you really know that you are a child of the Creator.

"In an age when the Creator was not well understood, Moses was justified in attempting to withstand idolatry, but in the coming age the Creator will have been revealed in the life of the Deliverer; and this new revelation will make it forever unnecessary to confuse the Creator with idols of stone or images of gold and silver. From now on, intelligent people may enjoy the treasures of art without confusing such material appreciation of beauty with the worship and service of the Universal Source, the Creator of all things and all beings."

Flavius believed all that Jesus taught, the next day going to Bethany beyond the Jordan to be baptized by the disciples of John. And Flavius did this because the apostles of Jesus did not yet baptize. Flavius, on returning to Jerusalem, made a great feast for Jesus and invited sixty friends. And many of these guests also became believers in the message of the coming new realm.

5. The Discourse on Assurance

One of the great sermons which Jesus preached in the temple this Passover week was in answer to a question asked by one of the hearers from Damascus who asked Jesus: "But, Rabbi, how will we know of a certainty that you are sent by the Creator, and that we may truly enter into this realm which you and your apostles declare is near at hand?" And Jesus answered:

“As to my message and the teaching of my apostles, you should judge them by their fruits. If we proclaim to you the truths of the spirit, the spirit will affirm that our message is genuine. Concerning the new realm and your assurance of acceptance by the Creator, let me ask what parents among you who are worthy and kindhearted parents would keep their children in anxiety or suspense regarding their status in the family or their place of security in the affections of their parents’ hearts? Do you earth parents take pleasure in torturing your children with uncertainty about your love? Neither does your Creator Parent leave the faithful children of the spirit in doubtful uncertainty as to their position in the Creator’s realm. If you receive the Creator as your Parent, then you are the children of the Creator. And if you are children, then you are secure in the position and standing of all that concerns eternal life. If you believe my words, you believe in the One who sent me, and by believing in the Creator, you have made your status of citizenship sure. If you do the will of the Creator, you will never fail in the attainment of the eternal life of progress.

“The Supreme Spirit will bear witness with your spirits that you are truly the children of the Creator. And if you are the children of the Creator, then you have been born of the spirit and whoever has been born of the spirit has the power to overcome all doubt, and this is the victory that overcomes all uncertainty.

“Said the Prophet Isaiah, speaking of these times: ‘When the spirit is poured upon us from on high, then the work of righteousness will become peace, quietness, and assurance forever.’ And for all who truly believe these teachings, I will become surety for their reception into the eternal mercies and the everlasting life of the Creator’s realm. You, then, who hear this message and believe these teachings are the children of the Creator, and you have life everlasting; and the evidence to all the world that you have been born of the spirit is that you sincerely love one another.”

The throng of listeners remained for many hours with Jesus, asking questions and listening attentively to the comforting answers. Even the apostles were emboldened to preach about the new realm with more power and assurance. This experience at Jerusalem was a great inspiration to the twelve. It was their first contact with such enormous crowds, and they learned many valuable lessons which proved of great assistance in their later work.

6. The Visit with Nicodemus

One evening at the home of Flavius, Nicodemus, a wealthy and elderly member of the Jewish Sanhedrin, came to see Jesus. Nicodemus had heard much about the teachings of this Galilean, and went one afternoon to hear Jesus in the temple courts. Nicodemus would have gone often to hear Jesus teach, but feared to be seen by the people in attendance, for already many of the rulers of the Jews were opposed to Jesus so that no member of the Sanhedrin would want to be identified in any open manner with these teachings. Accordingly, Nicodemus had arranged with Andrew to see Jesus privately in the evening. Peter, James, and John were in Flavius’s garden when the interview began, but later they all went into the house where the discourse continued.

In receiving Nicodemus, Jesus showed no particular deference; there was no compromise or undue persuasiveness. The Master made no attempt to repulse this secretive caller, nor employ sarcasm. In all dealings with the distinguished visitor, Jesus was calm, earnest, and dignified. Nicodemus was not an

official delegate of the Sanhedrin, but came to see Jesus wholly because of a personal and sincere interest in the Master's teachings.

On being presented by Flavius, Nicodemus said: "Rabbi, we know that you are sent by the Creator, for no mere mortal could teach as you do. And I would like to know more about your teachings regarding the coming new realm."

Jesus answered: "Nicodemus, a person who is not born again cannot see the realm of the Creator." Then Nicodemus replied: "But how can people who are old be born again? They cannot enter a second time into the womb to be born."

Jesus said: "Nevertheless, those who are not born of the spirit cannot enter into the realm of the Creator. That which is born of the body is material, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit. But you should not marvel that I said you must be born again. When the wind blows, you hear the rustle of the leaves, but you do not see the wind — where it comes from or where it goes — and so it is with everyone born of the spirit. With mortal eyes you can see the manifestations of the spirit, but you cannot actually discern the spirit itself."

Nicodemus replied: "But I do not understand — how can that be?" And Jesus said: "It becomes the duty of those who know about the realities of the spirit to reveal these things to those who discern only the manifestations of the material world. But will you believe us if we tell you of spiritual truths? Do you have the courage, Nicodemus, to believe in one who has descended from the Creator?"

And Nicodemus said: "But how can I begin to lay hold on this spirit which is to remake me in preparation for entering into the Creator's realm?" Jesus answered: "Already the spirit of the Creator indwells you. If you would be led by this spirit, very soon you would begin to see with the eyes of the spirit, and then by the wholehearted choice of spirit guidance you would be born of the spirit since your only purpose in living would be to do the will of the Creator. And so finding yourself born of the spirit and happily in the realm of the Creator, you would begin to bear the abundant fruits of the spirit in your daily life."

Nicodemus was thoroughly sincere and was deeply impressed but went away bewildered. Nicodemus was accomplished in self-development, in self-restraint, and even in high moral qualities, being refined and altruistic, but did not know how to *submit* to the will of the divine Creator as a little child is willing to submit to the guidance and leading of a wise and loving parent, becoming in reality a child of the Creator, a progressive heir to the eternal realm.

But Nicodemus did summon faith enough to accept the new realm, faintly protesting when the Sanhedrin sought to condemn Jesus without a hearing; and with Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus later boldly acknowledged having faith and claimed the body of Jesus, even when most of the apostles had fled in fear from the scenes of their Master's final suffering and death.

7. The Lesson on the Family

After the busy period of teaching and personal work of Passover week in Jerusalem, Jesus spent the next Wednesday at Bethany with the apostles, resting. That afternoon, Thomas asked a question which elicited

a long and instructive answer. Thomas asked: “Master, on the day we were set apart as ambassadors of the new realm, you told us many things and instructed us regarding our personal mode of life, but what will we teach the multitude? How should these people live after the new realm comes? Will your disciples own slaves? Will your followers court poverty and shun property? Will mercy alone prevail so that we have no more law and justice?” Jesus and the twelve spent all afternoon and all that evening, after supper, discussing Thomas’s questions. For the purposes of this record we present the following summary of the Master’s instruction:

Jesus tried to first make plain to the apostles that the bestowal life was unique, and that they, the twelve, had been called to participate in this bestowal experience; and as such coworkers, they, too, must share in many of the special restrictions and obligations of the entire bestowal experience. There was a veiled intimation that Jesus was the only person who had ever lived on earth who could simultaneously see into the very heart of the Creator and into the very depths of a mortal’s soul.

Very plainly Jesus explained that the realm of the Creator was an evolutionary experience, beginning here on earth and progressing up through successive life stations to Paradise. In the course of the evening Jesus definitely promised to revisit this world in spiritual power at some future stage of its development.

Jesus next explained that the “new realm” idea was not the best way to illustrate mortals’ relation to the Creator; that such figures of speech were employed because the Jewish people were expecting the realm of the Messiah, and because John had preached in those terms. Jesus said: “The people of another age will better understand the new realm when it is presented in terms expressive of the family relationship — when humankind understands religion as the teaching of the parenthood of the Creator and the family of humanity.” Then the Master discoursed at some length on the earthly family as an illustration of the Creator’s family, restating the two fundamental laws of living: the first commandment of love for the parent, and the second commandment of mutual love among the children, to love your siblings as yourself. And then Jesus explained that such a quality of family affection would invariably manifest itself in unselfish and loving social service.

Then came the memorable discussion of the fundamental characteristics of family life and their application to the relationship between the Creator and mortals. Jesus stated that a true family is founded on the following seven facts:

1. *The fact of existence.* The relationships of nature and the phenomena of mortal likenesses are bound up in the family: Children inherit certain parental traits. The children take origin in the parents; personality existence depends on the act of the parent. The relationship of parent and child is inherent in all nature and pervades all living existences.

2. *Security and pleasure.* True parents take great pleasure in providing for the needs of their children. Many parents are not content with supplying the mere wants of their children but enjoy making provision for their pleasures also.

3. *Education and training.* Wise parents carefully plan for the education and adequate training of their children, who when young are thereby prepared for the greater responsibilities of later life.

4. *Discipline and restraint.* Farseeing parents also make provision for the necessary discipline, guidance, correction, and sometimes restraint of their young and immature offspring.

5. *Companionship and loyalty.* Affectionate parents hold an intimate and loving relationship with their children. They are always open to the children's petitions; they are always ready to share the children's hardships and assist them to overcome their difficulties. Parents are supremely interested in the progressive welfare of their progeny.

6. *Love and mercy.* A compassionate parent is freely forgiving; parents do not hold vengeful memories against their children. Parents are not like judges, enemies, or creditors. Real families are built on tolerance, patience, and forgiveness.

7. *Provision for the future.* Temporal parents like to leave an inheritance for their children. The family continues from one generation to another. Death only ends one generation and marks the beginning of another. Death terminates an individual life but not necessarily the family.

For hours the Master discussed the application of these features of family life to the relations of mortals, the earth children, to the Creator, the Paradise Parent, and concluded with: "This entire relationship of a child to the Parent I know in perfection, for all that you must attain of relationship to the Creator in the eternal future I have now already attained. I am prepared to ascend to the Creator so that in me the way is open still wider for all of you to see the Creator and, before you have finished the glorious progression, to become perfect, even as the Creator is perfect."

When the apostles heard these startling words, they recalled the pronouncements which John made at the time of Jesus' baptism, and later they also vividly recalled this experience in connection with their preaching and teaching subsequent to the Master's death and resurrection.

Jesus is a divine Being, one in the Universal Source's full confidence, having been with, and comprehending the Creator fully. Jesus had now lived an earth life to the full satisfaction of the Creator, and this incarnation had enabled Jesus to fully comprehend mortals. Jesus was the perfection of mortals and had attained just such perfection as all who survive are destined to attain. Jesus revealed a Creator of perfection to mortals and presented the perfected mortal child to the Creator.

Although Jesus discoursed for several hours, Thomas was not yet satisfied, saying: "But we do not find that the Creator always deals kindly and mercifully with us. Many times we grievously suffer on earth, and our prayers are not always answered. Where do we fail to grasp the meaning of your teaching?"

Jesus replied: "Thomas, how long before you will acquire the ability to listen with the ear of the spirit? How long will it be before you discern that this realm is a spiritual realm, and that the Creator is also a spiritual being? Do you not understand that I am teaching you as spiritual children in the spirit family of the Creator, of which the head is an infinite and eternal spirit? Will you not allow me to use the earth family as an illustration of divine relationships without so literally applying my teaching to material affairs? In your minds can you not separate the spiritual realities of the new realm from the material, social, economic, and political problems of the age? When I speak the language of the spirit, why do you insist on translating

my meaning into the language of the material just because I presume to employ commonplace and literal relationships for purposes of illustration? My children, I implore that you stop applying the teaching of the realm of the spirit to the sordid affairs of slavery, poverty, houses, and lands, and to the material problems of human equity and justice. These temporal matters are the concern of the people of this world, and while in a way they affect everyone, you have been called to represent me in the world, even as I represent the Creator. You are spiritual ambassadors of a spiritual realm, special representatives of the spirit Parent. By this time it should be possible for me to instruct you as full-grown adults of the spirit realm and not as children. Nevertheless, I love you and will bear with you, even to the very end of our association. And even then my spirit will go before you into all the world.”

8. In Southern Judea

By the end of April the opposition to Jesus among the Pharisees and Sadducees had become so pronounced that the Master and the apostles decided to leave Jerusalem for a while, going south to work in Bethlehem and Hebron. The entire month of May was spent in doing personal work in these cities and among the people of the surrounding villages. No public preaching was done on this trip, only house-to-house visitation. A part of this time, while the apostles taught and ministered to the sick, Jesus and Abner spent at Engedi, visiting the Nazarite colony. John the Baptist had come from this place, and Abner had been head of this group. Many of the Nazarite community became followers, but the majority of them refused to accept the idea that Jesus was a teacher sent from the Creator because Jesus did not teach fasting and other forms of self-denial.

The people living in this region did not know that Jesus had been born in Bethlehem. They always supposed the Master had been born at Nazareth, as did the vast majority of the disciples, but the twelve knew the facts.

This sojourn in the south of Judea was a restful and fruitful season of labor; many souls were added to the realm. By the first days of June the agitation against Jesus had quieted down in Jerusalem so that the Master and the apostles returned to instruct and comfort followers.

Although Jesus and the apostles spent the entire month of June in or near Jerusalem, they did no public teaching during this period. They lived for the most part in tents, which they pitched in a shaded park, or garden, known in that day as Gethsemane. This park was situated on the western slope of the Mount of Olives not far from the brook Kidron. The Sabbath weekends they usually spent with Lazarus, Martha and Mary at Bethany. Jesus entered within the walls of Jerusalem only a few times, but a large number of interested inquirers came out to Gethsemane. One Friday evening Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea ventured out to see Jesus but turned back through fear even after they were standing before the entrance to the Master’s tent. And, of course, they did not perceive that Jesus knew all about their doings.

When the rulers of the Jews learned that the group had returned to Jerusalem, they prepared to arrest Jesus; but when they observed that no public preaching was taking place, they concluded that Jesus had become frightened by their previous agitation and decided to allow the teaching to continue in this private manner without further molestation. And so affairs moved along quietly until the last days of June, when Simon, a member of the Sanhedrin, admitted to being a follower and publicly espoused the teachings of Jesus.

Immediately a new agitation for Jesus' apprehension sprang up and grew so strong that the Master decided to retire into the cities of Samaria and the Decapolis.

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Going Through Samaria

At the end of June, C.E. 27, because of the increasing opposition of the Jewish religious rulers, Jesus and the twelve left Jerusalem after sending their tents and meager personal effects to be stored at the home of Lazarus in Bethany. Going north into Samaria, they spent the Sabbath at Bethel. Here they preached for several days to the people who came from Gophna and Ephraim. A group of citizens from Arimathea and Thamna came to invite Jesus to visit their villages. The Master and the apostles spent more than two weeks teaching the Jews and Samaritans of this region, many of whom came from as far as Antipatris to hear the teachings.

The people of southern Samaria heard Jesus gladly, and the apostles, with the exception of Judas Iscariot, succeeded in overcoming much of their prejudice against the Samaritans. The last week of July Jesus and the apostles prepared to leave for the new Greek cities of Phasaelis and Archelais near the Jordan.

1. Preaching at Archelais

The first half of the month of August the apostolic party made its headquarters at the Greek cities of Archelais and Phasaelis, where they had their first experience preaching to practically exclusive gatherings of gentiles — Greeks, Romans, and Syrians — for few Jews dwelt in these two Greek towns. In contacting with these Roman citizens, the apostles encountered new difficulties in sharing the message of the coming new realm, and they met with new objections to the teachings of Jesus. At one of the many evening conferences with the apostles, Jesus listened attentively to these objections as the twelve repeated their experiences.

A question asked by Philip was typical of their difficulties. Philip said: “Master, these Greeks and Romans make light of our message, saying that such teachings are fit for only weaklings and slaves. They assert that the religion of the heathen is superior to our teaching because it inspires the acquirement of a strong, robust, and aggressive character. They imply that we would convert all people into enfeebled specimens of passive non-resisters who would soon perish from the face of the earth. They like you and freely admit that your teaching is ideal, but they will not take us seriously. They assert that your religion is not for this world; that people cannot live as you teach. What should we say to these gentiles?”

Jesus, after hearing similar objections presented by Thomas, Nathaniel, Simon Zelotes, and Matthew, said to the twelve:

“I have come into this world to do the will of the Creator and to reveal the Creator’s loving character to all humanity. That is my mission. And this one thing I will do, regardless of the misunderstanding of my teachings by Jews or gentiles of this day or of another generation. But you should not overlook the fact that even divine love has its severe disciplines. The love of parents for their children often impels the parents to restrain the unwise acts of their thoughtless offspring. The child does not always comprehend the wise and loving motives of the parents’ restraining discipline. But the Creator does rule a universe of universes by the compelling power of love. Love is the greatest of all spirit realities. Truth is a liberating revelation, but

love is the supreme relationship. And no matter what blunders others make in their world management of today, in an age to come the teachings I give to you will rule this very world. The ultimate goal of human progress is the reverent recognition of the parenthood of the Creator and the loving materialization of the family of humanity.

“But who told you that my teachings were intended only for slaves and weaklings? Do you, my chosen apostles, resemble weaklings? Did John look like a weakling? Do you observe that I am enslaved by fear? True, the poor and oppressed of this generation have the new doctrine preached to them. The religions of this world have neglected the poor, but the Creator is no respecter of persons. Besides, the poor of this day are the first to heed the call to repentance and acceptance of the new realm. The doctrine of this new realm is to be preached to all people — Jew and gentile, Greek and Roman, rich and poor, free and bond — and equally to young and old.

“Because the Creator is a Deity of love and delights in the practice of mercy, do not believe that the service of the new realm is to be one of monotonous ease. The Paradise ascent is the supreme adventure of all time, the rugged achievement of eternity. The service of the new realm on earth will call for all the courage that you and your coworkers can muster. Many of you will be put to death for your loyalty to these teachings. It is easy to die in the line of physical battle when your courage is strengthened by the presence of your allies, but it requires a higher and more profound form of human courage and devotion to calmly and all alone lay down your life for the love of a truth enshrined in your mortal heart.

“Today, others may taunt you about preaching nonresistance and living lives of nonviolence, but you are the first volunteers of a long line of sincere followers who will astonish everyone by their heroic devotion to these teachings. No armies of the world have ever displayed more courage and bravery than will be portrayed by you and your loyal successors who will go forth to all the world proclaiming the parenthood of the Creator and the family of humanity. The courage of the flesh is the lowest form of bravery. Mind bravery is a higher type of human courage, but the highest and supreme is uncompromising loyalty to the enlightened convictions of profound spiritual realities. And such courage constitutes the heroism of the Creator-knowing mortal. And you are all Creator-knowing people; you are the personal associates of the Child of the Creator.”

This was not all that Jesus said on that occasion, but it is the introduction of this address, and Jesus went on at great length in amplification and in illustration of this pronouncement. This was one of the most impassioned addresses which Jesus ever delivered to the twelve. The Master seldom spoke to the apostles with evident strong feeling, but this was one of those few occasions when Jesus spoke with manifest earnestness, accompanied by marked emotion.

The result on the public preaching and personal ministry of the apostles was immediate; from that very day their message took on a new note of courageous dominance. The twelve continued to acquire the spirit of positive aggression in the new teachings. From this day forward they did not occupy themselves so much with the preaching of the negative virtues and the passive injunctions of their Master’s many-sided doctrines.

2. Lesson on Self-Mastery

The Master was a perfected specimen of human self-control. When reviled, Jesus did not retaliate; when tormented, Jesus uttered no threats against the tormentors; when denounced by enemies, Jesus simply submitted to the righteous judgment of the Creator.

At one of the evening conferences, Andrew asked Jesus: “Are we to practice self-denial as John taught us, or are we to strive for the self-control of your teaching? Where does your teaching differ from that of John?” Jesus answered: “John taught you the way of righteousness in accordance with the light and laws of our ancestors, and that was the religion of self-examination and self-denial. But I come with a new message of self-forgetfulness and self-control. I show to you the way of life as revealed to me by the Creator.

“Those who rule themselves are greater than those who capture a city. Self-mastery is the measure of moral nature and the indicator of spiritual development. In the old order you fasted and prayed; as the new creature of the rebirth of the spirit, you are taught to have faith and rejoice. In the new realm you are to become new creatures; old things are to pass away; I show you how all things are to become new. And by your love for one another you are to convince the world that you have passed from bondage to liberty, from death into life everlasting.

“By the old way you seek to suppress, obey, and conform to the rules of living; by the new way you are first *transformed* by the Spirit of Truth and strengthened in your inner soul by the constant spiritual renewing of your mind, and so you are endowed with the power of the certain and joyous performance of the gracious, acceptable, and perfect will of the Creator. Do not forget — it is your personal faith in the exceedingly great and precious promises of the Creator that ensures your becoming partakers of the divine nature. And so by your faith and the spirit’s transformation, you become in reality the temples of the Creator, whose spirit actually dwells within you. If, then, the spirit dwells within you, you are no longer slaves of the material but free and liberated children of the spirit. The new law of the spirit endows you with the liberty of self-mastery in place of the old law of the fear of self-bondage and the slavery of self-denial.

“Many times, when you have done evil, you have thought to blame your acts on the influence of the evil one when in reality you have been led astray by your own natural tendencies. Did the Prophet Jeremiah not long ago tell you that the human heart is deceitful above all things and sometimes even desperately wicked? How easy it is for you to become self-deceived and fall into foolish fears, diverse lusts, enslaving pleasures, malice, envy, and even vengeful hatred!

“Eternal life is achieved by the regeneration of the spirit and not by the self-righteous deeds of the flesh. You are justified by faith and by grace, not by fear and self-denial, although the Creator’s children who have been born of the spirit are always *masters* of the self and all that pertains to material desires. When you know that you are saved by faith, you have real peace with the Creator. And all who follow in the way of this peace are destined to be sanctified to the eternal service of the ever-advancing children of the eternal Creator. From now on, it is not a duty but rather your exalted privilege to cleanse yourselves from all evils of mind and body while you seek for perfection in the love of the Creator.

“Your relationship with the Creator is grounded in faith, and you are to remain unmoved by fear. Your joy is born of trust in the divine word, and you will not be led to doubt the reality of the Creator’s love and mercy. It is the very goodness of the Creator that leads people into true and genuine acceptance. Your secret of the mastery of self is bound up with your faith in the indwelling spirit, which always works by love. Even this saving faith you do not have of yourselves; it also is the gift of the Creator. And if you are the children of this living faith, you are no longer the slaves of self but rather the triumphant masters of yourselves, the liberated children of the Creator.

“If, then, my children, you are born of the spirit, you are forever delivered from the self-conscious bondage of a life of self-denial and anxiety about material desires, and you are translated into the joyous realm of the spirit, where you spontaneously show forth the fruits of the spirit in your daily lives; and the fruits of the spirit are the essence of the highest type of enjoyable and ennobling self-control, even the heights of terrestrial mortal attainment — true self-mastery.”

3. Diversion and Relaxation

About this time a state of great nervous and emotional tension developed among the apostles and their immediate disciple associates. They had hardly become accustomed to living and working together, and were experiencing increasing difficulties in maintaining harmonious relations with John’s disciples. The contact with the gentiles and the Samaritans was a great trial to these Jews. And besides all this, the recent statements of Jesus had augmented their disturbed state of mind. Andrew was almost distraught; not knowing what to do next, and so Andrew went to the Master. Jesus listened to the apostolic chief relate these concerns and said: “Andrew, you cannot talk people out of their concerns when they reach such a stage of involvement, and when so many persons with strong feelings are concerned. I cannot do what you ask of me — I will not participate in these personal social difficulties — but I will join you in the enjoyment of a three-day period of rest and relaxation. Go to the others and announce that all of you are to go with me up on Mount Sartaba, where I would like to rest for a day or two.

“Now you should go to each of the others privately, saying: ‘The Master wants us to go apart for a while to rest and relax. Since we all have recently experienced much stress of spirit and mind, I suggest that no mention be made of our trials and troubles while on this holiday. Can I depend on you to co-operate with me in this matter?’ In this way privately and personally approach each of them.” And Andrew did as the Master had instructed.

This was a marvelous occasion in the experience of each of them; they never forgot the day going up the mountain. Throughout the entire trip hardly a word was said about their troubles. When reaching the top of the mountain, Jesus seated them in a circle and said: “My friends, you must all learn the value of rest and relaxation. You must realize that the best method of solving some entangled problems is to forget them for a time. Then when you go back fresh from your rest or worship, you are able to address your troubles with a clearer head and a steadier hand, not to mention a more resolute heart. Again, many times your problem is found to have shrunk in size and proportions while you have been resting your mind and body.”

The next day Jesus assigned to each of the twelve a topic for discussion. The whole day was devoted to reminiscences and to talking over matters not related to their religious work. They were momentarily

shocked when Jesus even neglected to give thanks — verbally — when breaking bread for their lunch. This was the first time they had ever observed Jesus to neglect such formalities.

When they went up the mountain, Andrew's head was full of problems. John was inordinately perplexed. James was grievously troubled. Matthew was hard pressed for funds since they had been living among the gentiles. Peter was overwrought and had recently been more temperamental than usual. Judas was suffering from a periodic attack of sensitiveness and selfishness. Simon was unusually upset by trying to reconcile patriotism with the love of the family of humanity. Philip was more and more confused by the way things were going. Nathaniel had been less humorous since they had come in contact with the gentile populations, and Thomas was in the midst of a severe time of depression. Only the twins were normal and unperturbed. All of them were exceedingly challenged about how to get along peaceably with John's disciples.

The third day, when they started down the mountain and back to their camp, a great change had come over them. They had made the important discovery that many human difficulties are in reality nonexistent, that many pressing troubles are the creations of exaggerated fear and the offspring of augmented apprehension. They had learned that all such situations are best handled by being forgotten; by going off they had left such problems to solve themselves.

Their return from this holiday marked the beginning of a period of greatly improved relations with the followers of John. Many of the twelve gave way to joy when they noted the changed state of everybody's mind and observed the freedom from nervous irritability which had come to them as a result of their three days' vacation from the routine duties of life. There is always a danger that monotony of human contact will greatly multiply difficulties and magnify stress.

Not many of the gentiles in the two Greek cities of Archelais and Phasaelis believed in the teachings, but the twelve apostles gained a valuable experience in this, their first extensive work with exclusively gentile populations. On a Monday morning, about the middle of the month, Jesus said to Andrew: "We go into Samaria." And they set out at once for the city of Sychar, near Jacob's well.

4. The Jews and the Samaritans

For more than six hundred years the Jews of Judea, and later on those of Galilee also, had been hostile to the Samaritans. This ill feeling between the Jews and the Samaritans came about in this way: About seven hundred years B.C.E., Sargon, ruler of Assyria, in subduing a revolt in central Palestine, carried away and placed into captivity over twenty-five thousand Jews of the northern territory of Israel and installed in their place an almost equal number of the descendants of the Cuthites, Sepharvites, and the Hamathites. Later on, Ashurbanipal sent still other colonies to dwell in Samaria.

The religious hostility between the Jews and the Samaritans dated from the return of the former from the Babylonian captivity, when the Samaritans worked to prevent the rebuilding of Jerusalem. Later they offended the Jews by extending friendly assistance to the armies of Alexander. In return for their friendship Alexander gave the Samaritans permission to build a temple on Mount Gerizim, where they worshiped Yahweh and their tribal gods and offered sacrifices much after the order of the temple services at Jerusalem. At least they continued this worship up to the time of the Maccabees, when John Hyrcanus destroyed their

temple on Mount Gerizim. The Apostle Philip, while working with the Samaritans after the death of Jesus, held many meetings on the site of this old Samaritan temple.

The antagonisms between the Jews and the Samaritans were time-honored and historic; increasingly since the days of Alexander they had had no dealings with each other. The twelve apostles were not averse to preaching in the Greek and other gentile cities of the Decapolis and Syria, but it was a severe test of their loyalty to the Master when they were directed to go into Samaria. But in the year and more they had been with Jesus, they had developed a form of personal loyalty which transcended even their faith in the teachings and their prejudices against the Samaritans.

5. At the Well

When the Master and the twelve arrived at Jacob's well, Jesus, being weary from the journey, stayed by the well while Philip took the apostles to assist in bringing food and tents from Sychar, because they wanted to stay in this vicinity for a while. Peter and the Zebedees would have remained, but Jesus requested that they go with the others, saying: "Have no fear for me; these Samaritans will be friendly; only the Jews seek to harm us." And it was almost six o'clock on this summer's evening when Jesus sat down by the well to wait for the return of the apostles.

The water of Jacob's well was less mineral than that from the wells of Sychar and was therefore much valued for drinking purposes. Jesus was thirsty, but there was no way of getting water from the well. When, therefore, a person from Sychar came up with a water pitcher and prepared to draw from the well, Jesus said, "May I have a drink of water?" This person of Samaria knew Jesus was a Jew by appearance and dress, and surmised that Jesus was a Galilean Jew. The name of this person was Nalda, who was surprised to have a Jew ask for water, for it was not deemed proper in those days for a self-respecting Jew to speak to a Samaritan in public. Therefore, Nalda asked Jesus, "How is it that you, being a Jew, ask for a drink of me, a Samaritan?" Jesus answered: "I have asked you for water, but if you could only understand, you would ask me for a drink of the living water." Then Nalda said: "But you have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep; how do you have this living water? Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob who gave us this well, and who drank here also?"

Jesus replied: "Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water of the living spirit will never thirst. And this living water will become a well of refreshment springing up even to life eternal." Nalda then said: "I would like to have this water so I do not have to come all this way to the well. Besides, anything which a Samaritan could receive from such a commendable Jew would be a pleasure."

Nalda did not know how to take Jesus' willingness to talk, seeing in the Master's face the countenance of an upright and holy person.

Nalda was just about to seek direct and personal help from the Master but did what so many have done before and since — dodged the issue of personal salvation by turning to the discussion of theology and philosophy, quickly turning the conversation to a theological controversy. Pointing over to Mount Gerizim,

Nalda continued: “Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, and yet *you* would say that Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship; which, then, is the right place to worship Yahweh?”

Jesus perceived the attempt of Nalda’s soul to avoid direct and searching contact with its Maker, but also saw that there was present a desire to know the better way of life. After all, there was in Nalda’s heart a thirst for the truth; therefore Jesus said: “Let me say to you that the day is soon coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Creator. But now you worship that which you do not know, a mixture of the religion of many pagan gods and gentile philosophies. The Jews at least know whom they worship; they have removed all confusion by concentrating their worship on Yahweh. But you should believe me when I say that the time will soon come — even now is — when all sincere worshipers will worship the Creator in spirit and in truth, for it is just such worshipers that the Creator seeks. The Creator is spirit, and must be worshipped in spirit and in truth. Your salvation does not come from knowing how others should worship or where, but by receiving into your own heart this living water which I am offering you even now.”

But Nalda would make one more effort, once more resorting to questions of general religion, saying: “Yes, I know that John has preached about the coming of the Deliverer, who will declare all things to us.” Jesus, interrupting Nalda, said with startling assurance, “I am this Deliverer.”

This was the first direct, positive, and undisguised pronouncement of divine nature which Jesus had made on earth; and it was made to a Samaritan, a human soul who desired the truth and desired it sincerely and wholeheartedly, and that was enough.

As Nalda was about to voice a real and personal longing for better things and a more noble way of living, the twelve apostles returned from Sychar, and coming on this scene of Jesus’ talking so intimately with this Samaritan, they were more than astonished. They quickly deposited their supplies and drew aside, no one daring to speak, while Jesus said to Nalda: “Go your way. From now on you will live a new life. You have received the living water, and a new joy will spring up within your soul, and you will become a child of the Most High.” And Nalda, perceiving the disapproval of the apostles, fled to the city.

Entering the city, Nalda proclaimed to everyone: “Go out to Jacob’s well and go quickly, for there you will see a person who spoke of the living water. Can this be the Deliverer?” And before the sun went down, a great crowd had assembled at Jacob’s well to hear Jesus. And the Master talked to them more about the water of life, the gift of the indwelling spirit.

The apostles never ceased to be shocked by Jesus’ willingness to talk with people of all kinds. It was very difficult for Jesus to teach the apostles that these people have souls which can choose the Creator as their Parent, thereby becoming children of the Creator and candidates for life everlasting. Twenty centuries later many people show the same unwillingness to grasp the Master’s teachings. Even the Christian religion has been persistently built up around the fact of the death of Christ instead of around the truth of the life of Jesus. The world should be more concerned with this happy and Creator-revealing life than with Jesus’ tragic and sorrowful death.

6. The Samaritan Revival

On the evening that Nalda drew the crowd out from Sychar to see Jesus, the twelve had just returned with food, and they requested that Jesus eat with them instead of talking to the people, since they had been without food all day and were hungry. But Jesus knew that it would soon be dark, and was determined to talk to the people before sending them away. When Andrew sought to persuade Jesus to eat a bite before speaking to the crowd, Jesus said, "I have meat to eat that you do not know about." When the apostles heard this, they said among themselves: "Has any one brought Jesus anything to eat? Can it be that Nalda brought food as well as drink?" Jesus, hearing them talking among themselves and before speaking to the people, turned aside and said to the twelve: "My meat is to do the will of the Creator who sent me and to accomplish the Creator's work. You should no longer say it is such and such a time until the harvest. Look at these people coming out from a Samaritan city to hear us. I tell you the fields are already ripe for the harvest, consequently the sowers and the reapers rejoice together. For the saying is true: 'One plants and another harvests.' I am now sending you to gather that which you have not planted; others have planted, and you are about to gain from their labor." And Jesus said this in reference to the preaching of John the Baptist.

Jesus and the apostles went into Sychar and preached two days before they established their camp on Mount Gerizim. And many of the dwellers in Sychar believed the teachings and requested baptism, but the apostles of Jesus did not yet baptize.

The first night of the camp on Mount Gerizim the apostles expected that Jesus would rebuke them for their attitude toward the person at Jacob's well, but Jesus made no reference to the matter, instead giving them that memorable talk on "The realities which are central in the realm of the Creator." In any religion it is very easy to allow values to become disproportionate and to permit facts to occupy the place of truth in one's theology. The fact of the cross became the very center of subsequent Christianity; but it is not the central truth of the religion which may be derived from the life and teachings of Jesus.

The theme of the teaching on Mount Gerizim was: Wanting all people to see the Creator as a Parent-friend just as Jesus is a friend. And again and again Jesus impressed on them that love is the greatest relationship in the world — in the universe — just as truth is the greatest pronouncement of the observation of these divine relationships.

Jesus spoke so openly to the Samaritans because it was safe to do so, while also knowing that it would not be possible to visit the heart of Samaria again.

Jesus and the twelve camped on Mount Gerizim until the end of August. They preached the parenthood of the Creator to the Samaritans in the cities by day and spent the nights at the camp. The work which Jesus and the twelve did in these Samaritan cities yielded many souls and did much to prepare the way for the marvelous work of Philip in these regions after Jesus' death and resurrection, subsequent to the dispersion of the apostles to the ends of the earth by the bitter persecution of followers at Jerusalem.

7. Teachings About Prayer and Worship

At the evening conferences on Mount Gerizim, Jesus taught many great truths, and in particular laid emphasis on the following:

True religion is the act of an individual soul in its self-conscious relations with the Creator; organized religion is the attempt to *socialize* the worship of individual religionists.

Worship — contemplation of the spiritual — must alternate with service, contact with material reality. Work should alternate with play; religion should be balanced by humor. Profound philosophy should be relieved by rhythmic poetry. The strain of living — the time tension of personality — should be relaxed by the restfulness of worship. The feelings of insecurity arising from the fear of personality isolation in the universe should be antidoted by the faith contemplation of the Creator and by the attempted realization of the Supreme.

Prayer is designed to make people less thinking but more *realizing*; it is not designed to increase knowledge but rather to expand insight.

Worship is intended to anticipate the better life ahead and then to reflect these new spiritual significances back onto the life which now is. Prayer is spiritually sustaining, but worship is divinely creative.

Worship is the technique of looking to the *One* for the inspiration of service to the *many*. Worship is the yardstick which measures the extent of the soul's detachment from the material universe and its simultaneous and secure attachment to the spiritual realities of all creation.

Prayer is self-reminding — sublime thinking; worship is self-forgetting — super thinking. Worship is effortless attention, true and ideal soul rest, a form of restful spiritual exertion.

Worship is the act of a part identifying itself with the Whole; the finite with the Infinite; the child with the Parent; time in the act of striking step with eternity. Worship is the act of the child's personal communion with the divine Parent, the assumption of refreshing, creative, familial, and romantic attitudes by the human soul-spirit.

Although the apostles grasped only a few of these teachings at the camp, other worlds did, and other generations on earth will.

Paper 144

At Gilboa and in the Decapolis

September and October were spent in retirement at a secluded camp on the slopes of Mount Gilboa. Jesus spent the month of September alone here with the apostles, teaching and instructing them in the truths of the realm of the Creator.

There were a number of reasons why Jesus and the apostles were in retirement at this time on the borders of Samaria and the Decapolis. The Jerusalem religious rulers were very antagonistic; Herod Antipas still held John in prison, continuing to entertain suspicions that John and Jesus were in some way associated. These conditions made it unwise to plan for aggressive work in either Judea or Galilee. There was a third reason: the slowly augmenting tension between the leaders of John's disciples and the apostles of Jesus, which grew worse with the increasing number of followers.

Jesus knew that the days of the preliminary work of teaching and preaching were about over, and that the next move involved the beginning of the full and final effort of the bestowal mission, not wanting the launching of this undertaking to be in any manner either trying or embarrassing to John the Baptist. Jesus had therefore decided to spend some time in retirement rehearsing the apostles and then to do some quiet work in the cities of the Decapolis until John should be either executed or released to join them in a united effort.

1. The Gilboa Encampment

As time passed, the twelve became more devoted to Jesus and increasingly committed to the work. Their devotion was in large part a matter of personal loyalty. They did not grasp Jesus' many-sided teaching and they did not fully comprehend the nature of Jesus or the significance of the bestowal.

Jesus made it plain to the apostles that they were in retirement for three reasons:

1. To confirm their understanding of, and faith in, the doctrine of the new realm.
2. To allow opposition to their work in both Judea and Galilee to quiet down.
3. To await the fate of John the Baptist.

While they waited on Gilboa, Jesus told personal stories about early life experiences, also revealing something of what happened in the hills during the forty days immediately after the baptism. And Jesus directly charged the twelve that they should tell no one about these experiences until after the end of the bestowal mission.

During these September weeks they rested, visited, recounted their experiences since Jesus first called them to service, and engaged in an earnest effort to co-ordinate what the Master had so far taught them. They all sensed that this would be their last opportunity for prolonged rest. They realized that their next public effort in either Judea or Galilee would mark the beginning of the final proclamation of the coming new age, but

they had little or no settled idea as to what the new realm would be when it came. John and Andrew thought it had already come; Peter and James believed that it was yet to come; Nathaniel and Thomas frankly confessed that they were puzzled; Matthew, Philip, and Simon Zelotes were uncertain and confused; the twins were blissfully ignorant of the controversy; and Judas Iscariot was silent and noncommittal.

Much of this time Jesus was alone on the mountain near the camp, occasionally taking Peter, James, or John, but more often going off to pray or commune alone. Subsequent to the baptism and the forty days in the Perea hills, it is hardly proper to speak of these periods of communion with the Creator as prayer, nor is it consistent to speak of Jesus as worshiping, but it is altogether correct to allude to these occasions as personal communion with the Creator.

The central theme of the discussions throughout the entire month of September was prayer and worship. After they had discussed worship for some days, Jesus finally delivered a memorable discourse on prayer in answer to Thomas's request: "Master, teach us how to pray."

John had taught a prayer for eternal life in the coming new realm. Although Jesus never forbade the use of John's form of prayer, the apostles very early perceived that their Master did not fully approve of the practice of uttering set and formal prayers. Nevertheless, followers constantly requested to be taught how to pray. The twelve longed to know what form of petition Jesus would approve. And it was chiefly because of this need for some simple petition for the common people that Jesus at this time consented, in answer to Thomas's request, to teach them a suggestive form of prayer. Jesus gave this lesson one afternoon in the third week of their sojourn on Mount Gilboa.

2. The Discourse on Prayer

"John indeed taught you a simple form of prayer: 'Creator, cleanse us from sin, show us your glory, reveal your love, and let your spirit sanctify our hearts forevermore, Amen!' John taught this prayer so that you might have something to teach the multitude, but did not intend that you should use such a set and formal petition as the expression of your own souls in prayer.

"Prayer is entirely a personal and spontaneous expression of the attitude of the soul toward the spirit; prayer should be the communion and the expression of relationship. Prayer, when inspired by the spirit, leads to co-operative spiritual progress. The ideal prayer is a form of spiritual communion which leads to intelligent worship. True praying is the sincere attitude of reaching to the spirit realm for the attainment of your ideals.

"Prayer is the breath of the soul and should lead you to be persistent in your attempt to ascertain the Creator's will. If any one of you has a neighbor to whom you say: 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread because a friend of mine on a journey has come to see me and is hungry, and if your neighbor answers, 'Do not trouble me, for the door is now shut and the children and I are in bed; so I cannot rise and give you bread,' you will persist, explaining that your friend hungers, and that you have no food to offer. I say to you, your neighbor may not rise and give you bread out of friendship, but will get up and give you as many loaves as you need because of your importunity. If, then, persistence will win favors even from mortals, how much more will your persistence in the spirit win the bread of life for you from the willing hands of the Creator. Again I say to you: Ask and it will be given you; seek and you will find; knock and it will be

opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; everyone who seeks finds; and to one who knocks, the door of eternal life will be opened.

“Whoever is a parent, if a child asks unwisely, would hesitate to give in accordance with parental wisdom rather than in the terms of the child’s faulty petition? If the child needs food, will you give a stone just because it is unwisely requested? If your child needs a fish, will you give a water snake just because it may chance to come up in the net with the fish and the child foolishly asks for the snake? If you, then, being mortal and finite, know how to answer prayer and give good and appropriate gifts to your children, how much more will your Creator Parent give the spirit and many additional blessings to those who ask? People should always pray and not become discouraged.

“Let me tell you the story of a certain judge who lived in a wicked city. This judge did not fear Yahweh nor have respect for others. Now there was a needy person in that city who came repeatedly to this unjust judge, saying, ‘Protect me from my adversary.’ For some time the judge would not consent, but presently thought: ‘Though I do not fear Yahweh nor have regard for others, yet because this person does not cease to bother me, I will agree in order to avoid these persistent visits.’ These stories I tell you to encourage you to persist in praying and not to intimate that your petitions will change the Creator. Your persistence, however, is not to win favor but to change your earth attitude and to enlarge your soul’s capacity for spirit receptivity.

“But when you pray, you exercise so little faith. Genuine faith will remove mountains of material difficulty which may happen to lie in the path of soul expansion and spiritual progress.”

3. The Master’s Prayer

But the apostles were not yet satisfied; they wanted Jesus to give them a model prayer which they could teach the new disciples. After listening to this discourse on prayer, James Zebedee said: “Very good, Master, but we do not desire a form of prayer for ourselves so much as for the newer followers who so frequently ask us, ‘Teach us how acceptably to pray to the Creator.’”

When James had finished speaking, Jesus said: “If, then, you still desire such a prayer, I would present the one which I taught my family in Nazareth”:

Our Creator who is in Paradise,

Hallowed be your name.

Your dominion come; your will be done

On earth as it is in Paradise.

Give us this day our bread for tomorrow;

Refresh our souls with the water of life.

And forgive us every one our debts

As we also have forgiven our debtors.

Save us in temptation, deliver us from evil,

And increasingly make us perfect like yourself.

It is not strange that the apostles wanted Jesus to teach them a model prayer. John the Baptist had taught several prayers; all great teachers had formulated prayers for their pupils. The religious teachers of the Jews had some twenty-five or thirty set prayers which they recited in the synagogues and even on the street corners. Jesus was particularly averse to praying in public. Up to this time the twelve had heard Jesus pray only a few times. They observed Jesus spending entire nights at prayer or worship, and they were very curious to know the manner or form of those petitions. They were really hard pressed to know what to answer the multitudes when they asked to be taught how to pray as John had taught.

Jesus taught the twelve to always pray in secret; to go off by themselves in the quiet surroundings of nature or to go into their rooms and shut the doors when they engaged in prayer.

After Jesus' death and ascension it became the practice of many followers to add to this prayer. Still later on, two lines were lost in copying.

Jesus gave the apostles the prayer in collective form as they had prayed it in the Nazareth home, never teaching a formal personal prayer, only group, family, or social petitions, and never volunteering to do that.

Jesus taught that effective prayer must be:

1. Unselfish — not only for oneself.
2. Believing — according to faith.
3. Sincere — honest of heart.
4. Intelligent — according to light.
5. Trustful — in submission to the Creator's all-wise will.

When Jesus spent whole nights on the mountain in prayer, it was mainly for the followers, particularly for the twelve. The Master engaged very little in personal prayer, but spent much time in understanding communion with the Creator.

4. More About Prayer

For days after the discourse on prayer the apostles continued to ask the Master questions regarding this all-important and worshipful practice. Jesus' instruction to the apostles during these days, regarding prayer and worship, may be summarized and restated as follows:

The earnest and longing repetition of any prayer, when such is the sincere expression of a child of the Creator and is uttered in faith, no matter how ill-advised or impossible of direct answer, never fails to expand the soul's capacity for spiritual receptivity.

In all praying, remember that relationship with the Creator is a *gift*. No child needs to *earn* this relationship. The earth child comes into being by the will of its parents. The child of the Creator comes into grace and the new life of the spirit by the will of the Creator. Therefore the relationship with the Creator — eternal life — must be *received* as by a little child. You earn righteousness — progressive character development — but you receive eternal life by grace and through faith.

Prayer led Jesus up to super communion with the Supreme Rulers of the universe of universes. Prayer will lead the mortals of earth up to the communion of true worship. The soul's spiritual capacity for receptivity determines the quantity of blessings which can be personally appropriated and consciously realized as an answer to prayer.

Prayer and its associated worship is a technique of detachment from the daily routine of life, from the monotonous grind of material existence. It is an avenue of approach to spiritualized self-realization and individuality of intellectual and religious attainment.

Prayer is an antidote for harmful introspection. At least, prayer as the Master taught it is a beneficent ministry to the soul. Jesus consistently employed the beneficial influence of praying for others. The Master usually prayed in the plural, not in the singular. Only in great crises did Jesus ever engage in personal petitions.

Prayer is the breath of the spirit life in the midst of material civilization. Worship is salvation for the pleasure-seeking generations of mortals.

As prayer may be compared to recharging the spiritual batteries of the soul, so worship may be compared to the act of tuning in the soul to catch the universe broadcasts of the infinite spirit of the Universal Source.

Prayer is the sincere and longing look of the child to its spirit Parent; it is a psychologic process of exchanging the human will for the divine will. Prayer is a part of the divine plan for changing that which is, into that which ought to be.

One of the reasons why Peter, James, and John, who so often accompanied Jesus on long night vigils, never heard Jesus pray, was because their Master so rarely uttered prayers as spoken words. Practically all of Jesus' praying was done in the spirit and in the heart — silently.

Of all the apostles, Peter and James came the nearest to comprehending the Master's teaching about prayer and worship.

5. Other Forms of Prayer

From time to time, Jesus brought to the notice of the apostles several additional forms of prayer, but did this only in illustration of other matters, and enjoined that these "parable prayers" should not be taught to

the multitudes. Many of them were from other inhabited planets, but Jesus did not reveal this fact to the twelve. Among these prayers were the following:

Our Creator in whom consist the universe realms,
Uplifted be your name and all-glorious your character.
Your presence encompasses us, and your glory is manifested
Imperfectly through us as it is in perfection shown on high.
Give us this day the vivifying forces of light,
And let us not stray into the evil bypaths of our imagination,
For yours is the glorious indwelling, the everlasting power,
And to us, the eternal gift of infinite love.
Even so, and everlastingly true.

Our creative Parent, who is in the center of the universe,
Bestow upon us your nature and give to us your character.
Make us children of yours by grace
And glorify your name through our eternal achievement.
Your adjusting and controlling spirit give to live and dwell within us
That we may do your will on this sphere as angels do your bidding in light.
Sustain us this day in our progress along the path of truth.
Deliver us from inertia, evil, and all sinful transgression.
Be patient with us as we show loving-kindness to others.
Shed abroad the spirit of your mercy in our creature hearts.
Lead us by your own hand, step by step, through the uncertain maze of life,

And when our end shall come, receive our faithful spirits.

Even so, not our desires but your will be done.

Our perfect and righteous heavenly Parent,

This day guide and direct our journey.

Sanctify our steps and co-ordinate our thoughts.

Ever lead us in the ways of eternal progress.

Fill us with wisdom to the fullness of power

And vitalize us with your infinite energy.

Inspire us with the divine consciousness of

The presence and guidance of the seraphic hosts.

Guide us ever upward in the pathway of light;

Justify us fully in the day of the great judgment.

Make us like yourself in eternal glory

And receive us into your endless service on high.

Our Creator who is in the mystery,

Reveal to us your holy character.

Give your children on earth this day

To see the way, the light, and the truth.

Show us the pathway of eternal progress

And give us the will to walk therein.

Establish within us your divine rule

And thereby bestow upon us the full mastery of self.

Let us not stray into paths of darkness and death;

Lead us everlastingly beside the waters of life.

Hear these our prayers for your own sake;

Be pleased to make us more and more like yourself.

At the end,

Receive us into Paradise.

Even so, not our will but yours be done.

Glorious Creator Parent,

Loyal would we be to your divine nature.

Your own self to live again in and through us

By the gift and bestowal of your divine spirit,

Thus reproducing you imperfectly in this sphere

As you are perfectly and majestically shown on high.

Give us day by day your sweet ministry

And lead us moment by moment in the pathway of loving service.

Be you ever and unfailingly patient with us

Even as we show forth your patience to our children.

Give us the divine wisdom that does all things well

And the infinite love that is gracious to every creature.

Bestow upon us your patience and loving-kindness

That our charity may enfold the weak of the realm.

And when our career is finished, make it an honor to your name,
A pleasure to your good spirit, and a satisfaction to our soul helpers.
Not as we wish, our loving Parent, but as you desire the eternal good of your mortal children,
Even so may it be.

Our all-faithful Source and all-powerful Center,
Reverent and holy be your name.
Your bounties and your blessings have descended upon us,
Thus empowering us to perform your will and execute your bidding.
Give us moment by moment the sustenance of the tree of life;
Refresh us day by day with the living waters of the river thereof.
Step by step lead us out of darkness and into the divine light.
Renew our minds by the transformations of the indwelling spirit,
And when the mortal end shall finally come upon us,
Receive us to yourself and send us forth in eternity.
Crown us with celestial diadems of fruitful service,
And we will glorify the Eternal Trinity.
Even so, throughout a universe without end.

Our Creator who dwells in the secret places of the universe,
Honored be your name, revered your mercy, and respected your judgment.
Let the sun of righteousness shine upon us at noontime,
While we beseech you to guide our wayward steps in the twilight.

Lead us in the ways of your own choosing
 And forsake us not when the path is hard and the hours are dark.
 Forget us not as we so often neglect and forget you.
 But be you merciful and love us as we desire to love you.
 Look down upon us in kindness and forgive us in mercy
 As we in justice forgive those who distress and injure us.
 May the love, devotion, and bestowal of the majestic Paradise Beings
 Make available life everlasting with your endless mercy and love.
 May the Creator of universes bestow upon us the full measure of the spirit;
 Give us grace to yield to the leading of this spirit.
 By the loving ministry of devoted seraphic hosts
 May the Spirit guide and lead us to the end of the age.
 Make us ever and increasingly like yourself
 And at our end receive us into the eternal Paradise embrace.
 Even so, in the name of the bestowal Being
 And for the honor and glory of the Supreme.

Though the apostles were not at liberty to present these prayer lessons in their public teachings, they profited much from all of these revelations in their personal religious experiences. Jesus utilized these and other prayer models as illustrations in connection with the intimate instruction of the twelve, and specific permission has been granted for transcribing these seven specimen prayers into this record.

6. Conference with John's Apostles

Around the first of October, Philip and some of the other apostles were in a near-by village buying food when they met some of the apostles of John the Baptist. As a result of this chance meeting in the market place a three weeks' conference at the Gilboa camp between the apostles of Jesus and the apostles of John came about, for John had recently appointed twelve leaders to be apostles, following the precedent of Jesus. John had done this in response to the urging of Abner, the chief of the loyal supporters. Jesus was present at the Gilboa camp throughout the first week of this joint conference but not during the last two weeks.

By the beginning of the second week of this month, Abner had assembled all of John's apostles at the Gilboa camp and was prepared to go into council with the apostles of Jesus. For three weeks these twenty-four were in session three times a day and for six days each week. The first week Jesus mingled with them between their morning, afternoon, and evening sessions. They wanted the Master to meet with them and preside over their joint deliberations, but Jesus steadfastly refused to participate in their discussions, though consenting to speak to them on three occasions. These talks to the twenty-four were on sympathy, co-operation, and tolerance.

Andrew and Abner alternated in presiding over these joint meetings of the two apostolic groups. This group had many difficulties to discuss and numerous problems to solve. Again and again they would take their troubles to Jesus, who only said : "I am concerned only with your personal and purely religious problems. I am the representative of the Creator to the *individual*, not to the group. If you are in personal difficulty in your relations with the Creator, come to me, and I will hear you and counsel you in the solution of your problem. But when you enter into the co-ordination of divergent human interpretations of religious questions and on the socialization of religion, you are destined to solve all such problems by your own decisions. Although, I am always sympathetic and interested, and when you arrive at your conclusions touching these matters of nonspiritual import, provided you are all agreed, then I pledge in advance my full approval and co-operation. And now, in order to leave you unhampered in your deliberations, I am leaving you for two weeks. Do not be anxious about me, for I will return to you. I will be about the Creator's business, for we have other realms besides this one."

After speaking, Jesus went down the mountainside and was not seen for two full weeks. It was some time before the twenty-four could settle down to the serious consideration of their problems, they were so disconcerted by the absence of the Master. However, within a week they were again in the heart of their discussions, and they could not go to Jesus for help.

The first item the group agreed on was the adoption of the prayer which Jesus had so recently taught them. It was unanimously voted to accept this prayer as the one to be taught by both groups of apostles.

They next decided that, as long as John lived, whether in prison or out, both groups of twelve apostles would go on with their work, and that joint meetings for one week would be held every three months at places to be agreed on from time to time.

But the most serious of all their problems was the question of baptism. Their difficulties were all the more aggravated because Jesus had refused to make any pronouncement on the subject. They finally agreed: As long as John lived, or until they might jointly modify this decision, only the apostles of John would baptize, and only the apostles of Jesus would finally instruct the new disciples. Accordingly, from that time until after the death of John, two of the apostles of John accompanied Jesus' apostles in order to baptize, for the joint council had unanimously voted that baptism was to become the initial step in the outward alliance with the affairs of the new realm.

It was next agreed, in case of the death of John, that the apostles of John would become followers of Jesus and that they would no longer baptize unless authorized by Jesus or Jesus' apostles.

And then was it voted that, in case of John's death, the apostles of Jesus would begin to baptize with water as the emblem of the baptism of the divine Spirit. Whether or not *repentance* should be attached to the preaching of baptism was left optional; no decision was made binding on the group. John's apostles preached, "Repent and be baptized." Jesus' apostles proclaimed, "Believe and be baptized."

And this is the story of the first attempt of Jesus' followers to co-ordinate divergent efforts, compose differences of opinion, organize group undertakings, legislate on outward observances, and socialize personal religious practices.

Many other minor matters were considered and their solutions unanimously agreed on. These twenty-four had a truly remarkable experience during these two weeks when they were compelled to face problems and compose difficulties without Jesus. They learned to differ, to debate, to contend, to pray, and to compromise, and throughout it all to remain sympathetic with other people's viewpoints and to maintain at least some degree of tolerance for honest opinions.

On the afternoon of their final discussion of financial questions, Jesus returned, heard about their deliberations, listened to their decisions, and said: "These, then, are your conclusions, and I will help you each to carry out the spirit of your united decisions."

Two and a half months from this time John was executed, and throughout this period the apostles of John remained with Jesus and the twelve. They all worked together and baptized during this time in the cities of the Decapolis. The Gilboa camp was broken up on November 2, C.E. 27.

7. In the Decapolis Cities

Throughout the months of November and December, Jesus and the twenty-four worked quietly in the Greek cities of the Decapolis, chiefly in Scythopolis, Gerasa, Abila, and Gadara. This was really the end of that preliminary period of taking over John's work and organization. The socialized religion of a new revelation always pays the price of compromise with the established forms and usages of the preceding religion which it seeks to salvage. Baptism was the price which the followers of Jesus paid in order to carry with them, as a socialized religious group, the followers of John the Baptist. John's followers, in joining Jesus' followers, gave up just about everything except water baptism.

Jesus did little public teaching on this mission to the cities of the Decapolis, spending considerable time teaching the twenty-four and having many special sessions with John's twelve apostles. In time they became more understanding as to why Jesus did not go to visit John in prison and made no effort to secure John's release. But they never could understand why Jesus did no marvelous works or refused to produce outward signs of divine authority. Before coming to the Gilboa camp, they had believed in Jesus mostly because of John's testimony, but soon they were beginning to believe as a result of their own contact with the Master.

For these two months the group worked most of the time in pairs, one of Jesus' apostles going out with one of John's. The apostles of John baptized, the apostles of Jesus instructed, while they both preached the doctrine of the new age as they understood it. And they won many souls among these gentiles and apostate Jews.

Abner, the chief of John's apostles, became a devout follower of Jesus and was later made the head of a group of seventy teachers whom the Master commissioned to preach.

8. In Camp Near Pella

The latter part of December they all went over near the Jordan, close by Pella, where they again began to teach and preach. Both Jews and gentiles came to this camp. It was while Jesus was teaching the multitude one afternoon that some of John's special friends brought the Master the last message from the Baptist.

John had now been in prison a year and a half, and most of this time Jesus had labored very quietly; so it was not strange that John should be led to wonder about Jesus. John's friends interrupted Jesus' teaching to say: "John the Baptist has sent us to ask — are you truly the Deliverer, or shall we look for another?"

Jesus paused to say to John's friends: "Go back and tell John that I have not forgotten. Tell what you have seen and heard, that the poor have truth taught to them." And Jesus, after speaking further to the messengers of John, turned again to the multitude and said: "Do not think that John doubts the doctrine of the new age. John makes inquiry only to assure the disciples who are also my disciples. John is no weakling. Let me ask you who heard John preach before being put in prison: What did you see in John — a reed shaken with the wind? A person of changeable moods and clothed in soft raiment? As a rule those who are gorgeously dressed and who live delicately are in ruler's courts and in the mansions of the rich. But what did you see when you saw John? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and much more than a prophet.

"I say to you, there has not been anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet those who are small in the realm of the Creator are greater because they have been born of the spirit and know that they have become children of the Creator."

Many who heard Jesus that day submitted themselves to John's baptism, publicly professing entrance into the new realm. And the apostles of John were firmly knit to Jesus from that day forward. This occurrence marked the real union of John's and Jesus' followers.

After the messengers had conversed with Abner, they left for Machaerus to tell all this to John, who was greatly comforted, and John's faith was strengthened by the words of Jesus and the message of Abner.

On this afternoon Jesus continued to teach, saying: "But to what should I compare this generation? Many of you will receive neither John's message nor my teaching. You are like the children playing in the market place who call to others and say: 'We sang for you and you did not dance; we cried and you did not mourn.' And so with some of you. John came neither eating nor drinking, and was accused of having a devil. I come eating and drinking, and these same people say: 'Behold, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of publicans and sinners!'

"It would appear that the Creator has hidden some of these truths from the wise and haughty, while revealing them to babes. But the Creator does all things well, and is revealed to the universe by methods that are perfectly chosen. Come, therefore, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and you will find rest for your souls. Take on yourselves the divine burden, and you will experience the peace of the Creator, which passes all understanding."

9. Death of John the Baptist

John the Baptist was executed by order of Herod Antipas on the evening of January 10, C.E. 28. The next day a few of John's disciples who had gone to Machaerus heard of the execution and, going to Herod, requested John's body, which they put in a tomb, later giving it burial at Sebaste, the home of Abner. The following day, January 12, they started north to the camp of John's and Jesus' apostles near Pella, and they told Jesus about the death of John. Jesus, on hearing their report, dismissed the multitude and, calling the twenty-four together, said: "John is dead, beheaded by Herod. Tonight go into joint council and arrange your affairs accordingly. There will no longer be a delay. The time has come to proclaim the new realm openly and with power. Tomorrow we go into Galilee."

And so, early on the morning of January 13, C.E. 28, Jesus and the apostles, accompanied by some twenty-five disciples, made their way to Capernaum and lodged that night in Zebedee's house.

Paper 145

Four Eventful Days at Capernaum

Jesus and the apostles arrived in Capernaum the evening of Tuesday, January 13. As usual, they made their headquarters at the home of Zebedee in Bethsaida. Now that John the Baptist had been executed, Jesus prepared to launch out into the first open and public preaching tour of Galilee. The news that Jesus had returned rapidly spread throughout the city, and early the next day Mary hastened away, going over to Nazareth to visit Joseph.

Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday Jesus spent at the Zebedee house instructing the apostles preparatory to their first extensive public preaching tour, also receiving and teaching many earnest inquirers, both singly and in groups. Through Andrew, Jesus arranged to speak in the synagogue on the coming Sabbath day.

Late on Friday evening Ruth secretly paid Jesus a visit. They spent almost an hour together in a boat anchored a short distance from the shore. No human being, except John Zebedee, ever knew of this visit, and John was admonished to tell no one. Ruth was the only member of Jesus' family who consistently and unwaveringly believed in the divinity of the bestowal mission from the times of earliest spiritual consciousness right through Jesus' eventful ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension; and Ruth finally passed on to the worlds beyond never having doubted Jesus' supernatural character. Ruth was the chief family member to comfort Jesus throughout the trying ordeal of the trial, rejection, and crucifixion.

1. Fishing on the Sea of Galilee

On Friday morning of this same week Jesus was teaching by the seaside and became pressed so close to the water's edge by the people that a near-by boat needed to come to the rescue. Entering the boat, Jesus continued to teach the assembled multitude for more than two hours. This boat was named "Simon"; it was the former fishing vessel of Simon Peter and had been built by Jesus' own hands. On this particular morning the boat was being used by David Zebedee and two associates, who had just come in near shore from a fruitless night of fishing on the lake. They were cleaning and mending their nets when Jesus requested their assistance.

Jesus, after teaching the people, said to David: "As you were delayed by coming to my help, now let me work with you. Let us go fishing; put out into deep water and let down your nets." But Simon, one of David's assistants, answered: "Master, it is useless. We toiled all night and caught nothing; however, at your request we will put out and let down the nets." And Simon consented to follow Jesus' directions because of a gesture made by David. When they had proceeded to the place designated by Jesus, they let down their nets and captured such a multitude of fish that they feared the nets would break, so much so that they signaled to their associates on the shore to come to their assistance. When they had filled three boats with fish, almost to sinking, Simon fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, Master, for I am sinful." Simon and all who were concerned in this episode were amazed at the number of fish. From that day David Zebedee, Simon, and their associates left their nets and followed Jesus.

But this was in no sense a miraculous catch. Jesus was a close student of nature, was experienced in fishing and knew the habits of the fish in the Sea of Galilee. On this occasion it was merely a matter of directing the boat to the place where the fish were usually to be found at this time of day. But Jesus' followers always regarded it as a miracle.

2. Afternoon at the Synagogue

The next Sabbath, at the afternoon service in the synagogue, Jesus preached a sermon on "The Will of the Creator." In the morning Simon Peter had preached on "The New Realm." At the Thursday evening meeting of the synagogue Andrew had taught "The New Way." At this particular time more people believed in Jesus in Capernaum than in any other city on earth.

Jesus, while teaching in the synagogue this Sabbath afternoon, according to custom took the first text from the law, reading from the Book of Exodus: "And you shall serve Yahweh, who shall bless your bread and your water, and all sickness shall be taken away from you." The second text was chosen from the Prophets, reading from Isaiah: "Arise and shine, for your light has come, and the glory of Yahweh has risen upon you. Darkness may cover the earth and gross darkness the people, but the spirit of Yahweh shall arise upon you, and the divine glory shall be seen with you. Even the gentiles shall come to this light, and many great minds shall surrender to the brightness of this light."

This sermon was an effort on Jesus' part to make clear the fact that religion is a *personal experience*. Among other things, the Master said:

"You know that, while kindhearted parents love their family as a whole, they regard them as a group because of their strong affection for each individual member of that family. You should no longer approach the Creator as a child of Israel but as a *child of the Creator*. As a group, you are indeed the children of Israel, but as individuals, each one of you is a child of the Creator. I have come, not to reveal the Creator to the children of Israel, but rather to bring this knowledge of the Creator and the revelation of the Creator's love and mercy to the individual as a genuine personal experience. The prophets have all taught you that Yahweh cares for the people, that Yahweh loves Israel. But I have come among you to proclaim a greater truth, one which many of the later prophets also grasped, that the Creator loves *you* — every one of you — as individuals. All these generations you have had a national religion; now I have come to give you a personal religion.

"But even this is not a new idea. Many of the spiritually minded among you have known this truth, since some of the prophets have told you.

"Do you not believe the Scriptures? Do you not understand that the prophet's words are fulfilled in what you see this very day? And did Jeremiah not exhort you to make religion an affair of the heart, to relate yourselves to the Creator as individuals? Did the prophet not tell you that the Creator would search your individual hearts? And were you not warned that the natural human heart is deceitful above all things and often desperately wicked?

“Have you not read also where Ezekiel taught even your ancestors that religion must become a reality in your individual experiences? And Ezekiel foresaw even this day when speaking on behalf of Yahweh, saying: ‘A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you.’

“You should no longer fear that Yahweh will punish a nation for the sin of an individual; neither will the Creator punish one believing child for the sins of a nation, although the individual member of any family must often suffer the material consequences of family mistakes and group transgressions. Do you not realize that the hope of a better nation — or a better world — is bound up in the progress and enlightenment of the individual?”

Then the Master portrayed that the Creator, after mortals discern this spiritual freedom, wills that the children on earth should begin that eternal ascent of the Paradise career which consists in the creature’s conscious response to the divine urge of the indwelling spirit to find the Creator, to know and become like the Creator.

The apostles were greatly helped by this sermon. All of them realized more fully that the doctrine of the new age is a message directed to the individual, not to the nation.

Even though the people of Capernaum were familiar with Jesus’ teaching, they were astonished at this sermon. Jesus taught as one having authority and not as the scribes taught.

Just as Jesus finished speaking, a young person in the congregation who had been very agitated was seized with a violent epileptic attack and loudly cried out. At the end of the seizure, when recovering consciousness, this person spoke in a dreamy state, saying: “What have we to do with you, Jesus of Nazareth? You were sent by the Creator; have you come to destroy us?” Jesus took the young person by the hand, and asking that the people be quiet, said, “Come out of it” — and the person was immediately awakened.

This young person was not possessed of a malicious spirit, but was a victim of ordinary epilepsy, and had been taught that this affliction was due to possession by an evil spirit, believing this teaching and behaving accordingly in every way concerning this ailment. The people all believed that such phenomena were directly caused by the presence of demons. Accordingly they believed that Jesus had cast one out. But Jesus did not at that time cure the epilepsy. Not until later on that day, after sundown, was this person really healed. Long after the day of Pentecost the Apostle John, who was the last to write of Jesus’ doings, avoided all reference to these so-called acts of “casting out devils,” doing this in view of the fact that such cases of demon possession never occurred after Pentecost.

As a result of this commonplace incident the report was rapidly spread through Capernaum that Jesus had cast out a demon and miraculously healed someone in the synagogue at the conclusion of the afternoon sermon. The Sabbath was just the time for the rapid and effective spreading of such a startling rumor. This report was also carried to all the smaller settlements around Capernaum, and many of the people believed it.

Peter's home was near that of Zebedee; and Jesus stopped there on the way from the synagogue because a member of Peter's family had for several days been sick with chills and fever. Now while Jesus stood over and held the hand, smoothed the brow and spoke words of comfort and encouragement to this sick person, the fever left. Jesus had not yet had time to explain to the apostles that no miracle had taken place at the synagogue; and with this incident so fresh and vivid in their minds, and recalling the water and the wine at Cana, they seized on this coincidence as another miracle, and some of them rushed out to spread the news abroad throughout the city.

Peter's family member was suffering from malarial fever and was not miraculously healed by Jesus at this time. Not until several hours later, after sundown, was the real cure effected in connection with the extraordinary event which occurred in the front yard of the Zebedee home.

And these cases are typical of the manner in which a wonder-seeking generation and a miracle-minded people unfailingly seized on all such coincidences as the pretext for proclaiming that another miracle had been produced by Jesus.

3. The Healing at Sundown

By the time Jesus and the apostles were ready to take their evening meal near the end of this eventful Sabbath day, all Capernaum and its environs were excited by these reputed miracles of healing; and all who were sick or afflicted began preparations to go to Jesus or to have themselves carried there by their friends just as soon as the sun went down. According to Jewish teaching it was not permissible even to go in quest of health during the sacred hours of the Sabbath.

Therefore, as soon as the sun sank beneath the horizon, scores of afflicted people began to make their way toward the Zebedee home in Bethsaida. One person started out with a paralyzed child just as soon as the sun sank behind a neighbor's house.

The whole day's events had set the stage for this extraordinary sundown scene. Even the text Jesus had used for the afternoon sermon had intimated that sickness should be banished; and Jesus had spoken with such unprecedented power and authority! The message was so compelling! Jesus, while making no appeal to human authority, did speak directly to the consciences and souls of people. While not resorting to logic, legal quibbles, or clever sayings, Jesus did make a powerful, direct, clear, and personal appeal to the hearts of the hearers.

That Sabbath was a great day in the earth life of Jesus, yes, in the life of a universe. To all local universe intents and purposes the little Jewish city of Capernaum was the real capital of Nebadon. The handful of Jews in the Capernaum synagogue were not the only beings to hear that momentous closing statement of Jesus' sermon: "Hate is the shadow of fear; revenge the mask of cowardice." Neither could these hearers forget the blessed words that declared, "Mortals are the children of the Creator, not of the devil."

Soon after the setting of the sun, as Jesus and the apostles still lingered about the supper table, they heard voices in the front yard and, on going to the door, saw that a large group of sick people was assembling,

and that the road from Capernaum was crowded by those who were on their way to seek healing at Jesus' hands.

The Master, on stepping out of the front entrance of Zebedee's house, saw an array of stricken and afflicted humanity. Jesus gazed on almost one thousand sick and ailing human beings; at least that was the number of persons gathered together there. Not all present were afflicted; some had come assisting their loved ones in this effort to secure healing.

The sight of these afflicted mortals, suffering in large measure as a result of the mistakes and misdeeds of formerly trusted spiritual Beings of universe administration, peculiarly touched the human heart of Jesus and challenged the divine mercy of this benevolent Universe Creator. But Jesus knew that an enduring spiritual movement could never be built on the foundation of purely material wonders. It had been Jesus' consistent policy to refrain from exhibiting any creator prerogatives, and nothing supernatural or miraculous had occurred since Cana. Still, this afflicted multitude touched and mightily appealed to Jesus' sympathetic heart and understanding affection.

A voice from the front yard exclaimed: "Master, speak the word, restore our health, heal our diseases, and save our souls." No sooner had these words been uttered than a vast retinue of seraphim, physical controllers, Life Carriers, and midwayers, such as always attended this incarnated Creator of a universe, made themselves ready to act with creative power should their Sovereign give the signal. This was one of those moments in the earth career of Jesus in which divine wisdom and human compassion were interlocked so that Jesus sought refuge in an appeal to the Creator's will.

When Peter implored the Master to heed their cry for help, Jesus, looking down on the afflicted throng, answered: "I have come into the world to reveal the Creator and establish the Creator's realm. For this purpose I have lived my life to this hour. If, therefore, it should be the will of the One who sent me and not inconsistent with my dedication to the proclamation of the doctrine of the new age, I would desire to see my children made whole — and —" but the further words of Jesus were lost in the tumult.

Jesus had passed the responsibility of this healing decision to the ruling of the Creator. Evidently the Creator's will posed no objection, for the words of the Master had scarcely been uttered when the assembly of celestial personalities serving under the command of Jesus' Personalized Thought Adjuster was mightily astir. The vast retinue descended into the midst of this motley throng of afflicted mortals, and in a moment of time 683 people were perfectly healed of all their physical diseases and other material disorders. Such a scene was never witnessed on earth before that day, nor since. And for those of us who were present to experience this creative wave of healing, it was indeed a thrilling spectacle.

But of all the beings who were astonished at this sudden and unexpected outbreak of supernatural healing, Jesus was the most surprised. In a moment when Jesus' human interests and sympathies were focused on the scene of suffering and affliction spread out there, Jesus neglected to remember the warnings of the Personalized Adjuster regarding the impossibility of limiting the time element of the prerogatives of a Universe Creator under certain conditions and in certain circumstances. Jesus wanted to see these suffering mortals made whole if the Creator's will would not be violated. The Personalized Adjuster of Jesus instantly ruled that such an act of creative energy at that time would not transgress the will of the Paradise Creator,

and by such a decision — in view of Jesus' preceding expression of healing desire — the creative act *was*. What a *Universe Creator* desires and the Paradise Creator *wills* IS. Not in all of Jesus' subsequent earth life did another such en masse physical healing of mortals take place.

As might have been expected, the fame of this sundown healing at Bethsaida in Capernaum spread throughout all Galilee and Judea and to the regions beyond. Once more the fears of Herod were aroused, and Herod sent watchers to report on the work and teachings of Jesus and to ascertain if this was the former carpenter of Nazareth or John the Baptist risen from the dead.

Chiefly because of this unintended demonstration of physical healing, throughout the remainder of the earth career, Jesus became as much a physician as a preacher. While continuing to teach, Jesus' personal work consisted mostly in ministering to the sick and the distressed, and the apostles did the work of public preaching and baptizing.

But the majority of those who were recipients of supernatural or creative physical healing at this sundown demonstration of divine energy were not permanently spiritually benefited by this extraordinary manifestation of mercy. A small number were truly edified by this physical ministry, but the spiritual realm was not advanced in people's hearts by this amazing eruption of timeless creative healing.

The healing wonders which every now and then attended Jesus' mission on earth were not a part of the plan of proclaiming the new realm. They were incidentally inherent in having on earth a divine Being of virtually unlimited creator prerogatives in association with an unprecedented combination of divine mercy and human sympathy. But such so-called miracles gave Jesus much trouble in that they provided prejudice-raising publicity and created much unsought notoriety.

4. The Evening After

Throughout the evening following this great outburst of healing, the rejoicing and happy throng overran Zebedee's home, and the apostles of Jesus were keyed up to the highest pitch of emotional enthusiasm. From a human standpoint, this was probably the greatest day of all the great days of their association with Jesus. At no time before or after did their hopes surge to such heights of confident expectation. Jesus had told them only a few days before, and when they were still within the borders of Samaria, that the time had come when the new age was to be proclaimed in *power*, and now their eyes had seen what they supposed was the fulfillment of that promise. They were thrilled by the vision of what was to come if this amazing manifestation of healing power was just the beginning. Their lingering doubts about Jesus' divinity were banished. They were literally intoxicated with the ecstasy of their bewildered enchantment.

But they could not find Jesus. The Master was much perturbed by what had happened. The people who had been healed of diverse diseases stayed late into the evening, hoping for Jesus' return so that they might express their thanks. The apostles could not understand why the Master remained in seclusion as the hours passed and their joy would have been full and perfect except for this continued absence. When Jesus did return, the hour was late, and practically all of the beneficiaries of the healing episode had gone to their homes. Jesus refused the congratulations and adoration of the twelve and the others who had stayed, only

saying: “Do not rejoice that the Creator is powerful to heal the body, but rather is mighty to save the soul. Let us sleep, since tomorrow we must be about the Creator’s business.”

And again twelve disappointed and heart-sorrowing apostles went to their rest; few of them, except the twins, slept much that night. The Master would do something to cheer the souls and gladden the hearts of the apostles and then seemed to immediately dash their hopes in pieces and utterly demolish the foundations of their courage and enthusiasm. As these confused apostles looked into each other’s eyes, there was only one thought: “We cannot understand it. What does all this mean?”

5. Early Sunday Morning

Jesus did not sleep much either that Saturday night, realizing that the world was filled with physical distress and overrun with material difficulties, and contemplating the great danger of being compelled to devote so much time to the care of the sick and afflicted that the mission of establishing the spiritual realm in people’s hearts would be interfered with or at least subordinated to the ministry of physical things. Because of these and similar thoughts, Jesus rose that Sunday morning long before daybreak and went all alone to a favorite place for communion with the Creator. The theme of Jesus’ prayer on this early morning was for wisdom and judgment to not allow human sympathy, joined with divine mercy, to make such an appeal in the presence of mortal suffering that all of the time would be occupied with physical ministry to the neglect of the spiritual. Jesus, while not wishing to altogether avoid ministering to the sick, knew that the more important work of spiritual teaching and religious training must be done.

Jesus went out in the hills to pray so many times because there were no private rooms suitable for personal devotions.

Peter, who also could not sleep that night, very early, shortly after Jesus had gone out to pray, aroused James and John, and the three went to find their Master. After more than an hour’s search they found Jesus and asked to know the reason for this strange conduct. They wanted to know why Jesus appeared to be troubled by the mighty outpouring of the spirit of healing when all the people were overjoyed and the apostles rejoiced.

For more than four hours Jesus tried to explain to these three apostles what had happened, teaching them about what had transpired and explaining the dangers of such manifestations. Jesus confided to them the reason for having left to pray and sought to make plain the real reasons why the realm of the Creator could not be built on wonder-working and physical healing. But they could not comprehend this teaching.

Meanwhile, early Sunday morning, other crowds of afflicted souls and many curiosity seekers began to gather about the house of Zebedee. They clamored to see Jesus. Andrew and the apostles were so concerned that, while Simon Zelotes talked to the assembly, Andrew, with several associates, went to find Jesus. Andrew, having located Jesus in company with the three, said: “Master, why do you leave us alone with the multitude? Everyone seeks you; never before have so many sought after your teaching. Even now the house is surrounded by those who have come from near and far because of your mighty works. Will you not return with us to minister to them?”

Jesus, on hearing this, answered: “Andrew, have I not taught you and these others that my mission on earth is the revelation of the Creator, and my message the proclamation of the new realm? How is it, then, that you would have me turn aside from my work for the gratification of the curious and for the satisfaction of those who seek for signs and wonders? Have we not been among these people all these months, and have they flocked in multitudes to hear the doctrine of the new age? Why have they now come to us? Is it not because of the healing of their physical bodies rather than as a result of the reception of spiritual truth for their souls? When people are attracted to us because of extraordinary manifestations, many of them come seeking not for truth but rather in quest of healing for their physical ailments and to secure deliverance from their material difficulties.

“All this time I have been in Capernaum, and both in the synagogue and by the seaside I have proclaimed the new realm to all who had ears to hear and hearts to receive the truth. It is not the will of the Creator that I should return with you to cater to these curious ones and to become occupied with the ministry of things physical to the exclusion of the spiritual. I have ordained you to preach and minister to the sick, but I must not become engrossed in healing to the exclusion of my teaching. No, Andrew, I will not return with you. Go and tell the people to believe in that which we have taught them and to rejoice in the liberty of the children of the Creator, and make ready for our departure for the other cities of Galilee, where the way has already been prepared for the preaching about the new realm. It was for this purpose that I came from the Creator. Go, then, and prepare for our immediate departure while I wait for your return.”

When Jesus had spoken, Andrew and the apostles sorrowfully made their way back to Zebedee’s house, dismissed the assembled multitude, and quickly made ready for the journey as Jesus had directed. And so, on the afternoon of Sunday, January 18, C.E. 28, Jesus and the apostles started out on their first really public and open preaching tour of the cities of Galilee. On this first tour they preached in many cities, but they did not visit Nazareth.

That Sunday afternoon, shortly after Jesus and the apostles had left for Rimmon, James and Jude came to Zebedee’s house. About noon of that day Jude had sought out James and insisted that they go to Jesus. By the time James consented to go with Jude, Jesus had already left.

The apostles did not want to leave the great interest which had been aroused at Capernaum. Peter calculated that no less than one thousand could have been baptized. Jesus listened to them patiently, but would not consent to return. Silence prevailed for a while, and then Thomas addressed the apostles, saying: “Let’s go! The Master has spoken. It does not matter if we cannot fully comprehend the mysteries of the new realm, of one thing we are certain: We follow a teacher who seeks no personal glory.” And reluctantly they went to preach in the cities of Galilee.

Paper 146

First Preaching Tour of Galilee

The first public preaching tour of Galilee began on Sunday, January 18, C.E. 28, and continued for about two months, ending with the return to Capernaum on March 17. On this tour Jesus and the twelve apostles, assisted by the former apostles of John, preached and baptized in Rimmon, Jotapata, Ramah, Zebulun, Iron, Gischala, Chorazin, Madon, Cana, Nain, and Endor. In these cities they lived and taught, while in many other smaller towns they proclaimed the doctrine of the new realm as they passed through.

This was the first time Jesus permitted these associates to preach without restraint, on this tour cautioning them to remain away from Nazareth and to be discreet when passing through Capernaum and Tiberias. It was a source of great satisfaction to the apostles to feel that they were finally at liberty to preach and teach without restriction, and they threw themselves into the work of preaching, ministering to the sick, and baptizing, with great earnestness and joy.

1. Preaching at Rimmon

The small city of Rimmon had once been dedicated to the worship of a Babylonian god of the air, Ramman. Many of the earlier Babylonian and later Zoroastrian teachings were still embraced in the beliefs of the Rimmonites; therefore Jesus and the twenty-four devoted much of their time to the task of clarifying the difference between these older beliefs and the new doctrine of the realm of the Creator. Peter preached one of the great sermons of this early career on "Aaron and the Golden Calf."

Although many of the citizens of Rimmon became believers in Jesus' teachings, they made great trouble in later years. It is difficult to convert nature worshipers to the full fellowship of the adoration of a spiritual ideal during the short space of a single lifetime.

Many of the better Babylonian and Persian ideas of light and darkness, good and evil, and time and eternity, were later incorporated in the doctrines of so-called Christianity, and their inclusion rendered the Christian teachings more immediately acceptable to the peoples of the Near East. In like manner, the inclusion of many of Plato's theories of the ideal spirit or invisible patterns of all things visible and material, as later adapted by Philo to the Hebrew theology, made Paul's Christian teachings more easily acceptable to the western Greeks.

It was at Rimmon that Todan first heard the doctrine of the new realm, and later carried this message into Mesopotamia and far beyond, being among the first to preach the new doctrine to those who lived beyond the Euphrates.

2. At Jotapata

While the common people of Jotapata heard Jesus and the apostles gladly and many accepted the doctrine of the new realm, it was the discourse of Jesus to the twenty-four on the second evening of their sojourn in this small town that distinguishes the Jotapata mission. Nathaniel was confused about the Master's teachings concerning prayer, thanksgiving, and worship, and in response to Nathaniel's question Jesus

spoke at great length in further explanation of this teaching. This discourse may be presented as emphasizing the following points:

1. The conscious and persistent regard for iniquity in people's hearts gradually destroys the prayer connection of the human soul with the spirit circuits of communication between mortals and their Maker. Naturally the Creator hears the petition of the child, but when the human heart deliberately and persistently harbors the concepts of iniquity, the loss of personal communion between the earth child and the Creator gradually ensues.
2. Any prayer which is inconsistent with the known and established laws of the Universal Source is unacceptable to the Paradise Deities. If mortals will not listen to the Deities as they speak to their creation in the laws of spirit, mind, and matter, the very act of such deliberate and conscious disdain by the creature turns the ears of spirit personalities away from hearing the personal petitions of such lawless and disobedient mortals.
3. By opening the human end of the channel of the Creator-mortal communication, the ever-flowing stream of divine ministry is immediately made available to the creatures of the worlds. When mortals hear the Creator's spirit speak within the human heart, inherent in such an experience is the fact that the Creator simultaneously hears those prayers. Even the forgiveness of sin operates in this same unerring fashion. The Creator has forgiven you even before you have thought to ask, but such forgiveness is not available in your personal religious experience until such a time as you forgive others. The Creator's forgiveness in *fact* is not conditioned on your forgiving others, but in *experience* it is exactly so conditioned. And this fact of the synchrony of divine and human forgiveness was recognized and linked together in the prayer which Jesus taught the apostles.
4. There is a basic law of justice in the universe which mercy is powerless to circumvent. The unselfish gifts of Paradise cannot be received by a thoroughly selfish creature of the realms of time and space. Even the infinite love of the Creator cannot force eternal survival on any mortal creature who does not choose to survive. Mercy has great latitude of bestowal, but, after all, there are mandates of justice which even love combined with mercy cannot effectively abrogate.
5. Those who would receive mercy must show mercy; do not judge so that you are not judged. With the spirit with which you judge others you will also be judged. Mercy does not wholly abrogate universe fairness. In the end it will prove true: "Whoever ignores the cry of the poor will also someday cry for help, and no one will hear." The sincerity of any prayer is the assurance of its being heard; the spiritual wisdom and universe consistency of any petition is the determiner of the time, manner, and degree of the answer. A wise parent does not *literally* answer the foolish prayers of ignorant and inexperienced children, although the children may derive much pleasure and real soul satisfaction from making such absurd petitions.
6. When you have become wholly dedicated to the doing of the will of the Creator, the answer to all your petitions will be forthcoming because your prayers will be in full accordance with the Creator's will, and the Creator's will is manifest throughout the vast universe. What the true child desires and the infinite Parent wills IS. Such a prayer cannot remain unanswered, and no other sort of petition can possibly be fully answered.

7. The cry of the righteous is the faith act of the child which opens the door of the Creator's storehouse of goodness, truth, and mercy, and these good gifts have long been waiting for the child's approach and personal appropriation. Prayer does not change the divine attitude toward mortals, but it does change a mortal's attitude toward the changeless Creator. The *motive* of the prayer gives it access to the divine ear, not the social, economic, or outward religious status of the one who prays.

8. Prayer may not be employed to avoid the delays of time or to transcend the handicaps of space. Prayer is not designed as a technique for aggrandizing self or for gaining unfair advantage over others. A thoroughly selfish soul cannot pray in the true sense of the word. Jesus said: "Let your supreme delight be in the character of the Creator, who will surely give you the sincere desires of your heart." "Commit your way and trust in the Creator and the Creator will act." "For the Creator hears the cry of the needy, and will acknowledge the prayer of the destitute."

9. "I have come forth from the Creator; if, therefore, you are ever in doubt as to what you would ask of the Creator, ask it in my name, and I will present your petition in accordance with your real needs and desires and in accordance with the Creator's will." Guard against the great danger of becoming self-centered in your prayers. Avoid praying for yourself; pray more for the spiritual progress of others. Avoid materialistic praying; pray in the spirit and for the abundance of the gifts of the spirit.

10. When you pray for the sick and afflicted, do not expect that your petitions will take the place of loving and intelligent ministry to the necessities of these afflicted ones. Pray for the welfare of your families and friends, but especially pray for those who curse you, and make loving petitions for those who persecute you. "But when to pray, I will not say. Only the spirit that dwells within you may move you to the utterance of those petitions which are expressive of your inner relationship with the Source of spirits."

11. Many resort to prayer only when in trouble. Such a practice is thoughtless and misleading. True, you do well to pray when harassed, but you should also be mindful to speak as a child to your Parent even when all goes well with your soul. Let your real petitions always be in secret. Do not let anyone hear your personal prayers. Prayers of thanksgiving are appropriate for groups of worshipers, but the prayer of the soul is a personal matter. There is only one form of prayer which is appropriate for all of the Creator's children, and that is: "Nevertheless, your will be done."

12. All followers should pray sincerely for the extension of the new realm. Of all the prayers of the Hebrew scriptures Jesus commented most approvingly on the petition of the Psalmist: "Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me. Purge me from secret sins and keep back your servant from presumptuous transgression." Jesus commented at great length on the relation of prayer to careless and offending speech, quoting: "Set a watch before my mouth; keep the door of my lips." "The human tongue," said Jesus, "is a member which few can tame, but the spirit within can transform this unruly member into a kindly voice of tolerance and an inspiring minister of mercy."

13. Jesus taught that the prayer for divine guidance over the pathway of earthly life was next in importance to the petition for a knowledge of the Creator's will. In reality this means a prayer for divine wisdom. Jesus never taught that human knowledge and special skill could be gained by prayer, but did teach that prayer is a factor in the enlargement of one's capacity to receive the presence of the divine spirit. Jesus, when

teaching others to pray in the spirit and in truth, explained that this meant praying sincerely and in accordance with one's enlightenment, praying wholeheartedly and intelligently, earnestly and steadfastly.

14. Jesus warned the associates against thinking that their prayers would be rendered more effective by ornate repetitions, eloquent phraseology, fasting, penance, or sacrifices. But Jesus did exhort people to employ prayer as a means of leading up through thanksgiving to true worship, deploring that so little of the spirit of thanksgiving was to be found in the prayers and worship of the followers.

15. And Jesus taught: "Do not be constantly overanxious about your common needs. Do not be apprehensive concerning the problems of your earthly existence, but in all these things by prayer, with the spirit of sincere thanksgiving, let your needs be spread before your Creator Parent."

16. Jesus taught the followers that, when they had made their prayers, they should remain for a time in silent receptivity to afford the indwelling spirit a better opportunity to speak to the listening soul. The spirit speaks best when the human mind is in an attitude of true worship. We worship the Creator by the aid of the indwelling spirit and by the illumination of the human mind through the ministry of truth. Worship, taught Jesus, makes one increasingly like the one who is worshiped. Worship is a transforming experience by which the finite gradually approaches and ultimately attains the presence of the Infinite.

And many other truths Jesus told the apostles about communion with the Creator, but not many of them could fully understand these teachings.

3. The Stop at Ramah

At Ramah Jesus had the memorable discussion with the aged Greek philosopher who taught that science and philosophy were sufficient to satisfy the needs of human experience. Jesus listened with patience and sympathy to this Greek teacher, allowing the truth of many things but pointing out that this discussion of human existence failed to explain "when, why, and whether," and added: "Where you leave off, we begin. Religion is a revelation to the soul dealing with spiritual realities which the mind alone could never discover or fully fathom. Intellectual strivings may reveal the facts of life, but the doctrine about the Creator unfolds the *truths* of being. You have discussed the material shadows of truth; will you now listen while I tell you about the eternal and spiritual realities which cast these transient time shadows of the material facts of mortal existence?" For more than an hour Jesus taught this Greek the truths about the realm of the Creator. The old philosopher was susceptible to the Master's mode of approach, and being sincerely honest of heart, quickly believed this teaching.

The apostles were a bit disconcerted by the open manner of Jesus' assent to many of the Greek's propositions, but Jesus afterward privately said to them: "My children, do not marvel that I was tolerant of the Greek's philosophy. True and genuine inward certainty does not fear outward analysis, nor does truth resent honest criticism. You should never forget that intolerance is the mask covering up the entertainment of secret doubts as to the truth of one's belief. No one who has perfect confidence in the truth of what they believe is at any time disturbed by another's attitude. Courage is the confidence of thoroughgoing honesty about those things which one professes to believe. Sincere people are unafraid of the critical examination of their true convictions and noble ideals."

On the second evening at Ramah, Thomas asked Jesus this question: “How can a new seeker really know, really be certain, about the truth of this teaching concerning the new realm?”

And Jesus said to Thomas: “Your assurance that you have entered into the family of the Creator, and that you will eternally survive with the children of the Creator’s realm, is wholly a matter of personal experience — faith in the word of truth. Spiritual assurance is the equivalent of your personal religious experience in the eternal realities of divine truth and is otherwise equal to your intelligent understanding of truth realities plus your spiritual faith and minus your honest doubts.

“The child is naturally endowed with the life of the Parent. Having been endowed with the living spirit of the Creator, you are therefore children of the Creator. You survive your life in the material world because you are identified with the Creator’s living spirit, the gift of eternal life. Many had this life before I came, and many more have received this spirit because they believed my word; but I declare that, when I return to the Creator, this spirit will be sent into the hearts of all people.

“While you cannot observe the divine spirit at work in your minds, there is a practical method of discovering the degree to which you have yielded the control of your soul powers to the teaching and guidance of this indwelling spirit of the Creator, and that is the degree of your love for others. This spirit partakes of the love of the Creator, and as it dominates mortals, it unfailingly leads in the directions of divine worship and loving regard for others. At first you believe that you are children of the Creator because my teaching has made you more conscious of the inner leadings of our Parent’s indwelling presence; but presently the Spirit of Truth will be poured out on all people, and it will live among mortals and teach all mortals, even as I now live among you and speak to you the words of truth. And this Spirit of Truth, speaking for the spiritual endowments of your souls, will help you to know that you are the children of the Creator. It will unfailingly bear witness with the Creator’s indwelling presence, your spirit, then dwelling in all people as it now dwells in some, telling you that you are in reality the children of the Creator.

“Every earth child who follows the leading of this spirit shall eventually know the will of the Creator, and whoever surrenders to the will of the Creator will live forever. The way from the earth life to the eternal estate has not been made plain to you, but there is a way, there always has been, and I have come to make that way new and living. One who enters the realm of the Creator has eternal life already and will never perish. But much of this you will better understand when I have returned to the Creator and you are able to view your present experiences in retrospect.”

And all who heard these words were greatly cheered. The Jewish teachings had been confused and uncertain regarding the survival of the righteous, and it was refreshing and inspiring for Jesus’ followers to hear these very definite and positive words of assurance about the eternal survival of all true seekers.

The apostles continued to preach and baptize, while they kept up the practice of visiting from house to house, comforting the downcast and ministering to the sick and afflicted. The apostolic organization was expanded in that each of Jesus’ apostles now had one of John’s as an associate; Abner was the associate of Andrew; and this plan prevailed until they went to Jerusalem for the next Passover.

The special instruction given by Jesus during their stay at Zebulun had chiefly to do with further discussions of the mutual obligations of the Creator's realm and embraced teaching designed to make clear the differences between personal religious experience and the amities of social religious obligations. This was one of the few times the Master ever discussed the social aspects of religion. Throughout the entire earth life Jesus gave the followers very little instruction regarding the socialization of religion.

In Zebulun the people were of a mixed race, hardly Jew or gentile, and few of them really believed in Jesus, notwithstanding that they had heard of the healing of the sick at Capernaum.

4. The Gospel at Iron

At Iron, as in many of the smaller cities of Galilee and Judea, there was a synagogue, and during the earlier times of ministry it was Jesus' custom to speak in these synagogues on the Sabbath day, sometimes speaking at the morning service with Peter or one of the other apostles preaching at the afternoon hour. Jesus and the apostles would also often teach and preach at the weekday evening assemblies at the synagogue. Although the religious leaders at Jerusalem became increasingly antagonistic toward Jesus, they exercised no direct control over the synagogues outside of that city. It was not until later in Jesus' public ministry that they were able to create such a widespread negative sentiment as to bring about the almost universal closing of the synagogues to Jesus' teaching, but at this time that was not yet the case.

Iron was the site of extensive mineral mines for those days, and Jesus, having never shared the life of the miner, spent most of the time, while sojourning at Iron, in the mines. While the apostles visited the homes and preached in the public places, Jesus worked in the mines with these underground laborers. The fame of Jesus as a healer had spread even to this remote village, and many sick and afflicted sought help, and many were greatly benefited by this healing ministry. But in none of these cases did Jesus perform a so-called miracle of healing except in that of the leper.

Late on the afternoon of the third day at Iron, Jesus, while returning from the mines, happened to go through a narrow side street on the way home, and passed near the squalid hovel of a certain leper. This afflicted one, having heard of the Master's fame as a healer, accosted Jesus, saying: "Master, if only you would, you could make me clean. I have heard the message of your teachers, and I would enter the new realm if I could be made clean." And the leper spoke in this way because among the Jews, lepers were forbidden to attend the synagogue or otherwise engage in public worship. This person really believed that it would not be possible to be received into the coming new realm without being cured of leprosy. And Jesus, when seeing this affliction and hearing the words of clinging faith, was touched, and the divine mind was moved with compassion. As Jesus looked on, the leper fell down and worshiped. Then the Master reached forward and said: "I will — be clean." And immediately the affliction was healed; the leprosy was gone.

Jesus lifted up the leper and charged: "See that you tell no one about your healing but rather go quietly about your business, showing yourself to the priests and offering those sacrifices commanded by Moses in testimony of your cleansing." But this person did not go to the priests as Jesus had admonished but began to announce throughout the town that Jesus had cured the affliction. Since the leper was known to all the village, the people could plainly see that the disease had been cured. As a result of the news that Jesus had healed the leper, the Master was so thronged by the sick that it became necessary to rise early the next day

and leave the village. While not again entering the town, Jesus remained for two days in the outskirts near the mines, continuing to instruct the believing miners.

This cleansing of the leper was the first so-called miracle which Jesus had intentionally and deliberately performed up to this time. And this was a case of real leprosy.

From Iron they went to Gischala, spending two days teaching and preaching, and then departed for Chorazin, where they spent almost a week; but they were unable to win many followers for the new realm in Chorazin. In no place where Jesus had taught was there such a general rejection of the message. The sojourn at Chorazin was very depressing to most of the apostles, and Andrew and Abner had much difficulty in upholding the courage of their associates. And so, passing quietly through Capernaum, they went on to the village of Madon, where they fared little better. In the minds of most of the apostles the idea that their failure to meet with success in these towns was due to Jesus' insistence on not being referred to as a healer. How they wished Jesus would cleanse another leper or in some other manner so manifest power as to attract the attention of the people! But the Master was unmoved by their earnest urging.

5. Back in Cana

The apostolic party was greatly cheered when Jesus announced, "Tomorrow we go to Cana." They knew they would have a sympathetic hearing at Cana, for Jesus was well known there. They were doing well with their work of bringing people into the new realm when, on the third day, a certain prominent citizen of Capernaum arrived in Cana. This was Titus, whose child was critically ill. Titus had heard that Jesus was at Cana; and hurried over. The followers at Capernaum thought Jesus could heal any sickness.

Titus begged Jesus to hurry over to Capernaum and heal the afflicted child. While the apostles stood by in breathless expectancy, Jesus, looking at the parent of the sick child, said: "The power of the Creator is in your midst, but unless you see signs and wonders, you refuse to believe." But the parent pleaded with Jesus, saying: "Master, I do believe, but come before my child perishes, for when I left, the child was at the point of death." And Jesus, after spending a moment in silent meditation, suddenly spoke, "Return to your home; your child will live." Titus believed Jesus and rushed back to Capernaum, and the servants came out saying, "Your child is improved and lives." Then Titus asked them what time the child began to heal, and the servants answered, "yesterday about 7:00 the fever left," and Titus recalled that it was about that hour when Jesus had said, "Your child will live." And from then on Titus believed with a whole heart, and all the family also believed. This child became a mighty minister of the Creator's realm and later died with those who suffered in Rome. Though the entire household of Titus, their friends, and even the apostles regarded this episode as a miracle, it was not. At least this was not a miracle of curing physical disease. It was merely a case of preknowledge concerning the course of natural law, just such knowledge as Jesus frequently resorted to after being baptized.

Again Jesus was compelled to hurry away from Cana because of the undue attention attracted by the second episode of this sort in this village. The townspeople remembered the water and the wine, and now that Jesus was supposed to have healed a child at so great a distance, they came, not only bringing the sick and afflicted but also sending messengers requesting that Jesus heal sufferers at a distance. And Jesus, on seeing that the whole countryside was aroused, said, "Let us go to Nain."

6. The “Miracle” at Nain

These people believed in signs; they were a wonder-seeking generation. By this time the people of central and southern Galilee had become miracle minded regarding Jesus. Scores, hundreds, of honest persons suffering from purely nervous disorders and afflicted with emotional disturbances came into Jesus' presence and then returned home to their friends announcing that Jesus had healed them. And such cases of mental healing these people regarded as physical healing, miraculous cures.

When Jesus tried to leave Cana and go to Nain, a great multitude of curious people followed after. They were intent on observing miracles and wonders, and they were not to be disappointed. As Jesus and the apostles approached the gate of the city, they met a funeral procession on its way to the near-by cemetery, carrying the only child of a citizen of Nain. This person was much respected, and half of the village followed the bearers of the coffin of this supposedly dead child. When the funeral procession had reached Jesus, the people recognized the Master and begged that the child be brought back to life. Their miracle expectancy was aroused to such a high pitch that they thought Jesus could cure any human disease, and why not even raise the dead? Jesus, on being approached, stepped forward and, raising the covering of the coffin, examined the child. Discovering that the young person was not really dead, Jesus perceived the tragedy which could be averted and, turning to the parent, said: “Do not weep. Your child is not dead but sleeping, and will be restored to you.” And then, taking the child by the hand, Jesus said, “Awake and arise.” And the youth who was supposed to be dead presently sat up and began to speak, and Jesus asked the people to go back to their homes.

Jesus endeavored to calm the multitude and vainly tried to explain that the child was not really dead and had not been brought back from the grave, but it was useless. The multitude which followed Jesus, and the whole village of Nain, were aroused to the highest pitch of emotional frenzy. Fear seized many, panic others, while still others fell to praying and wailing over their sins. And it was not until long after nightfall that the clamoring multitude could be dispersed. And, of course, notwithstanding Jesus' statement that the child was not dead, everyone insisted that a miracle had been done and the dead raised. Although Jesus told them the child was merely in a deep sleep, they explained that Jesus always modestly tried to hide these miracles.

So the word went abroad throughout Galilee and into Judea that Jesus had raised a child from the dead, and many who heard this report believed it. Jesus was never able to make even all the apostles fully understand that the youth was not really dead, but did impress them sufficiently to keep it out of all subsequent records except that of Luke, who recorded it as the episode had been related by another. And again Jesus was so besieged as a physician that it was necessary to leave early the next day for Endor.

7. At Endor

At Endor Jesus escaped for a few days from the multitudes clamoring in quest of physical healing. During their stay at this place the Master recounted for the instruction of the apostles the story of Saul and the witch of Endor. Jesus plainly told the apostles that the stray and rebellious midwayers who had often impersonated the supposed spirits of the dead would soon be brought under control so that they could no longer do these

strange things. Such semi-spirit beings would no longer be able to possess the feeble and evil-minded among mortals.

Jesus explained to the apostles that the spirits of departed human beings do not come back to the world of their origin to communicate with living beings. Only after the passing of a dispensational age would it be possible for the advancing spirits of mortals to return to earth and then only in exceptional cases and as a part of the spiritual administration of the planet.

When they had rested two days, Jesus said to the apostles: "Tomorrow let us return to Capernaum to wait and teach while the countryside quiets down. At home they will have partly recovered from this sort of excitement by this time."

Paper 147

The Interlude Visit to Jerusalem

Jesus and the apostles arrived in Capernaum on Wednesday, March 17, and spent two weeks at the Bethsaida headquarters before they left for Jerusalem. These two weeks the apostles taught the people by the seaside while Jesus spent much time alone in the hills about the Creator's business. During this period Jesus, accompanied by James and John Zebedee, made two secret trips to Tiberias, where they met with the seekers and instructed them.

Many of the household of Herod believed in Jesus and attended these meetings. It was the influence of these followers among Herod's official family that had helped to lessen that ruler's enmity toward Jesus. These followers at Tiberias had fully explained to Herod that the "new realm" which Jesus proclaimed was spiritual in nature and not a political venture. Herod believed these members of the household and therefore did not become unduly alarmed by the spreading abroad of the reports concerning Jesus' teaching and healing. Herod had no objections to Jesus' work as a healer or religious teacher. Notwithstanding the favorable attitude of many of Herod's advisers, a group of Herod's other subordinates who were influenced by the religious leaders at Jerusalem remained bitter and threatening enemies of Jesus and the apostles and, later on, did much to hamper their public activities. The greatest danger to Jesus lay in the Jerusalem religious leaders and not in Herod. And it was for this very reason that Jesus and the apostles spent so much time and did most of their public preaching in Galilee rather than at Jerusalem and in Judea.

1. The Centurion's Servant

On the day before they prepared to go to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover, Mangus, a centurion of the Roman guard stationed at Capernaum, came to the rulers of the synagogue, saying: "My faithful orderly is sick and at the point of death. Would you go to Jesus on my behalf and request that my servant be healed?" The Roman centurion believed that the Jewish leaders would have more influence with Jesus. So the elders went to see Jesus and their spokesperson said: "Teacher, we earnestly request that you go to Capernaum and save the favorite servant of the Roman centurion, who loves our nation and even built us the very synagogue where you have so many times spoken."

And Jesus said, "I will go with you." And went with them to the centurion's house, and before they had entered the yard, the Roman soldier sent friends out to greet Jesus, instructing them to say: "Do not trouble yourself to enter my house, I am not worthy that you should come under my roof. Neither did I think myself worthy to come to you; and so I sent the elders of your own people. But I know that you can speak the word where you stand and my servant will be healed, for I am myself under the orders of others, and I have soldiers under me, and I tell them to go, and they go; to others come, and they come, and to my servants do this or do that, and they do it."

And Jesus, on hearing these words, turned and said to the apostles and those who were with them: "I marvel at the belief of the gentile. I have not found such great faith in all of Israel." Jesus, turning from the house, said, "Let us leave." And the friends of the centurion went into the house and told Mangus what Jesus had

said. And from that hour the servant began to mend and was eventually restored to normal health and usefulness.

But we never knew just what happened on this occasion. This is simply the record, and as to whether or not invisible beings ministered healing to the centurion's servant was not revealed to those who accompanied Jesus. We only know of the fact of the servant's complete recovery.

2. The Journey to Jerusalem

Early on the morning of Tuesday, March 30, Jesus and the apostolic party started on their journey to Jerusalem for the Passover, going by the route of the Jordan valley. They arrived on the afternoon of Friday, April 2, and established their headquarters, as usual, at Bethany. Passing through Jericho, they paused to rest while Judas made a deposit of some of their common funds in the bank of a friend. This was the first time Judas had carried a surplus of money, and this deposit was left undisturbed until they passed through Jericho again when on that last and eventful journey to Jerusalem just before the trial and death of Jesus.

The party had an uneventful trip to Jerusalem, but they had hardly gotten themselves settled at Bethany when from near and far those seeking healing for their bodies, comfort for troubled minds, and salvation for their souls, began to congregate, so much so that Jesus had little time for rest. Therefore they pitched tents at Gethsemane, and the Master would go back and forth from Bethany to Gethsemane to avoid the constant crowds. The apostolic party spent almost three weeks at Jerusalem, but Jesus instructed them to do no public preaching, only private teaching and personal work.

At Bethany they quietly celebrated the Passover. And this was the first time that Jesus and all of the twelve partook of the bloodless Passover feast. The apostles of John did not eat the Passover with Jesus and the apostles; they celebrated the feast with Abner and many of the early believers in John's preaching. This was the second Passover Jesus had observed with the apostles in Jerusalem.

When Jesus and the twelve left for Capernaum, the apostles of John did not return with them. Under the direction of Abner they remained in Jerusalem and the surrounding country, quietly laboring for the establishment of the new realm, while Jesus and the twelve returned to work in Galilee. Never again were the twenty-four all together until a short time before the commissioning and sending out of the seventy evangelists. But the two groups were co-operative, and notwithstanding their differences of opinion, the best of feelings prevailed.

3. At the Pool of Bethesda

The afternoon of the second Sabbath in Jerusalem, as the Master and the apostles were about to participate in the temple services, John said to Jesus, "Come with me, I would like to show you something." John led Jesus out through one of the Jerusalem gates to a pool of water called Bethesda. Surrounding this pool was a structure of five porches under which a large group of sufferers lingered in quest of healing. This was a hot spring whose reddish-tinged water would bubble up at irregular intervals because of gas accumulations in the rock caverns underneath the pool. This periodic disturbance of the warm waters was believed by

many to be due to supernatural influences, and it was a popular belief that the first person who entered the water after such a disturbance would be healed of any infirmity.

The apostles were somewhat restless under the restrictions imposed by Jesus, and John, the youngest of the twelve, was especially restive under this restraint. John had brought Jesus to the pool thinking that the sight of the assembled sufferers would make such an appeal to the Master's compassion that Jesus would be moved to perform a miracle of healing, and all Jerusalem would be astounded and presently be won to believe in the doctrine of the new age. John said to Jesus: "Master, see all of these suffering ones; is there nothing we can do for them?" And Jesus replied: "John, why would you tempt me to turn aside from the way I have chosen? Why do you go on wanting to substitute the working of wonders and the healing of the sick for the proclamation of eternal truth? My friend, I may not do what you desire, but gather together these sick and afflicted so that I may speak words of eternal comfort to them."

In speaking to those assembled, Jesus said: "Many of you are here, sick and afflicted, because of your many years of wrong living. Some suffer from the accidents of time, others as a result of the mistakes of their forebears, while some of you struggle under the handicaps of the imperfect conditions of your temporal existence. But the Creator works, and I would work, to improve your earthly state but especially to insure your eternal estate. None of us can do much to change the difficulties of life unless we discover that the Creator so wills. After all, we are all bound to do the will of the Eternal. If you could all be healed of your physical afflictions, you would indeed marvel, but it is even greater that you should be cleansed of all spiritual disease and find yourselves healed of all moral infirmities. You are all the Creator's children. The bonds of time may seem to afflict you, but the Source of eternity loves you. And when the time of judgment comes, do not be afraid, you will all find, not only justice, but an abundance of mercy. Whoever accepts this teaching of relationship with the Creator has eternal life; already they are passing from judgment and death to light and life. And the time is coming in which even those who are in the tombs will hear the voice of the resurrection."

And many of those who heard, believed. Some of the afflicted were so inspired and spiritually revived that they went about proclaiming that they had also been cured of their physical ailments.

One person who had been downcast and grievously afflicted by the infirmities of a troubled mind for many years, rejoiced at Jesus' words and went home, even though it was the Sabbath day. This afflicted person had waited all these years for *somebody* to help, being the victim of a feeling of helplessness and never once entertaining the idea of getting up and walking, which proved to be the one thing that was needed to be done in order to effect recovery.

Then Jesus said to John: "Let us leave before the chief priests and the scribes come and take offense that we spoke words of life to these afflicted ones." And they returned to the temple to join their companions, and presently all of them left to spend the night at Bethany. But John never told the other apostles of this visit to the pool of Bethesda on this Sabbath afternoon.

4. The Rule of Living

On the evening of this same Sabbath day, at Bethany, while Jesus, the twelve, and a group of followers were assembled about the fire in Lazarus's garden, Nathaniel asked Jesus this question: "Master, although you have taught us the positive version of the old rule of life, instructing us that we should do to others as we wish them to do to us, I do not fully discern how we can always abide by such an injunction. Let me illustrate my contention by citing the example of a lustful person who wickedly looks upon an intended consort in sin. How can we teach that this evil-intending person should do to others as they should do in return?"

Jesus, on hearing Nathaniel's question, immediately stood up and, pointing a finger at the apostle, said: "Nathaniel! What manner of thinking is going on in your heart? Do you not receive my teachings as one who has been born of the spirit? Do you not hear the truth as people of wisdom and spiritual understanding do? When I admonished you to do to others as you would have them do to you, I spoke to those of high ideals, not to those who would be tempted to distort my teaching into a license for the encouragement of evil-doing."

When the Master had spoken, Nathaniel stood up and said: "But, Master, you should not think that I approve of such an interpretation of your teaching. I asked the question because I conjectured that many might misjudge your admonition, and I hoped you would give us further instruction regarding these matters." And then when Nathaniel had sat down, Jesus continued speaking: "I well know, Nathaniel, that no such idea of evil is approved in your mind, but I am disappointed in that you all so often fail to put a genuinely spiritual interpretation on my commonplace teachings, instruction which must be given to you in human language and as people must speak. Let me now teach you concerning the differing levels of meaning attached to the interpretation of this rule of living, this admonition to 'do to others that which you desire others to do to you':

"1. *The level of the flesh.* Such a purely selfish and lustful interpretation would be well exemplified by the supposition of your question.

"2. *The level of the feelings.* This plane is one level higher than that of the flesh and implies that sympathy and pity would enhance one's interpretation of this rule of living.

"3. *The level of mind.* Now come into action the reason of mind and the intelligence of experience. Good judgment dictates that such a rule of living should be interpreted in consonance with the highest idealism embodied in the nobility of profound self-respect.

"4. *The level of familial love.* Still higher is discovered the level of unselfish devotion to the welfare of others. On this higher plane of wholehearted social service growing out of the consciousness of the parenthood of the Creator and the consequent recognition of the family of humanity, a new and far more beautiful interpretation of this basic rule of life is discovered.

"5. *The moral level.* And then when you attain true philosophic levels of interpretation, when you have real insight into the *rightness* and *wrongness* of things, when you perceive the eternal fitness of human

relationships, you will begin to view such a problem of interpretation as you would imagine a high-minded, idealistic, wise, and impartial third person would view and interpret such an injunction as applied to your personal problems of adjustment to your life situations.

“6. *The spiritual level.* And then last, but greatest of all, we attain the level of spirit insight and spiritual interpretation which impels us to recognize in this rule of life the divine command to treat all people as we conceive the Creator would treat them. That is the universe ideal of human relationships. And this is your attitude toward all such problems when your supreme desire is always to do the Creator’s will. I would, therefore, admonish you to do to all others that which you know I would do to them in like circumstances.”

Nothing Jesus had said to the apostles up to this time had ever astonished them more. They continued to discuss the Master’s words long after Jesus had retired. While Nathaniel was slow to recover from the supposition that Jesus had misunderstood the spirit of the question, the others were more than thankful that their philosophic apostle had had the courage to ask such a thought-provoking question.

5. Visiting Simon the Pharisee

Simon, although not a member of the Jewish Sanhedrin, was an influential Pharisee of Jerusalem. Notwithstanding the possibility of being severely criticized, Simon dared to invite Jesus and the three personal associates, Peter, James, and John, home for a social meal. Simon had long observed the Master and was much impressed with the teachings and even more so with Jesus’ personality.

The wealthy Pharisees were devoted to almsgiving, and they did not shun publicity regarding their philanthropy. Sometimes they would even blow a trumpet as they were about to bestow charity on some beggar. It was the custom of these Pharisees, when they provided a banquet for distinguished guests, to leave the doors of the house open so that even the street beggars might come in and, standing around the walls of the room behind the couches of the diners, be in a position to receive portions of food which might be tossed to them by the banqueters.

On this particular occasion at Simon’s house, among those who came in off the street was a person of unsavory reputation who had recently become a follower of Jesus. This person had, on accepting the teachings of Jesus, closed up a nefarious place of business and had induced the majority of the people associated with it to change their mode of living, but was still held in great disdain by the Pharisees. This unnamed person had brought a large flask of perfumed anointing lotion and began to anoint Jesus’ feet.

Simon, seeing all this, thought: “Why wouldn’t Jesus, if really a prophet, have perceived that this person is a notorious sinner?” And Jesus, knowing what was going on in Simon’s mind, spoke up, saying: “Simon, I have something which I would like to say to you.” “A certain wealthy moneylender had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii and the other fifty. Now, when neither of them was able to pay, the lender forgave them both. Which of them do you think, Simon, would have been the most grateful?” Simon answered, “The one, I suppose, who was forgiven the most.” And Jesus said, “You have rightly judged,” and continued: “Simon, take a good look at this person. I entered your house as an invited guest, yet you gave me no water for my feet. This grateful person has washed my feet. You gave me no kiss of friendly greeting, but this person, ever since coming in, has not ceased to kiss my feet. You neglected to anoint my head with

oil, but this person has anointed my feet with precious lotions. And what is the meaning of all this? Simply that this is someone whose many sins have been forgiven, and has therefore been led to love much. But those who have received little forgiveness sometimes love little.” And Jesus lifted up the person and said: “You have indeed repented of your sins, and they are forgiven. Do not be discouraged by the thoughtless and unkind attitude of others; go on in the joy and liberty of the realm of the Creator.”

When Simon and those who sat at the table heard these words, they were astonished, and they began to whisper among themselves, “Who is this that dares to forgive sins?” And Jesus, hearing them murmuring, turned to dismiss the person, saying, “Go in peace; your faith has saved you.”

Jesus, rising to leave, turned to Simon and said: “I know your heart, Simon, how you are torn between faith and doubts, how you are distraught by fear and troubled by pride; but I pray for you that you may yield to the light and may experience in your station in life just such mighty transformations of mind and spirit as may be comparable to the tremendous changes which the doctrine of the new age has already brought about in the heart of your unbidden and unwelcome guest. And I say to all of you that the Creator has opened the doors of the new realm to all who have the faith to enter, and no person or association of people can close those doors even to the most humble soul or supposedly most flagrant sinner on earth if they sincerely seek an entrance.” And Jesus, with Peter, James, and John, left their host and went to join the rest of the apostles at the camp in the garden of Gethsemane.

That same evening Jesus made the long-to-be-remembered address to the apostles regarding the relative value of status with the Creator and progress in the eternal ascent to Paradise. “My children, if there exists a true and living connection between the child and the Parent, the child is certain to progress continuously toward the Parent’s ideals. True, the child may at first make slow progress, but the progress is none the less sure. The important thing is not the rapidity of your progress but rather its certainty. Your actual achievement is not as important as the fact that the *direction* of your progress is toward the Creator. What you are becoming day by day is of infinitely more importance than what you are today.

“This transformed person whom some of you saw at Simon’s house today is, at this moment, living on a level which is vastly below that of Simon and the others gathered there; but while these Pharisees are occupied with the false progress of the illusion of traversing deceptive circles of meaningless ceremonial services, this person has, in earnest, started out on the long and eventful search for the Creator, and this path is not blocked by spiritual pride and moral self-satisfaction. The person is, while humanly speaking, much farther away from the Creator than Simon, but has a soul that is in progressive motion and is on the way toward an eternal goal. In this person there are tremendous spiritual possibilities for the future. Some of you may not stand high in actual levels of soul and spirit, but you are making daily progress on the living way opened up, through faith, to the Creator. There are tremendous possibilities in each of you for the future. It is better by far to have a small but living and growing faith than to be possessed of a great intellect with its dead stores of worldly wisdom and spiritual unbelief.”

But Jesus earnestly warned the apostles against the foolishness of the child of the Creator who presumes on the Parent’s love, declaring that the Creator is not a lax, loose, or foolishly indulgent parent who is ready to condone sin and forgive recklessness. Jesus cautioned the apostles not to mistakenly apply these illustrations of parent and child so as to make it appear that the Creator is like some overindulgent and

unwise parents who conspire with the foolish of earth to encompass the moral undoing of their thoughtless children, and who are certainly and directly contributing to the delinquency and early demoralization of their own offspring. Said Jesus: "The Creator does not indulgently condone those acts and practices which are self-destructive and suicidal to all moral growth and spiritual progress. Such sinful practices are unacceptable in the sight of the Creator."

Jesus attended many other semiprivate meetings and banquets with the high and the low, the rich and the poor, of Jerusalem before finally leaving with the apostles for Capernaum. And many did accept the doctrine of the new age and were subsequently baptized by Abner, who remained behind to foster the interests of the new realm in and around Jerusalem.

6. Returning to Capernaum

The last week of April, Jesus and the twelve left their Bethany headquarters near Jerusalem and began their journey back to Capernaum by way of Jericho and the Jordan.

The chief priests and the religious leaders of the Jews held many secret meetings for the purpose of deciding how to stop Jesus, but they could not agree on the method. They had hoped that the civil authorities would dispose of Jesus as Herod had put an end to John, but they discovered that Jesus was working in such a manner that the Roman officials were not much alarmed. Accordingly, it was decided that Jesus would have to be apprehended on a religious charge and be tried by the Sanhedrin. Therefore a commission of six secret spies was appointed to observe Jesus' words and acts, and when they had amassed sufficient evidence of lawbreaking and blasphemy, to return to Jerusalem with their report. These six Jews caught up with the apostolic party, numbering about thirty, at Jericho and, under the pretense of wanting to become disciples, attached themselves to Jesus' family of followers, remaining with the group up to the time of the beginning of the second preaching tour in Galilee; at which point three of them returned to Jerusalem to submit their report to the chief priests and the Sanhedrin.

Peter preached to the assembled multitude at the crossing of the Jordan, and the following morning they moved up the river toward Amathus. They wanted to proceed straight on to Capernaum, but such a crowd gathered here they remained for three days, preaching, teaching, and baptizing. They did not move toward home until early Sabbath morning, the first day of May. The Jerusalem spies were sure they would now secure their first charge of Sabbath breaking against Jesus, who had presumed to start the journey on the Sabbath day. But they were doomed to disappointment because, just before their departure, Jesus instructed Andrew to proceed for a distance of only one thousand yards, the legal Jewish Sabbath day's journey.

But the spies did not have long to wait for their opportunity to accuse Jesus and the others of Sabbath breaking. As the company passed along the narrow road, the waving wheat, which was just then ripening, was near at hand on either side, and some of the apostles, being hungry, plucked the ripe grain and ate it. It was customary for travelers to help themselves to grain as they passed along the road, and therefore no thought of wrongdoing was attached to such conduct. But the spies seized on this as a pretext for assailing Jesus. When observing the grain being rubbed and eaten, they went up to Andrew and said: "Do you not know that it is unlawful to pluck and rub the grain on the Sabbath day?" And Andrew answered: "But we are hungry and take only enough for our needs; and since when did it become sinful to eat grain on the

Sabbath day?” But the Pharisees answered: “You do no wrong in eating, but you do break the law in plucking and rubbing out the grain between your hands; surely your Master would not approve of such acts.” Then Andrew said: “But if it is not wrong to eat the grain, surely the rubbing out between our hands is hardly more work than the chewing of the grain, which you allow; why do you bother over such trifles?” The spies were indignant, and rushing back to where Jesus walked along, talking to Matthew, they protested, saying: “Behold, Teacher, your apostles do that which is unlawful on the Sabbath day; they pluck, rub, and eat the grain. We are sure you will command them to stop.” And then Jesus said to the accusers: “You are indeed zealous for the law, and you do well to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy, but have you not read in our law that it is lawful to do many needful things on the Sabbath day? And shall I not, before the day is finished, see you eat that which you have brought along for the needs of this day? My good people, you do well to be zealous for the Sabbath, but you would do better to guard the health and well-being of your associates. I declare that the Sabbath was made for mortals and not mortals for the Sabbath. And if you are here with us to watch my words, then I will openly proclaim that the Child of the Creator is ruler even of the Sabbath.”

The Pharisees were astonished and confounded by these words of discernment and wisdom. For the remainder of the day they kept by themselves and did not dare to ask any more questions.

Jesus’ opposition to the Jewish traditions and slavish ceremonials was always *positive*. It consisted in doing and in affirming. The Master spent little time in negative denunciations, teaching that those who know the Creator can enjoy the liberty of living without deceiving themselves by the licenses of sinning. Said Jesus to the apostles: “If you are enlightened by the truth and really know what you are doing, you are blessed; but if you do not know the divine way, you are unfortunate and already breakers of the law.”

7. Back in Capernaum

It was around noon on Monday, May 3, when Jesus and the twelve came to Bethsaida by boat from Tarichea. They traveled by boat in order to escape those who journeyed with them. But by the next day the others, including the official spies from Jerusalem, had again found Jesus.

On Tuesday evening Jesus was conducting one of the customary classes of questions and answers when the leader of the six spies said: “I was talking today with one of John’s disciples who is here attending your teaching, and we were at a loss to understand why you never command your disciples to fast and pray as we Pharisees fast and as John taught.” And Jesus, referring to a statement by John, answered this questioner: “Do the guests of the bridechamber fast while the bridegroom is with them? As long as the bridegroom remains with them, they can hardly fast. But the time is coming when the bridegroom will be taken away, and during those times the children of the bridechamber undoubtedly will fast and pray. To pray is natural for the children of light, but fasting is not a part of the doctrine of the new realm. Be reminded that a wise tailor does not sew a piece of new and unshrunk cloth on an old garment, in case, when it is wet, it shrinks and produces a worse tear. Neither do people put new wine into old wine skins, in case the new wine might burst the skins so that both the wine and the skins are ruined. The wise person puts the new wine into fresh wine skins. Therefore my disciples show wisdom in that they do not bring too much of the old order over into the new teaching. You who have lost your teacher may be justified in fasting for a time. Fasting may be an appropriate part of the law of Moses, but in the coming realm the children of the Creator will

experience freedom from fear and joy in the divine spirit.” And when they heard these words, the disciples of John were comforted while the Pharisees themselves were the more confounded.

Then the Master proceeded to warn against entertaining the notion that all olden teaching should be replaced entirely by new doctrines. Jesus said: “That which is old and also *true* must endure. Likewise, that which is new but false must be rejected. But that which is new and also true, have the faith and courage to accept.”

8. The Feast of Spiritual Goodness

That night, long after the usual listeners had retired, Jesus continued to teach the apostles, beginning this special instruction by quoting from the Prophet Isaiah:

““Why have you fasted? For what reason do you afflict your souls while you continue to find pleasure in oppression and to take delight in injustice?

““Will you dare to call this a fast and an acceptable day in the sight of Yahweh? Is this not the fast I should choose: to open the bonds of wickedness, to undo the knots of heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share my bread with the hungry and to bring those who are homeless and poor to my house? And when I see those who are naked, I will clothe them.

““Yahweh desires that you draw out your heart to the hungry, and that you minister to the afflicted souls; then your light will shine in obscurity, and even your darkness will be as the noonday. Then Yahweh will guide you continually, satisfying your soul and renewing your strength.””

And then long into the night Jesus taught the apostles the truth that it was their faith that made them secure in the present and the future, and not their affliction of soul nor fasting of body. Jesus exhorted the apostles at least to live up to the ideas of the prophet of old and expressed the hope that they would progress far beyond even the ideals of Isaiah and the older prophets, completing the teaching that night with: “Grow in grace by means of that living faith which grasps the fact that you are the children of the Creator while at the same time it recognizes every other person as a sibling.”

It was after two o’clock in the morning when Jesus finished speaking and everyone went to their rooms to sleep.

Paper 148

Training Evangelists at Bethsaida

From May 3 to October 3, C.E. 28, Jesus and the apostolic party were in residence at the Zebedee home at Bethsaida. Throughout this five months' period of the dry season an enormous camp was maintained by the seaside near the Zebedee residence, which had been greatly enlarged to accommodate the growing family of Jesus. This seaside camp, occupied by an ever-changing population of truth seekers, healing candidates, and curiosity devotees, numbered from five hundred to fifteen hundred. This tented city was under the general supervision of David Zebedee, assisted by the Alpheus twins. The encampment was a model of order and sanitation as well as in its general administration. The sick of different types were segregated and were under the supervision of a physician, a Syrian named Elman.

Throughout this period the apostles would go fishing at least one day a week, selling their catch to David for consumption by the seaside encampment. The funds received were turned over to the group treasury. The twelve were permitted to spend one week out of each month with their families or friends.

While Andrew continued in general charge of the apostolic activities, Peter was in full charge of the school of the evangelists. The apostles all did their share in teaching groups of evangelists each morning, and both teachers and pupils taught the people during the afternoons. After the evening meal, five nights a week, the apostles conducted classes for the benefit of the evangelists. Once a week Jesus presided at this time, answering the holdover questions from previous sessions.

In five months several thousand came and went at this encampment. Interested persons from every part of the Roman Empire and from the lands east of the Euphrates were in frequent attendance. This was the longest settled and well-organized period of the Master's teaching. Jesus' immediate family spent most of this time at either Nazareth or Cana.

The encampment was not conducted as a community of common interests, as was the apostolic family. David Zebedee managed this large tent city so that it became a self-sustaining enterprise, even though no one was ever turned away. This ever-changing camp was an indispensable feature of Peter's evangelistic training school.

1. A New School of the Prophets

Peter, James, and Andrew were the committee designated by Jesus to approve applicants for admission to the school of evangelists. All the races and nationalities of the Roman world and the East, as far as India, were represented among the students in this new school of the prophets. This school was conducted on the plan of learning and doing. What the students learned during the morning they taught to the assembly by the seaside during the afternoon. After supper they informally discussed both the learning of the morning and the teaching of the afternoon.

Each of the apostolic teachers taught a personal view of the doctrine of the new realm. They made no effort to teach just alike; there was no standardized or dogmatic formulation of theologic doctrines. Though they all taught the *same truth*, each apostle presented a personal interpretation of the Master's teaching. And

Jesus upheld this presentation of the diversity of personal experience, unfailingly harmonizing and coordinating these many and divergent views at the weekly meetings. Notwithstanding this great degree of personal liberty in matters of teaching, Simon Peter tended to dominate the theology of the school of evangelists. Next to Peter, James Zebedee exerted the greatest personal influence.

The one hundred and more evangelists trained during this five months by the seaside represented the material from which (excepting Abner and John's apostles) the later seventy teachers and preachers were drawn. The school of evangelists did not have everything in common to the same degree as the twelve.

These evangelists, though they taught and preached, did not baptize until after they were later ordained and commissioned by Jesus as the seventy messengers of the new realm. Only seven of the large number who were healed at the sundown scene at this place were to be found among these evangelistic students. The child from Capernaum was one of those trained for service in Peter's school.

2. The Bethsaida Hospital

In connection with the seaside encampment, Elman, the Syrian physician, with the assistance of a corps of thirty-seven young people, organized and conducted for four months what should be regarded as the new realm's first hospital. At this infirmary, located a short distance to the south of the main tented city, they treated the sick in accordance with all known material methods as well as by the spiritual practices of prayer and faith encouragement. Jesus visited the sick of this encampment not less than three times a week and made personal contact with each sufferer. As far as we know, no so-called miracles of supernatural healing occurred among the one thousand afflicted and ailing persons who went away from this infirmary improved or cured. However, the vast majority of these benefited individuals did not cease to proclaim that Jesus had healed them.

Many of the cures effected by Jesus on behalf of Elman's patients did, indeed, appear to resemble the working of miracles, but we were instructed that they were just such transformations of mind and spirit as may occur in the experience of expectant and faith-dominated persons who are under the immediate and inspirational influence of a strong, positive, and beneficent personality whose ministry banishes fear and destroys anxiety.

Elman endeavored to teach the truth to these sick ones concerning the "possession of evil spirits," but met with little success. The belief that physical sickness and mental derangement could be caused by the dwelling of a so-called unclean spirit in the mind or body of the afflicted person was basically universal.

In all this contact with the sick and afflicted, when it came to the technique of treatment or the revelation of the unknown causes of disease, Jesus did not disregard the instructions of Immanuel, received before embarking upon the venture of the Urantia incarnation. Notwithstanding this, those who ministered to the sick learned many helpful lessons by observing the manner in which Jesus inspired the faith and confidence of the sick and suffering.

The camp disbanded a short time before the season for the increase in chills and fever arrived.

3. The Creator's Business

Throughout this period Jesus conducted public services at the encampment less than a dozen times and spoke only once in the Capernaum synagogue, the second Sabbath before their departure with the newly trained evangelists on their second public preaching tour of Galilee.

Not since the baptism had the Master been so much alone as during this period of the evangelists' training encampment at Bethsaida. Jesus, whenever asked by any one of the apostles about being absent so much from their midst, would invariably answer "I was about the Creator's business."

During these periods of absence, Jesus was accompanied by only two of the apostles, having released Peter, James, and John temporarily from their assignment as personal companions so that they might also participate in the work of training the new evangelistic candidates, numbering more than one hundred. The Master, when planning to go to the hills about the Creator's business, would summon any two of the apostles who might be at liberty to go along. In this way each of the twelve enjoyed an opportunity for close association and intimate contact with Jesus.

It has not been revealed for the purposes of this record, but we have been led to infer that the Master, during many of these solitary seasons in the hills, was in direct and executive association with many chief directors of universe affairs. Ever since the time of the baptism this incarnated Sovereign of our universe had become increasingly and consciously active in the direction of certain phases of universe administration. And we have always held the opinion that, in some way not revealed to the apostles, during these weeks of decreased participation in the affairs of earth, Jesus was engaged in the direction of those high spirit intelligences who were charged with the running of a vast universe, and that the human Jesus chose to designate such activities as being "about the Creator's business."

Many times, when two of the apostles were nearby during these solitary times, they observed Jesus' features undergo rapid and multitudinous changes, although speaking no words. Neither did they observe any visible manifestation of celestial beings who might have been in communication with their Master, such as some of them did witness on a subsequent occasion.

4. Evil, Sin, and Iniquity

It was the habit of Jesus two evenings each week to hold special conversations, in a certain secluded and sheltered corner of the Zebedee garden, with individuals who wanted to talk. At one of these evening conversations in private, Thomas asked the Master this question: "Why is it necessary for people to be born of the spirit in order to enter the new realm? Is rebirth necessary to escape the control of the evil one? Master, what is evil?" Jesus, on hearing these questions, said to Thomas:

"Do not make the mistake of confusing *evil* with the *evil one*, more correctly the *iniquitous one*. The person you call the evil one is the high administrator who knowingly went into deliberate rebellion against the rule of the Creator. But I have already vanquished these sinful rebels. Make clear in your mind these different attitudes toward the Creator and the universe. Never forget these laws of relation to the Creator's will:

“Evil is the unconscious or unintended transgression of the divine law, the Creator’s will. Evil is also the measure of the imperfectness of obedience to the Creator’s will.

“Sin is the conscious, knowing, and deliberate transgression of the divine law, the Creator’s will. Sin is the measure of unwillingness to be divinely led and spiritually directed.

“Iniquity is the willful, determined, and persistent transgression of the divine law, the Creator’s will. Iniquity is the measure of the continued rejection of the Creator’s loving plan of personality survival and merciful ministry.

“By nature, before the rebirth of the spirit, mortals are subject to inherent evil tendencies, but such natural imperfections of behavior are neither sin nor iniquity. Mortals are just beginning their long ascent to the perfection of the Universal Source. To be imperfect or partial in natural endowment is not sinful. Mortals are subject to evil, but they are in no sense the children of the evil one unless they have knowingly and deliberately chosen the paths of sin and the life of iniquity. Evil is inherent in the natural order of this world, but sin is an attitude of conscious rebellion which was brought to this world by those who fell from spiritual light into gross darkness.

“Mortals are by nature evil, but not necessarily sinful. The new birth — the baptism of the spirit — is essential to deliverance from evil and necessary for entrance into the new realm, but none of this detracts from the fact that mortals are the children of the Creator. Neither does this inherent presence of potential evil mean that mortals are in some mysterious way estranged from the Creator so that, as aliens, foreigners, or stepchildren, they must in some manner seek for legal adoption. All such notions are born, first, of your misunderstanding of the Creator and, second, of your ignorance of the origin, nature, and destiny of humanity.

“The Greeks and others have taught you that mortals are descending from godly perfection steadily down toward oblivion or destruction; I have come to show that mortals, by entrance into the new realm, are ascending certainly and surely up to the Creator and divine perfection. Any being who in any manner falls short of the divine and spiritual ideals of the eternal Creator’s will is potentially evil, but such beings are in no sense sinful, much less iniquitous.

“Thomas, have you not read about this in the Scriptures, where it is written: ‘You are the children of the Creator.’ ‘I will be their parent and they shall be my children.’ ‘I have chosen them to be my children — I will be their Parent.’ ‘Bring my children from the ends of the earth; even everyone who is called by my name, for I have created them for my glory.’ ‘You are the children of the living Creator.’ ‘They who have the spirit of the Creator are indeed the children of the Creator.’ While there is a material part of the human parent in the natural child, there is a spiritual part of the Creator in every faith child of the new realm.”

All this and much more Jesus said to Thomas, and much of it the apostle comprehended, although Jesus admonished: “Do not speak to the others concerning these matters until after I have returned to the Creator.” And Thomas did not mention this interview until after the Master had departed from this world.

5. The Purpose of Affliction

At another of these private interviews in the garden Nathaniel asked Jesus: “Master, though I am beginning to understand why you refuse to practice healing indiscriminately, I am still at a loss to understand why the loving Creator permits so many of the children on earth to suffer so many afflictions.” Jesus answered Nathaniel, saying:

“Nathaniel, you and many others are confused because you do not comprehend how the natural order of this world has been upset so many times by the sinful adventures of certain rebellious traitors to the Creator’s will. And I have come to make a beginning of setting these things in order. But many ages will be required to restore this part of the universe to former paths and to release mortals from the extra burdens of sin and rebellion. The presence of evil alone is a sufficient test for the ascension of mortals — sin is not essential to survival.

“But you should know that the Creator does not purposely afflict mortal children. Mortals bring on themselves unnecessary affliction as a result of their persistent refusal to walk in the better ways of the divine will. Affliction is potential in evil, but much of it has been produced by sin and iniquity. Many unusual events have transpired on this world, and it is not strange that all thinking people should be affected by the scenes of suffering and affliction which they witness. But of one thing you may be sure: The Creator does not send affliction as an arbitrary punishment for wrongdoing. The imperfections and handicaps of evil are inherent; the penalties of sin are inevitable; the destroying consequences of iniquity are inexorable. Mortals should not blame the Creator for those afflictions which are the natural result of the life which they choose to live; neither should mortals complain about those experiences which are a part of life as it is lived on this world. It is the Creator’s will that mortals should work persistently and consistently toward the betterment of their estate on earth. Intelligent application would enable mortals to overcome much of their earthly misery.

“Nathaniel, it is our mission to help people solve their spiritual problems and in this way to quicken their minds so that they may be better prepared and inspired to go about solving their manifold material problems. I know of your confusion as you have read the Scriptures. All too often a tendency has prevailed to ascribe to the Creator the responsibility for everything which ignorant people fail to understand. The Creator is not personally responsible for all you may fail to comprehend. Do not doubt the love of the Creator just because some just and wise law of the universe happens to afflict you because you have innocently or deliberately transgressed such a divine ordinance.”

6. The Misunderstanding of Suffering — Discourse on Job

It was this same evening at Bethsaida that John also asked Jesus why so many apparently innocent people suffered from so many diseases and experienced so many afflictions. In answering John’s questions, among many other things, the Master said:

“John, you do not comprehend the meaning of adversity or the purpose of suffering. Have you not read that masterpiece of Semitic literature — the Scripture story of the afflictions of Job? Do you not recall how this wonderful parable begins with the recital of the material prosperity of Yahweh’s servant? You will

remember that Job was blessed with children, wealth, dignity, position, health, and everything else which people value in this temporal life. According to the time-honored teachings of the children of Abraham such material prosperity was all-sufficient evidence of divine favor. But such material possessions and such temporal prosperity do not indicate the Creator's favor. The Creator loves the poor just as much as the rich and is no respecter of persons.

“Although transgression of divine law is sooner or later followed by the harvest of punishment, while mortals certainly eventually do reap what they sow, you should still know that human suffering is not always a punishment for antecedent sin. Job and Job's friends failed to find the true answer for their concerns. And with the light you now enjoy you would hardly assign to either Satan or the Creator the parts they play in this unique parable. Job, while not, through suffering, finding the resolution of intellectual troubles or the solution of philosophical difficulties, did achieve great victories; even in the very face of the breakdown of theological defenses Job ascended to those spiritual heights where it was possible to sincerely say, ‘I abhor myself’; and was granted the gift of a *vision of the Creator*. So even through misunderstood suffering, Job ascended to the superhuman plane of moral understanding and spiritual insight. When the suffering servant obtains a vision of the Creator, a soul peace which passes all human understanding follows.

“The first of Job's friends, Eliphaz, exhorted the sufferer to exhibit the same fortitude Job had prescribed for others during the days of prosperity. Said this false comforter: ‘Trust in your religion, Job; remember that it is the wicked and not the righteous who suffer. You must deserve this punishment, or else you would not be afflicted. You well know that no one can be righteous in Yahweh's sight. You know that the wicked never really prosper. Anyway, mortals seem predestined to trouble, and perhaps Yahweh is only chastising you for your own good.’ No wonder poor Job failed to get much comfort from such an interpretation of the problem of human suffering.

“But the counsel of the second friend, Bildad, was even more depressing, notwithstanding its soundness from the standpoint of the then accepted theology. Said Bildad: ‘Yahweh cannot be unjust. Your children must have been sinners since they perished; you must be in error, otherwise you would not be so afflicted. And if you are really righteous, Yahweh will certainly deliver you from your afflictions. You should learn from the history of Yahweh's dealings with mortals that the Almighty destroys only the wicked.’

“And then you remember how Job replied, saying: ‘I know that the Creator does not hear my cry for help. How can the Creator be just and at the same time so utterly disregard my innocence? I am learning that I can get no satisfaction from appealing to the Almighty. Cannot you discern that the Creator tolerates the persecution of the good by the wicked? And since mortals are so weak, what chance have they for consideration at the hands of an omnipotent Deity? The Creator has made me as I am, I am defenseless. And why did Yahweh ever create me just to suffer in this miserable fashion?’

“And who can challenge the attitude of Job in view of the counsel of these friends and the erroneous ideas of the Creator which Job held? Do you not see that Job longed for a *human* Deity and hungered to commune with a divine Being who knows the mortal estate and understands that the just must often suffer in innocence as a part of this first life of the long Paradise ascent? Therefore I have come from the Creator to live such a

life as a mortal in order to comfort and sustain all those who must be called on to endure the afflictions of Job.

“Job’s third friend, Zophar, then spoke still less comforting words when saying: ‘You are foolish to claim to be righteous, seeing that you are afflicted. But I admit that it is impossible to comprehend Yahweh’s ways. Perhaps there is some hidden purpose in all your miseries.’ And Job, after listening to all three of these friends, appealed directly to the Creator for help, pleading the fact that ‘mortals are few of days and full of trouble.’

“Then the second session began. Eliphaz grew more stern, accusing, and sarcastic. Bildad became indignant at Job’s contempt. Zophar reiterated the former melancholy advice. Job by this time had become disgusted with these friends and turned again to the Creator, now appealing to a just Deity against the Deity of injustice embodied in the philosophy of those friends and enshrined even in Job’s own religious attitude. Next Job took refuge in the consolation of a future life in which the inequities of mortal existence may be more justly rectified. Failure to receive help from humans drives Job to the Creator. Then the great struggle ensues in Job’s heart between faith and doubt. Finally, the human sufferer begins to see the light of life; this tortured soul ascends to new heights of hope and courage and may suffer on and even die, but Job’s enlightened soul now utters that cry of triumph, ‘My Vindicator lives!’

“Job was altogether right when challenging the doctrine that the Creator afflicts children in order to punish their parents. Job was always ready to admit that the Creator is righteous, but longed for some soul-satisfying revelation of the personal character of the Eternal. And that is my mission on earth. Suffering mortals will no longer be denied the comfort of knowing the love and mercy of the Creator. While the speech of Yahweh spoken from the whirlwind was a majestic concept for that day, you have already learned that the Creator is not so revealed, but rather speaks within the human heart as a still, small voice, saying, ‘This is the way.’ Do you not comprehend that the Creator dwells within you and has become what you are in order to make you what the Creator is!”

Then Jesus made this final statement: “The Creator does not willingly afflict mortals, who suffer, first, from the accidents of time and the imperfections of the evil of an immature physical existence. Next, they suffer the inexorable consequences of sin — the transgression of the laws of life and light. And finally, mortals reap the harvest of their own iniquitous persistence in rebellion against the righteous rule of the Creator. But mortals’ miseries are not a *personal* visitation of divine judgment. Humans can, and will, do much to lessen their temporal sufferings. But once and for all be delivered from the superstition that the Creator afflicts humans at the request of the evil one. Study the Book of Job just to discover how many wrong ideas of the Creator even good people may honestly entertain; and then note how even the painfully afflicted Job found comfort in spite of such erroneous teachings. At last Job’s faith pierced the clouds of suffering to discern the light of life pouring forth from the Creator as healing mercy and everlasting righteousness.”

John pondered these sayings for many days. John’s entire afterlife was markedly changed as a result of this conversation with the Master in the garden, and while doing much, in later times, to cause the other apostles to change their viewpoints regarding the source, nature, and purpose of commonplace human afflictions, John never spoke of this conference until after the Master had departed.

7. The Person with the Withered Hand

The second Sabbath before the departure of the apostles and the new corps of evangelists on the second preaching tour of Galilee, Jesus spoke in the Capernaum synagogue on the “Joys of Righteous Living.” When Jesus had finished speaking, a large group of those who were maimed, sick, and afflicted crowded up, seeking healing. Also in this group were the apostles, many of the new evangelists, and the Pharisaic spies from Jerusalem.

The leader of the spying Pharisees induced a person with a withered hand to approach Jesus and ask if it would be lawful to be healed on the Sabbath day or would it be best to seek help on another day. Jesus, observing that this person had been sent by the Pharisees, said: “Come forward while I ask you a question. If you had a sheep and it should fall into a pit on the Sabbath day, would you reach down and lift it out? Is it lawful to do such things on the Sabbath day?” And the person answered: “Yes, Master, it would be lawful to do well on the Sabbath day.” Then said Jesus, speaking to all of them: “I know why you have sent this person into my presence. You are trying to tempt me to show mercy on the Sabbath day. In silence you all agreed that it was lawful to lift the unfortunate sheep out of the pit, even on the Sabbath, and I call you to witness that it is lawful to exhibit loving-kindness on the Sabbath day not only to animals but also to people. How much more valuable is a person than a sheep! I proclaim that it is lawful to do good to people on the Sabbath day.” And as they all stood in silence, Jesus, addressing the person with the withered hand, said: “Stand here by my side so that all may see you. And now that you may know that it is the Creator’s will that you do good on the Sabbath day, if you have the faith to be healed, I ask you to stretch out your hand.”

And as this person stretched forth the withered hand, it was healed. The people were tempted to turn on the Pharisees, but Jesus asked them to be calm, saying: “I have just told you that it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath, to save life, but I did not instruct you to do harm and give way to the desire to kill.” The angered Pharisees went away, and notwithstanding it was the Sabbath day, they hurried to Tiberias and took counsel with Herod, doing everything in their power to secure the Herodians as allies against Jesus. But Herod refused to take action against Jesus, advising that they carry their complaints to Jerusalem.

This is the first case of a miracle to be created by Jesus in response to the challenge of these enemies. And the Master performed this so-called miracle, not as a demonstration of healing power, but as an effective protest against making the Sabbath rest of religion a veritable bondage of meaningless restrictions on all humankind. This person returned to work as a stone mason, proving to be one of those whose healing was followed by a life of thanksgiving and righteousness.

8. Last Week at Bethsaida

During the last week at Bethsaida the Jerusalem spies became divided in their attitude toward Jesus. Three of these Pharisees were tremendously impressed by what they had seen and heard. Meanwhile, at Jerusalem, Abraham, a young and influential member of the Sanhedrin, publicly espoused the teachings of Jesus and was baptized in the pool of Siloam by Abner. All Jerusalem was excited over this event, and messengers were immediately dispatched to Bethsaida recalling the six spying Pharisees.

The Greek philosopher who had accepted the new realm on the previous tour of Galilee returned with certain wealthy Jews of Alexandria, and once more they invited Jesus to come to their city for the purpose of establishing a joint school of philosophy and religion as well as an infirmary for the sick. But Jesus courteously declined the invitation.

About this time a trance prophet from Bagdad, one Kirmeth, arrived at the Bethsaida encampment. This supposed prophet had peculiar visions when in a trance and dreamed fantastic dreams during sleep. Kirmeth created a considerable disturbance at the camp, and Simon Zelotes was in favor of dealing rather roughly with the self-deceived pretender, but Jesus intervened and allowed Kirmeth entire freedom of action for a few days. All who heard Kirmeth's preaching soon recognized that this teaching was not sound. Kirmeth shortly returned to Bagdad, taking along only a half dozen unstable and erratic souls. But before Jesus interceded for the Bagdad prophet, David Zebedee, with the assistance of a self-appointed committee, had taken Kirmeth out into the lake and, after repeatedly being plunged into the water, Kirmeth was advised to depart.

On this same day, Beth-Marion, a Phoenician, became fanatical and went berserk and, after almost drowning from trying to walk on the water, was sent away.

The new Jerusalem convert, Abraham the Pharisee, gave all worldly goods to the apostolic treasury, and this contribution did much to make possible the immediate sending forth of the one hundred newly trained evangelists. Andrew had already announced the closing of the encampment, and everybody prepared either to go home or else to follow the evangelists into Galilee.

9. Healing the Paralytic

On Friday afternoon, October 1, when Jesus was holding a final meeting with the apostles, evangelists, and other leaders of the disbanding encampment, and with the six Pharisees from Jerusalem seated in the front row of this assembly in the spacious and enlarged front room of the Zebedee home, one of the strangest and most unique episodes of all Jesus' earth life occurred. The Master was, at this time, speaking in this large room, which had been built to accommodate these gatherings during the rainy season. The house was entirely surrounded by a vast group of people who were straining their ears to catch some part of Jesus' discourse.

While the house was thronged with people and entirely surrounded by eager listeners, a person long afflicted with paralysis was carried down from Capernaum on a small couch by friends. This paralytic had heard that Jesus was about to leave Bethsaida, and having talked with Aaron the stone mason, who had been so recently made whole, resolved to be carried into Jesus' presence to seek healing. The friends tried to gain entrance to Zebedee's house by both the front and back doors, but too many people were crowded together. But the paralytic refused to accept defeat, directing the friends to procure ladders by which they ascended to the roof of the room in which Jesus was speaking, and after loosening the tiles, they boldly lowered the sick person on a couch by ropes until the afflicted one rested on the floor immediately in front of the Master. Jesus, seeing what they had done, ceased speaking, while those who were in the room marveled at the perseverance of the sick person and the friends. Said the paralytic: "Master, I would not disturb your teaching, but I am determined to be made whole. I am not like those who received healing and immediately

forgot your teaching. I would be made whole that I might serve in the new realm.” Now, notwithstanding that this person’s affliction had been brought about by a misspent life, Jesus, hearing this declaration of faith, said to the paralytic: “Fear not; your sins are forgiven. Your faith will save you.”

When the Pharisees from Jerusalem, together with other scribes and lawyers who sat with them, heard this pronouncement by Jesus, they began to say to themselves: “How dare this person speak such blasphemy? Who can forgive sin but Yahweh?” Jesus, perceiving that they reasoned this way within their own minds and among themselves, spoke to them, saying: “Why do you so reason in your hearts? Who are you that you sit in judgment over me? What is the difference whether I say to this paralytic, your sins are forgiven, or arise, take up your bed, and walk? But that you who witness all this may finally know that I have authority and power on earth to forgive sins, I will say to this afflicted person, Arise, take up your bed, and go to your own house.” And when Jesus had spoken, the paralytic rose, and walked out before them all. And those who saw these things were amazed. Peter dismissed the assemblage, while many prayed and glorified Yahweh, confessing that they had never before seen such strange things.

And it was about this time that the messengers of the Sanhedrin arrived to instruct the six spies to return to Jerusalem. When they heard this message, they fell to earnest debate among themselves; and after they had finished their discussions, the leader and two of the others returned with the messengers to Jerusalem, while three of the spying Pharisees confessed faith in Jesus and, going immediately to the lake, were baptized by Peter and welcomed by the apostles as children of the new realm.

Paper 149

The Second Preaching Tour

The second public preaching tour of Galilee began on Sunday, October 3, C.E. 28, and continued for almost three months, ending on December 30. Participating in this effort were Jesus and the twelve apostles, assisted by the newly recruited corps of 117 evangelists and by numerous other interested persons. On this tour they visited Gadara, Ptolemais, Japhia, Dabaritta, Megiddo, Jezreel, Scythopolis, Tarichea, Hippos, Gamala, Bethsaida-Julias, and many other cities and villages.

Before the departure on this Sunday morning Andrew and Peter asked Jesus to give the final charge to the new evangelists, but the Master declined to do those things which others could acceptably perform. After due deliberation it was decided that James Zebedee should administer the charge. At the conclusion of James's remarks Jesus said to the evangelists: "Go now to do the work as you have been charged, and later on, when you have shown yourselves competent and faithful, I will ordain you to preach the doctrine of the new age."

On this tour only James and John traveled with Jesus. Peter and the other apostles each took with them about one dozen of the evangelists and maintained close contact with them while they carried on their work of preaching and teaching. As fast as people were ready, the apostles would administer baptism. Jesus and the two companions traveled extensively during these three months, often visiting two cities in one day to observe the work of the evangelists and to encourage them in their efforts. This entire second preaching tour was principally an effort to afford practical experience for this corps of 117 newly trained evangelists.

Throughout this period and subsequently, up to the time of the final departure of Jesus and the twelve for Jerusalem, David Zebedee maintained a permanent headquarters in the family house at Bethsaida. This was the clearinghouse for Jesus' work on earth and the relay station for the messenger service which David carried on between the workers in various parts of Palestine and adjacent regions. David took the initiative for all of this with the approval of Andrew. David employed forty to fifty messengers in this intelligence division of the rapidly enlarging and extending work, being partially supported by spending some time at fishing.

1. The Widespread Fame of Jesus

By the time the camp at Bethsaida had been broken up, the fame of Jesus, particularly as a healer, had spread to all parts of Palestine and through all of Syria and the surrounding countries. For weeks after they left Bethsaida, the sick continued to arrive. On this tour Jesus did not deliberately perform any so-called miracles of healing. Nevertheless, scores of afflicted found restoration of health and happiness as a result of the reconstructive power of the intense faith which impelled them to seek for healing.

A peculiar and unexplained series of healing phenomena began to appear about the time of this mission and continued throughout the remainder of Jesus' life on earth. In the course of this three months' tour more than one hundred people from Judea, Idumea, Galilee, Syria, Tyre, and Sidon, and from beyond the Jordan were beneficiaries of this unconscious healing by Jesus and, returning to their homes, added to the

enlargement of Jesus' fame. And they did this in spite of the fact that Jesus would, on observing one of these cases of spontaneous healing, directly charge the beneficiary to "tell no one."

It was never revealed to us just what occurred in these cases of spontaneous or unconscious healing. The Master never explained to the apostles how these healings were effected, other than saying on several occasions, "I perceive that power has gone forth from me," and on one occasion remarking when touched by an ailing child, "I perceive that life has gone forth from me."

In the absence of direct word from the Master regarding the nature of these cases of spontaneous healing, it would be presuming on our part to undertake to explain how they were accomplished, but it will be permissible to record our opinion of all such healing phenomena. We believe that many of these apparent miracles of healing, as they occurred in the course of Jesus' earth ministry, were the result of the coexistence of the following three powerful, potent, and associated influences:

1. The presence of strong, dominant, and living faith in the heart of the human being who persistently sought healing, together with the fact that such healing was desired for its spiritual benefits rather than for purely physical restoration.
2. The existence, concomitant with such human faith, of the great sympathy and compassion of the incarnated and mercy-dominated Child of the Creator, who actually possessed almost unlimited and timeless creative healing powers and prerogatives.
3. Along with the faith of the creature it should also be noted that this Paradise Being was the personified expression of the Creator's will. If, in the contact of the human need and the divine power to meet it, the Creator did not will otherwise, the two became one, and the healing occurred unconsciously to the human Jesus but was immediately recognized by the divine nature. The explanation, then, of many of these cases of healing must be found in a great law which has long been known to us, namely, What the Child of the Creator desires and the eternal Creator wills IS.

It is, then, our opinion that, in the personal presence of Jesus, certain forms of profound human faith were literally and truly *compelling* in the manifestation of healing by certain creative forces and personalities of the universe who were at that time so intimately associated with this bestowal Being. It therefore becomes a fact of record that Jesus did, while present, frequently allow people to heal themselves by their powerful, personal faith.

Many others sought healing for wholly selfish purposes. A rich person of Tyre came seeking to be healed of infirmities, which were many; and following Jesus through Galilee, continued to offer more and more money, as if the power of the Creator were something to be purchased by the highest bidder. But this person would never become interested in the doctrine of the new age, only the cure of physical ailments.

2. Attitude of the People

Jesus understood the minds and hearts of people, and had the teachings been left as they were presented, the only commentary being the inspired interpretation afforded by Jesus' earth life, all nations and all religions of the world would speedily have embraced the doctrine of the new realm. The well-meant efforts

of Jesus' early followers to restate those teachings so as to make them more acceptable to certain nations and religions, only resulted in making them less acceptable to all other nations and religions.

The Apostle Paul, through efforts to bring the teachings of Jesus to the favorable notice of certain groups in that day, wrote many letters of instruction and admonition. Others did likewise, but none of them realized that some of these writings would subsequently be brought together by those who would enshrine them as the embodiment of the teachings of Jesus. And so, while so-called Christianity does contain more of the Master's teachings than any other religion, it also contains much that Jesus did not teach. Aside from the incorporation of many doctrines from the Persian mysteries and much of the Greek philosophy into early Christianity, two great mistakes were made:

1. The effort to connect the teachings directly onto the Jewish theology, as illustrated by the Christian doctrine of the atonement — the idea that Jesus was the sacrificed Child who would satisfy the Paradise Parent's stern justice and appease the divine wrath. This doctrine originated in a praiseworthy effort to make the teachings about the new realm more acceptable to disbelieving Jews. Though these efforts failed as far as winning the Jews was concerned, they did not fail to confuse and alienate many honest souls in all subsequent generations.
2. The second great blunder of the Master's early followers, and one which all subsequent generations have persisted in perpetuating, was to organize the Christian message so completely about the *person* of Jesus. This overemphasis of the personality of Jesus in the theology of Christianity has worked to obscure the teachings, and all of this has made it increasingly difficult for Jews, Muslims, Hindus, and other Eastern religionists to accept the doctrines of Jesus. We would not belittle the place of the person of Jesus in this religion, but we would not permit such consideration to eclipse Jesus' inspired life or saving message: the parenthood of the Creator and the family of humanity.

Proponents of the religion of Jesus should approach other religions with the recognition of the truths which are held in common (many of which come directly or indirectly from Jesus' message) while they refrain from placing so much emphasis on the differences.

While, at that particular time, the fame of Jesus rested chiefly on having a reputation as a healer, it does not follow that it continued in that way. As time passed, more and more Jesus was sought for spiritual help. But it was the physical cures that made the most direct and immediate appeal to the common people. Jesus was increasingly sought by the victims of moral enslavement and mental harassments, and invariably taught them the way of deliverance. Parents asked advice regarding the management of their children. Those who sat in darkness came to Jesus, who revealed to them the light of life. Jesus was always open to the sorrows of humankind and was always helping those who wanted assistance.

When the Local Universe Creator was incarnated on earth, it was inevitable that some extraordinary things would happen. But you should never approach Jesus through these so-called miraculous occurrences. Learn to approach the miracle through Jesus, but do not make the mistake of approaching Jesus through the miracle. And this admonition is warranted, notwithstanding that Jesus of Nazareth is the only founder of a religion who performed supermaterial acts on earth.

Jesus was entirely free from the superstitions of that day, was free from religious prejudices, was never intolerant, and had nothing resembling social antagonism. While complying with the good in the Jewish religion, Jesus did not hesitate to disregard evolutionary traditions of superstition and bondage, daring to teach that catastrophes of nature, accidents of time, and other calamitous happenings are not visitations of divine judgments or mysterious dispensations of Providence. Jesus denounced slavish devotion to meaningless ceremonials and exposed the fallacy of materialistic worship, boldly proclaiming spiritual freedom and daring to teach that mortals are indeed and in truth the children of the living Creator.

Jesus transcended all the earlier teachings, boldly substituting clean hearts for clean hands as the mark of true religion, putting reality in the place of tradition, and sweeping aside all pretensions of vanity and hypocrisy. And yet this fearless mortal did not give vent to destructive criticism or manifest an utter disregard of the religious, social, economic, and political usages of that time. Jesus was not a militant revolutionist, but a progressive evolutionist, engaging in the destruction of that which *was* only while simultaneously offering the superior thing which *ought to be*.

Jesus received the obedience of others without exacting it. Only three people who were personally invited refused to accept discipleship. Jesus exercised a peculiar drawing power over people, but was not dictatorial, and while Jesus assumed absolute authority over the disciples, no one ever objected.

The Master was admired by all except by those who entertained deep-seated religious prejudices or thought they discerned political dangers in Jesus' teachings. People were astonished at the originality and authoritativeness of the teachings. They marveled at Jesus' patience in dealing with backward and troublesome inquirers. Jesus inspired hope and confidence in the hearts of all who came for ministry, and was hated and feared only by those who were afraid of that truth which was destined to overthrow the evil and error which they had determined to hold in their hearts at all cost.

On both friends and foes Jesus exercised a strong and peculiarly fascinating influence. Multitudes would follow for weeks just to experience Jesus' gracious words and simple life. Devoted people loved Jesus with a well-nigh superhuman affection. And all this is still true, even today and in all future ages. The more mortals come to know Jesus, the more they will love and follow after the Master.

3. Hostility of the Religious Leaders

Notwithstanding the favorable reception of Jesus by the common people, the religious leaders at Jerusalem became increasingly alarmed and antagonistic. The Pharisees had formulated a systematic and dogmatic theology. Jesus taught as the occasion served and not systematically, teaching not so much from the law as from life, by parables. (And when employing a parable for illustrating the message, Jesus utilized just *one* feature of the story for that purpose. Many wrong ideas concerning the teachings of Jesus may be created by attempting to make allegories out of these parables.)

The religious leaders at Jerusalem were becoming frantic as a result of the recent conversion of young Abraham and by the desertion of the three spies who had been baptized by Peter, and who were now out with the evangelists on this second preaching tour of Galilee. The Jewish leaders were increasingly blinded by fear and prejudice, while their hearts were hardened by their continued rejection of the appealing truths

of the doctrine of the new realm. When people shut off the appeal to the spirit that dwells within them, there is little that can be done to modify their attitude.

Jesus, when first meeting with the evangelists at the Bethsaida camp, concluded by saying: “You should remember that in body and mind — emotionally — people react individually. The only *uniform* thing about people is the indwelling spirit. Though divine spirits may vary somewhat in the nature and extent of their experience, they react uniformly to all spiritual appeals. Only through, and by appeal to this spirit, can humankind ever attain unity.” But many of the leaders of the Jews had closed the doors of their hearts to the spiritual appeal of these teachings. From this day on they did not cease to plan and plot for the Master’s destruction. They were convinced that Jesus must be apprehended, convicted, and executed as a religious offender, a violator of the cardinal teachings of the Jewish sacred law.

4. Progress of the Preaching Tour

Jesus did very little public work on this preaching tour, but conducted many evening classes with the followers in most of the cities and villages. At one of these evening sessions one of the younger evangelists asked Jesus a question about anger, and the Master, among other things, said in reply:

“Anger is a material manifestation which represents, in a general way, the measure of the failure of the spiritual nature to gain control of the combined intellectual and physical natures. Anger indicates your lack of tolerant familial love plus your lack of self-respect and self-control. Anger depletes the health, debases the mind, and handicaps the spirit teacher of a person’s soul.”

On this same occasion the Master talked to the group about the desirability of possessing well-balanced characters. Jesus recognized that it was necessary for most people to devote themselves to the mastery of some vocation, but deplored all tendency toward overspecialization, toward becoming narrow-minded and circumscribed in life’s activities. Jesus called attention to the fact that any virtue, if carried to extremes, may become a vice, always preaching temperance and teaching consistency — proportionate adjustment of life problems. Jesus pointed out that too much sympathy and pity may degenerate into serious emotional instability; that enthusiasm may become fanaticism, and discussed one of their former associates whose imagination had led to visionary and impractical undertakings, at the same time warning them against the dangers of the dullness of overconservative mediocrity.

And then Jesus discussed the dangers of courage and faith, how they sometimes lead unthinking people to recklessness and presumption, and also showed how prudence and discretion, when carried too far, lead to cowardice and failure. Jesus exhorted people to strive for originality while they shunned all tendency toward eccentricity, pleading for sympathy without sentimentality, piety without sanctimoniousness, and teaching reverence free from fear and superstition.

It was not so much what these teachings said about balanced character that impressed people as the fact that Jesus’ own life was such an eloquent exemplification of this teaching. Jesus lived in the midst of stress and storm, but never wavered. Enemies continually laid snares, but they never succeeded. The wise and learned endeavored to trip Jesus, who never stumbled. When being embroiled in debate, Jesus’ answers were always enlightening, dignified, and final. When Jesus’ discourses were interrupted with multitudinous questions,

the answers were always significant and conclusive. Jesus never resorted to ignoble tactics in meeting the continuous pressure of enemies, who did not hesitate to employ every sort of false, unfair, and unrighteous mode of attack.

While it is true that many people must assiduously apply themselves to some definite pursuit as a livelihood vocation, it is nevertheless wholly desirable that human beings should cultivate a wide range of cultural familiarity with life as it is lived on earth. Truly educated persons are not satisfied with remaining in ignorance of the lives and doings of others.

5. Lesson Regarding Contentment

When Jesus was visiting the group of evangelists working under the supervision of Simon Zelotes, during their evening conference Simon asked the Master: "Why are some persons so much happier and more contented than others? Is contentment a matter of religious experience?" Among other things, Jesus said in answer to Simon's question:

"Simon, some persons are naturally happier than others. Much depends on the willingness of people to be led and directed by the Creator's spirit which lives within them.

"Much of people's sorrow is born of the disappointment of their ambitions and the wounding of their pride. Although people owe a duty to themselves to make the best of their lives on earth, having sincerely exerted themselves, they should cheerfully accept their lot and exercise ingenuity in making the most of that which has fallen to their hands. All too many of people's troubles take origin in the soil of their own fearful hearts.

"Do not seek for false peace and transient joy but rather for the assurance of faith and the sureties of the divine relationship which yield composure, contentment, and supreme joy in the spirit."

Jesus hardly regarded this world as a "vale of tears," but rather looked on it as the birth sphere of the eternal and immortal spirits of Paradise ascension, the "vale of soul making."

6. The "Fear of Yahweh"

It was at Gamala, during the evening conference, that Philip said to Jesus: "Master, why is it that the Scriptures instruct us to 'fear Yahweh,' while you would have us look to the Creator without fear? How are we to harmonize these teachings?" And Jesus replied to Philip, saying:

"My children, I am not surprised that you ask such questions. In the beginning it was only through fear that people could learn reverence, but I have come to reveal the Creator's love so that you will be attracted to the worship of the Eternal by the drawing of a child's affectionate recognition and reciprocation of the Paradise Parent's profound and perfect love. I would deliver you from the bondage of driving yourselves through slavish fear to the irksome service of a jealous and wrathful Deity. I would instruct you in the Parent-child relationship of the Creator and mortals so that you may be joyfully led into that sublime and supernal free worship of a loving, just, and merciful Divine Parent.

“The ‘fear of Yahweh’ has had different meanings in the successive ages, coming up from fear, through anguish and dread, to awe and reverence. And now from reverence I would lead you up, through recognition, realization, and appreciation, to *love*. When mortals recognize only the works of the Creator, they are led to fear; but when people begin to understand and experience the personality and character of the living Creator, they are led to increasingly love such a good and perfect universal and eternal Parent. And it is just this changing of the relation of mortals to the Creator that constitutes my mission on earth.

“Intelligent children do not fear their parents in order that they may receive good gifts from their hands; but having already received the abundance of good things bestowed by the dictates of the parents’ affection, these much loved children are led to love their parents in responsive recognition and appreciation of such beneficence. The goodness of the Creator leads to repentance; the beneficence of the Creator leads to service; the mercy of the Creator leads to eternal life; while the love of the Creator leads to intelligent and freehearted worship.

“Your forebears feared Yahweh for being mighty and mysterious. You will adore the Creator for being magnificent in love, plenteous in mercy, and glorious in truth. The power of Yahweh engenders fear in the hearts of mortals, but the nobility and righteousness of the Creator’s personality promote reverence, love, and willing worship. A dutiful and affectionate child does not fear or dread even mighty and noble parents. I have come into the world to put love in the place of fear, joy in the place of sorrow, confidence in the place of dread, loving service and appreciative worship in the place of slavish bondage and meaningless ceremonies. But it is still true of those who sit in darkness that ‘the fear of Yahweh is the beginning of wisdom.’ But when the light has more fully come, mortals are led to praise what the Creator *is* rather than to fear what the Creator *does*.

“When children are young and unthinking, they must necessarily be admonished to honor their parents. But when they grow older and become somewhat more appreciative of the benefits of parental ministry and protection, they are led, through understanding respect and increasing affection, to that level of experience where they actually love their parents for what they are, more than for what they have done. Parents naturally love their children, but children must develop love for their parents from the fear of what the parents can do, through awe, dread, dependence, and reverence, to the appreciative and affectionate regard of love.

“You have been taught that you should ‘fear Yahweh and keep the commandments, for that is the whole duty of humanity.’ But I have come to give you a new and higher commandment. I would teach you to ‘love the Creator and learn to do the Creator’s will, for that is the highest privilege of the Creator’s liberated children.’ Your forebears were taught to ‘fear Yahweh — the Almighty Ruler.’ I teach you, ‘Love the Creator — the all-merciful Parent.’

“In the new realm, which I have come to declare, there is no high and mighty ruler; this realm is a divine family. The universally recognized and unreservedly worshiped center and head of this family of intelligent beings is my Parent and your Parent. I am the Creator’s child, and you are also the Creator’s children. Therefore it is eternally true that you and I are siblings in the new realm, and all the more so since we have become siblings in the earthly life. Do not fear Yahweh as a ruler or serve Yahweh as a master; learn to reverence Yahweh as the Creator; honor the Creator as the Parent of your spirit youth; love the Creator as

a merciful defender; and ultimately worship the Creator as the loving and all-wise Parent of your more mature spiritual realization and appreciation.

“Out of your wrong concepts of the Creator grow your false ideas of humility and springs much of your hypocrisy. Mortals may be worms of the dust by nature and origin, but when they become indwelt by the Creator’s spirit, they become divine in their destiny. The bestowal spirit of the Creator will surely return to the divine source and universe level of origin, and the human souls of mortals which have become the reborn children of this indwelling spirit will certainly ascend with the divine spirit to the very presence of the eternal Source.

“Humility is appropriate for mortals who receive all these gifts from the Creator, although there is a divine dignity attached to all such faith candidates for the eternal ascent to Paradise. The meaningless and menial practices of an ostentatious and false humility are incompatible with the appreciation of the source of your eternal life and the recognition of the destiny of your spirit-born souls. Humility before the Creator is appropriate in the depths of your hearts; meekness before others is commendable; but the hypocrisy of self-conscious and attention-craving humility is childish and unworthy of the enlightened children of the new realm.

“You do well to be meek before the Creator and self-controlled before others, but let your meekness be of spiritual origin and not the self-deceptive display of a self-conscious sense of self-righteous superiority. The prophet spoke advisedly when saying, ‘Walk humbly with Yahweh,’ for the Creator, while being Infinite and Eternal, also dwells ‘with one who is of a contrite mind and a humble spirit.’ The Creator disdains pride, loathes hypocrisy, and abhors iniquity. And it was to emphasize the value of sincerity and perfect trust in the loving support and faithful guidance of the Creator that I have so often referred to the little child as illustrative of the attitude of mind and the response of spirit which are so essential to the entrance of mortals into the spirit realities of the new realm.

7. Returning to Bethsaida

Andrew, in consultation with Simon Peter and with the approval of Jesus, had instructed David at Bethsaida to dispatch messengers to the various preaching groups with instructions to terminate the tour and return to Bethsaida sometime on Thursday, December 30. By supper time on that rainy day all of the apostolic party and the teaching evangelists had arrived at the Zebedee home.

The group remained together over the Sabbath day, being accommodated in the homes of Bethsaida and near-by Capernaum, after which the entire party was granted a two weeks’ recess to go home to their families, visit their friends, or go fishing. The two or three days they were together in Bethsaida were exhilarating and inspiring; even the older teachers were edified by the young preachers as they narrated their experiences.

Of the 117 evangelists who participated in this second preaching tour of Galilee, only about seventy-five survived the test of actual experience and were on hand to be assigned to service at the end of the two weeks’ recess. Jesus, with Andrew, Peter, James, and John, remained at the Zebedee home and spent much time in conference regarding the welfare and extension of the new age.

Paper 150

The Third Preaching Tour

On Sunday evening, January 16, C.E. 29, Abner, with John's apostles, reached Bethsaida and went into joint conference with Andrew and the apostles of Jesus the next day. Abner and the other apostles of John made their headquarters at Hebron and were in the habit of coming to Bethsaida periodically for these conferences.

Among the many matters considered by this joint conference was the practice of anointing the sick with certain forms of oil in connection with prayers for healing. Again Jesus declined to participate in their discussions or to express anything regarding their conclusions. The apostles of John had always used the anointing oil in their ministry to the sick and afflicted, and they wanted to establish this as a uniform practice for both groups, but the apostles of Jesus refused to bind themselves by such a regulation.

On Tuesday, January 18, the twenty-four were joined by the tested evangelists, about seventy-five in number, at the Zebedee house in Bethsaida in preparation for being sent out on the third preaching tour of Galilee. This third mission continued for a period of seven weeks.

The evangelists were sent in groups of five, while Jesus and the twelve traveled together most of the time, the apostles going out two and two to baptize as the occasion required. For a period of almost three weeks Abner and the apostles of John also worked with the evangelistic groups, advising them and baptizing. They visited Magdala, Tiberias, Nazareth, and all the principal cities and villages of central and southern Galilee, all the places previously visited and many others. This was their last message to Galilee, except to the northern portions.

Editors' Note: *While it has been the policy of this edition to restate the text of The Urantia Book in gender neutral terms, in recognition of the historic precedent of Jesus' insistence on gender equality among the ambassadors of the new realm, we are including the following two sections of the original text that describe the formation of the women's evangelistic corps. This was such a significant element of Jesus' bestowal that we have decided to retain the specific gender reference in this instance.*

1. The Women's Evangelistic Corps

Of all the daring things which Jesus did in connection with the earth career, the most amazing was the sudden announcement on the evening of January 16: "Tomorrow we will set apart ten women for the ministering work of the realm." At the beginning of the two weeks' period during which the apostles and the evangelists were to be absent from Bethsaida, Jesus requested David to summon the elder Zebedees back to their home and to dispatch messengers calling to Bethsaida ten devout women who had served in the administration of the former encampment and the tented infirmary. These women had all listened to the instruction given the young evangelists, but it had never occurred to either themselves or their teachers that Jesus would dare to commission women to teach the doctrine of the new realm and minister to the sick. These ten selected and commissioned by Jesus were: Susanna, Joanna, Elizabeth, Martha, Rachel, Nasanta,

Milcha, Ruth, Celta, and Agaman. Later on, Jesus added two other women to this group — Mary Magdalene and Rebecca of Arimathea.

Jesus authorized these ten to create their own organization and directed Judas to provide funds for their equipment and for pack animals. This group elected Susanna as their chief and Joanna as their treasurer. From this time on they furnished their own funds; never again drawing on Judas for support.

It was most astounding in that day, when women were not even allowed on the main floor of the synagogue, to see them being recognized as authorized teachers of the new doctrine of the realm. The charge which Jesus gave this new group while setting them apart for teaching and ministry was the emancipation proclamation which established a precedent for that time. This was a decided shock to even the twelve apostles. Notwithstanding that they had many times heard the Master say that “in the realm of the Creator, there are no lower classes, all are equally the children of the Creator,” they were literally stunned when Jesus proposed to formally commission this new group as religious teachers and even to permit their traveling about with the apostles. The whole country was stirred up by this proceeding, the enemies of Jesus making great capital out of this move, but everywhere the women believers stood stanchly behind their chosen sisters and voiced no uncertain approval of this tardy acknowledgment of a woman’s place in religious work. And this liberation, giving them due recognition, was practiced by the apostles immediately after the Master’s departure, although they fell back to the old customs in subsequent generations. Throughout the early days of the Christian church women teachers and ministers were accorded general recognition. But Paul, despite conceding all this in theory, personally found it difficult to carry out in practice.

2. The Stop at Magdala

Increasingly, women had become believers in the new doctrine, and it had been a source of much difficulty and no end of embarrassment when they had asked to hold personal conversations with Jesus or one of the apostles. Now all this was changed. When any of the women believers wanted to see the Master or confer with the apostles, they went to Susanna, and in company with one of the women evangelists, they would go at once into the presence of the Master or one of the apostles.

It was at Magdala that the women first demonstrated their usefulness and vindicated the wisdom of their choosing. Andrew had imposed rather strict rules on the male associates about doing personal work with women, especially with those of questionable character. When the party entered Magdala, these ten women evangelists were free to enter the evil resorts and preach the new doctrine directly to all their residents. And when visiting the sick, they were able to draw very close in their ministry to their afflicted sisters. As the result of the ministry of this group, Mary Magdalene became a believer. Through a succession of misfortunes and in consequence of the attitude of reputable society toward women who commit such errors of judgment, Mary had become resident in one of the nefarious resorts of Magdala. It was Martha and Rachel who made it clear to Mary that the doors of the new realm were open to everyone. Mary believed them and was baptized by Peter the next day.

Mary Magdalene became the most effective teacher of the new doctrine among this group of new evangelists. Mary was set apart for such service, together with Rebecca, at Jotapata about four weeks

subsequent to being converted. Mary and Rebecca, with the others of this group, went on through the remainder of Jesus' life on earth, working faithfully and effectively for the enlightenment and uplifting of their downtrodden sisters; and when the last and tragic episode in the drama of Jesus' life was being enacted, notwithstanding that the apostles all fled except one, these women were all present, and not one either denied or betrayed the Master.

3. Sabbath at Tiberias

The Sabbath services of the apostolic party had been put in the hands of the women by Andrew, on instructions from Jesus. This meant, of course, that they could not be held in the new synagogue. The group selected Joanna to have charge of this occasion, and the meeting was held in the banquet room of Herod's new palace, Herod being away in residence at Julias in Perea. Joanna read from the Scriptures concerning women in the religious life of Israel, making reference to Miriam, Deborah, Esther, and others.

Late that evening Jesus gave a memorable talk on "Magic and Superstition." In those days the appearance of a bright and supposedly new star was regarded as a token indicating that a great person had been born on earth. Such a star having recently been observed, Andrew asked Jesus if these beliefs were well founded. In the long answer to Andrew's question the Master entered on a thoroughgoing discussion of the whole subject of human superstition. The statement which Jesus made at this time may be summarized as follows:

1. The courses of the stars have nothing whatever to do with the events of human life on earth. Astronomy is a proper pursuit of science, but astrology is a mass of superstitious error which has no place in the new realm.
2. The examination of the internal organs of an animal recently killed can reveal nothing about weather, future events, or the outcome of human affairs.
3. The spirits of the dead do not come back to communicate with their families or their former friends among the living.
4. Charms and relics are powerless to heal disease, ward off disaster, or influence evil spirits; the belief in all such material means of influencing the spiritual world is nothing but gross superstition.
5. Casting lots, while it may be a convenient way of settling many minor difficulties, is not a method designed to disclose the divine will. Such outcomes are purely matters of material chance. The only means of communion with the spiritual world is embraced in the spirit endowment of humankind, the indwelling spirit of the Creator, together with the outpoured Spirit of Truth and the omnipresent influence of the Infinite Mind.
6. Divination, sorcery, and witchcraft are superstitions of ignorant minds, as are the delusions of magic. The belief in magic numbers, omens of good luck, and harbingers of bad luck, is pure and unfounded superstition.

7. The interpretation of dreams is largely a superstitious and groundless system of ignorant and fantastic speculation. The doctrine of the new age must have nothing in common with the soothsayer priests of primitive religion.

8. The spirits of good or evil cannot dwell within material symbols of clay, wood, or metal; idols are nothing more than the material of which they are made.

9. The practices of the enchanters, wizards, magicians, and sorcerers were derived from the superstitions of the Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, and the ancient Canaanites. Amulets and all sorts of incantations are futile either to win the protection of good spirits or to ward off supposed evil spirits.

10. Jesus exposed and denounced their belief in spells, ordeals, bewitching, cursing, signs, mandrakes, knotted cords, and all other forms of ignorant and enslaving superstition.

4. Sending the Apostles Out Two and Two

The next evening, having gathered together the twelve apostles and the apostles of John, Jesus said: “You see for yourselves that the harvest is plenteous, but the laborers are few. Let us all, therefore, pray to the Creator to send even more laborers into the fields. While I remain to comfort and instruct the younger teachers, I would send out the older ones two and two so that they may pass quickly over all Galilee preaching the new doctrine while it is still convenient and peaceful.” Then Jesus designated the pairs of apostles to go out, and they were: Andrew and Peter, James and John Zebedee, Philip and Nathaniel, Thomas and Matthew, James and Judas Alpheus, Simon Zelotes and Judas Iscariot.

Jesus arranged the date for meeting the twelve at Nazareth, and in leaving said: “On this mission do not go to any city of the gentiles or into Samaria, but go instead to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Preach the new doctrine and proclaim that mortals are children of the Creator. I declare to you that there is nothing covered up that is not going to be revealed; there is nothing hidden that will not be known. What I have taught you privately, preach with wisdom in the open. What I have revealed to you in the inner chamber, proclaim in due time from the housetops. And I say to you, my friends and disciples, do not be afraid of those who can kill the body, but who are not able to destroy the soul; rather put your trust in the One who is able to sustain the body and save the soul.

“Not one of you is forgotten in the Creator’s sight. Do not be afraid. Do not be ashamed of my teaching; go forth proclaiming peace and good will, but do not be deceived — peace will not always attend your preaching. I came to bring peace on earth, but when people reject my gift, division and turmoil result. When all of a family receive the new doctrine, there is peace in that house; but when some of the family enter the new realm and others reject it, such division can produce only sorrow and sadness. Labor earnestly to save the whole family so that a person’s enemies do not become those of their family. But, when you have done your utmost for all of every family, I say to you that one who loves family more than this doctrine is not worthy of the new realm.”

When the twelve had heard these words, they prepared to leave. And they did not come together again until the time of their assembling at Nazareth to meet with Jesus and the other disciples as the Master had arranged.

5. What Must I Do to Be Saved?

One evening at Shunem, after John's apostles had returned to Hebron and after Jesus' apostles had been sent out two and two, when the Master was engaged in teaching a group of the younger evangelists who were laboring under the direction of Jacob, Rachel asked Jesus this question: "Master, what shall we answer when we are asked, What shall I do to be saved?" Jesus answered:

"When people ask what shall we do to be saved, you should answer; believe this doctrine of the new realm, accept divine forgiveness. By faith recognize the indwelling spirit of the Creator, whose acceptance makes you a child of the Creator. Entrance into our Parent's realm is wholly free, but progress — growth in grace — is essential to its continuance.

"Eternal life is the gift of the Creator and is revealed by the divine Beings. Acceptance by faith on your part makes you a partaker of the divine nature, a child of the Creator. By faith you are justified; by faith you are saved; and by this same faith you are eternally advanced in the way of progressive and divine perfection. By faith Abraham was justified and made aware of truth by the teachings of Melchizedek. All down through the ages this same faith has saved mortals, but now a divine Being has come to make the Creator's realm more real and acceptable."

When Jesus had finished speaking, there was great rejoicing among those who had heard these words, and they all went on in the days that followed proclaiming the new doctrine with power and with renewed energy and enthusiasm.

In summing up this final statement, Jesus said: "You cannot buy eternal life; you cannot earn righteousness. Eternal life is the gift of the Creator, and righteousness is the natural fruit of the spirit-born life of membership in the new realm. You are not to be saved because you live a righteous life; instead you live a righteous life because you have already been saved, have recognized universe citizenship as the gift of the Creator and service in the new realm as the supreme delight of life on earth. When people believe this doctrine, which is a revelation of the goodness of the Creator, they will be led to voluntary repentance of all known sin. Realization of universe citizenship is incompatible with the desire to sin. Truth seekers hunger for righteousness and thirst for divine perfection."

6. The Evening Lessons

At the evening sessions Jesus discussed many subjects. During the remainder of this tour — before they all reunited at Nazareth — those subjects included "The Love of God," "Dreams and Visions," "Malice," "Humility and Meekness," "Courage and Loyalty," "Music and Worship," "Service and Obedience," "Pride and Presumption," "Forgiveness in Relation to Repentance," "Peace and Perfection," "Evil Speaking and Envy," "Evil, Sin, and Temptation," "Doubts and Unbelief," "Wisdom and Worship." With the older apostles away, these younger groups entered more freely into these discussions with the Master.

After spending two or three days with one group of evangelists, Jesus would move on to join another group, being informed as to the whereabouts and movements of all these workers by David's messengers. Through the messenger service each of these groups was kept fully informed concerning the progress of the tour, and the receipt of news from other groups was always a source of encouragement to these scattered and separated workers.

Before their separation it had been arranged that the twelve apostles, together with the other evangelists, should assemble at Nazareth to meet the Master on Friday, March 4. Accordingly, about this time, from all parts of central and southern Galilee these various groups of apostles and evangelists began moving toward Nazareth. By midafternoon, Andrew and Peter, the last to arrive, had reached the encampment prepared by the early arrivals and situated on the highlands to the north of the city. And this was the first time Jesus had visited Nazareth since the beginning of the public ministry.

7. The Sojourn at Nazareth

This Friday afternoon Jesus walked about Nazareth quite unobserved and wholly unrecognized, passing by the childhood home and the carpenter shop and spending a half hour on the hill behind the home. Not since the day of the baptism by John in the Jordan had Jesus had such a flood of human emotion stirred up. While coming down from the mount, Jesus heard the familiar sounds of the trumpet blast announcing the setting of the sun. Before returning to the encampment, Jesus walked down by the synagogue and indulged in many reminiscences of childhood days at the synagogue school. Earlier in the day Jesus had sent Thomas to the synagogue to request permission to preach at the Sabbath morning service.

The people of Nazareth were never reputed for piety and righteous living. As the years passed, this village became increasingly contaminated by the low moral standards of near-by Sepphoris. There had long been a division of opinion in Nazareth regarding Jesus' move to Capernaum. While the inhabitants of Nazareth had heard much about the doings of their former carpenter, they were offended that mention of the town had never been included in the earlier preaching tours. They had heard of Jesus' fame, but the majority of the citizens were angry because none of the great works were done in their city. For months the people of Nazareth had discussed Jesus, but their opinions were, on the whole, unfavorable.

And so the Master appeared in the midst of, not a welcome homecoming, but a decidedly hostile and hypercritical atmosphere. But this was not all. Jesus' enemies, supposing that Jesus would speak in the synagogue, had hired numerous rough and uncouth youths to harass and in every possible way make trouble for Jesus.

Most of the older of Jesus' friends, including the doting chazan teacher, were dead or had left Nazareth, and the younger generation was prone to resent Jesus' fame with strong jealousy. They failed to remember Jesus' early devotion, but instead were bitter in their criticism of Jesus' neglect to visit the family members living in Nazareth. The attitude of Jesus' family had also tended to increase this unkind feeling of the citizenry. The orthodox among the Jews even presumed to criticize Jesus for walking too fast on the way to the synagogue this Sabbath morning.

8. The Sabbath Service

This Sabbath was a beautiful day, and all Nazareth, friends and foes, turned out to hear this former citizen of their town speak in the synagogue. Many of the apostolic retinue had to remain outside the synagogue; there was not room for all who had come. As a young adult Jesus had often spoken in this place of worship, and this morning, when the ruler of the synagogue handed Jesus the roll of sacred writings from which to read the Scripture lesson, none present seemed to recall that this was the very manuscript which Jesus had presented to this synagogue.

The services on this day were conducted just as when Jesus had attended them as a youth. Jesus ascended the speaking platform with the ruler of the synagogue, and the service was begun by the recital of the prayer: “Blessed is the Creator, Ruler of the world, who forms the light and creates the darkness, who makes peace and creates everything; who, in mercy, gives light to the earth and to those who dwell upon it and in goodness, day by day and every day, renews the works of creation.”

After a moment’s pause they again prayed: “With great love has the Creator loved us, and with much overflowing pity has pitied us, our Creator and our Ruler, for the sake of the trust of our forebears. You taught them the statutes of life; have mercy upon us and teach us. Enlighten our eyes in the law; cause our hearts to cleave to your commandments; unite our hearts to love you, and we shall not be put to shame, world without end. For you are a Deity who prepares eternal life, and you have chosen us from among all nations and tongues, and in truth you have brought us near your great name — *selah* — that we may lovingly praise your unity. Blessed is the Creator, who in love chose Israel.”

The congregation then recited the Shema, the Jewish creed of faith. This ritual consisted in repeating numerous passages from the law and indicated that the worshipers took on themselves the obligations of the Creator’s realm, also the obligations of the commandments as applied to the day and the night.

And then followed the third prayer: “True it is that you are Yahweh; our Creator and the rock of our salvation; our help and our deliverer. Your name is from everlasting, and there is no Deity beside you. Those who were delivered sang a new song to your name by the seashore; together all praised and named you Ruler and said, Yahweh shall reign, world without end. Blessed is Yahweh who saves Israel.”

The ruler of the synagogue then stood before the ark, or chest, containing the sacred writings and began the recitation of the nineteen prayer eulogies, or benedictions. But on this occasion it was desirable to shorten the service in order that the distinguished guest might have more time for discourse.

Then followed the final benediction: “O bestow on your people Israel great peace forever, for you are Ruler of all peace. And it is good in your eyes to bless Israel at all times and at every hour with peace. Blessed are you, Yahweh, who blesses the people Israel with peace.” The congregation did not look at the ruler as the benedictions were recited. Following the benedictions the ruler offered an informal prayer suitable for the occasion, and when this was concluded, all the congregation joined in saying amen.

Then the chazan went over to the ark and brought out a roll and presented it to Jesus to read the Scripture lesson. It was customary to call on seven persons to read not less than three verses of the law, but this

practice was waived on this occasion so that the visitor might select the lesson to be read. Jesus, taking the roll, stood up and began to read from Deuteronomy: "For this commandment which I give you this day is not hidden from you, neither is it far off. It is not in Paradise, that you should say, who shall go up for us to Paradise and bring it down to us that we may hear and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, who will go over the sea for us to bring the commandment to us that we may hear and do it? No, the word of life is very near to you, even in your presence and in your heart, that you may know and obey it."

And Jesus, when finished reading from the law, turned to Isaiah and began to read: "The spirit of the Creator is upon me and has anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor. The Creator has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and the recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are bruised."

Jesus closed the book and, after handing it back to the ruler of the synagogue, sat down and began to discourse to the people, starting by saying: "Today these Scriptures are fulfilled." And then Jesus spoke for almost fifteen minutes on "The Children of the Creator." Many of the people were pleased with the discourse, and they marveled at Jesus' graciousness and wisdom.

It was customary in the synagogue, after the conclusion of the formal service, for the speaker to remain so that those who might be interested could ask questions. Accordingly, on this Sabbath morning Jesus stepped down into the crowd which pressed forward. In this group were many turbulent individuals whose minds were bent on mischief, while about the fringe of this crowd circulated those debased youths who had been hired to make trouble for Jesus. Many of the disciples and evangelists who had remained outside now pressed into the synagogue and were not slow to recognize that trouble was brewing. They tried to lead the Master away, but Jesus would not go with them.

9. The Nazareth Rejection

Jesus was surrounded in the synagogue by a great throng of enemies, and in reply to their rude questions and sinister statements half humorously remarked: "Yes, I am Joseph's child; I am the carpenter, and I am not surprised that you remind me of the proverb, 'Physician heal yourself,' and that you challenge me to do in Nazareth what you have heard I did at Capernaum."

But, pointing accusing fingers at Jesus, they said: "You think you are better than the people of Nazareth; you moved away from us, but your family still lives among us. Where are they today? We hear big things about you, but we notice that you do no wonders when you come back." Jesus answered them: "I love the people who dwell in the city where I grew up, and I would be happy to see you all enter the realm of the Creator, but the doing of the works of the Creator is not for me to determine. The transformations of grace are made in response to the living faith of those who are the beneficiaries."

Jesus would have good-naturedly managed the crowd and effectively disarmed even the most violent enemies had it not been for the tactical blunder of one of the apostles, Simon Zelotes, who, with the help of Nahor, one of the younger evangelists, had meanwhile gathered together a group of Jesus' friends from among the crowd and, assuming a belligerent attitude, had served notice on the enemies of the Master to leave. Jesus had taught the apostles that a soft answer turns away wrath, but the followers were not accustomed to seeing their beloved teacher, whom they so willingly called Master, treated with such

discourtesy and disdain. It was too much for them, and they found themselves giving expression to passionate and vehement resentment, all of which only tended to arouse the mob spirit in this uncouth assembly. And so, under the leadership of hirelings, these ruffians rushed Jesus out of the synagogue to the brow of a near-by precipitous hill to be pushed over the edge. But just as they were about to do that, Jesus turned suddenly on these captors and stood facing them with arms folded, saying nothing. But the people were more than astonished when the mob parted and permitted Jesus to walk forward and pass on unmolested.

Jesus, followed by the disciples, proceeded to their encampment, where all this was recounted. And that evening they prepared to go back to Capernaum early the next day, as Jesus had directed. This turbulent ending of the third public preaching tour had a sobering effect on all of Jesus' followers. They were beginning to realize the meaning of some of the Master's teachings; they were awakening to the fact that the new realm would come only through much sorrow and bitter disappointment.

They left Nazareth this Sunday morning, and traveling by different routes, they all finally assembled at Bethsaida by noon on Thursday, March 10. They came together as a sober and serious group of disillusioned preachers and not as an enthusiastic and all-conquering band of triumphant crusaders.

Paper 151

Teaching by the Seaside

By March 10 all of the preaching and teaching groups had gathered at Bethsaida. Thursday night and Friday many of them went out to fish, while on the Sabbath day they attended the synagogue to hear an aged Jew of Damascus discourse on the glory of Abraham. Jesus spent most of this Sabbath day alone in the hills. That Saturday night the Master talked for more than an hour to the assembled groups on “The mission of adversity and the spiritual value of disappointment.” This was a memorable occasion, and the listeners never forgot the lesson.

Jesus had not fully recovered from the sorrow of being rejected at Nazareth, displaying a peculiar sadness mingled with the usual cheerful demeanor. James and John were with Jesus much of the time, Peter being more than occupied with the many responsibilities having to do with the welfare and direction of the new corps of evangelists. While waiting before starting for the Passover at Jerusalem, the evangelists spent this time visiting from house to house, providing personal ministry in Capernaum and the surrounding cities and villages.

1. The Parable of the Sower

About this time Jesus first began to employ the parable method of teaching the multitudes that so frequently gathered about. The apostles and others had been up long into the night, so that on this Sunday morning very few of the group were up for breakfast. Jesus went out by the seaside and sat alone in the old fishing boat of Andrew and Peter which was always kept available, and meditated on the next move to be made in the work. But the Master was not to be alone for long. Very soon the people from Capernaum and near-by villages began to arrive, and by ten o'clock that morning almost one thousand were assembled on the shore near Jesus' boat and were clamoring for attention. Peter was now up and, going to the boat, said to Jesus, “Master, shall I talk to them?” But Jesus answered, “No, Peter, I will tell them a story.” And then Jesus began the recital of the parable of the sower, one of the first of a long series of such parables. This boat had an elevated seat on which Jesus sat (for it was the custom to sit when teaching) while talking to the crowd assembled along the shore. After Peter had spoken a few words, Jesus said:

“A sower went forth to sow, and it came to pass that some seed fell by the wayside to be trampled underfoot and devoured by the birds. Other seed fell upon the rocky places where there was little soil, and immediately it sprang up because there was no depth to the soil, but as soon as the sun shone, it withered because it had no root by which to hold moisture. Other seed fell among the thorns, and as the thorns grew up, it was choked so that it yielded no grain. Still other seed fell on good ground and, growing, yielded, some thirtyfold, some sixtyfold, and some a hundredfold.” And Jesus, when the parable was finished, said to the multitude, “Those who have ears to hear, let them hear.”

The apostles and those who were with them, when they heard Jesus teach the people in this manner, were greatly puzzled; and after much talking among themselves, that evening in the Zebedee garden Matthew said to Jesus: “Master, what is the meaning of the dark sayings which you present to the multitude? Why do you speak in parables to those who seek the truth?” And Jesus answered:

“I have instructed you patiently all this time. To you it is given to know the mysteries of the realm of the Creator, but to the undiscerning multitudes and to those who seek our destruction, from now on, the mysteries of the new realm will be presented in parables. And this we will do so that those who really desire to enter the new realm may discern the meaning of the teaching and find truth, while those who listen only to trap us may be confounded in that they will see without seeing and will hear without hearing. My children, do you not perceive the law of the spirit which decrees that to those who have will be given so that they will have an abundance; but from those who do not have will be taken away even that which they have. Therefore from now on I will speak to the people in parables to the end that our friends and those who desire to know the truth may find that which they seek, while our enemies and those who do not love the truth may hear without understanding. Many of these people do not follow in the way of the truth.

The apostles did not fully comprehend the significance of the Master’s words. As Andrew and Thomas talked further with Jesus, Peter and the other apostles withdrew to another portion of the garden where they engaged in earnest and prolonged discussion.

2. Interpretation of the Parable

Peter and the others came to the conclusion that the parable of the sower was an allegory, that each feature had some hidden meaning, and so they decided to go to Jesus and ask for an explanation. Accordingly, Peter approached the Master, saying: “We are not able to penetrate the meaning of this parable, and we ask that you explain it to us since you say that we are to know the mysteries of the Creator’s realm.” And Jesus, on hearing this, said to Peter: “I desire to withhold nothing from you, but first suppose you tell me what you have been talking about; what is your interpretation of the parable?”

After a moment of silence, Peter said: “Master, we have talked much about the parable, and this is the interpretation I have decided on: The sower is the preacher of the doctrine; the seed is the word of the Creator. The seed which fell by the wayside represents those who do not understand the teaching. The birds which snatched away the seed that fell on the hardened ground represent Satan, or the evil one, who steals away that which has been sown in the hearts of these ignorant ones. The seed which fell on the rocky places, and which sprang up so suddenly, represents those superficial and unthinking persons who, when they hear the teachings, receive the message with joy; but because the truth has no real root in their deeper understanding, their devotion is short-lived in the face of tribulation and persecution. When trouble comes, these people stumble; they fall away when tempted. The seed which fell among thorns represents those who hear the word willingly, but who allow the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches to choke the word of truth so that it becomes unfruitful. Now the seed which fell on good ground and sprang up to bear, some thirty, some sixty, and some a hundredfold, represents those who, when they have heard the truth, receive it with varying degrees of appreciation — owing to their differing intellectual endowments — and therefore manifest these varying degrees of religious experience.”

Jesus, after listening to Peter’s interpretation of the parable, asked the other apostles if they did not also have suggestions to offer. To this invitation only Nathaniel responded, saying: “Master, while I recognize many good things about Simon Peter’s interpretation of the parable, I do not fully agree. My idea of this parable would be: The seed represents the doctrine, while the sower stands for the messengers. The seed which fell by the wayside on hardened ground represents those who have heard only little of the teachings,

along with those who are indifferent to the message, and who have hardened their hearts. The birds that snatched away the seed which fell by the wayside represent one's habits of life, the temptation of evil, and the desires of the body. The seed which fell among the rocks stands for those emotional souls who are quick to receive new teaching and equally quick to give up the truth when confronted with the difficulties and realities of living up to this truth; they lack spiritual perception. The seed which fell among the thorns represents those who are attracted to the truths; they are inclined to follow its teachings, but they are prevented by the pride of life, jealousy, envy, and the anxieties of human existence. The seed which fell on good soil, springing up to bear, some thirty, some sixty, and some a hundredfold, represents the natural and varying degrees of ability to comprehend truth and respond to its spiritual teachings by people who possess diverse endowments of spirit illumination."

When Nathaniel had finished speaking, the apostles and their associates fell into serious discussion and engaged in earnest debate, some contending for the correctness of Peter's interpretation, while almost an equal number sought to defend Nathaniel's explanation of the parable. Meanwhile Peter and Nathaniel had withdrawn to the house, where they were involved in a vigorous and determined effort to convince and change the mind of each other.

The Master permitted this confusion to pass the point of most intense expression; then called to them, and, when they had all gathered around once more, Jesus said, "Before I tell you about this parable, do any of you have anything to say?" Following a moment of silence, Thomas spoke up: "Yes, Master, I wish to say a few words. I remember that you once told us to beware of this very thing. You instructed us that, when using illustrations for our preaching, we should employ true stories, not fables, and that we should select a story best suited to the illustration of the one central and vital truth which we wished to teach the people, and that, having so used the story, we should not attempt to make a spiritual application of all the minor details involved in the telling of the story. I hold that Peter and Nathaniel are both wrong in their attempts to interpret this parable. I admire their ability to do these things, but I am equally sure that all such attempts to make a natural parable yield spiritual analogies in all its features can only result in confusion and serious misconception of the true purpose of such a parable. That I am right is fully proved by the fact that, whereas we were all of one mind an hour ago, now we are divided into two separate groups who hold different opinions concerning this parable and hold such opinions so earnestly as to interfere, in my opinion, with our ability to fully grasp the great truth which you had in mind when you presented this parable to the multitude and subsequently asked us to comment on it."

The words which Thomas spoke had a quieting effect on all of them, causing them to recall what Jesus had taught them on former occasions, and before Jesus resumed speaking, Andrew rose, saying: "I am persuaded that Thomas is right, and I would like to hear what meaning Thomas attaches to the parable of the sower." Then Thomas said: "My friends, I did not wish to prolong this discussion, but if you so desire, I will say that I think this parable was spoken to teach us one great truth. And that is that our teaching of the doctrine of the Creator's realm, no matter how faithfully and efficiently we execute our divine commissions, is going to be attended by varying degrees of success; and that all such differences in results are directly due to conditions inherent in the circumstances of our ministry, conditions over which we have little or no control."

When Thomas had finished speaking, the majority of the others were about ready to agree. Even Peter and Nathaniel were on their way over to speak with Thomas when Jesus rose and said: “Well done, Thomas; you have discerned the true meaning of parables; but both Peter and Nathaniel have done you all equal good in that they have so fully shown the danger of undertaking to make an allegory out of my parables. In your own hearts you may often profitably engage in such flights of the speculative imagination, but you make a mistake when you seek to offer such conclusions as a part of your public teaching.”

Now that the tension was over, Peter and Nathaniel congratulated each other on their interpretations, and each of the apostles ventured to make an interpretation of the parable of the sower before they retired for the night. Even Judas Iscariot offered a very plausible interpretation. The twelve would often, among themselves, attempt to figure out the Master’s parables as they would an allegory, but never again did they regard such speculations seriously. This was a very profitable session for the apostles and their associates, especially since from this time on Jesus more and more employed parables in connection with public teaching.

3. More About Parables

The apostles were parable-minded, so much so that the whole of the next evening was devoted to the further discussion of parables. Jesus introduced the evening’s conference by saying: “My beloved, you must always make a difference in teaching so as to suit your presentation of truth to the minds and hearts before you. When you stand before a multitude of varying intellects and temperaments, you cannot speak different words for each class of hearers, but you can tell a story to convey your teaching; and each group, even each individual, will be able to make a personal interpretation of your parable in accordance with their own intellectual and spiritual endowments. You are to let your light shine but do so with wisdom and discretion. No one, when lighting a lamp, covers it, but puts it on a stand where all can see the light. Let me tell you that nothing is hidden in the Creator’s realm which will not be made clear; neither are there any secrets which will not ultimately be made known. Eventually, all these things will come to light. Do not think only of the multitudes and how they hear the truth; pay attention also to yourselves and how you hear. Remember that I have many times told you: To those who have, more will be given, while from those who do not have, more will be taken away, even that which they think they have.”

The continued discussion of parables and further instruction as to their interpretation may be summarized and expressed as follows:

1. Jesus advised against the use of either fables or allegories in teaching the truth, but did recommend the free use of parables, especially nature parables, emphasizing the value of utilizing the *analogy* existing between the natural and the spiritual worlds as a means of teaching truth. Jesus frequently alluded to the natural as “the unreal and fleeting shadow of spirit realities.”
2. Jesus narrated three or four parables from the Hebrew scriptures, calling attention to the fact that this method of teaching was not wholly new. However, it became almost a new method of teaching as it was employed from this time onward.
3. In teaching the apostles the value of parables, Jesus called attention to the following points:

The parable provides for a simultaneous appeal to vastly different levels of mind and spirit. The parable stimulates the imagination, challenges the discrimination, and provokes critical thinking; it promotes sympathy without arousing antagonism.

The parable proceeds from the things which are known to the discernment of the unknown. The parable utilizes the material and natural as a means of introducing the spiritual and the supermaterial.

Parables favor the making of impartial moral decisions. The parable evades much prejudice and puts new truth gracefully into the mind and does all this with the arousal of a minimum of the self-defense of personal resentment.

To reject the truth contained in parabolical analogy requires conscious intellectual action which is directly in contempt of one's honest judgment and fair decision. The parable encourages thought through the sense of hearing.

The use of the parable form of teaching enables the teacher to present new and even startling truths while at the same time largely avoiding all controversy and outward clashing with tradition and established authority.

The parable also possesses the advantage of stimulating the memory of the truth taught when the same familiar scenes are subsequently encountered.

In this way Jesus tried to acquaint the followers with many of the reasons underlying this practice of increasingly using parables in public teaching.

Toward the close of the evening's lesson Jesus made an initial comment on the parable of the sower, saying that the parable referred to two things: First, it was a review of Jesus' own ministry up to that time and a forecast of what lay ahead for the remainder of this life on earth. And second, it was also a hint as to what the apostles and other messengers of the new realm might expect in their ministry from generation to generation as time passed.

Jesus also resorted to the use of parables as the best possible refutation of the studied effort of the religious leaders at Jerusalem to teach that all of this work was done by the assistance of demons and the evil one. The appeal to nature was in contravention of such teaching since the people of that day looked on all natural phenomena as the product of the direct act of spiritual beings and supernatural forces. Jesus also chose this method of teaching because it enabled the proclamation of vital truths to those who desired to know the better way while at the same time affording enemies less opportunity to find cause for offense and for accusations.

Before dismissing the group for the night, Jesus said: "Now I will tell you the last of the parable of the sower. I would test you to know how you will receive this: The realm of the Creator is also like a person who cast good seed on the earth; and while this person was sleeping by night and doing business by day, the seed sprang up and grew, and although the person did not know how it came about, the plant came to fruit. First there was the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. And then when the grain was ripe, the harvest was finished. Those who have ears to hear, let them hear."

Many times the apostles thought about this saying, but the Master never made further mention of this addition to the parable of the sower.

4. More Parables by the Sea

The next day Jesus again taught the people from the boat, saying: “The realm of the Creator is like a person who planted good seed in a field; but while this person was sleeping, an enemy came and planted weeds among the wheat and hurried away. And so when the young blades sprang up and later were about to bring forth fruit, the weeds also appeared. Then the servants of this householder came and said: ‘Did you not sow good seed in your field? Where did these weeds come from?’ And the householder replied, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The servants then asked, ‘Should we go out and pull up these weeds?’ But the householder answered them and said: ‘No, in case while you are gathering them up, you uproot the wheat also. Instead, let them both grow together until the time of the harvest, when I will say to the reapers, gather up first the weeds and bind them in bundles to burn and then gather up the wheat to be stored in my barn.’”

After the people had asked a few questions, Jesus spoke another parable: “The realm of the Creator is like a grain of mustard seed which a person planted in a field. Now a mustard seed is the smallest of seeds, but when it is fully grown, it becomes the greatest of all herbs and is like a tree so that the birds are able to come and rest in the branches.”

“The realm of the Creator is also like yeast which a person took and hid in three measures of flour, and in this way it came about that all of the flour was leavened.”

“The realm of the Creator is also like a treasure hidden in a field, which a person discovered and in joy went forth to sell every possession to have the money to buy the field.”

“The realm of the Creator is also like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls; and having found one pearl of great price, went out and sold every possession in order to be able to buy the extraordinary pearl.”

“Again, the realm of the Creator is like a net which was cast into the sea, and it gathered up every kind of fish. Now, when the net was filled, the fishers drew it up on the beach, where they sat down and sorted out the fish, gathering the good into vessels while the bad they threw away.”

Many other parables Jesus spoke to the multitudes, from this time forward seldom teaching the masses except by this means. After speaking to a public audience in parables, Jesus would, during the evening classes, more fully and explicitly expound these teachings to the apostles and the evangelists.

5. The Visit to Kheresa

The multitude continued to increase throughout the week. On Sabbath Jesus hurried away to the hills, but when Sunday morning came, the crowds returned. Jesus spoke to them in the early afternoon after the preaching of Peter, and when finished, said to the apostles: “I am tired of the throngs; let us cross over to the other side to rest for a day.”

On the way across the lake they encountered one of those violent and sudden windstorms which are characteristic of the Sea of Galilee, especially at this season of the year. This body of water is almost seven hundred feet below sea level and is surrounded by high banks, especially on the west. There are steep gorges leading from the lake into the hills, and as the heated air rises in a pocket over the lake during the day, there is a tendency after sunset for the cooling air of the gorges to rush down to the lake. These gales come on quickly and sometimes go away just as suddenly.

It was just such an evening gale that caught the boat carrying Jesus over to the other side on this Sunday evening. Three other boats containing some of the younger evangelists were trailing after. This tempest was severe, notwithstanding that it was confined to this region of the lake, there being no evidence of a storm on the western shore. The wind was so strong that the waves began to wash over the boat. The high wind had torn the sail away before the apostles could furl it, and they were now entirely dependent on their oars as they laboriously pulled for the shore, a little more than a mile and a half away.

Meanwhile Jesus lay asleep in the stern of the boat under a small overhead shelter. The Master was weary when they left Bethsaida, and had directed them to sail across to the other side in order to rest. These apostles were strong and experienced sailors, but this was one of the worst gales they had ever encountered. Although the wind and the waves tossed their boat about as though it were a toy ship, Jesus slept on undisturbed. Peter, who was at the right-hand oar near the stern when the boat began to fill with water, dropped the oar and rushed over to wake Jesus, and when Jesus was aroused, Peter said: "Master, don't you know we are in a violent storm? If you do not save us, we will all die."

Jesus, coming out in the rain, peered into the darkness at the struggling sailors and then looked at Simon Peter and said: "Why are all of you so filled with fear? Where is your faith? Peace, be quiet." Jesus had hardly uttered this rebuke to Peter and the other apostles when the disturbed atmosphere, having established its equilibrium, settled down into a great calm. The angry waves almost immediately subsided, while the dark clouds, having spent themselves in a short shower, vanished, and the stars shone overhead. All this was purely coincidental as far as we can judge; but the apostles, particularly Simon Peter, never ceased to regard the episode as a nature miracle. It was especially easy for the people of that day to believe in nature miracles since they firmly believed that all nature was a phenomenon directly under the control of spirit forces and supernatural beings.

Jesus plainly explained to the twelve that it was to their troubled spirits and their fear-tossed minds that those words were intended, and not to command the elements to obey, but it was of no use. The Master's followers always persisted in placing their own interpretation on all such coincidental occurrences. From this day on they insisted on regarding the Master as having absolute power over the natural elements. Peter never grew weary of reciting how "even the winds and the waves obey Jesus."

It was late in the evening when Jesus and the associates reached the shore, and since it was a calm and beautiful night, they all rested in the boats, not going ashore until shortly after sunrise the next morning. When they were gathered together, about forty in all, Jesus said: "Let us go up into the hills and stay for a few days while we consider the problems of the Creator's realm."

6. The Kheresa Lunatic

Although most of the near-by eastern shore of the lake sloped up gently to the highlands beyond, at this particular spot there was a steep hillside, the shore in some places dropping directly down into the lake. Pointing up to the side of the near-by hill, Jesus said: "Let us go up on this hillside for our breakfast and under some of the shelters rest and talk."

This entire hillside was covered with caverns which had been hewn out of the rock. Many of these niches were ancient graves. About halfway up the hillside on a small, relatively level spot was the cemetery of the little village of Kheresa. As Jesus and the associates passed near this burial ground, a lunatic who lived in these hillside caverns rushed up to them. This demented person was well known in this region, having once been bound with chains and confined in one of the grottoes, but long since had escaped and now roamed at will among the tombs and abandoned graves.

This person, whose name was Amos, was afflicted with a periodic form of insanity, but occasionally found some clothing and behaved fairly well, and during one of these lucid intervals went to Bethsaida to hear the preaching of Jesus and the apostles, at that time becoming a halfhearted follower. But soon a stormy phase of the problem appeared, and Amos fled to the tombs, moaning, crying out aloud, and behaving in a way that terrorized all who chanced to be near.

Amos, on recognizing Jesus, fell down and exclaimed: "I know you, Jesus, but I am influenced by many devils, and I beg that you will not torment me." Amos truly believed that this periodic mental affliction was due to having become controlled by evil or unclean spirits, but Amos' troubles were mostly emotional and not due to a grossly diseased brain.

Jesus, looking down on the person crouching like an animal, reached down and, lifting Amos up said: "Amos, you are not possessed of a devil; you have already heard that you are a child of the Creator. I command you to come out of this spell." And Amos, when hearing Jesus speak these words, was immediately restored to a right mind and normal emotional control. By this time a considerable crowd had assembled from the near-by village, and these people, augmented by the swine herders from the highland above them, were astonished to see the lunatic sitting with Jesus and the others, freely conversing with them.

As the swine herders rushed into the village to spread the news of the taming of the lunatic, some dogs charged at a small and untended herd of about thirty swine and drove most of them over a precipice into the sea. And it was this incidental occurrence, in connection with the presence of Jesus and the supposed miraculous curing of the lunatic, that gave origin to the legend that Jesus had cured Amos by casting out a legion of devils, and that these devils had entered into the herd of swine, causing them to rush headlong to their destruction in the sea below. Before the day was over, this episode was published abroad by the swine tenders, and the whole village believed it. Amos most certainly believed this story, having seen the swine tumbling over the brow of the hill shortly after having been cured, and always believed that they carried with them the very evil spirits which had so long been a source of torment and affliction. And this had a good deal to do with the permanency of the cure. It is equally true that all of Jesus' apostles (except Thomas) believed that the episode of the swine was directly connected with the cure of Amos.

Jesus was not able to rest, most of that day being thronged by those who came in response to the word that Amos had been cured, and who were attracted by the story that the demons had gone out of the lunatic and into the herd of swine. And so, after only one night of rest, early Tuesday morning Jesus and the others were awakened by a delegation of these swine-raising gentiles who had come to urge them to leave. Their spokesperson said to Peter and Andrew: "Leave us and take your prophet with you. We know your prophet is holy, but is not known by the gods of our country, and we stand in danger of losing many swine. We are afraid of you so we ask you to leave." And Jesus said to Andrew, "Let us return to our place."

As they were about to depart, Amos requested permission from Jesus to go back with them, but the Master would not consent. Jesus said to Amos: "Do not forget that you are a child of the Creator. Return to your own people and show them what great things the Creator has done for you." And Amos went about pronouncing that Jesus had cast out a legion of devils, and that these evil spirits had entered into a herd of swine, driving them to quick destruction. And Amos did not stop until having gone into all the cities of the Decapolis, declaring what great things Jesus had done.

Paper 152

Events Leading Up to the Capernaum Crisis

The story of the cure of Amos, the Kheresa lunatic, had already reached Bethsaida and Capernaum, so that a great crowd was waiting for Jesus and the others when their boat landed that Tuesday morning. Among this throng were the new observers from the Jerusalem Sanhedrin who had come to Capernaum to find cause for the Master's arrest and conviction. As Jesus spoke with those who had assembled, Jairus, one of the rulers of the synagogue, moved through the crowd and, falling down at Jesus' feet, said "Master, my only child lies in my home at the point of death. I pray that you will come." Jesus, on hearing this request said: "I will go with you."

As Jesus went with Jairus, the large crowd which had heard the request followed to see what would happen. Shortly before they reached the ruler's house, as they hurried through a narrow street, Jesus suddenly stopped, saying, "Someone touched me." And when those who were nearby denied it, Peter spoke up: "Master, you can see that this crowd presses you, threatening to crush us, and yet you say 'someone has touched me.' What do you mean?" Then Jesus said: "I asked who touched me, for I felt that living energy had gone from me." And Jesus, looking about, saw a near-by person, who, coming forward, knelt and said: "For years I have been afflicted with a scourging hemorrhage. I have suffered many things from many physicians; I have spent all my savings, but none could cure me. Then I heard of you, and I thought if I might just touch the hem of your garment, I will certainly be healed. And so I pressed forward with the crowd as it moved along until, standing near you, Master, I touched the border of your garment and I know that I have been healed of my affliction."

Jesus, on hearing this, lifted the person up and said: "Your faith has made you whole; go in peace." It was *faith* and not *touch* that made this person whole. And this case is a good illustration of many apparently miraculous cures which happened during Jesus' earth career, but which were in no sense consciously willed. The passing of time demonstrated that this person was really cured of the malady. The faith displayed was of the sort that laid direct hold on the creative power resident in the Master's person. With this faith it was only necessary to approach Jesus. It was not at all necessary to touch the garment; that was merely the superstitious part of the belief. Jesus spoke to this person, Veronica of Caesarea-Philippi, to correct two errors which might have lingered, or which might have persisted in the minds of those who witnessed this healing: Jesus did not want Veronica to go away thinking that attempting to steal the cure had been honored, or that superstition in associating touching the garment with healing had been effective. Jesus wanted all to know that it was pure and living *faith* that had brought about the cure.

1. At Jairus's House

Jairus was, of course, terribly impatient with this delay in reaching home; so they now hurried on at quickened pace. Even before they entered the ruler's yard, one of the servants came out, saying: "Do not trouble the Master; your child is dead." But seeming not to heed the servant's words, Jesus turned and said to the grief-stricken parent: "Do not be afraid; only believe." When entering the house with Peter, James, and John, Jesus found the flute-players already there with the mourners, who were making a commotion; already the relatives were engaged in weeping and wailing. And Jesus, after putting all the mourners out of

the room, went in with the parents and the three apostles. Jesus had told the mourners that the child was not dead, but they laughed. Jesus now turned to the parents, saying: “Your child is not dead, but only asleep.” And when the house had quieted down, Jesus, going up to where the child lay, took it by the hand and said, “Awake and arise!” And the child, on hearing these words, immediately rose up. And presently, after the child had recovered, Jesus directed that they should give it something to eat, for it had been a long time without food.

Jesus called the family together and explained that the child had been in a state of coma following a long fever, and had merely been aroused and not raised from the dead. Jesus also explained all this to the apostles, but it was futile; they all believed the little child had been raised from the dead. What Jesus said in explanation of many of these apparent miracles had little effect on the followers. They were miracle-minded and lost no opportunity to ascribe another wonder to Jesus. Jesus returned with the apostles to Bethsaida after they were specifically charged to tell no one about this.

When Jesus came out of Jairus’s house, two blind people led by a mute youth followed and cried out for healing. About this time Jesus’ reputation as a healer was at its very height. Everywhere the sick and the afflicted were waiting to be healed. The Master now looked very tired, and all of the followers were becoming concerned that Jesus should not continue the work of teaching and healing to the point of actual collapse.

Jesus’ apostles, let alone the common people, could not understand the nature and attributes of this divine Being. Neither has any subsequent generation been able to evaluate what took place on earth in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. And there can never be an opportunity for either science or religion to investigate these remarkable events for the simple reason that such an extraordinary situation can never occur again, either on this world or on any other world in Nebadon. Never again, on any world in this entire universe, will a being appear as a mortal, at the same time embodying all of the attributes of creative energy combined with spiritual endowments which transcend time and most other material limitations.

Never before Jesus was on earth, nor since, has it been possible to directly view the results of the strong and living faith of mortals. To repeat these phenomena, we would have to go into the immediate presence of Michael, the Local Universe Creator, as the mortal of those days. Likewise, today, while Jesus’ absence prevents such material manifestations, you should refrain from placing any sort of limitation on the possible exhibition of *spiritual power*. The Master, while absent as a material being, is present as a spiritual influence in the hearts of mortals. By going away from the world, Jesus made it possible for the Spirit of Truth to live alongside the spirit of the Creator which indwells the minds of mortals.

2. Feeding the Five Thousand

Jesus continued to teach the people by day while instructing the apostles and evangelists at night. On Friday Jesus declared a furlough of one week so that all the followers might go home or to their friends for a few days before preparing to go to Jerusalem for the Passover. But more than one half of the disciples refused to leave, and the multitude was increasing daily in size, so much so that David Zebedee wanted to establish a new encampment, but Jesus refused consent. The Master, who had little rest over the Sabbath, on Sunday morning, March 27, tried to get away from the people. Some of the evangelists were left to talk to the

multitude while Jesus and the twelve planned to escape, unnoticed, to the opposite shore of the lake, where they proposed to obtain much needed rest in a beautiful park south of Bethsaida-Julias. This region was a favorite resort for people from Capernaum; they were all familiar with these parks on the eastern shore. But the people would not have it. They saw the direction taken by Jesus' boat, and hiring every craft available, they started out in pursuit. Those who could not obtain boats went on foot to walk around the upper end of the lake.

By late afternoon more than a thousand people had located the Master in one of the parks, and Jesus spoke to them briefly, being followed by Peter. Many of these people had brought food with them, and after eating the evening meal, they gathered about in small groups while Jesus' apostles and disciples taught them.

Monday afternoon the multitude had increased to more than three thousand. And still — way into the evening — the people continued to flock in, bringing all manner of the sick with them. Hundreds of interested persons had made their plans to stop over at Capernaum to see and hear Jesus on their way to the Passover, and they simply refused to be disappointed. By Wednesday noon about five thousand people were assembled in this park to the south of Bethsaida-Julias. The weather was pleasant, it being near the end of the rainy season in this locality.

Philip had provided a three days' supply of food for Jesus and the twelve, which was in the custody of the Mark youth, their assistant for all chores. By the afternoon of this, the third day for almost half of this multitude, the food the people had brought with them was nearly exhausted. David Zebedee had no tented city here to feed and accommodate the crowds. Neither had Philip made food provision for such a multitude. But the people, even though they were hungry, would not go away. It was being quietly whispered about that Jesus, desiring to avoid trouble with both Herod and the Jerusalem leaders, had chosen this quiet spot outside the jurisdiction of all the enemies as the proper place to be crowned ruler. The enthusiasm of the people was rising every hour. Not a word was said to Jesus, who, of course, knew all that was going on. Even the twelve apostles were still tainted with such notions. The apostles who favored this attempt to proclaim Jesus ruler were Peter, John, Simon Zelotes, and Judas Iscariot. Those opposing the plan were Andrew, James, Nathaniel, and Thomas. Matthew, Philip, and the Alpheus twins were noncommittal. The ringleader of this plot to make Jesus ruler was Joab, one of the young evangelists.

This was the situation at about five o'clock on Wednesday afternoon, when Jesus asked James Alpheus to summon Andrew and Philip. Jesus said: "What shall we do with the multitude? They have been with us for three days, and many of them are hungry. They have no food." Philip and Andrew exchanged glances, and then Philip answered: "Master, you should send these people away so that they may go to the villages around about and buy themselves food." And Andrew, fearing the materialization of the ruler plot, quickly joined with Philip, saying: "Yes, Master, I think it best that you dismiss the multitude so that they may go their way and buy food while you rest for a while." By this time others of the twelve had joined the conference. Then said Jesus: "But I do not desire to send them away hungry; can you not feed them?" This was too much for Philip, who spoke right up: "Master, in this country place where can we buy bread for this multitude? Two hundred denarii worth would not be enough for lunch."

Before the apostles had an opportunity to express themselves, Jesus turned to Andrew and Philip, saying: "I do not want to send these people away. Here they are, like sheep without a shepherd. I would like to feed

them. What food do we have with us?” While Philip was conversing with Matthew and Judas, Andrew sought out the Mark youth to ascertain how much was left of their store of provisions. Returning to Jesus, Andrew said: “The youth has only five barley loaves and two dried fishes” — and Peter promptly added, “We have yet to eat this evening.”

For a moment Jesus stood in silence with a faraway look. The apostles said nothing. Jesus turned suddenly to Andrew and said, “Bring me the loaves and fishes.” And when Andrew had brought the basket to Jesus, the Master said: “Direct the people to sit down on the grass in companies of one hundred and appoint a leader over each group while you bring all of the evangelists here with us.”

Jesus took up the loaves, and after giving thanks, broke the bread and gave some to the apostles, who passed it on to their associates, who in turn carried it to the multitude. In the same way Jesus broke and distributed the fishes. And this multitude ate and were filled. And when they had finished eating, Jesus said to the disciples: “Gather up the broken pieces that remain so that nothing will be lost.” And when they had finished gathering up the fragments, they had twelve basketfuls. Those who ate of this extraordinary feast numbered about five thousand people.

And this is the first and only nature miracle which Jesus performed as a result of conscious preplanning. It is true that the disciples were disposed to call many things miracles which were not, but this was a genuine supernatural ministration. In this case, so we were taught, Michael multiplied food elements as always except for the elimination of the time factor and the visible life channel.

3. The Ruler-Making Episode

The feeding of the five thousand by supernatural energy was another of those cases where human pity plus creative power equaled that which happened. Now that the multitude had been fed, and since Jesus’ fame was then and there augmented by this stupendous wonder, the project to proclaim the Master ruler required no further personal direction. The idea seemed to spread through the crowd like a contagion. The reaction of the multitude to this sudden and spectacular supplying of their physical needs was profound and overwhelming. For a long time the Jews had been taught that the Messiah would cause the land to flow again with milk and honey, and that the bread of life would be bestowed on them as manna from heaven was supposed to have fallen on their ancestors in the wilderness. And was not all of this expectation now fulfilled right before their eyes? When this hungry, undernourished multitude had finished gorging itself with the wonder-food, there was only one unanimous reaction: “Here is our ruler.” The wonder-working deliverer of Israel had come. In the eyes of these simple-minded people the power to feed carried with it the right to rule. No wonder, then, that the multitude, when it had finished feasting, rose as one person and shouted, “Make him ruler!”

This mighty shout enthused Peter and those of the apostles who still retained the hope of seeing Jesus assert the right to rule. But these false hopes were not to live for long. This mighty shout of the multitude had hardly ceased to reverberate from the near-by rocks when Jesus stepped on a huge stone and, lifting up a hand to command their attention, said: “My children, you mean well, but you are shortsighted and material-minded.” There was a brief pause; this stalwart Galilean was majestically posed in the enchanting glow of that eastern twilight, looking every inch a ruler while continuing to speak to this breathless multitude: “You

would make me ruler, not because your souls have been lighted with a great truth, but because your stomachs have been filled with bread. How many times have I told you that my realm is not of this world? This realm of the Creator which we proclaim is a spiritual family, and no one rules over it seated on a material throne. The Creator is the all-wise and the all-powerful Ruler over this spiritual family of the children on earth. Have I so failed in revealing to you the Source of spirits that you would make a ruler of me! Now all of you go to your own homes. If you must have a ruler, let the Source of lights be enthroned in the heart of each of you as the spirit Ruler of all things.”

These words of Jesus sent the multitude away stunned and disheartened. Many who had believed turned back and followed no more from that day. The apostles were speechless; they stood in silence gathered about the twelve baskets of the fragments of food. Jesus, before going off to be alone in the hills, turned to Andrew and said: “Take the others back to Zebedee’s house and pray with them, especially for Simon Peter.”

4. Simon Peter’s Night Vision

The apostles, without their Master — sent off by themselves — entered the boat and in silence began to row toward Bethsaida on the western shore of the lake. None of the twelve was so crushed and downcast as Simon Peter. Hardly a word was spoken; they were all thinking of the Master alone in the hills. Had Jesus forsaken them? Jesus had never before sent them all away and refused to go with them. What could all this mean?

Darkness descended on them, for a strong and contrary wind had arisen which made progress almost impossible. As the hours of darkness and hard rowing passed, Peter grew weary and fell into a deep sleep of exhaustion. Andrew and James put Peter to rest on the cushioned seat in the stern of the boat. While the other apostles toiled against the wind and the waves, Peter dreamed a dream, seeing a vision of Jesus coming to them walking on the sea. When the Master seemed to walk on by the boat, Peter cried out, “Save us, Master, save us.” And those who were in the rear of the boat heard some of these words. As this apparition of the night continued, Peter dreamed of hearing Jesus say: “Be of good cheer; it is I; do not be afraid.” This was like a balm to Peter’s disturbed soul, whose troubled spirit was soothed so that (in the dream) Peter cried out to the Master: “If it really is you, let me come and walk with you on the water.” And Peter, starting to walk on the water, was frightened by the boisterous waves, and when about to sink, cried out, “Help, save me!” And many of the twelve heard this cry. Then Peter dreamed that Jesus came to the rescue and, stretching forth a hand, took hold and lifted Peter up, saying: “You of little faith, why did you doubt?”

In connection with the latter part of this dream Peter arose from the seat and actually stepped overboard and into the water, awakening from the dream as Andrew, James, and John provided helping hands back into the boat.

To Peter this experience was always real. Peter sincerely believed that Jesus came to them that night, but was able to only partially convince John Mark, which explains why Mark left a portion of the story out of the later narrative. Luke, the physician, who made a careful search into these matters, concluded that the episode was a vision of Peter’s and therefore refused to give a place to this incident in the reconstruction of the narrative.

5. Back in Bethsaida

Thursday morning, before daylight, they anchored their boat offshore near Zebedee's house and slept until about noontime. Andrew was first up and, going for a walk by the sea, found Jesus, in company with Mark, sitting on a stone by the water's edge. Shortly after midnight they had started to walk around the lake and across the river, back to Bethsaida, while many of the multitude and the young evangelists searched all night and much of the next day about the eastern hills for Jesus.

Of the five thousand who were miraculously fed, and who, when their stomachs were full and their hearts empty, would have made Jesus ruler, only about five hundred persisted in continuing to follow. But now back in Bethsaida, Jesus asked Andrew to assemble the twelve apostles and their associates, saying, "I would like to speak with them." And when all were ready, Jesus said:

"All these months have I taught you the truths of the new realm, and yet you are dominated by material motives instead of spiritual considerations.

"And now do you all see that the working of miracles and the performance of material wonders will not win souls for the spiritual realm? We fed the multitude, but it did not lead them to hunger for spiritual righteousness. When their hunger was satisfied, they did not seek entrance into the realm of the Creator but rather sought to proclaim me ruler after the manner of the rulers of this world, only so that they might continue to eat bread without having to work for it. And all this, in which many of you more or less participated, does nothing to reveal the Creator or to advance the new realm on earth. Do we not have sufficient enemies among the religious leaders without doing that which is likely to also estrange the civil rulers? I pray that the Creator will open your eyes so that you may see and open your ears so that you may hear, to the end that you may have full faith in the doctrines which I have taught you."

Jesus then announced a desire to withdraw for a few days of rest with the apostles before they prepared to go to Jerusalem for the Passover, and forbade any of the disciples or the multitude to follow. Accordingly they went by boat to the region of Gennesaret for two or three days of rest and sleep. Jesus was preparing for a great crisis of this life on earth, and therefore spent much time in communion with the Creator.

The news of the feeding of the five thousand and the attempt to make Jesus ruler aroused widespread curiosity and stirred up the fears of both the religious leaders and the civil rulers throughout all Galilee and Judea. While this great miracle did nothing to further the new realm in the souls of material-minded and halfhearted followers, it did serve the purpose of bringing to a head the miracle-seeking and ruler-craving proclivities of Jesus' immediate family of apostles and close disciples. This spectacular episode brought an end to the early era of teaching, training, and healing, thereby preparing the way for the inauguration of this last year of proclaiming the higher and more spiritual phases of the doctrine of the new realm — membership in the divine family, spiritual liberty, and life eternal.

6. At Gennesaret

While resting at the home of a wealthy follower in the Gennesaret region, Jesus held informal conferences with the twelve every afternoon. The ambassadors of the new realm were a disillusioned, serious, sober,

and chastened group. But even after all that had happened, and as subsequent events disclosed, these twelve were not yet fully delivered from their inbred and long-cherished notions about the coming of the Jewish Messiah. Events of the preceding few weeks had moved too swiftly for these astonished apostles to grasp their full significance. It requires time for people to effect radical and extensive changes in their basic and fundamental concepts of social conduct, philosophic attitudes, and religious convictions.

While Jesus and the twelve were resting at Gennesaret, the multitudes dispersed, some going to their homes, others going on to Jerusalem for the Passover. In less than one month's time the enthusiastic and open followers of Jesus, who numbered more than fifty thousand in Galilee alone, shrank to less than five hundred. Jesus wanted to give the apostles an experience with the fickleness of popular acclaim so that they would not be tempted to rely on such manifestations of transient religious hysteria after being left alone in the work of the new realm, but was only partially successful in this effort.

The second night of their stay at Gennesaret the Master again told the apostles the parable of the sower and added these words: "You see, my children, the appeal to human feelings is transitory and utterly disappointing; the exclusive appeal to the intellect is likewise empty and barren; it is only by making your appeal to the spirit which lives within the human mind that you can hope to achieve lasting success and accomplish those marvelous transformations of human character that are presently shown in the abundant yielding of the genuine fruits of the spirit in the daily lives of all who are delivered from the darkness of doubt by the birth of the spirit into the light of faith — the realm of the Creator."

Jesus taught the appeal to the emotions as the technique of arresting and focusing the intellectual attention, designating the aroused and quickened mind as the gateway to the soul, where that spiritual nature resides which must recognize truth and respond to the spiritual appeal of the teachings in order to afford the permanent results of true character transformations.

Jesus endeavored to prepare the apostles for the impending shock — the crisis in the public attitude which was only a few days away, explaining to the twelve that the religious rulers of Jerusalem would conspire with Herod Antipas to effect their destruction. They began to realize more fully (though not finally) that Jesus was not going to sit on David's throne. They saw more fully that spiritual truth was not to be advanced by material wonders. They began to realize that the feeding of the five thousand and the popular movement to make Jesus ruler was the apex of the miracle-seeking, wonder-working expectance of the people and the height of Jesus' acclaim by the populace. They vaguely discerned and dimly foresaw the approaching times of spiritual sifting and cruel adversity. These twelve were slowly awakening to the realization of the real nature of their task as ambassadors of the new realm, and they began to prepare themselves for the trying and testing ordeals of the last year of the Master's ministry on earth.

Before they left Gennesaret, Jesus instructed them regarding the miraculous feeding of the five thousand, telling them the reason for this extraordinary manifestation of creative power and also assuring them of not having yielded to sympathy for the multitude until ascertaining that it was "according to the Creator's will."

7. At Jerusalem

Sunday, April 3, Jesus, accompanied only by the twelve apostles, started from Bethsaida on the journey to Jerusalem. To avoid the multitudes and to attract as little attention as possible, they went by way of Gerasa and Philadelphia. Jesus forbade them to do any public teaching on this trip, and did not permit them to teach or preach while sojourning in Jerusalem. They arrived at Bethany, near Jerusalem, late on Wednesday evening, April 6. For this one night they stopped at the home of Lazarus, Martha, and Mary, but the next day they separated. Jesus, with John, stayed at the home of a follower named Simon, near the house of Lazarus in Bethany. Judas Iscariot and Simon Zelotes stopped with friends in Jerusalem, while the rest of the apostles stayed, two and two, in different homes.

Jesus entered Jerusalem only once during this Passover, and that was on the day of the feast. Many of the Jerusalem followers were brought out by Abner to meet Jesus at Bethany. During this stay at Jerusalem the twelve learned how bitter the feeling was becoming toward their Master. They departed from Jerusalem all believing that a crisis was impending.

On Sunday, April 24, Jesus and the apostles left Jerusalem for Bethsaida, going by way of the coast cities of Joppa, Caesarea, and Ptolemais. Then, overland they went by Ramah and Chorazin to Bethsaida, arriving on Friday, April 29. Immediately on reaching home, Jesus dispatched Andrew to ask of the ruler of the synagogue permission to speak the next day, that being the Sabbath, at the afternoon service. And Jesus knew that it would be the last time to ever be permitted to speak in the Capernaum synagogue.

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The Crisis at Capernaum

On Friday evening, the day of their arrival at Bethsaida, and on Sabbath morning, the apostles noticed that Jesus was seriously occupied with some momentous problem; they were cognizant that the Master was giving unusual thought to some important matter, having eaten no breakfast and very little at lunch. All of Sabbath morning and the evening before, the twelve and their associates were gathered together in small groups about the house, in the garden, and along the seashore. There was a tension of uncertainty and a suspense of apprehension resting on all of them. Jesus had said little to them since they left Jerusalem.

Not in months had they seen the Master so preoccupied and uncommunicative. Even Simon Peter was depressed, if not downcast. Andrew was at a loss to know what to do for the others. Nathaniel said they were in the midst of the "lull before the storm." Thomas expressed the opinion that "something out of the ordinary is about to happen." Philip advised David Zebedee to "forget about plans for feeding and lodging the multitude until we know what the Master is thinking about." Matthew was engaged in renewed efforts to replenish the treasury. James and John talked over the forthcoming sermon in the synagogue and speculated as to its probable nature and scope. Simon Zelotes expressed the belief, in reality a hope, that "the Creator may be about to intervene in some unexpected manner for the Master's vindication and support," while Judas Iscariot dared to indulge the thought that Jesus was possibly oppressed with regrets for not having the courage to become ruler of the Jews.

It was from among such a group of depressed and disconsolate followers that Jesus went out on this beautiful Sabbath afternoon to preach an epoch-making sermon in the Capernaum synagogue. The only word of cheerful greeting or well-wishing from any of the immediate followers came from one of the unsuspecting Alpheus twins, who, as Jesus left the house on the way to the synagogue, saluted cheerily and said: "We pray the Creator will help you, and that we may have bigger multitudes than ever."

1. The Setting of the Stage

A distinguished congregation greeted Jesus at three o'clock on this exquisite Sabbath afternoon in the new Capernaum synagogue. Jairus presided and handed Jesus the Scriptures to read. The day before, fifty-three Pharisees and Sadducees had arrived from Jerusalem; more than thirty of the leaders and rulers of the neighboring synagogues were also present. These Jewish religious leaders were acting directly under orders from the Sanhedrin at Jerusalem, and they constituted the orthodox vanguard which had come to inaugurate open warfare on Jesus and the disciples. Sitting by the side of these Jewish leaders, in the synagogue seats of honor, were the official observers of Herod Antipas who had been directed to ascertain the truth concerning the disturbing reports that an attempt had been made by the populace to proclaim Jesus the ruler of the Jews.

Jesus comprehended the imminent danger of the immediate declaration of avowed and open hostility by an increasing body of enemies, and elected to boldly assume the offensive. At the feeding of the five thousand Jesus had challenged their ideas of the material Messiah; now choosing again to openly attack their concept of the Jewish deliverer. This crisis, which began with the feeding of the five thousand, and which terminated

with this Sabbath afternoon sermon, was the outward turning of the tide of popular fame and acclaim. From now on the work was to be increasingly concerned with the more important task of winning lasting spiritual converts for the truly religious family of humankind. This sermon marks the crisis in the transition from the period of discussion, controversy, and decision to that of open conflict and final acceptance or final rejection.

The Master knew that many of the followers were slowly but surely preparing to finally reject the proclamation of the new realm, and also knew that many of the disciples were slowly but certainly passing through that training of mind and that discipline of soul which would enable them to triumph over doubt and courageously assert their full-fledged faith in the doctrine of the new age. Jesus fully understood how people prepare themselves for the decisions of a crisis and the performance of sudden deeds of courage by the slow process of the reiterated choosing between the recurring situations of good and evil, subjecting the chosen messengers to repeated rehearsals in disappointment and providing them with frequent and testing opportunities for choosing between the right and the wrong way of meeting spiritual trials. Jesus knew that the followers could be depended on when they met the final test to make their vital decisions in accordance with prior and habitual mental attitudes and spirit reactions.

This crisis in Jesus' earth life began with the feeding of the five thousand and ended with this sermon in the synagogue; the crisis in the lives of the apostles began with this sermon in the synagogue and continued for a whole year, ending only with the Master's trial and crucifixion.

As the people sat there in the synagogue that afternoon before Jesus began to speak, there was just one great mystery, one supreme question, in the minds of all. Both friends and foes pondered just one thought, and that was: "Why did Jesus so deliberately and effectively turn back the tide of popular enthusiasm?" And it was immediately before and immediately after this sermon that the doubts and disappointments of the disgruntled adherents grew into unconscious opposition and eventually turned into actual hatred. It was after this sermon in the synagogue that Judas Iscariot entertained the first conscious thought of deserting, but did, for the time being, effectively master all such inclinations.

Everyone was in a state of confusion. Jesus had left them dumfounded and confounded, having recently engaged in the greatest demonstration of supernatural power of this entire endeavor. The feeding of the five thousand was the one event of Jesus' earth life which made the greatest appeal to the Jewish concept of the expected Messiah. But this extraordinary advantage was immediately and unexplainedly offset by the prompt and unequivocal refusal to be made ruler.

On Friday evening, and again on Sabbath morning, the Jerusalem leaders had labored long and earnestly with Jairus to prevent Jesus' speaking in the synagogue, but it was of no use. Jairus's only reply to all this pleading was: "I have granted this request, and I will not violate my word."

2. The Epochal Sermon

Jesus introduced this sermon by reading from the law as found in Deuteronomy: "But it shall come to pass, if this people will not hearken to the voice of Yahweh, that the curses of transgression shall surely overtake them. Yahweh shall cause you to be smitten by your enemies; you shall be removed into all the domains of

the earth. And Yahweh shall bring you and the ruler you have set up over you into the hands of a strange nation. You shall become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword among all nations. Your children shall go into captivity. The strangers among you shall rise high in authority while you are brought very low. And these things shall be upon you and your seed forever because you would not hearken to Yahweh's word. Therefore you shall serve your enemies who shall come against you. You shall endure hunger and thirst and wear this alien yoke of iron. Yahweh shall bring against you a nation from afar, from the end of the earth, a nation whose tongue you shall not understand, a nation of fierce countenance, a nation which will have little regard for you. And they shall besiege you in all your towns until the high fortified walls in which you have trusted come down; and all the land shall fall into their hands."

And Jesus, having finished this reading, turned to the Prophets and read from Jeremiah: "'If you will not hearken to the words of my servants, the prophets whom I have sent you, then I will make this house like Shiloh, and I will make this city a curse to all the nations of the earth.' And the priests and the teachers heard Jeremiah speak these words in the house of Yahweh. And it came to pass that, when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking to all the people what Yahweh had commanded, the priests and teachers said, 'You shall surely die.' And all the people crowded around Jeremiah in the house of Yahweh. And when the rulers of Judah heard these things, they sat in judgment on Jeremiah. Then spoke the priests and the teachers to the rulers and to all the people, saying: 'This person is worthy to die for prophesying against our city, and you have heard this with your own ears.' Then Jeremiah spoke to all the rulers and to all the people: 'Yahweh sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city all the words which you have heard. Now, therefore, amend your ways and reform your doings and obey the voice of Yahweh that you may escape the evil which has been pronounced against you. As for me, I am in your hands. Do with me as seems good and right in your eyes. But know for certain that, if you put me to death, you shall bring innocent blood upon yourselves and upon this people, for of a truth Yahweh has sent me to speak all these words in your ears.'

"The priests and teachers of that day sought to kill Jeremiah, but the judges would not consent, although, for having spoken words of warning, they did let Jeremiah down by cords in a filthy dungeon to sink in mire up to the armpits. That is what this people did to the Prophet Jeremiah for obeying Yahweh's command to warn them of their impending political downfall. Today, I would like to ask you: What will the chief priests and religious leaders of this people do with the person who dares to warn them of the day of their spiritual doom? Will you also seek to put to death the teacher who dares to proclaim the word of the Creator, and who does not fear to point out where you refuse to walk in the way of light which leads to the entrance to the realm of the Creator?

"What is it that you seek as evidence of my mission on earth? We have left you undisturbed in your positions of influence and power while we preached good news to the poor and the outcast. We have made no hostile attack upon that which you hold in reverence but have rather proclaimed new liberty for people's fear-ridden souls. I came into the world to reveal the Creator and to establish on earth the spiritual family of humanity, the realm of the Creator. And notwithstanding that I have so many times reminded you that my domain is not of this world, still the Creator has granted you many manifestations of material wonders in addition to more evidential spiritual transformations and regenerations.

“What new sign is it that you seek at my hands? I declare that you already have sufficient evidence to enable you to make your decision. I say to many who sit before me this day, you are confronted with the necessity of choosing which way you will go; and I say to you, as Joshua said to your forebears, ‘choose this day whom you will serve.’ Today, many of you stand at the parting of the ways.

“Some of you, when you could not find me after the feasting of the multitude on the other side, hired the Tiberias fishing fleet, which a week before had taken shelter nearby during a storm, to go in pursuit of me, and what for? Not for truth and righteousness or that you might better know how to serve and minister to others! No, but rather that you might have more bread for which you had not labored. It was not to fill your souls with the word of life, but only that you might fill the belly with the bread of ease. And you have been taught that the Messiah, when coming, would work those wonders which would make life pleasant and easy for all the chosen people. It is not strange, then, that you who have been taught these things should long for the loaves and the fishes. But I affirm to you that such is not my mission. I have come to proclaim spiritual liberty, teach eternal truth, and foster living faith.

“Do not desire the meat which perishes but rather seek for the spiritual food that nourishes even to eternal life; and this is the bread of life which I give to all who will take it and eat, for the Creator has given me this life without measure. And when you asked me, ‘What must we do to perform the works of the Creator?’ I plainly told you: ‘This is the work of the Creator, that you believe the one whom the Creator has sent.’”

And then Jesus said, pointing up to the device of a pot of manna which decorated the lintel of this new synagogue, and which was embellished with grape clusters: “You have thought that your ancestors in the wilderness ate manna — the bread of paradise — but I say to you that this was the bread of earth. While Moses did not give them bread from paradise, the Creator now stands ready to give you the true bread of life. The bread of life is that which comes down from the Creator and gives eternal life to the people of the world. And when you say to me, Give us this living bread, I will answer: I am this bread of life. Whoever comes to me will not hunger, while those who believe me will never thirst. You have seen me, lived with me, and beheld my works, yet you do not believe that I came from the Creator. But to those who do believe — do not be afraid. All those led of the Creator will come to me, and no one who comes to me will be cast out.

“And now let me declare to you, once and for all time, that I have come down on the earth, not to do my own will, but the will of the One who sent me. And this is the final will of the One who sent me, that of all those given me I should not lose one. And this is the will of the Creator: That everyone who sees me and who believes me will have eternal life. Only yesterday I fed you with bread for your bodies; today I offer you the bread of life for your hungry souls. Will you now take the bread of the spirit as you then so willingly ate the bread of this world?”

As Jesus paused for a moment to look over the congregation, one of the teachers from Jerusalem (a member of the Sanhedrin) rose up and asked: “Do I understand you to say that you are the bread which comes down from paradise, and that the manna which Moses gave to our ancestors in the wilderness did not?” And Jesus answered the Pharisee, “You understood right.” Then said the Pharisee: “But are you not Jesus of Nazareth, the child of Joseph, the carpenter? Are not your parents, as well as your siblings, well known to many of us? How is it that you appear here in Yahweh’s house and declare that you have come down from paradise?”

By this time there was much murmuring in the synagogue, and such a tumult was threatened that Jesus stood up and said: "Let us be patient; the truth never suffers from honest examination. I am all that you say but more. The Creator and I are one; I do only that which the Creator teaches me, while all those who are given to me by the Creator, I will receive. You have read where it is written in the Prophets, 'You shall all be taught by Yahweh.' Everyone who yields to the teaching of the Creator's indwelling spirit will eventually come to me. Not that anyone has seen the Creator, but the Creator's spirit does live within mortals. And I have surely seen the Creator. And those who truly believe me already have eternal life.

"I am this bread of life. Your forebears ate manna in the wilderness and are dead. But this bread which comes down from the Creator, those who eat it will never die in spirit. I repeat, I am this living bread, and every soul who attains the realization of this united nature of Creator and mortal shall live forever. And this bread of life which I give to all who will receive it is my own living and combined nature. That is my life-giving revelation to the world and my saving gift to all nations."

When Jesus had finished speaking, the ruler of the synagogue dismissed the congregation, but they would not leave. They crowded up around Jesus to ask more questions while others murmured and disputed among themselves. And this state of affairs continued for more than three hours. It was well past seven o'clock before the audience finally dispersed.

3. The After Meeting

There were many questions asked during this meeting. Some were asked by the disciples, but more were asked by caviling enemies who only sought to embarrass and entrap Jesus.

One of the visiting Pharisees, mounting a lampstand, shouted out this question: "You tell us that you are the bread of life. How can you give us your flesh to eat or your blood to drink? What use is your teaching if it cannot be carried out?" And Jesus answered this question, saying: "I did not teach you that my flesh is the bread of life nor that my blood is the water of life. But I did say that my life is a bestowal of the bread of life. The fact of the Word of the Creator bestowed on earth and the phenomenon of the Child of Humanity subject to the will of the Creator, constitute a reality of experience which is equivalent to the divine sustenance. You cannot eat my flesh nor can you drink my blood, but you can become one in spirit with me even as I am one in spirit with the Creator. You can be nourished by the eternal word of the Creator, which is indeed the bread of life, and which has been bestowed in the likeness of a mortal; and you can be watered in soul by the divine spirit, which is truly the water of life. The Creator has sent me into the world to demonstrate a desire to indwell and direct all mortals; and I have lived this life so as to inspire all people to seek to know and do the will of the indwelling Creator."

Then one of the Jerusalem spies who had been observing Jesus and the apostles, said: "We notice that neither you nor your apostles wash your hands properly before you eat bread. You must know that such a practice as eating with defiled and unwashed hands is a transgression of the law of the elders. Neither do you properly wash your drinking cups and eating vessels. Why is it that you show such disrespect for the traditions and the laws of our elders?" And Jesus, hearing this, answered: "Why is it that you transgress the commandments of the Creator by the laws of your tradition? The commandment says, 'Honor your parents,' and directs that you share with them your substance if necessary; but you enact a law of tradition which

permits undutiful children to say that the money with which the parents might have been assisted has been 'given to Yahweh.' The law of the elders relieves such crafty children of their responsibility, notwithstanding that the children subsequently use all such money for their own comfort. Why is it that you in this way make void the commandment by your own tradition? Isaiah prophesied well of you hypocrites, saying: 'This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. In vain they worship me, teaching as their doctrines the precepts of mortals.'

"You can see how it is that you desert the commandment while you hold fast to the tradition of mortals. You are altogether willing to reject the word of the Creator while you maintain your own traditions. And in many other ways you dare to set up your own teachings above the law and the prophets."

Jesus then directed remarks to all present, saying: "But listen to me, all of you. It is not that which enters into the mouth that spiritually defiles one, but rather that which proceeds out of the mouth and from the heart." But even the apostles failed to fully grasp the meaning of these words, for Simon Peter also asked: "Lest some of your hearers be unnecessarily offended, would you explain to us the meaning of these words?" And then Jesus said to Peter: "Do you also not understand? Do you not know that every plant which the Creator has not planted will be rooted up? Turn your attention to those who would know the truth. You cannot compel people to love the truth. Many of these teachers are blind guides. And you know that, if the blind lead the blind, both will fall into the pit. But listen while I tell you the truth concerning those things which morally defile and spiritually contaminate. It is not that which enters the body by the mouth or gains access to the mind through the eyes and ears, that defiles someone. People are only defiled by that evil which may originate within the heart, and which finds expression in the words and deeds of such unholy persons. Do you not know that it is from the heart that evil thoughts, wicked projects of murder, theft, and adulteries, together with jealousy, pride, anger, revenge, and false witness come? And it is just such things that defile people, and not that they eat bread with ceremonially unclean hands."

The Pharisaic commissioners of the Jerusalem Sanhedrin were now almost convinced that Jesus must be apprehended on a charge of blasphemy or on one of flouting the sacred law of the Jews; which explained their efforts to involve Jesus in the discussion of, and possible attack upon, some of the traditions of the elders, or so-called oral laws of the nation. No matter how scarce water might be, these traditionally enslaved Jews would never fail to go through with the required ceremonial washing of the hands before every meal. It was their belief that "it is better to die than to transgress the commandments of the elders." The spies asked this question because it had been reported that Jesus had said, "Salvation is a matter of clean hearts rather than of clean hands." But such beliefs, when they once become a part of one's religion, are hard to get away from. Even many years after this day the Apostle Peter was still held in the bondage of fear to many of these traditions about things clean and unclean, only being finally delivered by experiencing an extraordinary and vivid dream. All of this can better be understood when it is recalled that these Jews looked upon eating with unwashed hands in the same light as commerce with a harlot, and both were equally punishable by excommunication.

In this way the Master elected to discuss and expose the folly of the whole rabbinic system of rules and regulations which was represented by the oral law — the traditions of the elders, all of which were regarded as more sacred and more binding on the Jews than even the teachings of the Scriptures. And Jesus spoke

out with less reserve because the hour had come when it was no longer possible to prevent an open rupture of relations with these religious leaders.

4. Last Words in the Synagogue

In the midst of the discussions of this after meeting, one of the Pharisees from Jerusalem brought to Jesus a distraught youth who was possessed of an unruly and rebellious spirit. Leading this demented youth up to Jesus, the Pharisee said: "What can you do for such affliction as this? Can you cast out devils?" And the Master, looking at the youth, was moved with compassion and said: "You know who I am; come out of this person; and I charge one of your loyal associates to see that you do not return." And immediately the youth was normal. And this is the first case where Jesus really cast an "evil spirit" out of a human being. All of the previous cases were only supposed possession of the devil; but this was a genuine case of demoniac possession, such as sometimes occurred in those days and right up to the day of Pentecost, when the Master's spirit was poured out on all people, making it forever impossible for these few celestial rebels to take such advantage of certain unstable types of human beings.

When the people marveled, one of the Pharisees stood up and charged that Jesus could do these things by being in league with devils; that Jesus admitted that in the language employed in casting out this devil, they were known to each other; and the Pharisee went on to state that the religious teachers and leaders at Jerusalem had decided that Jesus did all these so-called miracles by the power of the evil one, saying: "Have nothing to do with this person who is in partnership with Satan."

Then Jesus said: "How can Satan cast out Satan? A country divided against itself cannot stand; if a house is divided against itself, it is soon brought to desolation. Can a city withstand a siege if it is not united? But you should know that no one can enter into the house of a strong person and despoil it except by first overpowering and binding that strong person. And so, if I by the power of Satan cast out devils, by whom do you cast them out? But if I, by the spirit of the Creator, cast out devils, then the realm of the Creator has truly come upon you. If you were not blinded by prejudice and misled by fear and pride, you would easily perceive that one who is greater than devils stands in your midst. You compel me to declare that one who is not with me is against me, while one who does not gather with me scatters abroad. Let me utter a solemn warning to you who would presume, with your eyes open and with premeditated malice, knowingly to ascribe the works of the Creator to the doings of devils! I say to you, all your sins will be forgiven, even all of your blasphemies, but whoever blasphemes against the Creator with deliberation and wicked intention will never obtain forgiveness. Since such persistent workers of iniquity will never seek nor receive forgiveness, they are guilty of the sin of eternally rejecting divine forgiveness.

"Many of you have come this day to the parting of the ways; you have come to a beginning of the making of the inevitable choice between the will of the Creator and the self-chosen ways of darkness. And as you now choose, so you will eventually be. You must either make the tree and its fruit good, or else the tree and its fruit will become corrupt. In the Creator's eternal realm the tree is known by its fruits. But some of you who are as vipers, how can you, having already chosen evil, bring forth good fruits? After all, out of the abundance of the evil in your hearts your mouths speak."

Then another Pharisee stood up and said: “Teacher, we would have you give us a predetermined sign which we will agree on as establishing your authority and right to teach. Will you agree to such an arrangement?” And Jesus, hearing this, said: “This faithless and sign-seeking generation seeks a token, but no sign will be given to you other than that which you already have, and that which you will see when I depart from among you.”

And Jesus, when finished speaking, left the synagogue with the apostles. In silence they journeyed home to Bethsaida. The apostles were all amazed and somewhat terror-stricken by the sudden change in the Master’s teaching tactics. They were wholly unaccustomed to seeing Jesus perform in such a militant manner.

5. The Saturday Evening

Time and again Jesus had dashed to pieces the hopes of the apostles and had repeatedly crushed their fondest expectations, but no time of disappointment or season of sorrow had ever equaled that which now overtook them. And, too, there was now mixed with their depression a real fear for their safety. They were all surprisingly startled by the suddenness and completeness of the desertion of the populace. They were also somewhat frightened and disconcerted by the unexpected boldness and assertive determination exhibited by the Pharisees who had come from Jerusalem. But most of all they were bewildered by Jesus’ sudden change of tactics. Under ordinary circumstances they would have welcomed the appearance of this more aggressive attitude, but coming as it did, along with so much that was unexpected, it startled them.

And now, on top of all of these worries, when they reached home Jesus refused to eat, for hours becoming isolated in one of the upper rooms. It was almost midnight when Joab, the leader of the evangelists, returned and reported that about one third of the associates had deserted the cause. All through the evening loyal disciples had come and gone, reporting that the revulsion of feeling toward the Master was general in Capernaum. The leaders from Jerusalem were not slow to feed this feeling of disaffection and in every way possible to seek to promote the movement away from Jesus.

It was a little after midnight when Jesus came down from the upper chamber and stood among the twelve and their associates, numbering about thirty in all, saying: “I recognize that this sorting distresses you, but it is unavoidable. Still, after all the training you have had, was there any good reason why you should stumble at my words? Why is it that you are filled with fear and consternation when you see the new realm being divested of these lukewarm multitudes and halfhearted disciples? Why do you grieve when the new day is dawning for the shining forth in new glory of the spiritual teachings of the realm of the Creator? If you find it difficult to endure this test, what will you do when I must return to the Creator? When and how will you prepare yourselves for the time when I ascend to the place from which I came to this world?

“My beloved, you must remember that it is the spirit that quickens; the flesh and all that pertains to it is of little profit. The words which I have spoken to you are of spirit and life. Be of good cheer! I have not deserted you. Many will be offended by the plain speaking of these days. You have already heard that many of my disciples have turned back; they walk with me no more. From the beginning I knew that these halfhearted followers would fall by the wayside. Did I not choose you twelve and set you apart as ambassadors? And now at such a time as this would you also desert? Let each of you look to your own

faith, for one of you stands in grave danger.” And when Jesus had finished speaking, Simon Peter said: “Yes, Master, we are sad and confused, but we will never forsake you. You have taught us the words of eternal life. We have believed in you and followed you all this time. We will not turn back, for we know that you are sent by the Creator.” And when Peter stopped speaking, they all with one accord nodded their approval of this pledge of loyalty.

Then Jesus said: “Go to your rest, for busy times are upon us; active days are just ahead.”

Paper 154

Last Days at Capernaum

On the eventful Saturday night of April 30, as Jesus was speaking words of comfort and courage to the downcast and bewildered disciples, at Tiberias a council was being held between Herod Antipas and a group of special commissioners representing the Jerusalem Sanhedrin. These scribes and Pharisees urged Herod to arrest Jesus; making the case that Jesus was stirring up the populace to dissension and even to rebellion. But Herod refused to take action against Jesus as a political offender. Herod's advisers had correctly reported the episode across the lake when the people tried to proclaim Jesus ruler and how the proposal had been rejected.

One of Herod's official family, Chuza, had declared that Jesus did not propose to meddle with the affairs of political rule and was only concerned with the establishment of the spiritual association of followers, calling the association the realm of the Creator. Herod had confidence in Chuza's reports, and refused to interfere with Jesus' activities, being also influenced at this time by a superstitious fear of John the Baptist. Herod was one of those apostate Jews who, while believing nothing, feared everything. Herod had a bad conscience for having put John to death, and did not want to become entangled in these intrigues against Jesus, knowing of many cases of sickness which had been apparently healed by Jesus, who Herod regarded as either a prophet or a relatively harmless religious fanatic.

When the Jews threatened to report to Caesar that Herod was shielding a traitorous subject, they were ordered out of the council chamber. These matters rested for one week, during which time Jesus prepared the followers for the impending dispersion.

1. A Week of Counsel

From May 1 to May 7 Jesus held intimate counsel with the followers at the Zebedee house. Only the tried and trusted disciples were admitted to these conferences. At this time there were only about one hundred disciples who had the moral courage to brave the opposition of the Pharisees and openly declare their adherence to Jesus, who held sessions with this group morning, afternoon, and evening. Small groups of inquirers assembled each afternoon by the seaside, where some of the evangelists or apostles spoke to them. These groups seldom numbered more than fifty.

On Friday of this week official action was taken by the rulers of the Capernaum synagogue closing it to Jesus and all the followers. This action was taken at the instigation of the Jerusalem Pharisees. Jairus resigned as chief ruler and openly aligned with Jesus.

The last of the seaside meetings was held on Sabbath afternoon, May 7. Jesus talked to less than one hundred and fifty who had assembled at that time. This Saturday night marked the time of the lowest ebb in the tide of popular regard for Jesus. From then on there was a steady, slow, but more healthful and dependable growth in favorable sentiment; a new following was built up which was better grounded in spiritual faith and true religious experience. The more or less composite and compromising transition stage between the materialistic concepts held by the Master's followers and those more idealistic and spiritual concepts taught by Jesus, had now definitely ended. From now on there was a more open proclamation of the doctrine of the new realm in its larger scope and in its broad spiritual implications.

2. A Week of Rest

Sunday, May 8, C.E. 29, at Jerusalem, the Sanhedrin passed a decree closing all the synagogues of Palestine to Jesus and the followers. This was a new and unprecedented usurpation of authority by the Jerusalem Sanhedrin. Previously each synagogue had existed and functioned as an independent congregation of worshipers and was under the rule and direction of its own board of governors. Only the synagogues of Jerusalem had been subject to the authority of the Sanhedrin. This summary action of the Sanhedrin was followed by the resignation of five of its members. One hundred messengers were immediately dispatched to convey and enforce this decree. Within the short space of two weeks every synagogue in Palestine had bowed to this manifesto of the Sanhedrin except the synagogue at Hebron. The rulers of the Hebron synagogue refused to acknowledge the right of the Sanhedrin to exercise such jurisdiction over their assembly. This refusal to accede to the Jerusalem decree was based on their contention of congregational autonomy rather than on sympathy with Jesus' cause. Shortly afterward the Hebron synagogue was destroyed by fire.

This same Sunday morning, Jesus declared a week's holiday, urging all of the disciples to return to their homes or friends to rest their troubled souls and speak words of encouragement to their loved ones. Jesus said: "Go to your several places to play or fish while you pray for the extension of the new realm."

This week of rest enabled Jesus to visit many families and groups about the seaside and to go fishing with David Zebedee on several occasions. While Jesus was alone much of the time, there were always two or three of David's most trusted messengers nearby, who had explicit orders from their chief respecting the safeguarding of Jesus. There was no public teaching of any sort during this week of rest.

This was the week that Nathaniel and James Zebedee suffered from more than a slight illness. For three days and nights they were acutely afflicted with a painful digestive disturbance. On the third night, Jesus sent Salome, the elder Zebedee's spouse, to rest while continuing to minister to the suffering apostles. Of course Jesus could have instantly healed these two, but that is not the Creator's method for dealing with these commonplace difficulties and afflictions of the mortals on the evolutionary worlds of time and space. Never once, throughout all of the eventful life on earth, did Jesus engage in any sort of supernatural ministration to any member of the earth family or on behalf of any one of the immediate followers.

Universe difficulties must be met and planetary obstacles must be encountered as a part of the experience training provided for the growth and development, the progressive perfection, of the evolving souls of mortal creatures. The spiritualization of the human soul requires intimate experience with the educational solving of a wide range of real universe problems. The animal nature and the lower forms of will creatures do not progress favorably in environmental ease. Problematic situations, coupled with exertion stimuli, conspire to produce those activities of mind, soul, and spirit which contribute mightily to the achievement of worthy goals of mortal progression and to the attainment of higher levels of spirit destiny.

3. The Second Tiberias Conference

On May 16 the second conference at Tiberias between the authorities at Jerusalem and Herod Antipas was convened. The religious and the political leaders from Jerusalem were both in attendance. The Jewish leaders were able to report to Herod that practically all the synagogues in Galilee and Judea were closed to Jesus' teachings. While a new effort was made to have Jesus placed under arrest, Herod refused to do their bidding. On May 18, however, Herod did agree to the plan of permitting the Sanhedrin authorities to take Jesus to Jerusalem to be tried on religious charges, provided that the Roman ruler of Judea concurred in such an arrangement. Meanwhile, Jesus' enemies were industriously spreading the rumor throughout

Galilee that Herod had become hostile to Jesus, and meant to exterminate all who believed in Jesus' teachings.

On Saturday night, May 21, word reached Tiberias that the civil authorities at Jerusalem had no objection to the agreement between Herod and the Pharisees that Jesus be seized and carried to Jerusalem for trial before the Sanhedrin on charges of flouting the sacred laws of the Jewish nation. Accordingly, just before midnight of this day, Herod signed the decree which authorized that Jesus be seized by the officers of the Sanhedrin and forcibly taken to Jerusalem for trial. Herod consented to grant this permission as the result of strong pressure, knowing that Jesus could not expect a fair trial before the bitter enemies at Jerusalem.

4. Saturday Night in Capernaum

On this same Saturday night, in Capernaum, a group of fifty leading citizens met at the synagogue to discuss the important question: "What should we do with Jesus?" They talked and debated until after midnight, but they could not find any common ground for agreement. Aside from a few who inclined to the belief that Jesus might be the Messiah, or at least a holy person, or perhaps a prophet, the meeting was divided into four nearly equal groups who held, respectively, the following views:

1. That Jesus was a deluded and harmless religious fanatic.
2. That Jesus was a dangerous and designing agitator who might stir up rebellion.
3. That Jesus was in league with devils, and might even be a leader of devils.
4. That Jesus was mad, mentally unbalanced.

There was much talk about Jesus' preaching doctrines which were upsetting for the common people; the enemies maintained that these teachings were impractical, that everything would go to pieces if everybody made an honest effort to live in accordance with these ideas. And the people of many subsequent generations have said the same things. Many intelligent and well-meaning people, even in the more enlightened age of these revelations, maintain that modern civilization could not have been built on the teachings of Jesus — and they are partially right. But all such doubters forget that a much better civilization could have been built on these teachings, and someday will be. This world has never seriously tried to carry out the teachings of Jesus on a large scale, notwithstanding that halfhearted attempts have often been made to follow the doctrines of so-called Christianity.

5. The Eventful Sunday Morning

May 22 was an eventful day in the life of Jesus. On this Sunday morning, before daybreak, one of David's messengers arrived in a great hurry from Tiberias, bringing word that Herod had authorized, or was about to authorize, the arrest of Jesus by the officers of the Sanhedrin. The receipt of the news of this impending danger caused David Zebedee to arouse the messengers and send them out to all the local groups of disciples, summoning them for an emergency council at seven o'clock that morning. A member of Jesus' family, on hearing this alarming report, hastened word to all of the family who dwelt nearby, summoning them to assemble at Zebedee's house. And in response to this sudden call, Mary, James, Joseph, Jude, and Ruth presently assembled.

At this early morning meeting Jesus imparted final instructions to the assembled disciples; bidding them farewell for the time being, knowing that they would soon be dispersed from Capernaum, and directing them all to seek the Creator for guidance and to carry on the work regardless of consequences. The

evangelists were to work as they saw fit until such time as they might be called. Twelve of the evangelists and the twelve apostles were selected to remain with Jesus no matter what happened.

Jesus consented to David Zebedee's continuing the countrywide messenger service, and in presently bidding the Master farewell, David said: "Go to your work, Master. Don't let the bigots catch you, and never doubt that the messengers will follow after you. My people will never lose contact with you, and through them you will know of the work in other places, and by them we will all know about you. Nothing that might happen to me will interfere with this service, for I have appointed first and second leaders, even a third. I am neither a teacher nor a preacher, but it is in my heart to do this, and none can stop me."

About 7:30 this morning Jesus gave a parting address to almost one hundred followers who had crowded indoors to listen. This was a solemn occasion for all present, but Jesus seemed unusually cheerful. The seriousness of weeks had gone, and Jesus inspired all of them with words of faith, hope, and courage.

6. Jesus' Family Arrives

It was about eight o'clock on this Sunday morning when five members of Jesus' earth family arrived on the scene in response to the urgent summons. Of all Jesus' family, only one, Ruth, believed wholeheartedly and continuously in the divinity of the bestowal mission on earth. Jude and James, and even Joseph, still retained much of their faith in Jesus, but they had permitted pride to interfere with their better judgment and real spiritual inclinations. Mary was also torn between love and fear, between parental love and family pride. Though harassed by doubts, Mary could never quite forget the visit of Gabriel before Jesus was born. The Pharisees had been trying to persuade Mary to dissuade Jesus from further efforts at public teaching. They assured Mary that soon Jesus' health would break, and that only dishonor and disgrace could come upon the entire family as a result of continuing on. And so, when the word came, all five of them started at once for Zebedee's house, having been together at Mary's home, where they had met with the Pharisees the evening before. They had talked with the Jerusalem leaders long into the night, and all were more or less convinced that Jesus was acting strangely, and had acted strangely for some time. While Ruth could not explain all of this conduct, she insisted that Jesus had always treated the family fairly and refused to agree to the program of trying to dissuade any further work.

On the way to Zebedee's house they talked these things over and agreed among themselves to try to persuade Jesus to come home with them. Mary said: "If Jesus would only come home and listen to me I could be of some influence." James and Jude had heard rumors concerning the plans to take Jesus to Jerusalem for trial. They also feared for their own safety. As long as Jesus was a popular figure in the public eye, the family allowed matters to drift along, but now that the people of Capernaum and the leaders at Jerusalem had suddenly turned against Jesus, they began to keenly feel the pressure of the supposed disgrace of their embarrassing position.

They had expected to urge Jesus to go home with them; to provide assurances that they would forgive and forget if Jesus would only give up the foolishness of trying to preach a new religion which could bring only trouble and dishonor on the family. To all of this Ruth would only say that "I hope Jesus would be willing to die before allowing these wicked Pharisees to interfere with the preaching." Joseph promised to keep Ruth quiet while the others bargained with Jesus.

When they reached the Zebedee house, Jesus was in the midst of delivering the parting address to the disciples. They tried to gain entrance to the house, but it was crowded to overflowing. Finally they established themselves on the back porch and had word passed in, from person to person, so that it finally was whispered to Jesus by Simon Peter, who interrupted the talk for the purpose, and who said: "Your family is outside, and they are very anxious to speak with you." Now it did not occur to Mary how important

the giving of this parting message to the followers was, neither did Mary know that this address was likely to be terminated any moment by the arrival of apprehenders. Mary really thought that, after so long an apparent estrangement, in view of the fact that the family had shown the grace to actually come there, Jesus would stop speaking and come to them on receiving word that they were waiting.

It was just another of those instances in which the earth family could not comprehend that Jesus must be about the Creator's business. And so Mary and the other family members were deeply hurt when, even though Jesus paused speaking to receive the message, instead of rushing out to greet them, they heard with increased volume: "Say to my family that they should have no fear for me. The Creator who sent me into the world will not forsake me; neither will any harm come to my family. Ask them to have courage and put their trust in the Creator. But, after all, who is my family?" And reaching toward all of the disciples assembled in the room, Jesus said: "I have no family, for whoever does the will of the Creator is my family."

And Mary, on hearing these words, collapsed in Jude's arms. They carried Mary out in the garden to be revived while Jesus spoke the concluding words of this parting message. Jesus would then have gone out to confer with the family, but a messenger arrived from Tiberias bringing word that the officers of the Sanhedrin were on their way to take Jesus to Jerusalem. Andrew received this message and, interrupting Jesus, delivered it.

Andrew did not recall that David had posted some twenty-five sentinels about the Zebedee house, and that no one could take them by surprise; and asked Jesus what should be done. The Master stood there in silence while Mary, having heard the words, "I have no family," was recovering from the shock in the garden. It was at just this time that someone in the room stood up and exclaimed, "Blessed is the family that birthed and raised you." Jesus turned aside a moment from the conversation with Andrew to answer this person by saying, "No, rather is one blessed who hears the word of the Creator and dares to obey it."

Mary and the other family members thought that Jesus did not understand them and had lost interest in them, little realizing that it was they who failed to understand Jesus. Jesus fully understood how difficult it is for people to break with their past, how human beings are swayed by the preacher's eloquence, and how the conscience responds to emotional appeal as the mind does to logic and reason, but also knew how far more difficult it is to persuade people to *disown the past*.

It is forever true that all who may think they are misunderstood or not appreciated have in Jesus a sympathizing friend and an understanding counselor. Jesus had warned the apostles that members of a person's own household may be adversaries, but had hardly realized how near this prediction would come to apply personally. Jesus did not forsake the earth family to do the Creator's work — they forsook Jesus. Later on, after the Master's death and resurrection, James became connected with the early Christian movement and suffered immeasurably as a result of a failure to enjoy this earlier association with Jesus and the disciples.

In passing through these events, Jesus chose to be guided by the limited knowledge of the human mind, preferring to undergo the experience as a mere mortal. And the human mind of Jesus intended to see the family before leaving. Jesus did not want to stop in the midst of a discourse and render their first meeting after so long a separation such a public affair, expecting to finish the address and then have a visit with them before leaving, but this plan was thwarted by the conspiracy of events which immediately followed.

The haste of their flight was augmented by the arrival of a party of David's messengers at the rear entrance of the Zebedee home. The commotion this produced frightened the apostles into thinking that these new arrivals might be their apprehenders, and in fear of immediate arrest, they hurried through the front entrance to the waiting boat. And all of this explains why Jesus did not see the family waiting on the back porch.

But Jesus did say to David Zebedee while entering the boat in hasty flight: “Tell my family that I appreciate their coming, and that I intended to see them. Ask them to take no offense but rather to seek for a knowledge of the will of the Creator and for grace and courage to do that will.”

7. The Hasty Flight

And so it was on this Sunday morning, the twenty-second of May, in the year C.E. 29, that Jesus, with the twelve apostles and the twelve evangelists, engaged in this hasty flight from the Sanhedrin officers who were on their way to Bethsaida with authority from Herod Antipas to take Jesus to Jerusalem for trial on charges of blasphemy and other violations of the sacred laws of the Jews. It was almost half past eight this beautiful morning when this company of twenty-five got in a boat and headed for the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee.

Following the Master’s boat was another and smaller craft, containing six of David’s messengers, who had instructions to maintain contact with Jesus and the associates and to see that information of their whereabouts and safety was regularly transmitted to the home of Zebedee in Bethsaida, which had served as headquarters for the work for some time. But Jesus was never again to live at the house of Zebedee. From now on, throughout the remainder of the earth life, the Master truly no more had even the semblance of a settled home.

They rowed over to near the village of Kheresa, put their boat in the custody of friends, and began the wanderings of this eventful last year of the Master’s life on earth. For a time they remained in the domains of Philip, going from Kheresa to Caesarea-Philippi and making their way over to the coast of Phoenicia.

The crowd lingered about the home of Zebedee watching these two boats make their way over the lake toward the eastern shore, and they had already started when the Jerusalem officers hurried up and began their search. They refused to believe that Jesus had escaped them, and while Jesus and the others were journeying northward through Batanea, the Pharisees and their assistants spent almost a full week vainly searching for them in the neighborhood of Capernaum.

Jesus’ family returned to their home in Capernaum and spent almost a week talking, debating, and praying. They were filled with confusion and dismay. They enjoyed no peace of mind until Thursday afternoon, when Ruth returned from a visit to the Zebedee house, having learned from David that Jesus was safe and in good health and heading toward the Phoenician coast.

Paper 155

Fleeing Through Northern Galilee

Soon after landing near Kheresa on this eventful Sunday, Jesus and the twenty-four went a little way to the north, where they spent the night in a beautiful park south of Bethsaida-Julias. They were familiar with this camping place, having stopped there in days gone by. Before retiring for the night, the Master gathered the followers around and discussed with them the plans for their projected tour through Batanea and northern Galilee to the Phoenician coast.

1. Why Do the Heathen Rage?

Jesus said: “You should all recall how the Psalmist spoke of these times, saying, ‘Why do the heathen rage and the people plot in vain? The rulers of the earth take counsel together against Yahweh, saying, let us break the bonds of mercy and cast away the cords of love.’

“Today you see this fulfilled before your eyes. But you will not see the remainder of the Psalmist’s prophecy fulfilled, for the prophet entertained erroneous ideas about me and my mission on earth. My domain is founded on love. The Creator does not sit on a throne laughing in derision at the heathen. The Creator is not wrathful and in great displeasure. The promise is true that I will have these so-called heathen (in reality my ignorant and untaught children) for an inheritance. And I will receive these gentiles with open arms of mercy and affection. All this loving-kindness will be shown to the so-called heathen. The Psalmist exhorted you to ‘serve Yahweh with fear’ — I invite you to enter into the exalted privileges of divine relationship by faith. The Psalmist commands you to rejoice with trembling; I ask you to rejoice with assurance. You who have lived with me know that anger and wrath are not a part of the establishment of the realm of the Creator in the hearts of mortals. But the Psalmist did glimpse the true light when saying, in finishing this exhortation: ‘Blessed are they who put their trust in this divine Being.’”

Jesus continued to teach the twenty-four, saying: “The heathen are not without excuse when they rage at us. Because their outlook is small and narrow, they are able to concentrate their energies enthusiastically. Their goal is near and more or less visible; therefore they strive with valiant and effective execution. You who have professed entrance into the realm of the Creator are altogether too vacillating and indefinite in your teaching conduct. The heathen strike directly for their objectives; you are guilty of too much chronic yearning. If you want to enter the new realm, why do you not take it by spiritual assault even as the heathen take a city to which they lay siege? You are hardly worthy of the new realm when your service consists so largely in an attitude of regretting the past, whining over the present, and vainly hoping for the future. Why do the heathen rage? Because they do not know the truth. Why do you languish in futile yearning? Because you do not *obey* the truth. Cease your useless yearning and bravely do that which concerns the establishment of the new realm.

“In all that you do, do not become one-sided and overspecialized. The Pharisees who seek our destruction think that they are doing Yahweh’s service. They have become so narrowed by tradition that they are blinded by prejudice and hardened by fear. Consider the Greeks, who have a science without religion, while

the Jews have a religion without science. And when people become misled into accepting a narrow and confused disintegration of truth, their only hope is to become truth-co-ordinated — converted.

“Let me emphatically state this eternal truth: If you, by truth co-ordination, learn to exemplify in your lives this beautiful wholeness of righteousness, your associates will then seek after you so that they may gain what you have acquired. The measure by which truth seekers are drawn to you represents the measure of your truth endowment, your righteousness. The extent to which you have to go with your message to the people is, in a way, the measure of your failure to live the whole or righteous life, the truth-co-ordinated life.”

And many other things the Master taught the apostles and the evangelists before they said good night.

2. The Evangelists in Chorazin

On Monday morning, May 23, Jesus directed Peter to go to Chorazin with the twelve evangelists and then, with the eleven apostles, departed for Caesarea-Philippi, going by way of the Jordan to the Damascus-Capernaum road, then northeast to the junction with the road to Caesarea-Philippi, and on into that city, where they stayed and taught for two weeks. They arrived during the afternoon of Tuesday, May 24.

Peter and the evangelists stayed in Chorazin for two weeks, preaching the doctrine of the new realm to a small but earnest company of followers. But they were not able to win many new converts. No city of all Galilee yielded so few souls as Chorazin. In accordance with Peter’s instructions the twelve evangelists had less to say about healing — things physical — while they preached and taught with increased vigor the spiritual truths of the new age. These two weeks at Chorazin constituted a veritable baptism of adversity for the twelve evangelists in that it was the most difficult and unproductive period in their careers up to this time. Being deprived of the satisfaction of winning souls, they more earnestly and honestly took stock of their own souls and their progress in the spiritual paths of the new life.

When it appeared that no more people were inclined to seek entrance into the new realm, Peter, on Tuesday, June 7, called the associates together and left for Caesarea-Philippi to join Jesus and the apostles. They arrived about noontime on Wednesday and spent the entire evening retelling their experiences among the people of Chorazin. During the discussions of this evening Jesus made further reference to the parable of the sower and taught them much about the meaning of the apparent failure of life undertakings.

3. At Caesarea-Philippi

Although Jesus did no public work during this two weeks’ sojourn near Caesarea-Philippi, the apostles held numerous quiet evening meetings in the city, and many of the followers came out to the camp to talk with the Master. Very few were added to the group as a result of this visit. Jesus talked with the apostles each day, and they more clearly discerned that a new phase of the work of preaching was now beginning. They were beginning to comprehend that the “realm of the Creator is not meat and drink but the realization of the spiritual joy of the acceptance of the divine family.”

The sojourn at Caesarea-Philippi was a real test for the eleven apostles; it was a difficult two weeks for them to live through. They were depressed, and they missed the periodic stimulation of Peter’s enthusiastic

personality. In these times it was a great and testing adventure to believe in and follow after Jesus. Though they made few converts during these two weeks, they did learn much that was highly profitable from their daily conferences with the Master.

The apostles learned that the Jews were spiritually stagnant and dying because they had crystallized truth into a creed; that when truth becomes formulated as a boundary line of self-righteous exclusiveness instead of serving as a signpost of spiritual guidance and progress, such teachings lose their creative and life-giving power and ultimately become merely preservative and fossilizing.

Increasingly they learned from Jesus to see human personalities in terms of their possibilities in time and in eternity. They learned that many souls can best be led to love the unseen Creator by first being taught to love others whom they can see. And it was in this connection that new meaning became attached to the Master's pronouncement concerning unselfish service for others, "Inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these, you did it to me."

One of the great lessons of this stay at Caesarea had to do with the origin of religious traditions, with the grave danger of allowing a sense of sacredness to become attached to non-sacred things, common ideas, or everyday events. From one conference they emerged with the teaching that true religion was people's heartfelt loyalty to their highest and truest convictions.

Jesus warned them that, if their religious longings were only material, increasing knowledge of nature would, by progressive displacement of the supposed supernatural origin of things, ultimately deprive them of their faith in the Creator. But that, if their religion were spiritual, the progress of physical science could never disturb their faith in eternal realities and divine values.

They learned that, when religion is wholly spiritual in motive, it makes all life more worthwhile, filling it with high purposes, dignifying it with transcendent values, inspiring it with superb motives, all the while comforting the human soul with a sublime and sustaining hope. True religion is designed to lessen the strain of existence; it releases faith and courage for daily living and unselfish serving. Faith promotes spiritual vitality and righteous fruitfulness.

Jesus repeatedly taught the apostles that no civilization could survive the loss of the best in its religion, never growing weary of pointing out to the twelve the great danger of accepting religious symbols and ceremonies in the place of religious experience. Jesus' whole earth life was consistently devoted to the mission of thawing out the frozen forms of religion into the liquid liberties of enlightened truth.

4. On the Way to Phoenicia

On Thursday morning, June 9, after receiving word brought by the messengers of David from Bethsaida, this group of twenty-five teachers of truth left Caesarea-Philippi to begin their journey to the Phoenician coast. They passed around the marsh country, by way of Luz, to the point of junction with the Magdala-Mount Lebanon trail road, and then to the crossing with the road leading to Sidon, arriving there Friday afternoon.

While pausing for lunch under the shadow of an overhanging ledge of rock, near Luz, Jesus delivered one of the most remarkable addresses which the apostles ever listened to throughout all their years of association. No sooner had they seated themselves for lunch than Simon Peter asked Jesus: "Master, since the Creator knows all things, and since the Creator's spirit is our support in the establishment of the new realm on earth, why is it that we flee from the threats of our enemies? Why do we refuse to confront the foes of truth?" But before Jesus had begun to answer Peter's question, Thomas broke in, asking: "Master, I should really like to know just what is wrong with the religion of our enemies at Jerusalem. What is the real difference between their religion and ours? Why is it we are at such diversity of belief when we all profess to serve the same Creator?" And when Thomas had finished, Jesus said: "While I would not ignore Peter's question, knowing full well how easy it would be to misunderstand my reasons for avoiding an open clash with the rulers of the Jews at just this time, still it will prove more helpful to all of you if I choose instead to answer Thomas's question. And that I will proceed to do when you have finished your lunch."

5. The Discourse on True Religion

This memorable discourse on religion gave expression to the following truths:

While the religions of the world have a double origin — natural and revelatory — at any one time and among any one people there are to be found three distinct forms of religious devotion. And these three manifestations of the religious urge are:

1. *Primitive religion.* The seminatural and instinctive urge to fear mysterious energies and worship superior forces, chiefly a religion of the physical nature, the religion of fear.
2. *The religion of civilization.* The advancing religious concepts and practices of the civilizing races — the religion of the mind — the intellectual theology of the authority of established religious tradition.
3. *True religion — the religion of revelation.* The revelation of supernatural values, a partial insight into eternal realities, a glimpse of the goodness and beauty of the infinite character of the Creator — the religion of the spirit as demonstrated in human experience.

Jesus refused to belittle the religion of the physical senses and the superstitious fears of mortals, while deploring the fact that so much of this primitive form of worship persists in the religious forms of the more intelligent races of humankind. Jesus made it clear that the great difference between the religion of the mind and the religion of the spirit is that, while the former is upheld by ecclesiastical authority, the latter is wholly based on human experience.

And then the Master went on to make these truths clear:

Until humanity becomes highly intelligent and more fully civilized, many of those childlike and superstitious ceremonies which are so characteristic of the evolutionary religious practices of primitive and backward peoples will persist. Until the human race progresses to the level of a higher and more general recognition of the realities of spiritual experience, large numbers of people will continue to show a personal preference for those religions of authority which require only intellectual assent, in contrast to the religion

of the spirit, which entails active participation of mind and soul in the faith adventure of grappling with the rigorous realities of progressive human experience.

The acceptance of the traditional religions of authority presents the easy way out for the urge to seek satisfaction for the longings of the spiritual nature. The settled, crystallized, and established religions of authority afford a ready refuge to which the distracted and distraught soul may flee when harassed by fear and tormented by uncertainty. Such a religion requires of its devotees, as the price to be paid for its satisfactions and assurances, only a passive and purely intellectual assent.

And for a long time those timid, fearful, and hesitant individuals will live on earth who will prefer to secure their religious consolations, even though, in casting their lot with the religions of authority, they compromise the sovereignty of personality, debase the dignity of self-respect, and utterly surrender the right to participate in that most thrilling and inspiring of all possible human experiences: the personal quest for truth, the exhilaration of facing the perils of intellectual discovery, the determination to explore the realities of personal religious experience, the supreme satisfaction of experiencing the personal triumph of the actual realization of the victory of spiritual faith over intellectual doubt as it is honestly won in the supreme adventure of all human existence — mortals seeking and finding the Creator.

The religion of the spirit means effort, struggle, conflict, faith, determination, love, loyalty, and progress. The religion of the mind — the theology of authority — requires little or none of these exertions from its formal adherents. Tradition is a safe refuge and an easy path for those fearful and halfhearted souls who instinctively shun the spirit struggles and mental uncertainties associated with those faith voyages of daring adventure on the high seas of unexplored truth in search for the farther shores of spiritual realities as they may be discovered by the progressive human mind and experienced by the evolving human soul.

And Jesus went on to say: “At Jerusalem the religious leaders have formulated the various doctrines of their traditional teachers and the prophets of other days into an established system of intellectual beliefs, a religion of authority. The appeal of all such religions is largely to the mind. And now we are about to enter on a deadly conflict with such a religion since we will so shortly begin the bold proclamation of a new religion — a religion which is not a religion in the present-day meaning of that word, a religion that makes its chief appeal to the divine spirit of the Creator which resides in the minds of mortals; a religion which will derive its authority from the fruits of its acceptance that will so certainly appear in the personal experience of all who really and truly accept the truths of this higher spiritual communion.”

Pointing out each of the twenty-four and calling them by name, Jesus said: “And now, which one of you would prefer to take this easy path of conformity to an established and fossilized religion, as defended by the Pharisees at Jerusalem, rather than to suffer the difficulties and persecutions attendant on the mission of proclaiming a better way while you realize the satisfaction of discovering for yourselves the beauties of the realities of a living and personal experience in the eternal truths and supreme grandeurs of the realm of the Creator? Are you fearful, soft, and ease-seeking? Are you afraid to trust your future into the hands of the Source of truth, whose children you are? Are you distrustful of the Creator, whose children you are? Will you go back to the easy path of the certainty and intellectual settledness of the religion of traditional authority, or will you go forward with me into that uncertain and troublous future of proclaiming the new truths of the religion of the spirit, the realm of the Creator in the hearts of mortals?”

All twenty-four rose to their feet, intending to signify their united and loyal response to this, one of the few emotional appeals which Jesus ever made to them, but Jesus stopped them, saying: "Go now apart by yourselves, each one alone with the Creator, and find the unemotional answer to my question, and having found such a true and sincere attitude of soul, speak that answer freely and boldly to the Creator, whose infinite life of love is the very spirit of the religion we proclaim."

The evangelists and apostles went away by themselves for a short time. Their spirits were uplifted, their minds were inspired, and their emotions mightily stirred by what Jesus had said. But when Andrew called them together, the Master only said: "Let us resume our journey. We go into Phoenicia for a while, and all of you should pray to the Creator to transform your emotions of mind and body into the higher loyalties of mind and the more satisfying experiences of the spirit."

As they traveled down the road the twenty-four were silent, but presently they began to talk to one another, and by three o'clock that afternoon they could not go farther; they came to a halt, and Peter, going up to Jesus, said: "Master, you have spoken to us the words of life and truth. We would hear more; we ask you to speak to us further concerning these matters."

6. The Second Discourse on Religion

And so, while they paused in the shade of the hillside, Jesus continued to teach them regarding the religion of the spirit, in substance saying:

You have come out from among those who choose to remain satisfied with a religion of mind, who crave security and prefer conformity. You have elected to exchange your feelings of authoritative certainty for the assurances of the spirit of adventurous and progressive faith. You have dared to protest against the grueling bondage of institutional religion and to reject the authority of the traditions of record which are now regarded as the word of Yahweh. Our Creator indeed spoke through Moses, Elijah, Isaiah, Amos, and Hosea, but did not cease to minister words of truth to the world when these prophets of old made an end of their statements. The Creator is no respecter of races or generations in that the word of truth is given to one age and withheld from another. Do not commit the mistake of calling that divine which is wholly human, and do not fail to discern the words of truth which do not come through the traditional oracles of supposed inspiration.

I have called on you to be born again, to be born of the spirit. I have called you out of the darkness of authority and the lethargy of tradition into the transcendent light of the realization of the possibility of making for yourselves the greatest discovery possible for the human soul to make — the supernal experience of finding the Creator for yourself, in yourself, and of yourself, and of doing all this as a fact in your own personal experience. And so you may pass from death to life, from the authority of tradition to the experience of knowing the Creator; thus will you pass from darkness to light, from an inherited faith to a personal faith achieved by actual experience; and thereby you will progress from a theology of mind handed down by your ancestors to a true religion of spirit which will be built up in your souls as an eternal endowment.

Your religion will change from the mere intellectual belief in traditional authority to the actual experience of that living faith which is able to grasp the reality of the Creator and all that relates to the divine spirit of the Creator. The religion of the mind ties you hopelessly to the past; the religion of the spirit consists in progressive revelation and calls you on toward higher achievements in spiritual ideals and eternal realities.

While the religion of authority may impart a present feeling of settled security, you pay for such a transient satisfaction the price of the loss of your spiritual freedom and religious liberty. The Creator does not require of you as the price of entering the new realm that you should force yourself to subscribe to a belief in things which are spiritually repugnant and untruthful. It is not required of you that your own sense of mercy, justice, and truth should be outraged by submission to an outworn system of religious forms and ceremonies. The religion of the spirit leaves you forever free to follow the truth wherever the leadings of the spirit may take you. And who can judge — perhaps this spirit may have something to impart to this generation which other generations have refused to hear?

Shame on those false religious teachers who would drag hungry souls back into the dim and distant past and leave them there! And so these unfortunate persons are doomed to become frightened by every new discovery, while they are discomfited by every new revelation of truth. The prophet who said, “They will be kept in perfect peace whose minds are on Yahweh,” was not a mere intellectual believer in authoritative theology. This truth-knowing human had discovered the Creator and was not merely talking about the Creator.

I caution you to give up the practice of always quoting the prophets of old and praising the heroes of Israel, and instead aspire to become living prophets of the Most High and spiritual heroes of the coming new realm. To honor the Creator-knowing leaders of the past may be worthwhile, but why, in so doing, should you sacrifice the supreme experience of human existence: finding the Creator for yourselves and knowing the Creator in your own souls?

Every human group has its own mental outlook on human existence; therefore the religion of the mind must always run true to these various viewpoints. The religions of authority can never come to unification. Human unity can be achieved only by and through the super-endowment of the religion of the spirit. Minds may differ, but all humankind is indwelt by the same divine and eternal spirit. The hope of humanity can only be realized when, and as, the divergent religions of authority become impregnated with, and overshadowed by, the unifying and ennobling religion of the spirit — the religion of personal spiritual experience.

The religions of authority can only divide people and set them in conscientious array against each other; the religion of the spirit will progressively draw people together and cause them to become understandingly sympathetic with one another. The religions of authority require uniformity in belief, but this is impossible to realize in the present state of the world. The religion of the spirit requires only unity of experience — uniformity of destiny — making full allowance for diversity of belief. The religion of the spirit requires only uniformity of insight, not uniformity of viewpoint and outlook. The religion of the spirit does not demand uniformity of intellectual views, only unity of spirit feeling. The religions of authority crystallize into lifeless creeds; the religion of the spirit grows into the increasing joy and liberty of ennobling deeds of loving service and merciful ministration.

But do not look with disdain on the children of Abraham because they have fallen on these evil days of traditional barrenness. Our forebears gave themselves to the persistent and passionate search for Yahweh, and they succeeded as no others have ever done before. The Creator has not failed to mark the long and untiring struggle of Israel, ever since the days of Moses, to find and to know Yahweh. For weary generations the Jews have not ceased to work, sweat, groan, labor, and endure the sufferings and experience the sorrows of a misunderstood and despised people, all in order that they might come a little nearer to the discovery of the truth about Yahweh. And, notwithstanding all the failures of Israel, our ancestors progressively, from Moses to the times of Amos and Hosea, increasingly revealed to the whole world an ever clearer and more truthful picture of the eternal Creator. And so the way was prepared for the still greater revelation of the Creator which you have been called to share.

Never forget that there is only one adventure which is more satisfying and thrilling than the attempt to discover the will of the living Creator, and that is the supreme experience of honestly trying to do that divine will. And do not fail to remember that the will of the Creator can be done in any earthly occupation. Some callings are not holy and others secular. All things are sacred in the lives of those who are spirit led; that is, subordinated to truth, ennobled by love, dominated by mercy, and restrained by fairness — justice. The spirit which the Creator and I will send into the world is not only the Spirit of Truth but also the spirit of idealistic beauty.

You must stop seeking for the word of the Creator only on the pages of the olden records of theologic authority. Those who are born of the spirit will, from now on, discern the word of the Creator regardless of where it appears to take origin. Divine truth must not be discounted because the channel of its bestowal is apparently human. Many people have minds which accept the theory of divinity while they spiritually fail to realize the presence of the Creator. And that is just the reason why I have so often taught you that the new realm can best be realized by acquiring the spiritual attitude of a sincere child. It is not the mental immaturity of the child that I commend to you but rather the *spiritual simplicity* of such an easy-believing and fully-trusting little one. It is not so important that you should know about the fact of the Creator as that you should increasingly grow in the ability to *feel the presence of the Creator*.

When you begin to find the Creator in your soul, you will begin to discover the Creator in other people's souls and eventually in all the creatures and creations of a mighty universe. But what chance does the Creator have to appear as a Deity of supreme loyalties and divine ideals in the souls of those who give little or no time to the thoughtful contemplation of such eternal realities? While the mind is not the seat of the spiritual nature, it is certainly the gateway to it.

But do not make the mistake of trying to prove to others that you have found the Creator; you cannot consciously produce such valid proof, although there are two positive and powerful demonstrations of the fact that you are Creator-knowing, and they are:

1. The fruits of the spirit showing forth in your daily routine life.
2. The fact that your entire life plan furnishes positive proof that you have unreservedly risked everything you are and have on the adventure of survival after death in the pursuit of the hope of finding the Source of eternity, whose presence you have experienced in time.

The Creator will always respond to the faintest flicker of faith and takes note of people's physical and superstitious emotions. And with those honest but fearful souls whose faith is so weak that it amounts to little more than an intellectual conformity to a passive attitude of assent to religions of authority, the Creator is always alert to honor and foster even all such feeble attempts to reach out. But you who have been called out of darkness into the light are expected to believe with a whole heart; your faith will dominate the combined attitudes of body, mind, and spirit.

You are my apostles, and to you religion will not become a theologic shelter to which you may flee in fear of facing the rugged realities of spiritual progress and idealistic adventure; but rather your religion will become the fact of real experience which testifies that the Creator has found you, idealized, ennobled, and spiritualized you, and that you have enlisted in the eternal adventure of finding the Creator who has found you.

And Jesus, when finished speaking, signaled to Andrew and, pointing to the west toward Phoenicia, said: "Let us be on our way."

Paper 156

The Visit at Tyre and Sidon

On Friday afternoon, June 10, Jesus and the associates arrived in the area of Sidon, where they stopped at the home of a wealthy person who had been a patient in the Bethsaida hospital during the times when Jesus was at the height of popular favor. The evangelists and the apostles were lodged with others in the immediate neighborhood, and they rested over the Sabbath day in these refreshing surroundings. They spent almost two and one-half weeks in Sidon and vicinity before they prepared to visit the coast cities to the north.

This June Sabbath day was very quiet. The evangelists and apostles were absorbed in their meditations regarding the discourses of the Master on religion to which they had listened en route to Sidon. They were all able to appreciate something of what they had heard, but none of them fully grasped the importance of this teaching.

1. The Syrian

Near the home of Karuska, where the Master lodged, lived a Syrian who had heard much of Jesus as a great healer and teacher, and who, on this Sabbath afternoon, came over bringing a child. The child, about twelve years old, was afflicted with a grievous nervous disorder characterized by convulsions and other distressing manifestations.

Jesus had charged the associates to tell no one about being at the home of Karuska, explaining a desire to have a rest. While the associates had obeyed their Master's instructions, the servant of Karuska had gone over to the house of this Syrian, Norana, to say that Jesus lodged at Karuska's home and had urged this anxious parent to bring the afflicted child for healing. This parent believed that the child was possessed by a demon, an unclean spirit.

When Norana arrived with the child, the Alpheus twins explained through an interpreter that the Master was resting and could not be disturbed; at which point Norana replied that they would remain right there until the Master had finished resting. Peter also endeavored to persuade Norana to go home, explaining that Jesus was weary with much teaching and healing, and had come to Phoenicia for a period of quiet and rest. But it was futile; Norana would not leave, to Peter's entreaties replying only: "I will not depart until I have seen your Master, who I know can cast the demon out, and I will not go until the healer has looked at my child."

Then Thomas tried to send Norana away but met only with failure. To Thomas Norana said: "I have faith that your Master can cast out this demon which torments my child. I have heard of the mighty works in Galilee. What has happened to you disciples, that you would send away those who come seeking your Master's help?" And when Norana had spoken, Thomas withdrew.

Then Simon Zelotes came forward to argue with Norana. Said Simon: "You are a Greek-speaking gentile. It is not right that you should expect the Master to take the bread intended for the children of the favored household and cast it to the dogs." But Norana refused to take offense at Simon's thrust, only replying:

“Yes, teacher, I understand your words. I am only a dog in the eyes of the Jews, but I am a believing dog. I am determined that your Master should see my child, who I am persuaded will be healed. And even you would not dare to deprive the dogs of the privilege of obtaining the crumbs which happen to fall from the children’s table.”

At just this time the little child was seized with a violent convulsion before them all, and the parent cried out: “There, you can see that my child is possessed by an evil spirit. If our need does not impress you, it would appeal to your Master, who I have been told loves all people and dares to even heal the gentiles when they believe. You are not worthy to be this teacher’s disciples. I will not go until my child has been cured.”

Jesus, who had heard all of this conversation through an open window, now came outside, much to their surprise, and said: “Great is your faith, so great that I cannot withhold that which you request; go your way in peace. Your child already has been made whole.” And the little child was well from that moment. As Norana and the child left, Jesus asked them to tell no one of this occurrence; and while the associates did comply with this request, the parent and the child did not hesitate to proclaim the fact of the healing throughout all the countryside and even in Sidon, so much so that Jesus found it advisable to change lodgings within a few days.

The next day, Jesus, while teaching the apostles, commented on the cure of the Syrian’s child, saying: “And so it has been all along; you see for yourselves how the gentiles are able to exercise saving faith in the teachings of the doctrine of the new age. I tell you that the Creator’s realm will be taken by the gentiles if the children of Abraham are not able to show enough faith to enter.”

2. Teaching in Sidon

Entering Sidon, Jesus and the associates passed over a bridge, the first one many of them had ever seen. As they walked over this bridge, Jesus, among other things, said: “This world is only a bridge; you may pass over it, but you should not try to build a dwelling place on it.”

As the twenty-four began their labors in Sidon, Jesus went to stay in a home just north of the city, the house of Justa. Jesus taught the twenty-four each morning at the home of Justa, and they went to Sidon to teach and preach during the afternoons and evenings.

The apostles and evangelists were greatly cheered by the manner in which the gentiles of Sidon received their message; during their short stay many were added to the new realm. This period of about six weeks in Phoenicia was a very fruitful time in the work of attracting followers, but the later Jewish writers of the Gospels lightly passed over the record of this warm reception of Jesus’ teachings by these gentiles at this very time when such a large number of the Jews were hostile to them.

In many ways these gentiles appreciated Jesus’ teachings more fully than the Jews. Many of these Greek-speaking Syrophoenicians came to know not only that Jesus was like the Creator but also that the Creator was like Jesus. These so-called heathen achieved a good understanding of the Master’s teachings about the uniformity of the laws of this world and the entire universe. They grasped the teaching that the Creator is no respecter of persons, races, or nations; that there is no favoritism with the Universal Parent; that the

universe is wholly and ever law-abiding and unfailingly dependable. These gentiles were not afraid of Jesus, whose message they dared to accept. All through the ages it is not that people have been unable to comprehend Jesus; they have been afraid to.

Jesus made it clear to the twenty-four that fleeing from Galilee was not the result of lacking courage to confront the enemies. They comprehended that Jesus was not yet ready for an open clash with established religion, and did not seek to become a martyr.

The theme of Jesus' instructions during the stay at Sidon was spiritual progression. Jesus told the associates that they could not stand still; they must go forward in righteousness or retrogress into evil and sin, admonishing them to "forget those things which are in the past while you push forward to embrace the greater realities of the new realm." Jesus urged them to not be content with their childhood in the new age but to strive for the attainment of the full stature of divine relationship in the community of the spirit.

Jesus said: "My disciples must not only cease to do evil but learn to do good; you must not only be cleansed from all conscious sin, but you must refuse to harbor even the feelings of guilt. If you confess your sins, they are forgiven; therefore you must maintain a conscience without offense."

Jesus greatly enjoyed the keen sense of humor which these gentiles exhibited. It was the sense of humor as well as the great and persistent faith displayed by Norana, the Syrian, that so touched the Master's heart. Jesus greatly regretted that the Jews were so lacking in humor, once saying to Thomas: "My people take themselves too seriously; they are just about devoid of an appreciation of humor. The burdensome religion of the Pharisees could never have had origin among a people with a sense of humor. They also lack consistency; they strain at gnats and swallow camels."

3. The Journey up the Coast

On Tuesday, June 28, the Master and the associates left Sidon, going up the coast to Porphyreon and Heldua. They were well received by the gentiles, and many were added to the new realm during this week of teaching and preaching. The apostles preached in Porphyreon and the evangelists taught in Heldua. While the twenty-four were engaged in their work, Jesus left them for a period of three or four days, paying a visit to the coast city of Beirut and visiting with a Syrian named Malach, who had been at Bethsaida the year before.

On Wednesday, July 6, they all returned to Sidon and stayed at the home of Justa until Sunday morning, when they departed for Tyre, going south along the coast by way of Sarepta, arriving at Tyre on Monday, July 11. By this time the apostles and the evangelists were becoming accustomed to working among these so-called gentiles, who were in reality mainly descended from the Canaanite tribes of earlier Semitic origin. All of these peoples spoke the Greek language. It was a great surprise to the apostles and evangelists to observe the eagerness of these gentiles to hear the teachings and to note the readiness with which many of them believed.

4. At Tyre

From July 11 to July 24 they taught in Tyre. Each of the apostles took one of the evangelists, and two and two they taught and preached in all parts of Tyre and its environs. The polyglot population of this busy seaport heard them gladly, and many were brought into the outward family of the new realm. Jesus maintained headquarters at the home of a Jew named Joseph, who lived three or four miles south of Tyre, not far from the tomb of Hiram, who had been ruler of the city-state of Tyre during the times of David and Solomon.

Daily, for this period of two weeks, the apostles and evangelists entered Tyre by way of Alexander's causeway to conduct small meetings, and each night most of them would return to the encampment at Joseph's house south of the city. Every day people came out from the city to talk with Jesus at this resting place. The Master spoke in Tyre only once, on the afternoon of July 20, and taught the people concerning the Creator's love for all humankind and about the personal mission to reveal the Creator to all people. There was such an interest in the teachings among these gentiles that, on this occasion, the doors of the Melkarth temple were opened to Jesus, and it is interesting to record that in subsequent years a Christian church was built on the very site of this ancient temple.

Many of the leaders in the manufacture of Tyrian purple, the dye that made Tyre and Sidon famous the world over, and which contributed so much to their world-wide commerce and consequent enrichment, believed in the teachings. When, shortly afterward, the supply of the sea animals which were the source of this dye began to diminish, these dye makers went in search of new habitats of these shellfish. And migrating to the ends of the earth, they carried with them the message of the parenthood of the Creator and the family of humanity — the doctrine of the new realm.

5. Jesus' Teaching at Tyre

On this Wednesday afternoon, in the course of an address, Jesus first told the followers the story of the white lily which rears its pure and snowy head high into the sunshine while its roots are grounded in the slime and muck of the darkened soil beneath. "Likewise mortals, while they have their roots of origin and being in the animal soil of human nature, can by faith raise their spiritual nature up into the sunlight of spiritual truth and actually bear the noble fruits of the spirit."

It was during this same sermon that Jesus made use of the first and only parable having to do with carpentry. In the course of an admonition to "Build well the foundations for the growth of a noble character of spiritual endowments," Jesus said: "In order to yield the fruits of the spirit, you must be born of the spirit. You must be taught by the spirit and be led by the spirit if you would live the spirit-filled life among others. But do not make the mistake of the foolish carpenter who wastes valuable time squaring, measuring, and smoothing a worm-eaten and inwardly rotting timber and then, after having worked diligently on the unsound beam, must reject it as unfit to enter into the foundations of the building being constructed to withstand the assaults of time and storm. Let everyone make sure that the intellectual and moral foundations of character are such as will adequately support the superstructure of the enlarging and ennobling spiritual nature, which is to transform the mortal mind and then, in association with that re-created mind, is to achieve the evolvement of the soul of immortal destiny. Your spirit nature — the jointly created soul — is a living growth, but the

mind and morals of the individual are the soil from which these higher manifestations of human development and divine destiny must spring. The soil of the evolving soul is human and material, but the destiny of this combined creature of mind and spirit is spiritual and divine.”

On the evening of this same day Nathaniel asked Jesus: “Master, why did the prophets say that Yahweh will lead us into temptation when we well know from your revelation that the Creator never does such things?” Jesus answered Nathaniel:

“It is not strange that you ask such questions seeing that you are beginning to know the Creator as I do, and not as the early Hebrew prophets did. You know how our forebears were disposed to see Yahweh in almost everything that happened. They looked for the hand of Yahweh in all natural occurrences and in every unusual episode of human experience. They connected Yahweh with both good and evil. They thought Yahweh softened the heart of Moses and hardened the heart of Pharaoh. When people had a strong urge to do something, good or evil, they were in the habit of accounting for these unusual emotions by remarking: ‘Yahweh spoke to me saying, do this, or go here and there.’ Accordingly, since people so often and so violently ran into temptation, it became the habit of our forebears to believe that Yahweh led them for testing, punishing, or strengthening. But you now know better. You know that people are all too often led into temptation by the urge of their own selfishness and by the impulses of their animal natures. When you are tempted in this way, I caution you that, while you recognize temptation honestly and sincerely for just what it is, you intelligently redirect the energies of spirit, mind, and body, which are seeking expression, into higher channels and toward more idealistic goals. Then you may transform your temptations into the highest types of uplifting mortal ministry while you almost wholly avoid these wasteful and weakening conflicts between the animal and spiritual natures.

“But let me warn you against the foolishness of undertaking to surmount temptation by the effort of supplanting one desire by another and supposedly superior desire through the mere force of the human will. If you would be truly triumphant over the temptations of the lesser and lower nature, you must come to that place of spiritual advantage where you have really and truly developed an actual interest in, and love for, those higher and more idealistic forms of conduct which your mind is desirous of substituting for these lower and less idealistic habits of behavior that you recognize as temptation. You will in this way be delivered through spiritual transformation rather than increasingly overburdened with the deceptive suppression of mortal desires. The old and the inferior will be forgotten in the love for the new and the superior. Beauty is always triumphant over ugliness in the hearts of all who are illuminated by the love of truth. There is mighty power in the expulsive energy of a new and sincere spiritual affection. Do not be overcome by evil but rather overcome evil with good.”

Long into the night the apostles and evangelists continued to ask questions, and from the many answers we would present the following thoughts:

Forceful ambition, intelligent judgment, and seasoned wisdom are the essentials of material success. Leadership is dependent on natural ability, discretion, will power, and determination. Spiritual destiny is dependent on faith, love, and devotion to truth — hunger and thirst for righteousness — the wholehearted desire to find and to be like the Creator.

Do not become discouraged by the discovery that you are human. Human nature may tend toward evil, but it is not inherently sinful. Do not be downcast by your failure to wholly forget some of your regrettable experiences. The mistakes which you fail to forget in time will be forgotten in eternity. Lighten your burdens of soul by speedily acquiring a long-distance view of your destiny, a universe expansion of your career.

Do not make the mistake of estimating the soul's worth by the imperfections of the mind or by the appetites of the body. Do not judge the soul nor evaluate its destiny by the standard of a single unfortunate human episode. Your spiritual destiny is conditioned only by your spiritual longings and purposes.

Religion is the exclusively spiritual experience of the evolving immortal soul of the Creator-knowing person, but moral power and spiritual energy are mighty forces which may be utilized in dealing with difficult social situations and in solving intricate economic problems. These moral and spiritual endowments make all levels of human living richer and more meaningful.

You are destined to live a narrow and mean life if you learn to love only those who love you. Human love may be reciprocal, but divine love is outgoing in all its satisfaction-seeking. The less of love in any creature's nature, the greater the love need, and the more divine love seeks to satisfy such need. Love is never self-seeking, and it cannot be self-bestowed. Divine love cannot be self-contained; it must be unselfishly bestowed.

People should possess an implicit faith in the certain triumph of righteousness. They must be undoubting of the truth of the way of eternal life. People must increasingly learn how to step aside from the rush of life — escape the harassments of material existence — while they refresh the soul, inspire the mind, and renew the spirit by worshipful communion.

Creator-knowing individuals are not discouraged by misfortune or downcast by disappointment. Those who know the Creator are immune to the depression consequent on purely material upheavals; those who live in the spirit are not perturbed by the episodes of the material world. Candidates for eternal life are practitioners of an invigorating and constructive technique for meeting all of the vicissitudes and harassments of mortal living. Every day they live, they find it *easier* to do the right thing.

Spiritual living mightily increases true self-respect. But self-respect is not self-admiration. Self-respect is always co-ordinate with the love and service of others. It is not possible to respect yourself more than you love your neighbor; one is the measure of the capacity for the other.

As the days pass, every true seeker becomes more skillful in alluring others into the love of eternal truth. Are you more resourceful in revealing goodness to humanity today than you were yesterday? Are you becoming increasingly artistic in your technique of leading hungry souls into the spiritual realm?

Are your ideals sufficiently high to insure your eternal salvation while your ideas are so practical as to render you a useful citizen to function on earth in association with other mortals? In the spirit, your citizenship is in the universe; in the body, you are still citizens of the earth. Render to the governments the things which are material and to the Creator those which are spiritual.

The measure of the spiritual capacity of the evolving soul is your faith in truth and your love for others, but the measure of your human strength of character is your ability to resist the holding of grudges and your capacity to withstand brooding in the face of deep sorrow. Defeat is the true mirror in which you may honestly view your real self.

As you grow older in years and more experienced in the affairs of the new realm, are you becoming more tactful in dealing with troublesome mortals and more tolerant in living with stubborn associates? Tact is the fulcrum of social leverage, and tolerance is the earmark of a great soul. If you possess these rare and charming gifts, as the days pass you will become more alert and expert in your worthy efforts to avoid all unnecessary social misunderstandings. Such wise souls are able to avoid much of the trouble which is certain to be the portion of all who suffer from lack of emotional adjustment, those who refuse to grow up, and those who refuse to grow old gracefully.

Avoid dishonesty and unfairness in all your efforts to teach truth. Seek no unearned recognition and crave no undeserved sympathy. Freely receive love from both divine and human sources regardless of what you deserve, and love freely in return. But in all other things related to honor and adulation seek only that which honestly belongs to you.

The Creator-conscious mortal is certain of salvation, is unafraid of life, and is honest and consistent, knowing how to bravely endure unavoidable suffering, and is uncomplaining when faced by inescapable hardship.

The true seeker does not grow weary in doing good just because of being thwarted. Difficulty whets the appetite of the truth lover, while obstacles only challenge the exertions of the undaunted seeker.

And many other things Jesus taught them before they prepared to depart from Tyre.

Jesus, the day before leaving Tyre to return to the region of the Sea of Galilee, called the associates together and directed the twelve evangelists to go back by a route different from that which the others were to take. And after the evangelists left, they were never again so intimately associated with Jesus.

6. The Return from Phoenicia

About noon on Sunday, July 24, Jesus and the twelve left the home of Joseph, south of Tyre, going down the coast to Ptolemais. Here they stayed for a day, speaking words of comfort to the people resident there. Peter preached to them on the evening of July 25.

On Tuesday they left Ptolemais, going east inland to near Jotapata by way of the Tiberias road. Wednesday they stopped at Jotapata and further instructed the people. Thursday they left Jotapata, going north on the Nazareth-Mount Lebanon trail to the village of Zebulun, by way of Ramah. They held meetings at Ramah on Friday and remained over the Sabbath. They reached Zebulun on Sunday, the 31st, holding a meeting that evening and departing the next morning.

Leaving Zebulun, they traveled over to the junction with the Magdala-Sidon road near Gischala, and then made their way to Gennesaret on the western shores of the lake of Galilee, south of Capernaum, where they

had arranged to meet with David Zebedee, and where they intended to take counsel as to the next move to be made in the work of preaching.

During a brief conference with David they learned that many leaders were then gathered together on the opposite side of the lake near Kheresa, and accordingly, that very evening a boat took them across. For one day they rested quietly in the hills, going on the next day to the park nearby, where the Master once fed the five thousand. Here they rested for three days and held daily conferences, which were attended by about fifty people, the remnants of the once numerous company of followers resident in Capernaum and its environs.

While Jesus was absent from Capernaum and Galilee, the period of the Phoenician sojourn, the enemies had decided that the whole movement had been broken up and concluded that Jesus would not likely ever return to bother them. All active opposition to Jesus' teachings had about subsided. The followers were beginning to hold public meetings once more, and a gradual but effective consolidation was occurring of the tried and true survivors of the great sifting through which they had just passed.

Philip, the local ruler had become a halfhearted follower of Jesus and sent word that the Master was free to live and work in those domains.

The mandate to close the synagogues of all Jewry to the teachings of Jesus and all the followers had worked adversely for the scribes and Pharisees. Immediately on Jesus' no longer being an object of controversy, a reaction occurred among the entire Jewish people; there was general resentment against the Pharisees and the Sanhedrin leaders at Jerusalem. Many of the rulers of the synagogues began surreptitiously to open their synagogues to Abner and the associates, claiming that these teachers were followers of John and not disciples of Jesus.

Even Herod Antipas experienced a change of heart and, on learning that Jesus was staying across the lake in the territory of Philip, sent word that, while warrants had been signed for Jesus' arrest in Galilee, this was not authorized in Perea, indicating that Jesus would not be molested while remaining outside of Galilee; and Herod communicated this same ruling to the Jews at Jerusalem.

And that was the situation about the first of August, C.E. 29, when the Master returned from the Phoenician mission and began the reorganization of the scattered, tested, and depleted forces for this last and eventful year of the bestowal mission on earth.

The issues are clearly drawn as the Master and the associates prepare to begin the proclamation of a new religion, the religion of the spirit of the living Creator who dwells in the minds of mortals

Paper 157

At Caesarea-Philippi

Jesus, before taking the twelve for a short stay in the vicinity of Caesarea-Philippi, arranged through the messengers of David to go to Capernaum on Sunday, August 7, for the purpose of being with the family. By prearrangement this visit was to occur at the Zebedee boatshop. David Zebedee had arranged with Jude for the presence of the entire Nazareth family — Mary and all of Jesus' siblings — and Jesus went with Andrew and Peter to keep this appointment. It was certainly the intention of Mary and the children to keep this engagement, but it so happened that a group of the Pharisees, knowing that Jesus was on the opposite side of the lake in Philip's domains, decided to call on Mary. The arrival of these Jerusalem emissaries greatly concerned Mary, and noting the tension and nervousness of the entire family, the Pharisees concluded that Jesus must have been expected to pay a visit. Accordingly they installed themselves in Mary's home and, after summoning reinforcements, waited patiently for Jesus' arrival. And this, of course, effectively prevented any of the family from attempting to keep their appointment with Jesus. Several times during the day both Jude and Ruth tried to elude the vigilance of the Pharisees in their efforts to send word to Jesus, but it was of no avail.

Early in the afternoon David's messengers brought word that the Pharisees were encamped on the doorstep of Mary's house, and therefore Jesus made no attempt to visit the family. And so again, through no fault of either, Jesus and the earth family failed to make contact.

1. The Temple-Tax Collector

As Jesus, with Andrew and Peter, stayed by the lake near the boatshop, a temple-tax collector found them and, recognizing Jesus, called Peter to one side and said: "Does your Master not pay the temple tax?" Peter was inclined to show indignation at the suggestion that Jesus should be expected to contribute to the maintenance of the religious activities of sworn enemies, but, noting a peculiar expression on the face of the tax collector, rightly surmised that it was the purpose to entrap them in the act of refusing to pay the customary half shekel for the support of the temple services at Jerusalem. Accordingly, Peter replied: "Why of course the Master pays the temple tax. You wait by the gate, and I will return with the tax."

Now Peter had spoken hastily. Judas, who carried their funds, was across the lake. Neither Peter, Andrew, nor Jesus had brought along any money, and knowing that the Pharisees were looking for them, they could not go to Bethsaida to obtain money. When Peter told Jesus about the collector and the promise of money, Jesus said: "If you have promised, then you should pay. But how will you redeem your promise? Will you go fishing so that you may honor your word? Nevertheless, Peter, it is well in the circumstances that we pay the tax. Let us give these people no occasion for offense at our attitude. We will wait here while you go with the boat and cast for the fish, and when you have sold them at the market, pay the collector for all three of us."

All of this had been overheard by the secret messenger of David who stood nearby, and who then signaled to an associate, fishing near the shore, to come in quickly. When Peter prepared to go out in the boat for a catch, this messenger and a friend presented several large baskets of fish and assisted Peter in carrying them

to the fish merchant nearby, who purchased the catch, paying sufficiently, with what was added by the messenger of David, to meet the temple tax for the three. The collector accepted the tax, forgoing the penalty for late payment because they had been absent for some time from Galilee.

It is not strange that you have a record of Peter's catching a fish with a shekel in its mouth. In those days there were many stories about finding treasures in the mouths of fishes; such tales of near miracles were commonplace. So, as Peter left to go toward the boat, Jesus remarked, half-humorously: "Strange that we must pay tribute; usually it is the stranger who is taxed for the upkeep of the court, but we should provide no stumbling block for the authorities. Maybe you will catch the fish with the shekel in its mouth." Jesus having spoken, and Peter so soon appearing with the temple tax, it is not surprising that the episode became later expanded into a miracle as recorded by the writer of Matthew's Gospel.

Jesus, with Andrew and Peter, waited by the seashore until nearly sundown. Messengers brought them word that Mary's house was still under surveillance; therefore, when it grew dark, the three entered their boat and slowly rowed away toward the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee.

2. At Bethsaida-Julias

On Monday, August 8, while Jesus and the twelve apostles were camped in Magadan Park near Bethsaida-Julias, more than one hundred followers, the evangelists, and many others interested in the establishment of the new realm, came from Capernaum for a conference. And many of the Pharisees, learning that Jesus was here, came also. By this time some of the Sadducees were united with the Pharisees in their effort to entrap Jesus. Before going into the closed conference with the followers, Jesus held a public meeting at which the Pharisees were present, and they heckled the Master and otherwise tried to disturb the assembly. The leader of the disturbers said: "Teacher, we would like you to give us a sign of your authority to teach, and then, when it will come to pass, all people will know that you have been sent by Yahweh." And Jesus answered them: "When it is evening, you say it will be fair weather, for the skies are red; in the morning it will be foul weather, for the skies are red and lowering. When you see a cloud rising in the west, you say showers will come; when the wind blows from the south, you say scorching heat will come. How is it that you know so well how to discern the face of skies but are so utterly unable to discern the signs of the times? To those who would know the truth, a sign has already been given; but to an evil-minded and hypocritical generation no sign will be given."

Having spoken, Jesus withdrew and prepared for the evening conference with the followers. At this conference it was decided to undertake a united mission throughout all the cities and villages of the Decapolis as soon as Jesus and the twelve returned from their proposed visit to Caesarea-Philippi. The Master participated in planning for the Decapolis mission and, in dismissing the company, said: "Beware of the Pharisees and the Sadducees. Do not be deceived by their show of much learning and by their profound loyalty to the forms of religion. Be only concerned with the spirit of living truth and the power of true religion. It is not the fear of a dead religion that will save you but rather your faith in a living experience in spiritual realities. Do not allow yourselves to become blinded by prejudice and paralyzed by fear, nor permit reverence for the traditions to pervert your understanding so that your eyes do not see and your ears do not hear. It is not the purpose of true religion to merely bring peace but rather to insure progress. And there can be no peace in the heart, or progress in the mind, unless you fall wholeheartedly in love with truth,

the ideals of eternal realities. The issues of life and death are being set before you — the sinful pleasures of time against the righteous realities of eternity. Even now you should begin to find deliverance from the bondage of fear and doubt as you begin living the new life of faith and hope. And when the feelings of service for others rise within your soul, do not stifle them; when the emotions of love for your neighbor well up within your heart, give expression to such urges of affection in intelligent ministry to the real needs of others.”

3. Peter’s Declaration

Early Tuesday morning Jesus and the twelve apostles left Magadan Park for Caesarea-Philippi, the capital of the Tetrarch Philip’s domain. Caesarea-Philippi was situated in a region of wondrous beauty. It nestled in a charming valley between scenic hills where the Jordan poured from an underground cave. The heights of Mount Hermon were in full view to the north, while from the hills just to the south there was a magnificent view of the upper Jordan and the Sea of Galilee.

Jesus had gone to Mount Hermon in an earlier experience, and now entering upon the final epoch of the work, wanted to return to this mount of trial and triumph, hoping that the apostles might gain a new vision of their responsibilities and acquire new strength for the trying times just ahead. As they journeyed along the way, about the time of passing south of the Waters of Merom, the apostles fell to talking among themselves about their recent experiences in Phoenicia and elsewhere and to recounting how their message had been received, and how the different peoples regarded their Master.

As they paused for lunch, Jesus suddenly confronted the twelve with the first personal question ever addressed to them, asking, “Who do people say that I am?”

Jesus had spent long months in training these apostles and realized that the time had come when it was necessary to teach them more about having a divine nature and a personal relationship to the new realm. And now, as they were seated under the mulberry trees, the Master prepared to hold one of the most momentous sessions of the long association with the chosen apostles.

More than half the apostles participated in answering the question. They related that Jesus was regarded by all as a prophet or as an extraordinary person, and was greatly feared by even the enemies, being accused by them of being in league with devils. They said that some in Judea and Samaria believed that Jesus was John the Baptist risen from the dead. Peter explained that Jesus had been, at different times and by various people, compared with Moses, Elijah, Isaiah, and Jeremiah. Jesus, after listening to this report, stood up, and looking down on the twelve sitting in a semicircle, with startling emphasis pointed to them with a sweeping gesture and asked, “But who do you say that I am?” There was a moment of tense silence. The twelve never took their eyes off the Master, and then Simon Peter, springing up, declared: “You are the Deliverer, the Child of the living Creator.” And the eleven sitting apostles rose to their feet with one accord, indicating that Peter had spoken for all of them.

Jesus motioned them to be seated again, and while still standing before them, said: “This has been revealed to you by the Creator. The time has come when you should know the truth about me. But for the time being I charge you that you tell this to no one. Let us go.”

And so they resumed their journey to Caesarea-Philippi, arriving late that evening and stopping at the home of Celsus, who was expecting them. The apostles slept little that night; they seemed to sense that a great event in their lives and in the work had transpired.

4. The Talk About the New Realm

Since the occasions of the baptism by John and the turning of the water into wine at Cana, the apostles had, at various times, virtually accepted Jesus as the Messiah, and for short periods the expected Deliverer. But such hopes would hardly spring up in their hearts when the Master would dash them to pieces by some crushing word or disappointing deed. They had long been in a state of turmoil due to conflict between the concepts of the expected Messiah which they held in their minds and the experience of the association with this extraordinary person which they held in their hearts.

It was late morning on this Wednesday when the apostles assembled in Celsus' garden for their noontime meal. During most of the night and since they had risen that morning, Simon Peter and Simon Zelotes had been earnestly trying to bring them all to the point of the wholehearted acceptance of the Master, not merely as the Messiah, but also as the divine Child of the living Creator. The two Simons mainly agreed about their estimate of Jesus, and they worked diligently to bring the others around to the full acceptance of their views. While Andrew continued as the director-general of the apostolic corps, Simon Peter was becoming, increasingly and by common consent, the spokesperson for the twelve.

They were all seated in the garden at just about noon when the Master appeared. They wore expressions of dignified solemnity, and all rose to their feet. Jesus relieved the tension by that friendly smile which was so characteristic when the followers took themselves, or some happening related to themselves, too seriously. With a commanding gesture Jesus indicated that they should be seated, making it clear that such an outward show of respect was not required, and never again did the twelve greet their Master by rising when Jesus came into their presence.

After they had eaten their meal and were engaged in discussing plans for the forthcoming tour of the Decapolis, Jesus suddenly looked into their faces and said: "Now that a full day has passed since you assented to Simon Peter's declaration regarding my identity, I would ask if you still hold to your decision?" On hearing this, the twelve stood, and Simon Peter, stepping a few paces forward toward Jesus, said: "Yes, Master, we do. We believe that you are the Child of the living Creator." And Peter sat down with the others.

Jesus then said to the twelve: "You are my chosen ambassadors, but I know that, in the circumstances, you could not entertain this belief as a result of mere human knowledge. This is a revelation of the spirit of the Creator to your innermost souls. And when, therefore, you make this statement by the insight of the spirit of the Creator which dwells within you, I am led to declare that on this foundation I will build the family of the realm of the Creator. On this rock of spiritual reality I will build the living temple of spiritual relationships in the eternal realities of the Creator's realm. All the forces of evil and the hosts of sin will not prevail against this human family of the divine spirit. And while the Creator's spirit will ever be the divine guide and mentor of all who enter the bonds of this spirit family, to you and your successors I now deliver the keys of the outward realm — the authority over things temporal — the social and economic

features of this association of people as citizens of the new realm,” again charging them, for the time being, that they should tell no one about this.

Jesus was beginning to have faith in the loyalty and integrity of the apostles. The Master conceived that a faith which could stand what these chosen representatives had recently passed through would undoubtedly endure the fiery trials that were just ahead and emerge from the apparent wreckage of all their hopes into the light of a new dispensation and be able to go forth to enlighten a world sitting in darkness. On this day the Master began to believe in the faith of the apostles, except one.

And ever since that day this same Jesus has been building that living temple on that same eternal foundation of the divine relationship, and those who become self-conscious children of the Creator are the human stones which constitute this living temple erected to the glory and honor of the wisdom and love of the eternal Source of spirits.

And then Jesus directed the twelve to go by themselves in the hills to seek wisdom, strength, and spiritual guidance until the time of the evening meal. And they did as the Master asked.

5. The New Concept

The new and vital feature of Peter’s declaration was the clear-cut recognition that Jesus was the Child of the Creator, having unquestioned divinity. Ever since the baptism and the wedding at Cana these apostles had variously regarded Jesus as the Messiah, but it was not an aspect of the Jewish concept of the national deliverer to be *divine*. The Jews had not taught that the Messiah would spring from divinity, but was to be the “anointed one.” They hardly contemplated the Messiah as being “the Child of the Creator.” In the second realization more emphasis was placed on the *combined nature*, the supernal fact that Jesus was the Child of Humanity *and* the Child of the Creator, and it was on this great truth of the union of the human nature with the divine nature that Jesus intended to build the new realm.

Jesus had sought to live life on earth and complete the bestowal mission as the Child of Humanity. The followers were disposed to regard Jesus as the expected Messiah. Knowing that it would never be possible to fulfill their Messianic expectations, Jesus endeavored to effect such a modification of their concept of the Messiah as would partially meet their expectations, but now recognized that such a plan could hardly be carried through successfully, therefore electing to boldly disclose the third plan — to openly acknowledge the truthfulness of Peter’s declaration, and directly acknowledge being a Child of the Creator to the twelve.

For three years Jesus had been claiming to be the “Child of Humanity,” while for these same three years the apostles had been increasingly insistent that Jesus was the expected Jewish Messiah. Jesus now disclosed a prior existence as the Child of the Creator, and on the concept of the *combined nature* of the Child of Humanity and the Child of the Creator, determined to build the new realm. Having decided to refrain from further efforts to disclaim being the Messiah, Jesus now proposed to boldly reveal to them the truth of having a divine existence, and then to ignore their determination to persist in their concept of the Messiah.

6. The Next Afternoon

Jesus and the apostles remained another day at the home of Celsus, waiting for messengers to arrive from David Zebedee with funds. Following the collapse of the popularity of Jesus with the masses, a great falling off occurred in revenue. When they reached Caesarea-Philippi, the treasury was empty. Matthew hesitated to leave Jesus and the others at such a time, and had no personal funds to hand over to Judas as had been done so many times in the past. However, David Zebedee had foreseen this probable diminution of revenue and had accordingly instructed the messengers that, as they made their way through Judea, Samaria, and Galilee, they should act as collectors of money to be forwarded to the exiled apostles and their Master. And so, by evening of this day, these messengers arrived from Bethsaida bringing funds that were sufficient to sustain the apostles until their return to embark on the Decapolis tour. Matthew expected to have money from the sale of a last piece of property in Capernaum by that time, having arranged that these funds should be anonymously turned over to Judas.

Neither Peter nor the other apostles had a very adequate conception of Jesus' divinity. They little realized that this was the beginning of a new epoch in their Master's career on earth, the time when the teacher-healer was becoming the newly conceived Messiah — the Child of the Creator. From this time on a new note appeared in the Master's message. From now on Jesus' one ideal of living was the revelation of the Creator, while the one idea in teaching was to present to the universe the personification of that supreme wisdom which can only be comprehended by living it. Jesus came so that we all might have life and have it more abundantly.

Jesus now entered the fourth and last stage of the human life. The first stage was that of childhood, the years when there was only a dim consciousness of origin, nature, and destiny as a human being. The second stage was the increasingly self-conscious years of youth and advancing adulthood, during which Jesus came to more clearly comprehend having a divine nature and human mission. This second stage ended with the experiences and revelations associated with the baptism. The third stage of the Master's earth experience extended from the baptism through the years of ministry as teacher and healer and up to this momentous moment of Peter's declaration at Caesarea-Philippi. This third period of earth life embraced the times when the apostles and immediate followers regarded Jesus as the Child of Humanity and as the Messiah. The fourth and last period of the earth career began here at Caesarea-Philippi and extended on to the crucifixion. This stage of ministry was characterized by acknowledgment of divinity and embraced the labors of this last year on earth. During the fourth period the apostles knew Jesus as the Child of the Creator, while the majority of the followers still held to their belief in the concept of the Messiah. Peter's declaration marked the beginning of the new period of the more complete realization of the truth of Jesus' supreme ministry as a bestowal Being on Urantia and for an entire universe, and the recognition of that fact, at least hazily, by the chosen ambassadors.

And so Jesus' life exemplified the teachings: the growth of the spiritual nature by the technique of living progress. Jesus did not place emphasis, as did some later followers, on the incessant struggle between the soul and the body, but rather taught that the spirit was an easy victor over both and effective in the profitable reconciliation of much of this intellectual and instinctual conflict.

A new significance attaches to all of Jesus' teachings from this point on. Before Caesarea-Philippi Jesus presented the new doctrine as its master teacher, but after Caesarea-Philippi appeared not merely as a teacher but as the divine representative of the eternal Source, who is the center and circumference of this spiritual realm. And it was required that all this be done as a human being, the Child of Humanity.

Jesus had sincerely endeavored to lead the followers into the spiritual realm as a teacher, then as a teacher-healer, but this they would not accept. Jesus knew that this earth mission could not possibly fulfill the Messianic expectations of the Jewish people; the olden prophets had portrayed the concept of a Messiah which it was not possible to be. Jesus endeavored to establish the Creator's realm as the Child of Humanity, but the followers would not go forward in the adventure. Jesus, seeing this, then elected to meet them part way and in so doing prepared to openly assume the role of the bestowal Child of the Creator.

Accordingly, the apostles heard much that was new as Jesus talked to them this day in the garden. And some of these pronouncements sounded strange even to them. Among other startling things they heard the following:

"From this time on, if any one would join us, let them assume the obligations of the new realm and follow me. And when I am with you no longer, do not think that the world will treat you better than it did your Master. If you love me, prepare to prove this affection by your willingness to make the supreme sacrifice."

"And mark well my words: I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners. I did not come to be ministered to, but to minister and to bestow life as the gift for all. I have come to seek and to save those who are lost."

"No one in this world now sees the Creator except me. But if I am to be lifted up, I will draw all people to myself, and whoever believes this truth of my combined nature will be endowed with life that is more than age-abiding."

"We may not yet proclaim openly that the Child of Humanity is the Child of the Creator, but it has been revealed to you; therefore I speak boldly to you concerning these mysteries. Though I stand before you in this physical presence, I came from our Creator Parent. Before Abraham was, I am. I came from the Creator into this world as you have known me, and I must presently leave this world and return to the work of the Creator's realm."

"And now is your faith able to comprehend the truth of these declarations in the face of my warning you that I will not meet the expectations of your ancestors as they conceived the Messiah? My realm is not of this world. Can you believe the truth about me in the face of the fact that, though the foxes have holes and the birds have nests, I have nowhere to lay my head?"

"Nevertheless, I tell you that the Creator and I are one. Whoever has seen me has seen the Creator. The Creator is working with me in all these things, and will never leave me alone in my mission, even as I will never forsake you when you presently proclaim this doctrine throughout the world."

"And now I have brought you with me and by yourselves for a little while that you may comprehend the glory, and grasp the grandeur, of the life to which I have called you: the faith-adventure of the establishment

of the Creator's realm in the hearts of humankind, the building of my living association with the souls of all who believe these teachings."

The apostles listened to these bold and startling statements in silence; they were stunned. And they dispersed in small groups to discuss and ponder the Master's words. They had confessed that Jesus was the Child of the Creator, but they could not grasp the full meaning of what they had been led to do.

7. Andrew's Conference

That evening Andrew decided to hold a personal and searching conference with each of the apostles, and had profitable and heartening talks with all of them except Judas Iscariot. Andrew had never enjoyed such intimate personal association with Judas as with the other apostles and therefore had not thought it of serious account that Judas had never freely and confidentially related to the head of the apostolic corps. But Andrew, so worried by Judas's attitude, later on that night, after all the apostles were fast asleep, sought out Jesus and presented this cause for anxiety to the Master. Jesus said: "It is not wrong, Andrew, that you have come to me with this matter, but there is nothing more that we can do; only go on placing the utmost confidence in this apostle, and say nothing to the others concerning this talk with me."

And that was all Andrew could elicit from Jesus. There had always been some strangeness between Judas and the others. This Judean had been shocked by the death of John the Baptist, severely hurt by the Master's rebukes on several occasions, disappointed when Jesus refused to be made ruler, humiliated when Jesus fled from the Pharisees, chagrined when Jesus refused to accept the challenge of the Pharisees for a sign, bewildered by the refusal of the Master to resort to manifestations of power, and now, more recently, depressed and sometimes dejected by an empty treasury. And Judas missed the stimulus of the multitudes.

Each of the other apostles was, in some and varying measure, also affected by these same trials and tribulations, but they loved Jesus. At least they must have loved the Master more than Judas did, for they went through to the bitter end.

Being from Judea, Judas took personal offense at Jesus' recent warning to the apostles to "beware of the Pharisees", being disposed to regard this statement as a veiled personal reference. But the great mistake of Judas was: Time and again, when Jesus would send the apostles off by themselves to pray, Judas, instead of engaging in sincere communion with the spiritual forces of the universe, indulged in thoughts of human fear while persisting in the entertainment of subtle doubts about the mission of Jesus as well as giving in to an unfortunate tendency to harbor feelings of revenge.

And now Jesus would take the apostles to Mount Hermon, to inaugurate the fourth phase of earth ministry as the Child of the Creator. Some of them were present at the baptism in the Jordan and had witnessed the beginning of the career as the Child of Humanity, and Jesus wanted some of them to also be present to hear the authority for the assumption of the new and public role of a Child of the Creator. Accordingly, on the morning of Friday, August 12, Jesus said to the twelve: "Lay in provisions and prepare yourselves for a journey to the mountain, where the spirit calls me to go to be endowed for the finish of my work on earth. And I would take my friends along so that they may also be strengthened for the trying times of going with me through this experience."

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The Mount of Transfiguration

It was near sundown on Friday afternoon, August 12, C.E. 29, when Jesus and the associates reached the foot of Mount Hermon, near the very place where Tiglath once waited while the Master ascended the mountain alone to settle the spiritual destinies of Urantia and to technically terminate the Lucifer rebellion. And here they stayed for two days in spiritual preparation for the events to follow.

In a general way, Jesus knew beforehand what was to transpire on the mountain, and wanted all the apostles to share this experience. It was to prepare them for this personal revelation that Jesus waited with them at the foot of the mountain. But they could not attain those spiritual levels which would justify their exposure to the full experience of the visitation of the celestial beings so soon to appear on earth. And Jesus, being unable to take all of the associates, decided to take only the three who were in the habit of going on such special vigils. Accordingly, only Peter, James, and John shared even a part of this unique experience with the Master.

1. The Transfiguration

Early on the morning of Monday, August 15, Jesus and the three apostles began the ascent of Mount Hermon, and this was six days after the memorable declaration of Peter by the roadside under the mulberry trees.

Jesus had been summoned to go up on the mountain for the transaction of important matters having to do with the progress of the bestowal mission as this experience was related to the local universe. It is significant that this extraordinary event was timed to occur while Jesus and the apostles were in the lands of the gentiles, and that it actually transpired on a mountain of the gentiles.

They reached their destination, about halfway up the mountain, shortly before noon, and while eating lunch, Jesus told the three apostles something of an earlier experience in the hills to the east of Jordan shortly after the baptism and also some more of the experience on Mount Hermon in connection with a former visit to this lonely retreat.

As a youth, Jesus used to climb the hill near home and imagined the battles which had been fought by the armies of empires on the plain of Esdraelon. Now Jesus ascended Mount Hermon to receive the endowment which was to prepare for the enactment of the closing scenes of the bestowal on Urantia. The Master could have relinquished the struggle this day on Mount Hermon and returned to rule the universe domains, but not only chose to meet the requirements embraced in the mandate of the Eternal Spirit on Paradise, but also elected to meet the last and full measure of the present will of the Paradise Creator. On this day in August three of the apostles saw Jesus decline to be invested with full universe authority. They looked on in amazement as the celestial messengers departed, leaving Jesus alone to finish out the earth life as the Child of Humanity and the Child of the Creator.

The faith of the apostles was at a high point at the time of the feeding of the five thousand, and then it rapidly fell almost to zero. Now, as a result of the Master's admission of divinity, the lagging faith of the

twelve rose in the next few weeks to its highest pitch, only to undergo a progressive decline. The third revival of their faith did not occur until after the Master's resurrection.

It was about three o'clock on this beautiful afternoon that Jesus left the three apostles, saying: "I go alone for a while to commune with the Creator and some messengers. I ask you to stay here and, while awaiting my return, pray that the Creator's will may be done in all your experience in connection with my mission." And after saying this to them, Jesus withdrew for a long conference with Gabriel and the Original Melchizedek, not returning until about six o'clock. Jesus, seeing their anxiety over such a prolonged absence, said: "Why were you afraid? You know I must be about the Creator's business; why do you doubt when I am not with you? I now declare that I have chosen to go through my full life as one of you. Do not worry; I will not leave you until my work is finished."

As they ate their meager evening meal, Peter asked the Master, "How long do we remain on this mountain away from the others?" And Jesus answered: "Until you know that whatever I have declared to you is true." And they talked over the affairs of the Lucifer rebellion while seated about the glowing embers of their fire until darkness drew on and the apostles grew sleepy, for they had begun their journey very early that morning.

When the three had been asleep for about half an hour, they were suddenly awakened by a near-by crackling sound, and much to their amazement and consternation, on looking about them, they saw Jesus in intimate conversation with two brilliant beings clothed in the light of the celestial world. And Jesus' face and form shone with the luminosity of the same light. These three conversed in a strange language, and not understanding what they were saying, Peter erroneously conjectured that the beings with Jesus were Moses and Elijah; in reality, they were Gabriel and the Original Melchizedek. The physical controllers had arranged for the apostles to witness this scene at Jesus' request.

The three apostles were so badly frightened that they were slow in collecting their wits, but Peter, who was first to recover, said, as the dazzling vision faded from before them and they observed Jesus standing alone: "Jesus, Master, it is good to have been here. We are reluctant to go back down to the ordinary world. If you are willing, let us stay here, and we will erect three tents, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." And Peter said this out of confusion, and because nothing else came to mind at just that moment.

While Peter was speaking, a silvery cloud drew near and overshadowed the four of them. The apostles now became greatly frightened, and as they fell down on their faces to worship, they heard a voice, the same one that had spoken on the occasion of Jesus' baptism, say: "This is my beloved Child." And when the cloud vanished, Jesus was alone with the three, and reaching down and touching them, said: "Arise and do not be afraid; you will see greater things than this." But the apostles were truly afraid; they were a silent and thoughtful trio as they prepared to descend the mountain shortly before midnight.

2. Coming Down the Mountain

For about half the distance down the mountain not a word was spoken. Jesus then began the conversation by remarking: "Make sure that you tell no one, not even your associates, what you have seen and heard on this mountain until I have risen from the dead." The three apostles were shocked and bewildered by the

Master's words, "until I have risen from the dead." They had so recently reaffirmed their faith in Jesus as the Deliverer, the Child of the Creator, whom they had just seen transfigured before their very eyes, and who now began to talk about "rising from the dead"!

Peter shuddered at the thought of the Master's dying — it was too disagreeable an idea to entertain — and fearing that James or John might ask some question relative to this statement, thought it best to start up a diverting conversation and, not knowing what else to talk about, expressed the first thought coming to mind, which was: "Master, why is it that the scribes say that Elijah must come before the Messiah shall appear?" And Jesus, knowing that Peter sought to avoid reference to death and resurrection, answered: "Elijah comes first to prepare the way for the Child of Humanity, who must suffer many things and finally be rejected. But I tell you that Elijah has already come, and was not received." And then the three apostles perceived that Jesus referred to John the Baptist as Elijah, knowing that, if they insisted on regarding Jesus as the Messiah, then John must be the Elijah of the prophecy.

Jesus requested silence about their observation of this prelude to death and resurrection, not wanting to foster the notion that their erroneous concepts of a wonder-working Messiah would be fulfilled. Although Peter, James, and John pondered all this in their minds, they did not speak of it to any one until after the Master's resurrection.

As they continued to descend the mountain, Jesus said to them: "You would not receive me as the Child of Humanity; therefore I have consented to be received in accordance with your settled determination, but the will of the Creator must prevail. If you choose to follow the inclination of your own wills, you must prepare to suffer many disappointments and experience many trials, but the training which I have given you should suffice to bring you triumphantly through even these sorrows of your own choosing."

Jesus did not take Peter, James, and John up to the mount of the transfiguration because they were in any sense better prepared than the other apostles to witness what happened, or because they were spiritually more fit to enjoy such a rare privilege, well knowing that none of the twelve were spiritually qualified for this experience.

3. Meaning of the Transfiguration

What Peter, James, and John witnessed on the mount of transfiguration was a fleeting glimpse of a celestial pageant which transpired that eventful day on Mount Hermon. The transfiguration was the occasion of:

1. The acceptance of the fullness of the bestowal of the incarnated life of Michael on Urantia by the Eternal Spirit of Paradise. As far as concerned the requirements of the Eternal Spirit, Jesus had now received assurance of their fulfillment. And Gabriel brought Jesus that assurance.
2. The testimony of the satisfaction of the Infinite Mind as to the fullness of the Urantia bestowal. The universe representative of the Infinite Mind, the immediate associate of Michael on Salvington and ever-present coworker, on this occasion spoke through the Original Melchizedek.

Jesus welcomed this testimony regarding the success of the earth mission presented by the messengers of the Eternal Spirit and the Infinite Mind, but noted that the Universal Source did not indicate that the Urantia

bestowal was finished; only the unseen presence of the Creator bore witness through Jesus' Personalized Adjuster, saying, "This is my beloved Child." And this was spoken in words to be heard also by the three apostles.

After this celestial visitation Jesus endeavored to know the Creator's will and decided to pursue the mortal bestowal to its natural end. This was the significance of the transfiguration to Jesus. To the three apostles it was an event marking the entrance of the Master on the final phase of the earth career.

After the formal visitation of Gabriel and the Original Melchizedek, Jesus held informal conversations with them concerning the affairs of the universe.

4. The Epileptic Child

It was shortly before breakfast time on this Tuesday morning when Jesus and the companions arrived at the apostolic camp. As they drew near, they discerned a considerable crowd gathered around the apostles and soon began to hear the loud words of argument of this group of about fifty persons, embracing the nine apostles and a gathering equally divided between Jerusalem scribes and believing disciples who had tracked Jesus and the associates in their journey from Magadan.

Although the crowd engaged in numerous arguments, the chief controversy was about a certain citizen of Tiberias who had arrived the preceding day in quest of Jesus. This person, James of Safed, had an only child about fourteen years old who was severely afflicted with epilepsy. In addition to this nervous malady this youth had become possessed by one of those wandering, mischievous, and rebellious midwayers who were then present on earth and uncontrolled, so that the youth was both epileptic and demon-possessed.

For almost two weeks this anxious parent, a minor official of Herod Antipas, had wandered through the western borders of Philip's domains, seeking to ask Jesus to cure this afflicted child, not catching up with the apostolic party until about noon of this day when Jesus was up on the mountain with the three apostles.

The nine apostles were surprised and considerably perturbed when this person, accompanied by almost forty others who were looking for Jesus, suddenly arrived. At the time of the appearance of this group the nine apostles, at least the majority of them, had succumbed to their old temptation — that of discussing who should be greatest in the new realm; they were busily arguing about the probable positions which would be assigned the individual apostles. They simply could not free themselves entirely from the long-cherished idea of the material mission of the Messiah. And now that Jesus had acknowledged being the Deliverer — at least admitting the status of divinity — what was more natural than that, during this period of separation from the Master, they should resort to talking about those hopes and ambitions which were uppermost in their hearts. And they were engaged in these discussions when James of Safed and the other seekers after Jesus arrived.

Andrew stepped up to greet this parent and child, saying, "Whom do you seek?" James said: "I search for your Master. I seek healing for my afflicted child. I would have Jesus cast out this devil that possesses my child." And then the parent proceeded to relate to the apostles how the child almost died as a result of these malignant seizures.

As the apostles listened, Simon Zelotes and Judas Iscariot stepped into the presence of the parent, saying: "We can heal your child; you need not wait for the Master's return. We are ambassadors of the new realm; we no longer hold these things in secret. Jesus is the Deliverer, and the keys of the new realm have been delivered to us." By this time Andrew and Thomas were in consultation at one side. Nathaniel and the others looked on in amazement; they were all aghast at the sudden boldness, if not presumption, of Simon and Judas. Then the parent said: "If it has been given you to do these works, I pray that you will speak those words which will deliver my child from this bondage." Then Simon stepped forward and, placing a hand on the head and looking directly into the eyes of the child, commanded: "Come out, you unclean spirit; in the name of Jesus obey me." But the youth only had a more violent fit, while the scribes mocked the apostles in derision, and the disappointed followers suffered the taunts of these unfriendly critics.

Andrew was deeply chagrined at this ill-advised effort and its dismal failure, calling the apostles aside for conference and prayer. After this time of meditation, feeling keenly the sting of their defeat and sensing the humiliation resting on all of them, Andrew tried, in a second attempt, to cast out the demon, but these efforts only resulted in failure. Andrew frankly confessed defeat and asked the parent to remain with them overnight or until Jesus' return, saying: "Perhaps this sort only goes out by the Master's personal command."

And so, while Jesus was descending the mountain with the exuberant and ecstatic Peter, James, and John, their nine associates were sleepless in their confusion and downcast humiliation. They were a dejected and chastened group. But James of Safed would not give up and decided to stay on until the Master came back.

5. Jesus Heals the Child

As Jesus drew near, the nine apostles were more than relieved, and they were greatly encouraged to note the good cheer and unusual enthusiasm which marked the countenances of Peter, James, and John. They all rushed forward to greet Jesus and their three associates. As they exchanged greetings, the crowd came up, and Jesus asked, "What were you arguing about as we drew near?" But before the disconcerted and humiliated apostles could reply to the Master's question, the anxious parent of the afflicted child stepped forward and, kneeling at Jesus' feet, said: "Master, I have an only child who is possessed by an evil spirit, not only crying out in terror, foaming at the mouth, and falling like a dead person at the time of seizure, but often this evil spirit causes convulsions. With much grinding of teeth and as a result of many bruises, my child wastes away. This life is worse than death; we have a sad heart and a broken spirit. About noon yesterday, seeking for you, I caught up with your disciples, and while we were waiting, your apostles tried to cast out this demon, but they could not do it. And now, Master, will you do this for us, will you heal my child?"

Jesus, having listened to this recital, asked the kneeling parent to rise while giving the near-by apostles a searching look. Then Jesus said to all those who stood there: "How long before you learn that the works of faith do not come at the bidding of doubting unbelief?" And then, pointing to the bewildered parent, Jesus said, "Bring your child." And Jesus, when James had brought the youth, asked, "How long has the child been afflicted in this way?" The parent answered, "Since very young." And as they talked, the youth was seized with a violent attack and fell in their midst, with much grinding of teeth and foaming at the mouth. After a succession of violent convulsions the child lay there before them as if dead. Now the parent again

kneeled at Jesus' feet and implored the Master, saying: "If you can cure my child, I beg you to have compassion on us and deliver us from this affliction." And Jesus looked down into the parent's anxious face, saying: "Do not question the Creator's power of love, only the sincerity and reach of your faith. All things are possible to one who really believes." And then James of Safed spoke those long-to-be-remembered words of commingled faith and doubt, "Master, I believe. I pray you help my unbelief."

Jesus, on hearing these words, stepped forward and, taking the child by the hand, said: "I will do this in accordance with the Creator's will and in honor of living faith. My child, arise! Come out disobedient spirit, and do not go back." And placing the hand of the child in the hand of the parent, Jesus said: "Go your way. The Creator has granted the desire of your soul." And all who were present, even the enemies of Jesus, were astonished at what they saw.

It was a disillusionment for the three apostles who had so recently enjoyed the spiritual ecstasy of the scenes and experiences of the transfiguration, to so soon return to this scene of the defeat and discomfiture of the other apostles. But it was always so with these twelve ambassadors of the new realm. They never failed to alternate between exaltation and humiliation in their life experiences.

This was a true healing of a double affliction, a physical ailment and a spirit malady. And the youth was permanently cured from that moment. When James had left with the restored child, Jesus said: "We go now to Caesarea-Philippi; get ready at once." And they were a quiet group as they journeyed southward while the crowd followed on behind.

6. In Celsus' Garden

They remained overnight with Celsus, and that evening in the garden, after they had eaten and rested, the twelve gathered about Jesus, and Thomas said: "Master, while we who stayed behind still remain ignorant of what transpired up on the mountain, and which so greatly cheered those who were with you, we crave to have you talk with us concerning our defeat and instruct us in these matters, seeing that those things which happened on the mountain cannot be disclosed at this time."

And Jesus answered Thomas, saying: "Everything that was heard on the mountain will be revealed to you in due time. But I will now show you the cause of your defeat in that which you so unwisely attempted. While your Master and the others ascended the mountain yesterday to seek for a larger knowledge of the Creator's will and to ask for a richer endowment of wisdom effectively to do that divine will, you who remained on watch here with instructions to strive to acquire the mind of spiritual insight and to pray with us for a fuller revelation of the Creator's will, failed to exercise the faith at your command but, instead, yielded to the temptation and fell into your old evil tendencies to seek preferred places for yourselves in the new realm — the material and temporal realm which you persist in contemplating. And you cling to these erroneous concepts in spite of the reiterated declaration that my realm is not of this world.

"No sooner does your faith grasp my identity than your selfish desire for worldly preferment creeps back on you, and you fall to discussing among yourselves as to who should be greatest in the realm of the Creator, a realm which, as you persist in conceiving it, does not exist, nor ever will. Have I not told you that one who would be greatest in the Creator's realm must become the server of others? Spiritual greatness consists

in an understanding love that is Creatorlike and not in an enjoyment of the exercise of material power for the exaltation of self. In what you attempted, in which you so completely failed, your purpose was not pure. Your motive was not divine. Your ideal was not spiritual. Your ambition was not altruistic. Your procedure was not based on love, and your goal of attainment was not the will of the Creator.

“How long will it take you to learn that you cannot time-shorten the course of established natural phenomena except when such things are in accordance with the Creator’s will? Nor can you do spiritual work in the absence of spiritual power. And you can do neither of these, even when their potential is present, without the existence of that third and essential human factor, the personal experience of the possession of living faith. Must you always have material manifestations as an attraction for spiritual realities? Can you not grasp the spirit significance of my mission without the visible exhibition of unusual works? When can you be depended on to adhere to higher and spiritual realities regardless of the outward appearance of all material manifestations?”

And Jesus added: “And now go to your rest, for tomorrow we return to Magadan and take counsel there concerning our mission to the cities and villages of the Decapolis. And in the conclusion of this day’s experience, let me say to each of you that which I spoke on the mountain, and let these words find a deep lodgment in your hearts: I now begin the last phase of my mission. We are about to engage in those labors which will presently lead to the great and final testing of your faith and devotion when I will be delivered into the hands of those who seek my destruction. And remember what I am saying to you: I will be put to death, but I will rise again.”

They retired for the night, sorrowful. They were bewildered; they could not comprehend these words. And while they were afraid to ask anything concerning what Jesus had said, they did recall all of it subsequent to the resurrection.

7. Peter’s Protest

Early this Wednesday morning Jesus and the twelve left Caesarea-Philippi for Magadan Park near Bethsaida-Julias. The apostles had slept very little that night, so they were up early and ready to go. Even the stolid Alpheus twins had been shocked by this talk about the death of Jesus. As they journeyed south, just beyond the Waters of Merom they came to the Damascus road, and wanting to avoid the scribes and others who would presently be coming along after them, Jesus directed that they go on to Capernaum by the Damascus road which passes through Galilee. And this was because those who followed would go on over the east Jordan road since they thought that Jesus and the apostles would fear to pass through the territory of Herod Antipas. Jesus sought to elude these critics and the crowd which followed in order to be alone with the apostles this day.

They traveled on through Galilee until well past the time for their lunch, when they stopped in the shade to refresh themselves. And after they had eaten, Andrew, speaking to Jesus, said: “Master, we do not comprehend your deep sayings. We have come to fully believe that you are the Child of the Creator, and now we hear these strange words about leaving us, about dying. We do not understand your teaching. Are you speaking to us in parables? We ask that you speak to us directly and plainly.”

In answer to Andrew, Jesus said: "It is because you have confessed that I am the Child of the Creator that I am constrained to begin to unfold to you the truth about the end of my bestowal on earth. You insist on clinging to the belief that I am the Messiah, and you will not abandon the idea that the Messiah must sit on a throne in Jerusalem; therefore I persist in telling you that I must presently go to Jerusalem, suffer many things, be rejected by the scribes, the elders, and the chief priests, and after all this be killed and raised from the dead. And I do not speak a parable to you; I speak the truth to you so that you may be prepared for these events when they suddenly come upon us." And Simon Peter, rushing impetuously toward Jesus, laid a hand on the Master's shoulder and said: "Master, be it far from us to contend with you, but I declare that these things will never happen to you."

Peter loved Jesus; but the Master's human nature recognized in these words of well-meant affection the subtle suggestion of temptation that the policy of pursuing to the end the earth bestowal in accordance with the will of the Paradise Creator be changed. And so, detecting the danger of permitting the suggestions of even affectionate and loyal friends to change the course of events, Jesus turned on Peter and the other apostles, saying: "You sound like the adversary, the tempter. When you talk in this manner, you are not on my side but rather on the side of our enemy. In this way you make your love for me a stumbling block to my doing the Creator's will. Do not follow the ways of mortals but rather the will of the Creator."

After they had recovered from the first shock of Jesus' stinging rebuke, and before they resumed their journey, the Master spoke further: "Those who would come after me must disregard themselves, take up their responsibilities daily, and follow me. For those who would save their lives selfishly, will lose them, but those who lose their lives for my sake, will save them. What does it profit people to gain the whole world and lose their own souls? What would people give in exchange for eternal life? Do not be ashamed of me and my words in this sinful and hypocritical generation, even as I will not be ashamed to acknowledge you when I appear before the Creator in the presence of all the celestial hosts. Nevertheless, many of you now standing before me will not taste death until you see this realm of the Creator come with power."

And so Jesus made clear to the twelve the painful and conflicting path which they must follow. What a shock these words were to these Galileans, who persisted in dreaming of an earthly realm with positions of honor for themselves! But their loyal hearts were stirred by this courageous appeal, and not one of them was inclined to forsake Jesus. Jesus was not sending them alone into the conflict but was leading them, asking only that they bravely follow.

Slowly the twelve were grasping the idea that Jesus was talking about dying. They only vaguely comprehended this, while the statement about rising from the dead utterly failed to register in their minds. As the days passed, Peter, James, and John, recalling their experience on the mount of the transfiguration, arrived at a fuller understanding of some of these matters.

In all the association of the twelve with their Master, only a few times did they experience the anger and hear such swift words of rebuke as were administered to Peter and the rest of them on this occasion. Jesus had always been patient with their human shortcomings, but not so when faced by an impending threat against the program of implicitly carrying out the Creator's will regarding the remainder of the earth career. The apostles were literally stunned; they were amazed and horrified. They could not find words to express their sorrow. Slowly they began to realize what the Master must endure, and that they must also go through

these experiences, but they did not awaken to the reality of these coming events until long after these early hints of the impending tragedy of these latter days.

In silence Jesus and the twelve started for their camp at Magadan Park, going by way of Capernaum. As the afternoon wore on, though they did not converse with Jesus, they talked much among themselves while Andrew talked with the Master.

8. At Peter's House

Entering Capernaum at twilight, they went by isolated routes directly to the home of Simon Peter for their evening meal. While David Zebedee prepared to take them across the lake, they stayed at Simon's house, and Jesus, looking up at Peter and the other apostles, asked: "As you walked along together this afternoon, what was it that you talked about so earnestly among yourselves?" The apostles held their peace because many of them had continued the discussion begun at Mount Hermon as to what positions they were to have in the coming new realm; who should be the greatest, and so on. Jesus, knowing what it was that occupied their thoughts that day, motioned to one of Peter's little ones and, setting the child down among them, said: "Unless you turn about and become more like this child, you will make little progress in the realm of the Creator. Whoever becomes as humble as this little one will become greatest in the new realm. And whoever receives such a little one receives me. And those who receive me also receive the One who sent me. If you would be first in the new realm, seek to minister these good truths to others. But whoever causes one of these little ones to stumble, it would be better to be cast into the sea. If the things you do with your hands, or the things you see with your eyes give offense in the progress of the new realm, sacrifice these cherished idols, for it is better to enter the new realm minus many of the beloved things of life rather than to cling to these idols and find yourself shut out. But most of all, see that you do not despise a single one of these little ones, for their angels always behold the faces of the celestial hosts."

When Jesus had finished speaking, they entered the boat and sailed across to Magadan.

Paper 159

The Decapolis Tour

When Jesus and the twelve arrived at Magadan Park, they found a group of almost one hundred evangelists and disciples waiting for them, and they were immediately ready to begin the teaching and preaching tour of the cities of the Decapolis.

On this Thursday morning, August 18, the Master called the followers together and directed that each of the apostles should associate with one of the twelve evangelists, and they should go out in twelve groups to labor in the cities and villages of the Decapolis. All others were directed to remain with Jesus. Jesus allotted four weeks to this tour, instructing the followers to return to Magadan not later than Friday, September 16, and promising to visit them often during this time. In the course of this month these twelve groups labored in Gerasa, Gamala, Hippos, Zaphon, Gadara, Abila, Edrei, Philadelphia, Heshbon, Dium, Scythopolis, and many other cities. Throughout this tour no miracles of healing or other extraordinary events occurred.

1. The Sermon on Forgiveness

One evening at Hippos, in answer to a disciple's question, Jesus taught the lesson on forgiveness. The Master said:

“Does a kindhearted person who has a hundred sheep and one of them goes astray, not immediately leave the ninety-nine and go out in search of the one that has gone astray? And will a good shepherd not keep up the search for the lost sheep until it is found? And then, the shepherd having found the lost sheep, goes home rejoicing and calls to friends and neighbors, ‘Celebrate with me. I have found my sheep that was lost.’ I say that there is more joy in the universe over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance. Even so, it is not the will of the Creator that one of these little ones should go astray, much less that they should perish. In your religion Yahweh may receive repentant sinners; in the doctrine of the new realm the Creator goes to find them even before they have seriously thought of repentance.

“The Creator loves all of the children of the universe, and therefore you should learn to love one another; the Creator forgives you your sins; therefore you should learn to forgive one another. If your friend sins against you, point out the problem with tact and patience, and do all this between just the two of you. If your friend will listen to you, then you have preserved your friendship. But if your friend will not hear you and persists in the error, go again, taking with you one or two mutual friends so that you may have two or even three witnesses to confirm your story and establish the fact that you have dealt justly and mercifully with your offending friend. Now if your friend refuses to hear the others, you may tell the whole story to the community, and then, if the friend still refuses to hear the community, let them take such action as they feel is wise; let such an unruly member become an outcast. While you cannot presume to sit in judgment on the souls of others, and while you may not forgive sins or otherwise usurp the prerogatives of the supervisors of the universe, at the same time, it has been committed to your hands that you should maintain temporal order on earth. While you may not meddle with the divine decrees concerning eternal life, you

will determine the issues of conduct as they concern the temporal welfare of the people on earth. And so, in all these matters connected with the discipline of the community, whatever you decree on earth will be recognized in the universe. Although you cannot determine the eternal fate of the individual, you may legislate regarding the conduct of the group, for, where two or three of you agree concerning any of these things and ask it of me, it will be done for you if your petition is not inconsistent with the will of the Creator. And all of this is always true, for, where two or three are gathered together, I am there in the midst of them.”

Simon Peter was the apostle in charge of the workers at Hippos, and when hearing Jesus speak, asked: “Master, how often should I forgive my friend for sinning against me? Seven times?” And Jesus answered Peter: “Not only seven times but even seventy-seven times. Therefore the realm of the Creator may be compared to a certain ruler who ordered the stewards to do a financial accounting. And when they had begun to conduct this examination of accounts, one of the chief retainers confessed to owing the ruler ten thousand talents. Now this officer of the court claimed to be a victim of hard times, and to not having the means to pay this obligation. And so the ruler commanded that this person’s property be confiscated, and that the children be sold to pay the debt. And this chief steward, hearing this stern decree, fell down before the ruler and begged for mercy and more time, saying, ‘Master, have a little more patience with me, and I will pay you all.’ And the ruler, looking at this negligent servant, was moved with compassion and ordered that the loan should be wholly forgiven.

“And this chief steward, having received mercy and forgiveness at the hands of the ruler, claimed a debt of a mere hundred denarii from a subordinate steward, laying hold and taking this person by the throat and saying, ‘Pay me all that you owe.’ And then this subordinate fell down before the chief steward and begged: ‘Only have patience with me, and I will soon be able to pay you.’ But the chief steward would not show mercy and instead had this steward put in prison until the debt could be paid. When the other servants saw what had happened, they were so distressed that they told the ruler. The ruler, hearing of the doings of the chief steward, called this ungrateful and unforgiving person and said: ‘You are a wicked and unworthy servant. When you asked for compassion, I freely forgave you your entire debt. Why did you not also show mercy to your subordinate, even as I showed mercy to you?’ And the ruler was very angry and delivered the ungrateful chief steward to the jailers until all that was due could be paid. And even so the Creator will show more abundant mercy to those who freely show mercy to others. How can you come to the Creator asking consideration for your shortcomings when you chastise others for being guilty of these same human frailties? I say to all of you: You have freely received the good things of the universe; therefore give freely to others on earth.”

Thus did Jesus teach the dangers and illustrate the unfairness of sitting in personal judgment on others. Discipline must be maintained, justice must be administered, but in all these matters the wisdom of the community should prevail. Jesus invested legislative and judicial authority in the *group*, not in the *individual*. Even this investment of authority in the group must not be exercised as personal authority. There is always danger that the verdict of an individual may be warped by prejudice or distorted by passion. Group judgment is more likely to remove the dangers and eliminate the unfairness of personal bias. Jesus always sought to minimize the elements of unfairness, retaliation, and vengeance.

2. The Strange Preacher

Jesus went to Gamala to visit John and the other workers at that place. That evening, after the session of questions and answers, John said to Jesus: "Master, yesterday I went to Ashtaroth to see a person who was teaching in your name and even claiming to be able to cast out devils. Now this person had never been with us, and does not follow after us; therefore I prohibited the doing of such things." Then Jesus said: "Do not forbid it. Do you not perceive that this doctrine of the new realm will presently be proclaimed in all the world? How can you expect that all who will believe it will be subject to your direction? Be glad that our teaching has already begun to manifest itself beyond the bounds of our personal influence. Do you not see, John, that those who profess to do great works in my name must eventually support our cause? They certainly will not be quick to speak evil of me. In matters of this sort it would be better for you to assume that one who is not against us is for us. In the generations to come many who are not wholly worthy will do strange things in my name, but I will not forbid them. I tell you that, even when a cup of cold water is given to a thirsty soul, the Creator's messengers will ever make record of such a service of love."

This instruction greatly bothered John. Had the Master not said, "One who is not with me is against me"? And John did not perceive that in this case Jesus was referring to a person's direct relation to the spiritual teachings of the new age, while in the other case reference was made to the outward social relations of followers regarding the questions of administrative control and the jurisdiction of one group over the work of other groups which would eventually compose the forthcoming world-wide family of humanity.

But John often recounted this experience in connection with subsequent work on behalf of the new realm. Nevertheless, many times the apostles took offense at those who boldly taught in the Master's name, always deeming it inappropriate that those who had never sat at Jesus' feet should dare to do so.

This person whom John forbade to teach and work in Jesus' name did not heed the apostle's injunction, going right on with these efforts and raising a considerable company of followers at Kanata before going on into Mesopotamia. This person, Aden, had been led to believe in Jesus through the testimony of the demented individual whom Jesus healed near Kheresa, and who so confidently believed that the supposed evil spirits which the Master cast out entered the herd of swine and rushed them headlong over the cliff to their destruction.

3. Instruction for Teachers and Followers

At Edrei, where Thomas and the associates labored, Jesus spent a day and a night and, in the course of the evening's discussion, expressed the principles which should guide those who preach truth, and which should activate all who teach the doctrine of the new realm. Jesus taught:

Always respect the personality of others. A righteous cause should never be promoted by force; spiritual victories can be won only by spiritual power. This injunction against the employment of material influences refers to psychic force as well as to physical force. Overpowering arguments and mental superiority are not to be employed to coerce people into the new realm. People's minds are not to be crushed by the mere weight of logic or overawed by shrewd eloquence. While emotion as a factor in human decisions cannot be wholly eliminated, it should not be directly appealed to in the teachings of those who would advance the

cause. Make your appeals directly to the divine spirit that dwells within people's minds. Do not appeal to fear, pity, or mere sentiment. In appealing to people, be fair; exercise self-control and exhibit due restraint; show proper respect for the personalities of your pupils. Remember that I have said: "I stand at the door and knock, and if anyone will open it, I will come in."

In bringing people into the Creator's realm, do not lessen or destroy their self-respect. While too much self-respect may destroy proper humility and end in pride, conceit, and arrogance, the loss of self-respect often ends in paralysis of the will. It is the purpose of these teachings to restore self-respect to those who have lost it and to restrain it in those who have it. Do not make the mistake of only condemning the wrongs in the lives of your pupils; remember to also accord generous recognition for the most praiseworthy things in their lives. Do not forget that I will stop at nothing to restore self-respect to those who have lost it, and who really desire to regain it.

Take care that you do not wound the self-respect of timid and fearful souls. Do not indulge in sarcasm at the expense of my simple-minded children. Do not be cynical with my fear-ridden children. Idleness is destructive of self-respect; therefore, admonish others to always keep busy at their chosen tasks, and put forth every effort to secure work for those who find themselves without employment.

Never be guilty of such unworthy tactics as endeavoring to frighten people into the new realm. A loving parent does not frighten children into yielding obedience.

At some point the children of the realm will realize that strong feelings of emotion are not equivalent to the leadings of the divine spirit. To be strongly and strangely impressed to do something or to go to a certain place does not necessarily mean that such impulses are the leadings of the indwelling spirit.

Warn all hearers regarding the fringe of conflict which must be traversed by all who pass from the material life to the higher life as it is lived in the spirit. To those who live quite wholly within either realm, there is little conflict or confusion, but all are doomed to experience more or less uncertainty during the times of transition between the two levels of living. In entering the new realm, you cannot escape its responsibilities or avoid its obligations, but remember: The burden of truth is light.

The world is filled with hungry souls who starve in the very presence of the bread of life; people die searching for the very spirit that lives within them. People seek for the treasures of the new realm with yearning hearts when they are all within the immediate grasp of living faith. Faith is to religion what sails are to a ship; it is an addition of power, not an added burden of life. There is only one goal for those who enter the new realm, and that is to engage in the good struggle of faith. There is only one obstacle, and that is doubt — unbelief.

In preaching the doctrine of the new realm, you are simply teaching friendship with the Creator. And this relationship will appeal to all people in that they will find that which most truly satisfies their characteristic longings and ideals. Tell my children that I am not only sensitive to their feelings and patient with their frailties, but that I am also unaccepting of sin and uncompromising with iniquity. I am indeed meek and humble in the presence of my Creator Parent but I am equally and relentlessly inexorable where there is deliberate evil-doing and sinful rebellion against the will of the Creator.

You should not portray your teacher as a person of sorrows. Future generations will also know the radiance of my joy, the buoyance of my good will, and the inspiration of my good humor. I proclaim a message which is infectious in its transforming power. Our religion is throbbing with new life and new meanings. Those who accept this teaching are filled with joy and in their hearts are inspired to rejoice. Increasing happiness is always the experience of all who are certain about the Creator.

Teach all people to avoid leaning on the insecure props of false sympathy. You cannot develop strong characters out of the indulgence of self-pity; honestly endeavor to avoid the deceptive influence of mere companionship in misery. Extend sympathy to the brave and courageous while you withhold pity from those cowardly souls who only halfheartedly stand up before the trials of living. Do not offer consolation to those who lie down before their troubles without a struggle. Do not sympathize with others only so that they may sympathize with you in return.

When my children become self-conscious of the assurance of the divine presence, such a faith will expand the mind, ennoble the soul, reinforce the personality, augment the happiness, deepen the spirit perception, and enhance the power to love and be loved.

Teach all people that those who enter the new realm do not become immune to the accidents of time or to the ordinary catastrophes of nature. Believing my teachings will not prevent trouble, but it will insure that you shall be *unafraid* when trouble does overtake you. If you dare to believe in me and wholeheartedly proceed to follow after me, you will most certainly enter the sure pathway to trouble. I do not promise to deliver you from adversity, but I do promise to go with you through all of it.

And much more Jesus taught this group before they prepared for the night's sleep. And those who heard these sayings treasured them and often recited them for the edification of the apostles and disciples who were not present when they were spoken.

4. The Talk with Nathaniel

And then Jesus went to Abila, where Nathaniel and the associates labored. Nathaniel was bothered by some of Jesus' pronouncements which seemed to detract from the authority of the recognized Hebrew scriptures. Accordingly, on this night, after the usual period of questions and answers, Nathaniel took Jesus away from the others and asked: "Master, could you trust me to know the truth about the Scriptures? I observe that you teach us only a portion of the sacred writings — the best as I view it — and I infer that you reject the teachings of the rabbis to the effect that the words of the law are the very words of Yahweh, having been with the Creator even before the times of Abraham and Moses. What is the truth about the Scriptures?" Jesus, hearing the question of this bewildered apostle, answered:

"Nathaniel, you have rightly judged; I do not regard the Scriptures as the rabbis do. I will talk with you about this matter on the condition that you do not relate these things to the others, who are not all prepared to receive this teaching. The words of the law of Moses and the teachings of the Scriptures were not in existence before Abraham. The Scriptures have been gathered together as we now have them only in recent times. While they contain the best of the higher thoughts and longings of the Jewish people, they also contain much that is far from being representative of the character and teachings of the Creator; therefore I

must choose from among the better teachings those truths which are to be gleaned for the doctrine of the new age.

“These writings are the work of people, some of them holy people, others not so holy. The teachings of these books represent the views and extent of enlightenment of the times in which they had their origin. As a revelation of truth, the last are more dependable than the first. The Scriptures are faulty and altogether human in origin, but they do constitute the best collection of religious wisdom and spiritual truth to be found in all the world at this time.

“Many of these books were not written by the persons whose names they bear, but that in no way detracts from the value of the truths which they contain. If the story of Jonah should not be a fact, even if Jonah had never lived, still the profound truth of this narrative, the love of Yahweh for Nineveh and the so-called heathen, would be none the less precious in the eyes of all those who love others. The Scriptures are sacred because they present the thoughts and acts of people who were searching for truth, and who in these writings left on record their highest concepts of righteousness, truth, and holiness. The Scriptures contain much that is true, very much, but in the light of your present teaching, you know that these writings also contain much that is misrepresentative of the Universal Source, the loving Creator I have come to reveal to all the worlds.

“Nathaniel, never permit yourself for one moment to believe the Scripture records which tell you that the Source of love directed your ancestors to go forth in battle to slay all their enemies. Such records are the words of people, not very holy people, and they are not the word of the Creator. The Scriptures always have, and always will, reflect the intellectual, moral, and spiritual status of those who create them. Have you not noted that the concepts of Yahweh grow in beauty and glory as the prophets make their records from Samuel to Isaiah? And you should remember that the Scriptures are intended for religious instruction and spiritual guidance. They are not the works of either historians or philosophers.

“The thing most deplorable is not merely this erroneous idea of the absolute perfection of the Scripture record and the infallibility of its teachings, but rather the confusing misinterpretation of these sacred writings by the tradition-enslaved scribes and Pharisees at Jerusalem. And now they will employ both the belief in the inspiration of the Scriptures and their misinterpretations in their determined effort to withstand these newer teachings of the doctrine of the new realm. Nathaniel, never forget, the Creator does not limit the revelation of truth to any one generation or to any one people. Many earnest seekers after the truth have been, and will continue to be, confused and disheartened by these doctrines of the perfection of the Scriptures.

“The authority of truth is the spirit that indwells its living manifestations, and not the dead words of the less illuminated and supposedly inspired people of another generation. And even if these holy people of old lived inspired and spirit-filled lives, that does not mean that their *words* were similarly spiritually inspired. Today we make no record of these doctrines lest, when I have gone, you speedily become divided up into groups of truth contenders as a result of the diversity of your interpretation of my teachings. For this generation it is best that we *live* these truths while we avoid the making of records.

“Mark well my words, Nathaniel, nothing which human nature has touched can be regarded as infallible. Through the minds of mortals divine truth may indeed shine forth, but always of relative purity and partial divinity. The creature may crave infallibility, but only the Creators possess it.

“But the greatest error of the teaching about the Scriptures is the doctrine of their being sealed books of mystery and wisdom which only the wise minds of the nation dare to interpret. The revelations of divine truth are not sealed except by human ignorance, bigotry, and narrow-minded intolerance. The light of the Scriptures is only dimmed by prejudice and darkened by superstition. A false fear of sacredness has prevented religion from being safeguarded by common sense. The fear of the authority of the sacred writings of the past effectively prevents the honest souls of today from accepting the new light, the light which these very Creator-knowing people of another generation so intensely longed to see.

“But the saddest feature of all is the fact that some of the teachers of the sanctity of this traditionalism know this very truth. They more or less fully understand these limitations of Scripture, but they are moral cowards, intellectually dishonest. They know the truth regarding the sacred writings, but they prefer to withhold such disturbing facts from the people. And so they pervert and distort the Scriptures, making them the guide to slavish details of the daily life and an authority in things nonspiritual instead of appealing to the sacred writings as the repository of the moral wisdom, religious inspiration, and the spiritual teaching of the Creator-knowing people of other generations.”

Nathaniel was enlightened and shocked by the Master’s pronouncement, long pondering this talk, but telling no one concerning this conference until after Jesus’ ascension; and even then fearing to impart the full story of the Master’s instruction.

5. The Positive Nature of Jesus’ Religion

At Philadelphia, where James was working, Jesus taught the disciples about the positive nature of the new realm. When Jesus, in the course of these remarks, intimated that some parts of the Scripture were more truth-containing than others and admonished the hearers to feed their souls on the best of the spiritual food, James interrupted the Master, asking: “Would you be good enough, Master, to suggest to us how we may choose the better passages from the Scriptures for our personal edification?” And Jesus replied: “Yes, James, when you read the Scriptures look for those divinely beautiful teachings that are eternally true.”

And this is illustrative of the way Jesus, day by day, appropriated the cream of the Hebrew scriptures for the instruction of the followers and for inclusion in the teachings of the new doctrine of the Creator’s realm. Other religions had suggested the thought of the nearness of the Creator to mortals, but Jesus made the care of the Creator for mortals like the solicitude of a loving parent for the welfare of dependent children and then made this teaching the cornerstone of the new religion. And so the doctrine of the parenthood of the Creator made imperative the practice of the family of humanity. The worship of the Creator and the service of humanity became the sum and substance of this religion. Jesus took the best of the Jewish religion and translated it into a worthy setting in the new teachings.

Jesus put the spirit of positive action into the passive doctrines of the Jewish religion. In the place of negative compliance with ceremonial requirements, Jesus enjoined the positive doing of that which the new

religion required of those who accepted it. Jesus' religion consisted not merely in *believing*, but in actually *doing*, those things which the teachings required. Jesus did not teach that the essence of this religion consisted in social service, but rather that social service was one of the certain effects of the possession of the spirit of true religion.

Jesus did not hesitate to appropriate the better part of a Scripture while repudiating the lesser portion. The great exhortation, "Love your neighbor as yourself," Jesus took from the Scripture which reads: "You shall not take vengeance against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself." Jesus appropriated the positive portion of this Scripture while rejecting the negative part, even opposing negative or purely passive nonresistance. Jesus said: "When an enemy strikes you on one cheek, do not stand there dumb and passive but in positive attitude turn the other; that is, do the best thing possible to actively lead your enemy away from evil paths into the better ways of righteous living." Jesus required the followers to react positively and aggressively to every life situation. The turning of the other cheek, or whatever act that may typify, demands initiative, necessitates vigorous, active, and courageous expression of the personality.

Jesus did not advocate the practice of negative submission to the indignities of those who might purposely seek to impose on the practitioners of nonresistance to evil, but rather that the followers should be wise and alert in the quick and positive reaction of good to evil to the end that they might effectively overcome evil with good. Do not forget, the truly good is invariably more powerful than the most malignant evil. The Master taught a positive standard of righteousness: "Whoever wishes to be my disciple should take up a full measure of responsibilities daily to follow me." And Jesus "went about doing good." And this aspect of the teachings was well illustrated by many parables which were later spoken to the followers. Jesus never exhorted the followers to patiently bear their obligations but rather with energy and enthusiasm to live up to the full measure of their human responsibilities and divine privileges.

Jesus, when instructing the apostles that they should, when one unjustly took away their coat, offer the other garment, referred not so much to a literal second coat as to the idea of doing something *positive* to save the wrongdoer in the place of the olden advice to retaliate — "an eye for an eye" and so on. Jesus abhorred the idea either of retaliation or of becoming just a passive sufferer or victim of injustice, on this occasion teaching them the three ways of contending with, and resisting, evil:

1. To return evil for evil — the positive but unrighteous method.
2. To suffer evil without complaint and without resistance — the purely negative method.
3. To return good for evil, to assert the will so as to become master of the situation, to overcome evil with good — the positive and righteous method.

One of the apostles once asked: "Master, what should I do if a stranger forced me to carry a pack for a mile?" Jesus answered: "Do not sit down and sigh for relief while you berate the stranger under your breath. Righteousness does not come from such passive attitudes. If you can think of nothing more effectively positive to do, you can at least carry the pack a second mile. That will certainly challenge the unrighteous and ungodly stranger."

The Jews had heard of a Deity who would forgive repentant sinners and try to forget their misdeeds, but not until Jesus came did people hear about a Deity who went in search of lost sheep, who took the initiative in looking for those who are lost, and who rejoiced on finding them willing to return to the Creator's house. This positive note in religion Jesus extended to prayers and converted the negative golden rule into a positive admonition of human fairness.

In all teaching Jesus unfailingly eliminated distracting details, avoiding flowery language and the mere poetic imagery of a play on words. Jesus habitually put large meanings into small expressions, and for purposes of illustration reversed the current meanings of many terms, such as salt, leaven, fishing, and little children. Jesus most effectively employed the antithesis, comparing the minute to the infinite and so on, and used pictures that were striking, such as, "The blind leading the blind." But the greatest strength to be found in this illustrative teaching was its naturalness. Jesus brought the philosophy of religion down to earth, and portrayed the elemental needs of the soul with a new insight and a new bestowal of affection.

6. The Return to Magadan

The mission of four weeks in the Decapolis was moderately successful. Hundreds of souls were received into the new realm, and the apostles and evangelists had a valuable experience in carrying on their work without the inspiration of the immediate personal presence of Jesus.

On Friday, September 16, the entire corps of workers assembled by prearrangement at Magadan Park. On the Sabbath day a council of more than one hundred followers was held at which the future plans for extending the work were fully considered. The messengers of David were present and made reports concerning the welfare of the followers throughout Judea, Samaria, Galilee, and adjoining districts.

Few of Jesus' followers at this time fully appreciated the great value of the services of the messenger corps. Not only did the messengers keep the followers throughout Palestine in touch with each other and with Jesus and the apostles, but during these dark days they also served as collectors of funds, not only for the sustenance of Jesus and the associates, but also for the support of the families of the twelve apostles and the twelve evangelists.

About this time Abner moved the base of operations from Hebron to Bethlehem, and this latter place was also the headquarters in Judea for David's messengers. David maintained an overnight relay messenger service between Jerusalem and Bethsaida. These runners left Jerusalem each evening, relaying at Sychar and Scythopolis, and arriving in Bethsaida by breakfast time the next morning.

Jesus and the associates now prepared to take a week's rest before they started on the last epoch of their labors. This was their last rest, for the Perean mission developed into a campaign of preaching and teaching which extended right down to the time of their arrival at Jerusalem and of the enactment of the closing episodes of Jesus' earth career.

Paper 160

Rodan of Alexandria

On Sunday morning, September 18, Andrew announced that no work would be planned for the coming week. All of the apostles, except Nathaniel and Thomas, went home to visit their families or to stay with friends. This week Jesus enjoyed a period of almost complete rest, but Nathaniel and Thomas were very busy with their discussions with a certain Greek philosopher from Alexandria named Rodan. This Greek had recently become a disciple of Jesus through the teaching of one of Abner's associates who had conducted a mission at Alexandria. Rodan was now earnestly engaged in the task of harmonizing a personal philosophy of life with Jesus' new religious teachings, and had come to Magadan hoping that the Master would engage in a discussion of these problems. Rodan also wanted to secure a firsthand and authoritative version of the teachings from either Jesus or one of the apostles. The Master, while declining to enter into such a conference, did receive Rodan graciously and immediately directed that Nathaniel and Thomas should listen to Rodan's philosophy and explain the doctrine of the new age in return.

1. Rodan's Greek Philosophy

Early Monday morning, Rodan began a series of ten addresses to Nathaniel, Thomas, and a group of some two dozen followers who happened to be at Magadan. These talks, condensed, combined, and restated, present the following thoughts for consideration:

Human life consists in three great drives — urges, desires, and lures. Strong character, commanding personality, is only acquired by converting the natural urge of life into the social art of living, by transforming present desires into those higher longings which are capable of lasting attainment, while the commonplace lure of existence must be transferred from one's conventional and established ideas to the higher realms of unexplored ideas and undiscovered ideals.

The more complex civilization becomes, the more difficult the art of living will become. The more rapid the changes in social usage, the more complicated the task of character development will become. Every ten generations humankind must learn anew the art of living if progress is to continue. And if people become so ingenious that they more rapidly add to the complexities of society, the art of living will need to be remastered in less time, perhaps every single generation. If the evolution of the art of living fails to keep pace with the technique of existence, humanity will quickly revert to the simple urge of living — the attainment of the satisfaction of present desires. Thus will humanity remain immature; society will fail in growing to full maturity.

Social maturity is equivalent to the degree to which people are willing to surrender the gratification of mere transient and present desires for the entertainment of those superior longings the striving for whose attainment affords the more abundant satisfactions of progressive advancement toward permanent goals. But the true badge of social maturity is the willingness of a people to surrender the right to live peaceably and contentedly under the ease-promoting standards of the lure of established beliefs and conventional ideas for the disquieting and energy-requiring lure of the pursuit of the unexplored possibilities of the attainment of undiscovered goals of idealistic spiritual realities.

Animals respond nobly to the urge of life, but only humans can attain the art of living, although the majority of humans only experience the animal urge to live. Animals know only this blind and instinctive urge; humans are capable of transcending this urge to natural function. People may elect to live on the high plane of intelligent art, even that of celestial joy and spiritual ecstasy. Animals make no inquiry into the purposes of life; therefore they never worry, neither do they commit suicide. Suicide among humans testifies that such beings have emerged from the purely animal stage of existence, and to the further fact that the exploratory efforts of such human beings have failed to attain the artistic levels of mortal experience. Animals do not know the meaning of life; humans not only possess capacity for the recognition of values and the comprehension of meanings, but also are conscious of the meaning of meanings — are self-conscious of insight.

When people dare to forsake a life of natural craving for one of adventurous art and uncertain logic, they must expect to suffer the consequent hazards of emotional casualties — conflicts, unhappiness, and uncertainties — at least until the time of their attainment of some degree of intellectual and emotional maturity. Discouragement, worry, and indolence are positive evidence of moral immaturity. Human society is confronted with two problems: attainment of the maturity of the individual and attainment of the maturity of the human race. The mature human being soon begins to view all other mortals with feelings of tenderness and with emotions of tolerance. Mature individuals approach immature people with the love and consideration that parents bear their children.

Successful living is nothing more or less than the art of the mastery of dependable techniques for solving common problems. The first step in the solution of any problem is to locate the difficulty, to isolate the problem, and frankly to recognize its nature and gravity. The great mistake is that, when life problems excite our profound fears, we refuse to recognize them. Likewise, when the acknowledgment of our difficulties entails the reduction of our long-cherished conceit, the admission of envy, or the abandonment of deep-seated prejudices, the average person prefers to cling to the old illusions of safety and to the long-cherished false feelings of security. Only a brave person is willing to honestly admit, and fearlessly face, what a sincere and logical mind discovers.

The wise and effective solution of any problem demands that the mind will be free from bias, passion, and all other purely personal prejudices which might interfere with the disinterested survey of the actual factors that go to make up the problem presenting itself for solution. The solution of life problems requires courage and sincerity. Only honest and brave individuals are able to follow valiantly through the confusing maze of living to where the logic of a fearless mind may lead. And this emancipation of the mind and soul can never be effected without the driving power of an intelligent enthusiasm which borders on religious zeal. It requires the lure of a great ideal to drive a person on in the pursuit of a goal which is beset with difficult material problems and manifold intellectual hazards.

Even though you are effectively armed to meet the difficult situations of life, you can hardly expect success unless you are equipped with that wisdom of mind and charm of personality which enable you to win the hearty support and co-operation of others. You cannot hope for a large measure of success in either secular or religious work unless you can learn how to persuade people, to prevail with them. You simply must have tact and tolerance.

But the greatest of all methods of problem solving I have learned from your Master. I refer to that which Jesus so consistently practices, and has so faithfully taught you, the isolation of worshipful meditation. In this habit of Jesus' going off alone so frequently to commune with the Creator is to be found the technique, not only of gathering strength and wisdom for the ordinary conflicts of living, but also of appropriating the energy for the solution of the higher problems of a moral and spiritual nature. But even correct methods of solving problems will not compensate for inherent defects of personality or atone for the absence of the hunger and thirst for true righteousness.

I am deeply impressed with the custom of Jesus in going apart to engage in these times of solitary survey of the problems of living; to seek for new stores of wisdom and energy for meeting the manifold demands of social service; to quicken and deepen the supreme purpose of living by actually subjecting the total personality to the consciousness of contacting with divinity; to grasp for possession of new and better methods of adjusting oneself to the ever-changing situations of living existence; to effect those vital reconstructions and readjustments of one's personal attitudes which are so essential to enhanced insight into everything worthwhile and real; and to do all of this only for the glory of the Creator — to breathe in sincerity your Master's favorite prayer, "Not my will, but yours, be done."

This worshipful practice of your Master brings that relaxation which renews the mind; that illumination which inspires the soul; that courage which enables one to bravely face one's problems; that self-understanding which obliterates debilitating fear; and that consciousness of union with divinity which equips people with the assurance that enables them to dare to be Creatorlike. The relaxation of worship, or spiritual communion as practiced by the Master, relieves tension, removes conflicts, and mightily augments the total resources of the personality. And all of this philosophy, plus the doctrine of the new realm, constitutes the new religion as I understand it.

Prejudice blinds the soul to the recognition of truth, and prejudice can be removed only by the sincere devotion of the soul to the adoration of a cause that is all-embracing and all-inclusive of others. Prejudice is inseparably linked to selfishness. Prejudice can be eliminated only by the abandonment of self-seeking and by substituting the quest of the satisfaction of the service of a cause that is not only greater than self, but one that is even greater than all humanity — the search for the Creator, the attainment of divinity. The evidence of maturity of personality consists in the transformation of human desire so that it constantly seeks for the realization of those values which are highest and most divinely real.

In a continually changing world, in the midst of an evolving social order, it is impossible to maintain settled and established goals of destiny. Stability of personality can be experienced only by those who have discovered and embraced the living Creator as the eternal goal of infinite attainment. And so to transfer one's goal from time to eternity, from earth to Paradise, from the human to the divine, requires that people become regenerated, converted, be born again; that they become the re-created children of the divine spirit; that they gain entrance into the family of the Creator. All philosophies and religions which fall short of these ideals are immature. The philosophy which I teach, linked with the doctrine which you preach, represents the new religion of maturity, the ideal of all future generations. And this is true because our ideal is final, infallible, eternal, universal, absolute, and infinite.

My philosophy gave me the urge to search for the realities of true attainment, the goal of maturity. But my urge was impotent; my search lacked driving power; my quest suffered from the absence of certainty of direction. And these deficiencies have been abundantly supplied by this new doctrine of Jesus, with its enhancement of insights, elevation of ideals, and settledness of goals. Without doubts and misgivings I can now wholeheartedly enter into the eternal venture.

2. The Art of Living

There are just two ways in which mortals may live together: the material or animal way and the spiritual or human way. By the use of signals and sounds animals are able to communicate with each other in a limited way. But such forms of communication do not convey meanings, values, or ideas. The one distinction between humans and animals is that humans can communicate with others by means of *symbols* which most certainly designate and identify meanings, values, ideas, and even ideals.

Since animals cannot communicate ideas to each other, they cannot develop personality. People develop personality because they can communicate with others concerning both ideas and ideals.

It is this ability to communicate and share meanings that constitutes human culture and enables people, through social associations, to build civilizations. Knowledge and wisdom become cumulative because of people's ability to communicate these possessions to succeeding generations. And thereby the cultural activities of the human race arise: art, science, religion, and philosophy.

Symbolic communication between human beings predetermines the bringing into existence of social groups. The most effective of all social groups is the family, more particularly the *two parents*. Personal affection is the spiritual bond which holds together these material associations. Such an effective relationship is also possible between two persons of the same gender, as is so abundantly illustrated in the devotions of genuine friendships.

These associations of friendship and mutual affection are socializing and ennobling because they encourage and facilitate the following essential factors of the higher levels of the art of living:

1. *Mutual self-expression and self-understanding*. Many noble human impulses die because there is no one to hear their expression. Truly, it is not good for one to be alone. Some degree of recognition and a certain amount of appreciation are essential to the development of human character. Without the genuine love of parents, no child can achieve the full development of normal character. Character is something more than mere mind and morals. Of all social relations calculated to develop character, the most effective and ideal is the affectionate and understanding friendship of a couple in the mutual embrace of intelligent partnership. Marriage, with its manifold relations, is best designed to draw forth those precious impulses and those higher motives which are indispensable to the development of a strong character. I do not hesitate to glorify family life, for your Master has wisely chosen the parent-child relationship as the very cornerstone of this doctrine of the new realm. And such a matchless community of relationship is so valuable and satisfying an experience that it is worth any price, any sacrifice, requisite for its possession.

2. *Union of souls — the mobilization of wisdom.* Every human being sooner or later acquires a certain concept of this world and a certain vision of the next. Now it is possible, through personality association, to unite these views of temporal existence and eternal prospects. In this way the mind of one augments its spiritual values by gaining much of the insight of the other. In this way people enrich the soul by pooling their respective spiritual possessions. Likewise, in this same way, people are enabled to avoid that ever-present tendency to fall victim to distortion of vision, prejudice of viewpoint, and narrowness of judgment. Fear, envy, and conceit can be prevented only by intimate contact with other minds. I call your attention to the fact that the Master never sends you out alone to labor, but always sends you out two and two. And since wisdom is super-knowledge, it follows that, in the union of wisdom, the social group, small or large, mutually shares all knowledge.

3. *The enthusiasm for living.* Isolation tends to exhaust the energy charge of the soul. Association with others is essential to the renewal of the zest for life and is indispensable to the maintenance of the courage to face those challenges consequent upon the ascent to the higher levels of human living. Friendship enhances the joys and glorifies the triumphs of life. Loving and intimate human associations tend to rob suffering of its sorrow and hardship of much of its bitterness. The presence of a friend enhances all beauty and exalts every goodness. By intelligent symbols people are able to quicken and enlarge the appreciative capacities of their friends. One of the crowning glories of human friendship is this power and possibility of the mutual stimulation of the imagination. Great spiritual power is inherent in the consciousness of wholehearted devotion to a common cause, mutual loyalty to a cosmic Deity.

4. *The enhanced defense against all evil.* Personality association and mutual affection is an efficient insurance against evil. Difficulties, sorrow, disappointment, and defeat are more painful and disheartening when borne alone. Association does not transmute evil into righteousness, but it does aid in greatly lessening the sting. Your Master has said, “Happy are those who mourn” — if a friend is at hand to comfort. There is positive strength in the knowledge that you live for the welfare of others, and that these others likewise live for your welfare and advancement. People languish in isolation. Human beings unfailingly become discouraged when they view only the transitory transactions of time. The present, when divorced from the past and the future, becomes exasperatingly trivial. Only a glimpse of the circle of eternity can inspire people to do their best and can challenge the best in them to do its utmost. And when people are at their best, they live most unselfishly for the good of other sojourners in time and eternity.

I repeat, such inspiring and ennobling association finds its ideal possibilities in the human marriage relation. True, much is attained out of marriage, and many, many marriages utterly fail to produce these moral and spiritual fruits. Too many times marriage is entered by those who seek other values which are lower than these superior accompaniments of human maturity. Ideal marriage must be founded on something more stable than the fluctuations of sentiment and the fickleness of mere sex attraction; it must be based on genuine and mutual personal devotion. And so, if you can build up such trustworthy and effective small units of human association, when these are assembled in the aggregate, the world will behold a great and glorified social structure, the civilization of mortal maturity. Such a race might begin to realize something of your Master’s ideal of “peace on earth and good will among all.” While such a society would not be perfect or entirely free from evil, it would at least approach the stabilization of maturity.

3. The Lures of Maturity

The effort toward maturity necessitates work, and work requires energy. Where does the power come from to accomplish all this? The physical things can be taken for granted. Given the possession of a normal body and reasonably good health, we must next look for those lures which will act as a stimulus to call forth slumbering spiritual forces. Jesus has taught us that the Creator lives in mortals; then how can we induce people to release these soul-bound powers of divinity and infinity? How will we induce people to let the Creator spring forth to the refreshment of our own souls while in transit and then to serve the purpose of enlightening, uplifting, and blessing countless other souls? How can I best awaken these latent powers for good which lie dormant in your souls? One thing I am sure of: Emotional excitement is not the ideal spiritual stimulus. Excitement does not augment energy; it rather exhausts the powers of both mind and body. Where then does the energy to do these great things come from? Look to your Master who is even now out in the hills taking in power while we are here giving out energy. The secret of this problem is in spiritual communion, in worship. From the human standpoint it is a question of combined meditation and relaxation. Meditation makes the contact of mind with spirit; relaxation determines the capacity for spiritual receptivity. And this interchange of strength for weakness, courage for fear, the will of the Creator for the mind of self, constitutes worship. At least, that is the way the philosopher views it.

When these experiences are frequently repeated, they crystallize into habits, strength-giving and worshipful habits, and such habits eventually formulate themselves into a spiritual character, and such a character is finally recognized by others as a *mature personality*. These practices are difficult and time-consuming at first, but when they become habitual, they are restful and timesaving. The more complex society becomes, and the more the lures of civilization multiply, the more urgent the necessity for Creator-knowing individuals to form such protective habitual practices designed to conserve and augment their spiritual energies will become.

Another requirement for the attainment of maturity is the co-operative adjustment of social groups to an ever-changing environment. Immature individuals arouse the antagonisms of others; mature people win the hearty co-operation of their associates, thereby multiplying the fruits of their life efforts.

My philosophy tells me that there are times when I must argue, if need be, for the defense of my concept of righteousness, but I am sure that the Master, with a more mature type of personality, would easily and gracefully succeed by a superior technique of tact and tolerance. I heard the Master say only yesterday that the “wise person, when seeking entrance through the locked door, would not destroy the door but rather would seek for the key with which to unlock it.” Too often we engage in a struggle merely to convince ourselves that we are not afraid.

This doctrine of the new age renders a great service to the art of living in that it supplies a new and richer incentive for higher living. It presents a new and exalted goal of destiny, a supreme life purpose. And these new concepts of the eternal and divine goal of existence are in themselves transcendent stimuli, calling forth the reaction of the very best that is resident in people’s higher natures. On every mountaintop of intellectual thought are to be found relaxation for the mind, strength for the soul, and communion for the spirit. From such vantage points of high living, people are able to transcend the material irritations of the lower levels of thinking — worry, jealousy, envy, revenge, and the pride of immature personality. These

high-climbing souls deliver themselves from a multitude of the crosscurrent conflicts of the trifles of living, becoming free to attain consciousness of the higher currents of spirit concept and celestial communication. But the life purpose must be jealously guarded from the temptation to seek for easy and transient attainment; it must be so fostered as to become immune to the disastrous threats of fanaticism.

4. The Balance of Maturity

While you focus on the attainment of eternal realities, you must also make provision for the necessities of temporal living. While the spirit is our goal, the material is a fact. Occasionally the necessities of living may fall into our hands by accident, but in general, we must intelligently work for them. The two major problems of life are: making a temporal living and the achievement of eternal survival. And even the problem of making a living requires religion for its ideal solution. These are both highly personal problems. True religion, in fact, does not function apart from the individual.

The essentials of the temporal life, as I see them, are:

1. Good physical health.
2. Clear and clean thinking.
3. Ability and skill.
4. Wealth — the goods of life.
5. Ability to withstand defeat.
6. Culture — education and wisdom.

Even the physical problems of bodily health and efficiency are best solved when they are viewed from the religious standpoint of our Master's teaching that the body and mind are the dwelling place of the gift of the Deities, the spirit of the Creator becoming the spirit of mortals. The mind of mortals thus becomes the mediator between material things and spiritual realities.

It requires intelligence to secure one's share of the desirable things of life. It is wholly erroneous to suppose that faithfulness in doing one's daily work will insure the rewards of wealth. Barring the occasional and accidental acquirement of wealth, the material rewards of the temporal life are found to flow in certain well-organized channels, and only those who have access to these channels may expect to be well rewarded for their temporal efforts. Poverty must always be the lot of all who seek for wealth in isolated and individual channels. Wise planning, therefore, becomes the one thing essential to worldly prosperity. Success requires not only devotion to one's work but also that one should function as part of a channel of material wealth. If you are unwise, you can bestow a devoted life on your generation without material reward; if you are an accidental beneficiary of the flow of wealth, you may roll in luxury even though you have done nothing worthwhile for others.

Ability is that which you inherit, while skill is what you acquire. Life is not real to one who cannot do some one thing well, expertly. Skill is one of the real sources of the satisfaction of living. Ability implies the gift of foresight, farseeing vision. Do not be deceived by the tempting rewards of dishonest achievement; be willing to toil for the later returns inherent in honest endeavor. The wise person is able to distinguish between means and ends; otherwise, sometimes over-planning for the future defeats its own high purpose. As a pleasure seeker you should aim to always be a producer as well as a consumer.

Train your memory to hold in sacred trust the strength-giving and worth-while episodes of life, which you can recall at will for your pleasure and edification. Build up for yourself and in yourself reserve galleries of beauty, goodness, and artistic grandeur. But the noblest of all memories are the treasured recollections of the great moments of a superb friendship. And all of these memory treasures radiate their most precious and exalting influences under the releasing touch of spiritual worship.

But life will become a burden of existence unless you learn how to fail gracefully. There is an art in defeat which noble souls always acquire; you must know how to lose cheerfully; you must be fearless in disappointment. Never hesitate to admit failure. Make no attempt to hide failure under deceptive smiles and beaming optimism. It sounds well to always claim success, but the end results are appalling. Such a technique leads directly to the creation of a world of unreality and to the inevitable crash of ultimate disillusionment.

Success may generate courage and promote confidence, but wisdom comes only from the experiences of adjustment to the results of one's failures. People who prefer optimistic illusions to reality can never become wise. Only those who face facts and adjust them to ideals can achieve wisdom. Wisdom embraces both the fact and the ideal and therefore saves its devotees from both of those barren extremes of philosophy — the person whose idealism excludes facts and the materialist who is devoid of spiritual outlook. Those timid souls who can only keep up the struggle of life by the aid of continuous false illusions of success are doomed to suffer failure and experience defeat as they ultimately awaken from the dream world of their own imaginations.

And it is in this business of facing failure and adjusting to defeat that the far-reaching vision of religion exerts its supreme influence. Failure is simply an educational episode — a cultural experiment in the acquirement of wisdom — in the experience of the Creator-seeking mortal who has embarked on the eternal adventure of the exploration of a universe. To such people defeat is only a new tool for the achievement of higher levels of universe reality.

The career of a Creator-seeking person may prove to be a great success in the light of eternity, even though the whole temporal-life enterprise may appear as an overwhelming failure, provided each life failure yielded the culture of wisdom and spirit achievement. Do not make the mistake of confusing knowledge, culture, and wisdom. They are related in life, but they represent vastly differing spirit values; wisdom always dominates knowledge and glorifies culture.

5. The Religion of the Ideal

You have told me that your Master regards genuine human religion as the individual's experience with spiritual realities. I have regarded religion as the experience of reacting to something which one regards as being worthy of the homage and devotion of all humankind. In this sense, religion symbolizes our supreme devotion to that which represents our highest concept of the ideals of reality and the farthest reach of our minds toward eternal possibilities of spiritual attainment.

When people react to religion in the tribal, national, or racial sense, it is because they view those outside their group as not being truly human. We always see the object of our religious loyalty as being worthy of the reverence of everyone. Religion can never be a matter of mere intellectual belief or philosophic reasoning; religion is always and forever a mode of reacting to the situations of life; it is a species of conduct. Religion embraces thinking, feeling, and acting reverently toward some reality which we deem worthy of universal adoration.

If something has become a religion in your experience, it is self-evident that you already have become an active proponent of that religion since you deem the supreme concept of your religion as being worthy of the worship of everyone, all universe intelligences. If you do not positively declare your religion, you are self-deceived in that what you call a religion is only a traditional belief or a mere system of intellectual philosophy. If your religion is a spiritual experience, your object of worship must be the universal spirit reality and ideal of all your spiritualized concepts. All religions based on fear, emotion, tradition, and philosophy I call the intellectual religions, while those based on true spirit experience I would call the true religions. The object of religious devotion may be material or spiritual, true or false, real or unreal, human or divine. Religions can therefore be either good or evil.

Morality and religion are not necessarily the same. A system of morals, by grasping an object of worship, may become a religion. A religion, by losing its universal appeal to loyalty and supreme devotion, may evolve into a system of philosophy or a code of morals. This thing, being, state, or order of existence, or possibility of attainment which constitutes the supreme ideal of religious loyalty, and which is the recipient of the religious devotion of those who worship, is the Creator. Regardless of the name applied to this ideal of spirit reality, it is Deity.

The social characteristics of a true religion consist in the fact that it invariably seeks to convert the individual and to transform the world. Religion implies the existence of undiscovered ideals which far transcend the known standards of ethics and morality embodied in even the highest social usages of the most mature institutions of civilization. Religion reaches out for undiscovered ideals, unexplored realities, superhuman values, divine wisdom, and true spirit attainment. True religion does all of this; all other beliefs are not worthy of the name. You cannot have a genuine spiritual religion without the supreme and supernal ideal of an eternal Source. A religion without this Source is a human invention, an institution of lifeless intellectual beliefs and meaningless emotional ceremonies. A religion might claim as the object of its devotion a great ideal. But such ideals of unreality are not attainable; such a concept is illusionary. The only ideals susceptible of human attainment are the divine realities of the infinite values resident in the spiritual fact of the eternal Source.

The *idea* of Deity as contrasted with the *ideal* of Deity can become a part of any religion, no matter how immature or false that religion may be. And this idea can become anything which those who entertain it may choose to make it. The lower religions shape their ideas to meet the natural state of the human heart; the higher religions demand that the human heart be changed to meet the demands of the ideals of true religion.

The religion of Jesus transcends all our former concepts of the idea of worship in that it not only portrays the Creator as the ideal of infinite reality but positively declares that this divine source of values and the eternal center of the universe is truly and personally attainable by every mortal creature who chooses to enter the realm of the Creator on earth, thereby acknowledging the acceptance of relationship with the Creator and with all of humanity. That, I submit, is the highest concept of religion the world has ever known, and I pronounce that there can never be a higher since this doctrine embraces the infinity of realities, the divinity of values, and the eternity of universal attainments. Such a concept constitutes the achievement of the experience of the idealism of the supreme and the ultimate.

I am not only intrigued by the consummate ideals of this religion of your Master, but I am mightily moved to profess my belief that these ideals of spirit realities are attainable; that you and I can enter this long and eternal adventure with assurance of the certainty of our ultimate arrival at the portals of Paradise. My friends, I have embarked; I am on my way with you in this eternal venture. The Master has come from the Creator, and has promised to show us the way. I am fully persuaded that this is the truth. I am finally convinced that there are no attainable ideals of reality or values of perfection apart from the eternal and Universal Source.

I come, then, to worship, not merely the Deity of existences, but the Deity of the possibility of all future existences. Therefore your devotion to a supreme ideal, if that ideal is real, must be devotion to this Deity of past, present, and future universes of things and beings. And there is no other Deity, for there cannot possibly be any other Deity. All other gods are figments of the imagination, illusions of mortal mind, distortions of false logic, and the self-deceptive idols of those who create them. Yes, you can have a religion without this Deity, but it does not mean anything. And if you seek to substitute an idea for the reality of this ideal of the living Creator, you have only deluded yourself by putting an idea in the place of an ideal, a divine reality. Such beliefs are merely religions of wishful fancy.

I see in the teachings of Jesus, religion at its best. This doctrine enables us to seek for and find the Creator. But are we willing to pay the price of this entrance into the new realm? Are we willing to be born again? to be remade? Are we willing to be subject to this terrible and testing process of self-destruction and soul reconstruction? Has the Master not said: "Whoever would preserve life must lose it. Do not think that I have come to bring peace but rather a soul struggle"? True, after we pay the price of dedication to the Creator's will, we do experience great peace provided we continue to walk in these spiritual paths of consecrated living.

Now we are truly giving up the lures of the known order of existence while we unreservedly dedicate our search to the lures of the unknown and unexplored order of the existence of a future life of adventure in the spirit worlds of the higher idealism of divine reality. And we seek for those symbols of meaning with which to convey to others these concepts of the reality of the idealism of the religion of Jesus, and we will not

cease to pray for that day when all humankind will be thrilled by the communal vision of this supreme truth. Just now, our focalized concept of Deity, as held in our hearts, is that the Creator is spirit; as conveyed to others, that the Creator is love.

The religion of Jesus demands living and spiritual experience. Other religions may consist in traditional beliefs, emotional feelings, philosophic consciousness, and all of that, but the teaching of the Master requires the attainment of actual levels of real spirit progression.

The consciousness of the impulse to be like the Creator is not true religion. The feelings of the emotion to worship the Creator are not true religion. The knowledge of the conviction to forsake self and serve the Creator is not true religion. The wisdom of the reasoning that this religion is the best of all is not religion as a personal and spiritual experience. True religion has reference to destiny and reality of attainment as well as to the reality and idealism of that which is wholeheartedly faith-accepted. And all of this must be made personal to us by the revelation of the Spirit of Truth.

And so ended the dissertations of the Greek philosopher, one of the greatest of that kind, who had become a believer in the teachings of Jesus.

Paper 161

Further Discussions with Rodan

On Sunday, September 25, C.E. 29, the apostles and the evangelists assembled at Magadan. After a long conference that evening with these associates, Jesus surprised everyone by announcing a decision to leave early the next day with the twelve apostles for Jerusalem to attend the feast of tabernacles, directing that the evangelists visit the followers in Galilee.

When the time came to leave for Jerusalem, Nathaniel and Thomas were still in the midst of their discussions with Rodan of Alexandria, and they secured the Master's permission to remain at Magadan for a few days. And so, while Jesus and the ten were on their way to Jerusalem, Nathaniel and Thomas were engaged in earnest debate with Rodan. The week prior, in which Rodan had expounded about philosophy, Thomas and Nathaniel had alternated in presenting the doctrine of the new realm to the Greek philosopher, and it became clear that Rodan had already been well instructed in Jesus' teachings by one of the former apostles of John the Baptist while at Alexandria.

1. The Personality of the Creator

There was one matter on which Rodan and the two apostles did not see alike, and that was the personality of the Creator. Rodan readily accepted all that was presented regarding the attributes of Deity, but contended that the Creator is not, and cannot be, a person as humans conceive personality. While the apostles found themselves in difficulty trying to prove that the Creator is a person, Rodan found it still more difficult to prove that the Creator is not a person.

Rodan contended that the fact of personality consists in the coexistent fact of full and mutual communication between beings of equality, beings who are capable of sympathetic understanding. Rodan said: "In order to be a person, a Deity must have symbols of spirit communication which would make it possible to become fully understood by others. But since the Universal Source is infinite and eternal, the Creator of all other beings, it follows that, as regards beings of equality, the I AM is alone in the universe. There are none equal; there are none with whom it would be possible to communicate as an equal. Deity may be the source of all personality, but as such is transcendent to personality, even as the Creator is above and beyond the creature."

This contention greatly troubled Thomas and Nathaniel, and they had asked Jesus to come to their rescue, but the Master refused to enter into their discussions, saying to Thomas: "It matters little what *idea* of the Creator you may entertain as long as you are spiritually acquainted with the *ideal* of the Creator's infinite and eternal nature."

Thomas contended that Deity does communicate with mortals, and therefore that the Creator is a person, even within Rodan's definition. The Greek rejected this on the ground that Deity is not revealed personally and is still a mystery. Then Nathaniel appealed to personal experience with the Creator, and Rodan agreed, having recently had similar experiences. But these experiences, Rodan contended, proved only the *reality* of the Creator, not the *personality* of the Creator.

By Monday night Thomas gave up. But by Tuesday night Nathaniel had won Rodan to believe in the personality of the Creator, effecting this change in the Greek's views by the following steps of reasoning:

1. The Creator in Paradise does enjoy equality of communication with at least two other beings who are fully equal — the Eternal Spirit and the Infinite Mind. In view of the doctrine of the Trinity, the Greek was compelled to concede the personality possibility of the Universal Source. (It was the later consideration of these discussions which led to the enlarged conception of the Trinity in the minds of the twelve apostles. Of course, it was the general belief that Jesus was the Eternal Spirit.)
2. Since Jesus was equal with the Creator, and had manifested personality to the earth children, such a phenomenon constituted proof of the fact, and demonstration of the possibility, of the possession of personality by all three of the Deities and forever settled the question regarding the ability of the Creator to communicate with mortals and the possibility of mortals communicating with the Creator.
3. Jesus was on terms of mutual association and perfect communication with humans, and Jesus was the Child of the Creator. The relation of Jesus and the Creator presupposes equality of communication and mutuality of sympathetic understanding; Jesus and the Creator were one. Jesus maintained at one and the same time understanding communication with both the Creator and mortals, and since both the Creator and mortals comprehended the meaning of the symbols of Jesus' communication, both the Creator and mortals possessed the attributes of personality in so far as the requirements of the ability of intercommunication were concerned. The personality of Jesus demonstrated the personality of the Creator, while it proved conclusively the presence of the Creator in mortals, since two things which are related to the same thing are related to each other.
4. Personality represents humanity's highest concept of human reality and divine values. The Creator also represents humanity's highest concept of divine reality and infinite values; therefore, the Creator must be a divine and infinite personality, a personality in reality although infinitely and eternally transcending the human concept and definition of personality, but nevertheless always and universally a personality.
5. As the Creator of all personality and the destiny of all personality, the Universal Source must be a personality. Rodan had been tremendously influenced by the teaching, "Be you perfect, even as your Creator is perfect."

Rodan, having heard these arguments, said: "I am convinced. I will confess that the Creator is a person if you will permit me to qualify my confession of such a belief by attaching to the meaning of personality a group of extended values, such as superhuman, transcendent, supreme, infinite, eternal, final, and universal. I am now convinced that the Creator, while infinitely more than a personality, cannot be anything less. I am satisfied to end the argument and to accept Jesus as the personal revelation of the Creator and to accept the satisfaction of all unsatisfied factors in logic, reason, and philosophy."

2. The Divine Nature of Jesus

Since Nathaniel and Thomas had so fully approved Rodan's views of the doctrine of the new realm, only one more point remained to consider, the teaching dealing with the divine nature of Jesus, a doctrine only

so recently publicly announced. Nathaniel and Thomas jointly presented their views of the divine nature of the Master, and the following narrative is a condensed, rearranged, and restated presentation of their teaching:

1. Jesus has acknowledged being divine, and we believe this. Many remarkable things have happened in connection with our ministry which we can understand only by believing that Jesus is the Child of the Creator as well as the Child of Humanity.

2. Jesus' association with us exemplifies the ideal of human friendship; only a divine being could possibly be such a human friend. Jesus is the most truly unselfish person we have ever known and is the friend even of sinners and dares to love our enemies. Jesus is very loyal to us, and while not hesitant to reprove us, truly loves us. The better you know, the more you will love Jesus. You will be charmed by such unswerving devotion. Through all these years of our failure to comprehend the teachings, Jesus has been a faithful friend. While making no use of flattery, Jesus treats us all with equal kindness and is invariably tender and compassionate. The Master has shared everything with us. We are a happy community; we share all things in common. We do not believe that a mere human could live such a blameless life under such trying circumstances.

3. Jesus never does wrong, makes no mistakes, and shows extraordinary wisdom and superb piety. Jesus lives day by day in perfect accord with the Creator's will, never repenting of misdeeds because none of the Creator's laws have been transgressed. Jesus prays for us and with us, but never asks for prayers in return. We believe that Jesus is consistently sinless. We do not think that one who is only human ever professed to live such a life. Jesus claims to live a perfect life, and we acknowledge that. Our piety springs from repentance, but Jesus' piety springs from righteousness. Jesus even professes to forgive sins and heals diseases. No mere mortal would sanely profess to forgive sin; that is a divine prerogative. And Jesus has seemed to have been perfect in righteousness from the times of our first contact. We grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth, but our Master exhibits maturity of righteousness to start with. All people, good and evil, recognize these elements of goodness. And yet this piety is never obtrusive or ostentatious. Jesus is both meek and fearless. Jesus is either divine, or else is the greatest hypocrite and fraud the world has ever known, but we are persuaded that Jesus is unquestionably divine.

4. The uniqueness of character and the perfection of emotional control convince us that Jesus is a combination of humanity and divinity. Jesus is unfailingly sympathetic to the spectacle of human need; never failing to respond to suffering. Jesus' compassion is moved alike by physical suffering, mental anguish, or spiritual sorrow. Jesus is quick to recognize and generous to acknowledge the presence of faith or any other grace in others. Jesus is so just and fair and at the same time so merciful and considerate, grieving over the spiritual obstinacy of the people and rejoicing when they consent to see the light of truth.

5. Jesus seems to know the thoughts of people's minds and to understand the longings of their hearts, and is always sympathetic with our troubled spirits. The Master seems to possess all our human emotions, but strongly loves goodness and equally rejects sin. Jesus possesses a superhuman consciousness of the presence of Deity, seems to foreknow things and even dares to speak about dying with some mystic reference to a future glorification. Jesus, while kind, is also brave and courageous and never falters in doing what is right.

6. We are constantly impressed by the phenomenon of the Master's superhuman knowledge, the ability to know what is going on even at some distance. Jesus also seems to know about the thoughts of the associates, undoubtedly has communion with celestial personalities, and unquestionably lives on a spiritual plane far above the rest of us. Everything seems to be open to Jesus' unique understanding. The Master asks us questions to draw us out, not to gain information.

7. Jesus does not hesitate to assert being superhuman. From the day of our ordination as apostles until recent times, Jesus has never denied coming from divinity, speaking with the authority of a divine teacher and not hesitating to refute the religious teachings of today and to declare the new doctrine with positive authority. The Master is assertive, positive, and authoritative. Even John the Baptist declared that Jesus was the Child of the Creator. Jesus seems to be so self-sufficient, not needing the support of the multitude, and is indifferent to the opinions of others. Jesus is brave and yet so free from pride.

8. Jesus constantly talks about the Creator as an ever-present associate. Jesus once declared, "Before Abraham was, I am," and has definitely claimed divinity, professing to be in partnership with the Creator. Jesus exhausts the possibilities of language in claiming to be in intimate association with the Creator, even daring to assert being at one with the Creator, and says and does all these tremendous things with such childlike naturalness, alluding to having an association with the Creator in the same manner as having an association with us. Jesus seems to be so sure about the Creator and speaks of these relations in such a matter-of-fact way.

9. In prayer Jesus appears to communicate directly with the Creator. We have heard few of those prayers, but these few would indicate that Jesus talks with the Creator, as it were, face to face. The Master seems to know the future as well as the past. Jesus simply could not be all of this and do all of these extraordinary things without being something more than human. We know Jesus is human, we are sure of that, but we are almost equally sure that Jesus is also divine. We are convinced that Jesus is the Child of Humanity and the Child of the Creator.

When Nathaniel and Thomas had concluded their conferences with Rodan, they hurried on toward Jerusalem to join the other apostles, arriving on Friday of that week. This had been a great experience in the lives of all three, and the other apostles learned much from the recounting of these experiences by Nathaniel and Thomas.

Rodan went back to Alexandria, and long taught philosophy in the school of Meganta. Rodan became a mighty participant in the later affairs of the Creator's realm and was a faithful follower to the end, dying in Greece with others when the persecutions were at their height.

3. Jesus' Human and Divine Minds

Consciousness of divinity was a gradual growth in the mind of Jesus up to the occasion of the baptism. After becoming fully self-conscious of having a divine nature, prehuman existence, and universe prerogatives, Jesus seems to have possessed the power of variously limiting the human consciousness of divinity. It appears to us that from the baptism until the crucifixion it was entirely optional with Jesus as to whether to depend only on the human mind or to utilize the knowledge of both the human and the divine

minds. At times Jesus appeared to only use the human intellect, but on other occasions to act with such fullness of knowledge and wisdom as could only be afforded by divine consciousness.

We can accept the theory that it was possible for Jesus to self-limit divinity consciousness. We are fully cognizant that Jesus frequently avoided revealing the ability to foreknow events, and to be aware of the nature of the associates' thinking and planning. We understand that Jesus did not want the followers to know too fully that it was possible to discern their thoughts and to penetrate their plans, not wanting to transcend the concept of the human as it was held in the minds of the apostles and disciples.

We are utterly at a loss to differentiate between the practice of self-limiting the divine consciousness and the technique of concealing preknowledge and thought discernment from the human associates. We are convinced that Jesus used both of these techniques, but we are not always able, in a given instance, to specify which method may have been employed. We frequently observed Jesus acting with only the human content of consciousness; then we would observe a conference with the directors of the celestial hosts of the universe and discern the undoubted functioning of the divine mind. And then on numerous occasions we witnessed the working of this combined personality of mortal and Deity as it was activated by the apparent perfect union of the human and the divine minds. This is the limit of our knowledge of such phenomena; we really do not actually know the full truth about this mystery.

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At the Feast of Tabernacles

Jesus planned to go to Jerusalem through Samaria, that being the shorter route. Accordingly, they passed down the eastern shore of the lake and, by way of Scythopolis, entered the borders of Samaria. Near nightfall Jesus sent Philip and Matthew to a village on the eastern slopes of Mount Gilboa to secure lodging for the group. It so happened that these villagers were greatly prejudiced against the Jews, even more so than the average Samaritans, and these feelings were heightened at this particular time as so many Jews were on their way to the feast of tabernacles. These people knew very little about Jesus and the associates, and refused to provide lodging because they were Jews. When Matthew and Philip displayed indignation and informed these Samaritans that they were declining to entertain the Holy One of Israel, the infuriated villagers chased them out of the little town with sticks and stones.

After Philip and Matthew had returned and reported how they had been driven out of the village, James and John stepped up to Jesus and said: “Master, we ask you to give us permission to bid fire come down to devour these insolent and impenitent Samaritans.” But Jesus, on hearing these words of vengeance, turned on them and severely rebuked them: “You do not know what attitude you manifest. Vengeance has no place in the realm of the Creator. Rather than dispute, let us journey over to the little village by the Jordan ford.” And because of sectarian prejudice these Samaritans denied themselves the honor of showing hospitality to the Creator of a universe.

Jesus and the ten stopped for the night at the village near the Jordan ford. Early the next day they crossed the river and continued on to Jerusalem by way of the east Jordan highway, arriving at Bethany late Wednesday evening. Thomas and Nathaniel arrived on Friday, having been delayed by their conferences with Rodan.

Jesus and the twelve remained in the vicinity of Jerusalem until the end of the following month (October), about four and one-half weeks. Jesus went into the city only a few times, and these brief visits were made during the days of the feast of tabernacles. A considerable portion of October was spent with Abner and the associates at Bethlehem.

1. The Dangers of the Visit to Jerusalem

Long before they fled from Galilee, the followers of Jesus had advised going to Jerusalem to proclaim the doctrine of the new age in order that this message might have the prestige of having been preached at the center of Jewish culture and learning; but now that Jesus had actually come to Jerusalem to teach, they were concerned about the danger. Knowing that the Sanhedrin had sought to bring Jesus to Jerusalem for trial and recalling the Master’s recently reiterated declarations about being subject to death, the apostles had been literally stunned by the sudden decision to attend the feast of tabernacles. Jesus had replied to all their previous entreaties about going to Jerusalem by saying, “The hour has not yet come.” But now, to their protests of fear answered only, “The hour has come.”

During the feast of tabernacles Jesus went boldly into Jerusalem on several occasions and publicly taught in the temple, in spite of the advice of the apostles against doing this. Though they had long urged Jesus to proclaim the doctrine of the new realm in Jerusalem, they now feared that the scribes and Pharisees were intent on bringing about the death of their Master.

Jesus' bold appearance in Jerusalem more than ever confused the followers. Many of the disciples, and even Judas Iscariot, the apostle, had dared to think that Jesus had fled in haste into Phoenicia through fear of the Jewish leaders and Herod Antipas. They failed to comprehend the significance of the movements of the Master, whose presence in Jerusalem at the feast of tabernacles, even in opposition to the advice of the followers, sufficed to forever put an end to all whisperings about fear and cowardice.

During the feast of tabernacles, thousands of followers from all parts of the Roman Empire saw Jesus, heard the teachings, and many even journeyed out to Bethany to confer with Jesus regarding the progress of the new realm in their home districts.

There were many reasons why Jesus was able to publicly preach in the temple courts throughout the days of the feast, and chief of these was the fear that had come over the officers of the Sanhedrin as a result of the secret division of sentiment in their own ranks. It was a fact that many of the members of the Sanhedrin were either secret followers or else were decidedly averse to arresting Jesus during the feast, when such large numbers of people were present in Jerusalem, many of whom either believed in, or were at least friendly to the spiritual movement which Jesus sponsored.

The efforts of Abner and the associates throughout Judea had also done much to consolidate sentiment favorable to the new realm, so much so that the enemies of Jesus did not dare to be too outspoken in their opposition. This was one of the reasons why Jesus could now publicly visit Jerusalem and live. One or two months earlier it would certainly have resulted in death.

But the audacious boldness of Jesus in publicly appearing in Jerusalem overawed the enemies; they were not prepared for such a daring challenge. Several times during this month the Sanhedrin made feeble attempts to place the Master under arrest, but nothing came of these efforts. The enemies were so taken aback by Jesus' unexpected public appearance in Jerusalem that they conjectured protection must have been promised by the Roman authorities. Knowing that Philip (Herod Antipas's relative) was almost a follower of Jesus, the members of the Sanhedrin speculated that Philip had secured for Jesus promises of protection. Jesus had left their jurisdiction before they awakened to the realization that they had been mistaken in the belief that this sudden and bold appearance in Jerusalem had been due to a secret understanding with the Roman officials.

Only the twelve apostles had known that Jesus intended to attend the feast of tabernacles when they had departed from Magadan. The other followers were greatly astonished when the Master appeared in the temple courts and began to publicly teach, and the Jewish authorities were surprised beyond expression when it was reported that Jesus was teaching in the temple.

Although the disciples had not expected the Master to attend the feast, the vast majority of the pilgrims from afar entertained the hope that they might see Jesus at Jerusalem. And they were not disappointed, for

on several occasions Jesus taught in Solomon's Porch and elsewhere in the temple courts. These teachings were really the official or formal announcement of the divinity of Jesus to the Jewish people and to the whole world.

The multitudes who listened to the Master's teachings were divided in their opinions. Some said Jesus was a good person; some a prophet; some truly the Messiah; others a mischievous meddler, leading the people astray with strange doctrines. Enemies hesitated to denounce Jesus openly for fear of the friendly followers, while friends feared to acknowledge Jesus openly for fear of the Jewish leaders, knowing that the Sanhedrin was determined to put Jesus to death. But even the enemies marveled at the teachings, knowing that Jesus had not been instructed in the schools of the rabbis.

Every time Jesus went to Jerusalem, the apostles were filled with terror. They were even more afraid as, from day to day, they listened to increasingly bold pronouncements regarding the nature of Jesus' mission on earth. They were unaccustomed to hearing Jesus make such positive claims and such amazing assertions even when preaching among friends.

2. The First Temple Talk

The first afternoon that Jesus taught in the temple, a considerable crowd sat listening to words depicting the liberty of the new realm and the joy of those who believe the teachings, when a curious listener interrupted to ask: "Teacher, how is it you can quote the Scriptures and teach the people so fluently when I am told that you are untaught in the learning of the rabbis?" Jesus replied: "No one has taught me the truths which I declare to you. And this teaching is not mine but from the One who sent me. Anyone who really desires to do the Creator's will shall certainly know about my teaching, whether it be the Creator's or whether I speak for myself. I do not seek my own glory, but when I declare the words of the Creator, I seek the glory of the One who sent me. But before you try to enter into the new light, should you not follow the light you already have? Moses gave you the law, yet how many of you honestly seek to fulfill its demands? Moses in this law enjoins you, saying, 'You shall not kill'; but in spite of this command some of you seek to kill me."

When the crowd heard these words, they fell to arguing among themselves. Some said Jesus was mad; some that this was the work of a devil. Others said this was indeed the prophet of Galilee whom the scribes and Pharisees had long sought to kill. Some said the religious authorities were afraid to molest Jesus; others thought that they had become followers. After considerable debate one of the crowd stepped forward and asked Jesus, "Why do the rulers seek to kill you?" And Jesus replied: "The rulers seek to kill me because they resent my teaching about the new realm, a doctrine that sets people free from the burdensome traditions of a formal religion of ceremonies which these teachers are determined to uphold at any cost. They circumcise in accordance with the law on the Sabbath day, but they would kill me because I once on the Sabbath day set free someone held in the bondage of affliction. They follow after me on the Sabbath to spy on me but would kill me because on another occasion I chose to make a grievously stricken person completely well on the Sabbath day. They seek to kill me because they know that, if you honestly believe and dare to accept my teaching, their system of traditional religion will be overthrown, forever destroyed, and they will be deprived of authority over that to which they have devoted their lives since they steadfastly refuse to accept this new and more glorious doctrine of the realm of the Creator. And now I appeal to every

one of you: Do not judge according to outward appearances but rather judge by the true spirit of these teachings; judge righteously.”

Then said another inquirer: “Yes, Teacher, we do look for the Messiah to come, but we know that this appearance will be in mystery. We know who you are. You have been among your associates from the beginning. The deliverer will come in power to restore the throne of David’s rule. Do you really claim to be the Messiah?” And Jesus replied: “You claim to know me and to know who I am. I wish your claims were true, for then you would find abundant life in that knowledge. But I declare that I have not come to you for myself; I have been sent by the Creator, and the One who sent me is true and faithful. By refusing to hear me, you are refusing to receive the One who sends me. If you will receive these teachings, you will come to know the One who sent me. I know the Creator, for I have come to reveal the Creator to you.”

The agents of the scribes wanted to lay hands on Jesus, but they feared the multitude, for many were followers. Jesus’ work since the baptism had become well known to all Jewry, and as many of these people recounted these things, they said among themselves: “Even though this teacher is from Galilee and does not meet all of our expectations of the Messiah, we wonder if the deliverer will really do anything more wonderful than this Jesus of Nazareth has already done.”

When the Pharisees and their agents heard the people talking this way, they took counsel with their leaders and decided that something should be done to put a stop to these public appearances of Jesus in the temple courts. The leaders of the Jews, in general, were disposed to avoid a clash with Jesus, believing that the Roman authorities had promised immunity. They could not otherwise account for such boldness in coming at this time to Jerusalem; but the officers of the Sanhedrin did not wholly believe this rumor. They reasoned that the Roman rulers would not do such a thing secretly and without the knowledge of the highest governing body of the Jewish nation.

Accordingly, Eber, the proper officer of the Sanhedrin, was dispatched with two assistants to arrest Jesus. As Eber approached Jesus, the Master said: “Fear not. Draw near while you listen to my teaching. I know you have been sent to apprehend me, but you should understand that nothing will happen to me until my time comes. You are not arrayed against me; you come only to do the bidding of your masters, and even these rulers of the Jews think they are doing Yahweh’s service when they secretly seek my destruction.

“I bear none of you ill will. The Creator loves you, and therefore I long for your deliverance from the bondage of prejudice and the darkness of tradition. I offer you the liberty of life and the joy of redemption. I proclaim the new and living way, the deliverance from evil and the breaking of the bondage of sin. I have come so that you might have life, and have it eternally. You seek to be rid of me and my disquieting teachings. If you could only realize that I am to be with you only a little while! In just a short time I will go to the One who sent me into this world. And then many of you will diligently seek me, but you will not discover my presence, for where I am about to go you cannot come. But all who truly seek to find me will sometime attain the life that leads to the Creator’s presence.”

Some of the scoffers said among themselves: “Where will this person go that we cannot? to live among the Greeks? To be destroyed? What can it mean to soon depart from us to a place where we cannot go?”

Eber and the others refused to arrest Jesus and returned to their meeting place. When, therefore, the chief priests and the Pharisees upbraided Eber and the others because they had not brought Jesus with them, Eber only replied: "We feared to arrest this person in the midst of the multitude because many are followers. Besides, we have never heard anyone speak like this. There is something out of the ordinary about this teacher. You would all do well to go over to listen." And when the chief rulers heard these words, they were astonished and spoke tauntingly to Eber: "Are you also led astray? Are you about to believe in this deceiver? Have you heard that any of our learned teachers or any of the rulers have become believers? Have any of the scribes or the Pharisees been deceived by these clever teachings? How is it that you are influenced by the behavior of this ignorant multitude who do not know the law or the prophets? Do you not know that such untaught people are cursed?" And then Eber answered: "Even so, my masters, but this person speaks words of mercy and hope to the multitude and cheers the downhearted, and those words were comforting even to our souls. What can be wrong in these teachings even though this may not be the Messiah of the Scriptures? And even then does not our law require fairness? Do we condemn someone before we hear them?" And the chief of the Sanhedrin was angry with Eber and said: "Have you gone mad? Are you by any chance also from Galilee? Search the Scriptures, and you will discover that out of Galilee arises no prophet, much less the Messiah."

The Sanhedrin disbanded in confusion, and Jesus withdrew to Bethany for the night.

3. The Person Taken in Adultery

It was during this visit to Jerusalem that a person of ill repute was brought to Jesus. The distorted record you have of this episode would suggest that this person had been brought by the scribes and Pharisees, and that Jesus dealt with them in a way which indicated that these religious leaders of the Jews might themselves have been guilty of immorality. But Jesus knew that, while these scribes and Pharisees were spiritually blind and intellectually prejudiced by their loyalty to tradition, they were among the most thoroughly moral people of that day and generation.

What really happened was this: Early on the third morning of the feast, Jesus was approaching the temple and was met by a group of the hired agents of the Sanhedrin who were dragging someone along with them. As they came near, one of them said: "Master, this person was taken in adultery — in the very act. Now, the law of Moses commands that we should stone such a person. What do you say should be done?"

It was their plan, if Jesus upheld the law of Moses requiring that the self-confessed transgressor be stoned, to involve the Roman rulers, who had denied the Jews the right to inflict the death penalty without the approval of a Roman tribunal. If Jesus forbade the stoning, they would make an accusation before the Sanhedrin that Jesus claimed to be above Moses and the Jewish law. But the Master so managed the situation that the whole plot fell to pieces of its own sordid weight.

This person had been forced to earn a living through unsavory means by an unscrupulous spouse, who had entered into a bargain with the hirelings of the Jewish rulers to use the situation against Jesus. And so they came for the purpose of ensnaring Jesus into making some statement which could be used to justify an arrest.

Jesus perceived that the accuser was a party to the despicable transaction, and first walked around to near where this degenerate stood and wrote a few words on the sand which caused a hasty departure. Then Jesus came back and wrote again on the ground for the benefit of the agents of the Sanhedrin; and when they read these words, they, too, went away, one by one. When the Master stood up from this writing, the accused stood there alone. Jesus said: "Where are your accusers? did no one remain to stone you?" And the accused answered, "No one, Master." And then Jesus said: "I know about you, and I do not condemn you. Go your way in peace." And this person left the wicked spouse and joined the disciples of Jesus.

4. The Feast of Tabernacles

The presence of people from all of the known world, from Spain to India, made the feast of tabernacles an ideal occasion for Jesus to proclaim for the first time publicly the full doctrine of the new realm in Jerusalem. At this feast the people lived much in the open air, in leafy booths. It was the feast of the harvest gathering, and coming, as it did, in the cool of the autumn months, it was more generally attended by the Jews of the world than was the Passover at the end of the winter or Pentecost at the beginning of summer. The apostles at last experienced their Master making a bold announcement before all the world, as it were.

This was the feast of feasts, since any sacrifice not made at the other festivals could be made at this time. This was the occasion of the reception of the temple offerings; it was a combination of vacation pleasures with the solemn rites of religious worship. Here was a time of racial rejoicing, mingled with sacrifices, Levitical chants, and the solemn blasts of the silvery trumpets of the priests. At night the impressive spectacle of the temple and its pilgrim throngs was brilliantly illuminated by the great candelabras which burned brightly, as well as by the glare of scores of torches standing about the temple courts. The entire city was gaily decorated except for the Roman castle of Antonia, which looked down in grim contrast on this festive and worshipful scene. And how the Jews did hate this ever-present reminder of the Roman domination!

Seventy bullocks were sacrificed during the feast, the symbol of the seventy nations of heathendom. The ceremony of the outpouring of the water symbolized the outpouring of the divine spirit. This ceremony of the water followed the sunrise procession of the priests and Levites. The worshipers passed down the steps leading from the court of Israel while successive blasts were blown on the silvery trumpets. And then the faithful marched toward the Beautiful Gate, which opened on the court of the gentiles. Here they turned to face westward, to repeat their chants, and to continue their march for the symbolic water.

On the last day of the feast almost four hundred and fifty priests with a corresponding number of Levites officiated. At daybreak the pilgrims assembled from all parts of the city, each carrying in the right hand a sheaf of myrtle, willow, and palm branches, while in the left hand each one carried a branch of the paradise apple — the citron, or the "forbidden fruit." These pilgrims divided into three groups for this early morning ceremony. One band remained at the temple to attend the morning sacrifices; another group marched down below Jerusalem to near Maza to cut the willow branches for the adornment of the sacrificial altar, while the third group formed a procession to march from the temple behind the water priest, who, to the sound of the silvery trumpets, bore the golden pitcher which was to contain the symbolic water, out through Ophel to near Siloam, where the fountain gate was located. After the golden pitcher had been filled at the pool of Siloam, the procession marched back to the temple, entering by way of the water gate and going directly to

the court of the priests, where the priest bearing the water pitcher was joined by the priest bearing the wine for the drink offering. These two priests then moved to the silver funnels leading to the base of the altar and poured in the contents of the pitchers. The execution of this rite of pouring the wine and the water was the signal for the assembled pilgrims to begin the chanting of the Psalms from 113 to 118 inclusive, in alternation with the Levites. And as they repeated these lines, they would wave their sheaves at the altar. Then the sacrifices for the day followed, associated with the repeating of the Psalm for the day, the Psalm for the last day of the feast being the eighty-second, beginning with the fifth verse.

5. Sermon on the Light of the World

On the evening of the next to the last day of the feast, when the scene was brilliantly illuminated by the lights of the candelabras and the torches, Jesus stood up in the midst of the assembled throng and said:

“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life. Presuming to place me on trial and assuming to sit as my judges, you declare that, if I bear witness of myself, my witness cannot be true. But the creature can never sit in judgment on the Creator. Even if I do bear witness about myself, my witness is everlastingly true, for I know from where I came, who I am, and where I go. You who would kill me do not know where I came from, who I am, or where I go. You only judge by appearances; you do not perceive the realities of the spirit. I judge no one, not even my archenemy. But if I should choose to judge, my judgment would be true and righteous, for I would not judge alone but in association with the Creator, who sent me into the world, and who is the source of all true judgment. You even allow that the witness of two reliable persons may be accepted — well, then, I bear witness of these truths; so also does the Creator. And when I told you this yesterday, in your darkness you asked me, ‘Where is the Creator?’ Truly, you know neither me nor the Creator, for if you had known me, you would also have known the Creator.

“I have already told you that I am going away, and that you will seek me and not find me, for where I am going you cannot come. You who would reject this light are from beneath; I am from above. You who prefer to sit in darkness are of this world; I am not of this world, and I live in the eternal light of the Source of lights. You all have had abundant opportunity to learn who I am, but you will have still other evidence confirming my identity. I am the light of life, and everyone who deliberately and with understanding rejects this light will die. I have much to tell you, but you are unable to receive my words. However, the One who sent me is true and faithful; the Creator loves even erring children. And all that the Creator has spoken I also proclaim to the world.

“When I am lifted up, then you will all know that I have done nothing of myself but only as the Creator has taught me. I speak these words to you and to your children. The One who sent me is even now with me and has not left me alone, for I always do that which is pleasing to the Creator.”

As Jesus taught the pilgrims in the temple courts, many believed. And no one dared to lay hands upon Jesus.

6. Discourse on the Water of Life

On the last day, the great day of the feast, as the procession from the pool of Siloam passed through the temple courts, and just after the water and the wine had been poured down on the altar by the priests, Jesus, standing among the pilgrims, said: "If anyone thirsts, come to me and drink. From the Creator above I bring to this world the water of life. Those who believe me will be filled with the spirit which this water represents, for even the Scriptures have said, 'Out of Yahweh shall flow rivers of living waters.' When I have finished my work on earth, the living Spirit of Truth will be poured out on all. Those who receive this spirit will never know spiritual thirst."

Jesus did not interrupt the service to speak these words, but addressed the worshipers immediately after the chanting of the Hallel, the responsive reading of the Psalms accompanied by waving the branches before the altar. Just here was a pause while the sacrifices were being prepared, and it was at this time that the pilgrims heard the declaration that Jesus was the giver of living water to every spirit-thirsting soul.

At the conclusion of this early morning service Jesus continued to teach the multitude, saying: "Have you not read in the Scripture: 'Behold, as the waters are poured out on the dry ground and spread over the parched soil, so I will give the spirit of holiness to be poured out on your children for a blessing even to your children's children'? Why will you thirst for the ministry of the spirit while you seek to water your souls with the traditions of mortals, poured from the broken pitchers of ceremonial service? That which you see going on about this temple is the way in which your ancestors sought to symbolize the bestowal of the divine spirit on the children of faith, and you have done well to perpetuate these symbols, even down to this day. But now the revelation of the Source of spirits through my bestowal has come to this generation, and all of this will certainly be followed by the bestowal of our combined spirit. To everyone who has faith this bestowal of the spirit will become the true teacher of the way which leads to life everlasting, to the true waters of life in the realm of the Creator on earth and in the Creator's Paradise above."

And Jesus continued to answer the questions of both the multitude and the Pharisees. Some thought Jesus was a prophet; some the Messiah; others claimed that Jesus could not be the Deliverer, having come from Galilee, and that the Messiah must restore David's throne. Still they dared not arrest Jesus.

7. The Discourse on Spiritual Freedom

On the afternoon of the last day of the feast, Jesus again went into the temple to teach. Finding a large group assembled in Solomon's Porch, Jesus spoke to them, saying:

"If my words live in you and you intend to do the will of the Creator, then you are truly my disciples. You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free. I know how you will answer me: We are the children of Abraham, and we are in bondage to none; how then will we be made free? Even so, I do not speak of outward subjection to another's rule; I refer to the liberties of the soul.

"I know that you are Abraham's descendants, yet your leaders seek to kill me because my word has not been allowed to have its transforming influence in their hearts. Their souls are sealed by prejudice and blinded by the pride of revenge. I declare to you the truth which the eternal Source shows me, while these

deluded teachers seek to do the things which they have learned only from their temporal ancestors. And when you reply that Abraham is your parent, then I tell you that, if you were the children of Abraham, you would do the works of Abraham. Some of you believe my teaching, but others seek to destroy me because I have told you the truth which I received from the Creator. I perceive that some among you are determined to do the works of the evil one. If you realized that the Creator is your Parent, you would know me and love the truth which I reveal. Will you not see that I come forth from the Creator, that I am sent by the Creator, and that I am not doing this work of myself? Why do you not understand my words? Is it because you have chosen to become the children of evil? If you are the children of darkness, you will hardly walk in the light of the truth which I reveal. The children of evil follow only in the ways of their evil parent, who was a deceiver and did not stand for the truth. But now I come speaking and living the truth, and many of you refuse to believe.

“Which of you convicts me of sin? If I, then, proclaim and live the truth shown to me by the Creator, why do you not believe? One who is of the Creator gladly hears the words of the Creator; many of you do not hear my words, because you are not of the Creator. Your teachers have even presumed to say that I do my works by the power of the evil one. One nearby has just said that I have a devil, that I am a child of the devil. But all of you who deal honestly with your own souls know that I am not a devil. You know that I honor the Creator even while you would dishonor me. I do not seek my own glory, only the glory of my Paradise Parent. And I do not judge you, for there is one who judges for me.

“I say to you who believe my teachings that one who will keep this word of truth alive will never taste death. And now just at my side a scribe says that this statement proves that I have a devil, seeing that Abraham is dead, and also the prophets. And this scribe asks: ‘Are you so much greater than Abraham and the prophets that you dare to stand here and say that those who keep your word will not taste death? Who do you claim to be that you dare to speak such blasphemies?’ And I say to all that, if I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. But it is the Creator who will glorify me, even the same Creator whom you call Yahweh. But you have failed to know your Creator and my Parent, and I have come to bring you together; to show you how to truly become the children of the Creator. Though you do not know the Creator, I truly do. Even Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and by faith saw it and was glad.”

When the unbelieving Jews and the agents of the Sanhedrin who had gathered about by this time heard these words, they raised a tumult, shouting: “You are not fifty years of age, and yet you talk about seeing Abraham; you are a child of the devil!” Jesus was unable to continue the discourse, only saying while leaving, “I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.” Many of the people rushed forward for stones to cast, and the agents of the Sanhedrin sought to place Jesus under arrest, but the Master quickly left through the temple corridors and escaped to a secret meeting place near Bethany where Martha, Mary, and Lazarus waited.

8. The Visit with Martha and Mary

It had been arranged that Jesus would lodge with Lazarus, Martha and Mary at a friend’s house, while the apostles were scattered in small groups, these precautions being taken because the Jewish authorities were again becoming bold with their plans to arrest Jesus.

For years it had been the custom for these three to drop everything whenever Jesus happened to visit them. With the loss of their parents, Martha had assumed the responsibilities of the home life, and so on this occasion, while Lazarus and Mary sat at Jesus' feet, Martha prepared to serve the evening meal.

Martha, while busy with all these supposed duties, was disturbed because Mary and Lazarus did nothing to help, and went to Jesus and saying: "Master, do you not care that I have been left alone to do all of the serving? Will you not bid the others to come and help me?" Jesus answered: "Martha, why are you always anxious about so many things and troubled by so many trifles? Only one thing is really worthwhile, and since Mary and Lazarus have chosen this good and needful part, I will not take it away from them. But when will all of you learn to live as I have taught you, serving in co-operation and refreshing your souls in unison? Can you not learn that there is a time for everything — that the lesser matters of life should give way before the greater things?"

9. At Bethlehem with Abner

Throughout the week that followed the feast of tabernacles, scores of followers gathered at Bethany and received instruction from the twelve apostles. The Sanhedrin made no effort to molest these gatherings since Jesus was not present, throughout this time working with Abner and the associates in Bethlehem. The day following the close of the feast, Jesus had left for Bethany, and did not teach again in the temple during this visit to Jerusalem.

At this time, Abner had headquarters at Bethlehem, and from that center many workers had been sent to the cities of Judea and southern Samaria and even to Alexandria. Within a few days, Jesus and Abner completed the arrangements for the consolidation of the work of the two groups of apostles.

Throughout this visit to the feast of tabernacles, Jesus had divided the time about equally between Bethany and Bethlehem, at Bethany spending considerable time with the apostles, and at Bethlehem giving much instruction to Abner and the other former apostles of John. And it was this intimate contact that finally led them to believe in Jesus. These former apostles of John the Baptist were influenced by the courage Jesus displayed in the public teaching in Jerusalem as well as by the sympathetic understanding they experienced in the private teaching at Bethlehem. These influences finally and fully won over each of Abner's associates to a wholehearted acceptance of the new realm and all that such a step implied.

Before leaving Bethlehem for the last time, the Master made arrangements for them all to come together in the united effort which was to precede the ending of the earth career. It was agreed that Abner and the associates were to join Jesus and the twelve in the near future at Magadan Park.

In accordance with this understanding, early in November Abner and eleven others cast their lot with Jesus and the twelve and labored with them as one organization right up to the crucifixion.

In the latter part of October Jesus and the twelve withdrew from the immediate vicinity of Jerusalem. On Sunday, October 30, Jesus and the associates left the city of Ephraim, where they had been resting in seclusion for a few days, and, going by the west Jordan highway directly to Magadan Park, arrived late on the afternoon of Wednesday, November 2.

The apostles were greatly relieved to have the Master back on friendly soil; no more did they urge Jesus to go to Jerusalem.

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Ordination of the Seventy at Magadan

A few days after the return of Jesus and the twelve to Magadan from Jerusalem, Abner and a group of some fifty disciples arrived from Bethlehem. At this time the evangelistic corps and about one hundred and fifty other true and tried disciples from all parts of Palestine were also assembled at the Magadan Camp. After devoting a few days to visiting and the reorganization of the camp, Jesus and the twelve began a course of intensive training for this special group of followers, and from this well-trained and experienced aggregation of disciples the Master subsequently chose the seventy teachers and sent them out to proclaim the doctrine of the new realm. This regular instruction began on Friday, November 4, and continued until Sabbath, November 19.

Jesus gave a talk to this company each morning. Peter taught methods of public preaching; Nathaniel instructed them in the art of teaching; Thomas explained how to answer questions; while Matthew directed the organization of their group finances. The other apostles also participated in this training in accordance with their special experience and natural talents.

1. Ordination of the Seventy

The seventy were ordained by Jesus on Sabbath afternoon, November 19, at the Magadan Camp, and Abner was placed at the head of these preachers and teachers. This corps of seventy consisted of Abner and ten of the former apostles of John, fifty-one of the earlier evangelists, and eight other disciples who had distinguished themselves in the service of the new realm.

About two o'clock on this Sabbath afternoon, between showers of rain, a company of followers, augmented by the arrival of David and the majority of the messenger corps and numbering over four hundred, assembled on the shore of the lake of Galilee to witness the ordination of the seventy.

Jesus, before laying hands on the heads of the seventy to set them apart as messengers, addressed them, saying "The harvest is plenteous, but the laborers are few; therefore I urge all of you to pray that the Creator will send still other laborers into this harvest. I am about to set you apart as messengers of the new realm; I am about to send you to Jew and gentile as lambs among wolves. As you go your ways, two and two, I instruct you to carry neither purse nor extra clothing, for you go on this first mission for only a short time. Attend only to your work. Whenever you go to stay at a home, first say: Peace be to this household. If those who love peace live there, you will stay there; if not, then you will depart. And having selected this home, remain there for your stay in that city, eating and drinking whatever is set before you. And you do this because the laborer is worthy of sustenance. Do not move from house to house because a better lodging may be offered. Remember, as you go out proclaiming peace on earth and good will among all people, you must contend with bitter and self-deceived enemies; therefore be as wise as serpents while you are also as harmless as doves.

"And everywhere you go, preach, saying, 'The realm of the Creator is at hand,' and minister to all who may be sick in either mind or body. Freely you have received of the good things of the universe; freely give. If

the people of any city receive you, they will find an entrance into the Creator's realm; but if the people of any city refuse to receive this doctrine, you will still proclaim your message as you leave that unbelieving community, saying to those who reject your teaching: 'Even though you reject the truth, it remains that the realm of the Creator has come near you.' Whoever hears you hears me. And whoever hears me hears the One who sent me. Whoever rejects your message rejects me. And whoever rejects me rejects the One who sent me."

And Jesus, having spoken to the seventy, began with Abner and, as they knelt in a circle, laid hands on the head of every person.

Early the next morning Abner sent the seventy messengers into all the cities of Galilee, Samaria, and Judea. And these thirty-five couples went forth preaching and teaching for about six weeks, all of them returning to the new camp near Pella, in Perea, on Friday, December 30.

2. The Rich Young Person and Others

Over fifty disciples who sought ordination and appointment to membership in the seventy were rejected by the committee appointed by Jesus to select these candidates. This committee consisted of Andrew, Abner, and the acting head of the evangelistic corps. In all cases where this committee of three were not unanimous in agreement, they brought the candidate to Jesus, and while the Master never rejected a single person who craved ordination as a messenger, there were more than a dozen who, when they had talked with Jesus, no longer desired to become messengers.

One earnest disciple came to Jesus, saying: "Master, I would be one of your new apostles, but my parent is very old and near death; could I be permitted to return home for the burial?" To this person Jesus said: "My child, the foxes have holes, and the birds have nests, but I have nowhere to lay my head. You are a faithful disciple, and you can remain such while you return home to minister to your loved ones, but not so with my messengers. They have forsaken all to follow me and proclaim the new realm. If you would be an ordained teacher, you must let others bury the dead while you go out to publish the good news." And this person went away in great disappointment.

Another disciple came to the Master and said: "I would become an ordained messenger, but I would like to go to my home for a short while to comfort my family." And Jesus replied: "If you would be ordained, you must be willing to forsake all. The messengers cannot have divided affections. No one, having put a hand to the plough but turns back, is worthy to become a messenger of the new realm."

Then Andrew brought to Jesus a certain rich young person who desired to receive ordination. This young person, Matadormus, was a member of the Jerusalem Sanhedrin, and had heard Jesus teach and been subsequently instructed in the doctrine of the new realm by Peter and the other apostles. Jesus explained the requirements of ordination and requested that Matadormus defer the decision until after the matter could be given more thought. Early the next morning, Jesus, while going for a walk, was accosted by this young person who said: "Master, I would know from you the assurances of eternal life. Seeing that I have observed all the commandments from my youth, I would like to know what more I must do to gain eternal life?" In answer to this question Jesus said: "If you keep all the commandments — do not commit adultery, do not

kill, do not steal, do not bear false witness, do not defraud, honor your parents — you do well, but eternal life is the reward of faith, not merely of works. Do you believe this teaching about the new realm?” And Matadormus answered: “Yes, Master, I do believe everything you and your apostles have taught me.” And Jesus said, “Then are you indeed my disciple and a child of the realm.”

Then the young person said: “But, Master, I am not content to be your disciple; I would be one of your new messengers.” And Jesus, hearing this, looked down with great love and said: “I will have you to be one of my messengers if you are willing to pay the price, if you will supply the one thing which you lack.” Matadormus replied: “Master, I will do anything if I may be allowed to follow you.” Jesus, kissing the kneeling young person on the forehead, said: “If you would be my messenger, go and sell all that you have and, when you have bestowed the proceeds on the poor or on your friends, come and follow me, and you will have treasure in the realm of the Creator.”

Matadormus, when hearing this, rose and went away sorrowful. This wealthy young Pharisee had been raised to believe that wealth was the token of Yahweh’s favor. Jesus knew that Matadormus was not free from the love of riches. The Master wanted Matadormus to be delivered from the *love* of wealth, not necessarily from the wealth. While the disciples of Jesus did not part with all their worldly goods, the apostles and the seventy did. Matadormus desired to be one of the seventy new messengers, and that was the reason for Jesus’ requiring that all temporal possessions be abandoned.

Almost every human being has some one thing which is held as a pet evil, and which the entrance into the realm of the Creator requires as a part of the price of admission. If Matadormus had parted with wealth, it probably would have been given right back for administration as treasurer of the seventy. For later on, after the establishment of the church at Jerusalem, Matadormus did obey the Master’s injunction, although it was too late to enjoy membership in the seventy, and became the treasurer of the Jerusalem church, of which James was the head.

And so it always was and forever will be: People must arrive at their own decisions. There is a certain range of the freedom of choice which mortals may exercise. The forces of the spiritual world will not coerce people; they allow them to go the way of their own choosing.

Jesus foresaw that Matadormus, while rich, could not possibly become an ordained associate of others who had forsaken everything for the work; at the same time, seeing that, without riches, Matadormus would become the ultimate leader of all of them. But Matadormus never became great in the new realm, having been deprived of that intimate and personal association with the Master which might have been possible if Matadormus had been willing to do at this time the very thing which Jesus asked, and actually did several years later.

Riches have nothing directly to do with entrance into the realm of the Creator, but the *love of wealth does*. Spiritual loyalties are incompatible with dependence on materialistic things. People may not share their supreme loyalty to a spiritual ideal with a material devotion.

Jesus never taught that it was wrong to have wealth, requiring only the twelve and the seventy to dedicate all of their worldly possessions to the common cause, and even then providing for the profitable liquidation

of their property, as in the case of the Apostle Matthew. Jesus many times gave the same advice to the wealthy disciples as to the rich person of Rome. The Master regarded the wise investment of excess earnings as a legitimate form of insurance against future and unavoidable adversity. When the apostolic treasury was overflowing, Judas put funds on deposit to be used subsequently when they might suffer from a diminution of income. This Judas did after consultation with Andrew. Jesus never personally had anything to do with the apostolic finances except in the disbursement of alms. But there was one economic abuse which Jesus many times condemned, and that was the unfair exploitation of the weak, unlearned, and less fortunate by strong, keen, and more intelligent people. Jesus declared that such inhuman treatment was incompatible with the ideals of the family of the Creator.

3. The Discussion About Wealth

By the time Jesus had finished talking with Matadormus, Peter and a number of the apostles had gathered about, and as the rich young person was departing, Jesus turned around to face the apostles and said: "You see how difficult it is for those who have riches to enter fully into the realm of the Creator! Spiritual worship cannot be shared with material devotions; no one can serve two masters. You have a saying that it is 'easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for the heathen to inherit eternal life.' And I declare that it is as easy for this camel to go through the needle's eye as for these self-satisfied rich ones to enter the Creator's realm."

When Peter and the apostles heard these words they were astonished, so much so that Peter said: "Who then, Master, can be saved? Will all who have riches be kept out of the new realm?" And Jesus replied: "No, Peter, but all who put their trust in riches will hardly enter into the spiritual life that leads to eternal progress. But even then, much which is impossible to mortals is not beyond the reach of the Creator; we should recognize that with the Creator all things are possible."

As they went down to the lake, Jesus was sorry that Matadormus did not remain with them. And as they sat there beside the water, Peter, speaking for the twelve (who were all present by this time), said: "We are troubled by your words to the rich young person. Should we require those who would follow you to give up all their worldly goods?" And Jesus said: "No, Peter, only those who would become apostles, and who want to live with me as you do and as one family. But the Creator requires that the children's affections be pure and undivided. Whatever thing or person comes between you and the love of the truth must be surrendered. If one's wealth does not invade the precincts of the soul, it is of no consequence in the spiritual life of those who would enter the new realm."

And then Peter said, "But, Master, we have left everything to follow you, what then will we have?" And Jesus spoke to all of the twelve: "There is no one who has left wealth, home, or family for my sake and for the sake of the new realm who will not receive much more in this world, perhaps with some persecutions, and eternal life in the world to come. But many who are first will be last, while the last will often be first. The Creator deals with creatures in accordance with their needs and in obedience to just laws of merciful and loving consideration for the welfare of a universe.

"The realm of the Creator is like a householder who employed many people, and who went out early in the morning to hire laborers to work in the vineyard. The householder, after agreeing with the laborers to pay

them a denarius a day, sent them into the vineyard and then went out about nine o'clock, and seeing others standing in the market place idle, said to them: 'Go also to work in my vineyard, and whatever is right I will pay you.' And they went at once to work. Again the householder went out about twelve and about three and did likewise. And going to the market place about five in the afternoon, found still others standing idle, and inquired of them, 'Why do you stand here idle?' And they answered, 'Because nobody has hired us.' Then said the householder: 'Go also to work in my vineyard, and whatever is right I will pay you.'

"When evening came, this owner of the vineyard said to the steward: 'Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last hired and ending with the first.' When those who were hired about five o'clock came, they received a denarius each, and so it was with each of the other laborers. When those who were hired at the beginning of the day saw how the later comers were paid, they expected to receive more than the amount agreed upon. But like the others everyone received only a denarius. And when each had been paid, they complained to the householder, saying: 'These people who were hired last worked only one hour, and yet you have paid them the same as those of us who have borne the burden of the day in the scorching sun.'

"Then the householder answered: 'My friends, I do you no wrong. Did not each of you agree to work for a denarius a day? Take that which is yours and go your way, for it is my desire to give to those who came last as much as I have given to you. Is it not lawful for me to do what I want with what is mine? or do you begrudge my generosity because I choose to be good and to show mercy?'"

4. Farewell to the Seventy

It was a stirring time at the Magadan Camp the day the seventy went out on their first mission. Early that morning, in a last talk with the seventy, Jesus placed emphasis on the following:

1. The doctrine of the new realm must be proclaimed to all the world, to gentile as well as to Jew.
2. While ministering to the sick, refrain from teaching the expectation of miracles.
3. Proclaim a spiritual family of the children of the Creator, not an outward realm of worldly power and material glory.
4. Avoid loss of time through too much social visiting and other trivialities which might detract from wholehearted devotion to preaching.
5. If the first house to be selected for a headquarters proves to be a worthy home, stay there throughout the sojourn in that city.
6. Make clear to all faithful followers that the time for an open break with the religious leaders of the Jews at Jerusalem has now come.
7. Teach that a person's whole duty is summed up in this one commandment: Love the Creator with all your mind and soul and your neighbor as yourself. (This they were to teach as a person's whole duty in place of the 613 rules of living expounded by the Pharisees.)

When Jesus had spoken to the seventy in the presence of all the apostles and disciples, Simon Peter took them off by themselves and preached to them their ordination sermon, which was an elaboration of the Master's charge given at the time they were set apart as messengers. Peter exhorted the seventy to cherish in their experience the following virtues:

1. *Consecrated devotion.* To always pray for more teachers to be sent out. Peter explained that, in so praying, they will more likely say, "Here I am; send me," admonishing them to not neglect their daily worship.
2. *True courage.* Peter warned them that they would encounter hostility and would be certain to meet with persecution, telling them that their mission was no undertaking for cowards and advising those who were afraid, to leave before they started. But none withdrew.
3. *Faith and trust.* They must go forth on this short mission wholly unprovided for; they must trust the Creator for food and shelter and all other things.
4. *Zeal and initiative.* They must have zeal and intelligent enthusiasm; they must attend strictly to their Master's business. They were instructed to "greet no one by the way," which was a common method of exhorting someone to go about their business without wasting time. It had nothing to do with the matter of friendly greeting.
5. *Kindness and courtesy.* The Master had instructed them to avoid unnecessary waste of time in social ceremonies, but required courtesy toward all with whom they should come in contact. They were to show every kindness to those who might entertain them in their homes. They were strictly warned against leaving a modest home to be entertained in a more comfortable or influential one.
6. *Ministry to the sick.* The seventy were charged to search out the sick in mind and body and to do everything in their power to bring about the alleviation or cure of their maladies.

And when they had been charged and instructed, they started out, two and two, on their mission in Galilee, Samaria, and Judea.

Although the Jews had a particular regard for the number seventy, sometimes considering the nations of heathendom as being seventy in number, and although these seventy messengers were to go to all peoples, still as far as we can discern, it was only coincidental that this group happened to number just seventy. It was certain that Jesus would have accepted no less than half a dozen others, but they were unwilling to pay the price of forsaking wealth and families.

5. Moving the Camp to Pella

Jesus and the twelve now prepared to establish their last headquarters in Perea, near Pella, where the Master was baptized in the Jordan. The last ten days of November were spent in council at Magadan, and on Tuesday, December 6, the entire company of almost three hundred started out at daybreak with all their possessions to lodge that night near Pella by the river. This was the same site, at the spring, that John the Baptist had occupied several years before.

After the breaking up of the Magadan Camp, David Zebedee returned to Bethsaida and began to immediately curtail the messenger service. The work was taking on a new phase. Pilgrims arrived daily from all parts of Palestine and even from remote regions of the Roman Empire. People occasionally came from Mesopotamia and from the lands east of the Tigris. Accordingly, on Sunday, December 18, David, with the help of the messenger corps, loaded the pack animals with the camp equipment that had been stored in the family house, where the camp of Bethsaida had been conducted by the lake. Bidding good-bye to Bethsaida for the time being, David proceeded down the lake shore and along the Jordan to a point about one-half mile north of the apostolic camp, and in less than a week was prepared to offer hospitality to almost fifteen hundred pilgrim visitors. The apostolic camp could accommodate about five hundred. This was the rainy season in Palestine, and these accommodations were required in order to take care of the ever-increasing number of inquirers, mostly earnest, who came to Perea to see Jesus and to hear the teachings.

David did all this by personal choice, though having asked the advice of Philip and Matthew at Magadan. David employed the larger part of the former messenger corps as helpers in conducting this camp, now using less than twenty people on regular messenger duty. Near the end of December and before the return of the seventy, almost eight hundred visitors were gathered about the Master, and they found lodging in David's camp.

6. The Return of the Seventy

On Friday, December 30, while Jesus was away in the near-by hills with Peter, James, and John, the seventy messengers were arriving by couples, accompanied by numerous followers, at the Pella headquarters. All seventy were assembled at the teaching site about five o'clock when Jesus returned to the camp. The evening meal was delayed for more than an hour while these enthusiasts related their experiences. David's messengers had brought much of this news to the apostles during previous weeks, but it was truly inspiring to hear these newly ordained teachers personally tell how their message had been received by hungry Jews and gentiles. At last Jesus was able to see people going out to spread the teachings without being personally present. The Master now knew that it would be possible to leave this world without seriously hindering the progress of the new realm.

When the seventy related how "even the devils were subject" to them, they referred to the wonderful cures they had brought about in the cases of victims of nervous disorders. Nevertheless, there had been a few cases of real spirit possession relieved by these ministers, and referring to these, Jesus said: "It is not strange that these disobedient minor spirits should be subject to you, seeing that I saw Satan falling as lightning from the sky. But do not rejoice so much over this, for I declare to you that, as soon as I return to the Creator, we will send our spirits into the very minds of people so that these few lost spirits can no longer enter into unfortunate mortals. I celebrate with you that you have power with people, but do not be lifted up because of this, rather rejoice that your names are written on the rolls of the universe, and that you are to go forward in an endless career of spiritual conquest."

And it was at this time, just before taking the evening meal, that Jesus experienced one of those rare moments of emotional ecstasy which the followers had occasionally witnessed. Jesus said: "I thank you, my Creator Parent, that, while this wonderful teaching was hidden from the wise and self-righteous, the spirit has revealed these spiritual glories to these children of the new realm. Yes, my Creator Parent, it must

have been pleasing in your sight to do this, and I rejoice to know that the good news will spread to all the world even after I have returned to you and the work which you have given me to perform. I am mightily moved as I realize that you are about to deliver all authority into my hands, that only you really know who I am, and that only I really know you. And when I have finished this revelation to my children on earth, I will continue the revelation to your creatures on high.”

Jesus, having spoken this to the Creator, turned aside to speak to the apostles and ministers: “Blessed are the eyes which see and the ears which hear these things. Let me say to you that many prophets and many of the great people of the past ages have desired to see what you now see, but it was not granted to them. And many generations of the children of light yet to come will, when they hear of these things, envy you who have heard and seen them.”

The next day being the Sabbath, Jesus went apart with the seventy and said to them: “I rejoiced with you when you came back bearing the good news of the reception of the doctrine of the new realm by so many people scattered throughout Galilee, Samaria, and Judea. But why were you so surprisingly elated? Did you not expect that your message would manifest power in its delivery? Did you go forth with so little faith in this doctrine that you come back in surprise at its effectiveness? And now, while I would not quench your spirit of rejoicing, I would sternly warn you against the subtleties of pride, spiritual pride. If you could understand the downfall of Lucifer, the iniquitous one, you would solemnly shun all forms of spiritual pride.

“You have begun this great work of teaching mortals that they are the children of the Creator. I have shown you the way; go forward to do your duty and do not be weary in doing it. To you and to all who follow in your steps down through the ages, let me say: I always stand near, and my invitation-call is, and ever shall be, come to me all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my burden on you and learn of me, for I am true and loyal, and you will find spiritual rest for your souls.”

And they found the Master’s words to be true when they put these promises to the test. And since that day countless people also have tested and proved the surety of these same promises.

7. Preparation for the Last Mission

The next few days were busy times in the Pella camp; preparations for the Perean mission were being completed. Jesus and the associates were about to begin their last mission, the three months’ tour of all Perea, which terminated only on the Master’s entering Jerusalem for the final labors on earth. Throughout this period the headquarters of Jesus and the twelve apostles was maintained here at the Pella camp.

It was no longer necessary for Jesus to travel to teach the people. They now came in increasing numbers each week and from all parts, not only from Palestine but from the whole Roman world and the Near East. The Master, while participating with the seventy in the tour of Perea, spent much of the time at the Pella camp, teaching the multitude and instructing the twelve. Throughout this three months’ period at least ten of the apostles remained with Jesus.

The work now prepared to enter its terminal phase under the personal leadership of Jesus. And this present phase was one of spiritual depth in contrast with the miracle-minded and wonder-seeking multitudes who

followed after the Master during the former days of popularity in Galilee. However, there were still any number of followers who were material-minded, and who failed to grasp the truth that the realm of the Creator is the spiritual family of humanity founded on the eternal fact of the universal parenthood of the Creator.

Paper 164

At the Feast of Dedication

As the camp at Pella was being established, Jesus, taking Nathaniel and Thomas, secretly went to Jerusalem to attend the feast of the dedication. Not until they passed over the Jordan at the Bethany ford did the two apostles become aware that their Master was going on to Jerusalem. When they perceived that Jesus really intended to be present at the feast of dedication, they used every sort of argument against going. But their efforts were of no avail; Jesus was determined to visit Jerusalem. To all their entreaties and warnings emphasizing the folly and danger of being at the hands of the Sanhedrin, Jesus would only reply, "I would give these teachers in Israel another opportunity to see the light, before my hour comes."

On they went toward Jerusalem, the two apostles continuing to express their feelings of fear and to voice their doubts about the wisdom of such an apparently presumptuous undertaking. They reached Jericho about half past four and prepared to lodge there for the night.

1. Story of the Good Samaritan

That evening a considerable company gathered about Jesus and the two apostles to ask questions, many of which the apostles answered, while others the Master discussed. In the course of the evening a certain lawyer, seeking to entangle Jesus in a compromising dispute, said: "Teacher, I would like to ask you just what I should do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus answered, "What is written in the law and the prophets; how do you read the Scriptures?" The lawyer, knowing the teachings of both Jesus and the Pharisees, answered: "To love Yahweh with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, and your neighbor as yourself." Then Jesus said: "You have answered right; this, if you really do it, will lead to life everlasting."

But the lawyer was not wholly sincere in asking this question, and wanting to be justified while also hoping to embarrass Jesus, ventured to ask still another question, and so drawing a little closer to the Master, said, "But, Teacher, I would like you to tell me just who is my neighbor?" The lawyer asked this question hoping to entrap Jesus into making some statement that would contravene the Jewish law which defined one's neighbor as "the children of one's people." The Jews viewed all others as "gentile dogs." This lawyer was somewhat familiar with Jesus' teachings and, knowing that the Master thought differently, hoped to lead Jesus into saying something which could be construed as an attack on the sacred law.

But Jesus discerned the lawyer's motive, and instead of falling into the trap, proceeded to tell a story, a story which would be fully appreciated by any Jericho audience. Jesus said: "A certain person was going from Jerusalem to Jericho and, falling into the hands of cruel thieves, was robbed, stripped and beaten, and left half dead. Very soon, by chance, a certain priest was going down that way, and, on reaching the wounded person, passed by on the other side of the road. And a Levite also came along and saw the person and passed by on the other side. Now, about this time a certain Samaritan, while journeying to Jericho, came across this wounded victim, was moved with compassion, bound up the wounds, pouring on oil and wine, and brought the unfortunate person here to the inn. On the next day this Samaritan took out some money and, giving it to the host, said: 'Take good care of my friend, and if the expense is more, when I come back again, I will repay you.' Now let me ask you: Which of these three turned out to be the neighbor

of the one who fell among the robbers?” And the lawyer, perceiving that the snare had not succeeded, answered, “The one who showed mercy.” And Jesus said, “Go and do likewise.”

The lawyer had answered, “The one who showed mercy,” in order to refrain from even speaking that odious word, Samaritan. The lawyer was forced to give the very answer to the question, “Who is my neighbor?” which Jesus wished given, and which, if Jesus had so stated, would have directly involved a charge of heresy. Jesus not only confounded the dishonest lawyer, but told a story which was at the same time a beautiful admonition to all the followers and also a stunning rebuke to all Jews regarding their attitude toward the Samaritans. And this story has continued to promote familial love among all who have subsequently believed the teachings of Jesus.

2. At Jerusalem

Jesus had attended the feast of tabernacles in order to teach the pilgrims from all parts of the empire, and now went to the feast of the dedication for just one purpose: to give the Sanhedrin and the Jewish leaders another chance to see the light. The principal event of these few days in Jerusalem occurred on Friday night at the home of Nicodemus. Some twenty-five Jewish leaders who believed Jesus’ teaching were gathered here. Among this group were fourteen people who were then, or had recently been, members of the Sanhedrin. This meeting was attended by Eber, Matadormus, and Joseph of Arimathea.

On this occasion Jesus’ hearers were all educated people, and both they and the two apostles were amazed at the breadth and depth of the remarks which the Master made to this distinguished group. Not since the times of teaching in Alexandria, Rome, and in the islands of the Mediterranean, had Jesus exhibited such learning and shown such a grasp of the affairs of people, both secular and religious.

When this little meeting broke up, all went away mystified by the Master’s personality, charmed by Jesus’ gracious manner, and in love with the person. They had sought to advise Jesus about how to win the remaining members of the Sanhedrin. The Master listened attentively, but silently, to all their proposals, knowing that none of their plans would work and surmising that the majority of the Jewish leaders would never accept the doctrine of the new realm. Nevertheless, Jesus gave all of them one more chance to choose, but had not yet decided on the method to pursue in bringing the message once more to the notice of the Sanhedrin.

That night Nathaniel and Thomas slept little; they were too amazed by what they had heard at Nicodemus’s house. They thought over the final remark of Jesus regarding the offer of the former and present members of the Sanhedrin to go before the seventy. The Master said: “No, my friends, it would be to no purpose. You would multiply the wrath to be visited on your own heads, but you would not in the least mitigate the hatred which they bear me. Go, each of you, about the Creator’s business as the spirit leads you, while I once more bring the new realm to their notice in the manner which the Creator may direct.”

3. Healing the Blind Beggar

The next morning the three went to Martha’s home at Bethany for breakfast and then went immediately into Jerusalem. This Sabbath morning, as Jesus and the two apostles neared the temple, they encountered a

well-known beggar who had been born blind. Although these beggars did not solicit or receive alms on the Sabbath day, they were permitted to sit in their usual places. Jesus paused and looked at the beggar, and the idea developed as to how to once more bring this mission on earth to the notice of the Sanhedrin and the other Jewish leaders and religious teachers.

As the Master stood there before the blind person, engrossed in deep thought, Nathaniel, pondering the possible cause of blindness, asked: "Master, who sinned, this person or the parents?"

The rabbis taught that all such cases of blindness from birth were caused by sin. Not only were children conceived and born in sin, but a child could be born blind as a punishment for some specific sin committed by its parents. They even taught that a child itself might sin before it was born into the world.

There was, throughout all these regions, a lingering belief in reincarnation. The older Jewish teachers, together with Plato, Philo, and many of the Essenes, tolerated the theory that people may reap in one incarnation what they have sown in a previous existence; thus in one life they were believed to be expiating the sins committed in preceding lives. The Master found it difficult to make people believe that their souls had not had previous existences.

However, inconsistent as it seems, while such blindness was supposed to be the result of sin, the Jews held that it was meritorious in a high degree to give alms to these blind beggars. It was the custom of these blind people to constantly chant to the passers-by, "O tenderhearted, gain merit by assisting the blind."

Jesus entered into the discussion of this case with Nathaniel and Thomas, not only having already decided to employ this blind person as the means of bringing the teachings once more prominently to the notice of the Jewish leaders that day, but also wanting to encourage the apostles to seek for the true causes of all phenomena, natural or spiritual, having often warned them to avoid the common tendency to assign spiritual causes to commonplace physical events.

Jesus decided to include this beggar in the plans for that day's work, but before doing anything for the blind person, Josiah by name, proceeded to answer Nathaniel's question. The Master said: "Neither this person nor the parents sinned to cause this affliction. This blindness has come in the natural course of events, but we must now do the works of the One who sent me, while it is still day, for the night will certainly come when it will be impossible to do what we are about to perform. When I am in the world, I am the light of the world, but in only a little while I will not be with you."

Then Jesus said to Nathaniel and Thomas: "Let us create the sight of this blind person on this Sabbath day so that the scribes and Pharisees may have the full occasion which they seek for accusing me." Then, stooping over, Jesus spat on the ground and mixed the clay with the spittle, and speaking all of this so that the blind person could hear, went up to Josiah and put the clay over the sightless eyes, saying: "Go, my child, wash away this clay in the pool of Siloam, and immediately you will receive your sight." And Josiah, after washing in the pool of Siloam, returned to friends and family, seeing.

Having always been a beggar, Josiah knew nothing else; and so, after the first excitement of seeing had passed, returned to the usual place of alms-seeking. All who now observed that Josiah was no longer blind,

said, "Is this not Josiah the blind beggar?" Some said it was, while others said, "No, it is one who is similar, but this person can see." But Josiah, when asked, answered, "I am the same."

Josiah, when asked about being able to see, responded: "Someone called Jesus came by this way, and when talking about me, made clay with spittle, put it on my eyes, and directed that I should go and wash in the pool of Siloam. I did what I was told, and immediately I received my sight. And that is only a few hours ago. I do not yet know the meaning of much that I see." And when the people who began to gather about asked where they could find the strange person who had done this healing, Josiah could only answer, "I do not know."

This is one of the strangest of all the Master's miracles. This person did not ask for healing, and did not know that the Jesus who had caused it to happen was the prophet of Galilee who had preached in Jerusalem during the feast of tabernacles. This beggar had little faith in being restored to sight, but the people of that day had great faith in the efficacy of the spittle of a great or holy person; and from Jesus' conversation with Nathaniel and Thomas, Josiah had concluded that this would-be benefactor was a great person, a learned teacher or a holy prophet; and accordingly did as Jesus directed.

Jesus made use of the clay and the spittle and directed Josiah to wash in the symbolic pool of Siloam for three reasons:

1. This was not a miracle response to the individual's faith. This was a wonder which Jesus chose to perform for a particular purpose, but arranged it so that this person might derive lasting benefit.
2. The beggar had not asked for healing, and had little faith, so these material acts were suggested for the purpose of providing encouragement. Josiah did believe in the superstition of the efficacy of spittle, and knew the pool of Siloam was a semisacred place, but would hardly have gone there had it not been necessary to wash away the clay. There was just enough ceremony involved to induce this action.
3. But Jesus had a third reason for resorting to these material means in connection with this unique transaction: This was a miracle created purely by choice, and Jesus wanted to teach the followers of that day and all subsequent ages to refrain from despising or neglecting material means in the healing of the sick, teaching them that they must cease to regard miracles as the only method of curing human diseases.

Jesus provided this sight by miraculous working, on this Sabbath morning and in Jerusalem near the temple, for the prime purpose of making this act an open challenge to the Sanhedrin and all the Jewish teachers and religious leaders. This was a way of proclaiming an open break with the Pharisees. Jesus was always positive in doing everything. And it was for the purpose of bringing these matters before the Sanhedrin that Jesus brought the two apostles early in the afternoon of this Sabbath day and deliberately provoked those discussions which compelled the Pharisees to take notice of the miracle.

4. Josiah Before the Sanhedrin

By midafternoon the healing of Josiah had raised such a discussion around the temple that the leaders of the Sanhedrin decided to convene the council in its usual temple meeting place. And they did this in violation of a standing rule which prohibited the meeting of the Sanhedrin on the Sabbath day. Jesus knew

that Sabbath breaking would be one of the chief charges to be brought when the final test came, and wanted to be brought before the Sanhedrin for adjudication of the charge of having healed someone on the Sabbath day, when the very session of the high Jewish court sitting in judgment for this act of mercy would be deliberating on these matters on the Sabbath day and in direct violation of their own self-imposed laws.

But they did not call Jesus before them; they feared to. Instead, they sent for Josiah. After some preliminary questioning, the spokesperson for the Sanhedrin (about fifty members being present) directed Josiah to tell them what had happened. Since the healing that morning Josiah had learned from Thomas, Nathaniel, and others that the Pharisees were angry about this healing on the Sabbath, and that they were likely to make trouble for all concerned; but Josiah did not yet perceive that Jesus was the one who was called the Deliverer. So, Josiah, when questioned by the Pharisees, said: "This person came along, put clay on my eyes, told me to go wash in Siloam, and I now see."

One of the older Pharisees, after making a lengthy speech, said: "This person violates the law, first, in making the clay, then, in sending this beggar to wash in Siloam on the Sabbath day. Such a person cannot be a teacher sent from Yahweh."

Then one of the younger members who secretly believed in Jesus, said: "If this person is not sent by Yahweh, how is it possible to do these things? We know that one who is a common sinner cannot perform such miracles. We all know this beggar was born blind and now sees. Will you still say that this prophet does all these wonders by the power of the devil?" And for every Pharisee who dared to accuse and denounce Jesus, one would ask entangling and embarrassing questions, so that a serious division arose among them. The presiding officer saw where they were drifting, and in order to save the discussion, prepared to personally raise further questions, turning to Josiah and asking: "What do you have to say about this Jesus, whom you claim opened your eyes?" And Josiah answered, "I think Jesus is a prophet."

The leaders were greatly troubled and, not knowing what else to do, decided to send for Josiah's parents to learn whether Josiah had actually been born blind. They were loath to believe that the beggar had been healed.

It was well known about Jerusalem, not only that Jesus was denied entrance into all synagogues, but that all who believed the teachings were cast out of the synagogue, excommunicated from the congregation of Israel; and this meant denial of all rights and privileges of every sort throughout all Jewry except the right to buy the necessities of life.

When, therefore, Josiah's parents, poor and fear-burdened souls, appeared before the august Sanhedrin, they were afraid to speak freely. The spokesperson of the court asked them: "Is this your offspring who was born blind? If this is true, how is it possible that this person can now see?" And then Josiah's parents, answered: "We know that this is our child who was born blind, but who has now come to see. How this happened or who caused it we do not know. Ask Josiah."

They now called Josiah up before them a second time. They were not getting along well with their scheme of holding a formal trial, and some were beginning to feel strange about doing this on the Sabbath; accordingly, when they recalled Josiah, they attempted a different mode of attack. The officer of the court

spoke to the former blind person, saying: “Why do you not give Yahweh the glory for this? why do you not tell us the whole truth about what happened? We all know that this person is a sinner. Why do you refuse to discern the truth? You know that both you and this person stand convicted of Sabbath breaking. Will you not atone for your sin by acknowledging Yahweh as your healer, if you still claim that your eyes have been opened?”

But Josiah was neither dumb nor lacking in humor; and replied to the officer of the court: “Whether this person is a sinner, I do not know; but one thing I do know — before I was blind, and now I see.” And since they could not entrap Josiah, they questioned further, asking: “Just how were your eyes opened? what was actually done to you? what was said to you? were you asked to believe in this person?”

Josiah replied, somewhat impatiently: “I have told you exactly how it all happened, and if you did not believe my testimony, why would you hear it again? Would you by any chance also become disciples?” When Josiah had spoken, the Sanhedrin broke up in confusion, almost violence, for the leaders rushed on Josiah, angrily exclaiming: “You may talk about being this person’s disciple, but we are disciples of Moses, and we are the teachers of the laws of Yahweh. We know that Yahweh spoke through Moses, but we do not know who this Jesus is.”

Then Josiah, standing on a stool, shouted to all who could hear, saying: “Listen, you who claim to be the teachers of all Israel, while I affirm to you that here is a great marvel since you confess that you do not know who this person is, and yet you know of a certainty, from the testimony which you have heard, that my eyes have been opened. We all know that Yahweh does not perform such works for the sinner; that Yahweh would do such a thing only at the request of a true worshiper — for one who is holy and righteous. You know that not since the beginning of the world have you ever heard of the opening of the eyes of one who was born blind. Look, then, all of you, at me and realize what has been done this day in Jerusalem! I tell you, this person could not do this except by Yahweh.” And as the Sanhedrists departed in anger and confusion, they shouted to Josiah: “You were born in sin, and do you now presume to teach us? Maybe you were not really born blind, and even if your eyes were opened on the Sabbath day, this was done by the power of the devil.” And they went at once to the synagogue to cast out Josiah.

Josiah entered this trial with meager ideas about Jesus and the nature of the healing. Most of the daring testimony which was so cleverly and courageously spoken before this supreme tribunal of all Israel developed in Josiah’s mind as the trial proceeded along such unfair and unjust lines.

5. Teaching in Solomon’s Porch

All of the time this Sabbath-breaking session of the Sanhedrin was in progress in one of the temple chambers, Jesus was walking about nearby, teaching the people in Solomon’s Porch, hoping to be summoned before the Sanhedrin in order to tell them about the liberty and joy of the realm of the Creator. But the Sanhedrin were always disconcerted by these sudden and public appearances of Jesus in Jerusalem, and, even though they now had an opportunity to arrest or even bring Jesus before them as a witness, they were afraid to pursue this course of action.

This was midwinter in Jerusalem, and the people sought the partial shelter of Solomon's Porch; and as Jesus lingered, the crowds asked many questions, and Jesus taught them for more than two hours. Some of the Jewish teachers tried to entrap Jesus by publicly asking: "How long will you hold us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, why do you not plainly tell us?" Jesus said: "I have told you about myself and about the Creator many times, but you will not believe me. Can you not see that the works I do in the Creator's name bear witness for me? But many of you do not believe because you do not belong to my fold. The teacher of truth attracts only those who hunger for the truth and who thirst for righteousness. My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me. And to all who follow my teaching I give life eternal; they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. The Creator, who has given me these children, is greater than all, so that no one is able to pluck them out of the Creator's hand. The Creator and I are one." Some of the unbelieving Jews rushed over to where they were still building the temple to pick up stones to cast at Jesus, but the followers restrained them.

Jesus continued teaching: "I have shown you many loving works from the Creator, so that now I would inquire for which one of these good works do you think to stone me?" And then one of the Pharisees answered: "For no good work would we stone you but for blasphemy, since you, being a mortal, dare to make yourself equal with Yahweh." And Jesus answered: "You charge me with blasphemy because you refused to believe me when I declared to you that I was sent by the Creator. If I do not do the works of the Creator, then do not believe me, but if I do the works of the Creator, even though you do not believe in me, I should think you would believe the works. But that you may be certain of what I proclaim, let me again assert that the Creator is in me and I am in the Creator, and that, as the Creator dwells in me, so I will dwell in every one who believes these teachings." And when the people heard these words, many of them rushed out to pick up the stones to cast, but Jesus passed out through the temple precincts; and meeting Nathaniel and Thomas, who had been in attendance at the session of the Sanhedrin, waited with them near the temple until Josiah came from the council chamber.

Jesus and the two apostles went in search of Josiah at home and Jesus said to Josiah: "Do you believe in the Deliverer?" And Josiah answered, "Tell me who that is so that I may believe." And Jesus said: "You have both seen and heard the Deliverer, and that is I who now speak to you." And Josiah said, "Master, I believe."

Josiah, when learning about having been cast out of the synagogue, was at first greatly downcast, but was encouraged when Jesus issued an invitation to go with them to the camp at Pella. Josiah may have been cast out of a Jewish synagogue, but was now invited by the Creator of a universe to become associated with the spiritual nobility of that day and generation.

And now Jesus left Jerusalem, not to return again until it was time to prepare to leave this world. With the two apostles and Josiah the Master went back to Pella. And Josiah proved to be one of the recipients of the Master's miraculous ministry who turned out fruitfully, becoming a lifelong preacher of the doctrine of the new realm.

Paper 165

The Perean Mission Begins

On Tuesday, January 3, C.E. 30, Abner, the former chief of the twelve apostles of John the Baptist, a Nazarite and onetime head of the Nazarite school at Engedi, now chief of the seventy messengers, called these associates together and gave them final instructions before sending them on a mission to all of the cities and villages of Perea. This Perean mission continued for almost three months and was the last ministry of the Master. From this work Jesus went directly to Jerusalem to pass through the final mortal experiences. The seventy, supplemented by the periodic labors of Jesus and the twelve apostles, worked in the following cities and towns and some fifty additional villages: Zaphon, Gadara, Macad, Arbela, Ramath, Edrei, Bosora, Caspin, Mispheh, Gerasa, Ragaba, Succoth, Amathus, Adam, Penuel, Capitolias, Dion, Hatita, Gadda, Philadelphia, Jogbehah, Gilead, Beth-Nimrah, Tyrus, Elealah, Livias, Heshbon, Callirrhoe, Beth-Peor, Shittim, Sibmah, Medeba, Beth-Meon, Areopolis, and Aroer.

This was the final period of the teachings, and there was, accordingly, an absence of miracle working. No other part of Palestine was so thoroughly worked by the apostles and disciples of Jesus, and in no other region did the citizens so generally accept the Master's teaching.

Perea at this time was about equally gentile and Jewish, the Jews having been generally removed from these regions during the times of Judas Maccabee. Perea was the most beautiful and picturesque province of all Palestine. It was generally referred to by the Jews as "the land beyond the Jordan."

Throughout this period Jesus divided the time between the camp at Pella and trips with the twelve to assist the seventy in the various cities where they taught and preached. Under Abner's instructions the seventy baptized all truth seekers, although not charged by Jesus to do so.

1. At the Pella Camp

By the middle of January more than twelve hundred people were gathered together at Pella, and Jesus taught this multitude at least once each day while in residence at the camp, usually speaking at nine o'clock in the morning if not prevented by rain. Peter and the other apostles taught each afternoon. The evenings Jesus reserved for the usual sessions of questions and answers with the twelve and other advanced disciples. The evening groups averaged about fifty.

By the middle of March, the time when Jesus began the journey toward Jerusalem, over four thousand people composed the large audience which heard Jesus or Peter preach each morning. The Master chose to terminate the bestowal on earth when interest had reached a high point, the highest point attained under this second or non-miraculous phase of the progress of the work. While three quarters of the multitude were truth seekers, there were also a large number of Pharisees present from Jerusalem and elsewhere, together with many doubters.

Jesus and the twelve apostles devoted much of their time to the multitude assembled at the Pella camp. The twelve paid little or no attention to the field work, only going out with Jesus to visit Abner's associates from time to time. Abner was very familiar with the Perean district since this was the field in which John

the Baptist had mainly worked. After beginning the Perean mission, Abner and the seventy never returned to the Pella camp.

2. Sermon on the Good Shepherd

A company of over three hundred Jerusalemites, Pharisees and others, followed north to Pella when Jesus hurried away from the jurisdiction of the Jewish rulers at the ending of the feast of the dedication; and it was in the presence of these Jewish teachers and leaders, as well as in the hearing of the twelve apostles, that Jesus preached the sermon on the “Good Shepherd.” After half an hour of informal discussion, speaking to a group of about one hundred, Jesus said:

“On this night I have much to tell you, and since many of you are my disciples and some of you my bitter enemies, I will present my teaching in a parable, so that you may each take for yourself that which finds a reception in your heart.

“Tonight, here before me are those who would be willing to die for me and for this doctrine of the new realm, and some of them will so offer themselves in the years to come; and here also are some of you, slaves of tradition, who have followed me from Jerusalem, and who, with your darkened and deluded leaders, seek to kill me. The life which I now live will judge both of you, the true shepherds and the false shepherds. The false shepherd who is blind would have no sin, but you claim that you see; you profess to be teachers in Israel; therefore your sin remains upon you.

“The true shepherd gathers the flock into the fold for the night in times of danger. And when the morning has come, enters into the fold and calls, and the sheep know the shepherd’s voice. Every shepherd who gains entrance to the sheepfold by any other means than by the door is a thief and a robber. The true shepherd enters the fold and the sheep, knowing the shepherd’s voice, come out; and the true shepherd goes before them, leading the way for the sheep to follow. The sheep follow because they know the shepherd’s voice; they will not follow a stranger. They will flee from the stranger because they do not know the stranger’s voice. This multitude which is gathered about us here are like sheep without a shepherd, but when we speak to them, they know the shepherd’s voice, and they follow after us; at least, those who hunger for truth and thirst for righteousness do. Some of you are not of my fold; you do not know my voice, and you do not follow me. And because you are false shepherds, the sheep do not know your voice and will not follow you.”

And when Jesus had spoken this parable, no one asked a question. After a time Jesus began to speak again and went on to discuss the parable:

“You who would be the under-shepherds of the Creator’s flocks must not only be worthy leaders, but you must also *feed* the flock with good food; you are not true shepherds unless you lead your flocks.

“And now, in case some of you comprehend this parable too easily, I will declare that I am both the door to the Creator’s sheepfold and at the same time the true shepherd of the Creator’s flocks. All shepherds who seek to enter the fold without me will fail, and the sheep will not hear their voices. I, with those who minister

with me, am the door. Every soul who enters the eternal way by the means I have created and ordained will be saved and will be able to go on to the attainment of the eternal pastures of Paradise.

“But I also am the true shepherd who is willing to die for the sheep. The thief breaks into the fold only to steal, and to kill, and to destroy; but I have come so that you all may have life and have it more abundantly. One who is a hireling, when danger arises, will flee and allow the sheep to be scattered and destroyed. The true shepherd will not flee when the wolf comes, but will protect the flock and, if necessary, die for the sheep. Friends and enemies, I am the true shepherd; I know my own and my own know me. I will not flee in the face of danger. I will finish this service of the completion of the Creator’s will, and I will not forsake the flock which the Creator has entrusted to my keeping.

“But I have many other sheep not of this fold, and these words are true not only of this world. These other sheep also hear and know my voice, and I have promised the Creator that they will all be brought into one fold, one family of the children of the Creator. And then you will all know the voice of one shepherd, the true shepherd, and will all acknowledge the parenthood of the Creator.

“And so you will know why the Creator loves me and has put all of the flocks in this domain in my hands for keeping; it is because the Creator knows that I will not falter in the safeguarding of the sheepfold, that I will not desert my sheep, and that, if it is required, I will not hesitate to die in the service of the manifold flocks. But, mind you, if I die, I will rise up again. No person nor any other creature can take away my life. I have the right and the power to abandon my life, and I have the same power and right to take it up again. You cannot understand this, but I received such authority from the Creator even before this world was.”

When they heard these words, the apostles were confused, the disciples were amazed, while the Pharisees from Jerusalem and around about went out into the night, saying, “This person is either mad or has a devil.” But even some of the Jerusalem teachers said that Jesus “speaks like one having authority; besides, who ever saw one having a devil open the eyes of someone born blind and also do all of the wonderful things which this person has done?”

The next day about half of these Jewish teachers professed belief in Jesus, and the other half returned in dismay to Jerusalem and their homes.

3. Sabbath Sermon at Pella

By the end of January the Sabbath-afternoon multitudes numbered almost three thousand. On Saturday, January 28, Jesus preached the memorable sermon on “Trust and Spiritual Preparedness.” After preliminary remarks by Simon Peter, the Master said:

“What I have many times said to my apostles and to my disciples, I now declare to this multitude: Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees which is hypocrisy, born of prejudice and nurtured in traditional bondage, although many of these Pharisees are honest and some of them are here as my disciples. Presently all of you will understand my teaching, for there is nothing now hidden that will not be revealed. That which is now concealed from you will all be made known when I have completed my mission on earth.

“Soon, very soon, the things which our enemies now plan in secrecy and in darkness will be brought out into the light and be proclaimed from the housetops. But I say to you, my friends, when they seek to destroy me, do not be afraid of them. Do not fear those who, although they may be able to kill the body, after that have no more power over you. I admonish you to fear no one, but to rejoice in the knowledge of the One who has the power to deliver you from all unrighteousness and to present you blameless before the judgment seat of a universe.

“Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? And yet, when these birds fly about in quest of their sustenance, not one of them exists without the knowledge of the Creator, the source of all life. And if this is true, why should you live in fear of the many trifles which come up in your daily lives? I say to you: Do not fear; you are of much more value than many sparrows.

“All of you who have had the courage to confess faith in my teachings I will presently acknowledge before the angels; but one who will knowingly deny the truth of my teachings will be denied even before the angels.

“Say what you will about me, and it will be forgiven you; but one who presumes to blaspheme against the Creator will hardly find forgiveness. When people go so far as to knowingly ascribe the doings of the Creator to the forces of evil, such deliberate rebels will hardly seek forgiveness for their sins.

“And when our enemies bring you before the rulers of the synagogues and other high authorities, do not be concerned about what you should say nor anxious as to how you should answer their questions, for the spirit that dwells within you will certainly teach you in that very hour what you should say.

“How long will you wait in the valley of decision? Why do you halt between two opinions? Why should Jews or gentiles hesitate to accept the fact that they are children of the eternal Creator? How long will it take us to persuade you to enter joyfully into your spiritual inheritance? I came into this world to reveal the Creator to you and to lead you to the Creator. The first I have done, but the last I may not do without your consent; the Creator never compels anyone. The invitation always has been and will be: Whoever will, let them come and freely partake of the water of life.”

After Jesus had finished speaking, many went to be baptized by the apostles in the Jordan while Jesus listened to the questions of those who remained.

4. Dividing the Inheritance

As the apostles baptized the truth seekers, the Master talked with those who stayed behind. And a certain young person said: “Master, my parents died leaving much property to me, but my siblings refuse to give me that which is my own. Will you, then, ask my siblings to divide this inheritance with me?” Jesus was mildly indignant that this material-minded youth should bring up such a question of business; but proceeded to use the occasion for the impartation of further instruction. Jesus said: “Who made me a divider over you? Where did you get the idea that I give attention to the material affairs of this world?” And then, turning to all who were there, said: “Keep yourselves free from covetousness; a person’s life does not consist in the abundance of possessions. Happiness does not come from the power of wealth, and joy does not spring

from riches. Wealth, in itself, is not a curse, but the love of riches many times leads to such devotion to the things of this world that the soul becomes blinded to the beautiful attractions of the spiritual realities of the realm of the Creator and to the joys of eternal life.

“Let me tell you a story of a certain rich person whose ground brought forth plentifully; and this person, on becoming very rich, began to reason: ‘What should I do with all my riches? I now have so much that I have no place to store my wealth.’ And after meditating on this problem, thought: ‘This I will do; I will pull down my barns and build greater ones, and so I will have abundant room in which to store my fruits and my goods. Then I can say to my soul, you have much wealth laid up for many years; now eat, drink, and be merry, for you are rich and increased in goods.’

“But this rich person was also foolish, and in providing for the material requirements of mind and body, had failed to lay up treasures for the satisfaction of the spirit and for the growth of the soul. And even then this person was not to enjoy the pleasure of consuming this hoarded wealth, for that night thieves broke into the house and killed the householder, plundered the barns, and burned that which remained. And for the property which escaped the robbers the heirs fell to fighting among themselves. This person laid up treasures on earth, but was not rich toward the Creator.”

Jesus knew that the young person’s trouble was covetousness. Even if this had not been the case, the Master would not have interfered, having made it a practice to never meddle with the temporal affairs of even the apostles, much less the disciples.

When Jesus had finished this story, another person rose up and asked: “Master, I know that your apostles have sold all their earthly possessions to follow you, and that they have all things in common as do the Essenes, but would you have all of us who are your disciples do likewise? Is it a sin to possess honest wealth?” And Jesus replied to this question: “My friend, it is not a sin to have honorable wealth; but it is a sin if you convert the wealth of material possessions into *treasures* which may absorb your interests and divert your affections from devotion to spiritual pursuits. There is no sin in having honest possessions on earth provided your *treasure* is in the realm of the Creator, for where your treasure is your heart will be also. There is a great difference between wealth which leads to covetousness and selfishness and that which is held and dispensed in the spirit of stewardship by those who have an abundance of this world’s goods, and who so bountifully contribute to the support of those who devote all their energies to the work of the new realm. Many of you who are here and without money are fed and lodged in the tented city because people of means have given funds to your host, David Zebedee, for such purposes.

“But never forget that, after all, wealth is unenduring. The love of riches all too often obscures and even destroys the spiritual vision. Do not fail to recognize the danger of wealth’s becoming, not your servant, but your master.”

Jesus did not teach nor countenance improvidence, idleness, indifference to providing the physical necessities for one’s family, or dependence on alms, but did teach that the material and temporal must be subordinated to the welfare of the soul and the progress of the spiritual nature.

Then, as the people went down by the river to witness the baptizing, the first person came back privately, having felt that Jesus had been too harsh; and again the Master counseled: “My child, why do you miss the opportunity to feed on the bread of life on a day like this in order to indulge your covetous disposition? Do you not know that the Jewish laws of inheritance will be justly administered if you will go with your complaint to the court of the synagogue? Can you not see that my work has to do with making sure that you know about your spiritual inheritance?”

Jesus sent the young person away, saying, “My child, what will it profit you if you gain the whole world and lose your own soul?”

To another standing nearby who asked how the wealthy would stand in the day of judgment, Jesus replied: “I have come to judge neither the rich nor the poor, but the lives people live will sit in judgment on all. Whatever else may concern the wealthy in the judgment, at least three questions must be answered by all who acquire great wealth, and these questions are:

“1. How much wealth did you accumulate?

“2. How did you get this wealth?

“3. How did you use your wealth?”

Then Jesus went to rest for a while before the evening meal. When the apostles had finished with the baptizing, they came back and would have asked about earthly wealth and spiritual treasure, but Jesus was asleep.

5. Talks to the Apostles on Wealth

That evening after supper, when Jesus and the twelve gathered together for their daily conference, Andrew asked: “Master, while we were baptizing the truth seekers, you spoke many words to the lingering multitude which we did not hear. Would you be willing to repeat these words for our benefit?” And in response to Andrew’s request, Jesus said:

“Yes, Andrew, I will speak to you about these matters of wealth and self-support, but my words to you, the apostles, must be somewhat different from those spoken to the disciples and the multitude since you have forsaken everything, not only to follow me, but to be ordained as ambassadors of the new realm. Already you have had several years’ experience, and you know that the Creator whose realm you proclaim will not abandon you. You have dedicated your lives to the ministry of the new realm; therefore do not be anxious or worried about the things of the temporal life, what you will eat, nor what you will wear. The welfare of the soul is more than food and drink; the progress in the spirit is far above the need of clothing. When you are tempted to doubt the sureness of your bread, consider the ravens; they do not sow nor reap, they have no storehouses or barns, and yet the Creator provides food for every one of them that seeks it. And of how much more value are you than many birds! Besides, all of your anxiety or doubts can do nothing to supply your material needs. Which of you by anxiety can add an inch to your stature or a day to your life? Since such matters are not in your hands, why do you give anxious thought to any of these problems?

“When you wholeheartedly devote yourselves to the proclamation of the doctrine of the new realm, you should not be doubtful concerning the support of yourselves or the families you have left. If you give your lives truly to the teachings, you will live by the teachings. If you are only believing disciples, you must earn your own bread and contribute to the sustenance of all who teach and preach and heal. If you are anxious about your bread and water, how are you different from the nations of the world who so diligently seek such necessities? Devote yourselves to your work, believing that both the Creator and I know that you have need of all these things. Let me assure you, once and for all, that, if you dedicate your lives to the work of the new realm, all your real needs will be supplied. Seek the greater thing, and the lesser will be found; ask for the spiritual, and the material will be included. The shadow is certain to follow the substance.

“You are only a small group, but if you have faith, if you will not stumble in fear, I say that it is the Creator’s good pleasure to give you this realm. You have laid up your treasures where no thief can take them, and where nothing can destroy them. And as I told the people, where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

“But in the work which is just ahead of us, and in that which remains for you after I go to the Creator, you will be grievously tried. You must all be on your watch against fear and doubts. I say to you that a crisis is just ahead in your lives, and you must watch and be ready.

“Be on watch for yourselves, for at a time that you least suspect and in a manner you do not expect, I will depart.”

For some minutes the twelve sat in silence. Some of these warnings they had heard before but not in the setting presented to them at this time.

6. Answer to Peter’s Question

As they sat thinking, Simon Peter asked: “Do you speak this parable to us, your apostles, or is it for all the disciples?” And Jesus answered:

“In the time of testing, a person’s soul is revealed; trial discloses what really is in the heart. When the servant is tested and proved, then the master of the house may set such a servant over the household and safely trust this faithful steward to see that the children are fed and nurtured. Likewise, I will soon know who can be trusted with the welfare of my children when I have returned to the Creator. As the master of the household will set the true and tried servant over the affairs of the family, so I will exalt those who endure the trials of this hour in the affairs of my realm.

“But if the servant is lazy and begins to say, ‘My master is delayed,’ and begins to mistreat the other servants and to eat and drink with the drunken, then the master will come and will cast that servant out in disgrace. Therefore you do well to prepare yourselves for that day when you will be visited suddenly and in an unexpected manner. Remember, much has been given to you; therefore much will be required of you. Fiery trials are drawing near you. I have a baptism to be baptized with, and I am on watch until this is accomplished. You preach peace on earth, but my mission will not bring peace in the material affairs of the world — not for a time, at least. Division can only be the result where two members of a family believe in

me and three members reject me. Friends, relatives, and loved ones are destined to be set against each other by what you preach. True, each of these truth seekers will have great and lasting peace, but peace on earth will not come until all are willing to believe and enter into their glorious inheritance of a relationship with the Creator. Nevertheless, go into all the world proclaiming this doctrine to all nations, to every person.”

And this was the end of a full and busy Sabbath day. The next day Jesus and the twelve went into the cities of northern Perea to visit with the seventy, who were working in these regions under Abner’s supervision.

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Last Visit to Northern Perea

From February 11 to 20, Jesus and the twelve made a tour of all the cities and villages of northern Perea where the associates of Abner were working. They found these messengers meeting with success, and Jesus repeatedly called the attention of the apostles to the fact that the doctrine of the new realm could spread without the accompaniment of miracles and wonders.

This entire mission of three months in Perea was successfully carried on with little help from the twelve apostles, and the presentations from this time on reflected, not so much Jesus' personality, as the *teachings*. But the followers did not long follow instructions, for soon after Jesus' death and resurrection they departed from the teachings and began to build the early church around the miraculous concepts and the glorified memories of Jesus' divine-human personality.

1. The Pharisees at Ragaba

On Sabbath, February 18, Jesus was at Ragaba, where a wealthy Pharisee named Nathaniel lived; and since quite a number of other Pharisees were following Jesus and the twelve around the country, Nathaniel made a breakfast on this Sabbath morning for all of them, about twenty in number, and invited Jesus as the guest of honor.

By the time Jesus arrived at this breakfast, most of the Pharisees, with two or three lawyers, were already there and seated at the table. The Master immediately took a seat at the left of Nathaniel without going to the water basins to wash. Many of the Pharisees knew that Jesus considered washing hands to be only for purposes of cleanliness and abhorred these purely ceremonial performances; so they were not surprised that Jesus came directly to the table without having washed. But Nathaniel was shocked by this failure of the Master to comply with the strict requirements of Pharisaic practice. And Jesus did not wash, as did the Pharisees, after each course of food nor at the end of the meal.

After considerable whispering between Nathaniel and an unfriendly Pharisee and after much lifting of eyebrows and sneering by those who sat opposite the Master, Jesus finally said: "I had thought that you invited me to this house to break bread with you and perhaps to inquire of me concerning the proclamation of the new doctrine of the realm of the Creator; but I perceive that you have brought me here to witness an exhibition of ceremonial devotion to your own self-righteousness. That service you have now done; how will you honor me next as your guest on this occasion?"

When the Master had spoken, the others looked down and remained silent. And since no one spoke, Jesus continued: "Many of you Pharisees are here with me as friends, some are even my disciples, but the majority of the Pharisees are persistent in their refusal to see the light and acknowledge the truth, even when the work of the new realm is brought before them in great power. How carefully you cleanse the outside of the cups and the platters while the spiritual-food vessels are filthy and polluted! You make sure to present a pious and holy appearance to the people, but your inner souls are filled with self-righteousness, covetousness, extortion, and all manner of spiritual wickedness. Your leaders even dare to plot and plan to

murder me. Do you not understand that the Creator looks at the inner motives of the soul as well as on your outer pretenses and your pious professions? Do not think that the giving of alms and the paying of tithes will cleanse you from unrighteousness and enable you to stand clean in the presence of the Judge of all. Shame on you Pharisees who have persisted in rejecting the light of life! You are meticulous in tithing and ostentatious in almsgiving, but you knowingly spurn the visitation of the Creator and reject the revelation of the Creator's love. Though it is all right for you to give attention to these minor duties, you should not have left these weightier requirements undone. Shame on all who shun justice, spurn mercy, and reject truth! Shame on all those who despise the revelation of the Creator while they seek the chief seats in the synagogue and crave flattering salutations in the market places!"

When Jesus would have risen to leave, one of the lawyers who was at the table said: "But, Master, in some of your statements you reproach us also. Is there nothing good in the scribes, the Pharisees, or the lawyers?" And Jesus, standing, replied to the lawyer: "You, like the Pharisees, delight in the first places at the feasts and in wearing long robes while you put heavy burdens, grievous to be borne, on people's shoulders. And when their souls stagger under these heavy burdens, you will not lift a finger to help. Shame on you who take your greatest delight in building tombs for the prophets your ancestors killed! And that you consent to what your forebears did is made manifest when you now plan to kill those who come in this day doing what the prophets did in their day — revealing the righteousness and mercy of the Creator. But of all the generations that are past, the blood of the prophets and the apostles will be required of this perverse and self-righteous generation. Shame on all of you lawyers who have taken away the key of knowledge from the common people! You yourselves refuse to enter into the way of truth, and at the same time you would hinder all others who seek to enter. But you cannot shut the doors of the realm of the Creator; these we have opened to all who have the faith to enter, and these portals of mercy will not be closed by the prejudice and arrogance of false teachers and untrue shepherds."

And Jesus, after speaking at Nathaniel's table, went out of the house without eating. And of the Pharisees who heard these words, some became believers and entered into the realm, but the larger number persisted in the way of darkness, becoming all the more determined to lie in wait so that they might catch some statement which could be used to bring Jesus to trial and judgment before the Sanhedrin at Jerusalem.

There were just three things to which the Pharisees paid particular attention:

1. The practice of strict tithing.
2. Scrupulous observance of the laws of purification.
3. Avoidance of association with all non-Pharisees.

At this time Jesus sought to expose the spiritual barrenness of the first two practices, while reserving remarks designed to rebuke the Pharisees' refusal to engage in social intercourse with non-Pharisees for another and subsequent occasion that would involve many of these same people.

2. The Ten Lepers

The next day Jesus went with the twelve over to Amathus, near the border of Samaria, and as they approached the city, they encountered a group of ten lepers who stayed near this place. Nine of this group were Jews, one a Samaritan. Ordinarily these Jews would have refrained from all association or contact with this Samaritan, but their common affliction was more than enough to overcome all religious prejudice. They had heard much of Jesus and the earlier miracles of healing, and since the seventy made a practice of announcing the time of Jesus' expected arrival, the ten lepers had been made aware that the Master was expected to appear in this vicinity at about this time; and they were, accordingly, posted here on the outskirts of the city where they hoped to ask for healing. When the lepers saw Jesus drawing near them, not daring to approach, they stood far off and cried: "Master, have mercy on us; cleanse us from our affliction. Heal us as you have healed others."

Jesus had just been explaining to the twelve why the gentiles of Perea, together with the less orthodox Jews, were more willing to believe the message preached by the seventy than were the more orthodox and tradition-bound Jews of Judea. Jesus had called their attention to the fact that their message had likewise been more readily received by the Galileans, and even by the Samaritans. But the twelve apostles were hardly yet willing to entertain kind feelings for the long-despised Samaritans.

Simon Zelotes, observing the Samaritan among the lepers, tried to induce the Master to pass on into the city without even hesitating to exchange greetings with them. And Jesus said to Simon: "But what if the Samaritan loves the Creator as well as the Jews? Should we sit in judgment on others? Who can tell? If we make these ten whole, perhaps the Samaritan will prove more grateful than the Jews. Do you feel certain about your opinions, Simon?" And Simon quickly replied, "If you cleanse them, you will soon find out." And Jesus replied: "So it will be, Simon, and you will soon know the truth regarding the gratitude of mortals and the loving mercy of the Creator."

Jesus, going near the lepers, said: "If you would be made whole, go and show yourselves to the priests as required by the law of Moses." And as they went, they were made whole. But the Samaritan, on being healed, turned back and, going in quest of Jesus, began to glorify the Creator with a loud voice. And finding the Master, the Samaritan fell at Jesus' feet and gave thanks for this cleansing. The nine others, the Jews, had also realized their healing, and while they also were grateful for their cleansing, they continued on their way to show themselves to the priests.

As the Samaritan remained kneeling at Jesus' feet, the Master, looking about at the twelve, especially at Simon Zelotes, said: "Were not ten cleansed? Where, then, are the other nine, the Jews? Only one, this alien, has returned to give glory to the Creator." And then Jesus said to the Samaritan, "Rise and go your way; your faith has healed you."

Jesus looked again at the apostles as the stranger left. And the apostles all looked at Jesus, except Simon Zelotes, whose eyes were downcast. The twelve said not a word. Neither did Jesus speak; it was not necessary.

Though all ten of these people really believed they had leprosy, only four were actually afflicted. The other six were cured of a skin disease which had been mistaken for leprosy. But the Samaritan really had leprosy.

Jesus requested that the twelve say nothing about the cleansing of the lepers, and as they went on into Amathus, remarked: "You see how it is that the children of the house, even when they are insubordinate to their Creator's will, take their blessings for granted. They think it a small matter if they neglect to give thanks when the Creator bestows healing on them, but the strangers, when they receive gifts from the head of the house, are filled with wonder and are constrained to give thanks in recognition of the good things bestowed on them." And still the apostles said nothing in reply to the Master's words.

3. The Sermon at Gerasa

As Jesus and the twelve visited with the messengers at Gerasa, one of the Pharisees who was a follower asked this question: "Master, will there be few or many really saved?" And Jesus, answering, said:

"You have been taught that only the children of Abraham will be saved; that only the gentiles of adoption can hope for salvation. Some of you have reasoned that, since the Scriptures record that only Caleb and Joshua from among all the hosts that went out of Egypt lived to enter the promised land, only a comparatively few of those who seek the realm of the Creator will find entrance.

"You also have another saying among you, and one that contains much truth: That the way which leads to eternal life is straight and narrow, that the door which leads there is likewise narrow so that, of those who seek salvation, few can find entrance through this door. You also have a teaching that the way which leads to destruction is broad, that the entrance there is wide, and that there are many who choose to go this way. And this proverb is not without its meaning. But I declare that eternal life is first a matter of your personal choosing. Even if the door to the way of life is narrow, it is wide enough to admit all who sincerely seek to enter, for I am that door. And I will never refuse entrance to any child of the universe who, by faith, seeks to find the Creator through me.

"But here is the danger to all who would postpone their entrance into the new realm while they continue to pursue the pleasures of immaturity and indulge the satisfactions of selfishness: Having refused to enter the realm as a spiritual experience, they may subsequently seek entrance there when the glory of the better way becomes revealed in the age to come. And when, therefore, those who spurned the new realm when I came in the likeness of humanity seek to find an entrance when it is revealed in the likeness of divinity, then I will say to all such selfish ones: I do not know who you are. You had your chance to prepare for this citizenship, but you refused all such proffers of mercy; you rejected all invitations to come while the door was open. Now, to you who have refused to enter, the door is shut. This door is not open to those who would enter for selfish glory. Eternal life is not for those who are unwilling to pay the price of wholehearted dedication to doing the Creator's will. When in spirit and soul you have turned your backs on the Creator's realm, it is useless to stand before this door and knock, saying, 'Master, open to us; we would also be great.' Then I will say that you are not of my fold. I will not receive you to be among those who have fought the good fight of faith and won the reward of unselfish service on earth. And when you say, 'Did we not eat and drink with you, and did you not teach in our streets?' then I will again declare that you are spiritual strangers; that we were not servants in the Creator's ministry of mercy on earth; that I do not know you;

and then the Judge of all the earth will say to you: 'Depart from us, all you who have taken delight in the works of iniquity.'

"But fear not; everyone who sincerely desires to find eternal life by entrance into the realm of the Creator will certainly find it. But you who refuse this life will someday see the prophets of the seed of Abraham sit down with the believers of the gentile nations in this glorified realm to partake of the bread of life and to refresh themselves with the water. And those who will take the realm in spiritual power and by the persistent assaults of living faith will come from the north and the south and from the east and the west. And many who are first will be last, and those who are last will many times be first."

This was indeed a new and strange version of the old and familiar proverb of the straight and narrow way.

Slowly the apostles and many of the disciples were learning the meaning of Jesus' early declaration: "Unless you are born again, born of the spirit, you cannot enter the realm of the Creator." Nevertheless, to all who are honest of heart and sincere in faith, it remains eternally true: "I stand at the doors of people's hearts and knock, and for those who will open to me, I will come in and eat with them and will feed them with the bread of life; we will be one in spirit and purpose, and we will be companions in the long and fruitful service of the search for the Paradise Creator." And so, whether few or many are to survive altogether depends on whether few or many will heed the invitation: "I am the door, I am the new and living way, and whoever wills may enter to embark on the endless truth-search for eternal life."

Even the apostles were unable to fully comprehend this teaching as to the necessity for using spiritual energy for the purpose of overcoming all material resistance and for surmounting every earthly obstacle which might stand in the way of grasping the all-important spiritual values of the new life in the spirit as the liberated children of the Creator.

4. Teaching About Accidents

While most Palestinians ate only two meals a day, it was the custom of Jesus and the apostles, when on a journey, to pause at midday for rest and refreshment. And it was at such a noontime stop on the way to Philadelphia that Thomas asked Jesus: "Master, from hearing your remarks as we journeyed this morning, I would like to ask whether spiritual beings are concerned in the production of strange and extraordinary events in the material world and, further, to ask whether the angels and other spirit beings are able to prevent accidents."

In answer to Thomas's inquiry, Jesus said: "Have you failed to observe how I live as one with you and consistently refuse to employ the spiritual forces for my personal sustenance? Do we not all live by the same means by which all people exist? Do you see the power of the spiritual world manifested in the material life of this world, other than for the revelation of the Creator and the healing of the Creator's afflicted children?

"All too long your ancestors believed that prosperity was the token of divine approval; that adversity was the proof of Yahweh's displeasure. I say that such beliefs are superstitions. Do you not observe that far

greater numbers of the poor joyfully receive my teachings and immediately enter the new realm? If riches are evidence of divine favor, why do the rich so many times refuse to believe this doctrine?

“The Creator causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust; the sun likewise shines on the righteous and the unrighteous.”

“There are three groups of events which may occur in your lives:

“1. You may share in those normal happenings which are a part of the life you live on the face of the earth.

“2. You may fall victim to one of the accidents of nature, knowing full well that such occurrences are in no way prearranged or otherwise produced by the spiritual forces of the realm.

“3. You may experience the results of your direct efforts to comply with the natural laws governing the world.

“There was a certain person who planted a fig tree in the yard, and having many times looked for fruit and found none, called the gardeners and said: ‘I have come here these three seasons looking for fruit on this fig tree and have found none. Cut down this barren tree; why should it take up space?’ But the head gardener answered: ‘Let it alone for one more year so that I may dig around it and put on fertilizer, and then, next year, if it bears no fruit, it will be cut down.’ And when they had in this way complied with the laws of fruitfulness, since the tree was living and good, they were rewarded with an abundant yield.

“In the matter of sickness and health, you should know that these bodily states are the result of material causes.

“The Creator’s human children have equal capacity for the reception of material blessings; therefore the Creator bestows physical things upon people without discrimination. When it comes to the bestowal of spiritual gifts, the Creator is limited by people’s capacity for receiving these divine endowments. The Creator is no respecter of persons, but in the bestowal of spiritual gifts is limited by people’s faith and by their willingness to always abide by the Creator’s will.”

As they journeyed on toward Philadelphia, Jesus continued to teach them and to answer their questions having to do with accidents, sickness, and miracles, but they were not able to fully comprehend this instruction. One hour of teaching will not wholly change the beliefs of a lifetime, and so Jesus found it necessary to reiterate the message, to tell again and again that which they needed to understand; and even then they failed to grasp the meaning of the bestowal mission until after Jesus’ death and resurrection.

5. The Congregation at Philadelphia

Jesus and the twelve were on their way to visit Abner and the associates, who were preaching and teaching in Philadelphia. Of all the cities of Perea, in Philadelphia the largest group of Jews and gentiles, rich and poor, learned and unlearned, embraced the teachings of the seventy, thereby entering into the realm of the Creator. The synagogue of Philadelphia had never been subject to the supervision of the Sanhedrin at

Jerusalem and therefore had never been closed to the teachings of Jesus and the associates. At this very time, Abner was teaching three times a day in the Philadelphia synagogue.

This very synagogue later on became a Christian church and was the missionary headquarters for the promulgation of the new doctrine through the regions to the east. It was long a stronghold of the Master's teachings and stood alone in this region as a center of Christian learning for centuries.

The Jews at Jerusalem had always had trouble with the Jews of Philadelphia. And after the death and resurrection of Jesus the Jerusalem church, of which James was head, began to have serious difficulties with the Philadelphia congregation. Abner became the head of the Philadelphia church, continuing as such while alive. And this estrangement with Jerusalem explains why nothing is heard of Abner in the records of the New Testament. This feud between Jerusalem and Philadelphia lasted throughout the lifetimes of James and Abner and continued for some time after the destruction of Jerusalem. Philadelphia was really the headquarters of the early church in the south and east as Antioch was in the north and west.

It was the apparent misfortune of Abner to be at odds with all of the leaders of the early Christian church, falling out with Peter and James over questions of administration and the jurisdiction of the Jerusalem church, and parting company with Paul over differences of philosophy and theology. Abner was more Babylonian than Hellenic in philosophy, and stubbornly resisted all attempts of Paul to remake the teachings of Jesus so as to present less that was objectionable, first to the Jews, then to the Greco-Roman believers in the mysteries.

Abner was compelled to live a life of isolation, being head of a church which was without standing at Jerusalem. Abner had dared to defy James, who was subsequently supported by Peter, and such conduct effectively created separation from all the former associates. Then Abner dared to withstand Paul. While wholly sympathetic with Paul in the mission to the gentiles, and though supporting Paul in contentions with the church at Jerusalem, Abner bitterly opposed the version of Jesus' teachings which Paul elected to preach, eventually denouncing Paul as the "clever corrupter of the life teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, the Child of the living Creator."

During the later years of Abner and for some time after, the people at Philadelphia held more strictly to the religion of Jesus, as it was lived and taught, than any other group on earth.

Abner lived to be 89 years old, dying at Philadelphia on the 21st day of November, C.E. 74. And to the very end Abner was a faithful believer in, and teacher of, the doctrine of the realm of the Creator.

Paper 167

The Visit to Philadelphia

Throughout this period of the Perea ministry, when mention is made of Jesus and the apostles visiting the various localities where the seventy were at work, it should be recalled that, as a rule, only ten were with Jesus since it was the practice to leave at least two of the apostles at Pella to instruct the multitude. As Jesus prepared to go on to Philadelphia, Peter and Andrew returned to the Pella encampment to teach the crowds assembled there. When the Master left the camp at Pella to visit Perea, it was not uncommon for from three to five hundred to follow. When arriving at Philadelphia, Jesus was accompanied by over six hundred followers.

No miracles had attended the recent preaching tour through the Decapolis, and, except for the cleansing of the ten lepers, thus far there had been no miracles on this Perea mission. This was a period when the teachings were proclaimed with power, without miracles, and most of the time without the personal presence of Jesus or even of the apostles.

Jesus and the ten apostles arrived at Philadelphia on Wednesday, February 22, and spent Thursday and Friday resting from their recent travels and labors. That Friday night James spoke in the synagogue, and a general council was called for the following evening. They celebrated the progress at Philadelphia and among the near-by villages. The messengers of David also brought word of the further advancement of the work throughout Palestine, as well as good news from Alexandria and Damascus.

1. Breakfast with the Pharisees

A very wealthy and influential Pharisee who had accepted the teachings of Abner lived in Philadelphia, and invited Jesus Sabbath morning for breakfast. It was known that Jesus was expected in Philadelphia at this time; so a large number of visitors, among them many Pharisees, had come from Jerusalem and from elsewhere. Accordingly, about forty of these Pharisees and a few lawyers were invited to this breakfast, which had been arranged in honor of the Master.

As Jesus lingered by the door speaking with Abner, and after the host had been seated, one of the leading Pharisees of Jerusalem, a member of the Sanhedrin, came into the room and went directly to the seat of honor at the left of the host. But since this place had been reserved for the Master and that on the right for Abner, the host beckoned the Jerusalem Pharisee to sit four seats to the left, and this dignitary was much offended, having not received the seat of honor.

Soon they were all seated and enjoying visiting among themselves since the majority of those present were disciples of Jesus or else were friendly to the teachings. Only the enemies took notice of the fact that Jesus did not observe the ceremonial washing of hands before sitting down to eat. Abner washed at the beginning of the meal but not during the serving.

Near the end of the meal a person long afflicted with a chronic disease and now in a dropsical condition came in from the street. This person was a believer, having recently been baptized by Abner's associates, and made no request of Jesus for healing. But the Master knew full well that this afflicted person came to

this breakfast hoping to escape the crowds and be more likely to engage Jesus' attention. This person knew that few miracles were being performed then, but had hoped to appeal to the Master's compassion. And this was not mistaken, for, when the afflicted person entered the room, both Jesus and the self-righteous Pharisee from Jerusalem took notice. The Pharisee was not slow to voice resentment that such a person would be permitted to enter the room. But Jesus smiled so benignly that the sick person drew near and sat down on the floor. As the meal was ending, the Master looked over the guests and then, after glancing significantly at the person with dropsy, said: "My friends, teachers in Israel and learned lawyers, I would like to ask you a question: Is it lawful to heal the sick and afflicted on the Sabbath day, or not?" But those who were present knew Jesus too well; they held their peace; they did not answer this question.

Then Jesus went over to where the sick person sat and said: "Rise and go your way. You have not asked to be healed, but I know the desire of your heart and the faith of your soul." Before the person left the room, Jesus sat and, addressing those at the table, said: "Such works the Creator does, not to tempt you into the new realm, but to be revealed to those who are already there. You can perceive that it would be like the Creator to do these things because which one of you, having a favorite animal that fell in the well on the Sabbath day, would not go right out and draw it up?" And since no one would answer, and as the host evidently approved of what was going on, Jesus stood up and spoke to all present: "When you are invited to a marriage feast, do not sit down in the chief seat in case a more honored person than you has been invited, and the host will have to come to you and request that you give your place to this other and honored guest. In this event, with shame you will be required to take a lower place at the table. When you are invited to a feast, it would be the part of wisdom, on arriving at the festive table, to seek for the lowest place and take your seat there, so that the host, when looking over the guests, may say to you: 'My friend, why do you sit in the seat of the least? come up higher'; and so such a one will have glory in the presence of the other guests. Do not forget, those who exalt themselves will be humbled, while those who truly humble themselves will be honored. Therefore, when you entertain at dinner or give a supper, do not always invite your friends, your family, or your rich neighbors so that they may invite you to their feasts in return. When you give a banquet, sometimes invite the poor, the maimed, and the blind. In this way you will be blessed in your heart, for you know that the afflicted cannot repay you for your loving ministry."

2. Parable of the Great Supper

As Jesus finished speaking at the breakfast table of the Pharisee, one of the lawyers present, wanting to relieve the silence, thoughtlessly said: "Blessed is one who shall eat bread in the realm of Yahweh" — that being a common saying of those days. And then Jesus spoke a parable, which even the friendly host was compelled to take to heart.

"A certain ruler gave a great supper, and having invited many guests, dispatched the servants at suppertime to say to those who were invited, 'Come, for everything is now ready.' And they all with one accord began to make excuses. The first said, 'I have just bought a farm, and I must go to prove it; Please have me excused.' Another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I must go to receive them; Please have me excused.' And another said, 'I have just married, and therefore I cannot come.' So the servants went back and reported this to their master. The master of the house, on hearing this, was very angry, and turning to the servants, said: 'I have prepared this marriage feast and all is in readiness for my guests, but they have spurned my invitation; they have gone to their own homes and they even show disrespect to my servants

who invite them to my feast. Go out quickly into the streets of the city and out into the highways and bring the poor and the outcast, the blind and the lame, so that the marriage feast may have guests.’ And the servants did as their master commanded, and even then there was room for more guests. Then the master said to the servants: ‘Go out into the roads and the countryside and invite those who are there to come in so that my house may be filled. I say that none of those who were first invited will taste of my supper.’ And the servants did as their master commanded, and the house was filled.”

And when the guests heard these words, they departed. At least one of the sneering Pharisees present that morning comprehended the meaning of this parable, and was baptized that day and made public confession of faith. Abner preached on this parable that night at the general council of believers.

The next day all of the apostles engaged in the philosophic exercise of endeavoring to interpret the meaning of this parable of the great supper. Jesus, although listening with interest to all of these differing interpretations, steadfastly refused to offer them further help in understanding the parable, only saying, “Let everyone find out the meaning for themselves and in their own souls.”

3. The Person with the Spirit of Infirmity

Abner had arranged for the Master to teach in the synagogue on this Sabbath day for the first time since the synagogues had all been closed to Jesus’ teachings by order of the Sanhedrin. At the conclusion of the service Jesus looked down at an elderly person who wore a downcast expression, and whose body was bent over. This person had long been fear-ridden, and had lost all joy. Jesus stepped down from the pulpit, went over and, touching the bowed-over form on the shoulder, said: “If you would only believe, you could be wholly loosed from your spirit of infirmity.” And this person, who had been bowed down and bound up by the depressions of fear for more than eighteen years, believed the words of the Master and by faith straightened up immediately, speaking out and glorifying the Creator.

While this person’s affliction was wholly mental, the bowed-over form being the result of a depressed mind, the people thought that Jesus had healed a real physical disorder. Although the congregation of the synagogue at Philadelphia was friendly toward the teachings of Jesus, the chief ruler of the synagogue was an unfriendly Pharisee. While sharing the opinion of the congregation that Jesus had healed a physical disorder, and being indignant because Jesus had presumed to do such a thing on the Sabbath, the chief ruler stood up before the congregation and said: “Are there not six days in which people should do all their work? In these working days come and be healed, but not on the Sabbath day.”

When the unfriendly ruler had spoken, Jesus returned to the speaker’s platform and said: “Why play the part of hypocrites? Do not all of you, on the Sabbath, free their animals from the stalls and lead them out for watering? If such a service is permissible on the Sabbath day, should not this person who has been bound down by evil these eighteen years, be freed from this bondage and led to partake of the waters of liberty and life, even on this Sabbath day?” And as the afflicted person continued to glorify the Creator, the critic was put to shame, and the congregation rejoiced in the healing.

As a result of making public criticism of Jesus on this Sabbath the chief ruler of the synagogue was deposed, and a follower of Jesus was put in place.

Jesus frequently delivered such victims of fear from their spirit of infirmity, from their depression of mind, and from their bondage of fear. But the people thought that all such afflictions were either physical disorders or possession of evil spirits.

Jesus taught again in the synagogue on Sunday, and many were baptized by Abner at noon on that day in the river which flowed south of the city. The next day Jesus and the ten apostles would have started back to the Pella encampment except for the arrival of one of David's messengers, who brought an urgent message to Jesus from Bethany, near Jerusalem.

4. The Message from Bethany

Very late on Sunday night, February 26, a runner from Bethany arrived at Philadelphia, bringing a message from Martha and Mary which said, "Master, Lazarus is very sick." This message came at the end of the evening conference and just as Jesus was taking leave of the apostles for the night. At first Jesus made no reply. One of those strange interludes occurred, a time when Jesus appeared to be in communication with something outside and beyond, and then, looking up, said to the messenger in the hearing of the apostles, "This sickness is really not to the death. Do not doubt that it may be used to glorify the Creator."

Jesus was very fond of Martha, Mary and Lazarus; loving them with a fervent affection. The first and human thought that came was to go to their assistance at once, but another idea occurred to Jesus' combined mind. Having almost given up hope that the Jewish leaders at Jerusalem would ever accept the new teachings, Jesus still loved the Jewish people, and a plan now developed whereby the scribes and Pharisees of Jerusalem might have one more chance to accept these teachings; and Jesus decided, the Creator willing, to make this last appeal to Jerusalem the most profound and stupendous outward working of the entire earth career. The Jews clung to the idea of a wonder-working deliverer. And while refusing to stoop to the performance of material wonders or to the enactment of temporal exhibitions of political power, Jesus now asked the Creator's consent for the manifestation of previously unexhibited power over life and death.

The Jews were in the habit of burying their dead on the day of their demise; this was a necessary practice in such a warm climate. It often happened that they put in the tomb one who was merely comatose, so that on the second or even the third day, they would come out of the tomb. But it was the belief of the Jews that, while the spirit or soul might linger near the body for two or three days, it never stayed after the third day; that decay was well advanced by the fourth day, and that no one ever returned from the tomb after the lapse of such a period. And it was for these reasons that Jesus waited two full days in Philadelphia before leaving for Bethany.

Accordingly, early on Wednesday morning Jesus said to the apostles: "Let us prepare at once to go into Judea again." And when the apostles heard their Master say this, they drew off by themselves to consult with one another. James assumed the direction of the conference, and they all agreed that it was foolish to allow Jesus to go back into Judea, and they came back as one and so stated. James said: "Master, you were in Jerusalem a few weeks back, and the leaders sought your death, while the people were ready to stone you. At that time you gave these people their chance to receive the truth, and we will not permit you to go again into Judea."

Then Jesus said: “But do you not understand that there are twelve hours of the day in which work may safely be done? A person who walks in the day does not stumble because there is light. A person who walks in the night is liable to stumble since there is no light. As long as my day lasts, I do not fear to enter Judea. I would do one more mighty work for these Jews; I would give them one more chance to believe, even on their own terms, the visible manifestation of the power of the Creator. Besides, do you not realize that our friend has fallen asleep, and I go to awake Lazarus!”

Then one of the apostles said: “Master, if Lazarus is only asleep, then Lazarus will surely recover.” It was the custom of the Jews at that time to speak of death as a form of sleep, but as the apostles did not understand that Lazarus had died, Jesus now said plainly: “Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that you will now have new cause to believe in me; and by that which you will witness, you should all be strengthened in preparation for the day when I take leave of you and go to the Creator.”

When they could not persuade Jesus to refrain from going into Judea, and when some of the apostles were reluctant even to go along, Thomas addressed the others, saying: “We have related our fears, but the Master is determined to go to Bethany. I am satisfied it means that Jesus will surely be killed, but if that is the Master’s choice, then let us conduct ourselves like people of courage; let us go so that we may also die.” And so, in matters requiring deliberate and sustained courage, Thomas was always the mainstay of the twelve apostles.

5. On the Way to Bethany

On the way to Judea Jesus was followed by a company of almost fifty friends and enemies. At their noon lunchtime, on Wednesday, Jesus talked to the apostles and this group of followers on the “Terms of Salvation,” and at the end of this lesson told the parable of the Pharisee and the publican (a tax collector). Jesus said: “You see, then, that the Creator gives eternal life as a free gift to all who have the faith to receive membership in the divine family. There is nothing one can do to earn this gift. Works of self-righteousness cannot buy the favor of the Creator, and much praying in public will not atone for lack of living faith in the heart. You may deceive others by your outward service, but the Creator looks into your souls. What I am telling you is well illustrated by two people who went into the temple to pray, the one a Pharisee and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed: ‘Yahweh, I thank you that I am not like others, extortioners, unlearned, unjust, adulterers, or even like this publican. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.’ But the publican, standing far off, would not so much as look up but pleaded and said, ‘Yahweh be merciful to me a sinner.’ I tell you that the publican went home with the Creator’s approval rather than the Pharisee, for those who exalt themselves will be humbled, but those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

That night, in Jericho, the unfriendly Pharisees sought to entrap the Master by asking questions about marriage and divorce, as did others one time in Galilee, but Jesus artfully avoided their efforts and said nothing to conflict with their laws concerning divorce. The story about the publican and the Pharisee illustrated good and bad religion. The Pharisee applied the lowest standard, the publican the highest ideal. Devotion, to the Pharisee, was a means of inducing self-righteous inactivity and the assurance of false spiritual security; devotion, to the publican, was a means of coming to the realization of the need for

repentance, confession, and the acceptance, by faith, of merciful forgiveness. The Pharisee sought justice; the publican sought mercy. The law of the universe is: Ask and you will receive; seek and you will find.

Jesus, while refusing to be drawn into a controversy with the Pharisees concerning divorce, did proclaim a positive teaching of the highest ideals regarding marriage, exalting marriage as the most ideal and highest of all human relationships. Likewise, Jesus intimated strong disapproval of the lax and unfair divorce practices of the Jerusalem Jews, who at that time permitted divorce for the most trifling of reasons.

The Pharisees had even gone so far as to teach that divorce of this easy variety was a special dispensation granted to the Jewish people, particularly the Pharisees. And so, while refusing to make pronouncements dealing with marriage and divorce, Jesus denounced these shameful violations of the marriage relationship and pointed out their injustice.

Jesus, while not offering new mandates governing marriage and divorce, did urge the Jews to live up to their own laws and higher teachings, constantly appealing to the written Scriptures in an effort to improve their practices along these social lines. While upholding the high and ideal concepts of marriage, Jesus skillfully avoided clashing with these questioners about the social practices represented by either their written laws or their much-cherished divorce privileges.

It was very difficult for the apostles to understand the Master's reluctance to make positive pronouncements relative to scientific, social, economic, and political situations. They did not fully realize that the bestowal mission was exclusively concerned with revelations of spiritual and religious truths.

After Jesus had talked about marriage and divorce, later on that evening the apostles privately asked many additional questions, and the answers to these inquiries relieved their minds of many misconceptions. At the conclusion of this conference Jesus said: "Marriage is honorable and is to be desired by everyone. The fact that I pursue my earth mission alone is in no way a reflection on the desirability of marriage. That I should do this is the Creator's will, but this same Creator has directed the creation of two genders, and it is the divine will that people should find their highest service and consequent joy in the establishment of homes for the reception and training of children, in the creation of whom these parents become copartners with the Makers of the universe."

And in this way Jesus relieved the minds of the apostles of many worries about marriage and cleared up many misunderstandings regarding divorce, at the same time doing much to exalt their ideals of social union and to augment their respect for the home.

6. Blessing the Little Children

That evening Jesus' message regarding marriage and the blessedness of children spread all over Jericho, so that the next morning, long before Jesus and the apostles prepared to leave, even before breakfast time, scores of parents came to where Jesus lodged, bringing their children in their arms and leading them by their hands, and asked for Jesus' blessing on the little ones. When the apostles went out to view this assemblage of parents with their children they tried to send them away, but these parents refused to leave until the Master laid hands on their children and blessed them. And when the apostles loudly rebuked these

parents, Jesus, hearing the tumult, came out and indignantly reproved them, saying: "Let the little children come to me; do not forbid them, for they are of the realm of the Creator. Whoever does not receive the realm of the Creator as a little child will hardly enter there to grow up to the full stature of spiritual adulthood."

And the Master, having spoken to the apostles, received all of the children, laying hands on them while speaking words of courage and hope to their parents.

Jesus often talked to the apostles about the celestial mansions and taught that the advancing children of the Creator must mature spiritually as children grow up physically on this world. And so the sacred often appears to be the common, as on this day these children and their parents little realized that the onlooking intelligences of Nebadon saw the children of Jericho playing with the Creator of a universe.

Gender equality in Palestine was much improved by Jesus' teaching; and so it would have been throughout the world if the followers had not departed so far from that which was painstakingly taught them.

It was also at Jericho, in connection with the discussion of the early religious training of children in habits of divine worship, that Jesus impressed on the apostles the great value of beauty as an influence leading to the urge to worship, especially with children. The Master, by precept and example, taught the value of worshipping the Creator in the midst of the natural surroundings of creation, preferring to commune with the Creator among the trees and the lowly creatures of the natural world. Jesus rejoiced to contemplate the Creator through the inspiring spectacle of the starry realms.

When it is not possible to worship in the surroundings of nature, people should do their best to provide houses of beauty, sanctuaries of appealing simplicity and artistic embellishment, so that the highest of human emotions may be aroused in association with the intellectual approach to spiritual communion with the Creator. Truth, beauty, and sacredness are powerful and effective aids to true worship. But spirit communion is not promoted by mere massive ornateness and embellishment with elaborate and ostentatious art. Beauty is most religious when it is most simple and nature-like. How unfortunate that little children should have their first introduction to concepts of public worship in cold and barren rooms so devoid of beauty and so empty of all suggestion of happiness and inspiring sacredness! Children should be introduced to worship in nature's outdoors and later accompany their parents to public houses of religious assembly which are at least as materially attractive and artistically beautiful as the home.

7. The Talk About Angels

As they journeyed up the hills from Jericho to Bethany, Nathaniel walked most of the way by the side of Jesus, and their discussion of children in relation to the realm of the Creator led indirectly to the consideration of the ministry of angels. Nathaniel finally asked the Master this question: "Seeing that the high priest is a Sadducee, and since the Sadducees do not believe in angels, what should we teach the people regarding these ministers?" Then, among other things, Jesus said:

"The angelic hosts are a separate order of created beings; they are entirely different from the material order of mortal creatures, and they function as a distinct group of universe intelligences. Angels are not of that

group of creatures called ‘the Children of the Creator’; neither are they the glorified spirits of mortals who have gone on to progress through the mansions on high. Angels are a direct creation, and they do not reproduce themselves. The angelic hosts have only a spiritual kinship with the human race. As mortals progress in the journey to the Creator in Paradise, they traverse a state of being at one time analogous to the state of the angels, but mortals never become angels.

“The angels never die, as mortals do. The angels are immortal unless they become involved in sin as some of them did with the deceptions of Lucifer. The angels are the spirit servants in the universe, and they are neither all-wise nor all-powerful. But all of the loyal angels are truly pure and holy.

“And do you not remember that I said to you once before that, if you had your spiritual eyes anointed, you would then see the angels ascending and descending? It is by the ministry of the angels that one world may be kept in touch with other worlds. Have I not repeatedly told you that I have other sheep not of this fold? And these angels are not the spies of the spirit world who watch you and then go to tell the Creator the thoughts of your heart and to report on your deeds. The Creator, whose own spirit lives within you, has no need of such service. But these angelic spirits do function to keep some parts of the universe informed concerning the doings of other and remote parts. And many of the angels, while functioning in the government of the Creator and the universes of the Children of the Creator, are assigned to the service of the human races. When I taught you that many of these seraphim are ministering spirits, I did not speak in figurative language nor in poetic strains. And all this is true, regardless of your difficulty in comprehending such matters.

“Many of these angels are engaged in the work of helping mortals. Have I not told you of the seraphic joy when one soul elects to forsake sin and begin the search for the Creator? I even told you of the joy in the *presence of the angels* over one sinner who repents, indicating the existence of other and higher orders of celestial beings who are likewise concerned in the spiritual welfare and with the divine progress of mortals.

“These angels are also very much concerned with the means by which mortals’ spirits are released from their material bodies and their souls escorted to the mansions above. Angels are the sure guides of the souls of mortals during that uncharted and indefinite period of time which intervenes between the death of the body and the new life in the spirit abodes.”

And Jesus would have spoken further with Nathaniel regarding the ministry of angels, but was interrupted by the approach of Martha, who had been informed that they were drawing near to Bethany by friends who had observed them ascending the hills to the east. And she now hurried to greet them.

Paper 168

The Resurrection of Lazarus

It was shortly after noon when Martha started out to meet Jesus, who was coming over the brow of the hill near Bethany. Lazarus had been dead four days and had been laid away in their private tomb at the far end of the garden late on Sunday afternoon. The stone at the entrance of the tomb had been rolled in place on the morning of this day, Thursday.

When Martha and Mary sent word to Jesus concerning Lazarus's illness, they were confident the Master would do something about it. They knew that Lazarus was desperately sick, but they had such confidence in Jesus' power to heal disease that by speaking just a few words it would be possible to immediately make Lazarus whole. And when Lazarus died a few hours after the messenger left Bethany for Philadelphia, they reasoned that it was because the Master did not learn of the illness until it was too late, until Lazarus had already been dead for several hours.

But they, with all of their believing friends, were greatly puzzled by the message which the runner brought back to Bethany Tuesday morning. The messenger insisted that Jesus had said, "...this sickness is really not to the death." Neither could they understand why Jesus sent no word to them nor otherwise offered assistance.

Many friends from near-by towns and others from Jerusalem came over to provide comfort. Lazarus, Martha and Mary were the children of well-to-do and honorable Jews who had been the leading residents of the little village of Bethany. And in spite of the fact that all three had long been ardent followers of Jesus, they were highly respected by all who knew them. They had inherited extensive vineyards and olive orchards in this vicinity, and that they were wealthy was further attested to by the fact that they could afford a private burial tomb on their own land. Both of their parents had already been laid away in this tomb.

Mary had given up the thought of Jesus' coming and was abandoned to grief, but Martha clung to the hope that Jesus would come, even up to the time on that very morning when they rolled the stone in front of the tomb and sealed the entrance, even then instructing a neighbor to keep watch down the Jericho road from the brow of the hill to the east of Bethany; and it was this neighbor who brought news to Martha that Jesus and the others were approaching.

Martha met Jesus and, falling to the ground, exclaimed, "Master, if you had been here Lazarus would not have died!" Martha expressed no doubt, nor ventured to criticize or question the Master's conduct as related to Lazarus's death. Jesus reached down and, lifting Martha up, said, "Only have faith, Martha, and Lazarus will rise again." Then Martha answered: "I know that Lazarus will rise again in the resurrection of the last day; and even now I believe that whatever you ask of the Creator will be given to you."

Then Jesus said, looking straight into the eyes of Martha: "I am the resurrection and the life; those who believe in me, though they die, yet they will live. In truth, whoever lives and believes in me will never really die. Martha, do you believe this?" And Martha answered the Master: "Yes, I have long believed that you are the Deliverer, the Child of the living Creator, even the One who would come to this world."

Since Jesus had inquired for Mary, Martha went at once into the house and, whispering to Mary, said, "The Master is here and has asked for you." And Mary, on hearing this, rose up quickly and hurried out to meet Jesus, who still waited at the place, some distance from the house, where first meeting Martha. The friends who were there supposed that Mary was going to the tomb to weep, and they went also.

Many of those present were Jesus' bitter enemies. That is why Martha had come out alone, and had gone in secret to inform Mary. Martha, while craving to see Jesus, desired to avoid any possible unpleasantness which might be caused by the presence of a large group of the Jerusalem enemies. It had been Martha's intention to remain in the house with their friends while Mary went to greet Jesus, but instead they all followed Mary and found themselves unexpectedly in the presence of the Master.

Mary, on seeing Jesus, fell to the ground, exclaiming, "If you had only been here, Lazarus would not have died!" And Jesus, seeing how they all grieved over the death of Lazarus, was moved with compassion.

When the mourners saw that Mary had gone to greet Jesus, they withdrew for a short distance while both Martha and Mary talked with the Master and received further words of comfort and exhortation to maintain strong faith in the Creator and complete resignation to the divine will.

The human mind of Jesus was moved by the contention between love for Lazarus, Martha and Mary and disdain and contempt for the outward show of affection manifested by some of these unbelieving and murderously intentioned Jews. Jesus indignantly resented the show of forced and outward mourning for Lazarus by some of these professed friends. Some of these Jews, however, were sincere in their mourning, for they were real friends of the family.

1. At the Tomb of Lazarus

Jesus spent a few moments in comforting Martha and Mary apart from the mourners, then asked them, "Where have you laid Lazarus?" Martha said, "Come and see." And the Master, following on in silence, wept. When the friendly Jews who followed after them saw these tears, one of them said: "See how Jesus loved Lazarus. Could not the one who opened the eyes of the blind have kept Lazarus from dying?" By this time they were standing before the family tomb, a small natural cave, or declivity, in the ledge of rock which rose up some thirty feet at the far end of the garden plot.

It is difficult to explain to human minds just why Jesus wept. While we have access to the registration of the combined human emotions and divine thoughts as of record in the mind of the Personalized Adjuster, we are not altogether certain about the real cause of these emotional manifestations. We are inclined to believe that Jesus wept because of a number of thoughts and feelings at this time, such as:

1. Feeling a genuine and sorrowful sympathy for Martha and Mary.
2. Being disturbed by the presence of the crowd of mourners, some sincere and some merely pretenders. Jesus always resented these outward exhibitions of mourning, while at the same time knowing that Martha and Mary loved Lazarus and had faith in the survival of believers. These conflicting emotions may possibly explain why Jesus groaned as they came near the tomb.

3. Truly hesitating about bringing Lazarus back to the mortal life. While the family really needed Lazarus, Jesus regretted having to summon this friend back to experience the bitter persecution which Lazarus would have to endure as a result of being the subject of the greatest of all demonstrations of the divine power of the Child of the Creator.

And now we may relate an interesting and instructive fact: Although this narrative unfolds as an apparently natural and normal event in human affairs, it has some very interesting aspects. While the messenger went to Jesus on Sunday, telling of Lazarus's illness, and while Jesus sent word that it was "not to the death," at the same time Jesus went in person to Bethany and even asked, "Where have you laid Lazarus?" Even though all of this seems to indicate that the Master was proceeding after the manner of this life and in accordance with the limited knowledge of the human mind, nevertheless, the records of the universe reveal that Jesus' Personalized Adjuster issued orders for the indefinite detention of Lazarus's Thought Adjuster on the planet subsequent to Lazarus's death, and that this order was made of record just fifteen minutes before Lazarus died.

Did the divine mind of Jesus know in advance that Lazarus would be raised from the dead? We do not know. We know only what we are placing on record.

Many of Jesus' enemies were inclined to sneer at these manifestations of affection, and they said among themselves: "If Jesus thought so much of Lazarus, what was the reason for waiting so long before coming to Bethany? Why did Jesus not save this dear friend from death? What is the good of healing strangers in Galilee if it is not possible to save a beloved friend?" And in many other ways they mocked and made light of the teachings and works of Jesus.

And so, on this Thursday afternoon at about half past two o'clock, the stage was set in this little hamlet of Bethany for the enactment of the greatest of all works connected with the earth ministry of Michael of Nebadon, the greatest manifestation of divine power during this mortal incarnation, since Jesus' own resurrection occurred after having been liberated from the bonds of mortal habitation.

The small group assembled before Lazarus's tomb little realized the presence near at hand of a vast concourse of all orders of celestial beings assembled under the leadership of Gabriel and now in waiting, by direction of the Personalized Adjuster of Jesus, vibrating with expectancy and ready to execute the bidding of their beloved Sovereign.

When Jesus spoke those words of command, "Take away the stone," the assembled celestial hosts prepared to enact the drama of the resurrection of Lazarus. Such a form of resurrection involves difficulties of execution which far transcend the usual technique of the resurrection of mortal creatures in morontia form and requires far more celestial personalities and a far greater organization of universe facilities.

When Martha and Mary heard this command of Jesus directing that the stone in front of the tomb be rolled away, they were filled with conflicting emotions. Mary hoped that Lazarus was to be raised from the dead, but Martha, while to some extent sharing Mary's faith, was more motivated by the fear that Lazarus would not be presentable to Jesus, the apostles, and their friends. Martha said: "Must we roll away the stone? Lazarus has now been dead four days, so that by this time decay of the body has begun." Martha was also

not certain as to why the Master had requested that the stone be removed, thinking that perhaps Jesus wanted only to take one last look at Lazarus. Martha's attitude was not settled and constant. As they hesitated to roll away the stone, Jesus said: "Did I not tell you that this sickness was not to the death? Have I not come to fulfill my promise? And after I came to you, did I not say that, if you would only believe, you would see the glory of the Creator? Why do you doubt? How long will it be before you will believe?"

When Jesus had finished speaking, the apostles, with the assistance of willing neighbors, rolled the stone away from the entrance to the tomb.

It was the common belief of the Jews that the drop of gall on the point of the sword of the angel of death began to work by the end of the third day, so that it was taking full effect on the fourth day. They allowed that the soul might linger about the tomb until the end of the third day, seeking to reanimate the dead body; but they firmly believed that such a soul had gone on to the abode of departed spirits before the fourth day had dawned.

These beliefs and opinions regarding the dead and the departure of the spirits of the dead served to make sure, in the minds of all who were now present at Lazarus's tomb and subsequently to all who might hear of what was about to occur, that this was really and truly a case of the raising of the dead by the personal working of one who claimed to be "the resurrection and the life."

2. The Resurrection of Lazarus

As this company of some forty-five mortals stood before the tomb, they could dimly see the form of Lazarus, wrapped in linen bandages, resting on the right lower niche of the burial cave. While these earth creatures stood there in almost breathless silence, a vast host of celestial beings had swung into their places preparatory to answering the signal for action when it should be given by Gabriel, their commander.

Jesus looked up and said: "My Creator Parent, I am thankful that you heard and granted my request. I know that you always hear me, but because of those who stand here with me, I speak with you so that they may believe that you have sent me into the world, and so that they may know that you are working with me in what we are about to do." And Jesus, after praying, cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!"

Though these human observers remained motionless, the vast celestial host was moving in unified action in obedience to the Creator's word. In just twelve seconds of earth time the formerly lifeless form of Lazarus began to move and presently sat up on the edge of the stone shelf on which it had rested.

All, except the apostles, with Martha and Mary, fled to the house. They were pale with fright and overcome with astonishment. While some stayed, many hurried to their homes.

Lazarus greeted Jesus and the apostles and questioned having awakened in the garden. Martha explained that Lazarus had died, been buried, and resurrected, noting that death had occurred on Sunday and it was now Thursday, Lazarus having no consciousness of time since Sunday.

As Lazarus came out of the tomb, the Personalized Adjuster of Jesus, now chief of the Personalized Adjusters in this local universe, commanded the former Adjuster of Lazarus, now in waiting, to once again take up residence in Lazarus' mind and soul.

Then Lazarus went over to Jesus and, with Martha and Mary, knelt at the Master's feet to give thanks and offer praise to the Creator. Jesus lifted Lazarus up, saying: "My dear friend, what has happened to you will also be experienced by all who believe except that they will be resurrected in a more glorious form. You will be a living witness of the truth which I spoke — I am the resurrection and the life. But let us all now go into the house and have something to eat."

As they walked toward the house, Gabriel dismissed the extra groups of the assembled celestial host while making record of the first instance on Urantia, and the last, where a mortal creature had been resurrected in the likeness of a physical body that had died.

Lazarus could hardly comprehend what had occurred, remembering having been very sick, but only recalling having fallen asleep and being awakened, and was never able to tell anything about these four days in the tomb while wholly unconscious. Time is nonexistent to those who sleep the sleep of death.

Though many believed in Jesus as a result of this mighty work, others only hardened their hearts. By noon the next day this story had spread over all Jerusalem. Scores of people went to Bethany to talk with Lazarus, and the alarmed and disconcerted Pharisees hastily called a meeting of the Sanhedrin so that they might determine what should be done about these new developments.

3. Meeting of the Sanhedrin

Even though Lazarus' testimony of having been raised from the dead did much to consolidate the faith of the mass of believers in the doctrine of the new realm, it had little or no influence on the attitude of the religious leaders and rulers at Jerusalem except to hasten their decision to destroy Jesus.

At one o'clock the next day, Friday, the Sanhedrin met to deliberate further on the question, "What shall we do with Jesus of Nazareth?" After more than two hours of discussion and acrimonious debate, one Pharisee presented a resolution depicting Jesus as a menace to all Israel and formally committing the Sanhedrin to the decision of death, without trial and in defiance of all precedent.

Time and again this august body of Jewish leaders had decreed that Jesus be apprehended and brought to trial on charges of blasphemy and numerous other accusations of flouting the Jewish sacred law. They had once before even gone so far as to declare that Jesus should die, but this was the first time the Sanhedrin had gone on record as desiring to decree death in advance of a trial. But this resolution did not come to a vote since fourteen members of the Sanhedrin resigned in a body when such an unheard-of action was proposed. While these resignations were not formally acted on for almost two weeks, this group of fourteen withdrew from the Sanhedrin on that day, never again to sit in the council. When these resignations were subsequently acted on, five other members were thrown out because their associates believed they entertained friendly feelings toward Jesus. With the ejection of these nineteen people the Sanhedrin was in a position to try and to condemn Jesus with a solidarity bordering on unanimity.

The following week Lazarus, Martha and Mary were summoned to appear before the Sanhedrin. When their testimony had been heard, no doubt could be entertained that Lazarus had been raised from the dead. Though the transactions of the Sanhedrin virtually admitted the resurrection of Lazarus, the record carried a resolution attributing this and all other wonders worked by Jesus to the power of the evil one, with whom Jesus was declared to be in league.

No matter what the source of such wonder-working power, these Jewish leaders were persuaded that, if Jesus were not immediately stopped, very soon all the common people would become believers; and further, that serious complications with the Roman authorities would arise since so many of the believers regarded Jesus as the Messiah, Israel's deliverer.

It was at this same meeting of the Sanhedrin that Caiaphas, the high priest, first gave expression to that old Jewish adage, which was many times repeated: "It is better that one person die, than that the community perish."

Jesus, while having received warning of the doings of the Sanhedrin on this dark Friday afternoon, was not in the least bothered and continued resting over the Sabbath with friends in Bethpage, a hamlet near Bethany. Early Sunday morning Jesus and the apostles assembled, by prearrangement, at the home of Lazarus, and taking leave of the Bethany family, they started on their journey back to the Pella encampment.

4. The Answer to Prayer

On the way from Bethany to Pella the apostles asked Jesus many questions, all of which the Master freely answered except those involving the details of the resurrection of the dead. Such concerns were beyond the comprehension capacity of the apostles, and the Master declined to discuss these questions with them. Since they had departed from Bethany in secret, they were alone. Jesus therefore embraced the opportunity to say many things to the ten which would prepare them for the trying days just ahead.

The apostles were much stirred up in their minds and spent considerable time discussing their recent experiences as they were related to prayer and its answering. They all recalled Jesus' statement to the Bethany messenger at Philadelphia, saying plainly, "This sickness is not really to the death." And yet, in spite of this promise, Lazarus actually died. All that day, again and again, they reverted to the discussion of this question of the answer to prayer.

Jesus' answers to their many questions may be summarized as follows:

1. Prayer is an expression of the finite mind in an effort to approach the Infinite. The making of a prayer must, therefore, be limited by the knowledge, wisdom, and attributes of the finite; likewise the answer must be conditioned by the vision, aims, ideals, and prerogatives of the Infinite. An unbroken continuity of material phenomena between the making of a prayer and the reception of the full spiritual answer can never be observed.

2. When a prayer is apparently unanswered, the delay often anticipates a better answer, although one which is for some good reason greatly delayed. When Jesus said that "this sickness is really not to the death," Lazarus had already been dead eleven hours. No sincere prayer is denied an answer except when the

superior viewpoint of the spiritual world has devised a better answer, an answer which meets the petition of the spirit as contrasted with the prayer of the mind.

3. The prayers of time, when expressed by the spirit and in faith, are often so vast and all-encompassing that they can be answered only in eternity; the finite petition is sometimes so lacking of a grasp of the Infinite that the answer must be postponed to await the creation of adequate capacity for receptivity; the prayer of faith may be so all-embracing that the answer can be received only on Paradise.

4. The answers to the prayer of the mortal mind are often of such a nature that they can be received and recognized only after that same praying mind has attained the immortal state. The prayer of the material being can many times be answered only when such an individual has progressed to the spirit level.

5. The prayer of a Creator-knowing person may be so distorted by ignorance and so deformed by superstition that the answer would be highly undesirable. Then the intervening spirit beings must translate such a prayer so that, when the answer arrives, the petitioner wholly fails to recognize it as the answer.

6. All true prayers are addressed to spiritual beings, and all such petitions must be answered in spiritual terms, and all such answers must consist in spiritual realities. Spirit beings cannot provide material answers to the spirit petitions of even material beings. Material beings can pray effectively only when they "pray in the spirit."

7. No prayer can hope for an answer unless it is born of the spirit and nurtured by faith. Your sincere faith implies that you have virtually granted your prayer hearers in advance the full right to answer your petitions in accordance with that supreme wisdom and that divine love which your faith depicts as always actuating those beings to whom you pray.

8. The child is always justified when presuming to petition the parents; and the parents are always within their parental obligations to the immature child when their superior wisdom dictates that the answer to the child's prayer be delayed, modified, segregated, transcended, or postponed to another stage of spiritual ascension.

9. Do not hesitate to pray the prayers of spirit longing; do not doubt that you will receive the answer to your petitions. These answers will be on deposit, awaiting your achievement of those future spiritual levels of actual cosmic attainment, on this world or on others, where it will become possible for you to recognize and appropriate the long-waiting answers to your earlier but ill-timed petitions.

10. All genuine spirit-born petitions are certain of an answer. Ask and you will receive. But you should remember that you are progressive creatures of time and space; therefore you must constantly deal with the time-space factor in the experience of your personal reception of the full answers to your manifold prayers and petitions.

5. What Became of Lazarus

Lazarus remained at the Bethany home, being the center of great interest to many sincere believers and to numerous curious individuals, until the days of the crucifixion of Jesus, at which time Lazarus received

warning of having been condemned to death by the Sanhedrin. The rulers of the Jews were determined to put a stop to the further spread of the teachings of Jesus, and they judged that it would be useless to put Jesus to death if they permitted Lazarus, who represented the very peak of wonder-working, to live and bear testimony to the fact of having been raised from the dead by Jesus. Already Lazarus had suffered bitter persecution from them.

And so Lazarus took hasty leave of Bethany, fleeing down through Jericho and across the Jordan, never resting long until reaching Philadelphia. Lazarus knew Abner well, and felt safe here from the murderous intrigues of the wicked Sanhedrin.

Soon after this Martha and Mary disposed of their lands at Bethany and joined Lazarus in Perea. Meantime, Lazarus had become the treasurer of the church at Philadelphia and a strong supporter of Abner in the later controversy with Paul and the Jerusalem church. And Lazarus ultimately died, when 67 years old, of the same sickness as when younger at Bethany.

Paper 169

Last Teaching at Pella

Late on Monday evening, March 6, Jesus and the ten apostles arrived at the Pella camp. As this was the last week of the sojourn there, Jesus was very active in teaching the multitude and instructing the apostles, preaching every afternoon to the crowds and each night answering questions for the apostles and certain of the more advanced disciples residing at the camp.

Word regarding the resurrection of Lazarus had reached the encampment two days before the Master's arrival, and the entire assembly was excited. Not since the feeding of the five thousand had anything occurred which so aroused the imagination of the people. And so it was at the very height of the second phase of the public ministry that Jesus planned to teach this one short week at Pella and then to begin the tour of southern Perea which led right up to the final and tragic experiences of the last week in Jerusalem.

The Pharisees and the chief priests had begun to formulate their charges and to crystallize their accusations. They objected to the Master's teachings on these grounds:

1. Jesus is a friend of publicans and sinners, receiving the ungodly and even eating with them.
2. Jesus is a blasphemer, talking about Yahweh in familial and equal terms.
3. Jesus is a lawbreaker, healing disease on the Sabbath and in many other ways flouting the sacred law of Israel.
4. Jesus is in league with evil spirits, working wonders and doing seeming miracles by the power of the evil one.

1. Parable of the Lost Child

On Thursday afternoon Jesus talked to the multitude about the "Grace of Salvation." In the course of this sermon retelling the story of the lost sheep and the lost coin and then adding the parable of the prodigal child, Jesus said:

"You have been admonished by the prophets from Samuel to John that you should seek for the Creator — search for truth. And all such teaching should be taken to heart. But I have come to show you that, while you are seeking to find the Creator, the Creator is seeking to find you. I have told you many times the story of the good shepherd who left the ninety and nine sheep in the fold while going to search for the one that was lost, and how the shepherd, when finding the straying sheep, tenderly carried it back to the fold. And when the lost sheep had been restored to the fold, you remember that the good shepherd called in some friends and invited them to rejoice over the finding of the sheep that had been lost. Again I say there is more joy in heaven over one who is lost than over the ninety and nine just persons who are not lost. The fact that souls are *lost* only increases the interest of the Creator. I have come to this world to do the Creator's bidding, and it has truly been said of me that I am a friend of publicans and sinners.

“You have been taught that divine acceptance comes after your repentance and as a result of all your works of sacrifice and penitence, but I assure you that the Creator accepts you even before you have repented and sends the Divine Beings to find you and bring you, with rejoicing, back to the fold, the realm of universal family and spiritual progress. You are all like sheep which have gone astray, and I have come to seek and to save those who are lost.

“And you should also remember the story of the person who, having had ten pieces of silver, lost one piece, and lit the lamp and diligently swept the house and kept up the search until the lost piece of silver was found, and as soon as the coin that was lost had been found, called together some friends and neighbors, saying, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece that was lost.’ So again I say, there is always joy in the presence of the angels over one who is lost and returns to the Creator’s fold. And I tell you this story to impress on you that the Creator and I *search* for those who are lost, and in this search we employ all influences capable of rendering assistance in our diligent efforts to find those who are lost, those who stand in need of rescue. And so, while I go out in the wilderness to seek for the sheep gone astray, I also search for the coin which is lost in the house. The sheep wanders away, unintentionally; the coin is covered by the dust of time and obscured.

“And now I would like to tell you the story of a thoughtless child of a well-to-do farmer who *deliberately* left home and went off into a foreign land, and fell into much tribulation. You recall that the sheep strayed away without intention, but this youth left home with premeditation. It was like this:

“A certain couple had two children; one, the younger, was lighthearted and carefree, always seeking for a good time and shirking responsibility, while the older was serious, sober, hard-working, and willing to bear responsibility. Now these two children did not get along well together; they were always quarreling and bickering. The younger was cheerful and vivacious, but indolent and unreliable; the older was steady and industrious, at the same time self-centered, surly, and conceited. The younger enjoyed play but shunned work; the older was devoted to work but seldom played. This association became so disagreeable that the younger child asked the parents: ‘Give me the portion of your possessions which I would inherit and allow me to go out into the world to seek my own fortune.’ And when the parents heard this request, knowing how unhappy the youth was at home and with the older sibling, they divided their property, giving the youth the proper share.

“Within a few weeks the young person set out on a journey to a far country, and finding nothing profitable to do which was also pleasurable, soon wasted all the inheritance in riotous living. And when the youth had spent all, a prolonged famine arose in that country. And so, after suffering hunger and much distress, the youth found employment with one of the citizens of that country, and was sent into the fields to feed swine, and would even have eaten the husks which the swine ate, but had nothing.

“One day, while very hungry, the young person realized: ‘How many hired servants of my parents have bread to spare while I perish with hunger, feeding swine here in a foreign country! I will go to my parents and I will say to them: I have made a serious error in judgement against Yahweh and against you. I am not worthy to be called your child; only be willing to make me one of your hired servants.’ And on reaching this decision, the youth started out for home.

“Now these parents had grieved much for their child; they had missed the cheerful, though thoughtless, youth. These parents loved their child and were always on the lookout for the youth’s return, so that when approaching home, even while far off, the child was seen by the parents who, moved with loving compassion, ran out and with affectionate greeting, embraced and kissed their child. And after they had met, the child looked up into the parents’ tearful faces and said: ‘I have made a serious error in judgement against Yahweh and in your sight; I am not worthy to be called your child’ — but the youth did not find opportunity to complete this confession because the overjoyed parents said to the servants who had by this time come running up: ‘Quickly bring fine clothing for our long lost child.’

“And then, after the happy parents had led the footsore and weary youth into the house, they called to the servants: ‘Bring on a feast, and let us eat and celebrate, for our child was dead and is alive again; was lost and is found.’ And they all gathered about the parents to celebrate with them over the restoration of their child.

“About this time, while they were celebrating, the elder child came in from working in the field, and, drawing near the house, heard the music and the dancing, and when arriving at the back door, called out one of the servants and asked what was happening. And then the servant said: ‘Your long-lost sibling has come home, and your parents are rejoicing over their child’s safe return. Come in so that you may also receive your sibling back into your parents’ house.’

“But the older child, on hearing this, was too hurt and angry to go into the house. When the parents heard of this resentment, they went out to entreat their other child. But the older child would not yield to their persuasion, saying: ‘Here these many years I have served you, never disobeying the least of your commands, and yet you never gave me any reward. I have remained here to care for you all these years, and you never recognized my faithful service, but when your younger child returns, having squandered everything, you rejoice.’

“Since these parents truly loved both children, they tried to reason with this older one: ‘But you have all this time been with us, and all that we have is yours. But it is only proper that you should now join with us in being happy because of your sibling’s return. Think of it, your sibling was lost and is found, and has returned alive to us!’”

This was one of the most touching and effective of all the parables which Jesus ever presented to impress on the hearers the Creator’s willingness to receive all who seek entrance into the universal family.

Jesus was very partial to telling these three stories at the same time, presenting the story of the lost sheep to show that, when people unintentionally stray away from the path of life, the Creator is aware of such *lost* ones and goes out, with the divine Beings, the true shepherds of the flock, to seek the lost sheep. Jesus would then recite the story of the coin lost in the house to illustrate how thorough the divine *searching* is for all who are confused, confounded, or otherwise spiritually blinded by the material cares and accumulations of life. And then Jesus would launch into the telling of this parable of the lost child, the reception of the returning prodigal, to show how complete the *restoration* of the lost children is into the Creator’s realm.

Many, many times during these years of teaching, Jesus told and retold this story of the prodigal child. This parable and the story of the good Samaritan were a favorite means of teaching the love of the Creator and the compassion of mortals.

2. Parable of the Shrewd Steward

One evening Simon Zelotes, commenting on one of Jesus' statements, said: "Master, what did you mean when you said today that many of the children of the world are wiser in their generation than the children of the Creator's realm since they are skillful in the ways of the world?" Jesus answered:

"Some of you, before you entered the new realm, were very shrewd in dealing with your business associates. If you were unjust and often unfair, you were nonetheless prudent and farseeing in that you transacted your business with an eye to your present profit and future safety. Likewise you should now order your lives so as to provide for your present joy while you also make certain of your future enjoyment of treasures in the life to come. If you were so diligent in making gains for yourselves when in the service of self, why should you show less diligence in gaining souls for the new realm since you are now servants of the family of humanity and stewards of the Creator?"

"You may all learn a lesson from the story of a certain rich person who had a shrewd but unjust steward. This steward had not only oppressed the master's clients for selfish gain, but had also directly wasted and squandered the master's funds. All of this finally came to the attention of the master, who called the steward in and, asking the meaning of these rumors, required an immediate accounting and directed that the master's affairs be turned over to another.

"Now this unfaithful steward began to think: 'What should I do since I am about to lose this stewardship? I do not have the strength to dig; I am ashamed to beg. I know what I will do to make certain that, when I am put out of this stewardship, I will be welcomed into the houses of all who do business with my master.' And then the steward, calling in each of the master's debtors, said to the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' The client answered, 'A hundred measures of oil.' Then the steward said, 'Take your records and change it to fifty.' Then the steward said to another debtor, 'How much do you owe?' And the client replied, 'A hundred measures of wheat.' Then the steward said, 'Change your records and write eighty.' And the steward did this with numerous other debtors. And so this dishonest steward endeavored to make friends now, before having to leave this stewardship. Even the master, when subsequently finding out about this, was compelled to admit that the unfaithful steward had at least shown sagacity in seeking to provide for future days of want and adversity.

"And it is in this way that the people of this world sometimes show more wisdom in their preparation for the future than the children of light. I say to you who profess to be acquiring treasure in the life to come: Take lessons from those who understand the ways of the world, and conduct your lives so that you make eternal friendship with the forces of righteousness in order that, when all things earthly fail, you will be joyfully received into the eternal habitations.

"I affirm that one who is faithful in little will also be faithful in much, while one who is unrighteous in little will also be unrighteous in much. If you have not shown foresight and integrity in the affairs of this world,

how can you hope to be faithful and prudent when you are trusted with the stewardship of the true riches of the universe? If you are not good stewards and faithful bankers, if you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will be foolish enough to give you great treasure in your own name?

“And again I assert that no one can serve two masters; either they will hate the one and love the other, or else they will hold to one while despising the other.”

When the Pharisees who were present heard this, they began to sneer and scoff since they were much disposed toward the acquirement of riches. These unfriendly hearers tried to engage Jesus in unprofitable arguments, but the Master refused to debate with these enemies. When the Pharisees fell to bickering among themselves, their loud speaking attracted large numbers of the multitude encamped nearby; and when they began to dispute with each other, Jesus withdrew for the night.

3. The Nature of the Creator

Jesus never gave the apostles a systematic lesson concerning the personality and attributes of the Creator, never asking them to believe in the Creator but taking it for granted that they did. Jesus never offered arguments in proof of the reality of the Creator. The teachings regarding the Creator all centered in the declaration that Jesus and the Creator are one; that those who have seen Jesus have seen the Creator; that the Creator, like Jesus, knows all things; that only Jesus really knows the Creator; that those who know Jesus also know the Creator; and that the Creator sent Jesus into the world to reveal their combined natures and to demonstrate their conjoint work. Jesus never made other pronouncements about the Creator except to the person at Jacob's well, declaring, “The Creator is spirit.”

You learn about the Creator by observing the divinity of Jesus' life, not by depending on the teachings. From the life of the Master you may each assimilate that concept of the Creator which represents the measure of your capacity to perceive spiritual and divine realities, real and eternal truths. The finite can never hope to comprehend the Infinite except as the Infinite was focalized in the time-space personality of the finite experience of the human life of Jesus of Nazareth.

Jesus knew that the Creator can be known only by the realities of experience and can never be understood by the mere teaching of the mind. Jesus taught the apostles that, while they never could fully understand the Creator, they could most certainly *know* the Creator, even as they had known Jesus. You can know the Creator, not by understanding what Jesus said, but by knowing what Jesus was. Jesus *was* a revelation of the Creator.

Jesus never referred to Deity in any manner other than in terms descriptive of having a personal relationship with the First Source and Center of Paradise.

To the Jews, Elohim was the Deity of deities, while Yahweh was the Deity of Israel. Jesus accepted the concept of Elohim, but in the place of the concept of Yahweh, the racial Deity, introduced the idea of the parenthood of the Creator and the world-wide family of humanity. Jesus exalted the Yahweh concept of a racial Deity to the idea of a Parent of all mortals, a divine Parent of the individual believer, and further taught that this Source of universes and this Parent of all were one and the same Paradise Deity.

Jesus never claimed to be the physical manifestation of Elohim, and never claimed to be a revelation of Elohim to the worlds. Jesus never taught that “those who have seen me have seen Elohim,” but did claim to be the revelation of the Creator, and did say that “whoever has seen me has seen the Creator.”

Jesus chose to portray the Creator’s character in so far as such a revelation might be comprehensible to mortals. As regards the character of the other persons of the Paradise Trinity, we will have to be content with the teaching that they are altogether like the Universal Source, who has been revealed in the life of Jesus of Nazareth.

Jesus, whose life revealed the true nature of Deity, taught little about the Creator, teaching, in fact, only two things: that the Creator is spirit, and, in all matters of relationship with creatures, is a Parent. On this evening Jesus made the final pronouncement about this relationship when declaring: “I have come out from the Creator, and I have come into the world; again, I will leave the world and go to the Creator.”

Jesus never said, “Whoever has *heard* me has heard the Creator” but rather, “Whoever has *seen* me has seen the Creator.” To hear Jesus’ teaching is not equivalent to knowing the Creator, but to *see* Jesus is an experience which in itself is a revelation of the Creator to the soul. The Source of universes rules the vast creation, but it is the Creator whose spirit dwells within your minds.

Jesus is the spiritual lens in human likeness which makes visible to the material creature the One who is invisible. Jesus is your elder sibling who, in a material state, makes *known* to you a Being of infinite attributes whom not even the celestial hosts can presume to fully understand. But all of this must consist in the personal experience of the *individual believer*. Deity who is spirit can be known only as a spiritual experience. Deity can be revealed to the finite beings of the material worlds, by the divine Beings of the spiritual realms, only as a *Parent*. You can know the Eternal as a Parent; you can worship the Creator as the Source of universes, the infinite Creator of all existences.

Paper 170

The Realm of the Creator

Saturday afternoon, March 11, Jesus preached the last sermon at Pella. This was among the notable addresses of the public ministry, embracing a full and complete discussion of the realm of the Creator. Jesus was aware of the confusion which existed in the minds of the apostles and disciples regarding the meaning and significance of the term “realm of the Creator.” Although the very term should have been enough to separate what it stood for from all connection with temporal governments, it was not. The idea of a temporal ruler was too deeply rooted in the Jewish mind to be dislodged in a single generation. Therefore Jesus did not at first openly oppose this long-nourished concept of a temporal government.

This Sabbath afternoon the Master sought to clarify the teaching about the realm of the Creator, discussing the subject from every viewpoint and endeavoring to make clear the many different senses in which the term had been used. In this narrative we will amplify the address by adding numerous statements made by Jesus on previous occasions and by including some remarks made only to the apostles during the evening discussions of this same day. We will also make certain comments dealing with the subsequent outworking of the idea as it is related to the later Christian church.

1. Concepts of the Realm of the Creator

In connection with the recital of Jesus’ sermon it should be noted that throughout the Hebrew scriptures there was a dual concept of a temporal government. The prophets presented the idea as:

1. A present reality; and as
2. A future hope — when the government would be realized in fullness with the appearance of the Messiah. This is the concept which John the Baptist taught.

From the very first Jesus and the apostles taught both of these concepts. There were two other ideas which should be borne in mind:

3. The later Jewish concept of a world-wide and transcendental government of supernatural origin and miraculous inauguration.
4. The Persian teachings portraying the establishment of a divine realm as the achievement of the triumph of good over evil at the end of the world.

Just before the birth of Jesus on earth, the Jews combined and confused all of these ideas into their apocalyptic concept of the Messiah’s coming to establish the age of the Jewish triumph, the eternal age of Yahweh’s supreme rule on earth, the new world, the era in which all humankind would worship Yahweh. In choosing to utilize this concept, Jesus elected to appropriate the most vital and culminating heritage of both the Jewish and Persian religions.

The realm of the Creator, as it has been understood and misunderstood down through the centuries, embraced four distinct groups of ideas:

1. The concept of the Jews.
2. The concept of the Persians.
3. The personal-experience concept of Jesus — “the realm of the Creator within you.”
4. The composite and confused concepts which the founders and promulgators of Christianity have sought to impress on the world.

At different times and in varying circumstances it appears that Jesus may have presented numerous concepts in public teachings, but to the apostles Jesus always taught the realm of the Creator as embracing one’s personal experience in relation to others on earth and to the Creator. Concerning the new realm, Jesus’ last word always was, “The realm of the Creator is within you.”

Centuries of confusion regarding the meaning of the term have been due to three factors:

1. The confusion occasioned by observing the idea as it passed through various progressive phases.
2. The confusion which was inevitably associated with the transplantation of early Christianity from a Jewish to a gentile soil.
3. The confusion which was inherent in the fact that Christianity became a religion which was organized about the central idea of Jesus’ person; the idea became more and more a religion *about* Jesus.

2. Jesus’ Concept

The Master made it clear that the realm of the Creator must begin with, and be centered in, the dual concept of the truth of the parenthood of the Creator and the correlated fact of the family of humanity. The acceptance of such a teaching, Jesus declared, would liberate people from the age-long bondage of animal fear and at the same time enrich human living with the following endowments of the new life of spiritual liberty:

1. The possession of new courage and augmented spiritual power. The doctrine of the new realm was to set people free and inspire them to dare to hope for eternal life.
2. The doctrine carried a message of new confidence and true consolation for all people, even for the poor.
3. It was in itself a new standard of moral values, a new ethical yardstick with which to measure human conduct. It portrayed the ideal of a resultant new order of human society.
4. It taught the pre-eminence of the spiritual compared with the material; it glorified spiritual realities and exalted superhuman ideals.

5. This new doctrine held up spiritual attainment as the true goal of living. Human life received a new endowment of moral value and divine dignity.

6. Jesus taught that eternal realities were the result (reward) of righteous earthly striving. The mortal sojourn on earth acquired new meanings based on the recognition of a noble destiny.

7. The new doctrine affirmed that life eternal is the revelation of a far-reaching divine purpose to be fulfilled and realized in the future destiny of the endless service of the children of the Creator.

These teachings cover the expanded idea of the new realm which was taught by Jesus. This great concept was hardly embraced in the elementary and confused teachings of John the Baptist.

The apostles were unable to grasp the real meaning of the Master's statements regarding the new realm. The subsequent distortion of Jesus' teachings, as they are recorded in the New Testament, is because the concept of the writers was colored by the belief that Jesus was then absent from the world for only a short time, and would soon return to establish the new realm — just such an idea as they held while Jesus was present on earth. But Jesus did not connect the establishment of the new realm with the idea of returning to this world. That centuries have passed with no signs of the appearance of the "New Age" is in no way out of harmony with Jesus' teaching.

The great effort embodied in this sermon was the attempt to translate the concept of the realm of the Creator into the ideal of doing the will of the Creator, but Jesus did not succeed.

Jesus wanted to introduce the concept of the universal family, the Paradise Creator, and the liberated children of the Creator engaged in joyful and voluntary service for others and in the sublime and intelligent worship of the Parent of all.

Up to this time the apostles had acquired a double viewpoint of the new realm; they regarded it as:

1. A matter of personal experience then present in the hearts of true believers, and,
2. A question of racial or world phenomena; that the new realm was in the future, something to look forward to.

They viewed the coming of the new realm as a gradual development, like the leaven in the dough or like the growing of the mustard seed. They believed that the coming of the new realm in the world sense would be both sudden and spectacular. Jesus never tired of telling them that the realm of the Creator was their personal experience of realizing the higher qualities of spiritual living; that these realities of the spirit experience are progressively translated to new and higher levels of divine certainty and eternal grandeur.

On this afternoon the Master distinctly taught a new concept of the double nature of the new realm by portraying the following two phases:

First. The realm of the Creator in this world, the supreme desire to do the will of the Creator, the unselfish love which yields the good fruits of improved ethical and moral conduct.

Second. The realm of the Creator in the universe, the goal of mortal believers, the estate in which the love for the Creator is perfected, and where the will of the Creator is done more divinely.

Jesus taught that, by faith, the believer enters the new realm *now*, in the various discourses teaching that two things are essential to faith-entrance into the new realm:

1. *Faith, sincerity.* To come as a little child, to receive the bestowal of relationship with the Creator as a gift; to submit to the doing of the Creator's will without questioning and in the full confidence and genuine trustfulness of the Creator's wisdom; to come into the new realm free from prejudice and preconception; to be open-minded and teachable like an unspoiled child.

2. *Truth hunger.* The thirst for righteousness, a change of mind, the acquirement of the motive to be like and to find the Creator.

Jesus taught that sin is not the result of a defective nature but rather the offspring of a knowing mind dominated by an unsubmitive will. Regarding sin, teaching that the Creator *has* forgiven; that we make such forgiveness personally available by the act of forgiving others. When you forgive others, you create the capacity in your own soul for the reception of the reality of the Creator's forgiveness of your own misdeeds.

3. In Relation to Righteousness

Jesus was always trying to impress upon the apostles and disciples that they must acquire, by faith, a righteousness which would exceed the righteousness of slavish works which some of the scribes and Pharisees paraded so vaingloriously before the world.

Jesus taught that faith, simple childlike belief, is the key to the door of the new realm, also teaching that, having entered the door, there are the progressive steps of righteousness which every believing child must ascend in order to grow up to the full stature of the robust children of the Creator Parent.

It is in consideration of the technique of *receiving* the Creator's forgiveness that the attainment of righteousness is revealed. Faith is the price you pay for entrance into the family of the Creator; but forgiveness is the act of the Creator which accepts your faith as the price of admission. And the reception of forgiveness involves a definite and actual experience and consists in the following four steps, the steps of inner righteousness:

1. The Creator's forgiveness is made actually available and is personally experienced by people just in so far as they forgive others.
2. People will not truly forgive others unless they love them as themselves.
3. To love your neighbor as yourself *is* the highest ethics.
4. Moral conduct, true righteousness, becomes the natural result of such love.

It therefore is evident that the true and inner religion unfailingly and increasingly tends to manifest itself in practical avenues of social service. Jesus taught a living religion that impelled its believers to engage in the doing of loving service. But Jesus did not put ethics in the place of religion, instead teaching religion as a cause and ethics as a result.

The righteousness of any act must be measured by the motive; the highest forms of good are therefore unconscious. Jesus was never concerned with morals or ethics as such, but was wholly concerned with that inward and spiritual relationship with the Creator which so certainly and directly manifests itself as outward and loving service for humanity. Jesus taught that religion is a genuine personal experience which no one can wholly possess; that the consciousness of being a member of the family of believers leads inevitably to the practice of the precepts of the family conduct, the service to one's siblings in the effort to enhance and enlarge the family.

Religion is personal, individual; the fruits, the results, are familial, social. Jesus never failed to exalt the sacredness of the individual as contrasted with the community, but also recognized that people develop their characters by unselfish service; that they unfold their moral natures in loving relations with others.

By teaching that the realm of the Creator is within, by exalting the individual, Jesus ushered in the new dispensation of true social righteousness. This new order of society the world has little known because it has refused to practice the principles of the doctrine of the realm of the Creator. And when this realm of spiritual pre-eminence is established on the earth, it will not be manifested in mere improved social and material conditions, but rather in the glories of those enhanced and enriched spiritual values which are characteristic of the approaching age of improved human relations and advancing spiritual attainments.

4. Jesus' Teaching About the New Realm

Jesus never gave a precise definition of the new realm, but at one time would discourse on one phase, and at another time would discuss a different aspect. In the course of this Sabbath afternoon's sermon Jesus noted no less than five phases, or epochs, of the new realm, and they were:

1. The personal and inward experience of the spiritual life of the relationship of the individual believer with the Creator.
2. The enlarging family of believers, the social aspects of the enhanced morals and quickened ethics resulting from the reign of the Creator's spirit in the hearts of individual believers.
3. The supermortal family of invisible spiritual beings which prevails on earth and throughout the universe, the superhuman realm of the Creator.
4. The prospect of the more perfect fulfillment of the will of the Creator, the advance toward the dawn of a new social order in connection with improved spiritual living — the next age of mortals.
5. The new realm in its fullness, the future spiritual age of light and life on earth.

We must always examine the Master's teaching to ascertain which of these five phases is being referred to when the term "realm of the Creator" is used. By this process of slowly changing the mortal will and affecting human decisions, Michael is gradually but certainly changing the entire course of human evolution, social and otherwise.

The Master on this occasion placed emphasis on the following five points as representing the cardinal features of the doctrine of the new realm:

1. The pre-eminence of the individual.
2. The will as the determining factor in mortals' experience.
3. Spiritual relationship with the Creator.
4. The supreme satisfactions of the loving service of humanity.
5. The transcendency of the spiritual over the material in human personality.

This world has never seriously or sincerely or honestly tried out these dynamic ideas and divine ideals of Jesus' doctrine of the realm of the Creator. But you should not become discouraged by the apparently slow progress of the idea on Urantia. Remember that the order of progressive evolution is subjected to sudden and unexpected periodic changes in both the material and the spiritual worlds. The bestowal of Jesus was just such a strange and unexpected event in the spiritual life of the world. Neither make the fatal mistake, in looking for the age manifestation of the new realm, of failing to effect its establishment within your own souls.

Although Jesus referred one phase of the new realm to the future and did, on numerous occasions, intimate that such an event might appear as a part of a world crisis; and also most certainly, on several occasions, definitely promised to return sometime to Urantia, it should be recorded that these two ideas were never positively linked together. Jesus promised a new revelation on earth at some future time, and also promised sometime to come back to this world in person, but did not say that these two events were synonymous. From all we know these promises may, or may not, refer to the same event.

The apostles and disciples most certainly linked these two teachings together. When things failed to materialize as they had expected, recalling the Master's teaching concerning a future time and remembering the promise to come again, they jumped to the conclusion that these promises referred to an identical event; and therefore they lived in hope of an immediate second coming to establish the new realm in its fullness. And so successive believing generations have lived on earth entertaining the same inspiring but disappointing hope.

5. Later Ideas of the New Realm

Having summarized the teachings of Jesus about the realm of the Creator, we are permitted to narrate certain later ideas and to engage in a prophetic forecast of the new realm as it may evolve in the age to come.

Throughout the first centuries of the Christian message, the concept was tremendously influenced by the then rapidly spreading notions of Greek idealism, the idea of the natural as the shadow of the spiritual — the temporal as the time shadow of the eternal.

But the great step which marked the transplantation of the teachings of Jesus from a Jewish to a gentile soil was taken when the Messiah became the Redeemer of the church, a religious and social organization growing out of the activities of Paul and later successors, and based on the teachings of Jesus as they were supplemented by the ideas of Philo and the Persian doctrines of good and evil.

The ideas and ideals of Jesus, embodied in the teaching of the doctrine of the new realm, nearly failed to be realized as the followers progressively distorted these pronouncements. The Master's concept of the new realm was notably modified by two great tendencies:

1. The Jewish believers persisted in regarding Jesus as the *Messiah*. They believed that Jesus would very soon return to actually establish the world-wide temporal government.
2. The gentile Christians began to accept the doctrines of Paul, which led increasingly to the general belief that Jesus was the *Redeemer* of the children of the church, the new and institutional successor of the earlier concept of the purely spiritual family of the new realm.

The church, as a social outgrowth, would have been wholly natural and even desirable. The evil of the church was not its existence, but rather that it almost completely supplanted the Jesus concept of the new realm. Paul's institutionalized church became a virtual substitute for the realm of the Creator that Jesus had proclaimed.

But this realm of the Creator which the Master said exists within the heart of the believer, will yet be proclaimed to this Christian church, and to all other religions, races, and nations on earth — even to every individual.

Jesus' teaching about the spiritual ideal of individual righteousness and the concept of a divine relationship with the Creator became gradually submerged into the mystic conception of the person of Jesus as the Redeemer-Creator and spiritual head of a socialized religious community. In this way a formal and institutional church became the substitute for the individually spirit-led family of the new realm.

The church was an inevitable and useful *social* result of Jesus' life and teachings; the tragedy consisted in the fact that this social reaction to the teachings so fully displaced the spiritual concept of the real new realm as Jesus taught and lived it.

The new realm, to the Jews, was the Israelite *community*; to the gentiles it became the Christian *church*. To Jesus the new realm was the sum of those *individuals* who had confessed their faith in the parenthood of the Creator, thereby declaring their wholehearted dedication to the doing of the will of the Creator and becoming members of the spiritual family of humanity.

The Master fully realized that certain social results would appear in the world as a consequence of the spread of the doctrine of the new realm, but intended that all such desirable social manifestations should

appear as unconscious and inevitable outgrowths, or natural fruits, of this inner personal experience of individual believers, this purely spiritual family and communion with the divine spirit which indwells and activates all such believers.

Jesus foresaw that a social organization, or church, would follow the progress of the true spiritual realm, and therefore never opposed the apostles' practicing the rite of John's baptism. Jesus taught that the truth-loving soul, the one who hungers and thirsts for righteousness and for the Creator, is admitted by faith to the spiritual realm; at the same time the apostles taught that such a believer is admitted to the social organization of disciples by the outward rite of baptism.

When Jesus' immediate followers recognized their partial failure to realize the ideal of the establishment of the new realm in peoples' hearts by the spirit's domination and guidance of the individual believer, they endeavored to save this teaching from being wholly lost by substituting for the Master's ideal of the new realm the gradual creation of a visible social organization, the Christian church. And when they had accomplished this program of substitution, in order to maintain consistency and to provide for the recognition of the Master's teaching regarding the fact of the new realm, they proceeded to set it off into the future. The church, just as soon as it was well established, began to teach that the new age was in reality to appear at the culmination of the Christian age, at the second coming of Christ.

In this manner the new realm became the concept of an age, the idea of a future visitation, and the ideal of the final redemption of the saints of the Most High. The early Christians (and all too many of the later ones) generally lost sight of the spiritual relationship idea embodied in Jesus' teaching of the new realm, while they substituted the well-organized social body of the church. The church became mainly a *social* organization which effectively displaced Jesus' concept and ideal of a *spiritual* family.

Jesus' ideal concept largely failed, but on the foundation of the Master's personal life and teachings, supplemented by the Greek and Persian concepts of eternal life and augmented by Philo's doctrine of the temporal contrasted with the spiritual, Paul went forward to build up one of the most progressive human societies which has ever existed on Urantia.

The concept of Jesus is still alive in the advanced religions of the world. Paul's Christian church is the socialized and humanized shadow of what Jesus intended the new realm to be — and what it most certainly will yet become. Paul and the later successors partly transferred the issues of eternal life from the individual to the church. Christ became the head of the church rather than the elder sibling of each individual believer in the Creator's family. Paul applied all of Jesus' spiritual implications regarding the individual believer to the *church* as a group of believers, and in doing this, replaced Jesus' concept of the divine in the heart of the individual believer.

And so, for centuries, the Christian church has labored under great embarrassment because it dared to lay claim to those mysterious powers and privileges of the new realm, powers and privileges which can be exercised and experienced only between Jesus and the spiritual believers. Therefore it becomes apparent that membership in the church does not necessarily mean membership in the realm of the Creator; one is spiritual, the other mainly social.

Sooner or later another and greater John the Baptist is due to arise, proclaiming a return to the high spiritual concept of Jesus, who taught that the new realm is the will of the Creator dominant and transcendent in the heart of the believer — and doing all this without in any way referring either to the visible church on earth or to the anticipated second coming of Christ. There must come a revival of the *actual* teachings of Jesus, such a restatement as will undo the work of early followers who created a socio-philosophical system of belief regarding the *fact* of Michael's sojourn on earth. In a short time the teaching of this story *about* Jesus nearly supplanted Jesus' teachings. In this way a historical religion displaced that teaching in which Jesus had blended humanity's highest moral ideas and spiritual ideals with the most sublime hope for the future —life eternal. And that was the doctrine of the new realm.

It is just because the teachings of Jesus were so many-sided that within a few centuries, students of the records of these teachings became divided into so many cults and sects. This pitiful subdivision of Christian believers results from failure to discern the divine unity of the Master's matchless life. But someday the true believers in Jesus will not be so spiritually divided in their attitude. We may always have diversity of intellectual comprehension and interpretation, even varying degrees of socialization, but lack of spiritual unity is both inexcusable and reprehensible.

Mistake not! there is in the teachings of Jesus an eternal nature which will not permit them to forever remain unfruitful in the hearts of thinking people. The new realm as Jesus conceived it has to a large extent failed on earth; for the time being, an outward church has taken its place; but you should comprehend that this church is only the larval stage of the thwarted spiritual realm, which will carry it through this material age and over into a more spiritual dispensation where the Master's teachings may enjoy a fuller opportunity for development. Thus the so-called Christian church becomes the cocoon in which Jesus' concept now slumbers. The realm of the divine family is still alive and will eventually and certainly come forth from this long submergence, just as surely as the butterfly eventually emerges as the beautiful unfolding of its less attractive creature of metamorphic development.

Paper 171

On the Way to Jerusalem

The day after the memorable sermon on “The Realm of the Creator,” Jesus announced that on the following day they would leave for the Passover at Jerusalem, visiting numerous cities in southern Perea on the way.

The address on the new realm and the announcement about going to the Passover set all the followers to thinking that Jesus was going to Jerusalem to inaugurate the temporal rule of Jewish supremacy. No matter what Jesus said about the nonmaterial character of the realm, the Jewish hearers were still convinced that the Messiah was to establish some kind of nationalistic government with headquarters at Jerusalem.

What Jesus said in the Sabbath sermon only tended to confuse the majority of the followers; very few were enlightened by the Master’s discourse. The leaders understood something of the teachings regarding the inner realm, “the realm of the Creator within you,” but they also knew that Jesus had spoken about another and future realm, and it was this realm that they believed Jesus was now going to Jerusalem to establish. When they were disappointed in this expectation, when Jesus was rejected by the Jews, and later on, when Jerusalem was literally destroyed, they still clung to this hope, sincerely believing that the Master would soon return to the world in great power and majestic glory to establish the promised new realm.

It was on this Sunday afternoon that Salome came to Jesus with James and John and sought to have Jesus promise in advance to grant an unnamed request. But the Master would not promise, and instead, asked, “What do you want me to do for you?” Then Salome answered: “Master, now that you are going to Jerusalem to establish the new realm, I would ask you in advance to promise me that James and John will have honor with you, one to sit on your right hand and the other to sit on your left hand in your new realm.”

Jesus, in response to Salome’s request, said: “You do not know what you ask.” And then, looking straight into the eyes of the two honor-seeking apostles, said: “Because I have long known and loved you; because I have even lived in your parents’ house; because Andrew has assigned you to be with me at all times; you permit your parent to come to me secretly, making this request. But let me ask you: Are you able to drink the cup I am about to drink?” And without a moment for thought, James and John answered, “Yes, Master, we are able.” And Jesus said: “I am saddened that you do not know why we go to Jerusalem; I am grieved that you do not understand the nature of my realm; I am disappointed that you bring your parent to make this request of me; but I know that you love me in your hearts; therefore I say that you will indeed drink of my cup of bitterness and share in my humiliation, but to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give. Such honors are reserved for those who have been designated by the Creator.”

By this time someone had carried word of this conference to Peter and the other apostles, and they were highly indignant that James and John would seek to be preferred before them, and that they would secretly go with their parent to make such a request. When they began to argue among themselves, Jesus called them all together and said: “You understand how the rulers of the gentiles lord it over their subjects, and how those who are great exercise authority. But it will not be so in the new realm. Whoever would be great among you, let them first become your servant. Those who would be first in the new realm, let them become your ministers. I say to you that I came not to be ministered to but to minister; and I now go to Jerusalem

to lay down my life in the doing of the Creator's will and in the service of my friends." When the apostles heard these words, they withdrew by themselves to pray. That evening, in response to the labors of Peter, James and John made suitable apologies to the ten and were restored to their good graces.

In asking for places on the right and left hand of Jesus at Jerusalem, the children of Zebedee little realized that in less than one month their beloved teacher would be hanging on a Roman cross with a dying thief on one side and another transgressor on the other side. And Salome, who was present at the crucifixion, remembered the foolish request regarding the honors so unwisely sought for James and John.

1. The Departure from Pella

On the morning of Monday, March 13, Jesus and the twelve apostles took final leave of the Pella encampment, starting south on their tour of the cities of southern Perea, where Abner's associates were at work. They spent more than two weeks visiting among the seventy and then went directly to Jerusalem for the Passover.

When the Master left Pella, the disciples encamped with the apostles, about one thousand in number, followed after. About one half of this group separated at the Jordan ford on the road to Jericho when they learned that Jesus was going to Heshbon, and after they had heard the sermon on "Counting the Cost." They went on to Jerusalem, while the other half followed Jesus for two weeks, visiting the towns in southern Perea.

In a general way, most of Jesus' immediate followers understood that the camp at Pella had been abandoned, but they really thought this indicated that their Master at last intended to go to Jerusalem and lay claim to David's throne. A large majority of the followers were never able to grasp any other concept of the new realm; no matter what Jesus taught them, they would not give up this Jewish idea of a temporal government.

Acting on the instructions of the Apostle Andrew, David Zebedee closed the visitors' camp at Pella on Wednesday, March 15. At this time almost four thousand visitors were in residence, and this does not include the one thousand and more who sojourned with the apostles at what was known as the teachers' camp, and who went south with Jesus and the twelve. David disliked to do it, but sold the entire equipment to numerous buyers and proceeded with the funds to Jerusalem, subsequently turning the money over to Judas Iscariot.

David was present in Jerusalem during the tragic last week, taking Salome back to Bethsaida after the crucifixion. While waiting for Jesus and the apostles, David stopped at Bethany and became tremendously agitated by the manner in which the Pharisees had begun to persecute and harass Lazarus since the resurrection. Andrew had directed David to discontinue the messenger service; and this was construed by all as an indication of the early establishment of the new realm at Jerusalem. David was without a job, and had about decided to become the self-appointed defender of Lazarus when presently the object of this indignant solicitude fled in haste to Philadelphia. Accordingly, sometime after the resurrection and also after the death of Salome, David went to Philadelphia, having first assisted Martha and Mary in disposing of their real estate; and there, in association with Abner and Lazarus, David remained, becoming the

financial overseer of all those large interests which had their center at Philadelphia during the lifetime of Abner.

Within a short time after the destruction of Jerusalem, Antioch became the headquarters of *Pauline Christianity*, while Philadelphia remained the center of the *Abnerian doctrine*. From Antioch the Pauline version of the teachings of Jesus and about Jesus spread to all the Western world; from Philadelphia the missionaries of the Abnerian version spread throughout Mesopotamia and Arabia until the later times when these uncompromising emissaries of the teachings of Jesus were overwhelmed by the sudden rise of Islam.

2. On Counting the Cost

When Jesus and the company of almost one thousand followers arrived at the Bethany ford of the Jordan sometimes called Bethabara, the disciples began to realize that they were not going directly to Jerusalem. While they hesitated and debated among themselves, Jesus climbed up on a huge stone and delivered that discourse which has become known as "Counting the Cost." The Master said:

"You who would follow after me from this time on must be willing to pay the price of wholehearted dedication to the doing of the Creator's will. If you would be my disciples, you must be willing to forsake your families. If any one of you would now be my disciple, you must be willing to give up even your life just as I am about to offer up my life for the completion of the mission of doing the Creator's will on earth.

"If you are not willing to pay the full price, you can hardly be my disciple. Before you go further, you should each count the cost of being my disciple. Which one of you would undertake to build a watchtower on your lands without first counting up the cost to see whether you had enough money to complete it? If you fail to reckon the cost, after you have laid the foundation, you may discover that you are unable to finish that which you have begun, and therefore all of your neighbors will mock you, saying, 'This person began to build but was unable to finish the work.'

"Now, then, each of you must count the cost of being my disciple. From now on you will not be able to follow after us, listening to the teaching and seeing the works; you will be required to face bitter persecutions and to bear witness for these teachings in the face of crushing disappointment. If you are unwilling to renounce all that you are and to dedicate all that you have, then you are unworthy to be my disciple. If you have already conquered yourself within your own heart, you need have no fear of that outward victory which you must presently gain when I am rejected by the chief priests and the Sadducees and am given into the hands of mocking unbelievers.

"Now you should examine yourself to find out your motive for being my disciple. If you seek honor and reward, if you are worldly minded, you are like the salt when it has lost its savor. And when that which is valued for its saltiness has lost its savor, how will it be seasoned? Such a condiment is useless; it is only fit to be cast out among the garbage. Now I have warned you to turn back to your homes in peace if you are not willing to drink with me the cup which is being prepared. Again and again I have told you that my realm is not of this world, but you will not believe me. Those who have ears to hear let them hear what I say."

Immediately after speaking these words, Jesus, leading the twelve, started off on the way to Heshbon, followed by about five hundred. After a brief delay the other half of the multitude went on to Jerusalem. The apostles, together with the leading disciples, thought much about these words, but still clung to the belief that, after this brief period of adversity and trial, the new realm would certainly be set up somewhat in accordance with their long-cherished hopes.

3. The Perea Tour

For more than two weeks Jesus and the twelve, followed by a crowd of several hundred disciples, journeyed about in southern Perea, visiting all of the towns where the seventy worked. Many gentiles lived in this region, and since few were going to the Passover feast at Jerusalem, the messengers went right on with their work of teaching and preaching.

Jesus met Abner at Heshbon, and Andrew directed that the work of the seventy should not be interrupted by the Passover feast; Jesus advised that the messengers should go forward with their work in complete disregard of what was about to happen at Jerusalem. And this was the last time Abner ever saw Jesus.

As they traveled from city to city, large numbers of their followers deserted to go on to Jerusalem so that, by the time Jesus started for the Passover, the number of those who followed along day by day had dwindled to less than two hundred.

The apostles understood that Jesus was going to Jerusalem for the Passover. They knew that the Sanhedrin had broadcast a message to all Israel that Jesus had been condemned to die and directing that anyone who knew where Jesus was should inform the Sanhedrin; and yet, despite all this, they were not as alarmed as they had been when Jesus had announced going to Bethany to see Lazarus. This change of attitude from that of intense fear to a state of hushed expectancy was mostly because of Lazarus's resurrection. They had reached the conclusion that Jesus might, in an emergency, assert divine power and shame the enemies. This hope, coupled with their more profound and mature faith in the spiritual supremacy of their Master, accounted for the outward courage displayed by the immediate followers, who now prepared to follow Jesus into Jerusalem in the very face of the open hostility of the Sanhedrin.

The majority of the apostles and many of the inner disciples did not believe it possible for Jesus to die, believing that Jesus was "the resurrection and the life," and already triumphant over death.

4. Teaching at Livias

On Wednesday evening, March 29, Jesus and the followers camped at Livias on their way to Jerusalem, after having completed their tour of the cities of southern Perea. It was during this night at Livias that Simon Zelotes and Simon Peter, having conspired to have more than one hundred swords delivered into their hands at this place, received and distributed these arms to all who would accept them and wear them concealed beneath their cloaks. Simon Peter was still wearing a sword on the night of the Master's betrayal in the garden.

Early on Thursday morning before the others were awake, Jesus called Andrew and said: "Awaken the others! I have something to say to them." Jesus knew about the swords and which of the apostles had

received and were wearing these weapons, but never disclosed knowing about such things to them. When Andrew had aroused the associates, and they had assembled by themselves, Jesus said: "My children, you have been with me a long while, and I have taught you much that is needed for this time, but I would now warn you not to put your trust in the uncertainties of the body nor in the frailties of a human defense against the trials and testing which lie ahead of us. I have called you apart by yourselves so that I may once more plainly tell you that we are going to Jerusalem, where you know I have already been condemned to death. Again I am telling you that I will be delivered into the hands of the chief priests and the religious rulers; that they will condemn me and then deliver me into the hands of the gentiles. And they will mock me, even spit on me and scourge me, and they will deliver me up to death. And when they kill me, do not be dismayed, for on the third day I will rise. Remember that I have forewarned you."

Again the apostles were amazed, stunned; but they could not bring themselves to regard these words as literal; they could not comprehend that the Master meant just what was said. They were so blinded by their persistent belief in the temporal government, with headquarters at Jerusalem, that they simply could not — would not — permit themselves to accept Jesus' words as literal. They pondered all that day as to what the Master could mean by such strange pronouncements. But none of them dared to ask a question concerning these statements. Not until after Jesus' death did these bewildered apostles wake up to the realization that the Master had spoken to them plainly and directly in anticipation of the crucifixion.

It was here at Livias, just after breakfast, that certain friendly Pharisees came to Jesus and said: "Leave quickly, for Herod, just as with John, now seeks to kill you. Herod fears an uprising of the people and has decided to kill you. We bring you this warning so that you can escape."

And this was partly true. The resurrection of Lazarus frightened and alarmed Herod, and knowing that the Sanhedrin had dared to condemn Jesus, even in advance of a trial, Herod decided either to kill or to drive Jesus out. Herod really desired to do the latter, hoping it would not be necessary to execute Jesus.

Jesus, hearing what the Pharisees had to say, replied: "Herod would much prefer that I go to Jerusalem to suffer and die at the hands of the chief priests; Herod is not anxious, having been stained with the blood of John, to become responsible for my death. Go and tell that fox that I preach in Perea today, go into Judea tomorrow, and after a few days, will be perfected in my mission on earth and prepared to ascend to the Creator."

Then turning to the apostles, Jesus said: "From olden times the prophets have perished in Jerusalem, and it is only befitting that I should go to the city of the Creator's house to be offered up as the price of human bigotry and as the result of religious prejudice and spiritual blindness. O Jerusalem, which kills the prophets and stones the teachers of truth! How often I would have gathered your children together, but you would not let me do it! Your house is about to be left to you desolate! You will many times desire to see me, but you will not. You will then seek but not find me." And Jesus, having spoken, turned to those assembled and said: "Nevertheless, let us go to Jerusalem to attend the Passover and do that which becomes us in fulfilling the will of the Creator."

It was a confused and bewildered group of believers who followed Jesus this day into Jericho. The apostles could discern only the certain note of final triumph in Jesus' declarations; they just could not bring

themselves to that place where they were willing to grasp the warnings of the impending setback. When Jesus spoke of “rising on the third day,” they seized on this statement as signifying a sure triumph immediately following an unpleasant preliminary skirmish with the Jewish religious leaders. The “third day” was a common Jewish expression signifying “presently” or “soon after.” They thought that Jesus, when speaking of “rising,” referred to the “rising of the new realm.”

Jesus had been accepted by these believers as the Messiah, and the Jews knew little or nothing about a suffering Messiah. They did not understand that Jesus was to accomplish many things by dying which could never have been achieved by living. While it was the resurrection of Lazarus that steeled the apostles to enter Jerusalem, it was the memory of the transfiguration that sustained the Master at this trying period of the bestowal.

5. The Blind Person at Jericho

Late in the afternoon of Thursday, March 30, Jesus and the apostles, at the head of a band of about two hundred followers, approached the walls of Jericho. As they came near the gate of the city, they encountered a throng of beggars, among them one Bartimeus, an elderly person who had been blind since youth. This blind person had heard much about Jesus and knew all about the healing of the blind Josiah at Jerusalem. Bartimeus had not known of Jesus’ last visit to Jericho until later, and had resolved to never again allow Jesus to visit Jericho without asking for healing.

News of Jesus’ approach had been heralded throughout Jericho, and hundreds of the inhabitants flocked out to meet this legend. When this great crowd came back escorting the Master into the city, Bartimeus, hearing the heavy tramping of the multitude, knew that something unusual was happening, and asked those standing nearby what was going on. And one of the beggars replied, “Jesus of Nazareth is passing by.” Bartimeus, on hearing that Jesus was near, began to cry aloud, “Jesus, have mercy upon me!” and continued to cry louder and louder until some of those near to Jesus requested that Bartimeus be quiet; but it was of no avail; the cries only became louder.

Jesus, hearing the blind person crying out, stood still, and seeing Bartimeus, said to the friends, “Bring this person to me.” And then they went over to Bartimeus, saying: “Come with us, for the Master calls for you.” Bartimeus, hearing these words, sprang forward toward the center of the road and was guided to Jesus by those nearby. Addressing Bartimeus, Jesus said: “What do you want me to do for you?” Then Bartimeus answered, “I would have my sight restored.” And Jesus, hearing this request and seeing Bartimeus’ faith, said: “You shall receive your sight; go your way; your faith has made you whole.” Immediately Bartimeus could see, and remained near Jesus, exalting the Creator, until the Master started on the next day for Jerusalem, and then Bartimeus went before the multitude announcing to all that the blindness had been cured.

6. The Visit to Zaccheus

When the Master’s procession entered Jericho it was nearing sundown, and it was decided to stay there for the night. As Jesus passed by the customs house, Zaccheus, the chief publican or tax collector, happened to be present, and much desired to see Jesus. This chief publican was very rich and had heard much about this

prophet of Galilee, resolving to see what sort of a person Jesus was. Accordingly, Zaccheus sought to press through the crowd, but it was too great, and Zaccheus, being short of stature, could not see over their heads. And so the chief publican followed on with the crowd until they came near the center of the city and not far from home. When it became clear that it would not be possible to penetrate the crowd, and thinking that Jesus might be going right on through the city without stopping, Zaccheus ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree whose spreading branches overhung the roadway, knowing that in this way it would be possible to obtain a good view of the Master passing by. And Zaccheus was not disappointed, for Jesus, passing by, stopped and, looking up at Zaccheus, said: “Zaccheus, come down quickly, for tonight I must stay at your house.” And Zaccheus, hearing these astonishing words, almost fell out of the tree while hurrying to get down, and going up to Jesus, expressed great joy at being able to accommodate the Master.

They went at once to the home of Zaccheus, and those who lived in Jericho were very surprised that Jesus would consent to abide with the chief publican. Even while the Master and the apostles lingered with Zaccheus before the door of the house, one of the Jericho Pharisees, standing nearby, said: “You see how this person has gone to lodge with a sinner, an apostate Jew who is an extortioner and a robber.” And Jesus, hearing this, looked down at Zaccheus and smiled. Then Zaccheus stood on a stool and said: “People of Jericho, hear me! I may be a publican and a sinner, but the great Teacher has come to stay in my house; and before we go in, I tell you that I am going to bestow one half of all my goods upon the poor, and beginning tomorrow, if I have wrongfully taken from anyone, I will restore it four times over. I am going to seek restoration with all my heart and learn to do righteousness in the sight of the Creator.”

When Zaccheus had finished speaking, Jesus, turning to the crowd assembled about them, said: “Today Zaccheus has been restored, and do not marvel at what I say nor take offense at what I do, for I have always said that I have come to seek and to save that which is lost.”

They lodged with Zaccheus for the night. The next day they rose and made their way up the “road of robbers” to Bethany on their way to the Passover at Jerusalem.

7. “As Jesus Passed By”

Jesus spread optimism everywhere and was full of grace and truth. The associates never ceased to wonder at the gracious words that proceeded out of Jesus’ mouth. You can cultivate gracefulness, but graciousness is the aroma of friendliness which emanates from a love-saturated soul.

Goodness always compels respect, but when it is devoid of grace, it often repels affection. Goodness is universally attractive only when it is gracious. Goodness is effective only when it is attractive.

Jesus really understood people, and could therefore manifest practical, personal, and constructive sympathy that was genuine, and show sincere compassion while seldom indulging in pity. Familiarity with suffering never bred indifference, and Jesus was able to minister to distressed souls without increasing their self-pity.

Jesus loved people sincerely, and could be such a true friend as a result of having remarkable insight — knowing so fully what was in the heart and in the mind of everyone. Jesus was an interested and keen observer, an expert in the comprehension of human need, and clever in detecting human longings.

Jesus was never in a hurry and had time to comfort others “while passing by.” Jesus always made people feel at ease, was a charming listener and never engaged in the meddlesome probing of the souls of others. As Jesus comforted hungry minds and ministered to thirsty souls, the recipients of this mercy did not so much feel that they were confessing *to* Jesus as that they were conferring *with* Jesus. They felt unbounded confidence because they saw that Jesus had so much faith in them.

Jesus never seemed to be curious about people, and never manifested a desire to direct, manage, or follow them up. Jesus inspired profound self-confidence and robust courage in everyone. When Jesus smiled on someone, that person experienced increased capacity for solving manifold problems.

Jesus, who loved people so much and so wisely, never hesitated to be severe with them when the occasion demanded such discipline. Jesus frequently set out to help a person by asking for help, in this way eliciting interest and appealing to the better things in human nature.

The Master could discern saving faith in the gross superstition of the person who, simply by touching Jesus’ clothing, sought healing. Jesus was always ready and willing to stop a sermon or detain a multitude while ministering to the needs of a single person, even to a little child. Great things happened not only because people had faith in Jesus, but also because Jesus had so much faith in them.

Most of the really important things which Jesus said or did seemed to happen casually, “while passing by.” There was so little of the well-planned or the premeditated in the Master’s earthly ministry. Jesus dispensed health and scattered happiness naturally and gracefully while journeying through life. It was literally true, “Jesus went about doing good.”

And the Master’s followers in all ages should learn to minister as “they pass by” — to do unselfish good as they go about their daily duties.

8. Parable of the Pounds

They did not start from Jericho until near noon since they sat up late the night before while Jesus taught Zaccheus’ family the doctrine of the new age. About halfway along the ascending road to Bethany the party paused for lunch while the multitude passed on to Jerusalem, not knowing that Jesus and the apostles were going to stay that night on the Mount of Olives.

The parable of the pounds, unlike the parable of the talents, which was intended for all the disciples, was spoken more exclusively to the apostles.

Jesus said: “You think that I am going to Jerusalem to receive a domain, but you are doomed to disappointment. Do you not remember about a certain ruler who went into a far country to receive a new domain, but even before it was possible to return, the citizens of the home province, who in their hearts had already rejected this ruler, sent a representative, saying, ‘We will not have this person to reign over us’? As this ruler was rejected in the temporal rule, so I am to be rejected in the spiritual rule. Again I say that my realm is not of this world; but if I had been accorded the spiritual rule of my people, I would have accepted such a rule of peoples’ souls and would have reigned over such a dominion of human hearts. Notwithstanding that they reject my spiritual rule over them, I will return again to receive from others such

a realm of spirit as is now denied me. You will see me rejected now, but in another age that which the children of Abraham now reject will be received and exalted.

“And now, like the rejected ruler of this parable, I would call before me my twelve servants, special stewards, and giving into each of your hands the sum of one pound, I would ask each of you to follow my instructions that you trade diligently with your trust fund while I am away so that you may have the means to justify your stewardship when I return, when a reckoning will be required of you.

“And when the stewards of the rejected ruler were subsequently called together for an accounting, the first came forward, saying, ‘Master, with your pound I have made ten pounds more.’ And the master said: ‘Well done; you are a good servant; because you have proved faithful in this matter, I will give you authority over ten cities.’ And the second came, saying, ‘Your pound left with me has made five pounds.’ And the master said, ‘I will accordingly make you ruler over five cities.’ And so on down through the others until the last of the servants, on being called to account, reported: ‘Here is your pound, which I have kept safely in this napkin. And I did this because I feared you; I believed that you were unreasonable, seeing that you seek to reap where you have not sown.’ Then the ruler said: ‘You negligent and unfaithful servant, I will judge you out of your own mouth. You knew that I reap where I have apparently not sown; therefore you knew this reckoning would be required of you. Knowing this, you should have at least given my money to the banker so that when I returned I might have earned proper interest.’

“And then this ruler said to those who stood by: ‘Take the money from this slothful servant and give it to the one who has ten pounds.’ And when they reminded the master that such a one already had ten pounds, the master said: ‘To everyone who has will be given more, but from those who have not, even that which they have will be taken away from them.’”

And then the apostles sought to know the difference between the meaning of this parable and that of the former parable of the talents, but Jesus would only say, in answer to their many questions: “Ponder well these words in your hearts while each of you finds out their true meaning.”

It was Nathaniel who taught the meaning of these two parables in later years, summing up the teachings in these conclusions:

1. Ability is the practical measure of life's opportunities. You will never be held responsible for the accomplishment of that which is beyond your abilities.
2. Faithfulness is the unerring measure of human trustworthiness. Those who are faithful in little things are also likely to exhibit faithfulness in everything consistent with their endowments.
3. The Master grants the lesser reward for lesser faithfulness when there is like opportunity.
4. The Master grants a like reward for like faithfulness when there is lesser opportunity.

When they had finished their lunch, and after the multitude of followers had gone on toward Jerusalem, Jesus, standing before the apostles in the shade of an overhanging rock by the roadside, with cheerful dignity

and a gracious majesty pointed westward, saying: “Come, my friends, let us go on into Jerusalem, there to receive that which awaits us; thus we fulfill the will of the Creator in all things.”

And so Jesus and the apostles resumed this, the Master’s last journey to Jerusalem as a mortal.

Paper 172

Going Into Jerusalem

Jesus and the apostles arrived at Bethany shortly after four o'clock on Friday afternoon, March 31, C.E. 30. Lazarus, Martha, Mary and their friends were expecting them; and since so many people came every day to talk with Lazarus about the resurrection, Jesus was informed that arrangements had been made to stay with a neighboring believer, Simon, the leading citizen of the little village.

That evening Jesus received many visitors, and the people of Bethany and Bethpage did their best to provide a welcome. Although many thought Jesus was now going into Jerusalem, in utter defiance of the Sanhedrin's decree of death, to be proclaimed ruler of the Jews, the Bethany family — Lazarus, Martha, and Mary — more fully realized that the Master was not that kind of a ruler; they dimly felt that this might be Jesus' last visit to Jerusalem and Bethany.

The chief priests were informed that Jesus lodged at Bethany, but they thought it best not to attempt to do anything until Jesus came into Jerusalem. Jesus knew about all this, but was majestically calm and never more composed and congenial. Even the apostles were astounded that Jesus should be so unconcerned. While the Master slept that night, the apostles stood watch by twos, and many of them were armed with swords. Early the next morning they were awakened by hundreds of people who came from Jerusalem, even on the Sabbath day, to see Jesus and Lazarus, who had been raised from the dead.

1. Sabbath at Bethany

The people from outside of Judea, as well as the Jewish authorities, had all been asking: "What do you think? will Jesus come to the feast?" Therefore, when the people heard that Jesus was at Bethany they were glad, but the chief priests and Pharisees were concerned. They were pleased to have Jesus under their jurisdiction, but they were a trifle disconcerted by such boldness; they remembered that on a previous visit to Bethany, Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead, and Lazarus was becoming a big problem to the enemies of Jesus.

Six days before the Passover, on the evening after the Sabbath, all Bethany and Bethpage joined in celebrating the arrival of Jesus by a public banquet at the home of Simon. This supper was in honor of both Jesus and Lazarus; it was tendered in defiance of the Sanhedrin. The agents of the Sanhedrin were present, but they feared to apprehend Jesus in the midst of all these friends.

Jesus talked with Simon about Joshua of old, and recited how Joshua and the Israelites had come to Jerusalem through Jericho. In commenting on the legend of the walls of Jericho falling down, Jesus said: "I am not concerned with such walls of brick and stone; but I would cause the walls of prejudice, self-righteousness, and hate to crumble before this preaching of the Creator's love for all."

The banquet went along in a very normal manner except that all the apostles were unusually sober. Jesus was exceptionally cheerful and had been playing with the children up to the time of coming to the table.

Nothing out of the ordinary happened until near the close of the feasting when Mary stepped forward and, going to where Jesus reclined as the guest of honor, proceeded to open a large alabaster cruse of very rare and costly ointment and anointed the Master's head and feet. The whole house became filled with the odor of the ointment, and everybody present was amazed at what Mary had done. Lazarus said nothing, but when some of the people murmured, showing indignation that so costly an ointment should be used in this way, Judas Iscariot stepped over to where Andrew reclined and said: "Why was this ointment not sold and the money used to feed the poor? You should ask the Master to rebuke such waste."

Jesus, knowing what they thought and hearing what they said, put a hand on Mary's head and, with a kindly expression, said to the others: "Why do you trouble Mary about this? To you who murmur and say that this ointment should have been sold and the money given to the poor, let me say that the poor are always with you so that you may minister to them at any time it seems good to you; but I will not always be with you; I will soon go to the Creator. Mary has saved this ointment for my body at its burial, and shall not be denied such satisfaction now that it has seemed good to make this anointing in anticipation of my death. In doing this, Mary has reproofed all of you by demonstrating faith in what I have said about my death and ascension to the Creator. I say to you that in the ages to come, wherever my teachings will be preached throughout the whole world, what Mary has done will be spoken of."

It was because of this rebuke, taken personally, that Judas Iscariot finally decided to seek revenge. Many times Judas had entertained such ideas subconsciously, but now dared to think such wicked thoughts openly and consciously. And many others encouraged this attitude since the cost of this ointment was a sum equal to the earnings of one person for one year — enough to provide bread for five thousand people.

But Mary had obtained this precious ointment to use for embalming Jesus' body in death, and should not be denied the opportunity to make this offering to the Master while living. Both Lazarus and Martha knew that Mary had saved the money to buy this cruse of spikenard, and they heartily approved of doing this, for they were wealthy and could easily afford to make such an offering.

When the chief priests heard of this dinner in Bethany for Jesus and Lazarus, they began to discuss among themselves as to what should be done with Lazarus. And presently they decided that Lazarus must also die. They rightly concluded that it would be useless to put Jesus to death if they permitted Lazarus to live.

2. Sunday Morning with the Apostles

On this Sunday morning, in Simon's beautiful garden, the twelve apostles were given their final instructions by Jesus preparatory to entering Jerusalem, learning that Jesus would probably deliver many addresses and teach many lessons before returning to the Creator, but being advised to refrain from doing any public work during this Passover sojourn in Jerusalem. Jesus instructed them to remain nearby and to "watch and pray," knowing that many of the apostles and immediate followers even then carried concealed swords, but making no reference to this fact.

This morning's instructions embraced a brief review of their ministry from the day of their ordination near Capernaum down to this day when they were preparing to enter Jerusalem. The apostles listened in silence; they asked no questions.

Early that morning David Zebedee had turned over to Judas the funds realized from the sale of the equipment of the Pella encampment, and Judas, in turn, had placed the greater part of this money in the hands of Simon, their host, for safekeeping in anticipation of the exigencies of their entry into Jerusalem.

After the conference with the apostles Jesus instructed Lazarus to do everything possible to avoid being killed by the vengefulness of the Sanhedrin. It was in obedience to this admonition that Lazarus, a few days later, fled to Philadelphia to escape the officers of the Sanhedrin.

In a way, all of Jesus' followers sensed the impending crisis, but they were prevented from fully realizing its seriousness by the unusual cheerfulness and exceptional good humor of the Master.

3. The Start for Jerusalem

Bethany was about two miles from the temple, and it was half past one that Sunday afternoon when Jesus prepared to start for Jerusalem. Jesus had feelings of profound affection for Bethany and its simple people, having been rejected by Nazareth, Capernaum, and Jerusalem, but accepted by Bethany. And it was in this small village, where almost every person was a believer, that Jesus chose to perform the mightiest work of the earth bestowal, the resurrection of Lazarus. Lazarus was not raised so that the villagers might believe, but rather because they already believed.

All morning Jesus had thought about the entry into Jerusalem. Until now Jesus had always endeavored to suppress all public acclaim, but it was different now. It was nearing the end of this earthly career, and Jesus had been condemned to death by the Sanhedrin, so no harm could come from allowing the disciples to give free expression to their feelings, as might occur in response to a public entry into the city.

Jesus did not decide to make this public entrance into Jerusalem as a last bid for popular favor nor as a final grasp for power, nor to do it to satisfy the human longings of the disciples and apostles. Jesus entertained none of the illusions of a fantastic dreamer, well knowing what was to be the outcome of this visit.

Having decided on making a public entrance into Jerusalem, the Master was confronted with the necessity of choosing a proper method of executing such a resolve. Jesus thought over all of the many more or less contradictory so-called Messianic prophecies, but there seemed to be only one which was appropriate to follow. Most of these prophetic statements depicted the successor of David, a bold and aggressive temporal deliverer of all Israel from the yoke of foreign domination. But there was one Scripture that had sometimes been associated with the Messiah by those who held more to the spiritual concept of the bestowal mission, which Jesus thought might be taken as a guide for the projected entry into Jerusalem, and which referred to a ruler coming to Jerusalem riding on a donkey.

A warrior always entered a city riding on a horse; a ruler on a mission of peace and friendship always entered riding on a donkey. Jesus would not enter Jerusalem on horseback, but was willing to enter peacefully and with good will on a donkey.

Jesus had tried by direct teaching to impress on the apostles and disciples that the new realm was not of this world, that it was a purely spiritual matter; but had not succeeded in this effort. Now, what could not be done by plain and personal teaching, Jesus would attempt to accomplish by a symbolic appeal. Accordingly,

right after the noon lunch, Jesus called Peter and John, and after directing them to go to Bethpage, a neighboring village a little off the main road and a short distance northwest of Bethany, said: "Go to Bethpage, and when you come to the junction of the roads, you will find the colt of a donkey tied there. Loose the colt and bring it back with you. If anyone asks you why you do this, merely say, 'The Master has need of it.'" And when the two apostles had gone into Bethpage as the Master had directed, they found the colt tied in the open street and close to a house on the corner. As Peter began to untie the colt, the owner came over and asked why they did this, and when Peter answered as Jesus had directed, the owner said: "If your Master is Jesus from Galilee, you may have the colt." And so they returned bringing the colt with them.

By this time several hundred people had gathered around Jesus and the apostles. Since midmorning the visitors passing by on their way to the Passover had waited. Meanwhile, David Zebedee and some of the former messenger associates took it upon themselves to hurry on to Jerusalem, where they effectively spread the report among the throngs of visiting people about the temple that Jesus of Nazareth was making a triumphal entry into the city. Accordingly, several thousand of these visitors flocked to greet this much-talked-of prophet and wonder-worker, whom some believed to be the Messiah. This multitude, coming out from Jerusalem, met Jesus and the crowd going into the city just after they had passed over the brow of Olivet and had begun the descent into the city.

As the procession started out from Bethany, there was great enthusiasm among the festive crowd of disciples, believers, and visitors, many coming from Galilee and Perea.

Before they started, the Alpheus twins put their cloaks on the donkey and held it while the Master got on. As the procession moved toward the summit of Olivet, the festive crowd threw their garments on the ground and brought branches from the near-by trees in order to make a carpet of honor for the donkey bearing the promised Messiah. As the happy crowd moved on toward Jerusalem, they began to sing, or rather to shout in unison, the Psalm, "Hosanna to the child of David; blessed is the one who comes in the name of Yahweh. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed be the dominion that comes down from above."

Jesus was lighthearted and cheerful as they moved along until they came to the brow of Olivet, where the city and the temple towers came into full view. There the Master stopped the procession, and a great silence came upon all as they saw Jesus weeping. Looking down on the vast multitude coming forth from the city, the Master, with much emotion and with tearful voice, said: "O Jerusalem, if you had only known, even you, at least in this your day, the things which belong to your peace, and which you could so freely have had! But now these glories are about to be hidden from your eyes. You are about to reject the Bringer of Peace and turn your backs upon the doctrine of the new age. The days will soon come when your enemies will cast a trench around about you and lay siege to you on every side; they will utterly destroy you, so that not one stone will be left on another. And all this will befall you because you did not know the time of your divine visitation. You are about to reject the gift of the Creator, and all will reject you."

When Jesus had finished speaking, they began the descent of Olivet and presently were joined by the multitude of visitors who had come from Jerusalem waving palm branches, shouting hosannas, and otherwise expressing happiness and good will. The Master had not planned that these crowds should come out from Jerusalem to meet them; that was the work of others.

Along with the multitude which poured out to welcome the Master, many of the Pharisees and other enemies also came. They were so disturbed by this sudden and unexpected outburst of popular acclaim that they feared to arrest Jesus in case such action might precipitate an open revolt of the populace. They greatly feared the attitude of the large numbers of visitors, who had heard much about Jesus, and who, many of them, were believers.

As they neared Jerusalem, the crowd became more demonstrative, so much so that some of the Pharisees made their way up alongside Jesus and said: "Teacher, you should rebuke your disciples and order them to behave more seemly." Jesus answered: "It is only fitting that these children should welcome the Bringer of Peace, whom the chief priests have rejected. It would be useless to stop them."

The Pharisees hurried on ahead of the procession to rejoin the Sanhedrin, which was then in session at the temple, and they reported to their associates: "All that we do is of no avail; we are confounded by this Galilean. The people have gone mad; if we do not stop these ignorant ones, all the world will become followers."

There really was no deep significance to be attached to this superficial and spontaneous outburst of popular enthusiasm. This welcome, although it was joyous and sincere, did not reveal any real or deep-seated conviction in the hearts of this festive multitude. These same crowds were equally willing to quickly reject Jesus later on this week when the Sanhedrin once took a firm and decided stand, and when the people became disillusioned — when they realized that Jesus was not going to establish the new realm in accordance with their long-cherished expectations.

But the whole city was mightily stirred up, so that everyone asked, "Who is this person?" And the multitude answered, "This is the prophet of Galilee, Jesus of Nazareth."

4. Visiting About the Temple

While the Alpheus twins returned the donkey to its owner, Jesus and the ten apostles detached themselves from their immediate associates and strolled about the temple, viewing the preparations for the Passover. No attempt was made to molest Jesus as the Sanhedrin greatly feared the people, and that was, after all, one of the reasons Jesus had for allowing the multitude to express their acclaim. The apostles little understood that this was the only human procedure which could have been effective in preventing Jesus' immediate arrest on entering the city. The Master wanted to give the inhabitants of Jerusalem, high and low, as well as the tens of thousands of Passover visitors, this one more and last chance to hear the teachings and receive, if they would, the Bringer of Peace.

And now, as the evening drew on and the crowds went in search of nourishment, Jesus and the immediate followers were left alone. What a strange day it had been! The apostles were thoughtful but speechless. Never, in their years of association with Jesus, had they seen such a day. For a moment they sat down by the treasury, watching the people drop in their contributions: the rich putting much in the receiving box and all giving something in accordance with the extent of their possessions. At last along came a poor person, roughly dressed, and cast two small coppers into the box. And then Jesus said, calling the attention of the apostles to this person: "Remember what you have just seen. This poor person cast in more than all the

others, for all these others, from their abundance, cast in some trifle as a gift, but this poor person, even being in want, gave everything.”

As the evening drew on, they walked about the temple courts in silence, and Jesus, after surveying these familiar scenes once more, and recalling emotions felt in connection with previous visits, said, “Let us go up to Bethany for the night.” Jesus, with Peter and John, went to the home of Simon, while the other apostles lodged among their friends in Bethany and Bethpage.

5. The Apostles’ Attitude

This Sunday evening as they returned to Bethany, Jesus walked in front of the apostles. Not a word was spoken until they separated after arriving at Simon’s house. No twelve human beings ever experienced such diverse and inexplicable emotions as now surged through the minds and souls of these ambassadors of the new realm. These sturdy Galileans were confused and disconcerted; they did not know what to expect next; they were too surprised to be much afraid. They knew nothing of the Master’s plans for the next day, and they asked no questions. They went to their lodgings, though they did not sleep much, except for the twins. But they did not keep armed watch over Jesus at Simon’s house.

Andrew, thoroughly bewildered and confused, was the one apostle who did not seriously undertake to evaluate the popular outburst of acclaim, being too preoccupied with the responsibility as chief of the apostolic corps to give serious consideration to the meaning or significance of the loud hosannas of the multitude. Andrew was busy watching some of the associates, fearing that they might be led away by their emotions during the excitement, particularly Peter, James, John, and Simon Zelotes. Throughout this day and those which immediately followed, Andrew was troubled with serious doubts, but never expressed any of these misgivings to the apostolic associates. Andrew was concerned about the attitude of some of the twelve who were armed with swords, but did not know that Peter was carrying such a weapon. And so the procession into Jerusalem made a comparatively superficial impression upon Andrew, who was too busy with responsibilities to be otherwise affected.

Simon Peter was at first almost overwhelmed by this popular manifestation of enthusiasm, but was considerably sobered by the time they returned to Bethany that night. Peter simply could not figure out what the Master was about, and was terribly disappointed that Jesus did not follow up this wave of popular favor with some kind of a pronouncement. Peter could not understand why Jesus did not speak to the multitude when they arrived at the temple, or at least permit one of the apostles to address the crowd. Peter was a great preacher, and disliked to see such a large, receptive, and enthusiastic audience go to waste, preferring to preach to that throng right there in the temple; but the Master had specifically charged them that they were to do no teaching or preaching while in Jerusalem this Passover week. The reaction from the spectacular procession into the city was disastrous to Simon Peter, who by nightfall was sobered and inexpressibly saddened.

To James Zebedee, this Sunday was a day of profound confusion. James could not grasp the meaning of what was going on, and could not comprehend the Master’s purpose in permitting this wild acclaim and then in refusing to say a word to the people when they arrived at the temple. As the procession moved down Olivet toward Jerusalem, and especially when they were met by the thousands of pilgrims who poured forth

to welcome the Master, James was cruelly torn by conflicting emotions of elation and gratification and by a profound feeling of fear as to what would happen when they reached the temple, and then was downcast and overcome by disappointment when Jesus climbed off the donkey and proceeded to walk leisurely about the temple courts. James could not understand the reason for throwing away such a magnificent opportunity to proclaim the new realm and, by nightfall, was held firmly in the grip of a distressing and dreadful uncertainty.

John Zebedee came somewhere near understanding why Jesus did this; at least grasping in part the spiritual significance of this so-called triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Watching the multitude move on toward the temple, and seeing the Master sitting there astride the colt, John recalled hearing Jesus quote the passage of Scripture, the statement of Zechariah, which described the coming of the Messiah as a bringer of peace and riding into Jerusalem on a donkey. And John, contemplating this Scripture, began to comprehend the symbolic significance of this Sunday-afternoon pageant, at least grasping enough of the meaning of this Scripture to be able to somewhat enjoy the episode and to not become overly depressed by the apparently purposeless ending of the triumphal procession. John had a type of mind which naturally tended to think and feel in symbols.

Philip was entirely unsettled by the suddenness and spontaneity of the outburst, not being able to arrive at any settled notion as to what all the demonstration was about. In a way, Philip enjoyed the performance because the Master was being honored, but by the time they reached the temple, was bothered by the possibility of being asked to feed the multitude by Jesus, so that the conduct of Jesus in turning leisurely away from the crowds, which so deeply disappointed the majority of the apostles, was a great relief to Philip. Multitudes had sometimes been a great trial to the steward of the twelve. After being relieved of these personal fears regarding the material needs of the crowds, Philip joined with Peter in the expression of disappointment that nothing was done to teach the multitude. That night Philip got to thinking over these experiences and was tempted to doubt the whole idea of the new realm, honestly wondering what all these things could mean, but expressed these doubts to no one. Philip loved Jesus too much, and had great personal faith in the Master.

Nathaniel, aside from the symbolic and prophetic aspects, came the nearest to understanding the Master's reason for enlisting the popular support of the Passover pilgrims, reasoning, before they reached the temple, that without such a demonstrative entry into Jerusalem Jesus would have been arrested by the Sanhedrin officials and cast into prison on entering the city. Nathaniel was not, therefore, in the least surprised that the Master made no further use of the cheering crowds after going inside the walls of the city, so forcibly impressing the Jewish leaders that they would not attempt an arrest. Understanding the real reason for the Master's entering the city in this manner, Nathaniel naturally followed along with more poise and was less disappointed by Jesus' subsequent conduct than were the other apostles. Nathaniel had great confidence in Jesus' understanding of people as well as sagacity and cleverness in handling difficult situations.

Matthew was at first unaffected by this pageant performance and did not grasp its meaning until also recalling the Scripture in Zechariah where the prophet had alluded to the rejoicing of Jerusalem because the ruler had come riding on the colt of a donkey. As the procession moved in the direction of the city and then drew on toward the temple, Matthew became ecstatic, being certain that something extraordinary would happen when the Master arrived at the temple at the head of this shouting multitude. When one of the

Pharisees mocked Jesus, saying, "Look, everybody, see who comes here, the ruler of the Jews riding on an ass!" Matthew exercised great restraint in not attacking the Pharisee. None of the twelve was more depressed on the way back to Bethany that evening. Next to Simon Peter and Simon Zelotes, Matthew experienced the highest nervous tension and was in a state of exhaustion by night, but by morning was feeling much better. Matthew was, after all, a cheerful loser.

Thomas was the most bewildered and puzzled of all the twelve, most of the time just following along, gazing at the spectacle and honestly wondering what the Master's motive could be for participating in such a peculiar demonstration. Down deep Thomas regarded the whole performance as a little childish, if not downright foolish, never having seen Jesus do anything like this and being at a loss to account for such strange conduct on this Sunday afternoon. By the time they reached the temple, Thomas had deduced that the purpose of this popular demonstration was to frighten the Sanhedrin so that they would not dare to immediately arrest the Master. On the way back to Bethany Thomas thought much but said nothing. By bedtime the Master's cleverness in staging the tumultuous entry into Jerusalem had begun to make a somewhat humorous appeal, and Thomas was cheered up by this reaction.

This Sunday started off as a great day for Simon Zelotes, who saw visions of wonderful doings in Jerusalem the next few days. Simon dreamed of the establishment of the new national rule of the Jews, with the nationalists springing into action as soon as the new realm was announced, personally being in supreme command of the assembling military forces, and with Jesus on the throne of David, on the way down Olivet even imagining the Sanhedrin and all of their sympathizers dead before sunset of that day. Simon, who really believed something great was going to happen, was the noisiest person in the whole multitude. But by five o'clock that afternoon Simon was a silent, crushed, and disillusioned apostle, never fully recovering from the depression which resulted from this day's shock, at least not until long after the Master's resurrection.

To the Alpheus twins this was a perfect day. They really enjoyed it all the way through, and not being present during the time of quiet visitation about the temple, they escaped much of the anticlimax of the popular upheaval. They could not possibly understand the downcast behavior of the apostles when they came back to Bethany that evening. In the memory of the twins this was always their greatest day, it was the satisfying climax of their whole career as apostles. And the memory of the elation of this Sunday afternoon carried them on through all of the tragedy of this eventful week, right up to the hour of the crucifixion. It was the most befitting entry the twins could conceive; they enjoyed every moment of the whole pageant. They fully approved of all they saw and long cherished the memory.

Of all the apostles, Judas Iscariot was the most adversely affected by this processional entry into Jerusalem. Judas' mind was in a disagreeable ferment because of the Master's rebuke the preceding day in connection with Mary's anointing at the feast in Simon's house. Judas was disgusted with the whole spectacle, which seemed childish, if not ridiculous. As this vengeful apostle looked on the proceedings of this Sunday afternoon, Jesus seemed to resemble a clown more than a ruler. Judas heartily resented the whole performance, sharing the views of the Greeks and Romans, who looked down on anyone who would consent to ride on a donkey. By the time the triumphal procession had entered the city, Judas had about decided to abandon the whole idea of the new realm, and was almost resolved to forsake all such farcical attempts to establish it, but then thought of the resurrection of Lazarus, and many other things, and decided to stay on

with the twelve, at least for another day. Besides, Judas carried the bag, and would not desert with the apostolic funds. On the way back to Bethany that night Judas' conduct did not seem strange since all of the apostles were equally downcast and silent.

Judas was tremendously influenced by the ridicule of Sadducean friends. No single factor exerted such a powerful influence in the final determination to forsake Jesus and the apostles as much as a certain episode which occurred just as Jesus reached the gate of the city. A prominent Sadducee (a friend of Judas's family) rushed up in a spirit of gleeful ridicule and, slapping Judas on the back, said: "Why so troubled, my good friend; cheer up and join us all while we acclaim this Jesus of Nazareth the ruler of the Jews while riding through the gates of Jerusalem seated on an ass." Judas had never shrunk from persecution, but could not stand this sort of ridicule. With the long-nourished emotion of revenge this fatal fear of ridicule, that terrible and fearful feeling of being ashamed of the Master and the apostles, was now blended. At heart, this ordained ambassador of the new realm was already a deserter; it only remained to find some plausible excuse for an open break with the Master.

Paper 173

Monday in Jerusalem

Early on this Monday morning, by prearrangement, Jesus and the apostles assembled at the home of Simon in Bethany, and after a brief conference they set out for Jerusalem. The twelve were strangely silent as they journeyed on toward the temple; they had not recovered from the experience of the preceding day. They were expectant, fearful, and profoundly affected by a certain feeling of detachment growing out of the Master's sudden change of tactics, coupled with the instruction that they were to engage in no public teaching throughout this Passover week.

As this group walked down Mount Olivet Jesus led the way, the apostles following closely behind in meditative silence. There was just one thought uppermost in the minds of all except Judas Iscariot, and that was: What will the Master do today? Judas' one absorbing thought was: What should I do? Should I go on with Jesus and my associates, or should I withdraw? And if I am going to quit, how should I break off?

It was about nine o'clock on this beautiful morning when they arrived at the temple. They went immediately to the large court where Jesus so often taught, and after greeting the believers who were waiting, Jesus mounted one of the teaching platforms and began to address the gathering crowd. The apostles withdrew for a short distance and waited for developments.

1. Cleansing the Temple

A huge commercial traffic had grown up in association with the services and ceremonies of the temple worship. There was the business of providing suitable animals for the various sacrifices. Though it was permissible for a person to provide a sacrifice, the fact remained that this animal must be free from all "blemish" in the meaning of the Levitical law and as interpreted by official inspectors of the temple. Many had experienced the humiliation of having a supposedly perfect animal rejected by the temple examiners. It therefore became the more general practice to purchase sacrificial animals at the temple, and although there were several stations on near-by Olivet where they could be bought, it had become the custom to buy these animals directly from the temple pens. Gradually this practice of selling all kinds of sacrificial animals in the temple courts had grown up. An extensive business, in which enormous profits were made, had been brought into existence. Part of these gains was reserved for the temple treasury, but the larger part went indirectly into the hands of the ruling high-priestly families.

This sale of animals in the temple prospered because, when someone purchased such an animal, although the price might be somewhat high, no more fees had to be paid, and they could be sure the intended sacrifice would not be rejected on the ground of possessing real or technical blemishes. At one time or another, systems of exorbitant overcharge were imposed on the common people, especially during the great national feasts. At one time the greedy priests went so far as to demand the equivalent of the value of a week's labor for a pair of doves which should have been sold to the poor for a few pennies. The priests had already begun to establish their bazaars in the temple precincts, those very merchandise marts which persisted to the time of their final overthrow by a mob three years before the destruction of the temple itself.

But traffic in sacrificial animals and associated merchandise was not the only way in which the courts of the temple were profaned. At this time an extensive system of banking and commercial exchange was fostered which was carried on right within the temple precincts. And this all came about in the following manner: During the Asmonean dynasty the Jews coined their own silver money, and it had become the practice to require the temple dues of one-half shekel and all other temple fees to be paid with this Jewish coin. This regulation necessitated that money-changers be licensed to exchange the many sorts of currency in circulation throughout Palestine and other provinces of the Roman Empire for this orthodox shekel of Jewish coining. Accordingly, from the 15th to the 25th of the month preceding the Passover, accredited money-changers erected their booths in the principal cities of Palestine for the purpose of providing the Jewish people with proper money to meet the temple dues after they had reached Jerusalem. After this ten-day period these money-changers moved on to Jerusalem and proceeded to set up their exchange tables in the courts of the temple. These temple bankers also profited from the exchange of all money intended for the purchase of sacrificial animals and for the payment of vows and the making of offerings.

These temple money-changers not only conducted a regular banking business for profit in the exchange of more than twenty kinds of money which the visiting pilgrims would periodically bring to Jerusalem, but they also engaged in all other kinds of transactions pertaining to the banking business. Both the temple treasury and the temple rulers profited tremendously from these commercial activities. It was not uncommon for the temple treasury to hold enormous amounts of money while the common people languished in poverty and continued to pay these unjust levies.

In the midst of this noisy aggregation of money-changers, merchandisers, and cattle sellers, Jesus, on this Monday morning, attempted to teach. Jesus was not alone in resenting this profanation of the temple; the common people, especially the Jewish visitors from foreign provinces, also resented this profiteering desecration of their national house of worship. At this time the Sanhedrin itself held its regular meetings in a chamber surrounded by all this noise and confusion of trade and barter.

As Jesus was about to begin to address the crowd, two things happened. At the money table of a near-by exchanger a violent and heated argument had arisen over the alleged overcharging of a Jew from Alexandria, while at the same moment the air was rent by the bellowing of a drove of some one hundred bulls which was being driven from one section of the animal pens to another. Jesus silently but thoughtfully contemplated this scene of commerce and confusion, seeing a simple-minded Galilean close by, someone Jesus had once talked with in Iron, being ridiculed and jostled about by supercilious and would-be superior Judeans; and all of this combined to produce one of those strange and periodic uprisings of indignant emotion.

To the amazement of the apostles standing nearby, who refrained from participation in what so soon followed, Jesus stepped down from the teaching platform and, going over to the person who was driving the cattle through the court, took the whip of cords and swiftly drove the animals from the temple. But that was not all; Jesus strode majestically before the wondering gaze of the thousands assembled in the temple court to the farthest cattle pen and proceeded to open the gates of every stall and to drive out the imprisoned animals. By this time the assembled pilgrims were electrified, and with uproarious shouting they moved toward the bazaars and began to overturn the tables of the money-changers. In less than five minutes all commerce had been swept from the temple. By the time the near-by Roman guards had appeared on the

scene, all was quiet, and the crowds had become orderly. Jesus, returning to the speaker's stand, spoke to the multitude: "You have witnessed this day that which is written in the Scriptures: 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations, but you have made it a den of robbers.'"

But before Jesus could say anything else, the great assembly broke out in hosannas of praise, and presently a throng of youths stepped out from the crowd to sing grateful hymns of appreciation that the profane and profiteering merchandisers had been ejected from the sacred temple. All the rest of that day while Jesus taught, guards set by the people stood watch at every archway, and they would not permit anyone to carry even an empty vessel across the temple courts.

When the chief priests and the scribes heard about these happenings, they were dumfounded. They determined all the more to destroy Jesus. But they were confused. They did not know how to accomplish this, for they greatly feared the multitudes, who were now so outspoken in their approval of the overthrow of the profane profiteers. And all this day, a day of quiet and peace in the temple courts, the people heard Jesus' teaching and literally hung on those words.

This surprising act of Jesus was beyond the comprehension of the apostles. They were so taken aback by this sudden and unexpected move of their Master that they remained huddled together throughout the whole episode near the speaker's stand; they never lifted a hand to further this cleansing of the temple. If this spectacular event had occurred the day before, at the time of Jesus' triumphal arrival at the temple at the termination of the tumultuous procession through the gates of the city, all the while loudly acclaimed by the multitude, they would have been ready for it, but coming as it did, they were wholly unprepared to participate.

This cleansing of the temple discloses the Master's attitude toward commercializing the practices of religion as well as all forms of unfairness and profiteering at the expense of the poor and the unlearned. This episode also demonstrates that Jesus did not look with approval on the refusal to employ force to protect the majority of any given human group against the unfair and enslaving practices of unjust minorities who may be able to entrench themselves behind political, financial, or ecclesiastical power. Shrewd, wicked, and designing people are not to be permitted to organize themselves for the exploitation and oppression of those who, because of their idealism, are not disposed to resort to force for self-protection or for the furtherance of their laudable life projects.

2. Challenging the Master's Authority

On Sunday the triumphal entry into Jerusalem so overawed the Jewish leaders that they refrained from placing Jesus under arrest. Today, this spectacular cleansing of the temple also effectively postponed the Master's apprehension. Day by day the rulers of the Jews were becoming more and more determined to destroy Jesus, but they were distraught by two fears that conspired to delay the hour of striking. The chief priests and the scribes were unwilling to arrest Jesus in public for fear that the multitude might turn on them in a fury of resentment; they also dreaded the possibility of the Roman guards being called on to quell a popular uprising.

At the noon session of the Sanhedrin it was unanimously agreed that Jesus must be speedily destroyed, since no friend of the Master attended this meeting. But they could not agree as to when and how to do this. Finally they agreed on appointing five groups to go out among the people and seek to entangle or otherwise to discredit Jesus in the sight of those who listened. Accordingly, about two o'clock, when Jesus had just begun a discourse on "The Liberty of Universe Citizenship," a group of these elders of Israel made their way near Jesus and, interrupting in the customary manner, asked this question: "By what authority do you do these things? Who gave you this authority?"

It was altogether proper that the temple rulers and the officers of the Jewish Sanhedrin should ask this question of anyone who presumed to teach and perform in the extraordinary manner which had been characteristic of Jesus, especially as concerned the recent clearing of the temple of all commerce. These traders and money-changers all operated by direct license from the highest rulers, and a percentage of their gains was supposed to go directly into the temple treasury. Do not forget that *authority* was the watchword of all Jewry. The prophets were always stirring up trouble because they so boldly presumed to teach without authority, without having been duly instructed in the rabbinic academies and subsequently regularly ordained by the Sanhedrin. Lack of this authority in pretentious public teaching was viewed as indicating either ignorant presumption or open rebellion. At this time only the Sanhedrin could ordain an elder or teacher, and such a ceremony had to take place in the presence of at least three persons who had previously been so ordained. Such an ordination conferred the title of "rabbi" on the teachers and also qualified them to act as judges.

The rulers of the temple challenged both Jesus' teaching and acts. Jesus knew that these very individuals had long publicly taught that this teaching was Satanic, and that the mighty works had been done by the power of devils. Therefore the Master answered their questions by asking them a counter-question. Jesus said: "I would also like to ask you one question which, if you will answer me, I will tell you by what authority I do these works. When John baptized, was the authority from Yahweh or from mortals?"

And when the questioners heard this, they withdrew to one side to take counsel among themselves as to what answer they might give. They had thought to embarrass Jesus before the multitude, but now they found themselves much confused before all who were assembled at that time in the temple court. And their discomfort was all the more apparent when they returned to Jesus, saying: "Concerning the baptism of John, we cannot answer; we do not know." And they so answered the Master because they had reasoned among themselves: If we say from Yahweh, then we will be asked, Why did you not believe John, and Jesus may claim to have received authority from John; and if we say from mortals, then the multitude might turn on us, for most of them hold that John was a prophet; and so they were compelled to come before Jesus and the people confessing that they, the religious teachers and leaders of Israel, could not (or would not) express an opinion about John's mission. And when they had spoken, Jesus, looking down on them, said, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."

Jesus never intended to appeal to John for authority; John had never been ordained by the Sanhedrin. Jesus' authority was in the Creator's eternal supremacy.

In employing this method of dealing with adversaries, Jesus did not mean to dodge the question. At first it may seem to have been a masterly evasion, but it was not so. Jesus was never disposed to take unfair

advantage even of enemies. In this apparent evasion Jesus really supplied all the hearers with the answer to the Pharisees' question about authority. They had asserted that Jesus performed by authority of devils. Jesus had repeatedly asserted that all the teaching and works were by the power and authority of the Creator. The Jewish leaders refused to accept this and were seeking to corner Jesus into an admission of being an irregular teacher who had never been sanctioned by the Sanhedrin. In answering them, while not actually claiming authority from John, Jesus so satisfied the people with this inference that the enemies' effort was effectively turned on themselves and was much to their discredit in the eyes of all present.

And it was this genius of the Master for dealing with adversaries that made them so afraid. They attempted no more questions that day; they retired to take further counsel among themselves. But the people were not slow to discern the dishonesty and insincerity in these questions asked by the Jewish rulers. Even the common people could not fail to distinguish between the moral majesty of the Master and the designing hypocrisy of the enemies. But the cleansing of the temple had brought the Sadducees over to the side of the Pharisees in perfecting the plan to destroy Jesus. And the Sadducees now represented a majority of the Sanhedrin.

3. Parable of the Two Children

As the caviling Pharisees stood there in silence, Jesus looked down on them and said: "Since you are in doubt about John's mission and arrayed in enmity against my teaching and works, listen while I tell you a parable: A certain great and respected landholder had two children, and desiring their help in the management of the large estates, came to one of them, saying, 'Go work today in my vineyard.' And this unthinking child answered, saying, 'I will not go' but afterward repented and went. The landholder found the other child and said, 'Go work in my vineyard.' And this hypocritical and unfaithful child answered, 'Yes, I will go.' But when the parent had left, the child did not go. Let me ask you, which of these children really did the parent's will?"

And the people spoke with one accord, saying, "The first one." And then Jesus said: "Yes; and now I declare that the publicans and harlots, even though they appear to refuse the call to change, will see the error of their way and go on into the realm of the Creator before you, who make great pretensions of serving the Creator while you refuse to do the Creator's works. It was not you, the Pharisees and scribes, who believed John, but rather the publicans and sinners; nor do you believe my teaching, but the common people hear my words gladly."

Jesus did not despise the Pharisees and Sadducees personally, but rather their systems of teaching and practice. Jesus was hostile to no one, but what was occurring here was the inevitable clash between a new and living religion of the spirit and the older religion of ceremony, tradition, and authority.

All this time the twelve apostles stood near the Master, but they did not in any manner participate in these transactions. Each one of the twelve was reacting personally to the events of these closing days of Jesus' ministry, and each one remained obedient to the Master's injunction to refrain from all public teaching and preaching during this Passover week.

4. Parable of the Absent Landlord

When the chief Pharisees and the scribes who had sought to entangle Jesus with their questions had finished listening to the story of the two children, they withdrew to take further counsel, and the Master, turning to the listening multitude, told another parable:

“There was a good householder who planted a vineyard, set a hedge about it, dug a pit for the wine press, and built a watchtower for the guards. Then the householder rented this vineyard to tenants and went on a long journey into another country, and when the season of the fruits drew near, sent servants to the tenants to receive the rental. But the tenants refused to give these servants the fruits due their master; instead, they fell upon the servants, beating one, stoning another, and sending the others away empty-handed. And the householder, on hearing about all this, sent other and more trusted servants to deal with these wicked tenants, and these they wounded and also treated shamefully. And then the householder sent a favorite servant who they killed. And still, in patience and with forbearance, the householder dispatched many other servants, but they would receive none of these. Some they beat, others they killed, and the householder, who had been so dealt with, decided to send a family member to deal with these ungrateful tenants, thinking, ‘They may mistreat my servants, but they will surely show respect for my own family.’ But when these unrepentant and wicked tenants saw the relative, they reasoned among themselves: ‘This is the heir who we can kill and then the inheritance will be ours.’ So they killed the relative. What will the master of that vineyard do to those ungrateful and wicked tenants?”

And when the people heard this parable and the question Jesus asked, they answered, “The householder will destroy those miserable people and rent the vineyard to other and honest farmers who will render the fruits in their season.” And when some of them who heard perceived that this parable referred to the Jewish nation and its treatment of the prophets and to the impending rejection of Jesus, they said in sorrow, “Yahweh forbid that we should go on doing these things.”

Jesus saw a group of the Sadducees and Pharisees making their way through the crowd, and paused for a moment until they drew near, and said: “You know how your forebears rejected the prophets, and you know that you are set in your hearts to reject me.” And then, looking with a searching gaze at those priests and elders who were standing nearby, Jesus said: “Did you read in the Scripture about the stone which the builders rejected, and which, when the people had discovered it, was made into the cornerstone? And so once more I warn you that, if you continue to reject my teachings, presently the realm of the Creator will be taken away from you and be given to a people willing to receive the good news and to bring forth the fruits of the spirit. And there is a mystery about this stone, seeing that whoever falls on it and is thereby broken in pieces, will be saved; but one on whom this stone falls will be ground to dust and scattered to the four winds.”

The Pharisees, hearing these words, understood that they referred to themselves and the other Jewish leaders. They greatly desired to arrest Jesus then and there, but they feared the multitude. However, they were so angered by the Master’s words that they withdrew and discussed how they might bring about Jesus’ death. And that night both the Sadducees and the Pharisees joined together in the plan to do so the next day.

5. Parable of the Marriage Feast

After the scribes and rulers had withdrawn, Jesus again addressed the assembled crowd and told the parable of the wedding feast, saying:

“The realm of the Creator may be likened to a certain ruler who made a marriage feast and dispatched messengers to call those who had previously been invited to the feast to come, saying, ‘Everything is ready for the marriage supper at the palace.’ Now, many of those who had once promised to attend refused to come. And the ruler, hearing of these rejections of the invitation, sent other servants and messengers, saying: ‘Tell all those who were invited to come, for my dinner is ready. My cattle and lambs are killed, and all is in readiness for the celebration of the forthcoming marriage.’ But again the thoughtless made light of this call of their ruler, and they went their ways, one to the farm and others to their shops. Still others were not content to slight the ruler’s call, but in open rebellion they laid hands on the ruler’s messengers and shamefully mistreated them, even killing some of them. And the ruler, perceiving that the chosen guests, even those who had accepted the preliminary invitation and had promised to attend the wedding feast, had finally rejected the call and in rebellion had assaulted and slain the chosen messengers, was exceedingly angry. And then this insulted ruler ordered out the armies and the armies of allies and instructed them to destroy these rebellious murderers and to burn down their city.

“And when those who spurned the invitation were punished, the ruler appointed yet another day for the wedding feast and said to the messengers: ‘Those who were first invited to the wedding were not worthy; so go now beyond the borders of the city, and as many as you can find, ask these strangers to come in and attend this wedding feast.’ And then these servants went out into the highways and the out-of-the-way places, and they gathered together as many as they found, good and bad, rich and poor, so that at last the wedding chamber was filled with willing guests. When all was ready, the ruler came in to view the guests, and with much surprise saw a person without a wedding garment. The ruler, who had freely provided wedding garments for all the guests, addressed this person, saying: ‘Friend, how is it that you come into my guest chamber on this occasion without a wedding garment?’ And this unprepared person was speechless. Then the ruler said to the servants: ‘Cast out this thoughtless guest from my house to share the lot of all the others who have spurned my hospitality and rejected my call. I will have none here except those who delight to accept my invitation, and who do me the honor to wear those guest garments so freely provided for all.’”

After telling this parable, Jesus was about to dismiss the multitude when a sympathetic believer asked: “But, Master, how will we know about these things? how can we be ready for the ruler’s invitation? what sign will you give us by which we will know that you are the Child of the Creator?” And the Master said, “Only one sign will be given you.” And then, pointing to the physical vehicle of the bestowal mission, continued, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” But they mistook the reference to Jesus’ body for the temple buildings, saying, “It took almost fifty years for this temple to be built, how can it be destroyed and raised up in three days?” Even the apostles did not comprehend the significance of this statement, but subsequently, after the resurrection, they recalled what Jesus had said.

About four o’clock this afternoon Jesus beckoned to the apostles and indicated a desire to leave the temple and go to Bethany for their evening meal and a night of rest. On the way up Olivet Jesus instructed Andrew,

Philip, and Thomas that, on the next day, they should establish a camp nearer the city which they could occupy during the remainder of the Passover week. In compliance with this instruction the following morning they pitched their tents in the hillside ravine overlooking the public camping park of Gethsemane, on a plot of ground belonging to Simon of Bethany.

Again it was a silent group of Jews who made their way up the western slope of Olivet on this Monday night. These twelve, as never before, were beginning to sense that something tragic was about to happen. While the dramatic cleansing of the temple during the early morning had aroused their hopes of seeing the Master assert dominion and manifest mighty powers, the events of the entire afternoon only operated as an anticlimax in that they all pointed to the certain rejection of Jesus' teaching by the Jewish authorities. The apostles were gripped by suspense and were held in the firm grasp of a terrible uncertainty. They realized that only a few short days could intervene between the events of the day just passed and the crash of an impending doom. They all felt that something tremendous was about to happen, but they did not know what to expect. They went to their various places for rest, but they slept very little. Even the Alpheus twins were at last aroused to the realization that the events of the Master's life were moving swiftly toward their final culmination.

Paper 174

Tuesday Morning in the Temple

About seven o'clock on this Tuesday morning Jesus met the apostles and some two dozen other prominent disciples at the home of Simon. At this meeting Jesus instructed Lazarus to flee to Philadelphia in Perea, which Lazarus did and later became connected with the missionary movement having its headquarters in that city. Jesus also said good-bye to the aged Simon.

This morning Jesus greeted each of the twelve with a personal salutation, to Andrew Jesus said: "Do not be dismayed by the events just ahead. Keep a firm hold on your associates and do not let them see you worried." To Peter: "Do not put your trust in weapons. Establish yourself on spiritual foundations." To James: "Do not hesitate because of outward appearances. Remain firm in your faith, and you will soon know of the reality of that which you believe." To John: "Be gentle; love even your enemies; be tolerant. And remember that I have trusted you with many things." To Nathaniel: "Do not judge by appearances; remain firm in your faith when all appears to vanish; be true to your commission as an ambassador of the new realm." To Philip: "Be unmoved by the events now impending. Remain unshaken, even when you cannot see the way. Be loyal to your oath of consecration." To Matthew: "Do not forget the mercy that received you into the new realm. Let no one cheat you of your eternal reward. As you have withstood the inclinations of the mortal nature, be willing to be steadfast." To Thomas: "No matter how difficult it may be, just now you must walk by faith and not by sight. Do not doubt that I am able to finish the work I have begun, and that I will eventually see all of my faithful ambassadors in the realm beyond." To the Alpheus twins: "Do not allow the things which you cannot understand to crush you. Be true to the affections of your hearts and do not put your trust in either great people or the changing attitude of the people. Stand by your friends." And to Simon Zelotes: "Simon, you may be crushed by disappointment, but your spirit will rise above all that may happen to you. What you have failed to learn from me, my spirit will teach you. Seek the true realities of the spirit and do not be attracted by unreal and material shadows." And to Judas Iscariot: "Judas, I have loved you and have prayed that you would love the others. Never tire of doing good; and I warn you to beware of the slippery paths of flattery and the poison darts of ridicule."

And Jesus, after concluding these greetings, left for Jerusalem with Andrew, Peter, James, and John as the other apostles began the establishment of the Gethsemane camp, where they were to go that night, and where they made their headquarters for the remainder of the Master's life. About halfway down the slope of Olivet Jesus paused and visited for more than an hour with the four apostles.

1. Divine Forgiveness

For several days Peter and James had been engaged in discussing their differences of opinion about the Master's teaching regarding the forgiveness of sin. They had both agreed to lay the matter before Jesus, and Peter embraced this occasion as a fitting opportunity for securing the Master's counsel. Accordingly, Simon Peter broke in on a conversation dealing with the differences between praise and worship, by asking: "Master, James and I are not in agreement regarding your teachings having to do with the forgiveness of sin. James claims that you teach that the Creator forgives us even before we ask, and I maintain that repentance and confession must precede the forgiveness. Which of us is right? what do you say?"

After a short silence Jesus looked significantly at all four and answered: "My friends, your opinions are wrong because you do not comprehend the nature of those intimate and loving relations between the creature and the Creator. You fail to grasp that understanding sympathy which the wise parent entertains for the immature and sometimes erring child. It is doubtful whether intelligent and affectionate parents are ever called on to forgive an average and normal child. Understanding relationships associated with attitudes of love effectively prevent all those estrangements which later necessitate the readjustment of repentance by the child with forgiveness by the parent.

"A part of every parent lives in the child. The parent enjoys priority and superiority of understanding in all matters connected with the child-parent relationship. The parent is able to view the immaturity of the child in the light of the more advanced parental maturity, the riper experience of the older partner. With the earthly child and the Creator, the divine parent possesses infinity and divinity of sympathy and capacity for loving understanding. Divine forgiveness is inevitable; it is inherent and inalienable in the Creator's infinite understanding, in the perfect knowledge of all that concerns the mistaken judgment and erroneous choosing of the child. Divine justice is so eternally fair that it unfailingly embodies understanding mercy.

"A wise person who understands the inner impulses of others will love them. And when you love others, you have already forgiven them. This capacity to understand human nature and forgive apparent wrongdoing is Creatorlike. If you are wise parents, this is the way you will love and understand your children, even forgive them when transient misunderstanding has apparently separated you. The child, being immature and lacking in the fuller understanding of the depth of the child-parent relationship, must frequently feel a sense of guilty separation from a parent's full approval, but the true parent is never conscious of any such separation. Sin is an experience of creature consciousness; it is not a part of the Creator's consciousness.

"Your inability or unwillingness to forgive others is the measure of your immaturity, your failure to attain adult sympathy, understanding, and love. You hold grudges and nurse vengefulness in direct proportion to your ignorance of the inner nature and true longings of your children and other beings. Love is the outworking of the divine and inner urge of life. It is founded on understanding, nurtured by unselfish service, and perfected in wisdom."

2. Questions by the Jewish Rulers

On Monday evening a council between the Sanhedrin and some fifty additional leaders selected from among the scribes, Pharisees, and the Sadducees had been held. It was the consensus of this meeting that it would be dangerous to arrest Jesus in public because of the affections of the common people. It was also the opinion of the majority that a determined effort should be made before an arrest and trial to discredit Jesus in the eyes of the multitude. Accordingly, several groups of learned people were designated to be on hand the next morning in the temple to ask difficult questions and otherwise seek to embarrass Jesus before the people. At last, the Pharisees, Sadducees, and even the Herodians were all united in this effort to discredit Jesus in the eyes of the Passover multitudes.

On Tuesday morning Jesus arrived in the temple court and began to teach, and had spoken only a few words when a group of the younger students from the academies, who had been rehearsed for this purpose, came

forward and by their spokesperson addressed Jesus: “Master, we know you are a righteous teacher, and we know that you proclaim the ways of truth, and that you serve only Yahweh, for you fear no one, and that you are no respecter of persons. We are only students, and we would know the truth about a matter which troubles us. Our difficulty is this: Is it lawful for us to give tribute to Caesar? Shall we give or shall we not give?” Jesus, perceiving their hypocrisy and craftiness, said to them: “Why do you come to tempt me? Show me the tribute money, and I will answer you.” And when they produced a denarius, Jesus looked at it and said, “Whose image and superscription does this coin bear?” And when they answered, “Caesar’s,” Jesus said, “Give to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s and to the Creator the things that are the Creator’s.”

When Jesus had answered these young scribes and their Herodian accomplices, they withdrew, and the people, even the Sadducees, enjoyed their discomfort. Even the youths who had endeavored to entrap Jesus marveled at the unexpected sagacity of the Master’s answer.

The previous day the rulers had endeavored to trip Jesus before the multitude on matters of ecclesiastical authority, and having failed, they now tried to use a damaging discussion of civil authority. Both Pilate and Herod were in Jerusalem at this time, and these enemies conjectured that, if Jesus would dare to advise against the payment of tribute to Caesar, they could go at once before the Roman authorities with a charge of sedition. On the other hand, if Jesus advised the payment of tribute in so many words, they rightly calculated that such a pronouncement would greatly wound the national pride of the Jewish hearers, thereby alienating the good will and affection of the multitude.

In all of this the enemies of Jesus were defeated since it was a well-known ruling of the Sanhedrin, made for the guidance of the Jews dispersed among the gentile nations, that the “right of coinage carried with it the right to levy taxes.” In this manner Jesus avoided their trap. To have answered “No” to their question would have been equivalent to inciting rebellion; to have answered “Yes” would have shocked the deep-rooted nationalist sentiments of that day. The Master did not evade the question, but merely employed the wisdom of making a double reply. Jesus was never evasive, but was always wise in dealing with those who sought to harass and destroy.

3. The Sadducees and the Resurrection

Before Jesus could start teaching, another group came forward, this time a company of the learned and crafty Sadducees.

Jesus knew, and so did the people, that these Sadducees were not sincere. Nevertheless, Jesus condescended to reply to their mischievous questions about marriage after the death of a spouse. Jesus said: “You are all mistaken in asking such questions because you know neither the Scriptures nor the living power of Yahweh. You know that the people of this world marry, but you do not seem to understand that those who are accounted worthy to attain the worlds to come through resurrection do not marry. Those who experience the resurrection from the dead are more like the angels, and they never die. These resurrected ones are eternally the children of the Creator; they are the children of light resurrected into the progress of eternal life.”

When Jesus had finished answering these questions, the Sadducees withdrew, and some of the Pharisees forgot themselves and exclaimed, “True, true, Master, you have well answered these unbelieving Sadducees.” The Sadducees did not dare ask any more questions, and the people marveled at the wisdom of Jesus’ teaching.

The Master, although positively affirming the fact of the survival of mortal creatures by the technique of resurrection, did not in any sense speak approvingly of the Pharisaic beliefs in the resurrection of the literal human body.

The Sadducees had thought to subject Jesus to the withering influence of *ridicule*, knowing full well that persecution in public would most certainly create further sympathy in the minds of the multitude.

4. The Great Commandment

A group of Sadducees had been instructed to ask Jesus entangling questions about angels, but when they saw the fate of their associates, they very wisely decided to hold their peace; they retired without asking a question. It was the prearranged plan of the confederated Pharisees, scribes, Sadducees, and Herodians to fill up the entire day with these entangling questions, hoping to discredit Jesus before the people and at the same time effectively prevent there being any time for the proclamation of Jesus’ disturbing teachings.

Then one of the groups of the Pharisees came forward to ask harassing questions, and the spokesperson, signaling to Jesus, said: “Master, I am a lawyer, and I would like to ask you which, in your opinion, is the greatest commandment?” Jesus answered: “There is only one commandment, and that one is the greatest of all, and that commandment is: ‘You shall love your Creator with all your heart and with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second commandment is like the first, and it is: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these; on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

The lawyer, perceiving that Jesus had answered not only in accordance with the highest concept of Jewish religion, but had also answered wisely in the sight of the assembled multitude, thought it the better part of valor to openly commend the Master’s reply, saying: “Of a truth, Master, you have well said that Yahweh is one and there is none other; and that to love Yahweh with all the heart, understanding, and strength, and also to love one’s neighbor as one’s self, is the first and great commandment; and we are agreed that this great commandment is much more to be regarded than all the burnt offerings and sacrifices.” When the lawyer answered so discreetly, Jesus said, “My friend, I perceive that you are not far from the realm of the Creator.”

Jesus spoke the truth in referring to this lawyer as being “not far from the realm of the Creator,” for that very night the lawyer went out to the Master’s camp near Gethsemane, professed faith in the doctrine of the new realm, and was baptized by Josiah, one of the disciples of Abner.

Two or three other groups of the scribes and Pharisees were present and had intended to ask questions, but they were either disarmed by the answer to the lawyer, or they were deterred by the discomfort of all who had undertaken to ensnare Jesus. After this no one dared to ask another question in public.

5. The Inquiring Greeks

About noontime, while purchasing supplies for the new camp which was that day being established near Gethsemane, Philip was approached by a delegation of strangers, a group of believing Greeks from Alexandria, Athens, and Rome, whose spokesperson said to the apostle: “You have been pointed out to us by those who know you; so we come to you with the request to see Jesus, your Master.” Philip was taken by surprise to meet these prominent and inquiring Greek gentiles in the market place, and, since Jesus had so explicitly charged all of the twelve not to engage in any public teaching during the Passover week, was a bit puzzled as to the right way to handle this matter. Philip was also disconcerted because these people were foreign gentiles, and if they had been Jews or near-by and familiar gentiles, would not have hesitated so markedly. Asking these Greeks to remain right where they were, Philip hurried away. While the Greeks supposed that it was to search for Jesus, in reality Philip went to the home of Joseph, knowing that Andrew and the other apostles were at lunch; and calling Andrew out, explained the reason for coming, and then, accompanied by Andrew, returned to the waiting Greeks.

Philip had about finished the purchasing of supplies, and returned with Andrew and the Greeks to the home of Joseph, where Jesus received them; and they sat near while Jesus spoke to the apostles and a number of leading disciples assembled at this luncheon. Jesus said:

“The Creator sent me to this world to reveal loving-kindness to the children of mortals, but those to whom I first came have refused to receive me. True, many of you have believed my teachings for yourselves, but the children of Abraham and their leaders are about to reject me, and in so doing they will reject the One who sent me. I have freely proclaimed the doctrine of life eternal to this people; I have told them of joy, liberty, and life more abundant in the spirit. The Creator has done many wonderful works among these fear-ridden people. But the leaders of my people deliberately blinded their eyes so that they do not see, and hardened their hearts so they do not believe. All these years I have sought to heal them of their unbelief so that they might be recipients of the Creator’s eternal life. I know that not all have failed me; some of you have believed my message. In this room now are a full score of those who were once members of the Sanhedrin, or who were high in the councils of the nation, although even some of you still shrink from open confession of the truth lest they cast you out of the synagogue. Some of you are tempted to love the glory of mortals more than the glory of the Creator. But I am constrained to show forbearance since I fear for the safety and loyalty of even some of those who have been so long near me, and who have lived so close by my side.

“In this banquet chamber I perceive that Jews and gentiles are assembled in about equal numbers, and I would address you as the first and last of such a group that I may instruct in the affairs of the new realm before I go to the Creator.”

These Greeks had been in faithful attendance at Jesus’ teaching in the temple. On Monday evening they had held a conference at the home of Nicodemus, which lasted until dawn, and thirty of them had elected to enter the new realm.

Jesus, standing before them at this time, perceived the end of one dispensation and the beginning of another. Turning to the Greeks, the Master said:

“Those who believe these teachings, believe not merely in me but in the One who sent me. When you look at me, you see not only the Child of Humanity but also the Creator who sent me. I am the light of the world, and whoever will believe my teaching will no longer live in darkness. If you gentiles will hear me, you will receive the words of life and will enter into the joyous liberty of the truth of relationship with the Creator. If the Jews choose to reject me and to refuse my teachings, I will not sit in judgment on them, for I did not come to judge the world but to offer it restoration. Nevertheless, those who reject me and refuse to receive my teaching will be brought to judgment in due time by the Creator and those who have been appointed to sit in judgment on any who reject the gift of mercy and the truths of eternity. Remember, all of you, that I speak not of myself, but that I have faithfully declared to you that which the Creator commanded I should reveal to the children of mortals. And these words which the Creator directed me to speak to the world are words of divine truth, everlasting mercy, and eternal life.

“But to both Jew and gentile I affirm that the hour has about come when I will be glorified. You know that, if a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it lives alone; but if it dies in good soil, it springs up again to life and bears much fruit. Those who selfishly love their lives stand in danger of losing them; but those who are willing to lay down their lives for my sake will enjoy a more abundant existence on earth and in life eternal. If you will truly follow me, even after I have gone to the Creator, then you will become my disciples and the sincere servants of others.

“I know my hour is approaching, and I am troubled. I perceive that my people are determined to spurn me, but I am happy to receive these truth-seeking gentiles who come here today inquiring for the way of light. Nevertheless, my heart aches for my people, and my soul is distraught by that which lies just before me. What will I say as I look ahead and discern what is about to happen to me? Will I say, my Creator, save me from this awful hour? No! For this very purpose I have come into the world. Rather I will say, and pray that you will join me: My Creator, glorify your name; your will be done.”

And then the Personalized Adjuster appeared, and as Jesus paused noticeably, this now mighty spirit of the Creator’s representation spoke to Jesus of Nazareth, saying: “I have glorified my name in your bestowals many times, and I will glorify it once more.”

While the Jews and gentiles assembled here heard no voice, they could not fail to discern that the Master had paused speaking while a message came from some superhuman source. They all said, “An angel has spoken.”

Then Jesus continued to speak: “All this has not happened for my sake but for yours. I know of a certainty that the Creator will receive me and accept my mission on your behalf, but it is necessary that you be encouraged and made ready for the fiery trial which is just ahead. Let me assure you that victory will be the ultimate result of our united efforts to enlighten the world and liberate humankind. The old order is bringing itself to judgment; I have cast down the fallen ruler of this world; and all people will become free by the light of the spirit which I will pour out on everyone after I have ascended to the Creator.

“And now I promise you that if I am lifted up on earth and in your lives, I will draw all of you to myself and into the community of the Creator. You have believed that the Deliverer would live on earth forever, but I affirm that I will be rejected, and that I will go back to the Creator. I will be with you only a little

while; the living light will be among this darkened generation for only a short time. Walk while you have this light so that the oncoming darkness and confusion will not overtake you. Those who walk in the darkness do not know where they go; but if you will choose to walk in the light, you will all become liberated children of the Creator. And now, all of you, come with me while we go back to the temple and I speak farewell words to the chief priests, the scribes, the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Herodians, and the benighted rulers of Israel.”

After having spoken, Jesus led the way over the narrow streets of Jerusalem back to the temple. They had just heard the Master say that this was to be a farewell discourse in the temple, and they followed in silence and in deep meditation.

Paper 175

The Last Temple Discourse

Shortly after two o'clock on this Tuesday afternoon, Jesus, accompanied by eleven apostles, Joseph of Arimathea, the thirty Greeks, and certain other disciples, arrived at the temple and began the delivery of one last address in the courts of the sacred edifice. This discourse was intended to be a last appeal to the Jewish people and the final indictment of the vehement enemies and would-be destroyers — the scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees, and the chief rulers of Israel. Throughout the morning the various groups had had an opportunity to question Jesus; this afternoon no one asked a question.

As the Master began to speak, the temple court was quiet and orderly. The money-changers and the merchandisers had not dared to enter the temple since Jesus and the aroused multitude had driven them out the previous day. Before beginning the discourse, Jesus tenderly looked down on the audience which was so soon to hear this farewell public address of mercy to humankind, coupled with a last denunciation of the false teachers and the bigoted rulers of the Jews.

1. The Discourse

“For a long time I have been with you, going up and down in the land proclaiming the Creator’s love for the children of humanity, and many have seen the light and, by faith, have entered into the Creator’s realm. In connection with this teaching and preaching the Creator has done many wonderful works, even the resurrection of the dead. Many sick and afflicted have been made whole because they believed; but all of this proclamation of truth and healing of disease has not opened the eyes of those who refuse to see light, those who are determined to reject this doctrine of the new realm.

“In every manner consistent with doing the Creator’s will, I and my apostles have done our utmost to live in peace, to conform with the reasonable requirements of the laws of Moses and the traditions of Israel. We have persistently sought peace, but the leaders of Israel will not have it. By rejecting the truth and the light, they are aligning themselves on the side of error and darkness. There cannot be peace between light and darkness, between life and death, between truth and error.

“Many of you have dared to believe my teachings and have already entered into the joy and liberty of the consciousness of a relationship with the Creator. And you will bear witness that I have offered this same relationship to all the Jewish nation, even to the people who now seek my destruction. And even now the Creator would receive these blinded teachers and these hypocritical leaders if they would only accept the proffered mercy. Even now it is not too late for these people to receive the truth and to welcome me.

“The Creator has long dealt in mercy with this people. Generation after generation we have sent our prophets to teach and warn them, and generation after generation they have killed these teachers. And now your willful high priests and stubborn rulers go right on doing this same thing. As Herod brought about the death of John, you now prepare to destroy the Child of the Creator.

“As long as there is a chance that the Jews will accept mercy they will receive it; but when you have filled up your cup of impenitence, and when you have finally rejected this mercy, this nation will be left on its

own, and it will speedily come to an inglorious end. This people was called to become the light of the world, to show forth the spiritual glory of a Creator-knowing race, but you have departed so far from the fulfillment of your divine privileges that your leaders are about to commit the supreme folly of all the ages in that they are on the verge of finally rejecting the gift of the Creator to all people and for all ages — the revelation of the love of the Creator for all the creatures on earth.

“And when you do reject this revelation, it will be given to other peoples, to those who will receive it with joy and gladness. In the name of the Creator who sent me, I solemnly warn you that you are about to lose your position in the world as the standard-bearers of eternal truth and the custodians of the divine law. I am now offering you your last chance to come forward, to signify your intention to seek the Creator with all your hearts and to enter, like little children and by sincere faith, into the security and salvation of the new realm.

“The Creator has worked for your restoration, and I came down to live among you and personally show you the way. Many of both the Jews and the Samaritans, and even the gentiles, have believed the doctrine of the new realm, but those who should be first to come forward and accept the light have steadfastly refused to believe the revelation of the truth of the Creator – the Creator revealed in mortals and mortals uplifted to the Creator.

“This afternoon my apostles stand here before you in silence, but you will soon hear their voices ringing out with the urge to unite with the universe as children of the living Creator. And now I call to witness these, my disciples and believers, as well as the unseen messengers by their sides, that I have once more offered the rulers and the people of Israel deliverance. But you all see how the Creator’s mercy is slighted and how the messengers of truth are rejected. Nevertheless, I admonish you that these scribes and Pharisees still sit in Moses’ seat, and therefore, until the Most Highs who rule on earth finally overthrow this nation and destroy the place of these rulers, I ask you to co-operate with these elders in Israel. You are not required to unite with them in their plans to destroy me, but in everything related to the peace of Israel you are to be subject to them. In all these matters do whatever they require and observe the essentials of the law but do not repeat their evil works. Remember, this is the sin of these rulers: They say that which is good, but they do not do it. You know how these leaders place heavy burdens on your shoulders, burdens grievous to bear, and that they will not lift as much as one finger to help you bear these weighty burdens. They have oppressed you with ceremonies and enslaved you by traditions.

“Furthermore, these self-centered rulers delight in doing their good works so that they will be seen by everyone. They make broad their phylacteries and enlarge the borders of their official robes. They crave the chief places at the feasts and demand the chief seats in the synagogues. They covet laudatory salutations in the market places and desire to be called rabbi by all. And even while they seek this honor, they secretly take profit from the services of the sacred temple. For a pretense these hypocrites make long prayers in public and give alms to attract the notice of others.

“Remember, I have taught you that those who would be greatest among you should become the servers of all. If you presume to exalt yourselves before the Creator, you will certainly be humbled; but those who truly humble themselves will surely be exalted. Seek in your daily lives, not self-glorification, but the glory of the Creator. Intelligently subordinate your own wills to the will of the Creator.

“Do not mistake my words. I bear no malice toward these chief priests and rulers who even now seek my destruction; I have no ill will for these scribes and Pharisees who reject my teachings. I know that many of you believe in secret, and I know you will openly profess your allegiance when my hour comes. But how will your rabbis justify themselves since they profess to talk with the Creator and then presume to reject and destroy the one who comes to reveal the Creator to the worlds?

“Shame on you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! You would shut the doors of the realm of the Creator against sincere people because they happen to be unlearned in the ways of your teaching. You refuse to enter this realm and at the same time do everything within your power to prevent all others from entering. You stand with your backs to the doors of the realm of the Creator and fight with all who would enter.

“Shame on you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites that you are! for you go to great lengths to make one proselyte, and when you have succeeded, you are not content.

“Shame on you, chief priests and rulers who take the property of the poor and demand heavy dues of those who would serve the Creator as they think Moses ordained! You who refuse to show mercy, can you hope for mercy in the worlds to come?

“Shame on you, false teachers, blind guides! What can be expected of a nation when the blind lead the blind? They will both stumble into the pit of destruction.

“Shame on you who are hypocritical when you take an oath! You are tricksters since you teach that one may swear by the temple and break the oath, but that whoever swears by the gold in the temple must remain bound. You are all fools and blind. You are not even consistent in your dishonesty, for which is the greater, the gold or the temple which has supposedly sanctified the gold? You also teach that, if one swears by the altar, it is nothing; but that, if one swears by the gift that is on the altar, then that person will be held as a debtor. Again you are blind to the truth, for which is the greater, the gift or the altar which sanctifies the gift? How can you justify such hypocrisy and dishonesty in the sight of the Creator?

“Shame on you, scribes and Pharisees and all other hypocrites who make sure that they tithe material goods and at the same time disregard the weightier matters of the law — faith, mercy, and judgment! Within reason, the first you ought to have done but not left the other undone. You are truly blind guides and mute teachers; you strain out the gnat and swallow the camel.

“Shame on you, scribes, Pharisees, and hypocrites! for you are scrupulous to clean the outside of the cup and the platter, but inside the filth of extortion, excesses, and deception remains. You are spiritually blind. Do you not recognize how much better it would be to first clean the inside of the cup, and then that which spills over would of itself clean the outside? You wicked reprobates! you make the outward performances of your religion conform with the letter of your interpretation of Moses’ law while your souls are steeped in iniquity and filled with murder.

“Shame on all of you who reject truth and spurn mercy! Many of you are like white tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful but inside are full of dead bones and all sorts of uncleanness. You who knowingly reject

the Creator appear outwardly as holy and righteous, but inwardly your hearts are filled with hypocrisy and iniquity.

“Shame on you, false guides of a nation! You have built a monument to the martyred prophets of old, while you plot to destroy the One of whom they spoke. You garnish the tombs of the righteous and flatter yourselves that, had you lived in the days of your forebears, you would not have killed the prophets; and then in the face of such self-righteous thinking you prepare to slay the One of whom the prophets spoke. As you do these things, you are witness to yourselves that you are the wicked children of those who killed the prophets. Go on, then, and fill up the cup of your condemnation!

“Shame on you, children of evil! John did truly call you the offspring of vipers, and I ask, how can you escape the judgment that John pronounced on you?

“But even now I offer you, in the Creator’s name, mercy and forgiveness; even now I offer life eternal. The Creator has sent you the prophets; some you have persecuted and others you have killed. Then John appeared proclaiming the coming of the Deliverer, and you destroyed John after many had become believers. And now you prepare to shed more innocent blood. Do you not comprehend that a terrible day of reckoning will come when the Judge of all the earth will require of this people an accounting for the way they have rejected, persecuted, and destroyed these messengers? Do you not understand that you must account for all of this righteous blood, from the first prophet killed down to the times of Zechariah, who was slain between the sanctuary and the altar? And if you go on in your evil ways, this accounting may be required of this very generation.

“O Jerusalem and the children of Abraham, you who have stoned the prophets and killed the teachers that were sent to you, even now I would gather your children together, but you will not!

“And now I leave you. You have heard my message and have made your decision. Those who have believed my teachings are safe within the realm of the Creator. To you who have chosen to reject the gift of the Creator, I say that you will no longer see me teaching in the temple. My work for you is done. I now go forth with my children, and your house is left desolate!”

And then the Master beckoned the followers to depart from the temple.

2. Status of Individual Jews

The fact that the spiritual leaders and the religious teachers of the Jewish nation rejected the teachings of Jesus does not in any manner affect the status of any individual Jew’s standing before the Creator. And it should not cause those who profess to be Christians to be prejudiced against the Jew as an individual. The Jews, as a nation, as a sociopolitical group, paid in full the terrible price of rejecting the Bringer of Peace. They ceased to be the spiritual torchbearers of divine truth to humankind, but this constitutes no valid reason why the individual descendants of these earlier Jews should be made to suffer the persecutions which have been inflicted on them by intolerant, unworthy, and bigoted professed followers of Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Jew by natural birth.

Many times this unreasoning and un-Christlike hatred and persecution of modern Jews has terminated in the suffering and death of some innocent and unoffending Jewish individuals whose very ancestors heartily accepted Jesus' gospel and presently died unflinchingly for that truth which they so wholeheartedly believed. A shudder of horror passes over the onlooking celestial beings as they observe the professed followers of Jesus indulge themselves in persecuting, harassing, and even murdering the descendants of Peter, Philip, Matthew, and others of the Palestinian Jews who so gloriously yielded up their lives as the first martyrs of the new realm!

How cruel and unreasoning to compel innocent children to suffer for the sins of their progenitors, misdeeds of which they are wholly ignorant, and for which they could in no way be responsible! And to do such wicked deeds in the name of one who taught the disciples to love even their enemies! It has become necessary, in this recital, to portray the manner in which certain Jews rejected and conspired to bring about the ignominious death of Jesus; but we would warn all who read this narrative that the presentation of such a historical description in no way justifies the unjust hatred, nor condones the unfair attitude of mind, which so many professed Christians have maintained toward individual Jews for many centuries. Those who follow the teachings of Jesus must cease to mistreat the individual Jew as one who is guilty of the rejection and crucifixion of Jesus. The Universal Creator and the Local Universe Creator have never ceased to love the Jews. They are no respecters of persons, and eternal life is for the Jew as well as for the gentile.

3. The Fateful Sanhedrin Meeting

At eight o'clock on this Tuesday evening the fateful meeting of the Sanhedrin was called to order. On many previous occasions this supreme court of the Jewish nation had informally decreed the death of Jesus. Many times this august ruling body had determined to stop Jesus' work, but never before had they resolved to bring about Jesus' death at any and all costs. It was just before midnight on this Tuesday, April 4, C.E. 30, that the Sanhedrin, as then constituted, officially and *unanimously* voted to impose the death sentence on both Jesus and Lazarus. This was the answer to the Master's last appeal to the rulers of the Jews that had been made in the temple only a few hours before, and it represented their reaction of bitter resentment toward Jesus' last and vigorous indictment of these same chief priests and impenitent Sadducees and Pharisees. The passing of the death sentence (even before the trial) on Jesus was the Sanhedrin's reply to the last offer of mercy ever to be extended to the Jewish nation, as such.

From this time on the Jews were left to finish their brief and short lease of national life wholly in accordance with their purely human status among the nations of Urantia. Israel had repudiated the representative of the Deity who made a covenant with Abraham, and the plan to make the children of Abraham the light-bearers of truth to the world had been shattered. The divine covenant had been abrogated, and the end of the Hebrew nation was near.

The officers of the Sanhedrin were given the orders to arrest Jesus early the next morning, but with instructions not to do so in public. They were told to plan to take Jesus in secret, preferably suddenly and at night. Understanding that Jesus might not return that day (Wednesday) to teach in the temple, these officers of the Sanhedrin were instructed to act sometime before midnight on Thursday.

4. The Situation in Jerusalem

At the conclusion of Jesus' last discourse in the temple, the apostles were once more left in confusion and consternation. Before the Master began the terrible denunciation of the Jewish rulers, Judas had returned to the temple, so that all twelve heard this latter half of Jesus' last discourse. It is unfortunate that Judas Iscariot did not hear the first and mercy-proffering half of this farewell address, having been in conference with a certain group of Sadducean relatives and friends as to the most fitting manner of dissociating from Jesus and the other apostles. It was while listening to the Master's final indictment of the Jewish leaders and rulers that Judas finally and fully decided to abandon the whole enterprise. Nevertheless, Judas left the temple in company with the twelve, went with them to Mount Olivet, and, with the other apostles, listened to that fateful discourse on the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the Jewish nation, remaining with them that Tuesday night at the new camp near Gethsemane.

The multitude who heard Jesus swing from the merciful appeal to the Jewish leaders into that sudden and scathing rebuke were stunned and bewildered. That night, while the Sanhedrin sat in death judgment on Jesus, and while the Master sat with the apostles and certain of the disciples out on the Mount of Olives foretelling the death of the Jewish nation, all Jerusalem was involved in the serious and suppressed discussion of just one question: "What will they do with Jesus?"

At the home of Nicodemus more than thirty prominent Jews who were secret believers met and debated what course they would pursue in case an open break with the Sanhedrin came. All present agreed that they would make open acknowledgment of their allegiance at the very hour they should hear of the Master's arrest. And that is just what they did.

The Sadducees, who now controlled and dominated the Sanhedrin, desired to eliminate Jesus for the following reasons:

1. They feared that the increased popularity with the multitude threatened to endanger the existence of the Jewish nation by possible involvement with the Roman authorities.
2. Jesus' zeal for temple reform struck directly at their revenues; the cleansing of the temple affected their wealth.
3. They felt themselves responsible for the preservation of social order, and they feared the consequences of the further spread of Jesus' strange and new doctrine of the family of humanity.

The Pharisees had different motives for wanting to see Jesus put to death. They were afraid because:

1. Jesus was opposed to their traditional hold on the people. The Pharisees were ultraconservative, and they bitterly resented these supposedly radical attacks on their vested prestige as religious teachers.
2. They held that Jesus was a lawbreaker and had shown utter disregard for the Sabbath and numerous other legal and ceremonial requirements.
3. They charged that Jesus' reference to being the Child of the Creator was blasphemy.

4. And now they were thoroughly angry because of the last discourse of bitter denunciation which Jesus had delivered in the temple as the concluding portion of the farewell address.

The Sanhedrin, having formally issued orders for the arrest and death of Jesus, adjourned on this Tuesday near midnight, after arranging to meet at ten o'clock the next morning at the home of Caiaphas, the high priest, for the purpose of formulating the charges on which Jesus should be brought to trial.

A small group of the Sadducees had actually proposed to dispose of Jesus by assassination, but the Pharisees utterly refused to countenance such a procedure.

And this was the situation in Jerusalem on this eventful day while a vast concourse of celestial beings hovered over this momentous scene on earth, anxious to do something to assist their beloved Sovereign but powerless to act because they were effectively restrained by their commanding superiors.

Paper 176

Tuesday Evening on Mount Olivet

This Tuesday afternoon, as Jesus and the apostles left the temple on their way to the Gethsemane camp, Matthew, calling attention to the temple construction, said: “Master, observe what manner of buildings these are. See the massive stones and the beautiful adornment; can it be that these buildings are to be destroyed?” As they went on toward Olivet, Jesus said: “You see these stones and this massive temple; In the days soon to come there will not be one stone left standing. They will all be thrown down.” These remarks depicting the destruction of the sacred temple aroused the curiosity of the apostles as they walked along behind the Master; they could conceive of no event short of the end of the world which would cause the destruction of the temple.

In order to avoid the crowds passing along the Kidron valley toward Gethsemane, Jesus and the associates decided to climb up the western slope of Olivet for a short distance and then follow a trail over to their private camp near Gethsemane, located a short distance above the public camping ground. As they turned to leave the road leading to Bethany, they observed the temple, glorified by the rays of the setting sun; and while they stood on the mount, they saw the lights of the city appear and witnessed the beauty of the illuminated temple; and there, under the mellow light of the full moon, Jesus and the twelve sat down. The Master talked with them, and presently Nathaniel asked this question: “Tell us, Master, how will we know when these events are about to happen?”

1. The Destruction of Jerusalem

In answering Nathaniel’s question, Jesus said: “Yes, I will tell you about the times when this people will have filled up the cup of their iniquity, when justice will swiftly descend upon this city. I am about to leave you; I will go to the Creator. After I leave you, be sure that no one deceives you, for many will come as deliverers and will lead people astray. When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be troubled, for though all these things will happen, the end of Jerusalem is not yet at hand. You should not be disturbed by famines or earthquakes; neither should you be concerned when you are delivered to the civil authorities and are persecuted for the sake of the new realm. You will be thrown out of the synagogue and put in prison for my sake, and some of you will be killed. When you are brought before governors and rulers, it will be for a testimony of your faith and to show your dedication. And when you stand before judges, do not be anxious as to what you should say, for the spirit will teach you in that very hour what you should answer your adversaries. In these days of travail, even your own family, under the leadership of those who have rejected me, will deliver you to prison and death. For a time you may be hated by all for my sake, but even in these persecutions I will not forsake you; my spirit will not desert you. Be patient! Do not doubt that the doctrine of the new realm will triumph over all enemies and, eventually, be proclaimed to all nations.”

Jesus paused and looked down on the city. The Master realized that the rejection of the spiritual concept of the Messiah, the determination to cling persistently and blindly to the material mission of the expected deliverer, would presently bring the Jews in direct conflict with the powerful Roman armies, and that such a contest could only result in the final and complete overthrow of the Jewish nation. When the people rejected Jesus’ spiritual bestowal and refused to receive the light of truth as it so mercifully shone on them,

they sealed their doom as an independent people with a special spiritual mission on earth. Even the Jewish leaders subsequently recognized that it was this secular idea of the Messiah that directly led to the turbulence which eventually brought about their destruction.

Since Jerusalem was to become the cradle of the early movement, Jesus did not want its teachers and preachers to die in the terrible overthrow of the Jewish people in connection with the destruction of Jerusalem; and therefore gave these instructions to the followers. Jesus was much concerned in case some of the disciples might become involved in these soon-coming revolts and perish in the downfall of Jerusalem.

Then Andrew inquired: "But, Master, if the Holy City and the temple are to be destroyed, and if you are not here to direct us, when should we leave Jerusalem?" Jesus said: "You may remain in the city after I have gone, even through these times of travail and bitter persecution, but when you finally see Jerusalem being encompassed by the Roman armies after the revolt of the false prophets, then you will know that its desolation is near; then you must flee to the mountains. Let none who are in the city and around about wait to save anything, neither let those who are outside dare to enter. There will be great tribulation, for these will be the days of gentile vengeance. And after you have deserted the city, this disobedient people will fall by the edge of the sword and will be led captive into all nations; and so Jerusalem will be overcome by the gentiles. In the meantime, I warn you, do not be deceived. If any one comes to you, saying, 'Here is the Deliverer,' do not believe it, for many false teachers will arise and people will be led astray; but you should not be deceived, for I have told you all this in advance."

The apostles sat in silence in the moonlight for a considerable time while these astounding predictions of the Master sank into their bewildered minds. And it was in conformity with this very warning that practically the entire group of believers and disciples fled from Jerusalem on the first appearance of the Roman troops, finding a safe shelter in Pella to the north.

Even after this explicit warning, many of Jesus' followers interpreted these predictions as referring to the changes which would obviously occur in Jerusalem when the reappearing of the Messiah would result in the establishment of the New Jerusalem and in the enlargement of the city to become the world's capital. In their minds these Jews were determined to connect the destruction of the temple with the "end of the world." They believed that this New Jerusalem would fill all Palestine. And so it was not strange that Peter should say: "Master, we know that all things will pass away when the new realm appears, but how shall we know when you will return to bring all this about?"

Jesus, hearing this, was thoughtful for some time and then said: "You always try to attach the new teaching to the old; you are determined to misunderstand all my teaching; you insist on interpreting the new doctrine in accordance with your established beliefs. Nevertheless, I will try to enlighten you."

2. The Master's Second Coming

On several occasions Jesus had made statements about intending to presently leave this world, one day most certainly returning to consummate the work of the new realm. As the conviction grew on the followers that Jesus was going to leave them, it was only natural for all believers to cling to these promises to return. The

doctrine of the second coming of Christ therefore became incorporated into the teachings of the Christians, and almost every subsequent generation of disciples has devoutly believed this truth and has confidently looked forward to this second coming.

If they were to part with their Master and Teacher, how much more these first disciples and the apostles grasped at this promise to return, and they lost no time in associating the predicted destruction of Jerusalem with this promised second coming. And they continued with this interpretation notwithstanding that, throughout this evening of instruction on Mount Olivet, the Master took particular pains to prevent just such a mistake.

In further answer to Peter's question, Jesus said: "Why do you still look for me to sit on the throne of David and expect that the material dreams of the Jews will be fulfilled? Have I not told you all these years that my realm is not of this world? The things which you now see are coming to an end, but this will be a new beginning out of which the doctrine of the new realm will go to all the world and will spread to all peoples. And when the new age has come to its full fruition, be assured that the Creator will not fail to visit you with an enlarged revelation of truth and an enhanced demonstration of righteousness, even as other revelations have already been bestowed on this world. And so the Creator will continue to manifest mercy and show love, even to this dark and evil world. So also will I, after the Creator has invested me with all power and authority, continue to follow your fortunes and to guide in the affairs of the new realm by the presence of my spirit, which will shortly be poured out on all people. Even though I will be present with you in spirit, I also promise that I will return to this world, where I have lived this mortal life and achieved the experience of simultaneously revealing the Creator to mortals and leading mortals to the Creator. Very soon I must leave you and take up the work the Creator has entrusted to my hands, but have courage, for I will return. In the meantime, my Spirit of Truth will comfort and guide you.

"You see me now in weakness and in the body, but when I return, it will be with power and in the spirit. The eye of matter sees me in the body, but only the eye of the spirit will see me glorified by the Creator and appearing on earth in my own name.

"But the times of my reappearing are known only in the councils of Paradise; not even the angels know when this will occur. However, you should understand that, when this doctrine of the new realm has been proclaimed to all the world, and when the fullness of the age has come to pass, the Creator will send you another dispensational bestowal, or else I will return to judge the age.

"And now concerning the tragedy of Jerusalem about which I have spoken to you, even this generation will not pass away until my words are fulfilled; but concerning the times of my coming again, no one may presume to speak. But you should be wise regarding the ripening of an age; you should be alert to discern the signs of the times. You know when the fig tree shows its tender branches and puts forth its leaves that summer is near. Likewise, when the world has passed through the long winter of material-mindedness and you discern the coming of the spiritual springtime of a new dispensation, you should know that the summertime of a new visitation draws near.

"But what does the significance of this teaching have to do with the coming of the divine Beings? Do you not perceive that, when each of you is called to complete the life struggle and pass through the portal of

death, you stand in the immediate presence of judgment, and that you are face to face with the facts of a new dispensation of service in the eternal plan of the infinite Creator? What the whole world must face as a literal fact at the end of an age, you, as individuals, must each most certainly face as a personal experience when you reach the end of your natural life and pass on to be confronted with the conditions and demands inherent in the next revelation of the eternal progression of the Creator's realm."

Of all the discourses which the Master gave the apostles, none ever became so confused in their minds as this one, given this Tuesday evening on the Mount of Olives, regarding the twofold subject of the destruction of Jerusalem and the second coming. There was, therefore, little agreement between the subsequent written accounts based on the memories of what the Master said on this extraordinary occasion. Consequently, when the records were left blank concerning much that was said that Tuesday evening, many traditions grew; and very early in the second century a Jewish apocalyptic about the Messiah written by one Selta, who was attached to the court of the Emperor Caligula, was bodily copied into the Matthew Gospel and subsequently added (in part) to the Mark and Luke records. It was in these writings of Selta that the parable of the ten virgins appeared. No part of the record ever suffered such confusing misconstruction as this evening's teaching. But the Apostle John never became confused.

As these thirteen resumed their journey toward the camp, they were speechless and under great emotional tension. Judas had finally confirmed the decision to abandon these associates. It was a late hour when David Zebedee, John Mark, and a number of the leading disciples welcomed Jesus and the twelve to the new camp, but the apostles did not want to sleep; they wanted to know more about the destruction of Jerusalem, the Master's departure, and the end of the world.

3. Later Discussion at the Camp

As they gathered about the campfire, some twenty of them, Thomas asked: "Since you are to return to finish the work of the new realm, what should our attitude be while you are away on the Creator's business?" And Jesus answered:

"And even you, Thomas, fail to comprehend what I have been saying. Have I not all this time taught you that your connection with the new realm is spiritual and individual, wholly a matter of personal experience in the spirit by the faith-realization that you are a child of the Creator? What more can I say? The downfall of nations, the crash of empires, the destruction of the unbelieving Jews, the end of an age, even the end of the world, what have these things to do with one who believes these teachings, and who has lived in the surety of eternal life? You who are Creator-knowing and believing have already received the assurances of eternal life. Since your lives have been lived in the spirit and for the Creator, nothing can be of serious concern to you. The accredited citizens of the universe are not to be disturbed by temporal upheavals or perturbed by terrestrial cataclysms. What does it matter to you who believe if nations overturn, the age ends, or all things visible crash, since you know that your life is my gift, and that it is eternally secure in the Creator? Having lived the temporal life by faith and having yielded the fruits of the spirit as the righteousness of loving service for others, you can confidently look forward to the next step in the eternal career with the same survival faith that has carried you through your first and earthly adventure in relationship with the Creator.

“Each generation of believers should carry on their work, in view of my possible return, exactly as all individual believers carry forward their lifework in view of inevitable and ever-impending natural death. When you have by faith once established yourself as a child of the Creator, nothing else matters as regards the surety of survival. But make no mistake! this survival faith is a living faith, and it increasingly manifests the fruits of that divine spirit which first inspired it in the human heart. That you have once accepted membership in the new realm will not save you in the face of the knowing and persistent rejection of those truths which have to do with the progressive spiritual fruit-bearing of the children of the Creator. You who have been with me in the Creator’s business on earth can even now desert if you find that you do not love the way of the Creator’s service for humankind.

“As individuals, and as a generation of believers, hear me while I speak a parable: There was a certain great person who, before starting out on a long journey to another country, gave all of the trusted servants money, giving to one five talents, to another two, and to another one. And so on down through the entire group of honored stewards, to each entrusting money according to their abilities; and then leaving on the journey. When their master had departed, the servants set themselves at work to gain profits from the wealth entrusted to them. Immediately the one who had received five talents began to trade with them and very soon had made a profit of another five talents. In like manner the one who had received two talents soon had gained two more. And so all of these servants made gains for their master except the one who received only one talent. This servant dug a hole in the earth and hid the master’s money. Presently the master of those servants unexpectedly returned and called on the stewards for an accounting. And when they had all been called before their master, the one who had received the five talents came forward with the money and brought five additional talents, saying, ‘Master, you gave me five talents to invest, and I am glad to present five other talents as my gain.’ And then the master said: ‘Well done, good and faithful servant, you have been faithful over a few things; I will now set you as steward over many; enter into the joy of your master.’ And then the one who had received the two talents came forward, saying: ‘Master, you delivered into my hands two talents, and I have gained these other two talents.’ And the master then said: ‘Well done, good and faithful steward; you also have been faithful over a few things, and I will now set you over many; enter into the joy of your master.’ And then came the one who had received one talent. This servant came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew you and realized that you were a shrewd person in that you expected gains where you had not personally labored; therefore I was afraid to risk any of that which was entrusted to me. I safely hid your talent in the earth; here it is; you now have what belongs to you.’ But the master answered: ‘You are an indolent and slothful steward. By your own words you confess that you knew I would require of you an accounting with reasonable profit, such as the other diligent servants have rendered. Knowing this, you ought, therefore, to have at least put my money into the hands of the bankers so that on my return I might have received my own with interest.’ And then to the chief steward this master said: ‘Take away this one talent from this unprofitable servant and give it to the one who has the ten talents.’

“To all who have, more will be given, and they will have abundance; but from those who have not, what they have will be taken away. You cannot stand still in the affairs of the eternal realm. The Creator requires everyone to grow in grace and in a knowledge of the truth. You who know these truths must yield the increase of the fruits of the spirit and manifest a growing devotion to the unselfish service of others. And remember that, inasmuch as you minister to one of the least of these, you have done this service to me.

“And so you should go about the work of the Creator’s business. Carry on until I come. In faithfulness do that which is entrusted to you, and you will be ready for the call of death. And having lived for the glory of the Creator and for my satisfaction, you will enter with joy and exceedingly great pleasure into the eternal service of the everlasting realm.

“Truth is living; the Spirit of Truth will always lead the children of light into new realms of spiritual reality and divine service. You are not given truth to crystallize into settled, safe, and honored forms. Your revelation of truth must be so enhanced by passing through your personal experience that new beauty and actual spiritual gains will be disclosed to all who observe your spiritual fruits and are led to glorify the Creator. Only those faithful servants who grow in the knowledge of the truth, and who develop the capacity for divine appreciation of spiritual realities, can ever hope to enter fully into the joy of the Creator.” What a sorry sight for successive generations of the professed followers of Jesus to say, regarding their stewardship of divine truth: “Here, Master, is the truth you committed to us a hundred or a thousand years ago. We have lost nothing; we have faithfully preserved all you gave us; we have allowed no changes to be made in that which you taught us; here is the truth you gave us.” But such a plea concerning spiritual indolence will not justify the barren steward of truth in the presence of the Master. In accordance with the truth committed to your hands the Master of truth will require an accounting.

In the next world you will be asked to give an account of the endowments and stewardships of this world. Whether inherent talents are few or many, a just and merciful reckoning must be faced. If endowments are used only in selfish pursuits and no thought is bestowed on the higher duty of obtaining increased yield of the fruits of the spirit, as they are manifested in the ever-expanding service of mortals and the worship of the Creator, such selfish stewards must accept the consequences of their deliberate choosing.

And how much like all selfish mortals was this unfaithful servant with the one talent in blaming such slothfulness directly on the master. How prone are mortals, when they are confronted with the failures of their own making, to put the blame on others, often on those who least deserve it!

Jesus said that night as they went to their rest: “Freely you have received; therefore freely you should give of the truth, and in the giving this truth will multiply and show the increasing light of saving grace, even as you minister it.”

4. The Return of Michael

Of all the Master’s teachings no one phase has been so misunderstood as the promise to come back in person to this world. It is not strange that Michael would be interested in returning to the planet on which the seventh and last bestowal was experienced as a mortal. It is only natural to believe that Jesus of Nazareth, now sovereign ruler of a vast universe, would be interested in coming back, not only once but even many times, to this world, here having lived such a unique life and received the Creator’s unlimited bestowal of universe power and authority. Urantia will eternally be one of the seven nativity spheres of Michael in the winning of universe sovereignty.

Jesus did, on numerous occasions and to many individuals, declare an intention to return to this world. As the followers awakened to the fact that their Master was not going to function as a temporal deliverer, and

as they listened to the predictions of the overthrow of Jerusalem and the downfall of the Jewish nation, they most naturally began to associate this promised return with these catastrophic events. But when the Roman armies leveled the walls of Jerusalem, destroyed the temple, and dispersed the Judean Jews, and still the Master did not reappear in power and glory, the followers began the formulation of that belief which eventually associated the second coming of Christ with the end of the age, even with the end of the world.

Jesus promised to do two things after ascending to the Creator and after receiving all power in this universe and on earth, first, to send into the world another teacher, the Spirit of Truth, and doing this on the day of Pentecost. Second, most certainly promising to personally return to this world. But Jesus did not say how, where, or when this return would occur, on one occasion intimating that, while seen by mortal eyes when living here, on returning (at least on one possible visit) this reappearance would only be possible to discern by the eye of spiritual faith.

Many of us are inclined to believe that Jesus will return to Urantia many times during the ages to come. We do not have a specific promise regarding these plural visits, but it seems most probable that the one who carries the title of Planetary Administrator of Urantia will many times visit the world whose conquest conferred such a unique title.

We most positively believe that Michael will come again in person to Urantia, but we do not have the slightest idea as to when or in what manner that will happen. Will the second visit to earth be timed to occur in connection with the terminal judgment of this present age, either with or without the associated appearance of a Magisterial? Will it come in connection with the termination of some subsequent Urantian age? Will Michael come unannounced and as an isolated event? We do not know. Only one thing we are certain of, that is, on that return, all the world will likely know about it, for Michael must come as the supreme ruler of a universe and not as the obscure babe of Bethlehem. But if every eye is to see this phenomenon, and if only spiritual eyes are able to do so, then this event must be far in the future.

You would do well, therefore, to disassociate the Master's personal return to earth from any and all set events or settled epochs. We are sure of only one thing: Michael has promised to come back. We have no idea as to when this promise will be fulfilled or in what connection. As far as we know, it may occur at any time, or it may not come until age after age has passed and been duly adjudicated.

The second appearance of Michael on earth is an event of tremendous sentimental value to both midwayers and humans; but otherwise it is of no immediate concern to midwayers and of no more practical importance to human beings than the common event of natural death, which so suddenly precipitates mortals into the immediate grasp of that succession of universe events which leads directly to the presence of this same Jesus, the sovereign ruler of our universe. The children of light are all destined to see Michael, and it is of no serious concern whether that will take place on Salvington or here on earth.

Paper 177

Wednesday, the Rest Day

When the work of teaching the people did not press them, it was the custom of Jesus and the apostles to rest each Wednesday. On this particular Wednesday they ate breakfast somewhat later than usual, and the camp was pervaded by an ominous silence; little was said during the first half of this morning meal. At last Jesus spoke: "I want you to rest today. Take time to think over all that has happened since we came to Jerusalem and meditate on what is just ahead, of which I have plainly told you. Make sure that your lives represent the truth, and that you daily grow in grace."

After breakfast the Master expressed to Andrew a desire to be absent for the day and suggested that the apostles be permitted to spend the time in accordance with their own choosing, except that under no circumstances should they go within the gates of Jerusalem.

When Jesus prepared to go into the hills alone, David Zebedee said: "You know, Master, that the Pharisees and rulers seek to destroy you, and yet you prepare to go alone into the hills. To do this is foolish; I will send three people with you who are well prepared to see that no harm comes to you." Jesus looked over the three well-armed and stalwart Galileans and said to David: "You mean well, but you fail to understand that I need no one to defend me. No one will lay hands on me until the time when I am ready to lay down my life in conformity to the Creator's will. These people may not accompany me. I desire to go alone so that I may commune with the Creator."

On hearing these words, David and the armed guards withdrew; but as Jesus started off alone, John Mark came forward with a small basket containing food and water and suggested that Jesus, if intending to be away all day, might become hungry. The Master smiled on John and reached down to take the basket.

1. One Day Alone with the Creator

As Jesus was about to take the lunch basket, John ventured to say: "But, Master, you may set the basket down while you turn aside to pray and go on without it. Besides, if I go along to carry the lunch, you would be more free to worship, and I will surely be silent. I will ask no questions and will stay by the basket when you go apart by yourself to pray."

While making this speech, the temerity of which astonished some of the near-by listeners, John held on to the basket. There they stood, both John and Jesus holding the basket. Presently the Master let go and, looking down on the youth, said: "Since with all your heart you want to go with me, it will not be denied you. We will go off by ourselves and have a good visit. You may ask me any question you like, and we will comfort and console each other. You may start out carrying the lunch, and when you grow tired, I will help you. Follow on with me."

Jesus did not return to the camp that evening until after sunset. The Master spent this last day of quiet on earth visiting with this truth-hungry youth and talking with the Paradise Creator. This event has become known on high as "the day which a young man spent with Deity in the hills." This occasion exemplifies the willingness of the Creator to socialize with the creature. Even a youth, if the desire of the heart is really

supreme, can command the attention and enjoy the loving companionship of the ruler of a universe, actually experience the unforgettable ecstasy of being alone with Deity in the hills, and for a whole day. And such was the unique experience of John Mark on this Wednesday in the hills of Judea.

Jesus talked freely about the affairs of this world and the next. John told Jesus about feeling regret at not being old enough to be one of the apostles, and expressed great appreciation for being permitted to follow on with them since their first preaching at the Jordan ford near Jericho, except for the trip to Phoenicia. Jesus warned the youth not to become discouraged by impending events and gave assurances that John would live to become a mighty messenger of the new realm.

John Mark was thrilled by the memory of this day with Jesus in the hills, but never forgot the final admonition, spoken just as they were about to return to the Gethsemane camp, when Jesus said: "Well, John, we have had a good visit, a real day of rest, but see to it that you tell no one the things which I told you." And John Mark never did reveal anything that transpired on this day spent with Jesus in the hills.

Throughout the few remaining hours of Jesus' earth life John Mark never permitted the Master to get out of his sight for long. John was always in hiding nearby; sleeping only when Jesus slept.

2. Early Home Life

In the course of this day's visiting with John Mark, Jesus spent considerable time comparing their early childhood experiences. Although John's parents were wealthier than Jesus' parents, there was much experience in their early years which was very similar and Jesus said many things that helped John better understand members of the family. When John questioned becoming a "mighty messenger of the new realm," Jesus said:

"I know you will prove loyal to the new realm because I can depend on your present faith and love when these qualities are grounded on such an early training as has been your experience at home. You are the product of a home where the parents love each other, and therefore you have not been over-loved so as to injuriously exalt your concept of self-importance. Neither has your personality suffered distortion in consequence of your parents' loveless maneuvering for your confidence and loyalty, one against the other. You have enjoyed parental love which insures laudable self-confidence and which fosters normal feelings of security. But you have also been fortunate in that your parents possessed wisdom as well as love; and it was wisdom which led them to withhold most forms of indulgence and many luxuries which wealth can buy while they sent you to the synagogue school along with your neighborhood playmates, and also encouraged you to learn how to live in this world by permitting you to have original experiences. You came over to the Jordan, where we preached and John's disciples baptized, with your young friend Amos. Both of you wanted to go with us. When you returned to Jerusalem, your parents consented; Amos's parents refused; they loved their child so much that they denied the blessed experience which you have had, even such as you enjoy today. By running away from home Amos could have joined us, but in so doing would have wounded love and sacrificed loyalty. Even if such a course had been wise, it would have been a terrible price to pay for experience, independence, and liberty. Wise parents, such as yours, see to it that their children do not have to injure love or stifle loyalty in order to develop independence and enjoy invigorating liberty when they have grown up to your age.

“Love, John, is the supreme reality of the universe when bestowed by all-wise beings, but it is a dangerous and often semi-selfish trait as it is manifested in the experience of mortal parents. When you are married and have children of your own to rear, make sure that your love is motivated by wisdom and guided by intelligence.

“Your young friend Amos believes this doctrine of the new age just as much as you, but I am not certain about what Amos will do in the years to come since Amos’ early home life was not such as would produce a wholly dependable person. Amos is too much like one of the apostles who failed to enjoy a normal, loving, and wise home training. Your whole afterlife will be more happy and dependable because you spent your first eight years in a normal and well-regulated home. You have a strong and well-knit character because you grew up in a home where love prevailed and wisdom reigned. Such childhood training produces a type of loyalty which assures me that you will go through with the course you have begun.”

For more than an hour Jesus and John continued this discussion of home life. The Master went on to explain to John how a child is wholly dependent on the parents and the associated home life for all of the early concepts of everything intellectual, social, moral, and even spiritual, since the family represents to the young child all that can be first known of either human or divine relationships. The child must derive the first impressions of the universe from the parents’ care. The child’s subsequent life is made happy or unhappy, easy or difficult, in accordance with early mental and emotional life, conditioned by these social and spiritual relationships of the home. A human being’s entire afterlife is enormously influenced by what happens during the first few years of existence.

It is our sincere belief that the teachings of Jesus, founded as they are on the parent-child relationship, can hardly enjoy world-wide acceptance until such a time as the home life of the modern civilized peoples embraces more love and wisdom. Notwithstanding that parents of the twenty-first century possess great knowledge and increased truth for improving the home and ennobling the home life, it remains a fact that very few modern homes are such good places in which to nurture children as Jesus’ home in Galilee and John Mark’s home in Judea, although the acceptance of Jesus’ teachings will result in the immediate improvement of home life. The loving life of a wise home and the loyal devotion of true religion exert a profound reciprocal influence on each other. Such home life enhances religion, and genuine religion always glorifies the home.

It is true that many of the objectionable stunting influences and other cramping features of these olden Jewish homes have been virtually eliminated from many of the healthier homes of today. There is more spontaneous freedom and far more personal liberty, but this liberty is not restrained by love, motivated by loyalty, nor directed by the intelligent discipline of wisdom.

3. The Day at Camp

The apostles spent most of this day walking about on Mount Olivet and visiting with the disciples who were encamped with them, but early in the afternoon they became very desirous of seeing Jesus return. As the day wore on, they grew increasingly anxious and felt inexpressibly lonely without Jesus. There was much debating throughout the day as to whether the Master should have been allowed to go off alone in the hills,

accompanied only by a youth. Though no one openly expressed such thoughts, there was not one of them, except Judas Iscariot, who did not wish to be in John Mark's place.

It was about midafternoon when Nathaniel made a speech on "Supreme Desire" to about half a dozen of the apostles and as many disciples, the ending of which was: "What is wrong with most of us is that we are only halfhearted. We fail to love the Master as Jesus loves us. If we had all wanted to go along as much as John Mark did, we would surely have been taken. We stood by while the youth approached the Master and offered the basket, but when the Master took hold of it, John would not let go. And so the Master left us here while going off to the hills with basket, youth, and all."

About four o'clock, runners came to David Zebedee bringing word from Salome at Bethsaida. Several days previously David had decided that the chief priests and rulers were going to kill Jesus. David knew they were determined to destroy the Master, and was about convinced that Jesus would neither exert divine power to resist nor permit the followers to employ force. Having reached these conclusions, David lost no time in dispatching a messenger to Salome and to Jesus' family, urging them to come at once to Jerusalem.

Salome did as David requested, and now the runners came back bringing word that Salome and Jesus' entire family were on the way to Jerusalem and should arrive sometime late on the following day or very early the next morning. David, having taken this initiative, thought it wise to keep the matter private and told no one, therefore, that Jesus' family was on the way to Jerusalem.

Shortly after noon, more than twenty of the Greeks who had met with Jesus and the twelve at the home of Joseph of Arimathea arrived at the camp, and Peter and John spent several hours in conference with them. These Greeks, at least some of them, were well advanced in the knowledge of the new age, having been instructed by Rodan at Alexandria.

That evening, after returning to the camp, Jesus visited with the Greeks, and had it not been that such a course would have greatly disturbed the apostles and many of the leading disciples, would have ordained these twenty Greeks, even as had been done with the seventy.

While all of this was going on at the camp, in Jerusalem the chief priests and elders were amazed that Jesus did not return to address the multitudes. True, the day before, when leaving the temple, Jesus had said, "I leave your house to you desolate." But they could not understand why Jesus would be willing to forgo the great advantage which had been built up in the friendly attitude of the crowds. While they feared Jesus would stir up a tumult among the people, the Master's last words to the multitude had been an exhortation to conform in every reasonable manner with the authority of those "who sit in Moses' seat." But it was a busy day in the city as they simultaneously prepared for the Passover and perfected their plans for destroying Jesus.

Not many people came to the camp, for its establishment had been kept a well-guarded secret by all who knew that Jesus was expecting to stay there in place of going out to Bethany every night.

4. Judas and the Chief Priests

Shortly after Jesus and John Mark left the camp, Judas Iscariot disappeared from among the others, not returning until late in the afternoon. This confused and discontented apostle, notwithstanding the Master's specific request to refrain from entering Jerusalem, hurried to keep the appointment with Jesus' enemies at the home of Caiaphas, the high priest. This was an informal meeting of the Sanhedrin and had been scheduled for shortly after ten o'clock that morning. This meeting was called to discuss the nature of the charges which should be lodged and to decide on the procedure to be employed in bringing Jesus before the Roman authorities for the purpose of securing the necessary civil confirmation of the death sentence which they had already passed.

On the preceding day Judas had disclosed to some relatives, and to certain Sadducean friends of the family, about having reached the conclusion that Jesus, while being a well-meaning dreamer and idealist, was not the expected deliverer of Israel. Judas expressed the desire to find some way of withdrawing gracefully from the whole movement. The friends flatteringly stated that this withdrawal would be hailed by the Jewish rulers as a great event, and that nothing would be too good for Judas, who would soon receive high honors from the Sanhedrin, and would at last be in a position to erase the stigma of the well-meant but "unfortunate association with untaught Galileans."

Judas could not quite believe that the mighty works of the Master had been done by the power of the evil one, but was now fully persuaded that Jesus would not exert any power in self-aggrandizement, being at last convinced that Jesus would be destroyed by the Jewish rulers. Judas could not endure the humiliating thought of being identified with a movement of defeat, refusing to entertain the idea of apparent failure. While thoroughly understanding the sturdy character of the Master and the keenness of that majestic and merciful mind, Judas derived pleasure from even the partial entertainment of the suggestion of one of the relatives that Jesus, while a well-meaning fanatic, was probably not really sound of mind and had always appeared to be a strange and misunderstood person.

And now, as never before, Judas was becoming strangely resentful of never having been assigned a position of greater honor. All along Judas had appreciated the honor of being the apostolic treasurer, but now began to feel unappreciated and unrecognized. Judas was suddenly overcome with indignation that Peter, James, and John had been honored with close association with Jesus, and at this time, while on the way to the high priest's home, was bent on getting even with them more than being concerned with any thought of betraying Jesus. But over and above all, just then, a new and dominating thought began to emerge. Judas had set out to be honored, and if this could be secured simultaneously with getting even with those who had contributed to disappointment, all the better. Judas was seized with a terrible conspiracy of confusion, pride, desperation, and determination. And so it must be plain that it was not for money that Judas was then on the way to the home of Caiaphas to arrange for the betrayal of Jesus.

Judas, while approaching the home of Caiaphas, arrived at the final decision to abandon Jesus and the other apostles; and having decided to desert the cause, was determined to secure as much honor and glory as possible which might have been received when first becoming identified with Jesus and the new realm. All of the apostles once shared this ambition with Judas, but as time passed they learned to admire truth and to love Jesus, at least more than Judas did.

The traitor was presented to Caiaphas and the Jewish rulers by a cousin, who explained that Judas, having been misled by the subtle teaching of Jesus, now wanted to make public and formal renunciation of any association with the Galilean and at the same time to ask for reinstatement in the confidence of these Judean associates. This spokesperson went on to explain that Judas realized it would be best for the peace of Israel if Jesus were taken into custody, and that, as evidence of regret in having participated in such a movement of error and as proof of sincerity in now returning to the teachings of Moses, Judas had come to offer to make an arrangement with the captain holding the orders for arrest that Jesus could be taken into custody quietly, avoiding any danger of stirring up the multitudes or the necessity of postponing the arrest until after the Passover.

The cousin, having finished speaking, presented Judas, who, stepping forward near the high priest, said: "All that my cousin has promised, I will do, but what are you willing to give me for this service?" Judas did not seem to discern the look of disdain and even disgust that came over the face of the hardhearted and vainglorious Caiaphas, being set on self-glory and the craving for the satisfaction of self-exaltation.

And then Caiaphas looked down on the betrayer and said: "Judas, you go to the captain of the guard and arrange with that officer to bring your Master to us either tonight or tomorrow night, and when Jesus has been delivered by you into our hands, you will receive your reward for this service." Judas, hearing this, left the presence of the chief priests and rulers and met with the captain of the temple guards as to the manner in which Jesus was to be apprehended. Judas knew that Jesus was presently absent from the camp and so they agreed among themselves to arrest Jesus the next evening (Thursday) after the people of Jerusalem and all of the visiting pilgrims had retired for the night.

Judas returned to the camp intoxicated with thoughts of grandeur and glory, having originally enlisted with Jesus hoping to someday become great in the new realm, but at last realizing that there was to be no new realm such as had been anticipated. But Judas rejoiced in being so sagacious as to trade off disappointment in failing to achieve glory in an anticipated new realm for the immediate realization of honor and reward in the old order, which would survive, and which would destroy all that Jesus stood for. In its last motive of conscious intention, Judas's betrayal of Jesus was the cowardly act of a selfish deserter whose only thought was safety and glorification, no matter what the results of this conduct might be for the Master and the former associates.

But it was always just that way. Judas had long been engaged in this deliberate, persistent, selfish, and vengeful consciousness of progressively building up these hateful and evil desires of revenge and disloyalty. Jesus loved and trusted Judas even as the other apostles, but Judas failed to develop loyal trust and to experience wholehearted love in return. And how dangerous ambition can become when it is once wholly wedded to self-seeking and supremely motivated by sullen and long-suppressed vengeance! What a crushing thing is disappointment in the lives of those foolish people who, in fastening their gaze on the shadowy and fleeting allurements of time, become blinded to the higher and more real achievements of the everlasting attainments of the eternal worlds of divine values and true spiritual realities. Judas craved worldly honor and grew to love this desire with a whole heart; the other apostles also wanted this same worldly honor in their minds, but with their hearts they loved Jesus and were doing their best to learn to love the truths which Jesus taught them.

While not realizing it at this time, Judas had been a subconscious critic of Jesus ever since John the Baptist was beheaded by Herod. Deep down Judas always resented the fact that Jesus did not save John. You should not forget that Judas had been a disciple of John before becoming a follower of Jesus. And all these accumulations of human resentment and bitter disappointment were now well organized and ready to spring up when Judas dared to separate from the supporting influence of the other apostles while being at the same time exposed to the clever insinuations and subtle ridicule of the enemies of Jesus. Every time Judas' hopes soared high and Jesus would do or say something to dash them to pieces, a scar of bitter resentment was left in Judas's heart; and as these scars multiplied, presently that heart, so often wounded, lost all real affection for the one who had inflicted this distasteful experience on a well-intentioned but cowardly and self-centered personality. While not realizing it, Judas was a coward, and was accordingly always inclined to assign to Jesus cowardice as the motive which led so often to the refusal to grasp for power or glory when they were apparently within easy reach. And every mortal knows full well how love, even when once genuine, can, through disappointment, jealousy, and long-continued resentment, be eventually turned into actual hate.

At last the chief priests and elders could breathe easily for a few hours. They would not have to arrest Jesus in public, and the securing of Judas as a traitorous ally insured that Jesus would not escape from their jurisdiction as had happened so many times in the past.

5. The Last Social Hour

Since it was Wednesday, this evening at the camp was a social hour. The Master tried to cheer the unhappy apostles, but that was practically impossible. They were all beginning to realize that disconcerting and crushing events were impending. They could not be cheerful, even when the Master recounted their years of eventful and loving association.

This was the occasion of Jesus' warning the followers to beware of the support of the multitude, recounting their experiences in Galilee when time and again great throngs of people enthusiastically followed them around and then just as ardently turned against them and returned to their former ways of believing and living. And then Jesus said: "And so you must not allow yourselves to be deceived by the great crowds who heard us in the temple, and who seemed to believe our teachings. These multitudes listen to the truth and believe it superficially with their minds, but few of them permit the word of truth to strike down into the heart with living roots. Those who know the truth only in the mind, and who have not experienced it in the heart, cannot be depended upon for support when real trouble comes. When the rulers of the Jews reach an agreement to destroy me, and when they strike with one accord, you will see the multitude either flee in dismay or else stand by in silent amazement while these maddened and blinded rulers lead the teachers of truth to their death. And then, when adversity and persecution descend on you, still others who you think love the truth will be scattered, and some will renounce and desert you. Some who have been very close to us have already made up their minds to desert. You have rested today in preparation for those times which are now upon us. Watch and pray that tomorrow you may be strengthened for the days that are just ahead."

The atmosphere of the camp was charged with an inexplicable tension. Silent messengers came and went, communicating with only David Zebedee. Before the evening had passed, some knew that Lazarus had taken hasty flight from Bethany. John Mark was ominously silent after returning to camp, notwithstanding

having spent the whole day in the Master's company. Every effort to persuade John to talk only indicated clearly that Jesus had instructed John not to do so.

Even the Master's good cheer and unusual sociability frightened them. They all felt the certain terrible isolation which they realized was about to descend with crashing suddenness and inescapable terror. They vaguely sensed what was coming, and none felt prepared to face the test. The Master had been away all day and they had missed Jesus tremendously.

This Wednesday evening was the low-tide mark of their spiritual status up to the actual hour of the Master's death. Although the next day was one more day nearer the tragic Friday, still, Jesus was with them, and they passed through its anxious hours more gracefully.

It was just before midnight when Jesus, knowing this would be the last night to ever sleep through with these chosen friends on earth, said, when dispersing them for the night: "Go to sleep, my friends, and peace be upon you until we rise in the morning, one more day to do the Creator's will and experience the joy of knowing that we are the Creator's children."

Paper 178

Last Day at the Camp

Jesus planned to spend this Thursday, the last free day on earth, with the apostles and a few loyal and devoted disciples. Soon after breakfast on this beautiful morning, the Master led them to a secluded spot a short distance above their camp and taught them many new truths. Although Jesus delivered other discourses to the apostles during the early evening hours of the day, this talk on Thursday morning was the farewell address to the combined camp group of apostles and chosen disciples, both Jews and gentiles. The twelve were all present except Judas. Peter and several of the apostles remarked about this absence, and some of them thought Jesus had sent Judas into the city to attend to some matter, probably to arrange the details of their forthcoming celebration of the Passover. Judas did not return to the camp until midafternoon, a short time before Jesus led the twelve into Jerusalem for their last meal together.

1. Discourse on Citizenship

Jesus talked to about fifty trusted followers for almost two hours and answered many questions regarding the relation of the realm of the Creator to the dominions of this world, and the relationship with the Creator to citizenship in earthly governments. This discourse, together with the answers to questions, may be summarized as follows:

The dominions of this world, being material, may often find it necessary to employ physical force in the execution of their laws and for the maintenance of order. In the realm of the Creator true believers will not resort to the employment of physical force. The realm of the Creator, being a spiritual family of the spirit-born children of the Creator, may be promulgated only by the power of the spirit. This distinction of procedure refers to the relations of the believers to the secular governments and does not nullify the right of social groups to maintain order in their ranks and administer discipline to unruly and unworthy members.

There is nothing incompatible between membership in the spiritual realm and citizenship in the secular or civil government. It is the believer's duty to render to Caesar the things which are Caesar's and to the Creator the things which are the Creator's. There cannot be any disagreement between these two requirements, one being material and the other spiritual, unless it should develop that a Caesar presumes to usurp the prerogatives of Deity and demand spiritual homage and supreme worship. In such a case you should worship only the Creator while you seek to enlighten such misguided earthly rulers and lead them also to the recognition of the Creator. You should not render spiritual worship to earthly rulers; neither should you employ the physical forces of earthly governments, whose rulers may become believers, in the work of furthering the mission of the spiritual realm.

Membership in the spiritual realm, from the standpoint of advancing civilization, should assist you in becoming the ideal citizens of the governments of this world since service is the cornerstone of the doctrine of the new realm. The love call of the spiritual realm should prove to be the effective destroyer of the hate urge of the unbelieving and war-minded citizens of the earthly dominions. But these material-minded people in darkness will never know of your spiritual light of truth unless you draw very near them with that

unselfish social service which is the natural outgrowth of the bearing of the fruits of the spirit in the life experience of each individual believer.

As mortals, you are indeed citizens of the earthly governments, and you should be good citizens, all the better for having become reborn spirit citizens of the spiritual realm. As faith-enlightened and spirit-liberated citizens of the realm of the Creator, you face a double responsibility of duty to mortals and duty to the Creator while you voluntarily assume a third and sacred obligation: service to the family of Creator-knowing believers.

You may not worship your temporal rulers, and you should not employ temporal power in the furtherance of the spiritual realm; but you should manifest the righteous ministry of loving service to believers and unbelievers alike. In the doctrine of the new age the mighty Spirit of Truth resides, and presently I will pour out this same spirit on all people. The fruits of the spirit, your sincere and loving service, are the mighty social lever to uplift the people in darkness, and this Spirit of Truth will become your power-multiplying fulcrum.

Display wisdom and exhibit sagacity in your dealings with unbelieving civil rulers. By discretion show yourselves to be expert in ironing out minor disagreements and in adjusting trifling misunderstandings. In every possible way — in everything short of your spiritual allegiance to the rulers of the universe — seek to live peaceably with all people. Always be as wise as serpents but as harmless as doves.

You should be made better citizens of the secular government as a result of becoming enlightened members of the spiritual realm; and the rulers of earthly governments should become better rulers in civil affairs as a result of believing this doctrine of the new realm. The attitude of unselfish service of mortals and intelligent worship of the Creator should make all believers better world citizens, while the attitude of honest citizenship and sincere devotion to one's temporal duty should help to make such a citizen more easily reached by the spirit call to membership in the spiritual realm.

So long as the rulers of earthly governments seek to exercise the authority of religious dictators, you who believe these teachings can expect only trouble, persecution, and even death. But the very light which you bear to the world, and even the very manner in which you will suffer and die for this doctrine, will, in themselves, eventually enlighten the whole world and result in the gradual separation of politics and religion. The persistent preaching of this doctrine will someday bring to all nations a new and unbelievable liberation, intellectual freedom, and religious liberty.

Under the soon-coming persecutions by those who hate these teachings of joy and liberty, you will thrive and the new age will prosper. But you will stand in grave danger in subsequent times when most people will speak well of believers and many in high places nominally accept the doctrine of the new realm. Learn to be faithful even in times of peace and prosperity. Do not tempt the angels of your supervision to lead you in troublous ways as a loving discipline designed to save your ease-drifting souls.

Remember that you are commissioned to preach this doctrine — the supreme desire to do the Creator's will coupled with the supreme joy of the faith realization of relationship with the Creator — and you must not allow anything to divert your devotion to this one duty. Let all humankind benefit from the overflow of

your loving spiritual ministry, enlightening intellectual communion, and uplifting social service; but none of these humanitarian labors, nor all of them, should be permitted to take the place of proclaiming the new age. These mighty ministrations are the social by-products of the still more mighty and sublime transformations brought to the heart of the believer by the living Spirit of Truth and by the personal realization that the faith of a spirit-born person confers the assurance of a living relationship with the eternal Creator.

You must not seek to promulgate truth nor to establish righteousness by the power of civil governments or by the enactment of secular laws. You may always labor to persuade people, but you must never dare to compel them. You must not forget the great law of human fairness which I have taught you in positive form: Whatever you would want others to do to you, do also to them.

When believers are called on to serve the civil government, let them render such service as temporal citizens of that government, although believers should display in their civil service all of the ordinary traits of citizenship as these have been enhanced by the spiritual enlightenment of the ennobling association of the mind of mortals with the indwelling spirit of the eternal Creator. The consciousness of a relationship with the Creator should quicken the entire life service of every person who has become the possessor of such a mighty stimulus to all the inherent powers of a human personality.

You are not to be passive mystics or colorless ascetics; you should not become dreamers and drifters, trusting in a fictitious Providence to provide even the necessities of life. You are to be gentle in your dealings with erring mortals, patient in your interactions with ignorant people, and forbearing under provocation; but you are also to be valiant in defense of righteousness, mighty in the promulgation of truth, and aggressive in the preaching of this doctrine, even to the ends of the earth.

This doctrine of the new realm is a living truth. I have told you it is like the yeast in the dough, like the grain of mustard seed; and now I say that it is like the seed of the living being, which, from generation to generation, while it remains the same living seed, unfailingly unfolds itself in new manifestations and grows acceptably in channels of new adaptation to the particular needs and conditions of each successive generation. The revelation I have made to you is a *living revelation*, and I desire that it will bear appropriate fruits in each individual and in each generation in accordance with the laws of spiritual growth, increase, and adaptative development. From generation to generation this doctrine must show increasing vitality and exhibit greater depth of spiritual power. It must not be permitted to become merely a sacred memory, a tradition about me and the times in which we now live.

We have made no direct attack on the persons or on the authority of those who sit in Moses' seat; we only offered them the new light, which they have so vigorously rejected. We have assailed them only by the denunciation of their spiritual disloyalty to the very truths which they profess to teach and safeguard. We clashed with these established leaders and recognized rulers only when they threw themselves directly in the way of the preaching of the doctrine of the new realm to the people. And even now, it is not we who assail them, but they who seek our destruction. Do not forget that you are commissioned to go forth preaching only the good news. You are not to attack the old ways; you are to skillfully put the leaven of new truth in the midst of the old beliefs. Let the Spirit of Truth do its own work. Let disagreement come

only when those who despise the truth force controversy on you. But when the willful unbeliever attacks you, do not hesitate to stand in vigorous defense of the truth which has saved and sanctified you.

Throughout the vicissitudes of life, remember to always love one another. Do not strive with people, even with unbelievers. Show mercy even to those who spitefully abuse you. Show yourselves to be loyal citizens, upright artisans, praiseworthy neighbors, devoted kin, understanding parents, and sincere believers in the family of the Creator's realm. And my spirit will be with you, now and even to the end of the world.

When Jesus had concluded this teaching, it was almost one o'clock, and they immediately went back to the camp, where David and the associates had lunch ready for them.

2. After the Noontime Meal

Not many of the Master's hearers were able to take in even a part of the morning address. Of all who heard it, the Greeks comprehended most. Even the eleven apostles were bewildered by the allusions to future political dominions and to successive generations of believers. Jesus' most devoted followers could not reconcile the impending end of the earthly ministry with these references to an extended future of activities. Some of these Jewish believers were beginning to sense that earth's greatest tragedy was about to take place, but they could not reconcile such an impending disaster with either the Master's cheerfully indifferent personal attitude or the morning discourse, which repeatedly alluded to the future transactions of the spiritual realm, extending over vast stretches of time and embracing relations with many and successive temporal governments on earth.

By noon of this day all the apostles and disciples had learned about the hasty flight of Lazarus from Bethany, and they began to sense the grim determination of the Jewish rulers to exterminate Jesus.

David Zebedee, through the work of secret agents in Jerusalem, was fully advised concerning the progress of the plan to arrest and kill Jesus. David knew all about the part of Judas in this plot, but never disclosed this knowledge to the other apostles nor to any of the disciples. Shortly after lunch David did lead Jesus aside and asked whether — but never got further with the question. The Master, holding up a hand, interrupted, saying: "Yes, David, I know all about it, and I know that you know, but see to it that you tell no one. Only do not doubt in your own heart that the will of the Creator will prevail in the end."

This conversation with David was interrupted by the arrival of a messenger from Philadelphia bringing word that Abner had heard of the plot to kill Jesus and asked whether or not to come to Jerusalem. This runner hurried off for Philadelphia with this word for Abner: "Go on with your work. If I depart from you in the flesh, it is only that I may return in the spirit. I will not forsake you. I will be with you to the end."

About this time Philip came to the Master and asked: "Master, seeing that the time of the Passover draws near, where would you have us prepare to eat it?" And Jesus answered: "Go and bring Peter and John, and I will give you directions concerning the meal we will eat together this night. As for the Passover, that you will have to consider after we have done this."

Judas, hearing the Master speaking with Philip about these matters, drew closer in order to overhear their conversation. But David Zebedee, who was standing nearby, stepped up and engaged Judas in conversation while Philip, Peter, and John went to one side to talk with the Master.

Jesus said to the three: “Go immediately into Jerusalem, and as you enter the gate, you will meet someone carrying a water pitcher. This person will lead you to a certain house. Go in and ask the householder, ‘Where is the guest chamber where the Master is to eat supper with the apostles?’ And then this householder will show you a large upper room all furnished and ready for us.”

When the apostles reached the city, they met the person with the water pitcher near the gate and followed on to the home of John Mark, where John’s parents met them and showed them the upper room in readiness for the evening meal.

And all of this came to pass as the result of an understanding arrived at between the Master and John Mark during the afternoon of the preceding day when they were alone in the hills. Jesus wanted to be sure to have this one last meal undisturbed with the apostles, and believing that Judas might alert the enemies, made this secret arrangement with John Mark. In this way Judas did not learn of their place of meeting until later on when arriving there in company with Jesus and the other apostles.

David Zebedee had much business to transact, so that Judas, even though wanting to do so, was easily prevented from following Peter, John, and Philip. When Judas gave David a certain sum of money for provisions, David said: “Judas, might it not be well, under the circumstances, to provide me with a little money in advance of my actual needs?” And Judas, after reflecting for a moment, answered: “Yes, David, I think it would be wise. In fact, in view of the disturbed conditions in Jerusalem, I think it would be best for me to turn over all the money to you. They plot against the Master, and in case anything should happen to me, you would not be hampered.”

And so David received all the apostolic cash funds and receipts for all money on deposit. The apostles did not learn of this transaction until the evening of the next day.

It was about half past four o’clock when the three apostles returned and informed Jesus that everything was ready for the meal. The Master immediately prepared to lead the twelve apostles over the trail to the Bethany road and on into Jerusalem. And this was the last journey Jesus ever made with all twelve of them.

3. On the Way to the Last Meal

Seeking again to avoid the crowds passing through the Kidron valley back and forth between Gethsemane Park and Jerusalem, Jesus and the twelve walked over the western brow of Mount Olivet to meet the road leading from Bethany down to the city. As they came close to the place where Jesus discoursed the previous evening on the destruction of Jerusalem, they unconsciously paused while they stood and looked down in silence on the city. As they were a little early, Jesus, not wanting to pass through the city until after sunset, said to the associates:

“Sit down and rest while I talk with you about what must soon happen. All these years I have lived with you, and I have taught you the truth concerning the realm of the Creator and have revealed those mysteries

to you. And the Creator has done many wonderful works in connection with my mission on earth. You have been witnesses to all this and participants in the experience of being laborers together with the Creator. And you will acknowledge that I have for some time warned you that I must presently return to the work the Creator has given me to do; I have plainly told you that I must leave you in the world to carry on without me. It was for this purpose that I set you apart, in the hills of Capernaum. The experience you have had with me, you must now begin to share with others. As the Creator sent me into this world, so I am about to send you to represent me and finish the work I have begun.

“You look down on the city in sorrow, for you have heard my words telling of the end of Jerusalem. I have forewarned you so that you would not perish in its destruction and thereby delay the proclamation of the doctrine of the new realm. I also warn you to be careful so that you do not needlessly expose yourselves to danger when they come to take me. I must go, but you are to remain to witness to these teachings when I have gone, even as I directed that Lazarus flee in order to live to make known the glory of the Creator. If it is the Creator’s will that I leave, nothing you do can frustrate the divine plan. Be careful so that they do not kill you also. Let your souls be valiant in defense of the teachings by spirit power but do not be misled into any foolish attempt to defend me. I need no defense by the hands of mortals; the celestial hosts are even now close by; but I am determined to do the will of the Creator, and therefore we must submit to that which is so soon to occur.

“When you see this city destroyed, do not forget that you have already entered the eternal life of endless service in the ever-advancing realm of the Creator. You should know that in the Creator’s universe and in mine are many dwelling places, and that the revelation of cities whose builder is the Creator and worlds whose habit of life is righteousness and joy in the truth awaits the children of light. I have brought the realm of the Creator to you here on earth, but I declare that all of you who by faith enter in and remain there by the living service of truth will surely ascend to the worlds on high and sit with me in the spirit realm of our Creator. But first you must complete the work which you have begun with me. You must pass through much tribulation and endure many sorrows — and these trials are even now upon us — and when you have finished your work on earth, you will come to my joy, even as I have finished my work on earth and am about to return to the Creator’s embrace.”

The Master, having spoken, rose, and led them all down Olivet and into the city. None of the apostles, except three, knew where they were going as they made their way along the narrow streets in the approaching darkness. The crowds jostled them, but no one recognized them nor knew that the Child of the Creator was passing by on the way to the last mortal rendezvous with these chosen ambassadors of the new realm. And neither did the apostles know that one of their own number had already entered into a conspiracy to betray the Master into the hands of the enemies.

John Mark had followed them all the way into the city, and after they had entered the gate, hurried on by another street and was waiting to welcome them when they arrived.

Paper 179

The Last Meal Together

During the afternoon of this Thursday Philip reminded the Master about the approaching Passover and inquired concerning plans for its celebration, having in mind the Passover meal which was due to be eaten on the evening of the next day, Friday. It was the custom to begin the preparations for the celebration of the Passover not later than noon of the preceding day. And since the Jews calculated the day as beginning at sunset, this meant that Saturday's Passover meal would be eaten on Friday night, sometime before midnight.

The apostles were, therefore, entirely at a loss to understand the Master's announcement that they would celebrate the Passover one day early. Some of them thought that Jesus was aware that the impending arrest was to take place before the time of the Passover meal on Friday night and was therefore calling them together for a special meal on this Thursday evening. Others thought that this was merely a special occasion which was to precede the regular Passover celebration.

The apostles knew that Jesus had celebrated other Passovers without the lamb; choosing to not personally participate in any sacrificial service of the Jewish system. Jesus had many times partaken of the paschal lamb as a guest, but always, when Jesus was the host, no lamb was served. It would not have been a great surprise to the apostles to have seen the lamb omitted even on Passover night, and since this meal was given one day earlier, they thought nothing of its absence.

After receiving the greetings of welcome extended by the parents of John Mark, the apostles immediately went to the upper chamber while Jesus stayed behind to talk with the Mark family.

It had been understood beforehand that the Master was to celebrate this occasion alone with the twelve apostles; therefore no servants were provided to wait on them.

1. The Desire for Preference

When the apostles had been shown upstairs by John Mark, they saw a large chamber which was completely furnished for the meal, and observed that the bread, wine, water, and herbs were all in readiness on one end of the table. Except for the end on which the bread and wine rested, this long table was surrounded by thirteen reclining couches, just such as would be provided for the celebration of the Passover in a wealthy Jewish household.

As the twelve entered this upper chamber, they noticed, just inside the door, the pitchers of water, the basins, and towels for washing their dusty feet; and since no servant had been provided to render this service, the apostles began to look at one another as soon as John Mark had left them, and each began to think, who will wash our feet? And no one thought that it would be they who would seem to act as the servant of the others.

As they stood there confused, they surveyed the seating arrangement of the table, taking note of the higher divan of the host with one couch on the right and eleven arranged around the table opposite this second seat of honor on the host's right.

They expected the Master to arrive at any moment, but they were in a quandary as to whether they should seat themselves or allow Jesus to assign them their places. While they hesitated, Judas stepped over to the seat of honor, at the left of the host, and signified an intention to recline there as the preferred guest. This act of Judas immediately stirred up a heated dispute among the other apostles. Judas had no sooner taken

the seat of honor than John Zebedee laid claim to the next preferred seat, the one on the right of the host. Simon Peter was enraged at this assumption of choice positions by Judas and John and, as the other angry apostles looked on, marched clear around the table and took a place on the lowest couch, the end of the seating order and just opposite to that chosen by John Zebedee. Since others had taken the high seats, Peter decided to choose the lowest, and did this, not merely in protest against the unseemly pride of the others, but with the hope that Jesus, seeing Peter in the place of least honor, would offer a higher one, displacing one who had presumed to seize the honor.

With the highest and the lowest positions occupied, the rest of the apostles chose places, some near Judas and some near Peter, until all were settled. They were seated about the U-shaped table on these reclining divans in the following order: on the right of the Master, John; on the left, Judas, Simon Zelotes, Matthew, James Zebedee, Andrew, the Alpheus twins, Philip, Nathaniel, Thomas, and Simon Peter.

They are gathered together to celebrate, at least in spirit, an institution which antedated even Moses and referred to the times when their ancestors were slaves in Egypt. This meal is their last rendezvous with Jesus, and even in such a solemn setting, under the leadership of Judas the apostles are led once more to give way to their old predilection for honor, preference, and personal exaltation.

They were still engaged in voicing angry recriminations when the Master appeared in the doorway, hesitating a moment with a look of disappointment. Without comment Jesus took the place of the host and did not disturb their seating arrangement.

They were now ready to begin the meal, except that their feet were still unwashed, and they were in anything but a pleasant frame of mind. When the Master arrived, they were still engaged in making uncomplimentary remarks about one another, to say nothing of the thoughts of some who had sufficient emotional control to refrain from publicly expressing their feelings.

2. Beginning the Meal

For a few moments after the Master had been seated, not a word was spoken. Jesus looked them all over and, relieving the tension with a smile, said: "I have greatly desired to eat this Passover with you. I wanted to eat with you once more before I suffered, and realizing that my hour has come, I arranged to have this meal with you tonight, for, as concerns tomorrow, we are all in the hands of the Creator, whose will I have come to execute. I will not eat with you again until you sit down with me in the dominion which the Creator will give me when I have finished that for which I was sent into this world."

After the wine and the water had been mixed, they brought the cup to Jesus, who, on receiving it, held it while offering thanks. And after offering thanks, Jesus said: "Take this cup and divide it among yourselves and, when you drink it, realize that I will not drink with you the fruit of the vine again since this is our last meal. When we sit down again in this manner, it will be in the age to come."

Jesus understood that the time had come to return to the Creator, and that the work on earth was almost finished. The Master had revealed the Creator's love on earth and had shown the Creator's mercy to humankind, completing the purpose for this bestowal, even to the receiving of all power and authority in the universe. Likewise, Jesus knew that Judas Iscariot had fully decided to complete the betrayal that night, realizing that while this traitorous act was the work of Judas, it also pleased Lucifer, Satan, and Caligastia. But Jesus feared none of those who sought a spiritual overthrow any more than those who sought to inflict physical death. The Master had only one anxiety, and that was for the safety of the chosen followers. And so, with the full knowledge of the Creator having provided authority over all things, the Master now prepared to enact the parable of familial love.

3. Washing the Apostles' Feet

After drinking the first cup of the Passover, it was the Jewish custom for the host to rise from the table for the ceremonial hand washing. Later on in the meal and after the second cup, all of the guests also rose up and washed their hands. Since the apostles knew that their Master never observed these rites, they were very curious to know what Jesus intended to do when, after they had drunk this first cup, Jesus rose from the table and silently went over to the door, where the water pitchers, basins, and towels had been placed. And their curiosity grew into astonishment as they saw the Master begin to pour water into one of the foot basins. Imagine the amazement of these twelve, who had so recently refused to wash one another's feet, and who had engaged in such unseemly disputes about positions of honor at the table, when they saw Jesus move around the unoccupied end of the table to the lowest seat of the feast, where Simon Peter reclined, and, kneeling down in the attitude of a servant, prepare to wash Simon's feet. As the Master knelt, all twelve rose as one person to their feet; even the traitorous Judas rose with the other apostles in this expression of surprise, respect, and utter amazement.

There stood Simon Peter, looking down into the upturned face of the Master. Jesus said nothing; it was not necessary to speak. It was clear that Jesus intended to wash Simon Peter's feet. Notwithstanding having human frailties, Peter loved the Master. This Galilean was the first human being to wholeheartedly believe in the divinity of Jesus *and* to make full and public confession of that belief. And Peter had never since really doubted the divine nature of the Master. Since Peter so revered and honored Jesus, it was not strange that the thought of Jesus' kneeling there in the attitude of a menial servant was unacceptable. Peter presently recovered sufficiently to address the Master, and spoke the feelings of all the other apostles.

After a few moments of this great embarrassment, Peter said, "Master, do you really mean to wash my feet?" And then, looking up into Peter's face, Jesus said: "You may not fully understand what I am about to do, but some day you will know the meaning of all these things." Then Simon Peter, drawing a long breath, said, "Master, you shall never wash my feet!" And each of the apostles nodded their approval of Peter's firm declaration of refusal to allow Jesus to express such humility before them.

The dramatic appeal of this unusual scene at first touched the heart of even Judas Iscariot; but on passing judgment on the spectacle, Judas concluded that this gesture of humility was just one more episode which conclusively proved that Jesus would never qualify as Israel's deliverer, and that it had not been a mistake to desert the Master's cause.

As they all stood there in breathless amazement, Jesus said: "Peter, if I do not wash your feet, you will have no part with me in that which I am about to perform." And Peter, hearing this declaration, coupled with the fact that Jesus continued kneeling there, made one of those decisions of blind acquiescence in compliance with the wish of one who was respected and loved. As it began to dawn that, attached to this proposed enactment of service there was some significance that determined one's future connection with the Master's work, Peter not only became reconciled to the thought of allowing Jesus to proceed, but in a characteristic and impetuous manner, said: "Then, Master, wash not only my feet but also my hands and my head."

The Master, getting ready to wash Peter's feet, said: "Only the feet need to be washed for one who is already clean. You who sit with me tonight are clean — but not all. But the dust of your feet should have been washed away before you sat down with me. And besides, I would perform this service for you as a parable to illustrate the meaning of a new commandment which I will presently give you."

In like manner the Master went around the table, in silence, washing the feet of the twelve apostles, not even passing by Judas. Then Jesus, having finished washing the feet of the twelve, put on a cloak, returned to the place as host, and after looking over the bewildered apostles, said:

“Do you really understand what I have done? You call me Master, and you say well, for so I am. If, then, the Master has washed your feet, why was it that you were unwilling to wash one another’s feet? What lesson should you learn from this parable in which the Master so willingly does that service which others were unwilling to do for one another? A servant is not greater than the master; neither is one who is sent greater than the sender. You have seen the way of service in my life among you, and blessed are you who will have the gracious courage so to serve. But why are you so slow to learn that the secret of greatness in the spiritual realm is not like the methods of power in the material world?”

“When I came into this chamber tonight, you were not content to proudly refuse to wash one another’s feet, but you also fell to disputing among yourselves as to who should have the places of honor at my table. Such honors the Pharisees and the children of this world seek, but it should not be so among the ambassadors of the Creator’s realm. Do you not know that there can be no place of preferment at my table? Do you not understand that I love each of you as I do the others? Do you not know that the place nearest me, as people regard such honors, can mean nothing concerning your standing in the new realm? You know that the rulers of the gentiles have mastery over their subjects, while those who exercise this authority are sometimes called benefactors. But it will not be so in the realm of the Creator. Those who would be great among you, let them become as the lesser; while those who would be chiefs, let them become as one who serves. Who is the greater, one who sits at a meal, or one who serves? Is it not commonly regarded that one who sits at the meal is the greater? But you will observe that I am among you as one who serves. If you are willing to become servants with me in doing the Creator’s will, in the age to come you will sit with me in power, still doing the Creator’s will in future glory.”

When Jesus had finished speaking, the Alpheus twins brought on the bread and wine, with the bitter herbs and the paste of dried fruits, for the next course of the last meal.

4. Last Words to the Betrayer

For some minutes the apostles ate in silence, but under the influence of the Master’s cheerful demeanor they were soon drawn into conversation, and before long the meal was proceeding as if nothing out of the ordinary had occurred to interfere with the good cheer and social accord of this extraordinary occasion. After some time had elapsed, in about the middle of this second course of the meal, Jesus, looking them over, said: “I have told you how much I desired to have this meal with you, and knowing how the evil forces of darkness have conspired to bring about my death, I determined to eat this meal with you in this secret chamber and a day in advance of the Passover since I will not be with you by this time tomorrow night. I have repeatedly told you that I must return to the Creator. Now my hour has come, but it was not required that one of you should betray me into the hands of my enemies.”

When the twelve heard this, having already been robbed of much of their self-assertiveness and self-confidence by the parable of the feet washing and the Master’s subsequent discourse, they began to look at one another while in disconcerted tones they hesitatingly inquired, “Is it I?” And when they had all so inquired, Jesus said: “While it is necessary that I go to the Creator, it was not required that one of you should become a traitor to fulfill the Creator’s will. This is the coming to fruit of the concealed evil in the heart of one who failed to love the truth. How deceitful is the intellectual pride that precedes the spiritual downfall! My friend of many years, who even now eats my bread, will be willing to betray me.”

And when Jesus had spoken, they all began again to ask, “Is it I?” And as Judas, sitting on the left of the Master, again asked, “Is it I?” Jesus, dipping the bread in the dish of herbs, handed it to Judas, saying, “You have said.” But the others did not hear Jesus speak to Judas. John, who reclined on Jesus’ right hand, leaned over and asked the Master: “Who is it? We should know who it is that has proved untrue.” Jesus answered: “The one to whom I gave the herbs.” But it was so natural for the host to give herbs to the one who sat on

the left that none of them took notice of this, even though the Master had so plainly spoken. But Judas was painfully conscious of the meaning of the Master's words, and became fearful that the others now knew who was the betrayer.

Peter was highly excited by what had been said, and leaning forward over the table, said to John, "Ask who it is, or if Jesus has told you, tell me who the betrayer is."

Jesus brought their whisperings to an end by saying: "I am sorry that this evil has come to pass and hoped even up to now that the power of truth might triumph over the deceptions of evil, but such victories are not won without the faith of the sincere love of truth. I would not have told you these things at this, our last meal, but I want to warn you of these sorrows and to prepare you for what is now about to happen. I have told you of this because I want you to recall, after I have gone, that I knew about all these evil plans, and that I forewarned you of my betrayal. And I do all this only so that you may be strengthened for the temptations and trials which are just ahead."

Jesus, having spoken, leaned over toward Judas and said: "What you have decided to do, do quickly." And Judas rose from the table and hastily left the room, going out into the night. When the other apostles saw this, they thought Judas had gone to procure something additional for the meal or to do some other errand for the Master.

Jesus now knew that nothing could be done to keep Judas from turning traitor. The Master had, up to this very hour, done everything possible to sanctify and save Judas.

This meal, with its tender episodes and softening touches, was Jesus' last appeal to the deserting Judas, but it was of no avail. Warning, even when administered in the most tactful manner and conveyed in the most kindly spirit, only intensifies hatred and fires the evil determination to carry out to the full one's own selfish projects, when love is really dead.

5. Establishing the Remembrance

As they brought the third cup of wine, the "cup of blessing," Jesus rose from the couch and, taking the cup, blessed it, saying: "Take this cup, all of you, and drink of it. This will be the cup of my remembrance. This is the cup of the blessing of a new dispensation of grace and truth. This will be to you the emblem of the bestowal and ministry of the divine Spirit of Truth. And I will not drink this cup with you again until I drink in new form with you in the Creator's eternal realm."

The apostles all sensed that something out of the ordinary was transpiring as they drank this cup of blessing in profound reverence and perfect silence. The old Passover commemorated the emergence of their ancestors from a state of racial slavery into freedom; now the Master was instituting a new remembrance as a symbol of the new dispensation in which the enslaved individual emerges from the bondage of ceremonialism and selfishness into the spiritual joy of the family of the liberated faith children of the living Creator.

When they had finished drinking this new cup of remembrance, the Master took the bread and, after giving thanks, broke it in pieces and, directing them to pass it around, said: "Take this bread of remembrance and eat it. I have told you that I am the bread of life. And this bread of life is my gift in unity with the Creator. The word of the Creator, as revealed in me, is indeed the bread of life." When they had eaten the bread of remembrance, the symbol of the living word of truth incarnated as a mortal, they all sat down.

In instituting this remembrance, the Master resorted to parables and symbols, employing symbols in order to teach certain great spiritual truths in such a manner as to make it difficult for others to attach precise interpretations and definite meanings to these words. In this way Jesus tried to prevent successive generations from crystallizing the teachings and binding down the spiritual meanings by the dead chains of tradition and dogma. In the establishment of the only ceremony or sacrament associated with the whole life mission, Jesus took great pains to *suggest* meanings rather than to commit them to *precise definitions*. Jesus did not want to destroy the individual's concept of divine communion by establishing a precise form, nor to limit the believer's spiritual imagination by formally cramping it, instead endeavoring to set mortals' reborn souls free on the joyous wings of a new and living spiritual liberty.

Notwithstanding the Master's effort to establish this new sacrament of the remembrance, those who followed in the intervening centuries saw to it that this express desire was effectively thwarted in that the simple spiritual symbolism of that last night has been reduced to precise interpretations and subjected to the almost mathematical precision of a set formula. Of all Jesus' teachings none have become more tradition-standardized.

This remembrance, when it is participated in by those who are Creator-knowing, does not need to have associated with its symbolism any immature misinterpretations regarding the meaning of the divine presence, for on all such occasions the Master is *really present*. The remembrance is the believer's symbolic rendezvous with Michael. When you become spirit-conscious, Michael is actually present, and Michael's spirit consorts with the indwelling fragment of the Creator.

After they had engaged in meditation for a few moments, Jesus continued speaking: "When you do these things, recall the life I have lived on earth among you and rejoice that I am to continue to live on earth with you and to serve through you. As individuals, do not contend among yourselves as to who will be greatest. Be as one family. And when the new realm grows to embrace large groups of believers, you should refrain from contending for greatness or seeking preferment between such groups."

And this mighty occasion took place in the upper chamber of a friend. There was nothing of sacred form or of ceremonial consecration about either the meal or the building. The remembrance was established without ecclesiastical sanction.

Jesus, having established the remembrance, said to the eleven: "And as often as you do this, do it in remembrance of me. And when you do remember me, first look back on my mortal life, recall that I was once with you, and then, by faith, discern that you will all someday be with me in the Creator's eternal realm. This is the new Passover which I leave with you, the memory of my bestowal life, the word of eternal truth; and of my love for you, the outpouring of my Spirit of Truth on all."

And they ended this celebration of the old but bloodless Passover, in connection with the inauguration of the new remembrance, by singing, all together, the one hundred and eighteenth Psalm.

Paper 180

The Farewell Discourse

After singing the Psalm at the conclusion of the meal, the apostles thought that Jesus intended to return immediately to the camp, but Jesus indicated that they should sit down, and said:

“You remember when I sent you out without funds and even advised that you take with you no extra clothes. And you will all recall that you lacked nothing. But you have now come upon troublous times. You can no longer depend on the good will of the multitudes. From now on, if you have funds, take them with you. When you go out into the world to share my teachings, make whatever provision for your support that seems best. I have come to bring peace, but it will not appear for a while.

“The time has now come for me to be glorified, and the Creator will be glorified in me. My friends, I am to be with you only a little longer. Soon you will look for me, but you will not find me, for I am going to a place to which you cannot, at this time, come. But when you have finished your work on earth as I have now finished mine, you will then come to me even as I now prepare to go to the Creator. In just a short time I am going to leave you, you will see me no more on earth, but you will all see me in the age to come when you ascend to the realm which the Creator has given to me.”

1. The New Commandment

After a few moments of informal conversation, Jesus stood up and said: “When I enacted a parable indicating how you should be willing to serve one another, I said that I wanted to give you a new commandment; and I would do this now as I am about to leave you. You know the commandment which directs that you love one another; that you love your neighbor even as yourself. But I am not wholly satisfied with even that sincere devotion on the part of my children. I would have you perform still greater acts of love. And so I give you this new commandment: That you love one another even as I have loved you. And by this all people will know that you are my disciples if you love one another.

“When I give you this new commandment, I do not place any new burden upon your souls; rather I bring you new joy and make it possible for you to experience new pleasure in knowing the delights of the bestowal of your heart’s affection on others. I am about to experience the supreme joy, even though enduring outward sorrow, in the bestowal of my affection on you and all others.

“When I invite you to love one another even as I have loved you, I hold before you the supreme measure of true affection, for there can be no greater love than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. And you are my friends and you will continue to be my friends. You have called me Master, but I do not call you servants. If you love one another as I am loving you, I will always speak to you of that which the Creator reveals to me.

“You have not merely chosen me, but I have also chosen you, and I have ordained you to go into the world to yield the fruit of loving service to others even as I have lived among you and revealed the Creator to you. The Creator and I will both work with you, and you will experience the divine fullness of joy if you will only obey my command to love one another, even as I have loved you.

“If you would share my joy, you must share my love. And to share my love means that you have shared my service. Such an experience of love does not deliver you from the difficulties of this world; it does not create a new world, but it most certainly does make the old world new.”

Keep in mind: It is loyalty, not sacrifice, that Jesus demands. The consciousness of sacrifice implies the absence of that wholehearted affection which would have made such a loving service a supreme joy. The idea of *duty* signifies that you are servant-minded and hence are missing the mighty thrill of doing your service as a friend and for a friend. The impulse of friendship transcends all convictions of duty, and the service of a friend for a friend can never be called a sacrifice. The Master has taught the apostles that they are the children of the Creator. Jesus has called them siblings, and now, before leaving, calls them friends.

2. The Vine and the Branches

Then Jesus stood up again and continued teaching the apostles: "I am the true vine and the Creator is the vineyard keeper. I am the vine, and you are the branches. And the Creator only requires of me that you bear much fruit. The vine is pruned only to increase the fruitfulness of its branches. Every branch coming out of me which bears no fruit, the Creator will take away. Every branch which bears fruit, the Creator will clean so that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean through the word I have spoken, but you must continue to be clean. You must abide in me, and I in you; the branch will die if it is separated from the vine. As the branch cannot bear fruit unless it is connected to the vine, neither can you yield the fruits of loving service unless you live in me. Remember: I am the real vine, and you are the living branches. Those who live in me, and I in them, will bear much fruit of the spirit and experience the supreme joy of yielding this spiritual harvest. If you will maintain this living spiritual connection with me, you will bear abundant fruit. If you abide in me and my words live in you, you will be able to commune freely with me, and then my living spirit can so infuse you that you may ask whatever my spirit wills and do all this with the assurance that the Creator will grant us our petition. Here is how the Creator is glorified: that the vine has many living branches, and that every branch bears much fruit. And when the world sees these fruit-bearing branches — my friends who love one another, even as I have loved them — all people will know that you are truly my disciples.

"As the Creator has loved me, so I have loved you. Live in my love even as I live in the Creator's love. If you do as I have taught you, you will live in my love even as I have kept the Creator's word and forever live in the Creator's love."

The Jews had long taught that the Messiah would be "a stem rising out of the vine" of David's ancestors, and in commemoration of this olden teaching a large emblem of the grape and its attached vine decorated the entrance to Herod's temple. The apostles all recalled these things while the Master talked to them this night in the upper chamber.

But great sorrow later attended the misinterpretation of the Master's inferences regarding prayer. There would have been little difficulty about these teachings if Jesus' exact words had been remembered and subsequently truthfully recorded. But as the record was made, believers eventually regarded prayer in Jesus' name as a sort of supreme magic, thinking that they would receive from the Creator anything they asked for. For centuries honest souls have continued to wreck their faith against this stumbling block. How long will it take the world of believers to understand that prayer is not a process of getting your way but rather of taking the Creator's way, an experience of learning how to recognize and execute the Creator's will? It is entirely true that, when your will has been truly aligned with the Creator's, you can ask anything conceived by that will-union, and it will be granted. And such a will-union is effected by and through Jesus even as the life of the vine flows into and through the living branches.

When this living connection exists between divinity and humanity, if humanity should thoughtlessly and ignorantly pray for selfish ease and vainglorious accomplishments, there could be only one divine answer: more and increased bearing of the fruits of the spirit on the stems of the living branches. When the branch of the vine is alive, there can be only one answer to all its petitions: increased grape bearing. In fact, the

branch exists only for, and can do nothing except, fruit bearing, yielding grapes. So the true believers exist only for the purpose of bearing the fruits of the spirit: to love others as they themselves have been loved by the Creator — that we should love one another, even as Jesus has loved us.

And when the Creator's hand of discipline is laid on the vine, it is done in love, in order that the branches may bear much fruit. And a wise vineyard keeper cuts away only the dead and fruitless branches.

Jesus had great difficulty in leading even the apostles to recognize that prayer is a function of spirit-born believers in the spirit-dominated realm.

3. Enmity of the World

The eleven had scarcely ended their discussions of the discourse on the vine and the branches when the Master, indicating a desire to speak to them further and knowing that the time was short, said: "When I have left you, do not be discouraged by the enmity of the world. Do not be downcast even when fainthearted believers turn against you and join hands with our enemies. If the world hates you, you should recall that it hated me even before it hated you. If you were of this world, then the world would love its own, but because you are not, the world refuses to love you. You are in this world, but your lives are not to be worldlike. I have chosen you out of the world to represent the spirit of another world even to this world from which you have been chosen. But always remember the words I have spoken to you: The servant is not greater than the master. If they dare to persecute me, they will also persecute you. If my words offend the unbelievers, so your words will also offend the ungodly. And all of this they will do to you because they do not believe in me nor in the One who sent me; so you will suffer many things for my sake. But when you endure these tribulations, you should recall that I also suffered before you for the sake of this doctrine of the Creator's realm.

"Many of those who will attack you are ignorant of the light, but this is not true of some who now persecute us. If we had not taught them the truth, they might do many strange things without falling under condemnation, but now, since they have known the light and presumed to reject it, they have no excuse for their attitude. Those who hate me hate the Creator. It cannot be otherwise; the light which would save you if accepted can only condemn you if it is knowingly rejected. And what have I done to these people that they should despise me with such a terrible hatred? Nothing, except to offer them eternal life.

"But I will not leave you alone in the world. Very soon, after I have gone, I will send you a spirit helper. You will have with you one who will take my place among you, one who will continue to teach you the way of truth, who will even comfort you.

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in the Creator; continue to also believe in me. Even though I must leave you, I will not be far from you. I have already told you that in the Creator's universe there are many places. If this were not true, I would not have repeatedly told you about them. I am going to return to these worlds of light, stations in the Creator's realm to which you will ascend. From these places I came into this world, and the hour is now at hand when I must return to the Creator's work in the spheres on high.

"If I go before you into the Creator's realm, I will send for you so that you may be with me in the places that were prepared for the mortal children of the Creator before this world was. Even though I must leave you, I will be present with you in spirit, and eventually you will be with me in person when you have ascended to me in my universe even as I am about to ascend to the Creator in the greater universe. And what I have told you is true and everlasting, even though you may not fully comprehend it. I go to the Creator, and though you cannot follow me now, you will certainly follow me in the ages to come."

When Jesus sat down, Thomas rose and said: “Master, we do not know where you are going; so of course we do not know the way. But we will follow you this very night if you will show us the way.”

And Jesus answered: “Thomas, I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one goes to the Creator except through me. All who find the Creator, first find me. If you know me, you know the way to the Creator. And you do know me, for you have lived with me and you now see me.”

But this teaching was too deep for many of the apostles, especially for Philip, who, after speaking a few words with Nathaniel, rose and said: “Master, show us the Creator, and everything you have said will be made plain.”

And when Philip had spoken, Jesus said: “Philip, have I been so long with you and yet you do not even now know me? Again I say: Those who have seen me have seen the Creator. The Creator lives in me and works through me. Believe me when I say that the Creator is in me, and that I am in the Creator, or else believe me for the sake of the very life I have lived — for the work’s sake.”

As the Master went aside to drink some water, the eleven engaged in a spirited discussion of these teachings, and Peter was beginning to deliver an extended speech when Jesus returned and motioned to them to be seated.

4. The Promised Helper

Jesus continued to teach, saying: “When I have gone, and after the Creator has fully accepted the work I have done for you on earth, and after I have received the final sovereignty of my own domain, I will say to the Creator: Having left my children alone on earth, it is in accordance with my promise to send them another teacher. And after the Creator approves, I will pour out the Spirit of Truth on all people. The Creator’s spirit is already in your hearts, and when this day comes, you will also have me with you even as you now have the Creator. This new gift is the spirit of living truth. The unbelievers will not listen to the teachings of this spirit at first, but the children of light will all receive it gladly and with a whole heart. And you will know this spirit when it comes even as you have known me, and you will receive this gift in your hearts, and it will live with you. You realize that I am not going to leave you without help and guidance. I will not leave you desolate. Today I can be with you only in person. In the times to come I will be with you and all others who desire my presence, wherever you may be, and with each of you at the same time. Do you not see that it is better for me to go away; that I leave you so that I may better and more fully be with you in the spirit?

“In just a few hours the world will see me no more; but you will continue to know me in your hearts even until I send you this new teacher, the Spirit of Truth. As I have lived with you in person, then I will live in you; I will be one with your personal experience in the spirit realm. And when this has happened, you will surely know that I am in the Creator, and that, while your life is hidden with the Creator in me, I am also in you. I have loved the Creator and have kept the Creator’s word; you have loved me, and you will keep my word. As I have been given the Creator’s spirit, I give you my spirit. And this Spirit of Truth which I will send to you will guide and comfort you and will eventually lead you into all truth.

“I am telling you these things while I am still with you so that you may be better prepared to endure those trials which are even now right upon us. And when this new day comes, you will be indwelt by me as well as by the Creator. And these gifts will work with each other even as the Creator and I have worked on earth and before your very eyes as one person. And this spirit friend will bring to your remembrance everything I have taught you.”

As the Master paused for a moment, Judas Alpheus asked one of the few questions which either of the twins ever addressed to Jesus in public. Said Judas: "Master, you have always lived among us as a friend; how will we know you when you no longer manifest yourself to us except by this spirit? If the world does not see you, how will we be certain about you? How will you show yourself to us?"

Jesus looked down on them all, smiled, and said: "My little children, I am going away, going back to my Creator Parent. In a little while you will not see me as you do here. In a very short time I am going to send you my spirit, just like me except for this material body. This new teacher is the Spirit of Truth who will live with each one of you, in your hearts, and all the children of light will be made one and be drawn toward one another. And in this very manner will the Creator and I be able to live in the souls of each one of you and also in the hearts of all others who love us and make that love real in their experiences by loving one another, even as I am now loving you."

Judas Alpheus did not fully understand what the Master said, but grasped the promise of the new teacher, and from the expression on Andrew's face, perceived that the question had been satisfactorily answered.

5. The Spirit of Truth

The new helper which Jesus promised to send into the hearts of believers, to pour out on all people, is the *Spirit of Truth*. This divine endowment is not the letter or law of truth, neither is it to function as the form or expression of truth. The new teacher is the *conviction of truth*, the consciousness and assurance of true meanings on real spirit levels. And this new teacher is the spirit of living and growing truth, expanding, unfolding, and adaptative truth.

Divine truth is a spirit-discerned and living reality. Truth exists only on high spiritual levels of the realization of divinity and the consciousness of communion with the Creator. You can know the truth, and you can live the truth; you can experience the growth of truth in the soul and enjoy the liberty of its enlightenment in the mind, but you cannot imprison truth in formulas, codes, creeds, or intellectual patterns of human conduct. When you undertake the human formulation of divine truth, it speedily dies. The post-mortem salvage of imprisoned truth, even at best, can eventuate only in the realization of a peculiar form of intellectualized glorified wisdom. Static truth is dead truth, and only dead truth can be held as a theory. Living truth is dynamic and can enjoy only an experiential existence in the human mind.

Intelligence grows out of a material existence which is illuminated by the presence of the cosmic mind. Wisdom comprises the consciousness of knowledge elevated to new levels of meaning and activated by the presence of the universe endowment of the adjutant of wisdom. Truth is a spiritual reality value experienced only by spirit-endowed beings who function on supermaterial levels of universe consciousness, and who, after the realization of truth, permit its spirit of activation to live and reign within their souls.

The true child of universe insight looks for the living Spirit of Truth in every wise saying. The Creator-knowing individual is constantly elevating wisdom to the living-truth levels of divine attainment; the spiritually unprogressive soul is all the while dragging the living truth down to the dead levels of wisdom and to the domain of mere exalted knowledge.

The golden rule, when divested of the superhuman insight of the Spirit of Truth, becomes nothing more than a rule of high ethical conduct. The golden rule, when literally interpreted, may become the instrument of great offense to others. Without a spiritual discernment of the golden rule of wisdom you might reason that, since you desire that everyone speak the full and frank truth of their minds to you, you should therefore fully and frankly speak the full thought of your mind to others. Such an unspiritual interpretation of the golden rule might result in untold unhappiness and no end of sorrow.

Some persons discern and interpret the golden rule as a purely intellectual affirmation of the human family. Others experience this expression of human relationship as an emotional gratification of the tender feelings of the human personality. Another mortal recognizes this same golden rule as the yardstick for measuring all social relations, the standard of social conduct. Still others look upon it as being the positive injunction of a great moral teacher who embodied in this statement the highest concept of moral obligation as regards all relationships. In the lives of such moral beings the golden rule becomes the wise center and circumference of all their philosophy.

In the domain of the believing family of Creator-knowing truth lovers, this golden rule takes on living qualities of spiritual realization on those higher levels of interpretation which cause the mortal children of the Creator to view this injunction of the Master as requiring them to relate themselves to others so that they will receive the highest possible good as a result of the believer's contact with them. This is the essence of true religion: that you love your neighbor as yourself.

But the highest realization and the truest interpretation of the golden rule consists in the consciousness of the spirit of the truth of the enduring and living reality of such a divine declaration. The true cosmic meaning of this rule of universal relationship is revealed only in its spiritual realization, in the interpretation of the law of conduct by the spirit of the child to the spirit of the Parent that indwells the souls of mortals. And when such spirit-led mortals realize the true meaning of this golden rule, they are filled to overflowing with the assurance of citizenship in a friendly universe, and their ideals of spirit reality are satisfied only when they love others as Jesus loved us all, and that is the reality of the realization of the love of the Creator.

This same philosophy of the living flexibility and cosmic adaptability of divine truth to the individual requirements and capacity of every child of the Creator, must be perceived before you can hope to adequately understand the Master's teaching and practice of nonresistance to evil. The Master's teaching is basically a spiritual pronouncement. Even the material implications of this philosophy cannot be helpfully considered apart from their spiritual correlations. The spirit of the Master's injunction consists in the nonresistance of all selfish reaction to the universe, coupled with the aggressive and progressive attainment of righteous levels of true spirit values: divine beauty, infinite goodness, and eternal truth — to know and to become increasingly like the Creator.

Love, unselfishness, must undergo a constant and living re-adaptative interpretation of relationships in accordance with the leading of the Spirit of Truth. Love must grasp the ever-changing and enlarging concepts of the highest cosmic good of the individual who is loved. And then love goes on to strike this same attitude concerning all other individuals who could possibly be influenced by the growing and living relationship of one spirit-led mortal's love for other citizens of the universe. And this entire living adaptation of love must be effected in the light of both the environment of present evil and the eternal goal of the perfection of divine destiny.

And so we must clearly recognize that neither the golden rule nor the teaching of nonresistance can ever be properly understood as dogmas or precepts. They can only be comprehended by living them, by realizing their meanings in the living interpretation of the Spirit of Truth, which directs the loving contact of one human being with another.

And all this clearly indicates the difference between the old religion and the new. The old religion taught self-sacrifice; the new religion teaches only self-forgetfulness, enhanced self-realization in conjoined social service and universe comprehension. The old religion was motivated by fear-consciousness; the new doctrine is dominated by truth-conviction, the spirit of eternal and universal truth. And no amount of piety or creedal loyalty can compensate for the absence in the life experience of believers of that spontaneous,

generous, and sincere friendliness which characterizes the spirit-born children of the living Creator. Neither tradition nor a ceremonial system of formal worship can atone for the lack of genuine compassion for others.

6. The Necessity for Leaving

After Peter, James, John, and Matthew had asked numerous questions, Jesus continued this farewell discourse by saying: “And I am telling you about all this before I leave you in order that you may be prepared for what is coming so that you will not stumble into serious error. The authorities will not be content with merely putting you out of the synagogues; I warn you that the hour draws near when those who kill you will think they are doing a service to Yahweh. And they will do all of these things to you and to those whom you lead because they do not know the Creator. They have refused to know the Creator by refusing to receive me; and they refuse to receive me when they reject you, provided you have kept my new commandment that you love one another even as I have loved you. I am telling you in advance about these things so that, when your hour comes, as mine now has, you may be strengthened in the knowledge that all was known to me, and that my spirit will be with you in all your sufferings for my sake. It was for this purpose that I have been talking so plainly to you from the very beginning. I have even warned you that a person’s enemies may be those of the family. Although this doctrine of the new realm never fails to bring great peace to the soul of the individual believer, it will not bring peace on earth until people are willing to believe my teaching wholeheartedly and to establish the practice of doing the Creator’s will as the chief purpose in living the mortal life.

“Now that I am leaving you, seeing that the hour has come when I am about to go to the Creator, I am surprised that none of you have asked me, Why do you leave us? Nevertheless, I know that you ask such questions in your hearts. I will speak to you plainly, as one friend to another. It is really profitable for you that I go away. If I do not go away, the new teacher cannot come into your hearts. I must be divested of this mortal body and be restored to my place on high before I can send this spirit teacher to live in your souls and lead your spirits into the truth. And when my spirit comes to indwell you, it will illuminate the difference between sin and righteousness and will enable you to judge wisely in your hearts concerning them.

“I have much more to say to you, but you cannot stand any more just now. Although, when the Spirit of Truth comes, it will eventually guide you into all truth as you pass through the many levels of the Creator’s universe.

“This spirit will not speak of itself, but will declare to you that which the Creator has revealed to me, and will even show you things to come; the spirit will glorify me even as I have glorified the Creator. This spirit comes from me, and will reveal my truth to you. Everything which the Creator has in this domain is now mine; and this new teacher will take that which is mine and reveal it to you.

“In just a little while I will leave you for a short time. Afterward, when you see me again, I will already be on my way to the Creator so that even then you will not see me for long.”

While Jesus paused for a moment, the apostles began to talk with each other: “What does this mean? ‘In just a little while I will leave you,’ and ‘When you see me again it will not be for long, for I will be on my way to the Creator.’ What is meant by this ‘little while’ and ‘not for long’? We cannot understand it.”

And Jesus, knowing that they asked these questions, said: “Do you inquire among yourselves about what I meant when I said that in a little while I would not be with you, and that, when you would see me again, I would be on my way to the Creator? I have plainly told you that I must die, but that I will rise again. Can you not then understand the meaning of my words? You will be sorrowful at first, but later on you will

rejoice with many who will understand these things after they have come to pass. You are about to be unhappy over my departure, but I will soon see you again, and then your sorrow will be turned into rejoicing, and there will come to you a new revelation of the Creator which no one can ever take away from you. And all the worlds will be blessed in this same revelation of life in effecting the overthrow of death. Previously you have made all your requests in the Creator's name. After you see me again, you may also ask in my name, and I will hear you.

“Down here I have taught you in proverbs and spoken to you in parables. I did so because you were only children in the spirit; but the time is coming when I will talk to you plainly. And I will do this because the Creator loves you and desires to be more fully revealed to you. Mortals cannot see the spirit Source; therefore I have come into the world to show the Creator to your creature eyes. But when you have become perfected in spirit growth, you will then see the Creator yourselves.”

When the eleven had heard Jesus speak, they said to each other: “These are certainly plain words. Surely the Master did come from the Creator. But why is it necessary to return to the Creator?” And Jesus saw that they did not even yet comprehend him. These eleven could not get away from their long-nourished ideas of the Jewish concept of the Messiah. The more fully they believed in Jesus as the Messiah, the more troublesome these deep-rooted notions became regarding the glorious material triumph of the new realm on earth.

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Final Admonitions and Warnings

After the conclusion of the farewell discourse to the eleven, Jesus visited informally with them and recounted many experiences which concerned them as a group and as individuals. At last it was beginning to dawn on these Galileans that their friend and teacher was going to leave them, and their hope grasped at the promise that Jesus, after a little while, would again be with them, but they were prone to forget that this return visit was also for a little while. Many of the apostles and the leading disciples really thought that this promise to return for a short time (the short interval between the resurrection and the ascension) indicated that Jesus was just going away for a brief visit with the Creator, and would then return to establish the new realm. And such an interpretation of this teaching conformed both with their preconceived beliefs and with their ardent hopes. Since their lifelong beliefs and hopes of wish fulfillment were agreed, it was not difficult for them to find an interpretation of the Master's words which would justify their intense longings.

After the farewell discourse had been discussed and had begun to settle down in their minds, Jesus again called the apostles to order and began the impartation of final admonitions and warnings.

1. Last Words of Comfort

When the eleven had taken their seats, Jesus stood and addressed them: "As long as I am with you, I can be only one individual in your midst or in the entire world. But when I have been freed from this body, I will be able to return as a spirit to be with each of you and of all other believers. In this way I will become a spiritual incarnation in the souls of all true believers.

"When I have returned to live with you and work through you, I can better lead you on through this life and guide you through the many levels of the future life in the universe. Life in the eternal creation is not an endless rest of idleness and selfish ease but rather a ceaseless progression in universal service. Each of the many, many stations in the Creator's realm is a stopping place, a life designed to prepare you for the next one ahead. And so the children of light will go on from place to place until they attain the divine estate in which they are spiritually perfected even as the Universal Source is perfect in all things.

"If you would follow after me when I leave you, put forth your earnest efforts to live in accordance with the spirit of my teachings and with the ideal of my life — the doing of the Creator's will. Do this instead of trying to imitate my natural life as I have been required to live it on this world.

"The Creator sent me into this world, but only a few of you have chosen to receive me fully. I will pour out my spirit on all people, but all people will not choose to receive this new teacher as the guide and counselor of the soul. But as many as do receive it will be enlightened, cleansed, and comforted. And this Spirit of Truth will become in them a well of living water springing up into life eternal.

"And now, as I am about to leave you, I would speak words of comfort. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I make these gifts not as the world gives — by measure — I give each of you as much as you will receive. Do not let your heart be troubled or fearful. I have overcome the world, and in me you will all triumph through faith. I have warned you that I will be killed, but I assure you I will come back before I go to the Creator, even though it will only be for a little while. And after I have ascended to the Creator, I will send the new teacher to be with you and to live in your hearts. And when you see all this come to pass, do not be dismayed, but rather believe, since you knew it all beforehand. I have loved you with a great affection, and I would not leave you, but it is the Creator's will. My hour has come.

“Do not doubt any of these truths even after you are scattered by persecution. When you feel that you are alone in the world, I will know of your isolation even as, when you are all scattered, leaving me in the hands of my enemies, you will know of mine. But I am never alone; the Creator is always with me. Even at such a time I will pray for you. And all of these things I have told you so that you might have peace and have it more abundantly. In this world you will have tribulation, but do not worry; I have triumphed in the world and shown you the way to eternal joy and everlasting service.”

Jesus gives peace to doers of the will of the Creator but not on the order of the joys and satisfactions of this material world. Unbelieving materialists and fatalists can hope to enjoy only two kinds of peace and soul comfort: Either they must be stoics, with steadfast resolution determined to face the inevitable and to endure the worst; or they must be optimists, indulging that hope which springs eternal in the human heart, vainly longing for a peace which never really comes.

A certain amount of both stoicism and optimism are serviceable in living a life on earth, but neither has anything to do with that superb peace which Michael bestows on believers. The peace which Michael gives is that very peace which filled the soul of Jesus when living the mortal life on this very world. The peace of Jesus is the joy and satisfaction of a Creator-knowing individual who has achieved the triumph of learning how to fully do the will of the Creator while living the mortal life. The peace of Jesus' mind was founded on an absolute human faith in the actuality of the divine Source's wise and sympathetic overcare. Jesus had trouble on earth, but in and through all of these experiences enjoyed the comfort of that confidence which provided the power to proceed with life in the full assurance of achieving the Creator's will.

Jesus was determined, persistent, and thoroughly devoted to the accomplishment of the bestowal mission, but was not an unfeeling and calloused stoic. Jesus was always seeking for the cheerful aspects of life experiences, but was not a blind and self-deceived optimist. The Master knew all that was to happen, and was unafraid. After bestowing this peace on each of the followers, Jesus could consistently say, “Do not let your heart be troubled or afraid.”

The peace of Jesus is, then, the peace and assurance of a person who fully believes that the career of time and eternity is safely and wholly in the care and keeping of an all-wise, all-loving, and all-powerful spirit Creator. And this is, indeed, a peace which passes the understanding of mortal mind, but which can be enjoyed to the full by the believing human heart.

2. Farewell Personal Admonitions

The Master finished giving these farewell instructions and imparting final admonitions to the apostles as a group, and then said good-bye and gave a word of personal advice to each one individually, together with a parting blessing. The apostles were still seated about the table as when they first sat down to partake of their last meal together, and as the Master went around the table talking to them, each one rose when addressed by Jesus.

To John, Jesus said: “You, John, are the youngest of my associates. You have been very near me, and while I love you all with the same love which a parent bestows on a child, you were designated by Andrew as one of the three who should always be near me. Besides this, you have acted for me and must continue so to act in many matters concerning my earthly family. And I go to the Creator, John, having full confidence that you will continue to watch over those who are mine. See to it that their present confusion regarding my mission does not in any way prevent your extending to them all sympathy, counsel, and help even as you know I would if I were to remain here. And when they all come to see the light and enter fully into the new realm, while you all will welcome them joyously, I depend upon you, John, to welcome them for me.

“And now, as I enter the closing hours of my earthly career, remain near at hand so that I may leave any message with you regarding my family. As concerns the work put in my hands by the Creator, it is now finished except for my death, and I am ready for this last human experience. But as for my responsibilities for the family, while I have attended to these during my life, I must now depend on you to act on my behalf in all these matters. And I have chosen you to do this for me, John, because you are the youngest and will therefore very likely outlive these other apostles.

“You started out with us strong-minded and intolerant, but you have changed much since you wanted me to call fire down on the heads of ignorant and thoughtless unbelievers. And you must change still more. You should become the apostle of the new commandment which I have given you. Dedicate your life to teaching the others how to love one another, even as I have loved you.”

John Zebedee stood there in the upper chamber, weeping, and looking into the Master’s face said: “And so I will, my Master, but how can I learn to love the others more?” And then Jesus answered: “You will learn to love the others more when you first learn to love their Creator more, and after you have become truly more interested in their welfare in time and in eternity. And all such human interest is fostered by understanding sympathy, unselfish service, and unstinted forgiveness. No one should despise your youth, but I exhort you to always give due consideration to the fact that age often represents experience, and that nothing in human affairs can take the place of actual experience. Strive to live peaceably with all people, especially your friends. And, John, always remember, do not argue with the souls you would win for the new realm.”

And then the Master, moving on, paused a moment by the side of the place of Judas Iscariot. The apostles were rather surprised that Judas had not returned before this, and they were very curious about Jesus’ display of sadness while standing by the betrayer’s vacant seat. But none of them, except possibly Andrew, entertained even the slightest thought that their treasurer had gone out to betray the Master, as Jesus had intimated to them earlier in the evening and during the meal. So much had been going on that, for the time being, they had quite forgotten about the Master’s announcement that one of them was a betrayer.

Jesus now went over to Simon Zelotes, who stood up and listened to this admonition: “You are a true child of the Jews, but what a time I have had trying to make you a child of this new realm. I love you and so do all of the others. I know that you love me, Simon, and that you also love the teachings, but you are still set on making this new realm come according to your liking. I know full well that you will eventually grasp the spiritual nature and meaning of my teachings, and that you will do valiant work in its proclamation, but I am distressed about what may happen to you when I leave. I would rejoice to know that you would not falter; I would be happy if I could know that, after I go to the Creator, you would not cease to be my apostle, and that you would acceptably behave as an ambassador of the new realm.”

Jesus had hardly ceased speaking to Simon Zelotes when the fiery patriot replied: “Master, have no fears for my loyalty. I have turned my back on everything so that I might dedicate my life to the establishment of your dominion on earth, and I will not falter. I have survived every disappointment so far, and I will not forsake you.”

And then, laying a hand on Simon’s shoulder, Jesus said: “It is refreshing to hear you talk like that, especially at such a time as this, but, my good friend, you still do not know what you are talking about. Not for one moment would I doubt your loyalty, your devotion; I know you would not hesitate to die for me, as all these others would” (and they all nodded a vigorous approval), “but that will not be required of you. I have repeatedly told you that my realm is not of this world, and that my disciples will not fight to effect its establishment. I have told you this many times, Simon, but you refuse to face the truth. I am not concerned with your loyalty to me, but what will you do when I go away and you at last wake up to the realization

that you have failed to grasp the meaning of my teaching, and that you must adjust your misconceptions to the reality of another and spiritual order of affairs in the new realm?"

Simon wanted to speak further, but Jesus raised a hand and went on to say: "None of my apostles are more sincere and honest at heart than you, but not one of them will be so upset and disheartened as you after my departure. In all of your discouragement my spirit will live with you, and these others will not forsake you. Do not forget what I have taught you regarding the relation of citizenship on earth to membership in the Creator's spiritual realm. Carefully consider all that I have said to you about rendering to Caesar the things which are Caesar's and to the Creator that which is the Creator's. Dedicate your life, Simon, to showing how acceptably mortals may fulfill my injunction concerning the simultaneous recognition of temporal duty to civil powers and spiritual service in the new realm. If you will be taught by the Spirit of Truth, there will never be conflict between the requirements of citizenship on earth and citizenship in the universe unless the temporal rulers presume to require of you the homage and worship which belong only to the Creator.

"And now, Simon, when you do finally see all of this, and after you have shaken off your depression and have gone out proclaiming this doctrine in great power, never forget that I was with you even through all of your time of discouragement, and that I will go on with you to the very end. You will always be my apostle, and after you become willing to see spiritually and more fully yield your will to the will of the Creator, then you will return to work as my ambassador, and no one will take away from you the authority which I have conferred on you because of your slowness of comprehending the truths I have taught you. And so, Simon, once more I warn you that those who fight with the sword perish with the sword, while those who labor in the spirit achieve life everlasting in the realm to come with joy and peace in the realm which now is. And when the work given into your hands is finished on earth, you, Simon, will sit down with me over there. You will really see the dominion you have longed for, but not in this life. Continue to believe in me and in that which I have revealed to you, and you will receive the gift of eternal life."

Jesus, after speaking to Simon Zelotes, stepped over to Matthew Levi and said: "It will no longer rest on you to provide for the treasury of the apostolic group. Soon, very soon, you will all be scattered; you will not be permitted to enjoy the comforting and sustaining association of even one of your friends. As you go on preaching this doctrine of the new realm, you will have to find new friends for yourselves. I have sent you out two and two during the times of your training, but now that I am leaving you, after you have recovered from the shock, you will go out alone, and to the ends of the earth, proclaiming this: That faith-quickeners mortals are the children of the Creator."

Then Matthew spoke: "But, Master, who will send us, and how will we know where to go? Will Andrew show us the way?" And Jesus answered: "No, Levi, Andrew will no longer direct you, but will continue as your friend and counselor until that day when the new teacher comes, and then the Spirit of Truth will lead each of you to labor for the extension of the new realm. Many changes have come over you since that day at the customhouse when you first set out to follow me; but many more must come before you will be able to see the vision of an earthly family in which gentile sits alongside Jew in loving association. But go on with your urge to win your Jewish associates until you are fully satisfied and then turn with power to the gentiles. One thing you may be certain of, Levi: You have won the confidence and affection of the other apostles; they all love you." (And all ten of them signified their acquiescence in the Master's words.)

"Levi, I know much about your anxieties, sacrifices, and labors to keep the treasury replenished which the others do not know, and I am happy that, though the one who carried the bag is absent, the publican ambassador is here at my farewell gathering with the other messengers. I pray that you may discern the meaning of my teaching with the eyes of the spirit. And when the new teacher comes into your heart, follow on as it will lead you and let others see — even all the world — what the Creator can do for a hated tax-gatherer who dared to follow me and to believe the doctrine of the new realm. Even from the first, Levi, I

loved you as I did these other Galileans. Therefore knowing that neither the Creator nor I have no preferences among people, see to it that you make no such distinctions among those who become believers through your ministry. And so, Matthew, dedicate your whole future life service to showing all people that the Creator is no respecter of persons; that, in the sight of the Creator and in the family of the Creator's realm, all people are equal, all believers are the children of the Creator."

Jesus then stepped over to James Zebedee, who stood in silence as the Master spoke, and Jesus said: "James, when you once came to me with John seeking preference in the honors of the new realm, and I told you such honors were for the Creator to bestow, I asked if you were able to drink my cup, and both of you answered that you were. Even if you were not able then, and if you are not able now, you will soon be prepared for such a service by the experience you are about to pass through. By such behavior you angered the others at that time. If they have not already fully forgiven you, they will when they see you drink my cup. Whether your ministry is long or short, be patient. When the new teacher comes, let it teach you the poise of compassion and that sympathetic tolerance which is born of sublime confidence in me and of perfect submission to the Creator's will. Dedicate your life to the demonstration of that combined human affection and divine dignity of the Creator-knowing disciple. And all who thus live will reveal the Creator even in the manner of their death. You and John will go different ways, and one of you may sit down with me in the eternal realm long before the other. It would help you much if you would learn that true wisdom embraces discretion as well as courage. You should learn sagacity to go along with your aggressiveness. There will come those supreme moments in which my disciples will not hesitate to lay down their lives for me, but in all ordinary circumstances it would be far better to placate the wrath of unbelievers so that you might live and continue to preach. As far as it lies in your power, live long on the earth so that your life of many years may be fruitful in souls won for the new realm."

The Master, having finished speaking to James Zebedee, stepped around to the end of the table where Andrew sat and, looking this faithful helper in the eyes, said: "Andrew, you have faithfully represented me as acting head of the ambassadors of the new realm. Although you have sometimes doubted and at other times manifested dangerous timidity, still, you have always been sincerely just and eminently fair in dealing with your associates. Ever since the ordination of you and the others as messengers of the new age, you have been self-governing in all group administrative affairs except that I designated you as the acting head of these chosen ones. In no other temporal matter have I acted to direct or to influence your decisions. And this I did in order to provide for leadership in the direction of all your subsequent group deliberations. In my universe and in the Creator's universe of universes, our children are dealt with as individuals in all their spiritual relations, but in all group relationships we unfailingly provide for definite leadership. Our realm is one of order, and where two or more will creatures act in co-operation, the authority of leadership is always provided.

"And now, Andrew, since you are the chief of this group by authority of my appointment, and since you have served as my personal representative, and as I am about to leave you and go to the Creator, I release you from all responsibility as regards these temporal and administrative affairs. From now on you may exercise no jurisdiction over the others except that which you have earned in your capacity as spiritual leader, and which they therefore freely recognize. From this hour you may exercise no authority over the others unless they restore such jurisdiction to you after I have gone to the Creator. But this release from responsibility as the administrative head of this group does not in any manner lessen your moral responsibility to do everything in your power to hold them together with a firm and loving hand during the trying time just ahead, those days which must intervene between my departure and the sending of the new teacher who will live in your hearts, and who ultimately will lead you into all truth.

"If the others desire to retain you as their counselor, I direct that you should, in all matters temporal and spiritual, do your utmost to promote peace and harmony among the various groups of sincere believers.

Dedicate the remainder of your life to promoting the practical aspects of familial love among them. Be kind to them when they come to fully believe this doctrine. Manifest loving and impartial devotion to the Greeks in the West and to Abner in the East. Although these, my apostles, are soon going to be scattered to the four corners of the earth to proclaim the doctrine of the new realm, you are to hold them together during the trying time just ahead, that season of intense testing during which you must learn to believe this doctrine without my personal presence while you patiently await the arrival of the new teacher, the Spirit of Truth. And so, Andrew, though it may not fall to you to do great works as seen by mortals, be content to be the teacher and counselor of those who do such things. Go on with your work on earth to the end, and then you will continue this ministry in the eternal dominion, for have I not many times told you that I have other sheep not of this flock?"

Jesus then went over to the Alpheus twins and, standing between them, said: "My little children, you are one of the three groups of siblings who chose to follow after me. All six of you have done well to work in peace with your own family members, but none have done better than you. Hard times are just ahead of us. You may not understand all that will happen to you and the others, but never doubt that you were once called to the work of the new realm. For some time there will be no multitudes to manage, but do not become discouraged. When your lifework is finished, I will receive you on high, where you will tell of your experiences to seraphic hosts and to multitudes of the high Children of the Creator. Dedicate your lives to the enhancement of commonplace work. Show all mortals on earth and the angels of the universe how cheerfully and courageously mortals can, after having been called to work for a while in the special service of the Creator, return to the labor of former days. If, for the time being, your work in the outward affairs of the new realm are completed, you should go back to your former labors with the new enlightenment of the experience of relationship with the Creator and with the exalted realization that, to one who is Creator-knowing, there is no such thing as common or secular labor. To you who have worked with me, all things have become sacred, and all earthly labor has become a service even to the Creator. And when you hear the news of the doings of your former apostolic associates, rejoice with them and continue your daily work as those who wait upon the Creator and serve while they wait. You have been my apostles, and you always will be, and I will remember you in the age to come."

And then Jesus went over to Philip, who, standing up, heard this message from the Master: "Philip, you have asked me many foolish questions, but I have done my utmost to answer every one, and now I would answer the last of such questionings which have arisen in your most honest but unspiritual mind. All the time I have been coming around toward you, you have been saying to yourself, 'What will I ever do if the Master goes away and leaves us alone in the world?' And yet you have almost as much faith as many of the others. You have been a good steward, Philip. You failed us only a few times, and one of those failures we utilized to manifest the Creator's glory. Your office of stewardship is about over. You must soon more fully do the work you were called to do — the preaching of this doctrine of the new realm. Philip, you have always wanted to be shown, and very soon you will see great things. It would have been far better if you had seen all this by faith, but since you were sincere even in your material sightedness, you will live to see my words fulfilled. And then, when you are blessed with spiritual vision, do your work, dedicating your life to the cause of leading humankind to search for the Creator and to seek eternal realities with the eye of spiritual faith and not with the eyes of the material mind. Remember, Philip, you have a great mission on earth, for the world is filled with those who look at life just as you have tended to. You have a great work to do, and when it is finished in faith, you will come to me in my dominion, and I will take great pleasure in showing you that which eye has not seen, ear heard, nor the mortal mind conceived. In the meantime, become as a little child in the spirit and permit me, as the spirit of the new teacher, to lead you forward in the spiritual realm. And in this way I will be able to do much for you which I was not able to accomplish when I lived with you as a mortal. And always remember, Philip, those who have seen me have seen the Creator."

Then the Master went over and, sitting down by Nathaniel's side, said: "Nathaniel, you have learned to live above prejudice and to practice increased tolerance since you became my apostle. But there is much more for you to learn. You have been a blessing to the others in that they have always been admonished by your consistent sincerity. When I have gone, it may be that your frankness will interfere with your getting along well with them. You should learn that the expression of even a good thought must be modulated in accordance with the intellectual status and spiritual development of the hearer. Sincerity is most serviceable in the work when it is wedded to discretion.

"If you would learn to work with others, you might accomplish more permanent things, but if you find yourself going off in quest of those who think as you do, in that event dedicate your life to proving that the Creator-knowing disciple can become effective even when alone in the world and wholly isolated from other believers. I know you will be faithful to the end, and I will someday welcome you to the enlarged service of my dominion on high."

Then Nathaniel spoke, asking Jesus this question: "I have listened to your teaching ever since you first called me to the service of this new realm, but I honestly cannot understand the full meaning of all you tell us. I do not know what to expect next, and I think most of the others are likewise confused, but they hesitate to confess their confusion. Can you help me?" And Jesus, putting a hand on Nathaniel's shoulder, said: "My friend, it is not strange that you should encounter perplexity in your attempt to grasp the meaning of my spiritual teachings since you are so handicapped by your preconceptions of Jewish tradition and so confused by your persistent tendency to interpret my words in accordance with the teachings of the scribes and Pharisees.

"I have taught you much by word of mouth, and I have lived my life among you. I have done all that can be done to enlighten your minds and liberate your souls, and what you have not been able to get from my teachings and my life, you must now prepare to acquire at the hand of that master of all teachers — actual experience. And in all of this new experience which now awaits you, I will go before you and the Spirit of Truth will be with you. Fear not; that which you now fail to comprehend, the new teacher, when it comes, will reveal to you throughout the remainder of your life on earth and on through your training in the eternal ages."

And then the Master, turning to all of them, said: "Do not be dismayed that you fail to grasp the full meaning of my teachings. You are only finite mortals, and that which I have taught you is infinite, divine, and eternal. Be patient and of good courage since you have the eternal ages before you in which to continue your progressive attainment of the experience of becoming perfect, even as the Creator in Paradise is perfect."

And then Jesus went over to Thomas and said: "Thomas, you have often lacked faith; however, when you have had your times of doubt, you have never lacked courage. I know that the false prophets and spurious teachers will not deceive you. After I have gone, the others will appreciate your critical way of viewing new teachings. And when you are all scattered to the ends of the earth in the times to come, remember that you are still my ambassador. Dedicate your life to the great work of showing how the critical material minds of mortals can triumph over the inertia of intellectual doubting when faced by the demonstration of the manifestation of living truth as it operates in the experience of spirit-born people who yield the fruits of the spirit in their lives, and who love one another, even as I have loved you. Thomas, I am glad you joined us, and I know, after a short period of confusion, you will go on in the service of the new realm. Your doubts have concerned the others, but they have never troubled me. I have confidence in you, and I will go before you even to the uttermost parts of the earth."

Then the Master went over to Simon Peter and said: "Peter, I know you love me, and that you will dedicate your life to the public proclamation of this doctrine of the new realm to Jew and gentile, but I am distressed

that your years of such close association with me have not done more to help you think before you speak. What experience must you pass through before you will learn to set a guard on your lips? How much trouble you have made for us by your thoughtless speaking, by your presumptuous self-confidence! And you are destined to make much more trouble for yourself if you do not master this frailty. You know that the others love you in spite of this weakness, and you should also understand that this shortcoming in no way impairs my affection for you, but it lessens your usefulness and never ceases to make trouble for you. But you will undoubtedly receive great help from the experience you will pass through this very night. And what I now say to you, Simon Peter, I likewise say to all those assembled here: This night you will all be in great danger of stumbling over me. When I am absent, there is danger that some of you will succumb to doubts and stumble because of what befalls me. But I promise you now that I will come back to you for a little while, and that I will then go before you into Galilee.”

Then Peter said, placing a hand on Jesus’ shoulder: “No matter if all the others should succumb to doubts because of you, I promise that I will not stumble over anything you may do. I will go with you and, if need be, die for you.”

As Peter stood there before the Master, trembling with intense emotion and overflowing with genuine love, Jesus looked straight into Peter’s moistened eyes and said: “This night the rooster will not crow until you have denied me three or four times. And therefore what you have failed to learn from peaceful association with me, you will learn through much trouble and many sorrows. And after you have really learned this needed lesson, you should strengthen the others and go on living a life dedicated to preaching this doctrine, though you may fall into prison and, perhaps, follow me in paying the supreme price of loving service in the building of the Creator’s realm.

“But remember my promise: When I am raised up, I will stay with you for a while before I go to the Creator. And even this night I will ask the Creator to strengthen each of you for that which you must now so soon pass through. I love you all with the same love with which the Creator loves me, and therefore you should love one another, even as I have loved you.”

And then they departed for the camp on the Mount of Olives.

Paper 182

In Gethsemane

It was about ten o'clock this Thursday night when Jesus led the eleven apostles from the home of Elijah and Mary Mark on their way back to the Gethsemane camp. Ever since that day in the hills, John Mark had made it a priority to keep a watchful eye on Jesus. John, being in need of sleep, had gotten several hours of rest while the Master had been with the apostles in the upper room, but on hearing them coming downstairs, rose and, quickly throwing on a linen coat, followed them through the city, over the brook Kidron, and on to their private encampment adjacent to Gethsemane Park. And John Mark, by remaining so near the Master throughout this night and the next day, was able to witness everything and overheard much of what the Master said from this time on to the hour of the crucifixion.

As Jesus and the eleven made their way back to camp, the apostles began to wonder about the meaning of Judas's prolonged absence. They spoke to one another concerning the Master's prediction that one of them would be a betrayer, and for the first time they suspected that all was not well with Judas Iscariot. But they did not engage in open comment until they reached the camp and observed that Judas was not there, waiting to receive them. When they all besieged Andrew to know what had become of Judas, their chief remarked only, "I do not know, but I fear Judas has deserted us."

1. The Last Group Prayer

A few moments after arriving at camp, Jesus said to them: "My friends, my time with you is now very short, and I would like us to draw apart by ourselves while we pray to the Creator for strength to sustain us in this hour and from now on in all the work we must do."

Jesus, having spoken, led the way a short distance up on Olivet, and in full view of Jerusalem requested that they kneel on a large flat rock in a circle as they had done on the day of their ordination; and then, standing there in the midst of them in the mellow moonlight, Jesus looked up and prayed:

"My Creator Parent, my hour has come; now glorify me that I may glorify you. I know that you have given me full authority over all living creatures in my realm, and I will give eternal life to all who will become your faith children. And this is eternal life, that my creatures should know you as the only true Source and Parent of all, and that they should believe me, whom you sent into the world. My Parent, I have exalted you on earth and have accomplished the work which you gave me to do. I have almost finished my bestowal on the children of our own creation; it remains only for me to lay down my mortal life.

"I have manifested you to those whom you chose from the world and gave to me. They are yours — as all life is in your hands — you gave them to me, and I have lived among them, teaching them the way of life, and they have believed. These people are learning that all I have comes from you, and that the life I live is to make you known to the worlds. The truth which you have given to me I have revealed to them. These, my friends and ambassadors, have sincerely willed to receive your word. I have told them that I came from you, that you sent me into this world, and that I am about to return to you. I pray for these chosen people. And I pray for them not as I would pray for the world, but as for those whom I have chosen out of the world to represent me to the world after I have returned to your work, even as I have represented you in this world during my time here. These people are mine; you gave them to me; but all things which are mine are yours, and all that which was yours you have now caused to be mine. You have been exalted in me, and I now pray that I may be honored in these people. I can no longer be in this world; I am about to return to the work you have given me to do. I must leave these people behind to represent us among mortals. Keep these people faithful as I prepare to yield up my mortal life. Help these, my friends, to be one in spirit, even as

we are one. As long as I could be with them, I could watch over them and guide them, but now I am about to go away. Be near them until we can send the new teacher to comfort and strengthen them.

“You gave me twelve, and I have kept them all except one, who would not remain with us. These people are weak and frail, but I know we can trust them. I have proved them; they love me, even as they reverence you. While they must suffer much for my sake, I desire that they should also be filled with the joy of the assurance of citizenship in your realm. I have given these people your word and have taught them the truth. The world may hate them, even as it has hated me, but I do not ask that you take them out of the world, only that you keep them from the evil in the world. Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. And as you sent me into this world, I am about to send them into the world. For their sakes I have lived among mortals and have consecrated my life to your service so that I might inspire them to be purified through the truth I have taught them and the love I have revealed to them. I know that there is no need for me to ask you to watch over them after I have gone; I know you love them even as I, but I do this so that they may better realize that you love mortals even as I do.

“And now I would pray not only for these eleven but also for all others who now believe, or who may believe the doctrine of your realm through the word of their future ministry. I want them all to be one, even as you and I are one. You are in me and I am in you, and I desire that these believers likewise be in us; that both of our spirits indwell them. If my children are one as we are one, and if they love one another as I have loved them, all people will then believe that I came from you and be willing to receive the revelation of truth which I have made. The truth which you gave me I have revealed to these believers. As you have lived with me in spirit, so I have lived with them in the body. As you have been one with me, so I have been one with them, and so will the new teacher be one with them and in them. And all this I have done so that my friends may know that you love them even as I do, and that you love them even as you love me. Work with me to save these believers so that they may presently come to be with me and then go on to join you in the Paradise embrace. Those who serve with me in humiliation, I would have with me so that they may see all you have given into my hands as the eternal harvest of the seed sowing of time. I long to show my friends the love I had with you before the founding of this world. This world knows very little of you, but I know you, and I have made you known to these believers, and they will make you known to other generations. And now I promise them that you will be with them in the world even as you have been with me.”

The eleven remained kneeling in this circle about Jesus for several minutes before they rose and in silence made their way back to the near-by camp.

Jesus prayed for *unity* among the followers, but did not desire uniformity. Sin creates a dead level of evil inertia, but righteousness nourishes the creative spirit of individual experience in the living realities of eternal truth and in the progressive communion of the divine spirits of the Universal Creator and the Local Universe Creator. In the spiritual relationship of the believer-child with the divine Parent there can never be doctrinal finality and sectarian superiority of group consciousness.

The Master, during the course of this final prayer with the apostles, alluded to having manifested the Creator to the world, and truly did so by the revelation of the Creator through living a perfected mortal life. The Creator had sought to be revealed to Moses, but could proceed no further than to cause it to be said, “I AM.” And when pressed for further revelation, it was only disclosed, “I AM that I AM.” But when Jesus had finished this earth life, this essence of the Universal Source had been so revealed that the Master, who was the Creator incarnate, could truly say:

I am the desire of all ages.

I am the open door to eternal life.

I am the reality of endless life.

I am the pathway of infinite perfection.

I am the resurrection and the life.

I am the secret of eternal survival.

I am the way, the truth, and the life.

I am the infinite Parent of my finite children.

I am the true vine; you are the branches.

I am the hope of all who know the living truth.

I am the living bridge from one world to another.

I am the living link between time and eternity.

And so Jesus enlarged the living revelation of the Creator to all generations. As divine love reveals the nature of the Creator, eternal truth discloses the Creator's reality in ever-enlarging proportions.

2. Last Hour Before the Betrayal

The apostles were greatly shocked when they returned to their camp and found Judas absent. While the eleven were engaged in a heated discussion of the traitorous apostle, David Zebedee and John Mark took Jesus to one side and revealed that they had kept Judas under observation for several days, and that they knew of the intention to betray Jesus into the hands of the enemies. Jesus listened to them but only said: "My friends, nothing can happen to me unless the Creator so wills. Do not be troubled; all things will work together as they should."

As the time passed, Jesus became less cheerful and grew more and more serious, even sorrowful. The apostles, being much agitated, were hesitant to return to their tents even when requested to do so by the Master. Returning from the talk with David and John, Jesus addressed last words to all eleven, saying: "My friends, go to sleep. Prepare yourselves for tomorrow's work. Remember, we should all submit ourselves to the will of the Creator. My peace I leave with you." And having thus spoken, Jesus motioned them to their tents, but as they went, called to Peter, James, and John, saying, "I would like you to remain with me for a little while."

The apostles fell asleep only because they were literally exhausted; they had been running short on sleep ever since their arrival in Jerusalem. Before they went to their separate sleeping quarters, Simon Zelotes led them all over to where the swords and other arms were stored, and supplied each of them with this fighting equipment. All of them received these arms except Nathaniel, who said: "My friends, we have repeatedly been told that the Master's realm is not of this world, and that we should not fight with the sword to bring about its establishment. I believe this; I do not think there is a need to have us employ the sword in the Master's defense. We know that the Master could use mighty power in defense against these enemies, but by not resisting them, it must be that choosing such a course represents an attempt to fulfill the Creator's

will. I will pray, but I will not wield the sword.” Andrew, on hearing Nathaniel’s speech, handed the sword back to Simon Zelotes. And so nine of them were armed as they separated for the night.

Resentment of Judas’s being a traitor for the moment eclipsed everything else in the apostles’ minds. The Master’s comment, spoken in the course of the last prayer, opened their eyes to the fact that Judas had forsaken them.

After the eight apostles had finally gone to their tents, and while Peter, James, and John were standing by to receive the Master’s orders, Jesus called to David Zebedee, “Send me your fastest and most trustworthy messenger.” When David presented one Jacob, once a runner on the overnight messenger service between Jerusalem and Bethsaida, Jesus said: “Go quickly to Abner at Philadelphia and say for me: ‘I send greetings of peace to you. The hour has come for me to be delivered into the hands of the enemies, who will put me to death, but I will rise from the dead and appear to you shortly, before I go to the Creator, and I will then give you guidance to the time when the new teacher will come to live in your hearts.’” And when Jacob had rehearsed this message to the Master’s satisfaction and was ready to leave, Jesus said: “Do not fear what any one may do to you, Jacob, for this night an unseen messenger will run by your side.”

Then Jesus turned to the chief of the visiting Greeks who were encamped with them, and said: “My friend, do not be disturbed by what is about to take place since I have already forewarned you. I will be put to death at the instigation of my enemies, the chief priests and the rulers of the Jews, but I will rise to be with you a short time before I go to the Creator. And when you have seen all this come to pass, recognize the Creator and strengthen your associates.”

In ordinary circumstances the apostles would have wished the Master a personal good night, but this evening they were so preoccupied with the sudden realization of Judas’s desertion and so overcome by the unusual nature of the Master’s farewell prayer that they listened to the good-bye salutation and went away in silence.

Jesus did say this as Andrew left for the night: “Andrew, do what you can to keep the others together until I come again to you after I have drunk this cup. Strengthen them, seeing that I have already told you all. Peace be with you.”

None of the apostles expected anything out of the ordinary to happen that night since it was already so late. They tried to sleep so that they might rise up early in the morning and be prepared for the worst. They thought that the chief priests would seek to apprehend their Master early in the morning as no secular work was ever done after noon on the preparation day for the Passover. Only David Zebedee and John Mark understood that the enemies of Jesus were coming with Judas that very night.

David had arranged to stand guard that night on the upper trail which led to the Bethany-Jerusalem road, while John Mark was to watch along the road coming up by the Kidron to Gethsemane. David, before going to the self-imposed task of outpost duty, said farewell to Jesus, saying: “Master, I have had great joy in my service with you. I am not your apostle, but I have delighted to do the lesser things as they should be done, and I will miss you with all my heart when you are gone.” And then Jesus said to David: “David, others have done that which they were directed to do, but this service you have done of your own heart, and I have been aware of your devotion. You, too, shall someday serve with me in the eternal realm.”

And then, while preparing to go on watch by the upper trail, David said to Jesus: “You know, Master, I sent for your family, and I have word by a messenger that they are in Jericho tonight. They will be here early tomorrow morning since it would be dangerous for them to come up by night.” And Jesus, looking down on David, only said: “Let it be so, David.”

When David had gone up Olivet, John Mark took up the vigil near the road which ran by the brook down to Jerusalem. And John would have remained at this post but for a great desire to be near Jesus and to know what was going on. Shortly after David left, and observing Jesus withdraw with Peter, James, and John, into a near-by ravine, John Mark, who was overcome with combined devotion and curiosity, left the sentinel post and followed after them, hiding in the bushes, and seeing and overhearing all that transpired during those last moments in the garden just before Judas and the armed guards appeared to arrest Jesus.

While all this was in progress at the Master's camp, Judas Iscariot was in conference with the captain of the temple guards, who had assembled a force preparatory to setting out, under the leadership of the betrayer, to arrest Jesus.

3. Alone in Gethsemane

After all was quiet about the camp, Jesus, taking Peter, James, and John, went a short way up a near-by ravine to pray and commune. The three apostles could not help recognizing that Jesus was grievously oppressed; never before had they observed their Master to be so sorrowful. When they arrived at a place in which to pray, Jesus asked the three to sit down and watch while going off about a stone's throw and praying: "My Creator Parent, I came into this world to do your will, and so I have. I know that the hour has come to lay down this life, and I do not shrink from this, but I would know that it is your will that I drink this cup. Send me the assurance that I will please you in my death even as I have in my life."

The Master remained in a prayerful attitude for a few moments, and then, going over to the three apostles, found them sound asleep, for their eyes were heavy and they could not remain awake. Jesus, waking them, said: "Can you not watch with me even for one hour? Cannot you see that my soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death, and that I crave your companionship?" After the three had aroused from sleep, the Master again went apart alone and again prayed: "I know it is possible to avoid this cup — all things are possible with you — but I have come to do your will, and while this is a bitter cup, I would drink it if it is your will." And after thus praying, a mighty angel came down, speaking to and strengthening Jesus.

Jesus then returned to speak with the three apostles, but again found them fast asleep, and waking them, said: "In such an hour I need you to watch and pray with me — all the more you need to pray that you do not enter into temptation — therefore why do you fall asleep when I leave you?"

And then, for a third time, the Master withdrew and prayed: "My Creator, you see my sleeping apostles; have mercy on them. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. And now, if this cup may not pass, then I would drink it. Not my will, but yours, be done," and having finished praying, lay for a moment prostrate on the ground. Then Jesus rose and went back to the apostles, once more finding them asleep, and, with a pitying gesture, tenderly said: "Sleep on now and take your rest; the time of decision is past. The hour has come when I will be betrayed into the hands of my enemies." Jesus reached down to shake them in order to awaken them and said: "Wake up, let us go back to the camp, for, the one who betrays me is here, and the hour has come when my flock will be scattered. But I have already told you about these things."

Over the years the followers had much proof of Jesus' divine nature, but just now they are about to witness new evidences of Jesus' humanity. Just before the greatest of all the revelations of divinity, the resurrection, must now come the greatest proofs of a mortal nature -- humiliation and crucifixion.

While praying in the garden, Jesus' humanity laid a firmer faith-hold on divinity; the human will more completely became one with the divine will of the Creator. Among other words spoken by the mighty angel was the message that the Creator wanted the earth bestowal to be finished with the creature experience of

death just as all mortal creatures must experience material dissolution in passing from the existence of time into the progression of eternity.

Earlier in the evening it had not seemed so difficult to drink the cup, but as the human Jesus said good-bye to the apostles and sent them to their rest, the trial grew more appalling. Jesus experienced that natural ebb and flow of feeling which is common to all human experience, just now being weary from work, exhausted from the long hours of strenuous labor and painful anxiety concerning the safety of the apostles. While no mortal can presume to understand the thoughts and feelings of the incarnate Local Universe Creator at such a time as this, we know that it entailed great anguish and untold sorrow. Jesus was at last convinced that the Creator intended to allow natural events to take their course, and was fully determined not to employ sovereign power as the supreme head of a universe to avoid those events.

The assembled hosts of a vast creation are now hovered over this scene under the transient joint command of Gabriel and the Personalized Adjuster of Jesus. The division commanders of these hosts had repeatedly been warned not to interfere with these transactions on earth unless Jesus should order them to intervene.

The experience of parting with the apostles was a great strain on the human heart of Jesus; this sorrow of love bore down and made it more difficult to face the death that awaited. Jesus realized how weak and how ignorant the apostles were, and dreaded to leave them, knowing that the time to depart had come. But Jesus' human heart longed to find out whether there might not possibly be some legitimate avenue of escape from this terrible plight of suffering and sorrow. And after it had sought escape, and failed, it was willing to drink the cup. The divine mind of Michael knew that everything possible had been done for the twelve apostles; but the human heart of Jesus wished that more might have been done for them before they were left alone in the world. Jesus was isolated from the earth family, was being betrayed by a chosen associate, and had been rejected by the Jews, who thereby sealed their doom as a people with a special mission on earth. Jesus' soul was tortured by baffled love and rejected mercy. It was just one of those awful human moments when everything seems to bear down with crushing cruelty and terrible agony.

Jesus' humanity was not insensible to this situation of private loneliness, public shame, and the appearance of failure. All these sentiments bore down with indescribable heaviness. In this great sorrow Jesus' mind went back to the childhood days in Nazareth and to the early work in Galilee. At the time of this great trial many of those pleasant scenes of the earthly ministry came to mind. And it was from these old memories of Nazareth, Capernaum, Mount Hermon, and of the sunrise and sunset on the shimmering Sea of Galilee, that Jesus made the human heart strong and ready to encounter the traitor who would so soon carry out the betrayal.

Before Judas and the soldiers arrived, the Master had become fully poised; the spirit had triumphed over the body; faith had asserted itself over all human tendencies to fear or entertain doubt. The supreme test of the full realization of the human nature had been met and acceptably passed. Once more Jesus was prepared to face the enemies with equanimity and in the full assurance of having invincibility as a mortal unreservedly dedicated to the doing of the Creator's will.

Paper 183

The Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus

Jesus, having finally awakened Peter, James, and John, suggested that they go to their tents and try to sleep in preparation for the duties of the next day. But by this time the three apostles were wide awake; they had been refreshed by their short naps, and besides, they were stimulated and aroused by the arrival on the scene of two excited messengers who inquired for David Zebedee and quickly went to where David kept watch.

Although eight of the apostles were sound asleep, the Greeks who were encamped alongside them were more fearful of trouble, so much so that they had posted a sentinel to give the alarm in case danger should arise. When these two messengers hurried into camp, the Greek sentinel proceeded to arouse all of the others, who streamed out of their tents, fully dressed and fully armed. All of the camp was now aroused except the eight apostles. Peter wanted to call them, but Jesus definitely prohibited it. The Master mildly admonished them all to return to their tents, but they were reluctant to comply with this suggestion.

Failing to disperse the followers, the Master left them and walked down toward the olive press near the entrance to Gethsemane Park. Although the three apostles, the Greeks, and the other members of the camp hesitated to immediately follow, John Mark hurried around through the olive trees and hid in a small shed near the olive press. Jesus withdrew from the camp and from the others so that the apprehenders, when they arrived, could make their arrest without disturbing the apostles. The Master preferred to not have the apostles awake and present at the time of the arrest in case the spectacle of Judas's betrayal should so arouse their animosity that they would offer resistance to the soldiers and would also be taken into custody. Jesus worried that, if they should be arrested, they might also be killed.

Jesus, while knowing that the plan for execution had its origin in the councils of the rulers of the Jews, was also aware that all such nefarious schemes had the full approval of Lucifer, Satan, and Caligastia, and also knew that these rebels of the realms would be pleased to see all of the apostles destroyed as well.

Jesus sat down, alone, on the olive press, awaiting the coming of the betrayer, and was seen at this time only by John Mark and an innumerable host of celestial observers.

1. The Creator's Will

There is great danger of misunderstanding the meaning of numerous sayings and many events associated with the termination of the Master's career on earth. The cruel treatment of Jesus by the ignorant servants and the calloused soldiers, the unfair conduct of the trials, and the unfeeling attitude of the professed religious leaders, must not be confused with the fact that Jesus, in patiently submitting to all this suffering and humiliation, was truly doing the will of the Creator in Paradise. It was, indeed and in truth, the will of the Creator that Michael should drink to the full the cup of mortal experience, from birth to death, but the Creator had nothing whatever to do with instigating the barbarous behavior of those supposedly civilized human beings who so brutally tortured the Master and so horribly inflicted successive indignities. These inhuman and shocking experiences which Jesus was called on to endure in the final hours of mortal life were not in any sense a part of the divine will of the Creator, which Jesus' human nature had so triumphantly pledged to carry out at the time of the final surrender of mortal to Deity as signified in the threefold prayer which Jesus spoke in the garden while the weary apostles slept the sleep of physical exhaustion.

The Creator wanted Michael to finish the earth career *naturally*, just as all mortals must finish their lives on earth. Ordinary people cannot expect to have their last hours of mortal life and the supervening episode of death made easy by a special dispensation. Accordingly, Jesus elected to experience death in the manner

which was in keeping with the outworking of natural events, and steadfastly refused to avoid the cruel clutches of a wicked conspiracy of inhuman events which swept on with horrible certainty toward unbelievable humiliation and ignominious death. And every bit of all this astounding manifestation of hatred and this unprecedented demonstration of cruelty was the work of evil and wicked mortals. The Creator did not will it, neither did the archenemies of Jesus dictate it, though they did much to insure that unthinking and evil mortals would reject the bestowal. Even the archrebel turned away from the excruciating horror of the scene of the crucifixion.

2. Judas in the City

Judas, after so abruptly leaving the table while eating the final meal with Jesus and the apostles, went directly to the home of a cousin, and then the two went straight to the captain of the temple guards. Judas requested that the captain assemble the guards and offered to lead them to Jesus. Since Judas appeared on the scene a little before being expected, there was some delay in getting started for the Mark home, where Judas expected to find Jesus still visiting with the apostles. The Master and the eleven left the Mark home fully fifteen minutes before the betrayer and the guards arrived. By the time the apprehenders reached the Mark home, Jesus and the eleven were well outside the walls of the city and on their way to the Olivet camp.

Judas was disturbed by this failure to find Jesus at the Mark residence and in the company of the eleven, only two of whom were armed for resistance. Knowing that, in the afternoon when they had left camp, only Simon Peter and Simon Zelotes had swords, Judas had hoped to take Jesus when the city was quiet, and when there was little chance of resistance. The betrayer feared that waiting for them to return to their camp would mean that more than sixty devoted disciples would be encountered, and also knew that Simon Zelotes possessed an ample store of arms. Judas was becoming increasingly nervous while thinking about being condemned and potentially harmed by the eleven loyal apostles. Judas was not only disloyal, but a real coward at heart.

When they failed to find Jesus in the upper chamber, Judas asked the captain of the guard to return to the temple. By this time the rulers had begun to assemble at the high priest's home in preparation for receiving Jesus, seeing that their bargain with the traitor called for Jesus' arrest by midnight of that day. Judas explained to these associates that they had missed Jesus at the Mark home, and that it would be necessary to go to Gethsemane. The betrayer then went on to state that more than sixty devoted followers were encamped with Jesus, and that they were all well-armed. The rulers of the Jews reminded Judas that Jesus had always preached nonresistance, but Judas replied that they could not depend on all Jesus' followers to obey such teaching, and therefore asked for a company of forty armed soldiers. Since the Jewish authorities had no such armed force under their jurisdiction, they went at once to the fortress of Antonia and requested the Roman commander to give them this guard; but the commander, on learning that they intended to arrest Jesus, promptly refused to accede to their request and referred them to a superior officer. In this way more than an hour was consumed in going from one authority to another until they finally were compelled to go directly to Pilate in order to obtain permission to employ the armed Roman guards. It was late when they arrived at the home of Pilate, who had retired to private chambers. Pilate hesitated to have anything to do with the enterprise, but since the presiding officer of the Jewish Sanhedrin was present and making personal request for this assistance, the governor thought it wise to grant the petition, thinking that it would be possible later on to right any wrong they might be disposed to commit.

Accordingly, Judas Iscariot, when starting out from the temple at about half past eleven, was accompanied by more than sixty people — temple guards, Roman soldiers, and curious servants of the chief priests and rulers.

3. The Master's Arrest

As this company of armed soldiers and guards, carrying torches and lanterns, approached the garden, Judas stepped well out in front of them in order to be ready to quickly identify Jesus to make sure that the apprehension could be carried out before any defenders could respond. And there was another reason why Judas chose to be ahead of the Master's enemies. Judas wanted it to appear that, by arriving on the scene ahead of the soldiers, the apostles and others gathered about Jesus might not make a direct connection with the armed guards following behind. Judas had even thought to pose as having hurried out to warn them of the coming of the apprehenders, but this plan was thwarted by Jesus' greeting of the betrayer. Jesus, though speaking kindly, greeted Judas as a traitor.

As soon as Peter, James, and John, with some thirty others, saw the armed band with torches swing around the brow of the hill, they knew that these soldiers were coming to arrest Jesus, and they all rushed down to near the olive press where the Master was sitting in moonlit solitude. As the company of soldiers approached on one side, the three apostles and their associates approached on the other. As Judas strode forward to accost the Master, there the two groups stood, motionless, with the Master between them and Judas preparing to impose the traitorous kiss.

It had been the hope of the betrayer that it would be possible, after leading the guards to Gethsemane, to simply point Jesus out to the soldiers, or at most carry out the promise to greet Jesus with a kiss, and then quickly retire from the scene. Judas feared being the object of an attack by the apostles in retribution for daring to betray their beloved teacher. But Judas, when greeted by the Master as a betrayer, became confused and made no attempt to flee.

Jesus made one last effort to save Judas from actually carrying out the betrayal by stepping to one side before the traitor could come close and, addressing the foremost soldier on the left, the captain of the Romans, said, "Whom do you seek?" The captain answered, "Jesus of Nazareth." Then stepping up immediately in front of the officer and, standing there in the calm majesty of the ruler of all this creation, Jesus said, "I am the one." Many of this armed band had heard Jesus teach in the temple, others had learned about the mighty works, and when they heard this bold announcement, those in the front ranks fell suddenly backward. They were overcome with surprise at this calm and majestic announcement of identity. There was, therefore, no need for Judas to go on with the plan of betrayal. The Master had been revealed to the enemies, and they could have made the arrest without Judas's assistance. But the traitor had to do something to account for being present with this armed band, and besides, wanted to make a show of carrying out the betrayal bargain with the rulers of the Jews in order to be eligible for the great reward and honors which would be forthcoming in compensation for the promise to deliver Jesus into their hands.

As the guards rallied from their first faltering at the sound of Jesus' unusual voice, and as the apostles and disciples drew nearer, Judas stepped up to Jesus and, with a kiss, said, "Hail, Master and Teacher." And as Judas embraced the Master, Jesus said, "Friend, is it not enough to do this! Would you even betray me with a kiss?"

The apostles and disciples were literally stunned by what they saw. For a moment no one moved. Then Jesus, disengaging from the traitorous embrace of Judas, stepped up to the guards and soldiers and again asked, "Whom do you seek?" And again the captain said, "Jesus of Nazareth." And again Jesus answered: "I have told you that I am the one. If you seek me, let these others go their way. I am ready to go with you."

Jesus was ready to go back to Jerusalem with the guards, and the captain of the soldiers was altogether willing to allow the three apostles and their associates to go their way in peace. But before they were able to get started, as Jesus stood there awaiting the captain's orders, one Malchus, the Syrian bodyguard of the

high priest, stepped up and made ready to bind Jesus' hands, although the Roman captain had not directed that Jesus should be bound. When Peter and the associates saw their Master being subjected to this indignity, they were no longer able to restrain themselves. Peter, with the others, rushed forward with swords in hand to attack Malchus. But before the soldiers could come to the defense of the high priest's servant, Jesus raised a forbidding hand to Peter and, speaking sternly, said: "Peter, put up your sword. Those who take the sword shall perish by the sword. Do you not understand that it is the Creator's will that I drink this cup? And do you not also know that I could even now command more than twelve legions of angels and their associates, who would deliver me from the hands of these few soldiers?"

While Jesus effectively put a stop to this show of physical resistance by the followers, it was enough to arouse the fear of the captain of the guards, who now, with the help of the soldiers, quickly bound Jesus' hands with heavy cords. And as they did so, Jesus said to them: "Why do you come out against me with swords and with staves as if to seize a robber? I was with you in the temple, publicly teaching the people, and you made no effort to take me."

When Jesus had been bound, the captain, fearing that the followers might attempt to rescue the Master, gave orders that they be seized; but the soldiers were not quick enough since, having overheard the captain's orders to arrest them, Jesus' followers fled in haste back into the ravine. All this time John Mark had remained secluded in the near-by shed. When the guards started back to Jerusalem with Jesus, John Mark attempted to steal out of the shed in order to catch up with the fleeing apostles and disciples; but while emerging, one of the last of the returning soldiers who had pursued the fleeing disciples was passing near and, seeing this youth in a linen coat, gave chase, almost catching up. In fact, the soldier got near enough to John to grasp the coat, but the youth cast off the garment, escaping naked while the soldier held the empty coat. John Mark went quickly to David Zebedee on the upper trail, and having told David what had happened, they both hurried back to the tents of the sleeping apostles and informed all eight of them about the Master's betrayal and arrest.

At about the time the eight apostles were being awakened, those who had fled up the ravine were returning, and they all gathered together near the olive press to debate what should be done. In the meantime, Simon Peter and John Zebedee, who had hidden among the olive trees, had already gone on after the mob of soldiers, guards, and servants, who were now leading Jesus back to Jerusalem as they would have led a desperate criminal. John followed close behind the mob, but Peter followed far off. John Mark, after escaping from the soldier, put on a cloak from the tent of Simon Peter and John Zebedee. John suspected that the guards were going to take Jesus to the home of Annas, the high priest emeritus; and skirted around through the olive orchards to arrive ahead of the mob, hiding near the entrance to the gate of the high priest's palace.

4. Discussion at the Olive Press

James Zebedee had become separated, and now joined the apostles and the others at the olive press to deliberate on what should be done in view of the Master's arrest.

Andrew had been released from all responsibility in the group management of the apostles; accordingly, in this greatest of all crises in their lives, Andrew was silent. After a short informal discussion, Simon Zelotes stood up on the stone wall of the olive press and, making an impassioned plea for loyalty to the Master and the cause of the new realm, exhorted the apostles and the other disciples to follow on after the mob and effect the rescue of Jesus. The majority of the company would have been disposed to follow this aggressive leadership had it not been for the advice of Nathaniel, who stood up the moment Simon had finished speaking and called their attention to Jesus' often-repeated teachings regarding nonresistance. Nathaniel further reminded them that Jesus had that very night instructed them that they should preserve their lives

for the time when they would go into the world proclaiming the doctrine of the new realm. And Nathaniel was encouraged in this stand by James Zebedee, who now told how Peter and others drew their swords to defend the Master against arrest, and that Jesus instructed Simon Peter and the others to sheathe their blades. Matthew and Philip also made speeches, but nothing definite came of this discussion until Thomas, calling their attention to the fact that Jesus had counseled Lazarus against being exposed to death, pointed out that they could do nothing to save their Master, who refused to allow them to do so, and persisted in refraining from the use of divine powers to frustrate the human enemies. Thomas persuaded them to scatter individually, with the understanding that David Zebedee would remain at the camp to maintain a clearinghouse and messenger headquarters for the group. By half past two o'clock that morning the camp was deserted; only David remained on hand with three or four messengers, the others having been dispatched to secure information as to where Jesus had been taken, and what was going to be done.

Five of the apostles, Nathaniel, Matthew, Philip, and the twins, went into hiding at Bethpage and Bethany. Thomas, Andrew, James, and Simon Zelotes were hiding in the city. Simon Peter and John Zebedee followed along to the home of Annas.

Shortly after daybreak, Simon Peter wandered back to the Gethsemane camp, a dejected picture of deep despair. David sent Peter along with a messenger to join Andrew, who was at the home of Nicodemus in Jerusalem.

Until the very end of the crucifixion, John Zebedee remained, as Jesus had directed, always near at hand, and it was John who supplied David's messengers with information from hour to hour which they carried to David at the garden camp, and which was then relayed to the hiding apostles and to Jesus' family.

While they all vaguely realize that Jesus has forewarned them of this very situation, they are too severely shocked by the Master's sudden disappearance to be able to use their minds normally.

It was shortly after daylight and just after Peter had been sent to join Andrew, that Jude arrived in the camp, almost breathless and in advance of the rest of Jesus' family, only to learn that the Master had already been placed under arrest; and Jude hurried back down the Jericho road to carry this information to Mary and the rest of the family. David Zebedee sent word to the family, by Jude, to gather at the house of Martha and Mary in Bethany and await news which the messengers would regularly bring them.

This was the situation during the last half of Thursday night and the early morning hours of Friday as regards the apostles, the chief disciples, and the family of Jesus. And all these groups and individuals were kept in touch with each other by the messenger service which David Zebedee continued to operate from the headquarters at the Gethsemane camp.

5. On the Way to the High Priest's Palace

Before they started away from the garden with Jesus, a dispute arose between the Jewish captain of the temple guards and the Roman captain of the company of soldiers as to where they were to take Jesus. The captain of the temple guards gave orders that Jesus should be taken to Caiaphas, the acting high priest. The captain of the Roman soldiers directed that Jesus be taken to the palace of Annas, the former high priest. And this was because the Romans were in the habit of dealing directly with Annas in all matters having to do with the enforcement of the Jewish ecclesiastical laws. And the orders of the Roman captain were obeyed; they took Jesus to the home of Annas for preliminary examination.

Judas marched along near the captains, overhearing all that was said, but took no part in the dispute, for neither the Jewish captain nor the Roman officer would so much as speak to the betrayer, whom they held in such contempt.

About this time John Zebedee, remembering the Master's instructions to remain always near at hand, hurried up near Jesus who marched along between the two captains. The commander of the temple guards, seeing John come up alongside, said to an assistant: "This person is one of the prisoner's followers and must be taken." But the Roman captain, looking around, saw John and gave orders that the apostle should come close. Then the Roman captain said to the Jewish captain: "This person did not draw a sword to resist us in the garden, and is neither a traitor nor a coward, having the courage to come forward to be with the prisoner, and should be molested by no one. The Roman law allows that any prisoner may have at least one friend to stand alongside before the judgment bar, and this person shall not be prevented from standing by the side of the prisoner." And Judas, hearing this, was ashamed and humiliated and dropped back behind the marchers, coming up to the palace of Annas alone.

And this explains why John Zebedee was permitted to remain near Jesus all the way through the trying experiences of this night and the next day. The Jews feared to do anything because John had something of the status of a Roman counselor designated to act as observer of the transactions of the Jewish ecclesiastical court. John's position of privilege was made all the more secure when, in turning Jesus over to the captain of the temple guards at the gate of Annas' palace, the Roman, addressing an assistant, said: "Go along with this prisoner and see that these Jews do nothing without Pilate's consent. Watch that they do not assassinate the prisoner, and that the Galilean is permitted to stand by and observe all that goes on." And John was able to be near Jesus right up to the time of the crucifixion, though the other ten apostles were compelled to remain in hiding. John was acting under Roman protection, and the Jews dared not make a move until after the Master's death.

And all the way to the palace of Annas, Jesus said nothing. From the time of the arrest to the appearance before Annas, Jesus spoke no word.

Paper 184

Before the Sanhedrin Court

Representatives of Annas had secretly instructed the captain of the Roman soldiers to bring Jesus immediately to the palace of Annas after the arrest. The former high priest desired to maintain prestige as the chief ecclesiastical authority of the Jews. Annas also had another purpose in detaining Jesus for several hours, and that was to allow time for legally calling together the court of the Sanhedrin. It was not lawful to convene the Sanhedrin court before the time of the offering of the morning sacrifice in the temple, and this sacrifice was offered at about three o'clock in the morning.

Annas knew that a court of Sanhedrists was in waiting at the palace of Caiaphas. Some thirty members of the Sanhedrin had gathered at the home of the high priest by midnight so that they would be ready to sit in judgment when Jesus might be brought before them. Only those members were assembled who were strongly and openly opposed to Jesus since it required only twenty-three to constitute a trial court.

Jesus spent about three hours at the palace of Annas on Mount Olivet, not far from the garden of Gethsemane. John Zebedee was free and safe in the palace of Annas not only because of the word of the Roman captain, but also by virtue of being well known to the older servants, having many times been a guest at the palace as the former high priest was a distant relative of Salome.

1. Examination by Annas

Annas, enriched by the temple revenues, with a relative as the acting high priest, and with relations to the Roman authorities, was indeed the most powerful single individual in all Jewry. Annas was a suave and politic planner and plotter, and desired to personally direct the matter of disposing of Jesus, fearing to trust such an important undertaking wholly to anyone else. Annas wanted to make sure that the Master's trial was kept in the hands of the Sadducees, and feared the possible sympathy of some of the Pharisees, seeing that practically all of the members of the Sanhedrin who had espoused the cause of Jesus were Pharisees.

Annas had not seen Jesus for several years, not since the time when the Master visited and immediately left on observing Annas' coldness and reserve. Annas had thought to presume on this early acquaintance and thereby attempt to persuade Jesus to leave Palestine, being reluctant to participate in the murder of a good person and reasoning that Jesus might choose to leave the country rather than to suffer death. But Annas, standing before the stalwart and determined Galilean, knew at once that it would be useless to make such proposals. Jesus was even more majestic and well poised than Annas remembered.

When Jesus was young, Annas had taken a great interest, but now Annas' revenues were threatened by what Jesus had so recently done in driving the money-changers and other commercial traders out of the temple. This act had aroused the enmity of the former high priest far more than Jesus' teachings.

Annas entered the spacious audience chamber, sat in a large chair, and commanded that Jesus be brought in, and after a few moments spent in silently surveying the Master, said: "You realize that something must be done about your teaching since you are disturbing the peace and order of our country." As Annas looked inquiringly at Jesus, the Master returned the look but made no reply. Again Annas spoke, "What are the names of your disciples, besides Simon Zelotes, the agitator?" Again Jesus looked down at Annas, but did not answer.

Annas was considerably disturbed by Jesus' refusal to answer and said: "Do you have no care as to whether I am friendly to you or not? Do you have no regard for the power I have in determining the issues of your

coming trial?” And Jesus, hearing this, said: “Annas, you know that you could have no power over me unless it were permitted by the Creator. Some would destroy me because they are ignorant; they know no better, but you, friend, know what you are doing. How can you, therefore, reject the light of the Creator?”

Annas was almost bewildered by the kindly manner in which Jesus spoke, but had already determined that Jesus must either leave Palestine or die; so, summoning up courage, asked: “Just what is it you are trying to teach the people? What do you claim to be?” Jesus answered: “You know full well that I have spoken openly to the world. I have taught in the synagogues and many times in the temple, where all the Jews and many of the gentiles have heard me. I have spoken nothing in secret; why, then, do you ask me about my teaching? Why not summon those who have heard me and inquire of them? All Jerusalem has heard what I have spoken even if you have not yourself heard these teachings.” But before Annas could reply, the chief steward of the palace, who was standing near, struck Jesus in the face, saying, “How dare you answer the high priest with such words?” Annas spoke no words of rebuke to this steward, but Jesus did, saying, “My friend, if I have spoken evil, bear witness against the evil; but if I have spoken the truth, why, then, should you strike me?”

Annas, while regretting that the steward had struck Jesus, was too proud to take notice of the matter, and in confusion went into another room, leaving Jesus alone with the household attendants and the temple guards for almost an hour.

Annas, returning and going up to the Master’s side, said, “Do you claim to be the Messiah, the deliverer of Israel?” Jesus said: “Annas, you have known me from the times of my youth. You know that I claim to be nothing except that which the Creator has appointed, and that I have been sent to all people, gentile as well as Jew.” Then Annas said: “I have been told that you have claimed to be the Messiah; is that true?” Jesus looked at Annas but only replied, “So you have said.”

About this time messengers arrived from the palace of Caiaphas to inquire what time Jesus would be brought before the court of the Sanhedrin, and since it was nearing daybreak, Annas thought it best to send Jesus bound and in the custody of the temple guards to Caiaphas, following after them shortly.

2. Peter in the Courtyard

As the guards and soldiers approached the entrance to the palace of Annas, John Zebedee was walking by the side of the captain of the Roman soldiers. Judas had dropped some distance behind, and Simon Peter followed far off. After John had entered the palace courtyard with Jesus and the guards, Judas came up to the gate but, seeing Jesus and John, went on to the home of Caiaphas, knowing that the real trial of the Master would take place there later. Soon after Judas had left, Simon Peter arrived, and was noticed by John just as they were about to take Jesus into the palace. The gatekeeper knew John, who requested that Peter be let in, and gladly assented.

Peter, on entering the courtyard, went over to the charcoal fire to get warm, for the night was chilly, but felt very much out of place here among the enemies of Jesus, and indeed was out of place. Peter, who the Master had not asked to stay near at hand, belonged with the other apostles, who had been specifically warned not to endanger their lives during these times of the trial and crucifixion of their Master.

Peter threw away the sword shortly before coming to the palace gate and entered the courtyard of Annas unarmed, scarcely realizing that Jesus had been arrested and not grasping the reality of the situation — being here in the courtyard of Annas, getting warm beside the servants of the high priest, wondering what the other apostles were doing and concluding that John had been admitted to the palace as the result of being known to the servants.

Shortly after Peter was let in, and while warming by the fire, the gatekeeper approached and mischievously said, "Are you not also one of this person's disciples?" Peter should not have been surprised at this recognition, for it was John who had requested that Peter be admitted through the palace gates; but this identification as a disciple caused much concern, and with only one thought uppermost — the thought of escaping alive — Peter promptly answered the question by saying, "I am not."

Very soon another servant came up to Peter and asked: "Did I not see you in the garden when they arrested this person? Are you not also one of the followers?" Peter was now thoroughly alarmed and saw no way of safely escaping from these accusers; and so vehemently denied all connection with Jesus, saying, "I do not know this person, neither am I one of the followers."

About this time the gatekeeper drew Peter to one side and said: "I am sure you are a disciple of this Jesus, not only because one of the followers asked me to let you into the courtyard, but someone here has seen you in the temple with this person. Why do you deny this?" Peter, hearing the accusation, denied all knowledge with much cursing and swearing, again saying, "I am not a follower of Jesus; I do not know and never heard of this person before."

Peter left the fireside for a time and walked about the courtyard, wanting to have escaped, but fearing to attract attention. Getting cold, Peter returned to the fireside, and one of the people standing nearby said: "Surely you are one of this person's disciples. This Jesus is a Galilean, and your speech betrays you, for you also speak as a Galilean." And again Peter denied all connection with the Master.

Peter was greatly perturbed and tried to escape contact with these accusers by going away from the fire and remaining alone on the porch. After more than an hour of this isolation, the gatekeeper and another servant happened by, and both of them teasingly charged Peter with being a follower of Jesus. And again Peter denied the accusation. While making this last denial of all connection with Jesus, the rooster crowed, and Peter remembered the words of warning spoken by the Master earlier that same night. As Peter stood there, heavy of heart and crushed with the sense of guilt, the palace doors opened, and the guards led Jesus past on the way to Caiaphas. The Master, passing Peter, saw by the light of the torches the look of despair on the face of this former self-confident and superficially brave apostle, and Jesus turned and looked at Peter. Peter never forgot that look. It was a glance of commingled pity and love as no mortal had ever seen on the face of the Master.

After Jesus and the guards passed out of the palace gates, Peter followed them, but only for a short distance, unable to go further and sitting down by the side of the road and weeping bitterly. And after shedding these tears of agony, Peter turned back toward the camp, hoping to find Andrew, but on arriving at the camp, found only David Zebedee, who sent a messenger to direct Peter to where Andrew had gone to hide in Jerusalem.

Peter's entire experience occurred in the courtyard of the palace of Annas on Mount Olivet. Peter did not follow Jesus to the palace of the high priest, Caiaphas. That Peter was brought to the realization of having repeatedly denied the Master by the crowing of a rooster indicates that this all occurred outside of Jerusalem since it was against the law to keep poultry within the city proper.

Peter, until the crowing of the rooster brought clearer realization, had only thought, while walking up and down the porch to keep warm, how clever it had been to elude the accusations of the servants, and how their purpose to establish a connection with Jesus had been frustrated. For the time being, Peter had only considered that these servants had no moral or legal right to raise those questions, and really felt smug over having avoided being identified and possibly subjected to arrest and imprisonment. Not until the rooster

crowd was Peter aware of denying the Master. Not until seeing that look from Jesus did Peter accept having failed to live up to the privileges of an ambassador of the new realm.

Having taken the first step along the path of compromise and least resistance, there was nothing apparent to Peter but to go on with the course of conduct decided on. It requires a great and noble character, having started out wrong, to turn about and go right. All too often one's own mind tends to justify continuance in the path of error when once it is entered on.

Peter never fully believed that forgiveness was possible until meeting the Master after the resurrection and being received just as before the experiences of this tragic night of the denials.

3. Before the Court of Sanhedrists

It was about half past three o'clock this Friday morning when the chief priest, Caiaphas, called the Sanhedrist court of inquiry to order and asked that Jesus be brought before them for a formal trial. On three previous occasions the Sanhedrin, by a large majority vote, had decreed the death of Jesus, had decided that Jesus was worthy of death on informal charges of lawbreaking, blasphemy, and flouting the traditions of the ancestors of Israel.

This was not a regularly called meeting of the Sanhedrin and was not held in the usual place, the chamber of hewn stone in the temple. This was a special trial court of some thirty Sanhedrists and was convened in the palace of the high priest. John Zebedee was present with Jesus throughout this so-called trial.

How these chief priests, scribes, Sadducees, and some of the Pharisees flattered themselves that Jesus, the disturber of their position and the challenger of their authority, was now securely in their hands! And they were resolved that Jesus should never live to escape their vengeful clutches.

Ordinarily, the Jews, when trying someone on a capital charge, proceeded with great caution and provided every safeguard of fairness in the selection of witnesses and the entire conduct of the trial. But on this occasion, Caiaphas was more of a prosecutor than an unbiased judge.

Jesus appeared before this court with hands bound together and clothed in the usual garments. The entire court was startled and somewhat confused by Jesus' majestic appearance. They had never seen such a prisoner nor witnessed such composure in anyone on trial for life.

The Jewish law required that at least two witnesses must agree on any point before a charge could be laid against the prisoner. Judas could not be used as a witness against Jesus because the Jewish law specifically prohibited the testimony of a traitor. More than a score of false witnesses were on hand to testify against Jesus, but their testimony was so contradictory and so evidently trumped up that the Sanhedrists themselves were ashamed of the performance. The lying witnesses were disconcerted by the very countenance of Jesus, who stood there looking down benignly on these perjurers. Throughout all this false testimony the Master never said a word, nor made any reply to their many false accusations.

The first time any two of their witnesses approached even the semblance of an agreement was when two people testified that they had heard Jesus claim in the course of one of the temple discourses to be able to "destroy this temple made with hands and in three days make another temple without hands." That was not exactly what Jesus said, having pointed to the material body when making the remark.

Although the high priest shouted at Jesus, "Do you not answer any of these charges?" Jesus did not reply, standing there in silence while all of these false witnesses gave their testimony. Hatred, fanaticism, and

unscrupulous exaggeration so characterized the words of these perjurers that their testimony fell in its own entanglements. The very best refutation of their false accusations was the Master's calm and majestic silence.

Shortly after the beginning of the testimony of the false witnesses, Annas arrived and took a seat beside Caiaphas. Annas now rose and argued that this threat of Jesus to destroy the temple was sufficient to warrant three charges:

1. That Jesus was a dangerous deceiver of the people, teaching them impossible things and otherwise confusing them.
2. That Jesus was a fanatical revolutionist who advocated laying violent hands on the sacred temple, otherwise how could it be destroyed?
3. That Jesus taught magic by promising to build a new temple, and without hands.

Already the full Sanhedrin had agreed that Jesus was guilty of death-deserving transgressions of the Jewish laws, but they were now more concerned with developing charges regarding the conduct and teachings which would justify Pilate in pronouncing the death sentence on their prisoner. They knew that they must secure the consent of the Roman governor before Jesus could legally be put to death. And Annas was determined to make it appear that Jesus was a dangerous teacher to be among the people.

But Caiaphas could no longer endure the sight of the Master standing there in perfect composure and unbroken silence, and thought of at least one way in which the prisoner might be induced to speak. Accordingly, rushing over to the side of Jesus and, shaking an accusing finger in the Master's face, Caiaphas said: "I order you, in the name of Yahweh, that you tell us whether you are the Deliverer." Jesus answered Caiaphas: "I am. Soon I will go to the Creator, and presently I will be invested with power and once more reign over the hosts of this universe."

The high priest, hearing Jesus utter these words, was exceedingly angry, and exclaimed: "What further need do we have of witnesses? Now you have all heard this person's blasphemy. What do you now think should be done with this lawbreaker and blasphemer?" And they all answered in unison, "Let the prisoner be crucified."

Jesus manifested no interest in any question asked by Annas or the Sanhedrists except the one question relative to the bestowal mission; when asked about being the Deliverer, instantly and unequivocally answering in the affirmative.

Annas wanted the trial to proceed further, and that charges of a definite nature regarding Jesus' relation to the Roman law and Roman institutions be formulated for subsequent presentation to Pilate. The councilors were anxious to carry these matters to a speedy termination, not only because it was the preparation day for the Passover and no secular work should be done after noon, but also because they feared Pilate might at any time return to the Roman capital of Judea, Caesarea, having been in Jerusalem only for the Passover celebration.

But Annas did not succeed in keeping control of the court. After Jesus had so unexpectedly answered Caiaphas, the high priest stepped forward and struck Jesus in the face. Annas was truly shocked as the other members of the court, in passing out of the room, spit in and slapped Jesus' face. And so in disorder and with such unheard-of confusion this first session of the Sanhedrist trial of Jesus ended at half past four o'clock.

Thirty prejudiced and tradition-blinded false judges, with their false witnesses, are presuming to sit in judgment on the righteous Creator of a universe. And these impassioned accusers are exasperated by the majestic silence and superb bearing of this person. Jesus, whose silence is terrible to endure and whose speech is fearlessly defiant, is unmoved by their threats and undaunted by their assaults. Mortals sit in judgment on a Creator, who even then loves them and would save them if possible.

4. The Hour of Humiliation

The Jewish law required that, in the matter of passing the death sentence, there should be two sessions of the court. This second session was to be held on the day following the first, and the intervening time was to be spent in fasting and mourning by the members of the court. But these people could not wait until the next day for the confirmation of their decision that Jesus must die. They waited only one hour. In the meantime Jesus was left in the audience chamber in the custody of the temple guards, who, with the servants of the high priest, amused themselves by indulging in every sort of indignity. They mocked, spit on, and would cruelly strike Jesus in the face with a rod and then say, "Prophesy to us, you the Deliverer, who it was that struck you." And so they went on for one full hour, reviling and mistreating this unresisting citizen of Galilee.

During this tragic hour of suffering and mock trials before the ignorant and unfeeling guards and servants, John Zebedee waited in lonely terror in an adjoining room. When these abuses first started, Jesus indicated, by a nod of the head, that John should leave. The Master knew that, if allowed to remain in the room to witness these indignities, John's resentment would be aroused and produce an outbreak of protesting indignation that would probably result in death.

Throughout this awful hour Jesus said no word. To this gentle and sensitive soul of humankind, joined in personality relationship with the Creator of all this universe, there was no more bitter portion of this cup of humiliation than this terrible hour at the mercy of these ignorant and cruel guards and servants, who had been stimulated by the example of the members of this so-called Sanhedrist court.

The human heart cannot possibly conceive of the shudder of indignation that swept out over a vast universe as the celestial intelligences witnessed this sight of their beloved Sovereign submitting to the will of these ignorant and misguided creatures on the sin-darkened sphere of unfortunate Urantia.

What is this trait of the animal in mortals which leads them to want to insult and physically assault that which they cannot spiritually attain or intellectually achieve? In the half-civilized human still lurks an evil brutality which seeks to vent itself on those who are superior in wisdom and spiritual attainment. Witness the evil coarseness and the brutal ferocity of these supposedly civilized people as they derived a certain form of animal pleasure from this physical attack on the unresisting Jesus. As these insults, taunts, and blows fell, the Master was undefending but not defenseless. Jesus was not vanquished, merely uncontending in the material sense.

These are the moments of the Master's greatest victories in all of the long and eventful career as maker, upholder, and redeemer of a vast universe. Having fully lived a life of revealing the Creator to mortals, Jesus is now engaged in making a new and unprecedented revelation of humanity to the Creator. Jesus is revealing to the worlds the final triumph over all fears of creature personality isolation. Jesus does not hesitate to assert being one with the Creator; and on the basis of the fact and truth of that supreme and supernal experience, admonishes every believer to experience that oneness. The living experience in the religion of Jesus becomes the sure and certain technique by which the spiritually isolated and cosmically lonely mortals of earth are enabled to escape personality isolation, with all its consequences of fear and associated feelings of helplessness. In the realities of the universe, the faith children of the Creator find

final deliverance from the isolation of the self, both personal and planetary. The Creator-knowing believer increasingly experiences the ecstasy and grandeur of spiritual socialization on a universe scale — citizenship on high in association with the eternal realization of the divine destiny of perfection attainment.

5. The Second Meeting of the Court

At five-thirty the court reassembled, and Jesus was led into the adjoining room, where John was waiting. Here the Roman soldier and the temple guards watched over Jesus while the court began the formulation of the charges which were to be presented to Pilate. Annas made it clear that the charge of blasphemy would carry no weight with Pilate. Judas was present during this second meeting of the court, but gave no testimony.

This session of the court lasted only a half hour, and when they adjourned to go before Pilate, they had drawn up the indictment of Jesus, as being worthy of death, under three headings:

1. That Jesus was a perverter of the Jewish nation, having deceived the people and incited them to rebellion.
2. That Jesus taught the people to refuse to pay tribute to Caesar.
3. That, by claiming to be a ruler and the founder of a new sort of dominion, Jesus incited treason against the emperor.

This entire procedure was irregular and wholly contrary to the Jewish laws. No two witnesses had agreed on any matter except those who testified regarding Jesus' statement about destroying the temple and raising it again in three days. And even concerning that point, no witnesses spoke for the defense, and neither was Jesus asked to explain the intended meaning.

The only point the court could have consistently pursued was that of blasphemy, and that would have rested entirely on Jesus' own testimony. Even concerning blasphemy, they failed to cast a formal ballot for the death sentence.

And now they presumed to formulate three charges, with which to go before Pilate, on which no witnesses had been heard, and which were agreed on while the accused prisoner was absent. When this was done, three of the Pharisees left; they wanted to see Jesus destroyed, but they would not formulate charges without witnesses and in the accused's absence.

Jesus did not appear again before the Sanhedrist court. They did not want Jesus present as they sat in judgment. Jesus did not know (as a human) of their formal charges until hearing them recited by Pilate.

While Jesus was in the room with John and the guards, and while the court was in its second session, some of the people about the high priest's palace, together with their friends, came to look at the strange prisoner, and one of them asked, "Are you the Messiah?" And Jesus answered: "If I tell you, you will not believe me; and if I ask you, you will not answer."

At six o'clock that morning Jesus was led from the home of Caiaphas to appear before Pilate for confirmation of the sentence of death which this Sanhedrist court had so unjustly and irregularly decreed.

Paper 185

The Trial Before Pilate

Shortly after six o'clock on this Friday morning, April 7, C.E. 30, Jesus was brought before Pilate, the Roman procurator who governed Judea, Samaria, and Idumea under the immediate supervision of the legatus of Syria. The Master was taken into the presence of the Roman governor by the temple guards, bound, and was accompanied by about fifty accusers, including the Sanhedrist court (principally Sadduceans), Judas Iscariot, and the high priest, Caiaphas, and by the Apostle John. Annas did not appear before Pilate.

Pilate was up and ready to receive this group of early morning callers, having been informed that Jesus would be brought in early this day. This trial was arranged to take place in front of the praetorium, an addition to the fortress of Antonia, where Pilate's family made their headquarters when stopping in Jerusalem.

Though Pilate conducted much of Jesus' examination within the praetorium halls, the public trial was held outside on the steps leading up to the main entrance. This was a concession to the Jews, who refused to enter any gentile building where leaven might be used on this day of preparation for the Passover. Such conduct would not only render them ceremonially unclean and thereby prevent them from participating in the afternoon feast of thanksgiving but would also necessitate their subjection to purification ceremonies after sundown, before they would be eligible to partake of the Passover meal.

Although these Jews were not at all bothered in conscience as they intrigued to effect the judicial murder of Jesus, they were nonetheless scrupulous regarding all these matters of ceremonial cleanness and traditional regularity. And these Jews have not been the only ones to fail in the recognition of high and holy obligations of a divine nature while giving meticulous attention to things of trifling importance to human welfare in both time and eternity.

1. Pontius Pilate

Pontius Pilate had been a reasonably good governor of the minor provinces, and therefore had been allowed by Tiberius to remain as procurator of Judea for ten years. Although a fairly good administrator, Pilate was a moral coward and was not astute enough to comprehend the nature of the task as governor of the Jews. Pilate failed to grasp the fact that these Hebrews had a *real* religion, a faith for which they were willing to die, and that millions of them, scattered here and there throughout the empire, looked to Jerusalem as the shrine of their faith and held the Sanhedrin in respect as the highest tribunal on earth.

Pilate did not love the Jews, and this deep-seated hatred began to manifest itself early on. Of all the Roman provinces, none was more difficult to govern than Judea. Pilate never really understood the problems involved in the management of the Jews and, therefore as governor, very early made a series of almost fatal blunders. And it was these blunders that gave the Jews such power. When they wanted to influence Pilate's decisions, all they had to do was threaten an uprising, and Pilate would speedily capitulate. And this apparent vacillation, or lack of moral courage, of the procurator was chiefly due to the memory of having had a number of controversies with the Jews and because in each instance they had won. The Jews knew that Pilate was afraid of them and also feared Tiberius, and they employed this knowledge to the great disadvantage of the governor on numerous occasions.

Pilate's disfavor with the Jews came about as a result of a number of unfortunate encounters. First, failing to take seriously their deep-seated prejudice against all images as symbols of idol worship and therefore

permitting soldiers to enter Jerusalem without removing the images of Caesar from their banners, as had been the practice of the Roman soldiers under a predecessor. A large deputation of Jews begged to have these images removed from the military standards, but Pilate flatly refused to grant their petition and threatened them with instant death. Being a skeptic, Pilate did not understand that people of strong religious feelings will not hesitate to die for their religious convictions; and therefore was dismayed when these Jews drew themselves up defiantly before the palace, bowed their faces to the ground, and sent word that they were ready to die. Pilate then realized that this was an idle threat and surrendered, ordered the images removed from the standards of the soldiers in Jerusalem, and was from that day on to a large extent subject to the whims of the Jewish leaders, who had in this way discovered Pilate's weakness in making threats and fearing to execute them.

Pilate subsequently determined to regain this lost prestige and accordingly had the shields of the emperor, such as were commonly used in Caesar worship, put up on the walls of Herod's palace in Jerusalem. When the Jews protested, Pilate was adamant and refused to listen to their protests. At which point they promptly appealed to Rome, and the emperor just as promptly ordered the offending shields removed. And then Pilate was held in even lower esteem than before.

Another thing which brought great disfavor with the Jews was that Pilate dared to take money from the temple treasury to pay for the construction of a new aqueduct to provide increased water supply for the millions of visitors to Jerusalem at the times of the great religious feasts. The Jews held that only the Sanhedrin could disburse the temple funds, and they never ceased to inveigh against Pilate for this presumptuous ruling. No less than a dozen riots and much bloodshed resulted from this decision. The last of these serious outbreaks had to do with the slaughter of a large company of Galileans even as they worshiped at the altar.

It is significant that, while this vacillating Roman ruler sacrificed Jesus through fear of the Jews and to safeguard the throne, Pilate was finally deposed as a result of the needless slaughter of Samaritans in connection with the pretensions of a false Messiah who led troops to Mount Gerizim, where it was claimed that the temple vessels were buried; and fierce riots broke out when the hiding place of the sacred vessels was not revealed as promised. As a result of this episode, the legatus of Syria ordered Pilate to Rome. Tiberius died in the meantime, and Pilate was not reappointed as procurator of Judea. Never fully recovering from the regretful condemnation of having consented to the crucifixion of Jesus, and finding no favor in the eyes of the new emperor, Pilate retired to the province of Lausanne and subsequently committed suicide.

Claudia Procula, Pilate's spouse, had heard much of Jesus through the word of a servant who was a Phoenician believer in the new realm. After the death of Pilate, Claudia became prominently identified with the spread of the doctrine of the new realm.

And all this explains much that transpired so early on this tragic Friday morning. It is easy to understand why the Jews presumed to dictate to Pilate and also why they did not hesitate to threaten to charge Pilate with treason before the emperor if their demands for Jesus' death were not met.

A worthy Roman governor who had not become involved in a negative way with the rulers of the Jews would never have permitted these bloodthirsty religious fanatics to bring about the death of someone who had been declared innocent of their false charges and without fault. Rome made a great blunder, a far-reaching error in earthly affairs, when sending the second-rate Pilate to govern Palestine. Tiberius should have sent the best provincial administrator in the empire to the Jews.

2. Jesus Appears Before Pilate

When Jesus and the accusers had gathered in front of Pilate's judgment hall, the Roman governor came out and, addressing the assembly, asked, "What accusation do you bring against this person?" The Sadducees and councilors who had taken it upon themselves to put Jesus out of the way had determined to go before Pilate and ask for confirmation of the death sentence pronounced on Jesus, without volunteering any definite charge. Therefore the spokesman for the Sanhedrist court answered Pilate: "This person is an evildoer."

Pilate, observing that they were reluctant to state their charges against Jesus, although knowing that they had been engaged all night in deliberations, answered them: "Since you have not agreed on any definite charges, why do you not take this person and pass judgment in accordance with your own laws?"

Then the clerk of the Sanhedrin court spoke to Pilate: "It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death, and this disturber of our nation is worthy to die. Therefore we have come before you for confirmation of this decree."

To come before the Roman governor with this attempt at evasion discloses the ill-will of the Sanhedrists toward Jesus as well as their lack of respect for the fairness, honor, and dignity of Pilate. What effrontery for these subject citizens to appear before their provincial governor asking for a decree of execution against someone before conducting a fair trial and without even stating definite criminal charges!

Pilate knew something of Jesus' work among the Jews, and surmised that the charges had to do with infringements of the Jewish ecclesiastical laws, and therefore sought to refer the case back to their own tribunal. Again, Pilate took delight in making them publicly confess that they were powerless to pronounce and execute the death sentence on even one of their own race whom they had come to despise with a bitter and envious hatred.

It was a few hours previously, shortly before midnight and after having granted permission to use Roman soldiers in effecting the secret arrest of Jesus, that Pilate had heard further concerning Jesus.

Pilate would have liked to postpone this hearing, but saw that the Jewish leaders were determined to proceed with the case, also knowing that this was not only the morning of preparation for the Passover, but that this day, being Friday, was also the preparation day for the Jewish Sabbath of rest and worship.

Pilate, being keenly sensitive to the disrespectful manner of the approach of these Jews, was not willing to comply with their demands that Jesus be sentenced to death without a trial. Having waited a few moments for them to present their charges against the prisoner, Pilate turned to them and said: "I will not sentence this person to death without a trial; neither will I consent to examine this prisoner until you have presented your charges in writing."

When the high priest and the others heard Pilate say this, they signaled to the clerk of the court, who then handed to Pilate the written charges against Jesus. And these charges were:

"We find in the Sanhedrist tribunal that this person is an evildoer and a disturber of our nation and is guilty of:

"1. Perverting our nation and stirring up our people to rebellion.

“2. Forbidding the people to pay tribute to Caesar.

“3. Claiming to be the ruler of the Jews and teaching the founding of a new government.”

Jesus had not been regularly tried nor legally convicted on any of these charges, and did not even hear these charges when first stated, but Pilate insisted that they be repeated in Jesus’ hearing.

Jesus was aware of not having been heard on these matters before the Jewish court, and so were John Zebedee and the accusers, but Jesus made no reply to their false charges. Even when Pilate requested that the accusations be answered, Jesus did not speak. Pilate was astonished at the unfairness of the whole proceeding and impressed by Jesus’ silent and masterly bearing, and so decided to take the prisoner inside the hall for a private questioning.

Pilate was confused, fearful of the Jews, and mightily stirred by the spectacle of Jesus’ standing there in majesty before these bloodthirsty accusers and gazing down on them, not in silent contempt, but with an expression of genuine pity and sorrowful affection.

3. The Private Examination by Pilate

Pilate took Jesus and John Zebedee into a private chamber, leaving the guards outside in the hall, and requesting the prisoner to sit down, sat down alongside and asked several questions. Pilate first took the position of not believing the first count: that Jesus was a perverter of the nation and an inciter to rebellion, but then asked, “Did you ever teach that tribute should be refused Caesar?” Jesus, pointing to John, said, “Ask this or any other person who has heard my teaching.” Then Pilate questioned John about this matter of tribute, and John testified concerning the Master’s teaching and explained that Jesus and the apostles paid taxes both to Caesar and to the temple. Pilate, after questioning John, said, “See that you tell no one that I talked with you.” And John never did reveal this matter.

Pilate then turned around to question Jesus further, saying: “And now about the third accusation against you, are you the ruler of the Jews?” Since there was a tone of possibly sincere inquiry in Pilate’s voice, Jesus smiled on the procurator and said: “Pilate, do you ask this for yourself, or do you take this question from these others, my accusers?” Whereupon, in a tone of partial indignation, the governor answered: “Am I a Jew? Your own people and the chief priests delivered you and asked me to sentence you to death. I question the validity of their charges and am only trying to find out for myself what you have done. Tell me, have you said that you are the ruler of the Jews, and have you tried to found a new government?”

Then Jesus said to Pilate: “Do you not perceive that my realm is not of this world? If my realm were of this world, surely my disciples would fight so that I would not be delivered into the hands of the Jews. My presence here before you in these bonds is sufficient to show that my realm is a spiritual dominion, even the family of those who, through faith and by love, have become the children of the Creator. And this family is for the gentile as well as for the Jew.”

“Then you are a ruler after all?” said Pilate. And Jesus answered: “Yes, I am such a ruler, and my dominion is the family of the faith children of the Creator. For this purpose I was born into this world so that I would show the Creator to all people and declare the truth. And even now I say to you that everyone who loves the truth hears my voice.”

Then Pilate said, half in ridicule and half in sincerity, “Truth, what is truth — who knows?”

Pilate was neither able to fathom Jesus' words, nor to understand the nature of this spiritual realm, but was now certain that the prisoner had done nothing worthy of death. One look at Jesus, face to face, was enough to convince even Pilate that this gentle and weary, but majestic and upright, person was no wild and dangerous revolutionary who aspired to become established on the temporal throne of Israel. Pilate understood something of what Jesus meant when claiming to be a ruler, being familiar with the teachings of the Stoics, who declared that "the wise person is ruler." Pilate was thoroughly convinced that, instead of being a dangerous rabble rouser, Jesus was nothing more or less than a harmless visionary, an innocent fanatic.

After questioning the Master, Pilate went back to the chief priests and the accusers of Jesus and said: "I have examined this person and I find no fault. I am of the opinion that the prisoner is not guilty of the charges you have made and ought to be set free." And when the Jews heard this, they were moved with great anger, so much so that they wildly shouted that Jesus should die; and one of the Sanhedrists boldly stepped up by the side of Pilate, saying: "This person stirs up the people, beginning in Galilee and continuing throughout all Judea, and is a mischief-maker and an evildoer. You will long regret it if you let this wicked person go free."

Pilate was hard pressed to know what to do with Jesus; therefore, when hearing them say that Jesus had begun working in Galilee, thought to avoid the responsibility of deciding the case, at least to gain time for thought, by sending Jesus to appear before Herod, who was then in the city attending the Passover. Pilate also thought that this gesture would help to antidote some of the bitter feeling which had existed for some time with Herod, due to numerous misunderstandings over matters of jurisdiction.

Pilate, calling the guards, said: "This prisoner is a Galilean and should be taken immediately to Herod. When Herod has made an examination, report the findings to me." And they took Jesus to Herod.

4. Jesus Before Herod

While stopping in Jerusalem, Herod stayed in the old Maccabean palace of Herod the Great, and it was to this home of the former ruler that Jesus was now taken by the temple guards, followed by the accusers and an increasing multitude. Herod had long heard of Jesus, and was very curious. When Jesus appeared, on this Friday morning, the wicked Idumean never for one moment recalled the youth of former years who had appeared in Sepphoris pleading for a just decision regarding the money due to Joseph, who had been accidentally killed while at work on one of the public buildings. Herod did not remember ever seeing Jesus, but had worried a great deal when Jesus' work had been centered in Galilee. With Jesus now being in the custody of Pilate and the Judeans, Herod was feeling secure against any trouble in the future. Herod was curious to see Jesus, having heard much about the miracles and really hoping to be able to observe some wonder.

When they brought Jesus before Herod, the tetrarch was startled by the stately appearance and the calm composure of this prisoner's countenance. For some fifteen minutes Herod asked Jesus questions, but the Master would not answer. Herod taunted and dared Jesus to perform a miracle, but Jesus would not reply to these many inquiries or respond to the taunts.

Then Herod turned to the chief priests and the Sadducees and, listening to their accusations, heard all and more than Pilate had regarding Jesus' alleged evil doings. Finally, being convinced that Jesus would neither talk nor perform a wonder, Herod, after taunting for a time, had Jesus dressed in an old purple royal robe and sent back to Pilate. Herod was fully aware of having no jurisdiction over Jesus in Judea. Though happy to finally be rid of Jesus in Galilee, Herod was thankful that it was Pilate who had the responsibility of carrying out the death sentence. Herod had never fully recovered from the fear that resulted from the killing

of John the Baptist, having at certain times even feared that Jesus was John risen from the dead. Now Herod was relieved of that fear through observing that Jesus was a very different sort of person from the outspoken and fiery prophet.

5. Jesus Returns to Pilate

When the guards had brought Jesus back, Pilate went out on the front steps of the praetorium where the judgment seat had been placed, and calling together the chief priests and Sanhedrists, said to them: "You brought this person before me with charges of perverting the people, forbidding the payment of taxes, and claiming to be ruler of the Jews. After questioning I fail to find the prisoner guilty of these charges. In fact, I find no fault at all. Then I sent the accused to Herod, and the tetrarch must have reached the same conclusion and caused the prisoner to be returned to us. Certainly, nothing worthy of death has been done by this person. If you still think that discipline is necessary, I am willing to chastise and then release the prisoner."

Just as the Jews were about to engage in shouting their protests against the release of Jesus, a vast crowd came marching up to the praetorium for the purpose of asking Pilate for the release of a prisoner in honor of the Passover feast. For some time it had been the custom of the Roman governors to allow the populace to choose some imprisoned or condemned person for pardon at the time of the Passover. And now that this crowd had come to ask for the release of a prisoner, and since Jesus had so recently been in great favor with the multitudes, it occurred to Pilate that it might be possible to become extricated from this predicament by proposing that, since Jesus was now a prisoner before the judgment seat, this citizen of Galilee might be released as the token of Passover good will.

As the crowd surged up on the steps of the building, Pilate heard them calling out the name of one Barabbas. Barabbas was a noted political agitator and murderous robber, the child of a priest, who had recently been apprehended in the act of robbery and murder on the Jericho road. Barabbas was under sentence to die as soon as the Passover festivities were over.

Standing up and explaining to the crowd that Jesus had been brought by the chief priests to be put to death on certain charges, Pilate expressed the opinion that Jesus was not worthy of death, saying: "Which, therefore, would you prefer that I release to you, this Barabbas, the murderer, or this Jesus of Galilee?" And when Pilate had spoken, the chief priests and the Sanhedrin councilors all shouted at the top of their voices, "Barabbas, Barabbas!" And when the people saw that the chief priests were determined to have Jesus put to death, they quickly joined in the clamor while they loudly shouted for the release of Barabbas.

A few days before this the multitude had stood in awe of Jesus, but the mob did not look up to one who, having claimed to be the Deliverer, was now in the custody of the chief priests and the rulers and on trial before Pilate. Jesus could be a hero in the eyes of the populace while driving the money-changers and the traders out of the temple, but not as a non-resisting prisoner in the hands of enemies and on trial.

Pilate was angered at the sight of the chief priests clamoring for the pardon of a notorious murderer while they shouted for the blood of Jesus, clearly seeing their malice and hatred and perceiving their prejudice and envy. Therefore Pilate said to them: "How could you choose the life of a murderer in preference to one whose worst crime is claiming to be the ruler of the Jews?" But this was not a wise statement for Pilate to make. The Jews were a proud people, now subject to the Roman political yoke but hoping for the coming of a Messiah who would deliver them from gentile bondage with a great show of power and glory. They resented, more than Pilate could know, the intimation that this meek-mannered teacher of strange doctrines, now under arrest and charged with crimes worthy of death, should be referred to as "the ruler of the Jews." They looked on such a remark as an insult to everything which they held sacred and honorable in their

national existence, and therefore they all let loose their mighty shouts for Barabbas's release and Jesus' death.

Had Pilate been a just and courageous judge, Jesus would have been acquitted and turned loose. But while Pilate, who was afraid to defy these angry Jews, hesitated to make a decision, a messenger came up and presented a sealed message from Pilate's spouse, Claudia.

Pilate indicated to those assembled a desire to read the communication before proceeding further. Opening the letter Pilate read: "I pray you have nothing to do with this innocent and just person whom they call Jesus, on whose behalf I have suffered many things this night in a dream." This note not only greatly upset Pilate and thereby delayed the adjudication, but it unfortunately also provided considerable time in which the Jewish rulers freely circulated among the crowd and urged the people to call for the release of Barabbas and to clamor for the crucifixion of Jesus.

Finally, Pilate once more addressed the solution of the problem by asking the mixed assembly of Jewish rulers and the pardon-seeking crowd, "What shall I do with the one who is called the ruler of the Jews?" And they all shouted with one accord, "Crucify! Crucify!" The unanimity of this demand from the mixed multitude startled and alarmed Pilate, the unjust and fear-ridden judge.

Then Pilate said: "Why would you crucify this person? For what evil? Who will come forward to testify?" But when they heard Pilate speak in defense of Jesus, they only cried out all the more, "Crucify! Crucify!"

Then again Pilate appealed to them regarding the release of the Passover prisoner, saying: "Once more I ask you, which of these prisoners shall I release to you at this, your Passover time?" And again the crowd shouted, "Give us Barabbas!"

Then Pilate said: "If I release the murderer, Barabbas, what shall I do with Jesus?" And once more the multitude shouted in unison, "Crucify! Crucify!"

Pilate was terrorized by the insistent clamor of the mob, acting under the direct leadership of the chief priests and the councilors of the Sanhedrin, but nevertheless decided on at least one more attempt to appease the crowd and save Jesus.

6. Pilate's Last Appeal

In all that is transpiring early this Friday morning before Pilate, only the enemies are participating. Jesus' many friends either do not yet know of the night arrest and early morning trial or are in hiding in case they might also be apprehended and judged worthy of death because they believe Jesus' teachings. In the multitude which now clamors for the Master's death are to be found only sworn enemies and the easily led and unthinking populace.

Pilate would make one last appeal to their pity. Being afraid to defy the clamor of this misled mob who cried for the blood of Jesus, Pilate ordered the Jewish guards and the Roman soldiers to take Jesus to be whipped. This was in itself an unjust and illegal procedure since the Roman law provided that only those condemned to die by crucifixion should be subjected to whipping. The guards took Jesus into the open courtyard of the praetorium for this ordeal. Though the enemies did not witness this, Pilate did, and before they had finished this wicked abuse, directed them to stop. Before the whipping, Jesus was again dressed in the purple robe and forced to wear a crown of thorns. And when they had put a reed in Jesus' hand as a mock scepter, they knelt and mocked, saying, "Hail, ruler of the Jews!" And they spit on and struck Jesus in the face with their hands. And one of them took the reed and struck Jesus on the head.

Then Pilate presented this bleeding and lacerated prisoner before the mixed multitude, and said: "Again I declare to you that I find no crime in this person, who now having been whipped, I would release."

There stood Jesus of Nazareth, clothed in an old purple royal robe, with head pierced by a crown of thorns. Jesus, whose face was bloodstained, was bowed down with suffering and grief. But nothing can appeal to the unfeeling hearts of those who are victims of intense emotional hatred and slaves to religious prejudice. This sight sent a mighty shudder through the realms of a vast universe, but it did not touch the hearts of those who had set their minds to cause the destruction of Jesus.

When they had recovered from the first shock of seeing the Master's plight, they only shouted the louder and the longer, "Crucify! Crucify! Crucify!"

And now Pilate comprehended that it was futile to appeal to their supposed feelings of pity, and stepping forward said: "I perceive that you are determined this person shall die, but for what crime?"

Then the high priest stepped forward and, going up to Pilate, angrily declared: "We have a sacred law, and by that law this person ought to die as a result of pretending to be the Deliverer." Pilate, on hearing this, was all the more afraid, not only of the Jews, but recalling the Greek mythology of the gods coming down on earth, now trembled at the thought of Jesus possibly being a divine personage. Waving to the crowd to hold its peace, Pilate again led Jesus inside the building for further questioning, being now confused by fear, bewildered by superstition, and harassed by the stubborn attitude of the mob.

7. Pilate's Last Interview

Pilate, trembling with fearful emotion, sat down by the side of Jesus and inquired: "Where do you come from? Really, who are you? What is this they say, that you are the Deliverer?"

But Jesus could hardly answer such questions when asked by a weak and vacillating judge who was so unjust as to order Jesus to be whipped even after being declared innocent of all crime, and before being duly sentenced to die. Jesus looked Pilate straight in the face, but did not answer. Then Pilate said: "Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not realize that I still have power to release you or to crucify you?" Then Jesus said: "You could have no power over me unless it were permitted from above. You could exercise no authority over me unless the Creator allowed it. But you are not so guilty since you are ignorant. The ones who betrayed me and who delivered me to you, they have the greater sin."

This last talk with Jesus thoroughly frightened Pilate. This moral coward and judicial weakling now labored under the double weight of the superstitious fear of Jesus and mortal dread of the Jewish leaders.

Again Pilate appeared before the crowd, saying: "I am certain that this person is only a religious offender who should be taken and judged by your law. Why should you expect that I would consent to killing someone simply for clashing with your traditions?"

Pilate was just about ready to release Jesus when Caiaphas, the high priest, approached the cowardly Roman judge and, shaking an avenging finger in Pilate's face, said with angry words which the entire multitude could hear: "If you release this person, you are not Caesar's friend, and I will see that the emperor knows all." This public threat was too much for Pilate. Fear for personal fortunes now eclipsed all other considerations, and the cowardly governor ordered Jesus brought out before the judgment seat. As the Master stood there before them, Pilate pointed and tauntingly said, "Behold your ruler." And the Jews answered, "Crucify!" And then Pilate said, with much irony and sarcasm, "Shall I crucify your ruler?" And

the Jews answered, "Yes, crucify! We have no ruler but Caesar." And then Pilate, being unwilling to defy the Jews, realized that there was no hope of saving Jesus.

8. Pilate's Tragic Surrender

Here stood the Child of the Creator incarnate as the Child of Humanity. Jesus was arrested without indictment; accused without evidence; judged without witnesses; punished without a verdict; and now was soon to be condemned to die by an unjust judge who confessed to not being able to find any reason for execution. Pilate had thought to appeal to their patriotism by referring to Jesus as the "ruler of the Jews," but utterly failed. The Jews were not expecting any such ruler. The declaration of the chief priests and the Sadducees, "We have no ruler but Caesar," was a shock even to the unthinking populace, but it was too late now to save Jesus even had the mob dared to espouse the Master's cause.

Pilate was afraid of a tumult or a riot, not daring to risk such a disturbance during Passover time in Jerusalem. Having recently received a reprimand from Caesar, Pilate would not risk another. The mob cheered the order for the release of Barabbas. Then Pilate said: "I am innocent of the blood of this person whom you are determined should die, but in whom I have found no guilt. See to it then. The soldiers will lead the prisoner away." And then the mob cheered and replied, "This blood will be on us and on our children."

Paper 186

Just Before the Crucifixion

As Jesus and the accusers started off to see Herod, the Master turned to the Apostle John and said: “John, you can do no more for me. Go to my family and bring them to see me before I die.” John, although reluctant to leave Jesus alone among the enemies, hurried off to Bethany, where the entire family of Jesus was assembled at the home of Martha and Mary.

Several times during the morning, messengers had brought news to Martha and Mary concerning the progress of Jesus’ trial. But the family of Jesus did not reach Bethany until just a few minutes before John arrived bearing the request of Jesus to see them before being put to death. After John Zebedee had told them all that had happened since the midnight arrest of Jesus, Mary went at once in the company of John. By the time Mary and John reached the city, Jesus, accompanied by the Roman soldiers, had already arrived at Golgotha.

When Mary started out with John, Ruth refused to remain behind with the rest of the family. Since Ruth was determined to accompany Mary, Jude went along. The rest of the Master’s family remained in Bethany under the direction of James, and almost every hour the messengers of David Zebedee brought them reports concerning the progress of that terrible business of putting Jesus to death.

1. The End of Judas Iscariot

It was about half past eight o’clock this Friday morning when the hearing of Jesus before Pilate was ended and the Master was placed in the custody of the Roman soldiers. As soon as the Romans took possession of Jesus, the Jewish guards marched back to their temple headquarters. The chief priest and the Sanhedrist associates followed close behind the guards, going directly to their usual meeting place in the hall of hewn stone in the temple. Here they found many other members of the Sanhedrin waiting to learn what had been done with Jesus. As Caiaphas was engaged in making a report to the Sanhedrin regarding the trial and condemnation of Jesus, Judas appeared before them to claim the reward for having participated in the Master’s arrest and sentence of death.

All of these Jews loathed Judas; they viewed the betrayer with only feelings of utter contempt. Throughout the trial of Jesus before Caiaphas and during the appearance before Pilate, Judas was disturbed about having engaged in such traitorous conduct, and was also becoming somewhat disillusioned regarding the reward that had been promised as payment for being Jesus’ betrayer, not liking the coolness and aloofness of the Jewish authorities but expecting to be liberally rewarded. Judas anticipated being called before the full meeting of the Sanhedrin and being eulogized while they conferred suitable honors in token of the great service rendered to the nation. Imagine, therefore, the great surprise of this egotistic traitor when a servant of the high priest called Judas just outside the hall and said: “I have been appointed to pay you for the betrayal of Jesus. Here is your reward.” And the servant of Caiaphas handed Judas a bag containing thirty pieces of silver — the current price of a good, healthy slave.

Judas was stunned, dumfounded, and, wanting to appeal to the Sanhedrin, rushed back to enter the hall but was kept out by the doorkeeper. Judas could not believe that these rulers of the Jews would allow the betrayal of the Master and then offer only thirty pieces of silver as a reward. Judas was humiliated, disillusioned, and utterly crushed, and walked away from the temple, as it were, in a trance, automatically dropping the money bag in a deep pocket, the same pocket that had so long carried the bag containing the apostolic funds. And Judas wandered out through the city after the crowds who were on their way to witness the crucifixions.

From a distance Judas saw them raise the cross piece with Jesus nailed on it, and on seeing this, rushed back to the temple and, forcing past the doorkeeper, stood in the presence of the Sanhedrin, which was still in session. The betrayer was breathless and highly distraught, but managed to stammer out these words: “I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood. You have insulted me. You have offered me money as a reward for my service — the price of a slave. I repent that I have done this; here is your money. I want to escape the guilt of this deed.”

When the rulers of the Jews heard Judas, they laughed. One of them motioned that Judas should leave the hall and said: “Your Master has already been put to death by the Romans, and as for your guilt, what is that to us?”

Judas, leaving the Sanhedrin chamber, removed the thirty pieces of silver from the bag and threw them over the temple floor. When leaving the temple Judas was distraught, now passing through the experience of the realization of the true nature of sin. All the glamor, fascination, and intoxication of wrongdoing had vanished. Now Judas stood alone and face to face with the judgment verdict of a disillusioned and disappointed soul. Sin was bewitching and adventurous in the committing, but now the harvest of the naked and unromantic facts must be faced.

This onetime ambassador of the realm of the Creator on earth now walked through the streets of Jerusalem, forsaken and alone. Judas journeyed through the city and outside the walls, on down into the terrible solitude of the valley of Hinnom, and, climbing up the steep rocks, leaped over the precipice while hanging by the neck from a small tree. Before Judas was dead, the knot that had been tied gave way, and the betrayer’s body was dashed to pieces as it fell on the jagged rocks below.

2. The Master’s Attitude

Jesus, when arrested, knew that the work on earth was finished. Jesus fully understood the sort of death that awaited, and was little concerned with the details of the so-called trials.

Before the Sanhedrist court Jesus declined to reply to the testimony of perjured witnesses. There was only one question which would always elicit an answer, and that was the one concerning the nature and divinity of the mission on earth. When asked about being the Deliverer, Jesus unfailingly replied, but steadfastly refused to speak when in the presence of the curious and wicked Herod. Before Pilate Jesus spoke only when it seemed that Pilate or some other sincere person might be helped to a better knowledge of the truth, but was altogether willing to discuss with Pilate any question which belonged to the governor’s jurisdiction. Jesus had taught the apostles the uselessness of casting their pearls before swine, and now dared to practice that teaching. Jesus’ conduct at this time exemplified the patient submission of the human nature coupled with the majestic silence and solemn dignity of the divine nature.

Jesus was convinced that it was the will of the Creator that the natural and ordinary course of human events should be experienced, just as every other mortal creature must, and therefore refused to employ even purely human powers of persuasive eloquence to influence the outcome of the machinations of these socially nearsighted and spiritually blinded mortals. Although Jesus lived and died on Urantia, the whole human career, from first to last, was a spectacle designed to influence and instruct the entire universe.

While these shortsighted Jews clamored for the Master’s death, Jesus stood there in awful silence, looking at the death scene of a nation.

Jesus had acquired the type of human character which could preserve its composure and assert its dignity in the face of continued and gratuitous insult. Jesus could not be intimidated, and when first assaulted by the servant of Annas, had only suggested the propriety of calling witnesses who might duly testify.

From first to last, in the so-called trial before Pilate, the onlooking celestial hosts could not refrain from broadcasting to the universe the depiction of the scene of "Pilate on trial before Jesus."

When before Caiaphas, and when all the perjured testimony had broken down, Jesus did not hesitate to answer the question of the chief priest, personally providing what they needed as the basis for a conviction of blasphemy.

The Master never displayed the least interest in Pilate's well-meant but halfhearted efforts at exoneration, but out of pity sincerely endeavored to enlighten Pilate's darkened mind. Jesus was wholly passive to all the Roman governor's appeals to the Jews to withdraw their criminal charges, throughout the whole sorrowful ordeal appearing with simple dignity and unostentatious majesty. Jesus would not so much as cast reflections of insincerity on these would-be murderers when they asked "Are you the ruler of the Jews?" accepting the designation with little qualifying explanation, while having no intention to afford them real national leadership, even in a spiritual sense.

Jesus said little during these trials, but said enough to show everyone the kind of human character mortals can perfect in partnership with the Creator and to reveal to all the universe the manner in which the Creator can become manifest in the life of the creature when such a creature truly chooses to do the will of the Creator, becoming an active child of the living Creator.

Jesus' love for ignorant mortals is fully disclosed by the patience and great self-possession shown in the face of the jeers, blows, and buffetings of the coarse soldiers and the unthinking servants. Jesus was not even angry when being blindfolded and derisively struck in the face while they exclaimed: "Prophecy to us who it was that struck you."

Pilate, when presenting Jesus before the multitude, little dreamed that at just that moment the universe was gazing on this unique scene of its beloved Sovereign being subjected in humiliation to the taunts and blows of these darkened and degraded mortal subjects, while the Paradise Creator, the supreme ruler of the universe of universes, accepts Jesus of Nazareth as the satisfaction of the ideal of the mortal creatures of this local universe of time and space. In one matchless life Jesus never failed to reveal the Creator to mortals. Now, in these final episodes of the mortal career and subsequent death, Jesus made a new and touching revelation of mortals to the Creator.

3. The Dependable David Zebedee

Shortly after Jesus was turned over to the Roman soldiers at the conclusion of the hearing before Pilate, a detachment of the temple guards hurried out to Gethsemane to disperse or arrest the followers of the Master, but long before their arrival these followers had scattered. The apostles had retired to designated hiding places; the Greeks had separated and gone to various homes in Jerusalem; the other disciples had also disappeared. David Zebedee believed that Jesus' enemies would return, and early moved some five or six tents up the ravine near where the Master so often retired to pray and worship, proposing to hide here and at the same time maintain a center, or coordinating station, for the messenger service. David had hardly left the camp when the temple guards arrived. Finding no one there, they contented themselves with burning the camp and then went back to the temple. On hearing their report, the Sanhedrin was satisfied that the followers of Jesus were so thoroughly frightened and subdued that there would be no danger of an uprising

or any attempt to rescue Jesus from the hands of the executioners. They were at last able to breathe easily, and so they adjourned, each one going to prepare for the Passover.

As soon as Jesus was turned over to the Roman soldiers by Pilate for crucifixion, a messenger hurried away to Gethsemane to inform David, and within five minutes runners were on their way to Bethsaida, Pella, Philadelphia, Sidon, Shechem, Hebron, Damascus, and Alexandria. And these messengers carried the news that Jesus was about to be crucified by the Romans at the insistence of the rulers of the Jews.

Throughout this tragic day, until the message finally went out that the Master had been laid in the tomb, David sent messengers about every half hour with reports to the apostles, the Greeks, and Jesus' earthly family, assembled at the home of Lazarus in Bethany. When the messengers departed with the word that Jesus had been buried, David dismissed the corps of local runners for the Passover celebration and for the coming Sabbath of rest, instructing them to report back quietly on Sunday morning at the home of Nicodemus, where David proposed to go in hiding for a few days with Andrew and Simon Peter.

David Zebedee was the only one of the leading disciples of Jesus who was inclined to take a literal and plain matter-of-fact view of the assertion that the Master would die and rise again on the third day. David had once heard Jesus make this prediction and now proposed to assemble the messengers early Sunday morning at the home of Nicodemus so that they would be on hand to spread the news in case Jesus rose from the dead. David soon discovered that none of the followers were looking for Jesus to return so soon from the grave, and therefore said little about this belief and nothing about the mobilization of all the messenger force early Sunday morning except to the runners who had been dispatched on Friday morning to distant cities and believer centers.

And so these followers of Jesus, scattered throughout Jerusalem and its environs, celebrated the Passover that night and the following day remained in seclusion.

4. Preparation for the Crucifixion

Pilate ordered the Master turned over to the Roman soldiers and gave the word to their captain to carry out the crucifixion immediately. The soldiers led Jesus back into the courtyard of the praetorium, and after removing the purple robe, they put Jesus' own garments back on. These soldiers mocked and derided Jesus, but they did not inflict further physical punishment. Jesus was now alone with the Roman soldiers. The friends were in hiding; the enemies had gone their way; even John Zebedee was no longer there.

It was a little after eight o'clock when Pilate turned Jesus over to the soldiers and a little before nine o'clock when they started for the scene of the crucifixion. During this period of more than half an hour Jesus never spoke a word. The executive business of a great universe was practically at a standstill. Gabriel and the chief rulers of Nebadon were either assembled here on Urantia, or else they were closely listening to the reports of the archangels in an effort to keep advised as to what was happening on Urantia.

By the time the soldiers were ready to leave for Golgotha, they had begun to be impressed by Jesus' unusual composure, extraordinary dignity, and uncomplaining silence.

Much of the delay in starting off with Jesus for the site of the crucifixion was due to the last-minute decision of the captain to take along two thieves who had been condemned to die; since Jesus was to be crucified that morning, the Roman captain thought these two might just as well die also instead of waiting for the end of the Passover festivities.

As soon as the thieves could be made ready, they were led into the courtyard, where they saw Jesus, one of them for the first time, but the other had often heard Jesus speak, both in the temple and many months before at the Pella camp.

5. Jesus' Death in Relation to the Passover

There is no direct relation between the death of Jesus and the Jewish Passover. True, the Master did end the mortal existence on this day, the day of the preparation for the Jewish Passover, and at about the time of the sacrificing of the Passover lambs in the temple. But this coincidental occurrence does not in any manner indicate that Jesus' death has any connection with the Jewish sacrificial system. Jesus was a Jew, but was a mortal of the realms. The events already narrated and leading up to this hour of the Master's impending crucifixion are sufficient to indicate that dying at about this time was a purely natural and human-managed affair.

It was mortals and not Deity who planned and executed the death of Jesus on the cross. True, the Creator refused to interfere with the march of human events on Urantia, but the Universal Source did not decree, demand, or require Jesus' death as it was carried out on earth. It is a fact that in some manner, sooner or later, Jesus would have had to be divested of the mortal body, but could have executed such a task in countless ways without dying on a cross between two thieves. All of this was humanity's doing, not the Creator's.

At the time of the baptism the Master had already completed the required experience on earth which was necessary for the completion of this seventh and last universe bestowal. At this very time Jesus' duty on earth was done. All of the life that was lived thereafter, and even the manner of dying, was a purely personal ministry for the welfare and uplifting of the mortal creatures on this world and on other worlds.

The doctrine that mortals may, by faith, become spirit-conscious of being a child of the Creator, is not dependent on the death of Jesus. True, it has been tremendously illuminated by the Master's death, but even more so by Jesus' life.

All that Jesus said or did on earth greatly embellished the doctrine of a relationship with the Creator and of the family of humanity, but these essential relationships are inherent in the universe facts of the Creator's love for creatures and the innate mercy of the divine Beings. These touching and divinely beautiful relations between mortals and their Maker, on this world and on all others throughout the universe of universes, have existed from eternity; and they are not in any sense dependent on these periodic bestowal enactments of the Local Universe Creators, who assume the nature and likeness of their created intelligences as a part of the price which they must pay for the final acquirement of unlimited sovereignty over their respective local universes.

The Universal Source loved mortals on earth just as much before the life and death of Jesus on Urantia as after this transcendent exhibition of the co-partnership of mortals and Deity. This mighty transaction of the incarnation of the Creator of Nebadon as a mortal on Urantia could not augment the attributes of the eternal, infinite, and universal Source, but it did enrich and enlighten all other administrators and creatures of the universe of Nebadon. While the Paradise Creator loves mortals no more because of this bestowal of Michael, all other celestial intelligences do. And this is because Jesus not only made a revelation of the Creator to mortals, but also made a new revelation of mortals to the Deities and to the celestial intelligences of the universe of universes.

Jesus is not about to die as a sacrifice for sin, nor to atone for the inborn moral guilt of the human race. Humankind has no such racial guilt before the Creator. Guilt is purely a matter of personal sin and knowing, deliberate rebellion against the will of the Creator and the administration of the universe.

Sin and rebellion have nothing to do with the fundamental bestowal plan of the Paradise Beings, although it does appear to us that the plan of progression is a provisional feature of the bestowal plan.

The plan of the Creator for the progressive spiritualization of the mortals of Urantia would have been just as effective and unerringly certain if Jesus had not been put to death by the cruel hands of ignorant mortals. If the Master had been favorably received by the mortals of earth and had departed from Urantia by the voluntary relinquishment of material life, the fact of relationship with the Creator would have in no way been affected. You mortals are the children of the Creator, and only one thing is required to make such a truth factual in your personal experience, and that is your spirit-born faith.

Paper 187

The Crucifixion

After the two thieves had been made ready, the soldiers, under the direction of a centurion, started for the scene of the crucifixion. The centurion in charge of these twelve soldiers was the same captain who had led the Roman soldiers the previous night to arrest Jesus in Gethsemane. It was the Roman custom to assign four soldiers for each person to be crucified. The two thieves were properly whipped before they were taken out to be crucified, but Jesus was given no further physical punishment.

The two thieves crucified with Jesus were associates of Barabbas and would have been put to death at the same time if their leader had not been released as the Passover pardon of Pilate. Jesus was crucified in place of Barabbas.

Jesus freely submits to death on the cross. Foretelling this experience, Jesus said: "The Creator loves and sustains me because I am willing to experience mortal death. But I will rise again. No one takes my life away from me — I lay it down myself. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up. I have received such a commandment from the Creator."

It was just before nine o'clock this morning when the soldiers led Jesus from the praetorium on the way to Golgotha. They were followed by many who secretly sympathized with Jesus, but most of this group of two hundred or more were either enemies or curious idlers who merely wanted to enjoy the shock of witnessing the crucifixions. Only a few of the Jewish leaders went to see Jesus die on the cross. The others busied themselves with their meeting in the temple, where they discussed what should be done with Jesus' followers.

1. On the Way to Golgotha

Before leaving the courtyard of the praetorium, the soldiers placed the crossbeam on Jesus' shoulders. It was the custom to compel the condemned person to carry the crossbeam to the site of the crucifixion. Such a condemned person did not carry the whole cross, only this shorter timber. The longer and upright pieces of timber for the three crosses had already been transported to Golgotha and, by the time of the arrival of the soldiers and their prisoners, had been firmly implanted in the ground.

According to custom the captain led the procession, carrying small white boards on which had been written with charcoal the names of the criminals and the nature of the crimes for which they had been condemned. For the two thieves the centurion had notices which gave their names, underneath which was written the one word, "Thief." It was the custom, after the victim had been nailed to the crossbeam and hoisted on the upright timber, to nail this notice to the top of the cross, just above the head of the criminal, so that all witnesses might know for what crime the condemned person was being crucified. The legend which the centurion carried to put on the cross of Jesus had been written by Pilate in Latin, Greek, and Aramaic, and it read: "Jesus of Nazareth — the Ruler of the Jews."

Some of the Jewish authorities who were still present when Pilate wrote this legend made vigorous protest against calling Jesus the "ruler of the Jews." But Pilate reminded them that this accusation was part of the charge. When the Jews saw they could not prevail on Pilate, they pleaded that at least it be modified to read, "I claim to be the ruler of the Jews." But Pilate was adamant and would not alter the writing, to all further supplication only replying, "What I have written, I have written."

Ordinarily, it was the custom to journey to Golgotha by the longest road so that a large number of people might view the condemned criminal, but on this day they went by the most direct route to the Damascus gate, which led out of the city to the north, and following this road, they soon arrived at Golgotha, the official crucifixion site of Jerusalem. Beyond Golgotha were the villas of the wealthy, and on the other side of the road were the tombs of many wealthy Jews.

Crucifixion was not a Jewish mode of punishment. Both the Greeks and the Romans learned this method of execution from the Phoenicians. Even Herod did not resort to crucifixion. The Romans never crucified a Roman citizen; only slaves and subject peoples were subjected to this dishonorable mode of death. During the siege of Jerusalem, just forty years after the crucifixion of Jesus, all of Golgotha was covered by thousands of crosses on which, from day to day, the flower of the Jewish race perished. A terrible harvest, indeed, of the seed-sowing of this day.

As the death procession passed along the narrow streets of Jerusalem, many of the tenderhearted Jewish people who had experienced Jesus' words of compassion and life of loving ministry could not refrain from weeping. And when some of them even dared to follow along, the Master looked at them and said: "People of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but rather weep for yourselves and for your children. My work is about done — soon I go to the Creator — but the times of terrible trouble for Jerusalem are just beginning."

These people of Jerusalem were courageous to manifest sympathy for Jesus, for it was strictly against the law to show friendly feelings for one who was being led to crucifixion. The rabble were permitted to jeer, mock, and ridicule the condemned, but it was not allowed that any sympathy should be expressed. Jesus, while appreciating the manifestation of sympathy in this dark hour, did not want these kindhearted people to incur the displeasure of the authorities by daring to show compassion. Even at such a time as this, Jesus thought only of the terrible days of tragedy ahead for Jerusalem and the whole Jewish nation.

While trudging along on the way to the crucifixion, Jesus was exhausted, having had neither food or water since the last meal at the home of Elijah Mark, nor being permitted to enjoy one moment of sleep. In addition, there had been one hearing right after another up to the hour of condemnation, not to mention the abusive whippings with their accompanying physical suffering and loss of blood. Superimposed on all this was extreme mental anguish, acute spiritual tension, and a terrible feeling of human loneliness.

Shortly after passing through the gate on the way out of the city, while staggering under the weight of the crossbeam, Jesus, whose physical strength momentarily gave way, fell beneath the heavy burden. The soldiers shouted and kicked Jesus, who could not rise. The captain, seeing this and knowing what Jesus had already endured, commanded the soldiers to stop and ordered a passerby, one Simon from Cyrene, to take the crossbeam from Jesus' shoulders and carry it the rest of the way to Golgotha.

Simon had come all the way from Cyrene, in northern Africa, to attend the Passover, stopping with other Cyrenians just outside the city walls, and was on the way to the temple services in the city when being commanded to carry Jesus' crossbeam. Simon lingered all through the hours of the Master's death on the cross, talking with many of Jesus' friends and enemies. After the resurrection and before leaving Jerusalem, Simon became a valiant believer, and when returning home, led others into the new realm. Simon's two children, Alexander and Rufus, became very effective teachers of the new doctrine in Africa. But Simon never knew that Jesus and the Jewish tutor who once befriended an injured child, were the same person.

It was shortly after nine o'clock when this procession of death arrived at Golgotha, and the Roman soldiers set themselves about the task of nailing the two thieves and Jesus to their respective crosses.

2. The Crucifixion

It was the practice to first bind the condemned person's arms with cords to the crossbeam, and then nail their hands to the wood. When this crossbeam had been hoisted up on the post, and after it had been nailed securely to the upright timber of the cross, the feet were bound and nailed to the wood, using one long nail to penetrate both feet. The upright timber had a large peg, inserted at the proper height, which served as a sort of saddle for supporting the body weight. The cross was not high, the Master's feet being only about three feet from the ground. Jesus was therefore able to hear all that was said in derision and could plainly see the expression on the faces of all those who mocked so thoughtlessly. And also those present could easily hear all that Jesus said during these hours of lingering torture and slow death.

It was the custom to remove all clothes from those who were to be crucified, but since the Jews greatly objected to the public exposure of the naked human form, the Romans always provided a suitable loin cloth for all those crucified at Jerusalem. Accordingly, Jesus was thus garbed before being put on the cross.

Crucifixion was resorted to in order to provide a cruel and lingering punishment, the victim sometimes not dying for several days. There was considerable sentiment against crucifixion in Jerusalem, and a society of Jewish people existed who always sent a representative to crucifixions for the purpose of offering drugged wine to the victim in order to lessen the suffering. But Jesus, although being thirsty, refused to drink this wine. The Master chose to retain human consciousness until the very end, desiring to meet death, even in this cruel and inhuman form, and conquer it by voluntary submission to the full human experience.

Before Jesus was put on the cross, the two thieves had already been placed on their crosses, all the while cursing and spitting on their executioners. Jesus' only words, while being nailed to the crossbeam, were, "My Creator Parent, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." Jesus could not have so mercifully and lovingly interceded for these executioners if such thoughts of affectionate devotion had not been the mainspring of an entire life of unselfish service. The ideas, motives, and longings of a lifetime are openly revealed in a crisis.

After the Master was hoisted on the cross, the captain nailed the title at the top, and it read in three languages, "Jesus of Nazareth — the Ruler of the Jews." The Jews were infuriated by this believed insult. But Pilate was irritated by their disrespectful manner, feeling intimidated and humiliated, and took this method of obtaining petty revenge. Pilate could have written "Jesus, a rebel," but knew how these Jerusalem Jews detested the very name of Nazareth, and was determined to humiliate them. Pilate knew that they would also be cut to the very quick by seeing this executed Galilean called "The Ruler of the Jews."

Many of the Jewish leaders, when they learned how Pilate had tried to deride them by placing this inscription on the cross of Jesus, hurried out to Golgotha, but they dared not attempt to remove it since the Roman soldiers were standing on guard. Not being able to remove the title, these leaders mingled with the crowd and did their utmost to incite derision and ridicule, in case anyone should give serious regard to the inscription.

The Apostle John, with Mary, Ruth, and Jude, arrived on the scene just after Jesus had been hoisted on the cross, and just as the captain was nailing the title above the Master's head. John was the only one of the eleven apostles to witness the crucifixion, although being absent while going into Jerusalem to bring back Salome soon after escorting Mary to the scene.

Jesus, seeing Mary with John, Ruth and Jude, smiled but said nothing. Meanwhile the four soldiers assigned to the crucifixion, as was the custom, had divided Jesus' clothes among them, one taking the sandals, one the turban, one the girdle, and the fourth the cloak. This left the tunic, or seamless vestment reaching down to near the knees, to be cut up into four pieces, but when the soldiers saw what an unusual garment it was, they decided to cast lots for it. Jesus looked down on them while they divided the garments, and the thoughtless crowd jeered.

It was well that the Roman soldiers took possession of the Master's clothing. Otherwise, if the followers had gained these garments, they would have been tempted to resort to superstitious relic worship. The Master desired that the followers should have nothing material to associate with having lived on earth, wanting to leave humankind only the memory of a human life dedicated to the high spiritual ideal of being consecrated to doing the Creator's will.

3. Those Who Saw the Crucifixion

At about half past nine o'clock this Friday morning, Jesus was hung on the cross. Before eleven o'clock, upward of one thousand persons had assembled to witness this spectacle of the crucifixion. Throughout these dreadful hours the unseen hosts of a universe stood in silence while they gazed on this extraordinary phenomenon of the Creator dying the death of the creature, even the most ignoble death of a condemned criminal.

Standing near the cross at one time or another during the crucifixion were Mary, Ruth, Jude, John, Salome, and a group of earnest believers including Mary Magdalene and Rebecca. These and other friends of Jesus held their peace while they witnessed such great patience and fortitude in the midst of intense sufferings.

Many who passed by wagged their heads and, railing at Jesus, said: "You who would destroy the temple and build it again in three days, save yourself. If you are the Deliverer, why do you not come down from your cross?" In the same way some of the rulers of the Jews mocked, saying, "You saved others, why can you not save yourself." Others said, "If you are the ruler of the Jews, come down from the cross, and we will believe in you." And later on they mocked the more, saying: "You trusted in Yahweh to deliver you. You even claimed to be the Deliverer — look at you now — crucified between two thieves." Even the two thieves also railed and cast reproach on Jesus.

Inasmuch as Jesus would make no reply to their taunts, and since it was nearing noon of this special preparation day, by half past eleven o'clock most of the jesting and jeering crowd had gone its way; less than fifty persons remained on the scene. The soldiers now prepared to eat lunch and drink their cheap, sour wine as they settled down for the long deathwatch. As they drank their wine, they derisively offered a toast to Jesus, saying, "Hail and good fortune! to the ruler of the Jews." And they were astonished at the Master's tolerant regard of their ridicule and mocking.

Jesus, seeing them eat and drink, looked down on them and said, "I thirst." The captain of the guard, hearing this, took some wine and, putting the saturated sponge stopper on the end of a javelin, raised it to Jesus.

Jesus had decided to live without resorting to supernatural power, and likewise elected to die as an ordinary mortal on the cross. Jesus had lived as a mortal, and would die as a mortal — doing the Creator's will.

4. The Thief on the Cross

One of the thieves railed at Jesus, saying, "If you are the Deliverer, why do you not save yourself and us?" But then the other thief, who had many times heard the Master teach, said: "Do you have no fear even of Yahweh? Do you not see that we are suffering justly for our deeds, but that this person suffers unjustly? Better that we should seek forgiveness for our sins and salvation for our souls." And Jesus, hearing the thief say this, turned and smiled approvingly. The malefactor, seeing the face of Jesus, mustered up courage, fanned the flickering flame of faith, and said, "Master, remember me when you come into your dominion." And then Jesus said, "I say to you today, you will sometime be with me in Paradise."

The Master had time while in the pangs of mortal death to listen to the faith confession of the believing thief. This thief reached out and found acceptance, having many times before this been constrained to believe in Jesus, but only in these last hours of consciousness turning with a whole heart toward the Master's teaching. When seeing the manner in which Jesus faced death on the cross, this thief could no longer resist the conviction that this Child of Humanity was indeed the Child of the Creator.

During this episode of the conversion and reception of the thief by Jesus, the Apostle John was absent, having gone into the city to bring Salome to the scene of the crucifixion. Luke subsequently heard this story from the converted Roman captain of the guard.

The Apostle John told about the crucifixion from memory two thirds of a century after its occurrence. The other records were based on the recital of the Roman centurion on duty who, because of the experience, subsequently believed in Jesus and entered into the full membership of the realm of the Creator on earth.

The penitent thief had been led into a life of violence and wrongdoing by those who extolled such a career of robbery as an effective patriotic protest against political oppression and social injustice. And this sort of teaching, plus the urge for adventure, led many otherwise well-meaning youths to enlist in these daring expeditions of robbery. This young person had considered Barabbas a hero, but now realized that this was a mistake. Here on the cross was a really great person, a true hero. Here was a hero who inspired the highest ideas of moral self-respect and quickened all the ideals of courage and bravery. Seeing Jesus, there sprang up an overwhelming sense of love, loyalty, and genuine greatness.

And if any other people among the jeering crowd had experienced the birth of faith and had appealed to the mercy of Jesus, they would have been received with the same loving consideration that was displayed toward the believing thief.

Just after the repentant thief heard the Master's promise that they should sometime meet in Paradise, John returned from the city, bringing Salome and a group of almost a dozen believers. John took up a position near Mary. Jude stood on the other side. As Jesus looked down on this scene it was noon, and Jesus said to Mary, "Behold your child!" And speaking to John, said, "Behold your parent!" And then, addressing them both, said, "I desire that you leave this place." And so John and Jude led Mary away from Golgotha. John took Mary to a place to stay in Jerusalem and then hurried back to the scene of the crucifixion. After the Passover Mary returned to Bethsaida and lived at John's home from then on. Mary did not live quite one year after the death of Jesus.

After Mary left, the other believers withdrew for a short distance and remained until Jesus expired on the cross, and they were still standing by when the body of the Master was taken down for burial.

5. Last Hour on the Cross

Although it was early in the season for such a phenomenon, shortly after twelve o'clock the sky darkened by reason of the fine sand in the air. The people of Jerusalem knew that this meant the coming of one of those hot-wind sandstorms from the Arabian desert. Before one o'clock the sky was so dark that the sun was hidden, and the remainder of the crowd hurried back to the city. When the Master died shortly after this hour, less than thirty people were present, only the thirteen Roman soldiers and a group of about fifteen believers, including Jude and John Zebedee, who returned to the scene just before the Master expired.

Shortly after one o'clock, in the midst of the increasing darkness of the fierce sandstorm, Jesus began to fail in human consciousness. The last words of mercy, forgiveness, and admonition had been spoken. The last wish — concerning the care of Mary — had been expressed. During this time of approaching death the human mind of Jesus resorted to the repetition of many passages in the Hebrew scriptures, particularly the Psalms. The last conscious thought of the human Jesus was concerned with the repetition of a portion of the Book of Psalms now known as the twentieth, twenty-first, and twenty-second Psalms. Jesus was too weak to speak the words as these memorized passages came to mind. Only a few times did those standing by catch some utterance, such as “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” Jesus did not entertain the slightest doubt about having lived in accordance with the Creator’s will, and never doubted that this death was in accordance with the Creator’s will. Jesus did not feel forsaken by the Creator, but was merely reciting many Scriptures, among them this twenty-second Psalm, which begins with “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” And this happened to be one of the three passages which were spoken with sufficient clarity to be heard by those standing by.

The last request was made at about half past one o'clock when, a second time, Jesus said, “I thirst,” and the same captain of the guard again provided the sponge wet in the sour wine, in those days commonly called vinegar.

The sandstorm grew in intensity and the heavens increasingly darkened. Still the soldiers and the small group of believers stood by. The soldiers crouched near the cross, huddled together to protect themselves from the cutting sand. Salome and the others watched from a distance where they were somewhat sheltered by an overhanging rock. When the Master finally expired, John Zebedee, Jude, Ruth, Mary Magdalene, and Rebecca were present at the foot of the cross.

It was just before three o'clock when Jesus, with a loud voice, cried out, “It is finished! My Parent, into your hands I commend my spirit.” And having thus spoken, Jesus gave up the life struggle. The Roman centurion, seeing how Jesus died, said: “This was indeed a righteous person who truly must have been divine.” And from that hour the centurion began to believe in Jesus.

Jesus lived and died royally, freely admitting being divine and remaining master of the situation throughout this tragic day. Jesus went willingly to this ignominious death after providing for the safety of the chosen apostles, wisely restraining Peter’s trouble-making violence, and providing that John might be nearby right up to the end of mortal existence. The Master proclaimed being divine to the murderous Sanhedrin and declared having sovereign authority as a Child of the Creator to Pilate. Jesus finished this loving bestowal by handing over the spirit of mortal acquirement to the Paradise Creator. After such a life — and at such a death — the Master could truly say, “It is finished.”

Because this was the preparation day for both the Passover and the Sabbath, the Jews did not want these bodies to be exposed on Golgotha. Therefore they went to Pilate asking that the legs of these three be broken, that they be dispatched, so that they could be taken down from their crosses and cast into the

criminal burial pits before sundown. At this request, Pilate sent three soldiers to break the legs and dispatch Jesus and the two thieves.

When these soldiers arrived at Golgotha, they did accordingly to the two thieves, but they found Jesus already dead, much to their surprise. However, in order to make sure, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' left side with a spear. Though it was common for the victims of crucifixion to linger alive on the cross for even two or three days, overwhelming emotional agony and acute spiritual anguish brought an end to Jesus' mortal life in a little less than five and one-half hours.

6. After the Crucifixion

In the midst of the darkness of the sandstorm, about half past three o'clock, David Zebedee sent out the last of the messengers carrying the news of the Master's death, dispatching them to the home of Martha and Mary in Bethany, where David supposed that Mary stopped with the rest of the family.

After the death of the Master, John sent the believers, in charge of Jude, to the home of Elijah Mark, where they stayed over the Sabbath day. John, being well known by this time to the Roman centurion, remained at Golgotha until Joseph and Nicodemus arrived on the scene with an order from Pilate authorizing them to take possession of the body of Jesus.

Thus ended a day of tragedy and sorrow for a vast universe whose myriads of intelligences had shuddered at the shocking spectacle of the crucifixion of the human incarnation of their beloved Sovereign; they were stunned by this exhibition of mortal callousness and human perversity.

Paper 188

The Time of the Tomb

The day and a half that Jesus' mortal body lay in the tomb of Joseph, the period between death on the cross and resurrection, is a chapter in the earth career of Michael which is little known to us. We can narrate Jesus' burial and put in this record the events associated with the resurrection, but we cannot supply much information of an authentic nature about what really transpired during this period of about thirty-six hours, from three o'clock Friday afternoon to three o'clock Sunday morning. This period in the Master's career began shortly before being taken down from the cross by the Roman soldiers. Jesus hung on the cross for about one hour after dying, and would have been taken down sooner except for the delay in dispatching the two thieves.

The rulers of the Jews had planned to have Jesus' body thrown in the open burial pits of Gehenna, south of the city; this was the customary way to dispose of the victims of crucifixion. If this plan had been followed, the body of the Master would have been exposed to the wild animals.

In the meantime, Joseph of Arimathea, accompanied by Nicodemus, had gone to Pilate and asked that the body of Jesus be turned over to them for proper burial. It was not uncommon for friends of crucified persons to offer bribes to the Roman authorities for the privilege of gaining possession of such bodies. Joseph went before Pilate with a large sum of money, in case it became necessary to pay for permission to remove Jesus' body to a private burial tomb. But Pilate would not take money for this, and when hearing the request, quickly signed the order which authorized Joseph to proceed to Golgotha and take immediate and full possession of the Master's body. In the meantime, the sandstorm having considerably abated, a group of Jews representing the Sanhedrin had gone out to Golgotha for the purpose of making sure that Jesus' body accompanied those of the thieves to the open public burial pits.

1. The Burial of Jesus

When Joseph and Nicodemus arrived at Golgotha, they found the soldiers taking Jesus down from the cross and the representatives of the Sanhedrin standing by to see that none of Jesus' followers prevented the body from going to the criminal burial pits. When Joseph presented Pilate's order for the Master's body to the centurion, these Sanhedrin raised a tumult and clamored for its possession. In their raving they tried to violently take possession of the body, and when they did this, the centurion summoned four soldiers, and with drawn swords they stood astride the Master's body as it lay there on the ground. The centurion ordered the other soldiers to leave the two thieves while they drove back this angry mob of infuriated Jews. When order had been restored, the centurion read the permit from Pilate to the Jews and, stepping aside, said to Joseph: "This body is yours to do with as you see fit. I and my soldiers will stand by to see that no one interferes."

A crucified person could not be buried in a Jewish cemetery; there was a strict law against such a procedure. Joseph and Nicodemus knew this law, and on the way to Golgotha they had decided to bury Jesus in Joseph's new family tomb, hewn out of solid rock, located a short distance north of Golgotha and across the road leading to Samaria. No one had ever lain in this tomb, and they thought it appropriate that the Master should rest there. Joseph really believed that Jesus would rise from the dead, but Nicodemus was very doubtful. These former members of the Sanhedrin had kept their faith in Jesus more or less a secret, although the other Sanhedrists had long suspected them even before they withdrew from the council. From now on they were the most outspoken disciples of Jesus in all Jerusalem.

At about half past four o'clock the burial procession of Jesus started from Golgotha for Joseph's tomb. The body was wrapped in a linen sheet as the four people carried it, followed by the faithful watchers from Galilee. The mortals who bore the material body of Jesus to the tomb were: Joseph, Nicodemus, John, and the Roman centurion.

They carried the body into the tomb, a chamber about ten feet square, where they hurriedly prepared it for burial. The Jews did not really bury their dead; they actually embalmed them. Joseph and Nicodemus had brought with them large quantities of myrrh and aloes, and they now wrapped the body with bandages saturated with these solutions. When the embalming was completed, they tied a napkin about the face, wrapped the body in a linen sheet, and reverently placed it on a shelf in the tomb.

After placing the body in the tomb, the centurion signaled for the soldiers to help roll the stone in front of the entrance to the tomb. The soldiers then left for Gehenna with the bodies of the thieves while the others returned to Jerusalem, in sorrow, to observe the Passover feast according to the laws of Moses.

There was considerable haste about the burial of Jesus because this was preparation day and the Sabbath was drawing on quickly. Some of the burial party hurried back to the city, but others lingered near the tomb until it was very dark.

While all this was going on, the ones who remained were hiding nearby so that they saw it all and observed where the Master had been laid. These people did not think Jesus had been properly prepared for burial, and they agreed among themselves to go back to the home of Joseph, rest over the Sabbath, make ready spices and ointments, and return on Sunday morning to properly prepare the Master's body for the death rest.

Aside from David Zebedee and Joseph of Arimathea, very few of the disciples really believed or understood that Jesus was due to rise from the tomb on the third day.

2. Safeguarding the Tomb

If the followers had forgotten Jesus' promise to rise from the grave on the third day, the enemies had not. The chief priests, Pharisees, and Sadducees recalled that they had received reports of the claim that Jesus would rise from the dead.

This Friday night, after the Passover supper, about midnight a group of the Jewish leaders gathered at the home of Caiaphas, where they discussed their fears concerning the Master's assertions about rising from the dead on the third day. This meeting ended with the appointment of a committee of Sanhedrists who were to visit Pilate early the next day, bearing the official request of the Sanhedrin that a Roman guard be stationed at Jesus' tomb to prevent anyone from tampering with it. The spokesperson of this committee said to Pilate: "We remember that this deceiver, Jesus of Nazareth, said, while yet alive, 'After three days I will rise again.' We have, therefore, come before you to request that you issue such orders as will make the tomb secure against intrusion, at least until after the third day. We greatly fear that the disciples might come and steal the body away by night and then proclaim to the people that the deceiver has risen from the dead. If we permit this to happen, this mistake would be far worse than to have allowed the criminal to live."

Pilate, on hearing this request of the Sanhedrists, said: "I will give you a guard of ten soldiers. Go and make the tomb secure." They went back to the temple, secured ten of their own guards, and then marched out to Joseph's tomb with these ten Jewish guards and ten Roman soldiers, even on this Sabbath morning, to set them to watch before the tomb. They rolled still another stone in front of the tomb and set the seal of Pilate

on and around these stones, in case they were disturbed without their knowledge. And these twenty remained on watch up to the hour of the resurrection, the Jews bringing them their food and drink.

3. During the Sabbath Day

Throughout this Sabbath day the disciples and the apostles remained in hiding, while all Jerusalem discussed the death of Jesus on the cross. There were almost one and one-half million Jews present in Jerusalem at this time, coming from all parts of the Roman Empire and from Mesopotamia. This was the beginning of the Passover week, and all these pilgrims would be in the city to learn of the resurrection of Jesus and to carry the report back to their homes.

Late Saturday night, John Mark summoned the eleven apostles to secretly come to the Mark home, where, just before midnight, they all assembled in the same upper chamber where they had partaken of the last meal with their Master two nights previously.

Mary, with Ruth and Jude, returned to Bethany to join their family this Saturday evening just before sunset. David Zebedee remained at the home of Nicodemus, and arranged for the messengers to assemble there early Sunday morning. The people of Galilee, who prepared spices for the further embalming of Jesus' body, stayed at the home of Joseph of Arimathea.

We are not able to fully explain just what happened to Jesus during this period of a day and a half while resting in Joseph's new tomb. Apparently Jesus died the same natural death on the cross as would any other mortal in the same circumstances. We heard Jesus say, "Into your hands I commend my spirit." We do not fully understand the meaning of such a statement since the Thought Adjuster had long since been personalized and maintained an existence apart from Jesus' mortal being. The Master's Personalized Adjuster could in no sense be affected by physical death. That which Jesus put in the Creator's hands for the time being must have been the spirit counterpart of the Adjuster's early work in spiritizing the mortal mind so as to provide for the transfer of the transcript of the human experience to the mansion worlds. There must have been some spiritual reality in the experience of Jesus which was analogous to the spirit nature, or soul, of the faith-growing mortals of the spheres. But this is merely our opinion — we do not really know what Jesus commended to the Creator.

We know that the physical form of the Master rested there in Joseph's tomb until about three o'clock Sunday morning, but we are wholly uncertain regarding the status of the personality of Jesus during that period of thirty-six hours. We have sometimes dared to explain these things to ourselves somewhat as follows:

1. The Creator consciousness of Michael must have been at large and wholly free from its associated mortal mind of the physical incarnation.
2. We know that the former Thought Adjuster of Jesus was present on earth during this period and in personal command of the assembled celestial hosts.
3. The acquired spirit identity of Jesus which was built up during the mortal lifetime, first, by the direct efforts of the Thought Adjuster, and later, by the perfect adjustment between the physical necessities and the spiritual requirements of the ideal mortal existence, as it was effected by the never-ceasing choice of the Creator's will, must have been consigned to the custody of the Paradise Creator. Whether or not this spirit reality returned to become a part of the resurrected personality, we do not know, but we believe it did. But there are those in the universe who hold that this soul-identity of Jesus now reposes with the Creator, to be subsequently released for leadership of the Nebadon Corps of the Finality in their undisclosed destiny in connection with the uncreated universes of the unorganized realms of outer space.

4. We think the human or mortal consciousness of Jesus slept during these thirty-six hours. We have reason to believe that the human Jesus knew nothing of what transpired in the universe during this period. To the mortal consciousness there appeared no lapse of time; the resurrection of life followed the sleep of death as of the same instant.

And this is about all we can place on record regarding the status of Jesus during this period in the tomb. There are a number of correlated facts to which we can allude, although we are hardly competent to undertake their interpretation.

In the vast court of the resurrection halls of the first mansion world of Satania, there may now be observed a magnificent material-morontia structure known as the "Michael Memorial," now bearing the seal of Gabriel. This memorial was created shortly after Michael departed from this world, and it bears this inscription: "In commemoration of the mortal transit of Jesus of Nazareth on Urantia."

There are records which show that during this period the supreme council of Salvington, numbering one hundred, held an executive meeting on Urantia under the leadership of Gabriel. There are also records showing that the Ancients of Days of Uversa communicated with Michael regarding the status of the universe of Nebadon during this time.

We know that at least one message passed between Michael and Immanuel on Salvington while the Master's body lay in the tomb.

There is good reason for believing that some personality sat in the seat of Caligastia in the system council of the Planetary Administrator on Jerusem which convened while the body of Jesus rested in the tomb.

The records of Edentia indicate that the Constellation Ruler of Norlatiadek was on Urantia, and received instructions from Michael during this time of the tomb.

And there is much other evidence which suggests that not all of the personality of Jesus was asleep and unconscious during this time of apparent physical death.

4. Meaning of the Death on the Cross

Although Jesus did not die this death on the cross to atone for the racial guilt of mortals nor to provide some sort of effective approach to an otherwise offended and unforgiving Deity; even though Jesus was not offered as a sacrifice to appease the wrath of Yahweh and to open the way for sinful mortals to obtain salvation; notwithstanding that these ideas of atonement and propitiation are erroneous, nonetheless, there are significances attached to the death of Jesus on the cross which should not be overlooked. It is a fact that Urantia has become known among other neighboring inhabited planets as the "World of the Cross."

Jesus wanted to live a full mortal life on Urantia. Death is, ordinarily, a part of life. Death is the last act in the mortal drama. In your well-meant efforts to escape the superstitious errors of the false interpretation of the meaning of the death on the cross, you should be careful not to make the great mistake of failing to perceive the true significance and the genuine import of the Master's death.

Mortals were never the property of the archdeceivers. Jesus did not die to ransom humanity from the clutch of the apostate rulers and fallen administrators of the spheres. The Creator never conceived of such crass injustice as damning mortal souls because of the evil-doing of their ancestors. Neither was the Master's death on the cross a sacrifice which consisted in an effort to pay a debt which humankind had come to owe the Creator.

Before Jesus lived on earth, you might possibly have been justified in believing in such a Deity, but not since the Master lived and died among mortals. Moses taught the dignity and justice of Yahweh; but Jesus portrayed the love and mercy of a Creator Parent.

The animal nature — the tendency toward evil-doing — may be hereditary, but sin is not transmitted from parent to child. Sin is the act of conscious and deliberate rebellion against the Creator's will and the universe laws by an individual will creature.

Jesus lived and died for a whole universe, not just for this one world. While the mortals of the realms had access to eternal life even before Jesus lived and died on Urantia, it is nevertheless a fact that the bestowal on this world greatly illuminated the way of spiritual progress; Jesus' death did much to establish the certainty of mortal survival after death.

Though it is hardly proper to speak of Jesus as a sacrificer, a ransomer, or a redeemer, it is wholly correct to refer to Jesus as a *savior* who forever made the way of survival more clear and certain, and who better and more surely showed the way to eternal life for all the mortals of all the worlds of the universe of Nebadon.

When you grasp the idea of the Creator as a true and loving Parent, the only concept which Jesus ever taught, you must, in all consistency, utterly abandon all those primitive notions about the Creator as an offended monarch, a stern and all-powerful ruler whose chief delight is to detect wrongdoing and to see that people are adequately punished, unless some being should volunteer to suffer for them, to die as a substitute and in their place. The whole idea of ransom and atonement is incompatible with the concept of the Creator as it was taught and exemplified by Jesus. The infinite love of the Creator is not secondary to anything in the divine nature.

All this concept of atonement and sacrificial salvation is rooted and grounded in selfishness. Jesus taught that *service* to others is the highest concept of the family of spirit believers. Survival should be taken for granted by those who believe in the parenthood of the Creator. The believer's chief concern should not be the selfish desire for personal survival but rather the unselfish urge to love and, therefore, serve others even as Jesus loved and served mortals.

Neither do genuine believers trouble themselves so much about the future punishment of sin. The real believer is only concerned about present separation from the Creator. True, wise parents may chasten their children, but they do all this in love and for corrective purposes. They do not punish in anger, neither do they chastise in retribution.

Even if the Creator were the stern and legal monarch of a universe in which justice ruled supreme, the childish scheme of substituting an innocent sufferer for a guilty offender would certainly not be acceptable.

The great thing about the death of Jesus, as it is related to the enrichment of human experience and the enlargement of the way of eternal life, is not the *fact* of that death but rather the superb manner and the matchless spirit in which Jesus met death.

This entire idea of the ransom of the atonement places salvation on a plane of unreality; such a concept is purely philosophic. Human survival is *real*; it is based on two realities which may be grasped by the creature's faith and become incorporated into individual human experience: the fact of the parenthood of the Creator and its correlated truth, the family of humanity.

5. Lessons from the Cross

The cross of Jesus portrays the full measure of the supreme devotion of the true shepherd for even the unworthy members of the flock. It forever places all relations between Deity and mortals on the family basis. The Creator is the Parent; mortals are the children. Love, the love of a parent for a child, becomes the central truth in the universe relations of Creator and creature — not the justice of a ruler who seeks satisfaction in the sufferings and punishment of the evil-doing subject.

The cross forever shows that the attitude of Jesus toward sinners was neither condemnation nor condonation, but rather eternal and loving support. Jesus is truly a savior in the sense of having lived and died to win mortals over to goodness and righteous survival. Jesus loves mortals so much that this love awakens the response of love in the human heart. Love is truly contagious and eternally creative. Jesus' death on the cross exemplifies a love which is sufficiently strong and divine to forgive sin and swallow up all evil-doing. Jesus disclosed to this world a higher quality of righteousness than justice — mere technical right and wrong. Divine love does not merely forgive wrongs; it absorbs and actually destroys them. The forgiveness of love utterly transcends the forgiveness of mercy. Mercy sets the guilt of evil-doing to one side; but love destroys the sin and all weakness resulting from it. Jesus brought a new method of living to Urantia, teaching us not to resist evil but to find a goodness which effectually destroys evil. The forgiveness of Jesus is not condonation; it is release from condemnation. The realm of the Creator does not slight wrongs; it *makes them right*. True love does not compromise nor condone hate; it destroys it. The love of Jesus is never satisfied with mere forgiveness. The Master's love implies rehabilitation, eternal survival.

Jesus, by the power of personal love for mortals, could break the hold of sin and evil, thereby setting people free to choose better ways of living. Jesus portrayed a deliverance from the past which in itself promised a triumph for the future. Forgiveness provided survival. The beauty of divine love, once fully admitted to the human heart, forever destroys the charm of sin and the power of evil.

The sufferings of Jesus were not confined to the crucifixion. In reality, Jesus spent upward of twenty-five years on the cross of a real and intense mortal existence. The real value of the cross consists in the fact that it was the supreme and final expression of love, the completed revelation of mercy.

On millions of inhabited worlds, tens of trillions of evolving creatures who may have been tempted to give up the moral struggle and abandon the good fight of faith, have taken one more look at Jesus on the cross and then have forged on ahead, inspired by the sight of a divine Being laying down an incarnate life in devotion to the unselfish service of humanity.

The triumph of the death on the cross is all summed up in the spirit of Jesus' attitude toward those who caused that death. Jesus made the cross an eternal symbol of the triumph of love over hate and the victory of truth over evil by praying, "Forgive them, for they know not what they do." That devotion of love was contagious throughout a vast universe; the disciples caught it from their Master. The very first teacher who followed Jesus and was called on to die in this service, said, while being stoned to death, "Do not blame them for this sin."

The cross makes a supreme appeal to the best in mortals because it discloses one who was willing to die in the service of others. No one can have greater love than this: to be willing to die for others — and Jesus had such a love as to be willing to die even for enemies, a love greater than any which had ever been known on earth.

On other worlds, as well as on Urantia, this sublime spectacle of the death of the human Jesus on the cross of Golgotha has stirred the emotions of mortals, while it has aroused the highest devotion of the angels.

The cross is that high symbol of sacred service, the devotion of one's life to the welfare of others. The cross is not the symbol of the sacrifice of the innocent Child of the Creator in the place of guilty sinners and in order to appease the wrath of an offended Deity, but it does stand forever, on earth and throughout a vast universe, as a sacred symbol of the good bestowing themselves on the evil and saving them by this very devotion of love. The cross does stand as the token of the highest form of unselfish service, the supreme devotion of the full bestowal of a righteous life in the service of wholehearted ministry, even in death, the death of the cross. And the very sight of this great symbol of the bestowal life of Jesus truly inspires all of us to want to do likewise.

When thinking people look at Jesus dying on the cross, they will hardly again permit themselves to complain of even the severest hardships of life, much less at petty harassments and their many purely fictitious grievances. Jesus was so glorious in life and so triumphant in death that we are all enticed to a willingness to share both. There is true drawing power in the whole bestowal of Michael, from youth to this overwhelming spectacle of death on the cross.

Make sure, then, that when you view the cross as a revelation of the Creator, you do not look with the eyes of the primitive human nor with the viewpoint of the later barbarian, both of whom regarded their Deity as a relentless Sovereign of stern justice and rigid law-enforcement. Rather, make sure that you see in the cross the final manifestation of the love and devotion of Jesus to the life mission of bestowal on the mortals of a vast universe. See in the death of Jesus the climax of the unfolding of the Creator's divine love for the children of the mortal spheres. The cross portrays the devotion of willing affection and the bestowal of voluntary restoration on those who are willing to receive such gifts and devotion. There was nothing in the cross which the Creator required — only that which Jesus so willingly gave, and refused to avoid.

If mortals cannot otherwise appreciate Jesus and understand the meaning of the bestowal on earth, they can at least comprehend the experience of mortal sufferings. No one can ever fear that the Creator does not know the nature or extent of temporal afflictions.

We know that the death on the cross was not to effect mortals' reconciliation to the Creator but to stimulate mortals' *realization* of the Creator's eternal love and unending mercy, and to broadcast these universal truths to a whole universe.

Paper 189

The Resurrection

Soon after the burial of Jesus on Friday afternoon, the chief of the archangels of Nebadon, then present on Urantia, summoned the council of the resurrection of sleeping will creatures and initiated the consideration of a possible technique for the restoration of Jesus. These assembled citizens of the local universe, the creatures of Michael, did this on their own responsibility; Gabriel had not assembled them. By midnight they had arrived at the conclusion that the creature could do nothing to facilitate the resurrection of the Creator. They were disposed to accept the advice of Gabriel, who instructed them that Michael, having freely made the decision to give up the mortal life, had the power to take it up again. Shortly after the adjournment of this council of the archangels, the Life Carriers, and their various associates in the work of creature rehabilitation and morontia creation, the Personalized Adjuster of Jesus, being in personal command of the assembled celestial hosts then on Urantia, spoke these words to the anxious waiting watchers:

“Not one of you can do anything to assist your Creator-parent in the return to life. As a mortal of the realm Michael has experienced material death, but as the Sovereign of a universe Michael still lives. That which you observe is the mortal transit of Jesus from material life to life in the morontia. The spirit transit of Jesus was completed at the time I separated myself and became your temporary director. Your Creator-parent has elected to pass through the whole of the experience of mortal creatures, from birth on the material worlds, on through natural death and the resurrection of the morontia, into the status of true spirit existence. You are about to observe a certain phase of this experience, but you may not participate in it. Those things which you ordinarily do for the creature, you may not do for the Creator. A Universe Creator has the power to become bestowed in the likeness of any created beings; has the power to lay down that bestowal life and to take it up again; and has this power because of the direct command of the Paradise Creator, and I know whereof I speak.”

When they heard the Personalized Adjuster speak, they all assumed the attitude of anxious expectancy, from Gabriel down to the most humble cherubim. They saw the mortal body of Jesus in the tomb; they detected evidences of the universe activity of their beloved Sovereign; and not understanding such phenomena, they waited patiently for developments.

1. The Morontia Transit

At two forty-five Sunday morning, the Paradise incarnation commission, consisting of seven unidentified Paradise personalities, arrived on the scene and immediately deployed themselves about the tomb. At ten minutes before three, intense vibrations of commingled material and morontia activities began to issue from Joseph's new tomb, and at two minutes past three o'clock, this Sunday morning, April 9, C.E. 30, the resurrected morontia form and personality of Jesus of Nazareth came out of the tomb.

After the resurrected Jesus emerged from the burial tomb, the material body was still lying there in the niche, undisturbed and wrapped in the linen sheet, just as it had been laid to rest by Joseph and the others on Friday afternoon. Neither was the stone before the entrance of the tomb in any way disturbed; the seal of Pilate was still unbroken; the soldiers were still on guard. The temple guards had been on continuous duty; the Roman guard had been changed at midnight. None of these watchers suspected that the object of their vigil had risen to a new and higher form of existence, and that the body which they were guarding was now a discarded outer covering which had no further connection with the delivered and resurrected morontia personality of Jesus.

Humankind is slow to perceive that, in all that is personal, matter is the skeleton of morontia, and that both are the reflected shadow of enduring spirit reality. How long will it be before you will regard time as the moving image of eternity and space as the fleeting shadow of Paradise realities?

As far as we can judge, no creature of this universe nor any personality from another universe had anything to do with the morontia resurrection of Jesus. On Friday Jesus died as a mortal of the realm, and on Sunday morning rose again as a morontia being of the system of Satania in Norlatiadek. There is much about the resurrection which we do not understand, but we know that it occurred as we have stated and at about the time indicated. We can also record that all known phenomena associated with this mortal transit, or morontia resurrection, occurred right there in Joseph's new tomb, where the material remains of Jesus lay wrapped in burial cloths.

We know that no creature of the local universe participated in this morontia awakening. We perceived the seven personalities of Paradise surround the tomb, but we did not see them do anything in connection with the Master's awakening. Just as soon as Jesus appeared beside Gabriel, just above the tomb, the seven personalities from Paradise signaled their intention of immediate departure for Uversa.

Let us forever clarify the concept of the resurrection of Jesus by making the following statements:

1. The material or physical body was not a part of the resurrected personality. When Jesus came out of the tomb, the body remained there undisturbed. Jesus emerged from the burial tomb without moving the stones in front of the entrance and without disturbing the seals of Pilate.
2. Jesus did not emerge from the tomb as a spirit nor as Michael of Nebadon; and did not appear in the form of the Creator Sovereign, such as before the incarnation on Urantia.
3. Jesus did come out of this tomb of Joseph in the likeness of the morontia personalities of those who, as resurrected morontia ascendant beings, emerge from the resurrection halls of the first mansion world of this local system of Satania. And the presence of the Michael memorial in the center of the vast court of the resurrection halls of mansonia number one leads us to conjecture that the Master's resurrection on Urantia was in some way fostered on this, the first of the system mansion worlds.

The first act of Jesus on rising from the tomb was to instruct Gabriel to continue in executive charge of universe affairs under Immanuel, and then to direct the chief of the Melchizedeks to convey greetings to Immanuel. Jesus then asked the Most High of Edentia for the certification of the Ancients of Days as to the mortal transit; and turning to the assembled morontia groups of the seven mansion worlds, gathered together here to greet and welcome their Creator as a creature of their order, Jesus spoke the first words of the postmortal career: "Having finished my life as a mortal, I would remain here for a short time in transition form so that I may more fully know the life of my ascendant creatures and further reveal the will of the Creator in Paradise."

Having spoken, Jesus signaled to the Personalized Adjuster, and all universe intelligences who had been assembled on Urantia to witness the resurrection were immediately dispatched to their respective universe assignments.

Jesus now began the contacts of the morontia level, being introduced, as a creature, to the requirements of the morontia life that would be lived for a short time on Urantia. This initiation into the morontia world required more than an hour of earth time and was twice interrupted by communication with former human associates as they came out from Jerusalem to wonderingly peer into the empty tomb to discover what they considered evidence of the resurrection.

Now the mortal transit of Jesus — the morontia resurrection — is completed. The transitory experience of the Master as a personality midway between the material and the spiritual has begun. And Jesus has done all this through inherent power; no personality has rendered any assistance. Michael now lives as Jesus of morontia, and while in this morontia life, the material body lies there undisturbed in the tomb. The soldiers are still on guard, and the seal of the governor has not yet been broken.

2. The Material Body of Jesus

At ten minutes past three o'clock, as the resurrected Jesus socialized with the assembled morontia personalities from the seven mansion worlds of Satania, the chief of archangels — the angels of the resurrection — approached Gabriel and asked for the mortal body of Jesus, saying: "We may not participate in the morontia resurrection of the bestowal experience of Michael, but we would have the mortal remains put in our custody for immediate dissolution. We do not propose to employ our technique of dematerialization; we merely want to invoke the process of accelerated time. It is enough that we have seen the Sovereign live and die on Urantia; the celestial hosts would like to be spared the memory of enduring the sight of the slow decay of the human form of the Creator and Upholder of a universe. In the name of the celestial intelligences of all Nebadon, I ask for a mandate giving me the custody of the mortal body of Jesus and empowering us to proceed with its immediate dissolution."

And when Gabriel had conferred with the senior Most High of Edentia, the archangel spokesperson for the celestial hosts was given permission to make such disposition of the physical remains of Jesus.

The chief of archangels, after having been granted this request, summoned many of the other archangels, together with a numerous host of the representatives of all orders of celestial personalities, and then, with the aid of the Urantia midwayers, proceeded to take possession of Jesus' physical body. This body of death was a purely material creation; it was physical and literal; it could not be removed from the tomb as the morontia form of the resurrection had been able to escape the sealed enclosure. By the aid of certain morontia auxiliary personalities, the morontia form can be made at one time as of the spirit so that it can become indifferent to ordinary matter, while at another time it can become discernible and contactable by material beings, such as the mortals of the realm.

As they prepared to remove the body of Jesus from the tomb in order to give it the dignified and reverent disposal of near-instantaneous dissolution, the secondary Urantia midwayers were assigned to roll away the stones from the entrance of the tomb. The larger of these two stones was a huge circular affair, much like a millstone, and it moved in a groove chiseled out of the rock so that it could be rolled back and forth to open or close the tomb. When the watching Jewish guards and the Roman soldiers, in the dim light of the morning, saw this huge stone begin to roll away from the entrance of the tomb, apparently of its own accord — without any visible means to account for such motion — they were seized with fear and panic, and they ran from the scene. The Jews fled to their homes, afterward going back to report these doings to their captain at the temple. The Romans fled to the fortress of Antonia and reported what they had seen to the centurion.

The Jewish leaders had begun the sordid business of supposedly getting rid of Jesus by offering bribes to the traitorous Judas, and now, when confronted with this embarrassing situation, instead of thinking of punishing the guards who deserted their post, they resorted to bribing these guards and the Roman soldiers. They paid each of these twenty people a sum of money and instructed them to say to all: "While we slept during the night, Jesus' disciples came and took away the body." And the Jewish leaders made solemn promises to the soldiers to defend them before Pilate in case it should ever come to the governor's knowledge that they had accepted a bribe.

The Christian belief in the resurrection of Jesus has been based on the fact of the “empty tomb.” It was indeed a *fact* that the tomb was empty, but this is not the *truth* of the resurrection. The tomb was truly empty when the first believers arrived, and this fact, associated with that of the undoubted resurrection of the Master, led to the formulation of a belief which was not true: the teaching that the material body of Jesus was raised from the grave. Truth having to do with spiritual realities and eternal values cannot always be built up by a combination of apparent facts. Although individual facts may be materially true, it does not follow that the association of a group of facts must necessarily lead to truthful spiritual conclusions.

The tomb of Joseph was empty, not because the body of Jesus had been rehabilitated or resurrected, but because the celestial hosts had been granted their request to afford it a special and unique dissolution without the intervention of the delays of time and without the operation of the ordinary and visible processes of material decay and corruption.

The mortal remains of Jesus underwent the same natural process of elemental disintegration as characterizes all human bodies on earth except that, in point of time, this natural mode of dissolution was greatly accelerated, hastened to that point where it became practically instantaneous.

The true evidences of the resurrection of Michael are spiritual in nature, although this teaching is corroborated by the testimony of many mortals of the realm who met, recognized, and communed with the resurrected morontia Master. Jesus became a part of the personal experience of almost one thousand human beings before finally taking leave of Urantia.

3. The Dispensational Resurrection

A little after half past four o’clock this Sunday morning, Gabriel summoned the archangels and prepared to inaugurate the general resurrection of the termination of the Edenic dispensation on Urantia. When the vast host of the seraphim and the cherubim concerned in this great event had been marshaled in proper formation, the morontia Michael appeared before Gabriel, saying: “The Creator bestows all life and authorized me to also bestow it. Although I have not yet fully resumed the exercise of universe jurisdiction, this self-imposed limitation does not in any manner restrict the bestowal of life on my sleeping children; let the roll call of the planetary resurrection begin.”

The circuit of the archangels then operated for the first time from Urantia. Gabriel and the archangel hosts moved to the place of the spiritual polarity of the planet; and when the signal was given, the voice of Gabriel flashed to the first of the system mansion worlds, saying: “By the mandate of Michael, let the dead of a Urantia dispensation rise!” Then all the survivors of the human races of Urantia who had fallen asleep since the days of Eden, and who had not already gone on to judgment, appeared in the resurrection halls of mansonia in readiness for morontia investiture. And in an instant of time the seraphim and their associates prepared to depart for the mansion worlds. Ordinarily these seraphic guardians, once assigned to the group custody of these surviving mortals, would have been present at the moment of their awakening in the resurrection halls of mansonia, but they were on this world itself at this time because of the necessity of Gabriel’s presence here in connection with the morontia resurrection of Jesus.

Notwithstanding that countless individuals having personal seraphic guardians and those achieving the requisite attainment of spiritual personality progress had gone on to mansonia during the ages subsequent to the times of Eden, and though there had been many special and millennial resurrections on Urantia, this was the third of the planetary roll calls, or complete dispensational resurrections. The first occurred at the time of the arrival of the Planetary Administrator, the second during the time of Eden, and this, the third, signaled the morontia resurrection, the mortal transit, of Jesus of Nazareth.

When the signal of the planetary resurrection had been received by the chief of archangels, the Personalized Adjuster relinquished authority over the celestial hosts assembled on Urantia, turning them back to the jurisdiction of their respective commanders, and having done this, departed for Salvington to register with Immanuel the completion of the mortal transit of Michael, immediately followed by all the celestial host not required for duty on Urantia. But Gabriel remained on Urantia with the morontia Jesus.

And this is the recital of the events of the resurrection of Jesus as viewed by those who saw them as they really occurred, free from the limitations of partial and restricted human vision.

4. Discovery of the Empty Tomb

As we approach the time of the resurrection of Jesus on this early Sunday morning, it should be recalled that the ten apostles were staying at the home of Elijah and Mary Mark, where they were asleep in the upper chamber, resting on the very couches on which they reclined during the last meal with their Master. This Sunday morning they were all assembled there except Thomas. Thomas was with them for a few minutes late Saturday night when they first got together, but the sight of the apostles, coupled with the thought of what had happened to Jesus, was too much. Thomas, after looking the associates over, immediately left the room, going to the home of Simon in Bethpage to grieve in solitude. The apostles all suffered, not so much from doubt and despair as from fear, grief, and shame.

At the home of Nicodemus, with David Zebedee and Joseph of Arimathea, some twelve or fifteen of the Jerusalem disciples of Jesus were gathered together. At the home of Joseph of Arimathea there were some fifteen or twenty of the leading believers. Those who were in Joseph's house had stayed inside during the hours of the Sabbath day and the evening after the Sabbath, so that they were ignorant of the military guard on watch at the tomb; neither did they know that a second stone had been rolled in front of the tomb, and that both of these stones had been placed under the seal of Pilate.

A little before three o'clock this Sunday morning, when the first signs of day began to appear in the east, five of these believers, including Mary Magdalene, started out for the tomb of Jesus. They had prepared an abundance of special embalming lotions, and they carried many linen bandages with them. It was their purpose to more thoroughly give the body of Jesus its death anointing and to more carefully wrap it up with the new bandages.

It was about half past three o'clock when the five, laden with their ointments, arrived before the empty tomb. As they passed out of the Damascus gate, they encountered a number of soldiers fleeing into the city more or less panic-stricken, and this caused them to pause for a few minutes; but when nothing more developed, they resumed their journey.

They were greatly surprised to see the stone rolled away from the entrance to the tomb, inasmuch as they had said among themselves on the way out, "Who will help us roll away the stone?" They set down their burdens and began to look at one another in fear and with great amazement. While they stood there, trembling with fear, Mary Magdalene ventured around the smaller stone and dared to enter the open tomb. This tomb of Joseph was in a garden on the hillside on the eastern side of the road, and it also faced toward the east. By this hour there was just enough of the dawn of a new day to make it possible to look back to the place where the Master's body had lain and to discern that it was gone. In the recess of stone where they had laid Jesus, only the folded napkin and the bandages were lying intact and as they had rested on the stone before the celestial hosts removed the body. The covering sheet lay at the foot of the burial niche.

Seeing that Jesus' body was gone and in its place were only these grave cloths, Mary uttered a cry of alarm and anguish. All the those present were exceedingly nervous; they had been on edge ever since meeting the

panicky soldiers at the city gate, and on hearing this cry of anguish, they were terror-stricken and ran away. And they did not stop until they had run all the way to the Damascus gate. By this time they were conscience-stricken about deserting Mary and started back for the tomb.

As they drew near, Mary, who was even more terrorized when failing to find the others waiting outside the tomb, now rushed up to them, excitedly exclaiming: "The body is not there — they have taken it away!" And they all entered the tomb and saw that it was empty.

All five then sat down on the stone near the entrance and talked over the situation. It had not yet occurred to them that Jesus had been resurrected. They had been by themselves over the Sabbath, and they conjectured that the body had been moved to another resting place. But when they pondered such a solution of their dilemma, they were at a loss to account for the orderly arrangement of the grave cloths; how could the body have been removed since the very bandages in which it was wrapped were left in position and apparently intact on the burial shelf?

As they sat there in the early hours of the dawn, they looked to one side and observed a silent and motionless stranger. For a moment they were again frightened, but Mary Magdalene said, "Where have they taken the Master? Where have they laid the body? Tell us so that we may go and get it." Then Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Whom do you seek?" They said: "We seek for Jesus who was laid to rest in Joseph's tomb, but is now gone. Do you know where they have taken the body?" Mary began to weep when the stranger did not answer. Then Jesus said: "Did not this Jesus talk to you, even in Galilee, about dying and rising again?" These words startled them, but they did not recognize the Master, whose back was turned to the dim light. And as they pondered these words, Jesus addressed them with a familiar voice, and when they heard that tone of well-known sympathy and affectionate greeting, they knew it was the voice of the Master, and rushed to kneel at Jesus' feet.

These human eyes were enabled to see the morontia form of Jesus because of the special ministry of the transformers and the midwayers in association with certain of the morontia personalities then accompanying Jesus.

Jesus, whose feet they sought to embrace, said: "Do not touch me, I am not as you knew me. In this form I will be with you for a little while before I ascend to the Creator. But go now, all of you, and tell my apostles — and Peter — that I have risen, and that you have talked with me."

After they had recovered from the shock of their amazement, they hurried back to the city and to the home of Elijah Mark, where they related to the ten apostles all that had happened to them; but the apostles were not inclined to believe them, thinking at first that these people had seen a vision. But when Mary Magdalene repeated the words which Jesus had spoken to them, Peter rushed out of the upper chamber, followed closely by John, to reach the tomb and see these things for themselves.

The story of talking with Jesus was then repeated to the other apostles, but they would not believe; and they would not go to find out for themselves as had Peter and John.

5. Peter and John at the Tomb

As the two apostles raced for Golgotha and the tomb of Joseph, Peter's thoughts alternated between fear and hope, fearing to meet the Master, but encouraged by having been specifically mentioned. Peter was half persuaded that Jesus was really alive, recalling the promise to rise on the third day. Strange to relate, this promise had not occurred to Peter since the crucifixion and until this moment while hurrying north

through Jerusalem. John experienced a strange ecstasy of joy and hope, and was half convinced that the others really had seen the risen Master.

John, being younger than Peter, arrived first at the tomb, stopping at the door and viewing the tomb, and it was just as it had been described. Very soon Simon Peter rushed up and, entering, saw the same empty tomb with the grave cloths so peculiarly arranged. And when Peter had come out, John also went in and saw it all, and then they sat down on the stone to ponder the meaning of what they had seen and heard. And while they sat there, they remembered what had been told to them about Jesus, but they could not clearly perceive what had happened.

Peter at first suggested that the grave had been rifled, that enemies had stolen the body, perhaps bribed the guards. But John reasoned that the grave would hardly have been left so orderly if the body had been stolen, and also raised the question as to how the bandages happened to be left behind, and so apparently intact. And again they both went back into the tomb to more closely examine the grave cloths. As they came out of the tomb the second time, they found that Mary had returned and was weeping before the entrance. Mary had gone to the apostles believing that Jesus had risen from the grave, but when the apostles refused to believe this report, became depressed and longed to go back near the tomb.

As Mary lingered after Peter and John had gone, the Master again appeared, saying: "Do not doubt; have the courage to believe what you have seen and heard. Go back to my apostles and tell them again that I have risen, that I will appear to them, and that presently I will go before them into Galilee as I promised."

Mary hurried back to the Mark home and told the apostles about again talking with Jesus, but the apostles would not believe it. But when Peter and John returned, the other apostles ceased to ridicule and became filled with fear and apprehension.

Paper 190

Morontia Appearances of Jesus

The resurrected Jesus now prepares to spend a short period on Urantia for the purpose of experiencing the ascending morontia career of a mortal of the realms. Although this time of the morontia life is to be spent on the world of mortal incarnation, it will, however, be in all respects the counterpart of the experience of Satania mortals who pass through the progressive morontia life of the seven mansion worlds of Jerusem.

All this power which is inherent in Jesus — the endowment of life — and which enabled the resurrection, is the very gift of eternal life which is bestowed on believers, and which even now makes their escape from the bonds of natural death certain.

The mortals of the realms will rise in the morning of the resurrection with the same type of transition or morontia body that Jesus had when emerging from the tomb on this Sunday morning. These bodies do not have circulating blood, and such beings do not partake of ordinary material food; nevertheless, these morontia forms are *real*. When the various believers saw Jesus after the resurrection, they were not the self-deceived victims of visions or hallucinations.

Abiding faith in the resurrection of Jesus was the cardinal feature of the faith of all branches of the subsequent teaching. In Jerusalem, Alexandria, Antioch, and Philadelphia all of the teachers united in this implicit faith in the Master's resurrection.

1. Heralds of the Resurrection

The apostles did not want Jesus to leave them; therefore they tended to ignore all of the statements about dying, along with the promises to rise again. They were not expecting the resurrection as it came, and they refused to believe it until they were confronted with the compulsion of unimpeachable evidence and the absolute proof of their own experiences.

When the apostles refused to believe the report of the five people who stated that they had seen and talked with Jesus, Mary Magdalene returned to the tomb, and the others went back to Joseph's house, where they related their experiences to the others gathered there. And these people believed their report. Shortly after six o'clock several of these believers went over to the home of Nicodemus, where they related all these happenings to Joseph, Nicodemus, David Zebedee, and those assembled there. Nicodemus and the others doubted their story, doubted that Jesus had risen from the dead; they conjectured that the Jews had removed the body. Joseph and David were disposed to believe the report, so much so that they hurried out to inspect the tomb, and they found everything just as had been described. And they were the last to view the tomb, for the high priest sent the captain of the temple guards at half past seven o'clock to remove the grave cloths. The captain wrapped them all up in the linen sheet and threw them over a near-by cliff.

From the tomb David and Joseph went immediately to the home of Elijah Mark, where they held a conference with the ten apostles in the upper chamber. Only John Zebedee was disposed to believe, even faintly, that Jesus had risen from the dead. Peter had believed at first but, when failing to find the Master, fell into grave doubting. They were all disposed to believe that the Jews had removed the body. David would not argue with them, but on leaving said: "You are the apostles, and you ought to understand these things. I will not contend with you; nevertheless, I am now going back to the home of Nicodemus, where I have arranged with the messengers to assemble this morning, and when they have gathered together, I will send them on their last mission, as heralds of the Master's resurrection. I heard the Master's prediction

about dying and rising on the third day, and I believe it.” And after speaking to the dejected and forlorn ambassadors, this self-appointed chief of communication and intelligence took leave of the apostles. On the way from the upper chamber David dropped the bag of Judas, containing all the apostolic funds, in the lap of Matthew Levi.

It was about half past nine o’clock when the last of David’s twenty-six messengers arrived at the home of Nicodemus. David promptly assembled them in the spacious courtyard and addressed them:

“Friends, all this time you have served me in accordance with your oath to me and to one another, and I have never yet sent you out with false information. I am about to send you on your last mission as volunteer messengers, and in doing so I release you from your oaths and disband the messenger corps. I say to you that we have finished our work. The Master has no more need of mortal messengers, having risen from the dead. We were told that the Master would die and rise again on the third day. I have seen the tomb — it is empty. I have spoken with others who have talked with Jesus. I now disband you, bid you farewell, and send you on your respective assignments, and the message which you will deliver to the believers is: ‘Jesus has risen from the dead; the tomb is empty.’”

The majority of those present tried to persuade David not to do this. But they did not succeed. They then sought to dissuade the messengers, but they would not heed the words of doubt. And so, shortly before ten o’clock this Sunday morning, these twenty-six runners went forth as the first heralds of the mighty truth-fact of the resurrected Jesus. And they started out on this mission as they had on so many others, in fulfillment of their oath to David Zebedee and to one another. These people had great confidence in David. They departed on this assignment without even waiting to talk with those who had seen Jesus. The majority of them believed what David had told them, and even those who somewhat doubted, carried the message just as certainly and just as swiftly.

The apostles, the ambassadors of the new realm, are assembled in the upper chamber, where they manifest fear and express doubts, while these ordinary people, representing the first attempt at the socialization of the Master’s doctrine of the family of humanity, under the orders of their fearless and efficient leader, go out to proclaim the risen Savior of a world and a universe. And they engage in this eventful service before the chosen representatives are willing to accept the evidence of eyewitnesses.

These twenty-six were dispatched to the home of Lazarus in Bethany and to all of the believer centers, from Beersheba in the south to Damascus and Sidon in the north; and from Philadelphia in the east to Alexandria in the west.

David left for the home of Joseph to get Salome, and they then went to Bethany to join the waiting family of Jesus. David lived there in Bethany with Martha and Mary until after they had disposed of their earthly possessions, and then accompanied them on their journey to join Lazarus at Philadelphia.

In about one week from this time Jesus’ family separated. John Zebedee took Mary home to Bethsaida. James stayed with the family in Jerusalem. Ruth remained at Bethany with Martha and Mary. The rest of the family returned to Galilee. David Zebedee left Bethany for Philadelphia with Martha and Mary early in June, the day after marrying Ruth.

2. Jesus’ Appearance at Bethany

From the time of the morontia resurrection until the hour of the spirit ascension, Jesus made nineteen separate appearances in visible form to the believers on earth. Jesus did not appear to the enemies nor to

those who could not make spiritual use of this manifestation in visible form. The first appearance was to the five people at the tomb; the second, to Mary Magdalene, also at the tomb.

The third appearance occurred this Sunday at Bethany. Shortly after noon, James was standing in the garden before the empty tomb of the resurrected Lazarus, considering the news brought to them about one hour previously by the messenger of David. James had always inclined to believe in Jesus' mission on earth, but had long since lost contact with the work and had drifted into grave doubting regarding the later claims of the apostles that Jesus was the Messiah. The whole family was startled and confounded by the news brought by the messenger. Even as James stood before Lazarus's empty tomb, Mary Magdalene arrived on the scene and was excitedly relating to the family the experiences of the early morning hours at the tomb of Joseph. While Mary was still speaking, David Zebedee and Salome arrived. Ruth, of course, believed the report, and so did Jude after talking with David and Salome.

In the meantime, James, while standing there in the garden near the tomb, became aware of a near-by presence, and turning to look, observed the gradual appearance of a strange form. James was too amazed to speak and too frightened to flee. And then the strange form spoke, saying: "James, I come to call you to the service of the new realm. Join earnest hands with the others and follow after me." James realized that it was Jesus who had spoken. They all had more or less difficulty in recognizing the morontia form of the Master, but few of them had any trouble recognizing the voice or otherwise identifying the charming personality of Jesus.

James, on hearing Jesus' voice, started to kneel, but Jesus asked James to stand and they walked through the garden and talked for almost three minutes; talking over experiences of former days and forecasting the events of the near future. As they neared the house, Jesus said, "Farewell, James, until I greet you all together."

James rushed into the house, exclaiming: "I have just seen and talked with Jesus, who is not dead but has risen! And then, vanishing before me, Jesus said, 'Farewell until I greet you all together.'" James had scarcely finished speaking when Jude returned, and the experience of meeting Jesus in the garden was retold for the benefit of Jude. And they all began to believe in the resurrection of Jesus. James now announced a desire to remain in this area and not return to Galilee and David exclaimed "I expect to see Jesus myself."

And David did not have long to wait, for the fourth appearance to mortal recognition occurred shortly before two o'clock in this very home of Martha and Mary, when Jesus appeared visibly before the earthly family and their friends, twenty in all. The Master appeared in the open back door, saying: "Peace be upon you. Greetings to those who were once near me. How could you doubt? Why have you waited so long before choosing to follow the light of truth with a whole heart? Come, therefore, all of you into the family of the Spirit of Truth in the Creator's realm." As they began to recover from the first shock of their amazement they moved as if to embrace Jesus, who vanished from their sight.

They all wanted to rush off to the city to tell the doubting apostles about what had happened, but James restrained them. Only Mary Magdalene was permitted to return to Joseph's house. James forbade their publishing abroad the fact of this morontia visit because of certain things which Jesus had said as they conversed in the garden. But James never revealed more of this visit with the risen Master at the Lazarus home in Bethany.

3. At the Home of Joseph

The fifth morontia manifestation of Jesus occurred in the presence of some twenty-five believers assembled at the home of Joseph of Arimathea, at about fifteen minutes past four o'clock on this same Sunday

afternoon. Mary Magdalene had returned to Joseph's house just a few minutes before this appearance. James had requested that nothing be said to the apostles concerning the Master's appearance at Bethany, but had not asked Mary to refrain from reporting the occurrence to the group at Joseph's home. Accordingly, Mary, after pledging them all to secrecy, proceeded to relate what had so recently happened with Jesus' family at Bethany. And in the very midst of this thrilling recital a sudden and solemn hush fell over them; they saw in their very midst the fully visible form of the risen Jesus, who greeted them, saying: "Peace be upon you. In the new realm there will be neither Jew nor gentile, rich nor poor, free nor bond. You also are called to publish the doctrine of the liberty of humankind through the relationship with the Creator. Go to all the world proclaiming this doctrine and confirming believers in the faith. And while you do this, do not forget to minister to the sick and strengthen those who are fainthearted and fear-ridden. And I will be with you always, even to the ends of the earth." And having spoken, Jesus vanished from their sight, while the people fell on their faces and worshiped in silence.

Of the five morontia appearances of Jesus occurring up to this time, Mary Magdalene had witnessed four.

As a result of sending out the messengers during the mid-morning, and from the unconscious leakage of intimations concerning this appearance of Jesus at Joseph's house, word began to come to the rulers of the Jews during the early evening that it was being reported about the city that Jesus had risen, and had been seen by many people. The Sanhedrists were thoroughly aroused by these rumors. After a hasty consultation with Annas, Caiaphas called a meeting of the Sanhedrin to convene at eight o'clock that evening. It was at this meeting that action was taken to exclude from the synagogues any person who made mention of Jesus' resurrection. It was even suggested that anyone claiming to have seen Jesus should be put to death; this proposal, however, did not come to a vote since the meeting broke up in confusion bordering on actual panic. They had dared to think they were through with Jesus. They were about to discover that their real troubles had just begun.

4. Appearance to the Greeks

About half past four o'clock, at the home of Flavius, the Master made a sixth morontia appearance to some forty Greek believers assembled there. While they were engaged in discussing the reports of the Master's resurrection, Jesus manifested in their midst, notwithstanding that the doors were securely fastened, and speaking to them, said: "Peace be upon you. While I appeared on earth among the Jews, I came to minister to all people. In the realm of the Creator there will be neither Jew nor gentile; you will all be siblings — the children of the Creator. Go therefore to all the world, proclaiming this doctrine as you have received it from the ambassadors of the new realm, and I will welcome you into the family of the Creator's children of faith and truth." And Jesus, having charged them, left. They remained within the house all evening; they were too overcome with awe and fear to venture forth. Neither did any of these Greeks sleep that night; they stayed awake discussing these things and hoping that the Master might again visit them. Among this group were many of the Greeks who were at Gethsemane when Jesus was arrested by the soldiers and betrayed by Judas with a kiss.

Rumors of Jesus' resurrection and reports concerning the many appearances to the followers are spreading rapidly, and the whole city is being raised to a high pitch of excitement. The Master has already appeared to the family, to the followers, and to the Greeks, and presently will manifest in the midst of the apostles. The Sanhedrin is soon to begin the consideration of these new problems which have been so suddenly thrust upon the Jewish rulers. Jesus thinks much about the apostles but wants them to be left alone for a few more hours of solemn reflection and thoughtful consideration before visiting them.

5. The Walk with Two Shepherds

At Emmaus, about seven miles west of Jerusalem, lived two shepherds who had spent the Passover week in Jerusalem attending the sacrifices, ceremonials, and feasts. Cleopas, the elder, was a partial believer in Jesus; at least having been cast out of the synagogue. Jacob, the younger, was not a believer, but was intrigued by what had been said about the Master's teachings and works.

On this Sunday afternoon, about three miles out of Jerusalem and a few minutes before five o'clock, as these two shepherds trudged along the road to Emmaus, they talked in great earnestness about Jesus' teachings, work, and more especially concerning the rumors that the tomb was empty, and that Jesus had talked with certain of the believers. Cleopas was inclined to believe these reports, but Jacob was insistent that the whole affair was probably a fraud. While they argued and debated as they made their way toward home, the morontia manifestation of Jesus, the seventh appearance, came alongside them as they journeyed on. Cleopas did not recognize who this was in spite of having often heard Jesus teach and having eaten at the homes of Jerusalem believers on several occasions when the Master had been present.

After walking a short way with them, Jesus said: "What were the words you exchanged so earnestly as I came upon you?" And Cleopas said: "Can it be that you live in Jerusalem and do not know the things which have recently happened?" Then the Master asked, "What things?" Cleopas replied: "If you do not know about these matters, you are the only one in Jerusalem who has not heard these rumors concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in word and in deed before Yahweh and all the people. The chief priests and our rulers delivered this Jesus up to the Romans to be crucified. Now many of us had hoped that it was Jesus who would deliver Israel from the domination of the gentiles. But that is not all. It is now the third day since the crucifixion, and certain people have amazed us by declaring that very early this morning they went to the tomb and found it empty. And these same people insist that they talked with Jesus, who they maintain has risen from the dead. And when they reported this to the apostles, two of them ran to the tomb and found it empty" — and here Jacob interrupted to say, "but they did not see Jesus."

As they walked along, Jesus said to them: "When you tell me that it is about the teachings and work of this person that you have your discussions, then may I enlighten you since I am more than familiar with these things. Do you not remember the teaching that Jesus' dominion was not of this world, and that all people, being the children of the Creator, would find liberty and freedom in the spiritual joy of the pursuit of loving service in this new realm of the truth of the Creator's love? Do you not recall how Jesus proclaimed restoration for all people, ministering to the sick and afflicted and setting free those who were bound by fear and enslaved by evil? Do you not know that this citizen of Nazareth told the disciples that 'I must go to Jerusalem, be delivered to my enemies, who will put me to death, and I will rise on the third day?' Have you not been told all this? Did you not understand how great the doctrine of the new realm was which was delivered to you? Do you not perceive how great a liberation has come upon you?"

By this time they had come near the village where these shepherds lived. These two had not spoken a word since Jesus began to teach them as they walked along the way. Soon they arrived in front of their humble dwelling place, and Jesus was about to leave them, going on down the road, but they insisted that it was near nightfall, and that Jesus stay with them. Finally Jesus consented, and very soon after they went into the house, they sat down to eat. They gave Jesus the bread to bless, and as it was being broken and handed to them, their eyes were opened, and Cleopas recognized that their guest was the Master. And when Cleopas said, "It is the Master —," the morontia Jesus vanished from their sight.

And then they said, "No wonder our hearts burned within us while we walked along the road and listened to those teachings!"

They would not stop to eat. They had seen the morontia Master, and they rushed from the house, hurrying back to Jerusalem to spread the news of the risen Deliverer.

About nine o'clock that evening and just before the Master appeared to the ten apostles, these two excited shepherds broke in on them in the upper chamber, exclaiming that they had seen and talked with Jesus. And they told everything that Jesus had said to them and how they had not discerned who it was until the time of the breaking of the bread.

Paper 191

Appearances to the Apostles and Other Leaders

Resurrection Sunday was a terrible day in the lives of the apostles; ten of them spent the larger part of the day in the upper chamber behind locked doors. They might have fled from Jerusalem, but they were afraid of being arrested by the agents of the Sanhedrin if they were found. Thomas was brooding alone at Bethpage but would have fared better by remaining with the other apostles, and would have aided them to direct their discussions along more helpful lines.

All day long John upheld the idea that Jesus had risen from the dead, recounting no less than five different times when the Master had promised to rise again on the third day. John's attitude had considerable influence on them, especially on James and Nathaniel. John would have influenced them more if not for being the youngest member of the group.

Their isolation had much to do with their troubles. John Mark kept them in touch with developments about the temple and informed them as to the many rumors gaining headway in the city, but it did not occur to Mark to gather news from the different groups of believers to whom Jesus had already appeared. That was the kind of service which had previously been rendered by the messengers of David, but they were all absent on their last assignment as heralds of the resurrection to those groups of believers who lived remotely from Jerusalem. For the first time in all these years the apostles realized how much they had been dependent on David's messengers for their daily information.

All this day Peter characteristically vacillated emotionally between faith and doubt concerning the Master's resurrection. Peter could not get away from the sight of the grave cloths resting there in the tomb as if the body of Jesus had just evaporated from within. "But," reasoned Peter, "if the Master has risen and has been seen by others, why not appear to us, the apostles?" Peter would grow sorrowful, thinking that maybe being present among the apostles was the reason that Jesus did not come to them because of having denied Jesus that night in Annas's courtyard. And then Peter became more cheerful when remembering what had been said to Mary Magdalene and the others, "Go tell my apostles — and Peter." But to derive encouragement from this message implied believing that they had really seen and heard the risen Master. Thus Peter alternated between faith and doubt throughout the whole day, until a little after eight o'clock, when, venturing out into the courtyard, Peter thought about leaving the apostles in order to no longer prevent Jesus' coming to them because of having denied the Master.

James Zebedee at first advocated that they all go to the tomb, being strongly in favor of doing something to get to the bottom of the mystery. It was Nathaniel who prevented them from going out in public in response to James's urging, doing this by reminding them of Jesus' warning against unduly jeopardizing their lives at this time. By noontime James had settled down with the others to watchful waiting. James said little and was tremendously disappointed because Jesus did not appear to them, not knowing of the Master's many appearances to other groups and individuals.

Andrew did much listening this day. Andrew was exceedingly bothered by the situation and had many doubts, but at least enjoyed a certain sense of freedom from responsibility for the guidance of the other apostles. Andrew was indeed grateful for having been released by the Master from the burdens of leadership before they fell upon these distracting times.

More than once during the long and weary hours of this tragic day, the only sustaining influence of the group was the frequent contribution of Nathaniel's characteristic philosophic counsel. Nathaniel was really

the controlling influence among the ten throughout the entire day, never once expressing either belief or disbelief in the Master's resurrection. But as the day wore on, Nathaniel became increasingly inclined toward believing that Jesus had fulfilled the promise to rise again.

Simon Zelotes was too crushed to participate in the discussions, most of the time reclining on a couch in a corner of the room facing the wall. Simon did not speak half a dozen times throughout the whole day. The concept of the new realm had crashed, and Simon could not discern that the Master's resurrection could materially change the situation. This disappointment was very personal and altogether too powerful to be recovered from on short notice, even in the face of such a stupendous fact as the resurrection.

Strange to record, the usually inexpressive Philip did much talking throughout the afternoon of this day. During the morning Philip had little to say, but all afternoon asked questions of the other apostles. Peter was often annoyed by these questions, but the others took the inquiries good-naturedly. Philip was particularly interested in knowing, provided Jesus had really risen from the grave, whether the material body would bear the physical marks of the crucifixion.

Matthew was highly confused, listening to the discussions but spending most of the time thinking about the problem of their future finances. Regardless of Jesus' supposed resurrection, Judas was gone, David had unceremoniously turned the funds over, and they were without an authoritative leader. But Matthew, before getting around to giving serious consideration to their arguments about the resurrection, had already seen the Master face to face.

The Alpheus twins took little part in these serious discussions; they were fairly busy with their customary ministrations. One of them expressed the attitude of both when saying, in reply to a question asked by Philip: "We do not understand about the resurrection, but the others say they talked with the Master, and we believe them."

Thomas was in the midst of a typical spell of despairing depression, sleeping a portion of the day and walking over the hills the rest of the time. Thomas felt the urge to rejoin the other apostles, but the desire to be alone was stronger.

The Master put off the first morontia appearance to the apostles for a number of reasons. First, that so they would have time, after hearing of the resurrection, to think over what had been predicted by Jesus about dying and rising again. In the second place, Jesus wanted Thomas to be there when appearing to them. John Mark located Thomas at the home of Simon in Bethpage early this Sunday morning, bringing word to that effect to the apostles about eleven o'clock. Any time during this day Thomas would have gone back to them if Nathaniel or any two of the other apostles had requested it, really wanting to return, but having left the evening before, was too proud to go back so soon. By the next day Thomas was so depressed that it required almost a week to decide to return. The apostles waited for Thomas, and Thomas waited for them to take the initiative in making the request, remaining away until the next Saturday evening, when, after darkness had come, Peter and John went to Bethpage and brought Thomas back with them. And this is also the reason why they did not go at once to Galilee after Jesus first appeared to them; they would not go without Thomas.

1. The Appearance to Peter

It was half past eight o'clock this Sunday evening when Jesus appeared to Simon Peter in the garden of the Mark home. This was the eighth morontia manifestation. Peter had lived under a heavy burden of doubt and guilt ever since denying the Master, and all day Saturday and this Sunday had fought the fear of perhaps no longer being an apostle. Peter had shuddered at the fate of Judas and even thought of also having betrayed the Master, all this afternoon thinking that being present with the apostles had prevented Jesus' appearing

to them, provided, of course, that Jesus had really risen from the dead. And it was to Peter, in such a frame of mind and in such a state of soul, that Jesus appeared as the dejected apostle strolled among the flowers and shrubs.

When Peter thought of the loving look the Master gave while passing by on Annas's porch, and about that wonderful message brought in the early morning by the believers who came from the empty tomb, "Go tell my apostles — and Peter" — while contemplating these tokens of mercy, Peter's faith began to overcome the doubts, and Peter stood still, fists clenched, and said: "I believe that Jesus has risen from the dead; I will go and tell the others." And suddenly a form appeared in front of Peter, speaking in familiar tones and saying: "Peter, the enemy desired to have you, but I would not give you up. I knew it was not from the heart that you disowned me; therefore I forgave you even before you asked; but now you must stop thinking about yourself and your troubles while you prepare to carry my teachings to those who sit in darkness. You should no longer be concerned with what you may obtain from the new realm but rather be motivated by what you can give to those who live in dire spiritual poverty. Prepare yourself, Simon, for the challenges of a new day, the struggle with spiritual darkness and the evil doubtings of the natural minds of mortals."

Peter and the morontia Jesus walked through the garden and talked of things past, present, and future for almost five minutes. Then the Master vanished, saying, "Farewell, Peter, until I see you with the others."

For a moment, Peter was overcome by the realization of having talked with the risen Master, and of being sure of still serving as an ambassador of the new realm. Peter had just heard the Master's encouragement to go on preaching, and with all this welling up, rushed to the upper chamber and into the presence of the other apostles, exclaiming in breathless excitement: "I have seen the Master in the garden. We talked and I have been forgiven."

Peter's description of having seen Jesus in the garden made a profound impression on the other apostles, and they were about ready to surrender their doubts when Andrew got up and warned them not to be too much influenced by Peter's report. Andrew intimated that Peter had seen things which were not real before, and while not directly alluding to the vision of the night on the Sea of Galilee when Peter claimed to have seen the Master coming to them walking on the water, said enough to betray to all present that it was this incident that had come to mind. Simon Peter was very hurt by Andrew's insinuations and immediately lapsed into crestfallen silence. The twins felt sorry for Peter, and they both went over to express their sympathy and to reassert that others had also seen the Master.

2. First Appearance to the Apostles

Shortly after nine o'clock that evening, after the departure of Cleopas and Jacob, while the Alpheus twins comforted Peter, and while Nathaniel remonstrated with Andrew, and as the ten apostles were assembled in the upper chamber with all the doors locked for fear of arrest, the Master suddenly appeared in the midst of them, saying: "Peace be upon you. Why are you so frightened when I appear, as though you had seen a spirit? Did I not tell you about these things when I was present with you in the body? Did I not say to you that the chief priests and the rulers would deliver me up to be killed, that one of your own would betray me, and that on the third day I would rise? Why then all your doubtings and all this discussion about the reports of the believers, Cleopas and Jacob, and even Peter? How long will you doubt my words and refuse to believe my promises? And now that you actually see me, will you believe? Even now one of you is absent. When you are gathered together once more, and after all of you know of a certainty that I have risen from the grave, go into Galilee. Have faith in the Creator; have faith in one another; and so you will enter into the new service of the realm of the Creator. I will stay in Jerusalem with you until you are ready to go into Galilee. My peace I leave with you."

The morontia Jesus then vanished from their sight. And they all fell on their faces, praising the Creator and venerating their vanished Master. This was the Master's ninth morontia appearance.

3. With the Morontia Creatures

The next day, Monday, was spent wholly with the morontia creatures then present on Urantia. As participants in the Master's morontia-transition experience, more than one million morontia directors and associates had come to Urantia, together with transition mortals of various orders from the seven mansion worlds of Satania. The morontia Jesus spent forty days with these splendid intelligences, instructing them and learning from their directors about the life of morontia transition as it is traversed by the mortals of the inhabited worlds of Satania as they pass through the system morontia spheres.

About midnight of this Monday the Master's morontia form was adjusted for transition to the second stage of morontia progression. When Jesus next appeared to the mortal children on earth, it was as a second-stage morontia being. As the Master progressed in the morontia career, it became, technically, more and more difficult for the morontia intelligences and their transforming associates to visualize the Master to mortal and material eyes.

Jesus made the transit to the third stage of morontia on Friday, April 14th; to the fourth stage on Monday, the 17th; to the fifth stage on Saturday, the 22nd; to the sixth stage on Thursday, the 27th; to the seventh stage on Tuesday, May 2nd; to Jerusem citizenship on Sunday, the 7th; and entered the embrace of the Most Highs of Edentia on Sunday, the 14th.

In this manner Michael of Nebadon completed the service of universe experience, having already, in connection with previous bestowals, fully experienced the life of the ascendant mortals of time and space from the sojourn on the headquarters of the constellation even on to, and through, the service of the headquarters of the superuniverse. And it was by these very morontia experiences that the Creator of Nebadon really finished and acceptably terminated this seventh and final universe bestowal.

4. The Tenth Appearance (At Philadelphia)

The tenth morontia manifestation of Jesus to mortal recognition occurred a short time after eight o'clock on Tuesday, April 11, at Philadelphia, appearing to Abner and Lazarus and some one hundred and fifty of their associates, including more than fifty of the evangelistic corps of the seventy. This appearance occurred just after the opening of a special meeting in the synagogue which had been called by Abner to discuss the crucifixion of Jesus and the more recent report of the resurrection which had been brought by David's messenger. Inasmuch as the resurrected Lazarus was now a member of this group of believers, it was not difficult for them to believe the report that Jesus had risen from the dead.

The meeting in the synagogue was just being opened by Abner and Lazarus, who were standing together in the pulpit, when the entire audience of believers saw the form of the Master appear suddenly. Jesus stepped forward from between Abner and Lazarus, and greeting the company, said:

"Peace be upon you. You all know that we have only one Universal Creator, and that there is only one doctrine — the teaching of the gift of eternal life which mortals receive by faith. As you rejoice in your loyalty to this teaching, pray to the Source of truth to create in your hearts a new and greater love for others. You are to love all people as I have loved you; you are to serve all people as I have served you. With understanding sympathy and familial affection, engage with all those who are dedicated to the proclamation of the doctrine of the new age, whether they are Jew or gentile, Greek or Roman, Persian or Ethiopian. John proclaimed the new realm in advance; you have preached it in power; the Greeks already teach it; and I am

soon to send the Spirit of Truth into the souls of all these people who have so unselfishly dedicated their lives to the enlightenment of those who sit in spiritual darkness. You are all the children of light; therefore do not stumble into the misunderstanding entanglements of mortal suspicion and human intolerance. If you are ennobled, by the grace of faith, to love unbelievers, should you not also equally love those who are believers in the far-spreading household of faith? Remember, as you love one another, all people will know that you are my disciples.

“Go, then, into all the world proclaiming this doctrine of the parenthood of the Creator and the family of humanity to all nations and always be wise in your choice of methods for presenting these teachings to the different peoples of humanity. You have freely received this doctrine and you will freely give it to all nations. Do not fear the resistance of evil, for I am with you always, even to the end of the ages. And my peace I leave with you.”

And then Jesus vanished. With the exception of one of the appearances in Galilee, which upward of five hundred believers experienced at one time, this group in Philadelphia constituted the largest number of mortals who saw Jesus on any single occasion.

Early the next morning, even while the apostles waited in Jerusalem for the emotional recovery of Thomas, these believers at Philadelphia went out proclaiming that Jesus of Nazareth had risen from the dead.

The next day, Wednesday, Jesus spent without interruption in the company of the morontia associates, and during the midafternoon hours received visiting morontia delegates from the mansion worlds of every local system of inhabited spheres throughout the constellation of Norlatiadek. And they all rejoiced to know their Creator as one of their own order of universe intelligence.

5. Second Appearance to the Apostles

Thomas spent a lonesome week alone in the hills around Olivet, during this time seeing only those at Simon’s house and John Mark. It was about nine o’clock on Saturday, April 15, when the two apostles took Thomas back with them to their rendezvous at the Mark home. The next day Thomas listened to the telling of the stories of the Master’s various appearances, but steadfastly refused to believe. Thomas maintained that Peter had confused them into thinking they had seen the Master. Nathaniel reasoned with Thomas, but it did no good. There was an emotional stubbornness associated with customary doubtfulness, and this state of mind, coupled with chagrin at having run away from them, conspired to create a situation of isolation which even Thomas did not fully understand. Thomas had withdrawn from the others and now, even back among them, unconsciously tended to assume an attitude of disagreement. Thomas was slow to surrender, disliking to give in. Without intending it, Thomas really enjoyed the attention and derived unconscious satisfaction from the efforts of the others. Thomas had missed them for a full week, and obtained considerable pleasure from their persistent attentions.

They were having their evening meal a little after six o’clock, with Peter sitting on one side of Thomas and Nathaniel on the other, when the doubting apostle said: “I will not believe unless I see the Master with my own eyes and put my finger in the mark of the nails.” As they sat at supper, and while the doors were securely shut and locked, the morontia Master suddenly appeared inside the curvature of the table and, standing directly in front of Thomas, said:

“Peace be upon you. For a full week I have stayed so that I might appear again when you were all present to hear once more the commission to go into all the world and preach this doctrine of the new realm. Again I tell you: As the Creator sent me into the world, so I send you. As I have revealed the Creator, so you will reveal the divine love, not merely with words, but in your daily living. I send you forward, not to love the

souls of mortals, but rather to *love all people*. You are not to merely proclaim the joys of the Creator's realm but also to exhibit in your daily experience these spirit realities of the divine life since you already have eternal life, as the gift of the Creator, through faith. When you have faith, when power from on high, the Spirit of Truth, has come to you, you will not hide your light here behind closed doors; you will make known the love and the mercy of the Creator to all humankind. Through fear you now flee from the facts of a disagreeable experience, but when you have been baptized with the Spirit of Truth, you will bravely and joyously go forth to meet the new experiences of proclaiming eternal life in the realm of the Creator. You may wait here and in Galilee for a short time while you recover from the shock of the transition from the false security of the authority of traditionalism to the new order of the authority of facts, truth, and faith in the supreme realities of living experience. Your mission to the world is founded on the fact that I lived a Creator-revealing life among you; on the truth that you and all others are the children of the Creator; and it will consist in the life which you will live among mortals — the actual and living experience of loving people and serving them, even as I have loved and served you. Let faith reveal your light to the world; let the revelation of truth open the eyes blinded by tradition; let your loving service effectually destroy the prejudice engendered by ignorance. By drawing close to others in understanding sympathy and with unselfish devotion, you will lead them into a saving knowledge of the Creator's love. The Jews have extolled goodness; the Greeks have exalted beauty; the Hindus preach devotion; the faraway ascetics teach reverence; the Romans demand loyalty; but I require of my disciples life, a life of loving service for others."

Then the Master looked down into the face of Thomas and said: "And you, Thomas, who said you would not believe unless you could see me and put your finger in the nail marks of my hands, have now seen me and heard my words; and though you see no nail marks on my hands, since I am raised in the form that you will also have when you depart from this world, what will you say to others? You will acknowledge the truth, for already in your heart you had begun to believe even when you so stoutly asserted your unbelief. Your doubts, Thomas, always most stubbornly assert themselves just as they are about to crumble. Thomas, I ask you to not be faithless but believing — and I know you will believe, even with a whole heart."

Thomas fell down before the morontia Master and exclaimed, "I believe! My Master!" Then Jesus said to Thomas: "You have believed, Thomas, because you have really seen and heard me. Blessed are those in the ages to come who will believe even though they have not seen with mortal eyes nor heard with mortal ears."

And then, as the Master's form moved over near the head of the table, Jesus addressed them all, saying: "And now all of you go to Galilee, where I will presently appear to you," and after saying this, vanished.

The eleven apostles were now fully convinced that Jesus had risen from the dead, and very early the next morning, before dawn, they started out for Galilee.

6. The Alexandrian Appearance

While the eleven apostles were on the way to Galilee, drawing near their journey's end on Tuesday evening, April 18, at about half past eight o'clock, Jesus appeared to Rodan and some eighty other believers in Alexandria. This was the Master's twelfth appearance in morontia form. Jesus appeared before these Greeks and Jews at the conclusion of the report of David's messenger regarding the crucifixion. This messenger, being the fifth in the Jerusalem-Alexandria relay of runners, had arrived in Alexandria late that afternoon, and after Rodan and the others received this message, it was decided to call the believers together to receive this tragic word directly from the messenger. At about eight o'clock, the messenger, Nathan of Busiris, came before this group and told them in detail all that had been received from the preceding runner. Nathan ended this touching recital with these words: "But David, who sends us this word, reports that the Master

predicted this death and resurrection.” Even as Nathan spoke, the morontia Master appeared there in full view of all. And when Nathan sat down, Jesus said:

“Peace be upon you. That which the Creator sent me into the world to establish belongs not to any special group of teachers or preachers. This doctrine of the new age belongs to both Jew and gentile, to rich and poor, to free and bond, even to the little children. And you are all to proclaim this teaching of love and truth by the lives which you live. You will love one another with a new and startling affection, even as I have loved you. You will serve humankind with a new and amazing devotion, even as I have served you. And when people see that you love them, and when they see how fervently you serve them, they will perceive that you have become faith-members of the realm of the Creator, and they will follow after the Spirit of Truth which they see in your lives, to the finding of life eternal.

“As the Creator sent me into this world, I now send you. You are all called to carry the teachings to those who sit in darkness. This doctrine of the new age belongs to all who believe it; it shall not be committed to the custody of mere priests. Soon the Spirit of Truth will come to you, and it will lead you into all truth. Go, therefore, into all the world preaching this doctrine, and I will be with you always, even to the end of the ages.”

And then the Master vanished. All that night these believers remained there together, recounting their experiences as believers and listening to the many words of Rodan and the associates. And they all believed that Jesus had risen from the dead. Imagine the surprise of David’s herald of the resurrection, who arrived the second day after this, when they replied to the announcement, saying: “Yes, we know, for Jesus appeared to us the day before yesterday.”

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Appearances in Galilee

By the time the apostles left Jerusalem for Galilee, the Jewish leaders had quieted down considerably. Since Jesus appeared only to the believers, and since the apostles were in hiding and did no public preaching, the rulers of the Jews concluded that the movement was, after all, effectually crushed. They were, of course, disconcerted by the increasing spread of rumors that Jesus had risen from the dead, but they depended on the bribed guards to effectively counteract all such reports by their reiteration of the story that a band of followers had removed the body.

From this time on, until the apostles were dispersed by the rising tide of persecution, Peter was the generally recognized head of the apostolic corps. Jesus never gave Peter any such authority, and Peter had never been formally elected to such a position of responsibility by the other apostles, but simply assumed it and held it by common consent and by virtue of being their chief preacher. From now on public preaching became the main business of the apostles. After their return from Galilee, Matthias, whom they chose to take the place of Judas, became their treasurer.

Early this Monday morning, when the apostles left for Galilee, John Mark followed them out of the city, and when they had passed well beyond Bethany, boldly came up among them, feeling confident about being allowed to stay with them.

The apostles paused several times on the way to Galilee to tell the story of their risen Master and therefore did not arrive at Bethsaida until very late on Wednesday night. It was noon on Thursday before they were all awake and ready to eat breakfast.

1. Appearance by the Lake

About six o'clock Friday morning, April 21, the morontia Master made the thirteenth appearance, the first in Galilee, to the ten apostles as their boat approached the shore close to the usual landing place at Bethsaida.

After the apostles had spent the afternoon and early evening of Thursday waiting at the Zebedee home, Simon Peter suggested that they go fishing. When Peter proposed the fishing trip, all of the apostles decided to go along. All night they struggled with the nets but caught no fish. They did not mind the failure to make a catch, for they had many interesting experiences to talk over, things which had so recently happened to them at Jerusalem. But when daylight came they decided to return to Bethsaida. As they neared the shore they saw someone on the beach, near the boat landing, standing by a fire. At first they thought it was John Mark, who had come to welcome them back with their catch, but as they drew nearer the shore, they saw they were mistaken — the person was too tall for John. It had occurred to none of them that this was the Master. They did not altogether understand why Jesus wanted to meet with them in the midst of the scenes of their earlier associations and out in the open in contact with nature, far away from the shut-in environment of Jerusalem with its tragic associations of fear, betrayal, and death. Having promised to meet them if they would go into Galilee, Jesus was about to fulfill that promise.

As they dropped anchor and prepared to enter the small boat for going ashore, the person on the beach called to them, "Have you caught anything?" and when they answered, "No," said, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find fish." While they did not know it was Jesus who had directed them, with one accord they cast in the net as they had been instructed, and immediately it was filled, so much so that they were hardly able to draw it up. Now, John Zebedee, seeing the heavy-laden net, perceived that it was the Master who had spoken to them, and leaned over and whispered to Peter, "It is the Master." Peter,

who was always inclined toward thoughtless action and impetuous devotion; when John whispered this, quickly arose and jumped into the water in order to reach the Master's side sooner. The others came up close behind, having come ashore in the small boat, hauling the net of fishes after them.

By this time John Mark was up and, seeing the apostles coming ashore with the heavy-laden net, ran down the beach to greet them; and seeing eleven instead of ten, surmised that the unrecognized one was the risen Jesus. And as the astonished ten stood by in silence, the youth rushed up to the Master and, kneeling down, said, "My Master." And then Jesus spoke, not as in Jerusalem, when greeting them with "Peace be upon you," but in commonplace tones addressed John Mark: "Well, John, I am glad to see you again and in carefree Galilee, where we can have a good visit. Stay with us, John, and have breakfast."

As Jesus talked with John Mark, the ten were so astonished and surprised that they neglected to haul the net of fish onto the beach. Now Jesus said: "Bring in your fish and prepare some for breakfast. Already we have the fire and bread."

While John Mark had paid homage to the Master, Peter had for a moment been shocked at the sight of the coals of fire glowing there on the beach; the scene was a vivid reminder of the midnight fire of charcoal in the courtyard of Annas, where Peter had disowned the Master, but recovering and, kneeling at Jesus' feet, exclaimed, "My Master!"

Peter then joined the others as they hauled in the net. When they had landed their catch, they counted the fish, and there were 153 large ones. And again the mistake was made of calling this another miraculous catch of fish. There was no miracle connected with this episode. It was merely an exercise of the Master's preknowledge, knowing that the fish were there and accordingly directing the apostles where to cast the net.

Jesus spoke to them, saying: "Come now, all of you, to breakfast. Even the twins should sit down while I visit with you; John Mark will dress the fish." John Mark brought seven good-sized fish, which the Master put on the fire, and when they were cooked, served them to the ten. Then Jesus broke the bread and handed it to John, who in turn served it to the hungry apostles. When they had all been served, Jesus asked John Mark to sit down while personally serving John the fish and the bread. And as they ate, Jesus visited with them and recounted their many experiences in Galilee and by this very lake.

This was the third time Jesus had become manifest to the apostles as a group. When Jesus first addressed them, asking if they had any fish, they did not suspect who it was because it was a common experience on the Sea of Galilee, when they came ashore, to be accosted by the fish merchants of Tarichea, who were usually on hand to buy the fresh catches for the drying establishments.

Jesus visited with the ten apostles and John Mark for more than an hour, and then walked up and down the beach, talking with them two and two — but not the same couples that at first been sent out together to teach. All eleven of the apostles had come from Jerusalem together, but Simon Zelotes had grown more and more despondent as they drew near Galilee, and, when they reached Bethsaida, left the others and returned home.

Before leaving them this morning, Jesus directed that two of the apostles should volunteer to bring Simon Zelotes back that same day. And Peter and Andrew did so.

2. Visiting with the Apostles Two and Two

When they had finished breakfast, and while the others sat by the fire, Jesus beckoned to Peter and John to come along for a stroll on the beach. As they walked, Jesus said to John, “John, do you love me?” And when John answered, “Yes, Master, with all my heart,” the Master said: “Then, John, give up your intolerance and learn to love others as I have loved you. Devote your life to proving that love is the greatest thing in the world. It is the love of the Creator that impels people to seek redemption. Love is the ancestor of all spiritual goodness, the essence of the true and the beautiful.”

Jesus then turned toward Peter and asked, “Peter, do you love me?” Peter answered, “You know I love you with all my soul.” Then Jesus said: “If you love me, Peter, feed my lambs. Do not neglect to minister to the weak, the poor, and the young. Preach without fear or favor; always remember that the Creator is no respecter of persons. Serve others even as I have served you; forgive others even as I have forgiven you. Let experience teach you the value of meditation and the power of intelligent reflection.”

After they had walked along a little farther, the Master turned to Peter and asked, “Peter, do you really love me?” And then said Simon, “Yes, Master, you know that I love you.” And again Jesus said: “Then take good care of my sheep. Be a good and a true shepherd to the flock. Do not betray their confidence in you. Do not be taken by surprise at the enemy’s hand. Be on guard at all times — watch and pray.”

When they had gone a few steps farther, Jesus turned to Peter and, for the third time, asked, “Peter, do you truly love me?” And then Peter, being slightly grieved at the Master’s seeming distrust, said with considerable feeling, “Master, you know all things, and therefore you know that I really and truly love you.” Then Jesus said: “Feed my sheep. Do not forsake the flock. Be an example and an inspiration to all the other shepherds. Love the flock as I have loved you and devote yourself to their welfare even as I have devoted my life to your welfare. And follow after me even to the end.”

Peter took this last statement literally, and pointing to John, asked, “If I follow on after you, what shall this person do?” And then, perceiving that Peter had misunderstood, Jesus said: “Peter, do not be concerned about what the others will do. If I ask that John should remain after you are gone, even until I come back, what is that to you? Only make sure that you follow me.”

This remark spread among the apostles and was received as a statement by Jesus to the effect that John would not die before the Master returned, as many thought and hoped, to establish the new realm in power and glory. It was this interpretation of what Jesus said that had much to do with getting Simon Zelotes back into service and staying at work.

When they returned to the others, Jesus went for a walk and talk with Andrew and James. When they had gone a short distance, Jesus said to Andrew, “Andrew, do you trust me?” And the former chief of the apostles, hearing Jesus ask such a question, stood still and answered, “Yes, Master, of a certainty I trust you, and you know that I do.” Then Jesus said: “Andrew, if you trust me, trust the others more — even Peter. I once trusted you with the leadership of the apostles. Now you must trust them as I leave you to go to the Creator. When the others begin to scatter because of bitter persecutions, be a considerate and wise counselor to James, who will receive heavy burdens and is not qualified by experience to bear them. And then go on trusting, for I will not fail you. When you are through on earth, you will come to me.”

Then Jesus turned to James, asking, “James, do you trust me?” And of course James replied, “Yes, Master, I trust you with all my heart.” Then Jesus said: “James, if you trust me more, you will be less impatient with the others. If you will trust me, it will help you to be kind to the family of believers. Learn to weigh the consequences of your sayings and your doings. Remember that the reaping is in accordance with the

sowing. Pray for tranquility of spirit and cultivate patience. These graces, with living faith, will sustain you when the hour comes to drink the cup of sacrifice. But never be dismayed; when you are through on earth, you will also come to be with me.”

Jesus next talked with Thomas and Nathaniel, saying to Thomas, “Thomas, do you serve me?” Thomas replied, “Yes, Master, I serve you now and always.” Then Jesus said: “If you would serve me, serve the others even as I have served you. And do not be weary in this but persevere as one who has been ordained by the Creator for this service of love. When you have finished your service with me on earth, you will serve with me in the life to come. Thomas, you must cease doubting; you must grow in faith and the knowledge of truth. Believe in the Creator like a child but cease to act so childishly. Have courage; be strong in faith and mighty in the realm of the Creator.”

Then the Master said to Nathaniel, “Nathaniel, do you serve me?” And the apostle answered, “Yes, Master, and with an undivided affection.” Then Jesus said: “If, therefore, you serve me with a whole heart, make sure that you are devoted to the welfare of the others with tireless affection. Mix friendship with your counsel and add love to your philosophy. Serve others even as I have served you. Be faithful to others as I have watched over you. Be less critical; expect less of some people and thereby lessen the extent of your disappointment. And when the work down here is over, you will serve with me in the ages to come.”

After this the Master talked with Matthew and Philip, to Philip saying, “Philip, do you obey me?” Philip answered, “Yes, Master, I will obey you even with my life.” Then Jesus said: “If you would obey me, go into the lands of the gentiles and proclaim this doctrine. The prophets have told you that to obey is better than to sacrifice. By faith you have become a Creator-knowing citizen. There is only one law to obey — that is the command to go forth proclaiming the doctrine of the new realm. Cease to fear people; be unafraid to preach the doctrine of eternal life to those who languish in darkness and hunger for the light of truth. No more, Philip, will you busy yourself with money and goods. You are now free to preach just as the others are. And I will go before you and be with you even to the end.”

And then, speaking to Matthew, the Master asked, “Matthew, do you have it in your heart to obey me?” Matthew answered, “Yes, Master, I am fully dedicated to doing your will.” Then the Master said: “Matthew, if you would obey me, go forth to teach all peoples this doctrine of the new realm. You will no longer serve the others the material things of life; from now on you are also to proclaim eternal life. From now on have an eye only to obeying your commission to preach this doctrine of the Creator’s realm. As I have done the Creator’s will on earth, you will fulfill the divine commission. Remember, both Jew and gentile are your family. Fear no one when you proclaim the saving truths of the doctrine of the realm of the Creator. And where I go, you will presently come.”

Then Jesus walked and talked with the Alpheus twins, James and Judas, and speaking to both of them, asked, “James and Judas, do you believe in me?” And when they both answered, “Yes, Master, we do believe,” Jesus said: “I will soon leave you. You see that I have already left you in the body. I remain only a short time in this form before I go to the Creator. You believe in me — you are my apostles, and you always will be. Go on believing and remembering your association with me, when I am gone, and after you have, perhaps, returned to the work you used to do before you came to live with me. Never allow a change in your outward work to influence your allegiance. Have faith in the Creator to the end of your days on earth. Never forget that, when you are a faith child of the Creator, all upright work of the realm is sacred. Nothing which a child of the Creator does can be common. Do your work, therefore, from this time on, as if for the Creator. And when you are through on this world, I have other and better worlds where you will likewise work for me. And in all of this work, on this world and on other worlds, I will work with you, and my spirit will dwell within you.”

It was almost ten o'clock when Jesus returned from visiting with the Alpheus twins, and in leaving the apostles, said: "Farewell, until I meet you all on the mount of your ordination tomorrow at noon." And having spoken, Jesus vanished.

3. On the Mount of Ordination

At noon on Saturday, April 22, the eleven apostles assembled by appointment on the hill near Capernaum, and Jesus appeared among them. This meeting occurred on the very mount where the Master had set them apart as apostles and as ambassadors of the Creator's realm on earth. And this was the Master's fourteenth morontia manifestation.

At this time the eleven apostles knelt in a circle while the Master repeated the charges and re-enacted the ordination scene just as when they were first set apart for the special work of the mission. And all of this was to them a memory of their former consecration to the Creator's service, except the Master's prayer. When the Master — the morontia Jesus — now prayed, it was in tones of majesty and with words of power such as the apostles had never heard before. Their Master now spoke with the rulers of the universes as one who, in this universe, had all power and authority. And these eleven never forgot this experience of the morontia rededication to the former pledges of ambassadorship. The Master spent just one hour on this mount with them, and after taking an affectionate farewell, vanished from their sight.

And no one saw Jesus for a full week. The apostles really had no idea what to do, not knowing whether the Master had gone to the Creator. In this state of uncertainty they stayed at Bethsaida. They were afraid to go fishing in case they might miss a visit from Jesus, although during this entire week Jesus was occupied with the morontia creatures on earth and with the experience of the morontia transition on this world.

4. The Lakeside Gathering

Word of the appearances of Jesus was spreading throughout Galilee, and every day increasing numbers of believers arrived at the Zebedee home to inquire about the Master's resurrection and to find out the truth about these reputed appearances. Peter, early in the week, sent out word that a public meeting would be held by the seaside the next Sabbath at three o'clock in the afternoon.

Accordingly, on Saturday, April 29, at three o'clock, more than five hundred believers from the environs of Capernaum assembled at Bethsaida to hear Peter preach the first public sermon since the resurrection. The apostle was compelling, and after finishing the appealing discourse, few of the hearers doubted that the Master had risen from the dead.

Peter ended the sermon, saying: "We affirm that Jesus is not dead; we declare that the Master has risen from the tomb; we proclaim that we have seen and talked with Jesus." Just as Peter finished making this declaration of faith, there, in full view of all these people, the Master appeared in morontia form and, speaking to them in familiar accents, said, "Peace be upon you, and my peace I leave with you." Having appeared and spoken to them, Jesus vanished. This was the fifteenth morontia manifestation of the risen Jesus.

Because of certain things said to the eleven while they were in conference with the Master on the mount of ordination, the apostles received the impression that their Master would presently make a public appearance before a group of the Galilean believers, and that, after doing so, they were to return to Jerusalem. Accordingly, early the next day, Sunday, April 30, the eleven left Bethsaida for Jerusalem. They did considerable teaching and preaching on the way down the Jordan, so that they did not arrive at the Mark home in Jerusalem until late on Wednesday, May 3.

This was a sad home-coming for John Mark. Just a few hours before John reached home, Elijah Mark suddenly died from a hemorrhage in the brain. Although the thought of the certainty of the resurrection of the dead did much to comfort the apostles in their grief, at the same time they truly mourned the loss of their good friend, who had been their firm supporter even in the times of great trouble and disappointment. John Mark invited the apostles to continue to make this their home. And the eleven made the upper chamber their headquarters until after the day of Pentecost.

The apostles had purposely entered Jerusalem after nightfall so that they might not be seen by the Jewish authorities. Neither did they publicly appear in connection with the funeral of Elijah Mark. All the next day they remained in quiet seclusion in this eventful upper chamber.

On Thursday night the apostles had a wonderful meeting and all pledged themselves to go forth in the public preaching of the new realm of the risen Master except Thomas, Simon Zelotes, and the Alpheus twins. Already the first steps had begun of changing the doctrine of the new realm — relationship with the Creator and with mortals — into the proclamation of the resurrection of Jesus. Nathaniel opposed this shift in the burden of their public message, but could not withstand Peter's eloquence, nor overcome the enthusiasm of the disciples.

And so, under the vigorous leadership of Peter and before the Master ascended to the Creator, these well-meaning representatives began that subtle process of gradually and certainly changing the religion *of* Jesus into a new and modified form of religion *about* Jesus.

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Final Appearances and Ascension

The sixteenth morontia manifestation of Jesus occurred on Friday, May 5, in the courtyard of Nicodemus, about nine o'clock at night. On this evening the Jerusalem believers had made their first attempt to get together since the resurrection. Assembled here at this time were the eleven apostles, the evangelists, and about fifty other leading disciples of the Master, including a number of the Greeks. This company of believers had been visiting informally for more than half an hour when, suddenly, the morontia Master appeared in full view and immediately began to instruct them, saying:

“Peace be upon you. This is the most representative group of believers — apostles and disciples — to which I have appeared since the time of my deliverance from the body. I now call you to witness that I told you beforehand that my sojourn among you must come to an end; I told you that presently I must return to the Creator. And then I plainly told you how the chief priests and the rulers of the Jews would deliver me to be put to death, and that I would rise from the grave. Why, then, did you allow yourselves to become so disconcerted by all this when it came to pass? and why were you so surprised when I rose from the tomb on the third day? You failed to believe me because you heard my words without comprehending their meaning.

“And now you should listen to my words lest you again make the mistake of hearing my teaching with the mind while in your hearts you fail to comprehend the meaning. From the beginning of my life as one of you, I taught you that my one purpose was to reveal the Creator on earth. I have lived the Creator-revealing bestowal so that you might experience the Creator-knowing career. I have revealed the Creator as your spiritual Parent; I have revealed you as the children of the Creator on earth. It is a fact that the Creator loves you. By faith in my word this fact becomes an eternal and living truth in your hearts. When, by living faith, you become divinely Creator-conscious, you are then born of the spirit as children of light and life, the eternal life in which you will ascend the universe of universes and attain the experience of finding the Universal Source on Paradise.

“I admonish you to always remember that your mission is to proclaim the doctrine of the new realm — the reality of the parenthood of the Creator and the truth of the childhood of mortals. Proclaim the whole truth, not just a part of it. Your message is not changed by my resurrection experience. Relationship with the Creator, by faith, is still the saving truth. You are to go forth preaching the love of the Creator and the service of humankind. That which the world needs most to know is: Mortals are the children of the Creator, and through faith they can actually realize, and daily experience, this ennobling truth. My bestowal should help all people to know that they are the children of the Creator, but such knowledge will not suffice if they fail to personally faith-grasp the saving truth that they are the living spirit children of the eternal Creator. The doctrine of the new realm is concerned with the love of the Creator and the service of others on earth.

“Among yourselves, here, you share the knowledge that I have risen from the dead, but that is not strange. I have the power to lay down my life and to take it up again; the Creator gives such power to the Paradise Children. I lived my life to show how you can, through loving service, become Creator-revealing to others even as, by loving you and serving you, I have become Creator-revealing to you. I have lived among you so that you, and all others, might know that you are all indeed the children of the Creator. Therefore, go now into the world preaching this doctrine of the realm of the Creator to all people. Love all people as I have loved you; serve others as I have served you. You have freely received, freely give. Only stay here in Jerusalem while I go to the Creator, and until I send you the Spirit of Truth who will lead you into the enlarged truth, and I will go with you into the world. I am with you always, and my peace I leave with you.”

Then the Master vanished. It was near daybreak before these believers dispersed; all night they remained together, earnestly discussing the Master's admonitions and contemplating all that had befallen them. James Zebedee and others of the apostles also told them of their experiences with the morontia Master who had appeared to them in Galilee three times.

1. The Appearance at Sychar

About four o'clock on Sabbath afternoon, May 13, the Master appeared to Nalda and about seventy-five Samaritan believers near Jacob's well, at Sychar. The believers were in the habit of meeting at this place, near where Jesus had spoken to Nalda concerning the water of life. On this day, just as they had finished their discussions of the reported resurrection, Jesus suddenly appeared before them, saying:

"Peace be upon you. You rejoice to know that I am the resurrection and the life, but this will avail you nothing unless you are born first of the eternal spirit, thereby coming to possess, by faith, the gift of eternal life. If you are the faith children of the Creator, you will never die; you will not perish. The doctrine of the new realm has taught you that all people are the children of the Creator. And this news concerning the love of the Creator must be carried to all the world. The time has come when you worship the Creator neither on Gerizim nor at Jerusalem, but where you are, as you are, in spirit and in truth. It is your faith that saves your souls. Eternal life is the gift of the Creator to all who believe. But do not be deceived; while eternal life is the free gift of the Creator and is bestowed on all who accept it by faith, what follows is the experience of bearing the fruits of this spirit as it is lived in the mortal life. The acceptance of the doctrine of the parenthood of the Creator implies that you also freely accept the associated truth of the family of humanity. And if all people are your siblings, they are even more than your neighbors, whom the Creator requires you to love as yourself. Your siblings, being of your own family, you will not only love with a family affection, but you will also serve as you would serve yourself. And you will love and serve your siblings because you, being my siblings, have been loved and served by me. Go, then, into the world telling this to all creatures. My spirit will go before you, and I will be with you always."

These Samaritans were astonished at this appearance of the Master, and they hurried off to the near-by towns and villages, where they announced the news that they had seen and heard Jesus. And this was the seventeenth morontia appearance of the Master.

2. The Phoenician Appearance

The Master's eighteenth morontia appearance was at Tyre, on Tuesday, May 16, at a little before nine o'clock in the evening. Again Jesus appeared at the close of a meeting of believers, as they were about to disperse, saying:

"Peace be upon you. You rejoice to know that I have risen from the dead because you therefore know that you will also survive mortal death. But such survival is dependent on your having been previously born of the spirit of truth-seeking and Creator-finding. The bread and the water of life are given only to those who hunger for truth and thirst for righteousness — for the Creator. The fact that the dead rise is not the doctrine of the new realm. These great truths and universe facts are all related to this doctrine in that they are a part of the result of believing and are embraced in the subsequent experience of those who, by faith, become, in deed and in truth, the everlasting children of the eternal Creator. The Creator sent me into the world to proclaim this redemption to all people. And so I send you abroad to preach this doctrine. Eternal life is the gift of the Creator, but those who are born of the spirit will immediately begin to show the fruits of the spirit in loving service to others. And the fruits of the divine spirit which are yielded in the lives of spirit-born and Creator-knowing mortals are: loving service, unselfish devotion, courageous loyalty, sincere fairness, enlightened honesty, undying hope, confiding trust, merciful ministry, unfailing goodness, forgiving

tolerance, and enduring peace. If professed believers do not bear these fruits of the divine spirit in their lives, they are dead; the Spirit of Truth is not in them; they are useless branches on the living vine, and they will soon be taken away. The Creator requires of the children of faith that they bear much spirit fruit. If, therefore, you are not fruitful, the Creator will dig about your roots and cut away your unfruitful branches. Increasingly, you must yield the fruits of the spirit as you progress toward Paradise. You may enter the new realm as a child, but the Creator requires that you grow up, by grace, to the full stature of spiritual adulthood. And when you go abroad to tell all nations about this doctrine, I will go before you, and my Spirit of Truth will abide in your hearts. My peace I leave with you.”

And then the Master disappeared. The next day those who carried this story went out from Tyre to Sidon and even to Antioch and Damascus. Jesus, who had been with these believers while living in mortal form, was quick to be recognized when beginning to teach them. Although Jesus was not readily recognized in the morontia form when made visible, when speaking to people they were never slow to identify Jesus’ personality.

3. Last Appearance in Jerusalem

Early Thursday morning, May 18, Jesus made the last appearance on earth as a morontia personality. As the eleven apostles were about to sit down to breakfast in the upper chamber of Mary Mark’s home, Jesus appeared to them and said:

“Peace be upon you. I have asked you to stay here in Jerusalem until I ascend to the Creator and until I send you the Spirit of Truth, who will soon be poured out on all people, and who will endow you with power from on high.” Simon Zelotes interrupted Jesus, asking, “Then, Master, will you restore the Jewish nation, and will we see the glory of the Creator manifested on earth?” And Jesus answered: “Simon, you still cling to your old ideas about the Jewish Messiah and the material realm. But you will receive spiritual power after the spirit has descended on you, and you will presently go into the world preaching this doctrine of the new realm. As the Creator sent me into the world, so I send you. And I wish that you would love and trust one another. Judas refused to trust you and is no longer with you. Do you not remember that the Scriptures say it is not good for people to be alone? Did I not send you out to teach, two and two, so that you might not become lonely and fall into the mischief and miseries of isolation? You also know that, when I was in the body, I did not permit myself to be alone for long periods. From the very beginning of our associations I always had two or three of you constantly by my side or else very near at hand even when I communed with the Creator. Trust, therefore, and confide in one another. And this is all the more necessary since this day I am going to leave you alone in the world. The hour has come; I am about to go to the Creator.”

Having spoken, Jesus beckoned for them to come, and led them out on the Mount of Olives, saying farewell in preparation for departing from Urantia. This was a solemn journey to Olivet. Not a word was spoken by any of them from the time they left the upper chamber until Jesus paused with them on the Mount of Olives.

4. Causes of Judas’s Downfall

In the first part of the Master’s farewell message to the apostles Jesus alluded to the loss of Judas and held up the tragic fate of this traitorous worker as a solemn warning against the dangers of isolation. It may be helpful to believers, in this and in future ages, to briefly review the causes of Judas’s downfall in the light of the Master’s remarks and in view of the accumulated enlightenment of succeeding centuries.

As we look back on this tragedy, we conceive that Judas went wrong, primarily, because of being a very markedly isolated personality, a personality shut in and away from ordinary social contacts. Judas

persistently refused to confide in, or freely socialize with, the other apostles. But being an isolated type of personality would not, in and of itself, have wrought such mischief had it not been that Judas also failed to increase in love and grow in spiritual grace. And then, as if to make a bad matter worse, Judas persistently harbored grudges and fostered such psychologic enemies as revenge and disappointment.

This unfortunate combination of individual peculiarities and mental tendencies conspired to destroy a well-intentioned person who failed to subdue these evils by love, faith, and trust. That Judas need not have gone wrong is well proved by the cases of Thomas and Nathaniel, both of whom were cursed with this same sort of suspicion and overdevelopment of the individualistic tendency. Even Andrew and Matthew had many leanings in this direction; but all these people grew to love Jesus and the other apostles more, and not less, as time passed. They grew in grace and in a knowledge of the truth. They became increasingly more trustful of their friends and slowly developed the ability to confide in them. Judas persistently refused to confide in the other apostles. When driven, by the accumulation of emotional conflicts, to seek relief in self-expression, Judas invariably sought the advice and received the unwise consolation of unspiritual relatives or those chance acquaintances who were either indifferent, or actually hostile, to the welfare and progress of the spiritual realities of the new age, of which Judas was one of the twelve consecrated ambassadors on earth.

Judas met defeat in the earth struggle because of the following factors of personal tendencies and character weakness:

1. Judas was an isolated type of human being, and was highly individualistic and chose to grow into a confirmed "shut-in" and unsociable sort of person.
2. As a child, life had been made too easy for Judas, who bitterly resented being thwarted and always expected to win. Judas was a very poor loser.
3. Judas never acquired a philosophic technique for meeting disappointment, instead of accepting disappointments as a regular and commonplace feature of human existence, unfailingly resorting to the practice of blaming someone in particular, or the associates as a group, for all personal difficulties and disappointments.
4. Judas was given to holding grudges and was always entertaining the idea of revenge.
5. Judas did not like to face facts frankly and was dishonest toward life situations.
6. Judas disliked to discuss personal problems with the other apostles, refusing to talk over difficulties with them, and in all the years of their association never once went to the Master with a purely personal problem.
7. Judas never learned that the real rewards for noble living are, after all, spiritual prizes, which are not always distributed during this one short life.

As a result of this persistent isolation of personality, Judas' griefs multiplied, sorrows increased, anxieties grew, and despair deepened almost beyond endurance.

While this self-centered and ultra-individualistic apostle had many psychic, emotional, and spiritual troubles, the main difficulties were: Judas was isolated in personality, suspicious and vengeful in mind, surly and vindictive in temperament, emotionally loveless and unforgiving, socially unconfiding and almost wholly self-contained, arrogant and selfishly ambitious in spirit, and friendless in death.

These, then, are the factors of mind and influences of evil which, taken altogether, explain why a well-meaning and otherwise onetime sincere believer in Jesus, even after several years of intimate association with this transforming personality, forsook the others, repudiated a sacred cause, renounced a holy calling, and betrayed the divine Master.

5. The Master's Ascension

It was almost half past seven o'clock this Thursday morning, May 18, when Jesus arrived on the western slope of Mount Olivet with eleven silent and somewhat bewildered apostles. From this location, about two thirds of the way up the mountain, they could look out over Jerusalem and down on Gethsemane. Jesus now prepared to say a last farewell to the apostles before taking leave of Urantia, and without being directed, they knelt about Jesus in a circle, and the Master said:

"I directed you to wait in Jerusalem until you were endowed with power from on high. I am now about to take leave of you; I am about to ascend to the Creator, and soon, very soon, we will send the Spirit of Truth into this world; and when it has come, you will begin the proclamation of the doctrine of the new realm, first in Jerusalem and then to the uttermost parts of the world. Love others with the love with which I have loved you and serve others as I have served you. By the spirit fruits of your lives impel souls to believe the truth that mortals are the children of the Creator, and that all people are siblings. Remember all I have taught you and the life I have lived among you. My love overshadows you, my spirit will dwell with you, and my peace shall abide upon you. Farewell."

Then the morontia Master vanished from their sight. This so-called ascension of Jesus was in no way different from the other disappearances from mortal vision during the forty days of the morontia career on Urantia.

The Master went by way of Jerusem to Edentia, where the Most Highs released Jesus from the morontia state and who, through the spirit channels of ascension, returned to the status of a Paradise Being and supreme sovereignty on Salvington.

It was about seven forty-five this morning when the morontia Jesus disappeared from the observation of the eleven apostles to begin the ascent to the Creator, to receive formal confirmation of the completed sovereignty of the universe of Nebadon.

6. Peter Calls a Meeting

Acting on the instruction of Peter, John Mark and others called the leading disciples together at the home of Mary Mark. This was the first conference of the Master's disciples to be held after the termination of the planetary career. By ten thirty, one hundred and twenty of the foremost disciples of Jesus living in Jerusalem had gathered to hear the report of the farewell message of the Master and to learn of the ascension. Among this company were members of Jesus' family, including Mary and James. Mary had returned to Jerusalem with John Zebedee when the apostles came back from their recent stay in Galilee. Soon after Pentecost Mary returned to the home of Salome at Bethsaida.

Simon Peter took responsibility for speaking for the other apostles and made a thrilling report of the last meeting of the eleven with their Master and most touchingly portrayed the Master's final farewell and ascension disappearance. It was a meeting the like of which had never before occurred on this world. This part of the meeting lasted not quite one hour. Peter then explained that they had decided to choose a successor to Judas Iscariot, and that a recess would be granted to enable the apostles to decide between the two people who had been suggested for this position, Matthias and Justus.

The eleven apostles then went downstairs, where they agreed to cast lots in order to determine which of these two should become an apostle to serve in Judas's place. The lot fell on Matthias, who was declared to be the new apostle. Matthias was duly inducted into the office and then appointed treasurer. But Matthias had little part in the subsequent activities of the apostles.

Soon after Pentecost the twins returned to their homes in Galilee. Simon Zelotes was in retirement for some time before going out to preach. Thomas worried for a shorter period and then resumed teaching. Nathaniel differed increasingly with Peter regarding preaching about Jesus in the place of proclaiming the former doctrine of the new realm. This disagreement became so acute by the middle of the following month that Nathaniel withdrew, going to Philadelphia to visit Abner and Lazarus; and after staying there for more than a year, Nathaniel went on into the lands beyond Mesopotamia to preach.

This left six of the original twelve apostles to become actors on the stage of the early proclamation of the teachings in Jerusalem: Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, and Matthew.

Just about noon the apostles returned to the others in the upper chamber and announced that Matthias had been chosen as the new apostle. And then Peter called all of the believers to engage in prayer, prayer that they might be prepared to receive the gift of the spirit which the Master had promised to send.

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Bestowal of the Spirit of Truth

About one o'clock, as the one hundred and twenty believers were engaged in prayer, they all became aware of a strange presence in the room. At the same time these disciples all became conscious of a new and profound sense of spiritual joy, security, and confidence. This new consciousness of spiritual strength was immediately followed by a strong urge to go out and publicly proclaim the doctrine of the new realm and the news that Jesus had risen from the dead.

Peter stood up and declared that this must be the coming of the Spirit of Truth which the Master had promised them, and proposed that they go to the temple and begin the proclamation of the teachings committed to their hands. And they did just what Peter suggested.

These people had been trained and instructed that the doctrine which they should preach was the parenthood of the Creator and the family of humanity, but at just this moment of spiritual ecstasy and personal triumph, the greatest news they could think of was the *fact* of the risen Master. And so they went forth, endowed with power, preaching redemption through Jesus to the people, but they unintentionally stumbled into the error of substituting some of the facts associated with the teachings for the message itself. Peter unwittingly led off in this mistake, and others followed all the way to Paul, who created a new religion out of the new version of the teachings.

The doctrine of the new realm is: the fact of the parenthood of the Creator, coupled with the resultant truth of the family of humanity. Christianity, as it developed from that day, focused on the experience of believer-fellowship with the risen and glorified Christ.

It is not strange that these spirit-infused people should have seized on this opportunity to express their feelings of triumph over the forces which had sought to destroy their Master and end the influence of the teachings. At such a time as this it was easier to remember their personal association with Jesus and to be thrilled with the assurance that the Master still lived, that their friendship had not ended, and that the spirit had indeed come upon them even as Jesus had promised.

These believers felt themselves suddenly translated into another world, a new existence of joy and power. The Master had told them that the new realm would come with power, and some of them thought they were beginning to discern what that meant.

And when all of this is taken into consideration, it is not difficult to understand how these people came to preach a *new doctrine about Jesus* in the place of their former message of the parenthood of the Creator and the family of humanity.

1. The Pentecost Sermon

The apostles had been in hiding for forty days. This day happened to be the Jewish festival of Pentecost, and thousands of visitors from all parts of the world were in Jerusalem. Many arrived for this feast, but a majority had been in the city since the Passover. Now these frightened apostles emerged from their weeks of seclusion to appear boldly in the temple, where they began to preach the new message of a risen Messiah. And all the disciples were conscious of having received some new spiritual endowment of insight and power.

It was about two o'clock when Peter stood up in that very place where the Master had last taught in this temple, and delivered the impassioned appeal which resulted in the winning of more than two thousand souls. The Master had gone, but they suddenly discovered that this story about the resurrection had great power with the people. No wonder they were led into the further proclamation of that which vindicated their former devotion to Jesus and at the same time so constrained people to believe. Six of the apostles participated in this meeting: Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, and Matthew. They talked for more than an hour and a half and delivered messages in Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic, as well as a few words in even other languages with which they had a speaking acquaintance.

The leaders of the Jews were astounded at the boldness of the apostles, but were afraid to molest them because of the large numbers who believed their story.

By half past four o'clock more than two thousand new believers followed the apostles down to the pool of Siloam, where Peter, Andrew, James, and John baptized them in the Master's name. And it was dark when they had finished with baptizing this multitude.

Pentecost was the great festival of baptism, the time for including the proselytes of the gate, those gentiles who desired to serve Yahweh. It was, therefore, easier for large numbers of both the Jews and believing gentiles to submit to baptism on this day. In doing this, they were in no way disconnecting themselves from the Jewish faith. Even for some time after this, the believers in Jesus were a sect within Judaism. All of them, including the apostles, were still loyal to the essential requirements of the Jewish ceremonial system.

2. The Significance of Pentecost

Jesus lived on earth and taught a doctrine which redeemed mortals from the superstition that they were children of evil and elevated them to the dignity of faith children of the Creator. The message that Jesus preached and lived was an effective solvent for people's spiritual difficulties in that day of its statement. And now, having personally left the world, Jesus sends the Spirit of Truth, who is designed to live in mortals and, for each new generation, to restate the Jesus message so that every new group of people to appear on the earth will have a new and up-to-date version of the teachings, just such personal enlightenment and group guidance as will prove to be an effective solvent for humanity's ever-new and varied spiritual difficulties.

The first mission of this spirit is, of course, to foster and personalize truth, for it is the comprehension of truth that constitutes the highest form of human liberty. Next, it is the purpose of this spirit to destroy the believer's feeling of isolation. Jesus having been among mortals, all believers would experience a sense of loneliness at the departure of the Master had not the Spirit of Truth come to dwell in people's hearts.

The bestowal of this spirit effectively prepared all normal minds for the subsequent universal bestowal of the Creator's spirit (the Adjuster) on all people. In a certain sense, this Spirit of Truth is the spirit of both the Universal Source and the Local Universe Creator.

Do not make the mistake of expecting to become strongly intellectually conscious of the outpoured Spirit of Truth. The spirit never creates a consciousness of itself, only a consciousness of Michael. From the beginning Jesus taught that the spirit would not speak of itself. The proof, therefore, of your relationship with the Spirit of Truth is not to be found in your consciousness of this spirit but rather in your experience of an enhanced relationship with Michael.

The spirit also came to help people recall and understand the words of the Master as well as to illuminate and reinterpret Jesus' life on earth.

Next, the Spirit of Truth came to help the believer to witness to the teachings and to the realities of Jesus' life as it is lived anew and afresh in the individual believer of each passing generation of the spirit-filled children of the Creator.

Thus it appears that the Spirit of Truth comes to lead all believers into all truth, into the expanding knowledge of the experience of the living and growing spiritual consciousness of the reality of eternal and ascending relationship with the Creator.

Jesus lived a life which is a revelation of a mortal submitted to the Creator's will, not an example for anyone literally to attempt to follow. This life, together with the death on the cross and subsequent resurrection, presently became a new doctrine of the ransom which had been paid in order to purchase humanity back from the clutch of the evil one — from the condemnation of an offended Deity. Nevertheless, even though the doctrine did become greatly distorted, it remains a fact that this new message about Jesus carried along with it many of the fundamental truths and teachings of the earlier doctrine of the new realm. And, sooner or later, these concealed truths of the parenthood of the Creator and the family of humanity will emerge to effectually transform the civilization of all humankind.

But these mistakes of the intellect in no way interfered with the believer's great progress in growth in spirit. In less than a month after the bestowal of the Spirit of Truth, the apostles made more individual spiritual progress than during their almost four years of personal and loving association with the Master. Neither did this substitution of the *fact* of the resurrection of Jesus for the *truth* of relationship with the Creator in any way interfere with the rapid spread of their teachings; on the contrary, this overshadowing of the original message by the new teachings about Jesus' person and resurrection seemed to greatly facilitate the preaching.

The term "baptism of the spirit," which came into such general use at about this time, merely signified the conscious reception of this gift of the Spirit of Truth and the personal acknowledgment of this new spiritual power as an augmentation of all spiritual influences previously experienced by Creator-knowing souls.

Since the bestowal of the Spirit of Truth, people are subject to the teaching and guidance of a threefold spirit endowment: the spirit of the Universal Source, the Thought Adjuster; the spirit of the Local Universe Creator, the Spirit of Truth; and the spirit of the Local Universe Creative Spirit, the Holy Spirit.

In a way, humankind is subject to the double influence of the sevenfold appeal of the universe spirit influences. The early evolutionary races of mortals are subject to the progressive contact of the seven adjutant mind-spirits of the local universe Creative Spirit. As mortals progress upward in the scale of intelligence and spiritual perception, the seven higher spirit influences eventually come to hover over them and dwell within them. And these seven spirits of the advancing worlds are:

1. The bestowed spirit of the Universal Source — the Thought Adjusters.
2. The spirit presence of the Eternal Spirit — the spirit gravity of the universe of universes and the certain channel of all spirit communion.
3. The spirit presence of the Infinite Mind — the universal spirit-mind of all creation, the spiritual source of the intellectual kinship of all progressive intelligences.
4. The spirit of the Universal Source and the Local Universe Creator — the Spirit of Truth.
5. The spirit of the Infinite Mind and the Local Universe Creative Spirit — the Holy Spirit.

6. The mind-spirit of the Local Universe Creative Spirit — the seven adjutant mind-spirits of the local universe.

7. The spirit of all these levels — the new-name spirit of the ascending mortals of the realms after the fusion of the mortal spirit-born soul with the Paradise Thought Adjuster and after the subsequent attainment of the divinity of the status of the Paradise Corps of the Finality.

And so the bestowal of the Spirit of Truth brought to the world and its peoples the last of the spirit endowment designed to aid in the ascending search for the Universal Source.

3. What Happened at Pentecost

Many strange teachings became associated with the early narratives of the day of Pentecost. In subsequent times the events of this day, on which the Spirit of Truth, the new teacher, came to dwell with humankind, have become confused with the foolish outbreaks of rampant emotionalism. The chief mission of this outpoured spirit is to teach people about the truths of the love of the Universal Source and the mercy of the Local Universe Creator. These are the truths of divinity which people can comprehend more fully than all the other divine traits of character. The Spirit of Truth is concerned primarily with the revelation of the spirit nature of the Universal Source and the moral character of the Local Universe Creator, who revealed the Source to mortals; the Spirit of Truth, in the heart, reveals the Local Universe Creator to mortals. When mortals yield the “fruits of the spirit” in their lives, they are simply showing the traits which the Master manifested while living on Urantia. Jesus lived as one personality — Jesus of Nazareth. As the indwelling spirit of the “new teacher,” the Master has, since Pentecost, been able to live life anew in the experience of every truth-taught believer.

Many things which happen in the course of a human life are hard to understand, difficult to reconcile with the idea that this is a universe in which truth prevails and in which righteousness triumphs. It so often appears that slander, lies, dishonesty, and unrighteousness — sin — prevail. Does faith, after all, triumph over evil, sin, and iniquity? It does. And the life and death of Jesus are eternal proof that the truth of goodness and the faith of the spirit-led creature will always be vindicated. It looked dark on the day of the crucifixion, but it was gloriously bright on the resurrection morning; it was still brighter and more joyous on the day of Pentecost. The religions of pessimistic despair seek to obtain release from the burdens of life; they crave extinction in endless slumber and rest. These are the religions of primitive fear and dread. The religion of Jesus is a new expression of faith to be proclaimed to struggling humanity. This new religion is founded on faith, hope, and love.

Mortal life had dealt its hardest, cruelest, and bitterest blows to Jesus, who met these ministrations of despair with faith, courage, and the unswerving determination to do the Creator’s will. Jesus met life in all its terrible reality and mastered it — even in death — and did not use religion as a release from life. The religion of Jesus does not seek to escape this life in order to enjoy the waiting bliss of another existence. The religion of Jesus provides the joy and peace of another and spiritual existence to enhance and ennoble the mortal life which people now live.

If religion is an opiate to the people, it is not the religion of Jesus. On the cross Jesus refused to drink the deadening drug, and the Spirit of Truth, poured out on all people, is a mighty world influence which leads mortals upward and urges them onward. The spiritual forward urge is the most powerful driving force present in this world; the truth-learning believer is the one progressive and aggressive soul on earth.

On the day of Pentecost the religion of Jesus broke all national restrictions and racial fetters. On this day the Spirit of Truth became the personal gift from the Master to every mortal. This spirit was bestowed for

the purpose of qualifying believers to more effectively preach the doctrine of the new realm, but they mistook the experience of receiving the outpoured spirit for a part of the new doctrine which they were unconsciously formulating.

Do not overlook the fact that the Spirit of Truth was bestowed on all people; this gift of the spirit did not come only to the apostles. The one hundred and twenty people assembled in the upper chamber all received the new teacher, as did all the honest of heart throughout the whole world. This new teacher was bestowed on humankind, and every soul received it in accordance with the love for truth and the capacity to grasp and comprehend spiritual realities. At last, true religion is delivered from the custody of priests and all sacred classes and finds its real manifestation in the individual souls of mortals.

The religion of Jesus fosters the highest type of human civilization in that it creates the highest type of spiritual personality and proclaims the sacredness of that person.

The coming of the Spirit of Truth on Pentecost made possible a religion which is neither radical nor conservative; it is neither the old nor the new; it is to be dominated neither by the aged nor the young. The fact of Jesus' earthly life provides a fixed point for the anchor of time, while the bestowal of the Spirit of Truth provides for the everlasting expansion and endless growth of the religion which Jesus lived and proclaimed. The spirit guides into *all* truth; it is the teacher of an expanding and always-growing religion of endless progress and divine unfolding. This new teacher will be forever unfolding, to the truth-seeking believer, that which was so divinely revealed in the person and nature of Jesus of Nazareth.

The manifestations associated with the bestowal of the "new teacher," and the reception of the apostles' preaching by the people of various races and nations gathered together at Jerusalem, indicate the universality of the religion of Jesus. The doctrine of the new realm was to be identified with no particular race, culture, or language. This day of Pentecost witnessed the great effort of the spirit to liberate the religion of Jesus from its inherited Jewish fetters. Even after this demonstration of pouring out the spirit on all people, the apostles at first endeavored to impose the requirements of Judaism on their converts. Even Paul had trouble with the Jerusalem believers by refusing to subject the gentiles to these Jewish practices. No revealed religion can spread to all the world when it makes the serious mistake of becoming permeated with some national culture or associated with established racial, social, or economic practices.

The bestowal of the Spirit of Truth was independent of all forms, ceremonies, sacred places, and special behavior by those who received the fullness of its manifestation. When the spirit came to those assembled in the upper chamber, they were simply sitting there, having just been engaged in silent prayer. The spirit was bestowed in the country as well as in the city. It was not necessary for the apostles to go to a lonely place for years of solitary meditation in order to receive the spirit. For all time, Pentecost disassociates the idea of spiritual experience from the notion of especially favorable environments.

Pentecost, with its spiritual endowment, was designed to forever free the religion of the Master from all dependence on physical force; the teachers of this new religion are now equipped with spiritual power. They are to go out to fill the world with unfailing forgiveness, matchless good will, and abounding love. They are equipped to overcome evil with good, to vanquish hate by love, to destroy fear with a courageous and living faith in truth. Jesus had already taught the followers that this religion was never passive; the disciples were to be active and positive in their ministry of mercy and in their manifestations of love. These believers made progress, at least, even if they did in some measure fail fully to grasp the truth that the Creator is also the spiritual Parent of every individual.

Pentecost endowed mortals with the power to forgive personal injuries, to keep sweet in the midst of the gravest injustice, to remain unmoved in the face of appalling danger, and to challenge the evils of hate and

anger by the fearless acts of love and forbearance. Urantia has passed through the ravages of great and destructive wars in its history. All participants in these terrible struggles met with defeat. There was only one victor; there was only one who came out of these embittered struggles with an enhanced reputation — that was Jesus and the doctrine of overcoming evil with good. The secret of a better civilization is discovered in the Master's teachings of the family of humanity, the good will of love and mutual trust.

Up to Pentecost, religion had revealed only mortals seeking for the Creator; since Pentecost, mortals are still searching for the Creator, but there shines out over the world the spectacle of the Creator also seeking for mortals and sending the spirit to dwell within them when finding them.

After Pentecost, in the family of humanity, all people stood before the Creator equally. Pentecost obliterated all religious discrimination founded on racial distinction, cultural differences, social caste, or gender prejudice. No wonder these believers in the new religion would cry out, "Where the spirit of the Creator is, there is liberty."

Members of the family of Jesus were present among the one hundred and twenty believers at Pentecost, and as members of this common group of disciples, they also received the outpoured spirit. They received no more of the gift than the others. No special gift was bestowed on the members of Jesus' earthly family. Pentecost marked the end of special priesthoods and all belief in sacred families.

Before Pentecost the apostles had given up much for Jesus. They had sacrificed their homes, families, friends, worldly goods, and positions. At Pentecost they gave themselves to the Creator, and the Universal Source and the Local Universe Creator responded by giving themselves to mortals — sending their spirits to live within all people. This experience of losing self and finding the spirit was not one of emotion; it was an act of intelligent self-surrender and unreserved consecration.

Pentecost was the call to spiritual unity among all people. When the spirit descended on the disciples at Jerusalem, the same thing happened in Philadelphia, Alexandria, and at all other places where people lived. The religion of Jesus is the most powerful unifying influence the world has ever known.

Pentecost was designed to lessen the self-assertiveness of individuals, groups, nations, and races. It is this spirit of self-assertiveness which so increases in tension that it periodically breaks loose in destructive wars. Humankind can be unified only by the spiritual approach, and the Spirit of Truth is a world influence which is universal.

The coming of the Spirit of Truth purifies the human heart and leads the recipient to formulate a life purpose dedicated to the will of the Creator and the welfare of others. The material spirit of selfishness has been swallowed up in this new spiritual bestowal of selflessness. Pentecost, then and now, signifies that the Jesus of history has become the divine Sovereign of living experience. The joy of this outpoured spirit, when it is consciously experienced in human life, is a tonic for health, a stimulus for mind, and an unfailing energy for the soul.

Prayer did not bring the spirit on the day of Pentecost, but it did have much to do with determining the capacity of receptivity which characterized the individual believers. Prayer does not move the divine heart to liberality of bestowal, but it does so often dig out larger and deeper channels in which the divine bestowals may flow to the hearts and souls of those who remember to maintain unbroken communion with their Maker through sincere prayer and true worship.

4. Beginnings of the Christian Church

When Jesus was so suddenly seized by the enemies and so quickly crucified between two thieves, the apostles and disciples were completely demoralized. The thought of the Master, arrested, bound, whipped, and crucified, was too much for even the apostles. They forgot Jesus' teachings and warnings. Jesus might have been "a prophet mighty in deed and word before Yahweh and all the people," but could hardly be the Messiah they had hoped would restore the dominion of Israel.

Then comes the resurrection, with its deliverance from despair and the return of their faith in the Master's divinity. Again and again they see and talk with Jesus, who takes them out on Olivet and bids them farewell and talks about going back to the Creator. Jesus has told them to wait in Jerusalem until they are endowed with power — until the Spirit of Truth comes. And on the day of Pentecost this new teacher arrives, and they go out at once to preach with new power. They are the bold and courageous followers of a living Sovereign, not a dead and defeated leader. The Master lives in the hearts of these evangelists; the Creator is not a doctrine in their minds, but has become a living presence in their souls.

What has happened to these people whom Jesus had ordained to preach the doctrine of the new realm, the parenthood of the Creator and the family of humanity? They have a new doctrine; they are on fire with a new experience; they are filled with a new spiritual energy.

But the doctrine of the new realm, the message of Jesus, had been suddenly changed. They now proclaimed the facts of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, and preached the hope of Jesus' speedy return to this world to finish the work. Thus the message of the early believers had to do with preaching about the facts of Jesus' first coming and with teaching the hope of a second coming, an event which they deemed to be very near.

Christ was about to become the creed of the rapidly forming church. Jesus lives; died for mortals; gave the spirit; and is coming again. Jesus filled all their thoughts and determined all their new concepts of Deity and everything else. They were too enthusiastic over the new doctrine to be concerned with the old message that "The Creator is the loving Parent of all people," even of every single individual. True, a marvelous manifestation of familial love and good will did spring up in these early communities of believers. But it was a family of believers in Jesus, not a family of the Creator. Their good will arose from the love born of the concept of Jesus' bestowal and not from the recognition of the family of mortals. Nevertheless, they were filled with joy, and they lived such new and unique lives that all people were attracted to their teachings about Jesus. They made the great mistake of substituting their teachings about Jesus for the doctrine of the new spiritual realm, but even that represented the greatest religion humankind had ever known.

Unmistakably, a new community was arising in the world. They called each other siblings; they greeted one another with a kiss; they ministered to the poor. It was a community of living as well as of worship. They were not communal by decree but by the desire to share their goods with other believers. They confidently expected that Jesus would return to complete the establishment of the Creator's realm during their generation. This spontaneous sharing of earthly possessions was not a direct feature of Jesus' teaching; it came about because these people so sincerely and so confidently believed that Jesus was to return any day to finish the work and to consummate the new realm. But the final results of this well-meant experiment in thoughtless familial love were disastrous and sorrow-breeding. Thousands of earnest believers sold their property and disposed of all their capital goods and other productive assets. With the passing of time, the dwindling resources of Christian "equal-sharing" came to an *end* — but the world did not. Very soon the believers at Antioch were taking up a collection to keep the believers at Jerusalem from starving.

In these days they celebrated the communion after the manner of its establishment; that is, they assembled for a social meal and took the sacrament at the end of the meal.

At first they baptized in the name of Jesus. Baptism was all that was required for admission into the community of believers. They had no organization as yet; it was simply the Jesus community.

This Jesus sect was growing rapidly, and once more the Sadducees took notice of them. The Pharisees were not bothered about the situation, seeing that none of the teachings in any way interfered with the observance of the Jewish laws. But the Sadducees began to put the leaders of the Jesus sect in jail until one of the leading rabbis, Gamaliel advised them: "Refrain from these people and let them alone, for if this work is of mortals, it will be overthrown; but if it is of Yahweh, you will not be able to overthrow them, and you may be found to be fighting against Yahweh." They decided to follow Gamaliel's counsel, and a time of peace and quiet ensued in Jerusalem, during which the new teachings about Jesus spread rapidly.

And so all went well in Jerusalem until the time of the coming of the Greeks in large numbers from Alexandria. Two of the pupils of Rodan arrived in Jerusalem and made many converts from among the Hellenists. Among their early converts were Stephen and Barnabas. These able Greeks did not have the Jewish viewpoint, and they did not conform to the Jewish mode of worship and other ceremonial practices. And it was the doings of these Greek believers that terminated the peaceful relations between the Jesus sect and the Pharisees and Sadducees. Stephen and Barnabas began to preach more as Jesus taught, and this brought them into immediate conflict with the Jewish rulers. In a public sermon, when Stephen reached the objectionable part of the discourse, they dispensed with all formalities of trial and proceeded to stone Stephen to death on the spot.

Stephen, the leader of the Greek colony of Jesus' believers in Jerusalem, became the first martyr to the new faith and the specific cause for the formal organization of the early Christian church. This new crisis was met by the recognition that believers could no longer go on as a sect within the Jewish faith. They all agreed that they must separate themselves from unbelievers; and within one month from the death of Stephen the church at Jerusalem had been organized under the leadership of Peter, and James had been installed as its titular head.

And then the new and relentless persecutions by the Jews broke out, so that the active teachers of the new religion about Jesus, which subsequently was called Christianity at Antioch, went out to the ends of the empire proclaiming Jesus. Before the time of Paul the leadership was in Greek hands, and in carrying this message, these first missionaries, as also the later ones, followed the path of Alexander's march of former days, going by way of Gaza and Tyre to Antioch and then over Asia Minor to Macedonia, then on to Rome and to the uttermost parts of the empire.

Paper 195

After Pentecost

The results of Peter's preaching on the day of Pentecost were to decide the future policies, and to determine the plans, of the majority of the apostles in their efforts. Peter was the real founder of the Christian church; Paul carried the Christian message to the gentiles, and the Greek believers carried it to the whole Roman Empire.

Although the tradition-bound and priest-ridden Hebrews, as a people, refused to accept either Jesus' doctrine of the parenthood of the Creator and the family of humanity or Peter's and Paul's proclamation of the resurrection and ascension of Christ (subsequent Christianity), the rest of the Roman Empire was found to be receptive to the evolving Christian teachings. Western civilization was at this time intellectual, war weary, and thoroughly skeptical of all existing religions and universe philosophies. The peoples of the Western world, the beneficiaries of Greek culture, had a revered tradition of a great past. They could contemplate the inheritance of great accomplishments in philosophy, art, literature, and political progress. But with all these achievements they had no soul-satisfying religion. Their spiritual longings remained unsatisfied.

On such a stage of human society the teachings of Jesus, embraced in the Christian message, were suddenly thrust. A new order of living was presented to the hungry hearts of these Western peoples. This situation meant immediate conflict between the older religious practices and the new Christianized version of Jesus' message to the world. Such a conflict must result in either decided victory for the new or for the old or in some degree of *compromise*. History shows that the struggle ended in compromise. Christianity presumed to embrace too much for any one people to assimilate in one or two generations. It was not a simple spiritual appeal, such as Jesus had presented; it struck a decided attitude on religious rituals, education, magic, medicine, art, literature, law, government, morals, sex regulation, polygamy, and, in limited degree, even slavery. Christianity came not merely as a new religion — something all the Roman Empire and all the Orient were waiting for — but as a *new order of human society*. And as such a pretension it quickly precipitated the social-moral clash of the ages. The ideals of Jesus, as they were reinterpreted by Greek philosophy and socialized in Christianity, now boldly challenged the traditions of the human race embodied in the ethics, morality, and religions of Western civilization.

At first, Christianity won converts from only the lower social and economic strata. But by the beginning of the second century the very best of Greco-Roman culture was increasingly turning to this new order of Christian belief, this new concept of the purpose of living and the goal of existence.

How did this new message of Jewish origin, which had almost failed in the land of its birth, so quickly and effectively capture the very best minds of the Roman Empire? The triumph of Christianity over the philosophic religions and the mystery cults was due to:

1. Organization. Paul was a great organizer whose successors kept up the pace.
2. Christianity was thoroughly Hellenized. It embraced the best in Greek philosophy as well as the cream of Hebrew theology.
3. But best of all, it contained a new and great *ideal*, the echo of the life bestowal of Jesus and the reflection of a message of redemption for all humankind.

4. The Christian leaders were willing to make such compromises with Mithraism that half of its adherents were won over to the Antioch cult.

5. Likewise the next and later generations of Christian leaders made such further compromises with paganism that even the Roman emperor Constantine was won to the new religion.

But the Christians made a shrewd bargain with the pagans in that they adopted the ritualistic pageantry of the pagan while compelling the pagan to accept the Hellenized version of Pauline Christianity. They made a better bargain with the pagans than they did with the Mithraic cult, but even in that earlier compromise they succeeded in eliminating the gross immoralities and also numerous other reprehensible practices of the Persian mystery.

Wisely or unwisely, these early leaders of Christianity deliberately compromised the *ideals* of Jesus in an effort to save and further many of the *ideas*. And they were eminently successful. But these compromised ideals of the Master are still latent, and they will eventually assert their full power on the world.

By this paganization of Christianity the old order won many minor victories of a ritualistic nature, but the Christians gained the ascendancy in that:

1. A new and enormously higher note in human morals was struck.
2. A new and greatly enlarged concept of Deity was given to the world.
3. The hope of immortality became a part of the assurance of a recognized religion.
4. Jesus of Nazareth was given to people's hungry souls.

Many of the great truths taught by Jesus were almost lost in these early compromises, but they still sleep in this religion of paganized Christianity, which was in turn the Pauline version of the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth. And Christianity, even before it was paganized, was first thoroughly Hellenized. Christianity owes much, very much, to the Greeks. It was a Greek, from Egypt, who so bravely stood up at Nicaea and so fearlessly challenged this assembly that it did not dare to obscure the concept of the nature of Jesus so that the real truth of the bestowal might have been in danger of being lost to the world. This Greek's name was Athanasius, and except for the eloquence and the logic of this believer, the persuasions of Arius would have triumphed.

1. Influence of the Greeks

The Hellenization of Christianity started in earnest on that eventful day when the Apostle Paul stood before the council of the Areopagus in Athens and told the Athenians about "the Unknown Creator." There, under the shadow of the Acropolis, this Roman citizen proclaimed to these Greeks the new religion which had taken origin in the Jewish land of Galilee. And there was something strangely alike in Greek philosophy and many of the teachings of Jesus. They had a common goal — both aimed at the *emergence of the individual*. The Greek, at social and political emergence; Jesus, at moral and spiritual emergence. The Greek taught intellectual liberalism leading to political freedom; Jesus taught spiritual liberalism leading to religious liberty. These two ideas, put together, constituted a new and mighty charter for human freedom; they presaged humanity's social, political, and spiritual liberty.

Christianity came into existence and triumphed primarily because of two things:

1. The Greek mind was willing to borrow new and good ideas even from the Jews.
2. Paul and those who followed were willing but shrewd and sagacious compromisers; they were keen theologic traders.

At the time Paul stood up in Athens preaching “Christ Crucified,” the Greeks were spiritually hungry; they were inquiring, interested, and actually looking for spiritual truth. Never forget that at first the Romans fought Christianity while the Greeks embraced it, and that it was the Greeks who literally forced the Romans to subsequently accept this new religion, as then modified, as a part of Greek culture.

The Greek revered beauty, the Jew holiness, but both peoples loved truth. For centuries the Greek had seriously thought and earnestly debated about all human problems — social, economic, political, and philosophic — except religion. Few Greeks had paid much attention to religion; they did not take even their own religion very seriously. For centuries the Jews had neglected these other fields of thought while they devoted their minds to religion. They took their religion very seriously, too seriously. As illuminated by the content of Jesus’ message, the united product of the centuries of the thought of these two peoples now became the driving power of a new order of human society and, to a certain extent, of a new order of human religious belief and practice.

The influence of Greek culture had already penetrated the lands of the western Mediterranean when Alexander spread Hellenistic civilization over the near-Eastern world. The Greeks did very well with their religion and their politics as long as they lived in small city-states, but when the Macedonian ruler dared to expand Greece into an empire stretching from the Adriatic to the Indus, trouble began. The art and philosophy of Greece were fully equal to the task of imperial expansion, but not so with Greek political administration or religion. After the city-states of Greece had expanded into empire, their rather parochial gods seemed a little strange. The Greeks were really searching for *one Deity*, a greater and better Deity, when the Christianized version of the older Jewish religion came to them.

The Hellenistic Empire, as such, could not endure. Its cultural sway continued on, but it endured only after securing from the West the Roman political genius for empire administration and after obtaining from the East a religion whose one Deity possessed empire dignity.

In the first century after Christ, Hellenistic culture had already attained its highest levels; its retrogression had begun; learning was advancing but genius was declining. It was at this very time that the ideas and ideals of Jesus, which were partially embodied in Christianity, became a part of the salvage of Greek culture and learning.

Alexander had expanded in the East with the cultural gift of the civilization of Greece; Paul introduced the West to the Christian version of the teachings of Jesus. And wherever the Greek culture prevailed throughout the West, Hellenized Christianity took root.

The Eastern version of the message of Jesus, notwithstanding that it remained more true to the teachings, continued to follow the uncompromising attitude of Abner. It never progressed as did the Hellenized version and was eventually lost in the Islamic movement.

2. The Roman Influence

The Romans bodily took over Greek culture, putting representative government in the place of government by lot. And presently this change favored Christianity in that Rome brought into the whole Western world a new tolerance for different languages, peoples, and even religions.

Much of the early persecution of Christians in Rome was due solely to their unfortunate use of the term “dominion” in their preaching. The Romans were tolerant of any and all religions but very resentful of anything that savored of political rivalry. And so, when these early persecutions, due so largely to misunderstanding, died out, the field for religious doctrine was wide open. The Roman was interested in political administration and cared little for either art or religion, but was unusually tolerant of both.

Oriental law was stern and arbitrary; Greek law was fluid and artistic; Roman law was dignified and respect-breeding. Roman education bred an unheard-of and stolid loyalty. The early Romans were politically devoted and sublimely consecrated individuals. They were honest, zealous, and dedicated to their ideals, but without a religion worthy of the name. Small wonder that their Greek teachers were able to persuade them to accept Paul’s Christianity.

And these Romans were a great people. They could govern the Occident because they governed themselves. Such unparalleled honesty, devotion, and stalwart self-control was ideal soil for the reception and growth of Christianity.

It was easy for these Greco-Romans to become just as spiritually devoted to an institutional church as they were politically devoted to the state. The Romans fought the church only when they feared it as a competitor of the state. Rome, having little national philosophy or native culture, took over Greek culture for its own and boldly adopted Christianity as its moral philosophy. Christianity became the moral culture of Rome but hardly its religion in the sense of being the individual experience in spiritual growth of those who embraced the new religion in such a wholesale manner. True, many individuals did penetrate beneath the surface of this state religion and found the real values of the hidden meanings held within the latent truths of Hellenized and paganized Christianity.

The Stoic’s sturdy appeal to “nature and conscience” had prepared all Rome to receive Christianity, at least in an intellectual sense. The Roman was by nature and training a lawyer, revering even the laws of nature, and now, in Christianity, discerning in the laws of nature the laws of Deity. A people that could produce Cicero and Vergil were ripe for Paul’s Hellenized Christianity.

And so these Romanized Greeks forced both Jews and Christians to philosophize their religion, to coordinate its ideas and systematize its ideals, to adapt religious practices to the existing current of life. And all this was enormously helped by translation of the Hebrew scriptures into Greek and by the later recording of the New Testament in the Greek tongue.

The Greeks, in contrast with the Jews and many other peoples, had provisionally believed in immortality, some sort of survival after death, and since this was the very heart of Jesus’ teaching, it was certain that Christianity would make a strong appeal to them.

A succession of Greek-cultural and Roman-political victories had consolidated the Mediterranean lands into one empire, with one language and one culture, and had made the Western world ready for one Deity. Judaism provided this Deity, but Judaism was not acceptable as a religion to these Romanized Greeks. Philo helped to mitigate their objections, but Christianity revealed to them an even better concept of one Creator, and they embraced it readily.

3. Under the Roman Empire

After the consolidation of Roman political rule and the dissemination of Christianity, the Christians found themselves with one Deity, a great religious concept, but without empire. The Greco-Romans found themselves with a great empire but without a Deity to serve as the suitable religious concept for empire

worship and spiritual unification. The Christians accepted the empire; the empire adopted Christianity. The Roman provided a unity of political rule; the Greek, a unity of culture and learning; Christianity, a unity of religious thought and practice.

Rome overcame the tradition of nationalism by imperial universalism and for the first time in history made it possible for different races and nations to at least nominally accept one religion.

Christianity came into favor in Rome at a time when there was great contention between the vigorous teachings of the Stoics and the salvation promises of the mystery cults. Christianity came with refreshing comfort and liberating power to a spiritually hungry people whose language had no word for "unselfishness."

That which gave greatest power to Christianity was the way its believers lived lives of service and even the way they died for their faith during the earlier times of drastic persecution.

The teaching regarding Christ's love for children soon put an end to the widespread practice of exposing children to death when they were not wanted.

The early plan of Christian worship was largely taken over from the Jewish synagogue, modified by the Mithraic ritual; later on, much pagan pageantry was added. The backbone of the early Christian church consisted of Christianized Greek proselytes to Judaism.

The second century after Christ was the best time in all the world's history for a good religion to make progress in the Western world. During the first century Christianity had prepared itself, by struggle and compromise, to take root and rapidly spread. Christianity adopted the emperor; later, the emperor adopted Christianity. This was a great age for the spread of a new religion. There was religious liberty; travel was universal and thought was untrammelled.

The spiritual impetus of nominally accepting Hellenized Christianity came to Rome too late to prevent the well-started moral decline or to compensate for the already well-established and increasing racial deterioration. This new religion was a cultural necessity for imperial Rome, and it is exceedingly unfortunate that it did not become a means of spiritual salvation in a larger sense.

Even a good religion could not save a great empire from the sure results of lack of individual participation in the affairs of government, from overmuch paternalism, over-taxation and gross collection abuses, unbalanced trade with the Levant which drained away the gold, amusement madness, Roman standardization, slavery, physical plagues, and a state church which became institutionalized nearly to the point of spiritual barrenness.

Conditions, however, were not so bad at Alexandria. The early schools continued to hold much of Jesus' teachings free from compromise. Pantaenus taught Clement and then went on to follow Nathaniel in proclaiming Christianity in India. While some of the ideals of Jesus were sacrificed in the building of Christianity, it should in all fairness be recorded that, by the end of the second century, practically all the great minds of the Greco-Roman world had become Christian. The triumph was approaching completion.

And this Roman Empire lasted sufficiently long to ensure the survival of Christianity even after the empire collapsed. But we have often conjectured what would have happened in Rome and in the world if it had been the doctrine of the new age which had been accepted in the place of Greek Christianity.

4. The European Dark Ages

The church, being an adjunct to society and the ally of politics, was doomed to share in the intellectual and spiritual decline of the so-called European “dark ages.” During this time, religion became more and more monasticized, asceticized, and legalized. In a spiritual sense, Christianity was hibernating. Throughout this period, alongside this slumbering and secularized religion, there existed a continuous stream of mysticism, a fantastic spiritual experience bordering on unreality and philosophically akin to pantheism.

During these dark and despairing centuries, religion became virtually secondhand again. The individual was almost lost before the overshadowing authority, tradition, and dictation of the church. A new spiritual menace arose in the creation of a galaxy of “saints” who were assumed to have special influence at the divine courts, and who, therefore, if effectively appealed to, would be able to intercede on one’s behalf before the Deities.

But Christianity was sufficiently socialized and paganized that, while it was impotent to hold off the oncoming dark ages, it was better prepared to survive this long period of moral darkness and spiritual stagnation. And it did persist through the long night of Western civilization and was still functioning as a moral influence in the world when the renaissance dawned. The rehabilitation of Christianity, following the passing of the dark ages, resulted in bringing into existence numerous sects of the Christian teachings, beliefs suited to special intellectual, emotional, and spiritual types of human personality. And many of these special Christian groups, or religious communities, still persist at the time of the making of this presentation.

Christianity exhibits a history of having originated out of the unintended transformation of the religion of Jesus into a religion about Jesus. It further follows the history of having experienced Hellenization, paganization, secularization, institutionalization, intellectual deterioration, spiritual decadence, moral hibernation, threatened extinction, later rejuvenation, fragmentation, and more recent relative rehabilitation. Such a pedigree is indicative of inherent vitality and the possession of vast recuperative resources. And this same Christianity is now present in the civilized world and stands face to face with a struggle for existence which is even more ominous than those eventful crises which have characterized its past battles for dominance.

Religion is now confronted by the challenge of a new age of scientific minds and materialistic tendencies. In this gigantic struggle between the secular and the spiritual, the religion of Jesus will eventually triumph.

5. The Modern Problem

The twenty-first century has brought new problems for Christianity and all other religions to solve. The higher a civilization climbs, the more necessitous the duty becomes to include a spiritual perspective in all of humanity’s efforts to stabilize society and facilitate the solution of its material problems.

Truth often becomes confusing and even misleading when it is dismembered, segregated, isolated, and over-analyzed. Living truth teaches the truth seeker only when it is embraced in wholeness and as a living spiritual reality, not as a fact of material science or an inspiration of intervening art.

Religion is the revelation to mortals of their divine and eternal destiny. Religion is a purely personal and spiritual experience and must forever be distinguished from other high forms of thought, such as:

1. A logical attitude toward the things of material reality.

2. An aesthetic appreciation of beauty contrasted with ugliness.
3. An ethical recognition of social obligations and political duty.
4. Even a sense of human morality is not, in and of itself, religious.

Religion is designed to find those values in the universe which call forth faith, trust, and assurance; religion culminates in worship. Religion discovers for the soul those supreme values which are in contrast with the relative values discovered by the mind. Such superhuman insight can be had only through genuine religious experience.

A lasting social system without a morality predicated on spiritual realities can no more be maintained than the solar system could without gravity.

Do not try to satisfy the curiosity or gratify all the latent adventure surging within the soul in one short mortal life. Be patient! Do not be tempted to indulge in a lawless plunge into cheap and sordid adventure. Harness your energies and control your passions; be calm while you await the majestic unfolding of an endless career of progressive adventure and thrilling discovery.

In confusion over people's origins, do not lose sight of their eternal destiny. Do not forget that Jesus loved little children, and forever made clear the great worth of human personality.

As you view the world, remember that the patches of evil which you see are shown against a background of ultimate good. You do not merely view patches of good which show up miserably against a background of evil.

When there is so much good truth to publish and proclaim, why should people dwell so much on the evil in the world just because it appears to be a fact? The beauties of the spiritual values of truth are more pleasurable and uplifting than the phenomenon of evil.

In religion, Jesus advocated and followed the method of experience, even as modern science pursues the technique of experiment. We find the Creator through the leadings of spiritual insight, but we approach this insight of the soul through the love of the beautiful, the pursuit of truth, loyalty to duty, and the worship of divine goodness. But of all these values, love is the true guide to real insight.

6. Materialism

Scientists have unintentionally precipitated humankind into a materialistic panic; they have started an unthinking run on the moral bank of the ages, but this bank of human experience has vast spiritual resources; it can stand the demands being made on it. Only unthinking people become panicky about the spiritual assets of the human race. When the materialistic-secular panic is over, the religion of Jesus will not be found bankrupt. The spiritual bank of the realm of the Creator will be paying out faith, hope, and moral security to all who draw on it.

No matter what the apparent conflict between materialism and the teachings of Jesus may be, you can rest assured that, in the ages to come, the teachings of the Master will fully triumph. In reality, true religion cannot become involved in any controversy with science; it is in no way concerned with material things. Religion is simply indifferent to, but sympathetic with, science, while it supremely concerns itself with the *scientist*.

The pursuit of mere knowledge, without the attendant interpretation of wisdom and the spiritual insight of religious experience, eventually leads to pessimism and human despair. A little knowledge is truly disconcerting.

At the time of this writing the day of a better understanding is already beginning to dawn. The higher minds of the scientific world are no longer wholly materialistic in their philosophy, but the rank and file of the people still lean in that direction as a result of former teachings. But this age of physical realism is only a passing episode in life on earth. Modern science has left true religion — the teachings of Jesus as translated in the lives of believers — untouched. All science has done is to destroy the childlike illusions of the misinterpretations of life.

Science is a quantitative experience, religion a qualitative experience, as regards life on earth. Science deals with phenomena; religion, with origins, values, and goals. To assign *causes* as an explanation of physical phenomena is to confess ignorance of ultimates and in the end only leads the scientist straight back to the first great cause — the Universal Source.

The violent swing from an age of miracles to an age of machines has proved altogether upsetting. The cleverness and dexterity of the false philosophies of mechanism belie their very mechanistic contentions. The fatalistic agility of the mind of a materialist forever disproves any assertions that the universe is a blind and purposeless energy phenomenon.

The mechanistic naturalism of some supposedly educated people and the thoughtless secularism of the person in the street are both exclusively concerned with *things*; they are barren of all real values, sanctions, and satisfactions of a spiritual nature, as well as being devoid of faith, hope, and eternal assurances. One of the great problems with modern life is that people think they are too busy to find time for spiritual meditation and religious devotion.

Materialism reduces humans to soulless automatons and constitutes them merely an arithmetical symbol finding a helpless place in the mathematical formula of an unromantic and mechanistic universe. But where does all this vast universe of mathematics come from without a Master Mathematician? Science may expatiate on the conservation of matter, but religion validates the conservation of people's souls — it concerns their experience with spiritual realities and eternal values.

The materialistic sociologist of today surveys a community, makes a report, and leaves the people as they were found. Two thousand years ago, unlearned Galileans surveyed Jesus living as a spiritual contribution to people's inner experience and then went out and turned the whole Roman Empire upside down.

But religious leaders are making a great mistake when they try to call modern people to experience the spiritual with the approach of the Middle Ages. Religion must provide itself with new and up-to-date language. Neither democracy nor any other political panacea will take the place of spiritual progress. False religions may represent an evasion of reality, but Jesus introduced mortals to the very entrance of an eternal reality of spiritual progression.

To say that mind "emerged" from matter explains nothing. If the universe were merely a mechanism and mind were not separate from matter, we would never have two differing interpretations of any observed phenomenon. The concepts of truth, beauty, and goodness are not inherent in either physics or chemistry. A machine cannot *know*, much less know truth, hunger for righteousness, and cherish goodness.

Science may be physical, but the mind of the truth-discerning scientist is at the same time supermaterial. Matter does not know truth, neither can it love mercy nor delight in spiritual realities. Moral convictions

based on spiritual enlightenment and rooted in human experience are just as real and certain as mathematical deductions based on physical observations, but on another and higher level.

If people were only machines, they would react more or less uniformly to a material universe. Individuality, much less personality, would be nonexistent.

The fact of the absolute mechanism of Paradise at the center of the universe of universes, in the presence of the unqualified volition of the Second Source and Center, makes it certain that determiners are not the exclusive law of the cosmos. Materialism is there, but it is not exclusive; mechanism is there, but it is not unqualified; determinism is there, but it is not alone.

The finite universe of matter would eventually become uniform and deterministic except for the combined presence of mind and spirit. The influence of the cosmic mind constantly injects spontaneity into the material worlds.

Freedom or initiative in any realm of existence is directly proportional to the degree of spiritual influence and cosmic-mind control; that is, in human experience, the degree of the actuality of doing the Creator's will. And so, when you start out to find the Creator, that is conclusive proof that the Creator has already found you.

The sincere pursuit of goodness, beauty, and truth leads to the Universal Source. And every scientific discovery demonstrates the existence of both freedom and uniformity in the universe. The discoverer was free to make the discovery. The thing discovered is real and apparently uniform, or else it could not have become known as a *thing*.

7. The Vulnerability of Materialism

How foolish it is for material-minded people to allow such vulnerable theories as those of a mechanistic universe to deprive them of the vast spiritual resources of the personal experience of true religion. Facts never quarrel with real spiritual faith; theories may. It would be better if science were devoted to the destruction of superstition rather than attempting the overthrow of religious faith — human belief in spiritual realities and divine values.

Science should do for people materially what religion does for them spiritually: extend the horizon of life and enlarge the personality. True science can have no lasting quarrel with true religion. The “scientific method” is merely an intellectual yardstick with which to measure material adventures and physical achievements. But being material and wholly intellectual, it is utterly useless in the evaluation of spiritual realities and religious experiences.

The inconsistency of the modern mechanist is: If this were merely a material universe and people only machines, such people would be wholly unable to recognize themselves as such a machine, and likewise such a machine-person would be wholly unconscious of the fact of the existence of such a material universe. The materialistic dismay and despair of a mechanistic science has failed to recognize the fact of the spirit-indwelt mind of the scientist whose very supermaterial insight formulates these mistaken and self-contradictory *concepts* of a materialistic universe.

Paradise values of eternity and infinity, of truth, beauty, and goodness, are concealed within the facts of the phenomena of the universes of time and space. But it requires the eye of faith in a spirit-born mortal to detect and discern these spiritual values.

The realities and values of spiritual progress are not a “psychologic projection” — a mere glorified daydream of the material mind. Such things are the spiritual forecasts of the indwelling Adjuster, the spirit of the Creator living in the mind. And do not let your exposure to the faintly glimpsed findings of “relativity” disturb your concepts of the eternity and infinity of the Universal Source. And in all your solicitation concerning the necessity for *self-expression* do not make the mistake of failing to provide for *Adjuster-expression*, the manifestation of your real and better self.

If this were only a material universe, material mortals would never be able to arrive at the concept of the mechanistic character of such an exclusively material existence. This very *mechanistic concept* of the universe is in itself a nonmaterial phenomenon of mind, and all mind is of nonmaterial origin, no matter how thoroughly it may appear to be materially conditioned and mechanistically controlled.

The partially evolved mental mechanism of mortals is not overendowed with consistency and wisdom. Human conceit often outruns reason and eludes logic.

The very pessimism of the most pessimistic materialist is, in and of itself, sufficient proof that the universe of the pessimist is not wholly material. Both optimism and pessimism are concept reactions in a mind conscious of *values* as well as of *facts*. If the universe were truly what the materialist regards it to be, mortals as human machines would then be devoid of all conscious recognition of that very *fact*. Without the consciousness of the concept of *values* within the spirit-born mind, the fact of universe materialism and the mechanistic phenomena of universe operation would be wholly unrecognized. One machine cannot be conscious of the nature or value of another machine.

A mechanistic philosophy of life and the universe cannot be scientific because science recognizes and deals only with materials and facts. Philosophy is inevitably super-scientific. Mortals are a material fact of nature, but their *lives* are a phenomenon which transcends the material levels of nature in that it exhibits the control attributes of mind and the creative qualities of spirit.

The sincere effort of mortals to become mechanists represents the tragic phenomenon of their futile effort to commit intellectual and moral suicide. But they cannot do it.

If the universe were only material and mortals only a machine, there would be no science to embolden the scientist to postulate this mechanization of the universe. Machines cannot measure, classify, nor evaluate themselves. Such a scientific piece of work could be executed only by some entity of super-machine status.

If universe reality is only one vast machine, then mortals must be outside of the universe and apart from it in order to recognize such a *fact* and become conscious of the *insight* of such an *evaluation*.

If mortals are only machines, by what technique do they come to *believe* or claim to *know* that they are only machines? The experience of self-conscious evaluation of one's self is never an attribute of a mere machine. A self-conscious and avowed mechanist is the best possible answer to mechanism. If materialism were a fact, there could be no self-conscious mechanist. It is also true that one must first be a moral person before one can perform immoral acts.

The very claim of materialism implies a supermaterial consciousness of the mind which presumes to assert such dogmas. A mechanism might deteriorate, but it could never progress. Machines do not think, create, dream, aspire, idealize, hunger for truth, or thirst for righteousness. They do not motivate their lives with the passion to serve other machines and to choose as their goal of eternal progression the sublime task of finding and striving to be like the Creator. Machines are never intellectual, emotional, aesthetic, ethical, moral, or spiritual.

Art proves that mortals are not mechanistic, but it does not prove that they are spiritually immortal. Art is mortal morontia, the intervening field between the material and the spiritual. Poetry is an effort to escape from material realities to spiritual values.

In a high civilization, art humanizes science, while in turn it is spiritualized by true religion — insight into spiritual and eternal values. Art represents the human and time-space evaluation of reality. Religion *is* the divine embrace of cosmic values and connotes eternal progression in spiritual ascension and expansion. The art of time is dangerous only when it becomes blind to the spirit standards of the divine patterns which eternity reflects as the reality shadows of time. True art is the effective manipulation of the material things of life; religion is the ennobling transformation of the material facts of life, and it never ceases in its spiritual evaluation of art.

How foolish it is to presume that an automaton could conceive a philosophy of automatism, and how ridiculous that it should presume to form such a concept of other automatons!

Any scientific interpretation of the material universe is valueless unless it provides due recognition for the *scientist*. No appreciation of art is genuine unless it accords recognition to the *artist*. No evaluation of morals is worthwhile unless it includes the *moralist*. No recognition of philosophy is edifying if it ignores the *philosopher*, and religion cannot exist without the real experience of the *religionist* who, in and through this very experience, is seeking to find and to know the Creator. Likewise the universe of universes is without significance apart from the I AM, the infinite Source who made it and unceasingly manages it.

Mechanists — humanists — tend to drift with the material currents. Idealists *dare* to use their oars with intelligence and vigor in order to modify the apparently purely material course of the energy streams.

Science lives by the mathematics of the mind; music expresses the tempo of the emotions. Religion is the spiritual rhythm of the soul in time-space harmony with the higher and eternal melody measurements of Infinity. Religious experience is something in human life which is truly super-mathematical.

In language, an alphabet represents the mechanism of materialism, while the words expressive of the meaning of a thousand thoughts, grand ideas, and noble ideals — of love and hate, of cowardice and courage — represent the performances of mind within the scope defined by both material and spiritual law, directed by the assertion of the will of personality, and limited by the inherent situational endowment.

The universe is not like the laws, mechanisms, and the uniformities which the scientist discovers and comes to regard as science, but rather like the curious, thinking, choosing, creative, combining, and discriminating *scientist* who observes universe phenomena and classifies the mathematical facts inherent in the mechanistic phases of the material side of creation. Neither is the universe like the art of the artist, but rather like the striving, dreaming, aspiring, and advancing *artist* who seeks to transcend the world of material things in an effort to achieve a spiritual goal.

The scientist, not science, perceives the reality of an evolving and advancing universe of energy and matter. The artist, not art, demonstrates the existence of the transient morontia world intervening between material existence and spiritual liberty. The religionist, not religion, proves the existence of the spirit realities and divine values which are to be encountered in the progress of eternity.

8. Secular Totalitarianism

But even after materialism and mechanism have been more or less vanquished, the devastating influence of twenty-first century secularism will still blight the spiritual experience of millions of unsuspecting souls.

Modern secularism has been fostered by two world-wide influences. The impetus for secularism was the narrow-minded and materialistic attitude of nineteenth- and twentieth-century so-called science — atheistic science. The nurturer of modern secularism was the totalitarian medieval Christian church. Secularism had its inception as a rising protest against the almost complete domination of Western civilization by the institutionalized Christian church.

At the time of this revelation, the prevailing intellectual and philosophical climate of both European and American life is decidedly secular — humanistic. For three hundred years Western thinking has been progressively secularized. Religion has become more and more a nominal influence, largely a ritualistic exercise. The majority of professed Christians of Western civilization are unwittingly actual secularists.

It required a great power, a mighty influence, to free the thinking and living of the Western peoples from the withering grasp of a totalitarian ecclesiastical domination. Secularism did break the bonds of religious control, and now in turn it threatens to establish a new and materialistic type of mastery over the hearts and minds of modern people. The tyrannical and dictatorial political state is the direct offspring of scientific materialism and philosophic secularism. Secularism no sooner frees people from the domination of institutionalized religion than it sells them into slavish bondage to the totalitarian state. Secularism frees people from ecclesiastical slavery only to betray them into the tyranny of political and economic slavery.

Materialism denies spiritual reality, secularism simply ignores it; at least that was the earlier attitude. More recently, secularism has assumed a more aggressive attitude, assuming to take the place of the religion whose totalitarian bondage it once resisted. Twenty-first century secularism tends to affirm that humanity does not need Deity. But beware! this philosophy of human society will lead only to unrest, animosity, unhappiness, war, and world-wide disaster.

Secularism can never bring peace to humankind. Nothing can take the place of Deity in human society. But do not be quick to surrender the beneficent gains of the secular revolt from ecclesiastical totalitarianism. Western civilization today enjoys many liberties and satisfactions as a result of the secular revolt. The great mistake of secularism was this: In revolting against the almost total control of life by religious authority, and after attaining the liberation from such ecclesiastical tyranny, the secularists went on to institute a revolt against Deity, sometimes tacitly and sometimes openly.

To the secularistic revolt you owe the amazing creativity of American industrialism and the unprecedented material progress of Western civilization. And because the secularistic revolt went too far and lost sight of *true* religion, the unlooked-for harvest of world wars and international unsettledness also followed.

It is not necessary to sacrifice faith in order to enjoy the blessings of the modern secularistic revolt: tolerance, social service, democratic government, and civil liberties. It was not necessary for the secularists to antagonize true religion in order to promote science and to advance education.

But secularism is not the sole parent of all these recent gains in the enlargement of living. Behind the gains of the twenty-first century are not only science and secularism but also the unrecognized and unacknowledged spiritual workings of the life and teaching of Jesus.

Without religion, scientific secularism can never co-ordinate its forces, harmonize its divergent and rivalrous interests, races, and nationalisms. This secularistic human society, notwithstanding its unparalleled materialistic achievement, is slowly disintegrating. The chief cohesive force resisting this disintegration of antagonism is nationalism. And nationalism is the chief barrier to world peace.

The inherent weakness of secularism is that it discards ethics and religion for politics and power. You simply cannot establish the family of humanity while ignoring or denying the parenthood of the Creator.

Secular social and political optimism is an illusion. Without Deity, neither freedom and liberty, nor property and wealth will lead to peace.

The complete secularization of science, education, industry, and society can lead only to disaster. During the first third of the twentieth century Urantians killed more human beings than were killed during the whole time since the life of Jesus. And this was only the beginning of the dire harvest of materialism and secularism.

9. Christianity's Problem

Do not overlook the value of your spiritual heritage, the river of truth running down through the centuries, even to the barren times of a materialistic and secular age. In all your worthy efforts to rid yourselves of the superstitious creeds of past ages, make sure that you hold onto the eternal truth. But be patient! When the present superstition revolt is over, the truths of Jesus' doctrine will persist gloriously to illuminate a new and better way.

But paganized and socialized Christianity stands in need of new contact with the uncompromised teachings of Jesus; it languishes for lack of a new vision of the Master's life on earth. A new and fuller revelation of the religion of Jesus is destined to conquer an empire of materialistic secularism and to overthrow a world sway of mechanistic naturalism. Urantia is now quivering on the very brink of one of its most amazing and enthralling epochs of social readjustment, moral quickening, and spiritual enlightenment.

The teachings of Jesus, even though greatly modified, survived the mystery cults of their birthtime, the ignorance and superstition of the dark ages, and are even now slowly triumphing over the materialism, mechanism, and secularism of the twenty-first century. And such times of great testing and threatened defeat are always times of great revelation.

Religion needs new leaders, spiritual people who will dare to depend solely on Jesus' incomparable teachings. If Christianity persists in neglecting its spiritual mission while it continues to busy itself with social and material problems, the spiritual renaissance must wait for the coming of these new teachers of Jesus' religion who will be exclusively devoted to the spiritual regeneration of humanity. And then these spirit-born souls will quickly supply the leadership and inspiration requisite for the social, moral, economic, and political reorganization of the world.

The modern age will refuse to accept a religion which is inconsistent with facts and out of harmony with its highest conceptions of truth, beauty, and goodness. The hour is striking for a rediscovery of the true and original foundations of present-day distorted and compromised Christianity — the real life and teachings of Jesus.

Primitive people lived a life of superstitious bondage to religious fear. Modern, civilized people dread the thought of falling under the dominance of strong religious convictions. Thinking people have always feared to be *held* by a religion. When a strong and moving religion threatens to dominate them, they invariably try to rationalize, traditionalize, and institutionalize it, thereby hoping to gain control of it. By such procedure, even a revealed religion becomes human-made and human-dominated. Modern people of intelligence evade the religion of Jesus because of their fears of what it will do *to* them — and *with* them. And all such fears are well founded. The religion of Jesus does, indeed, dominate and transform its believers, demanding that

people dedicate their lives to seeking for a knowledge of the will of the Creator and requiring that the energies of living be consecrated to the unselfish service of the family of humanity.

Selfish people simply will not pay such a price for even the greatest spiritual treasure ever offered to mortals. Only when people have become sufficiently disillusioned by the sorrowful disappointments attendant on the foolish and deceptive pursuits of selfishness, and subsequent to the discovery of the barrenness of formalized religion, will they be disposed to turn wholeheartedly to the religion of Jesus.

The world needs more firsthand religion. Christianity is not only a religion *about* Jesus, but it is so largely one which people experience secondhand. They take their religion wholly as handed down by their accepted religious teachers. What an awakening the world would experience if it could only see how Jesus really lived on earth and know, firsthand, Jesus' life-giving teachings! Descriptive words of beautiful things cannot thrill like the sight of them, neither can creedal words inspire people's souls like the experience of knowing the presence of the Creator. But expectant faith will always keep open the door of people's souls for the entrance of the eternal spiritual realities of the divine values of the worlds beyond.

Christianity has dared to lower its ideals before the challenge of human greed, war-madness, and the lust for power; but the religion of Jesus stands as the unsullied and transcendent spiritual summons, calling to the best there is in people to rise above all these legacies of animal evolution and, by grace, attain the moral heights of true human destiny.

Christianity is threatened by slow death from formalism, over-organization, intellectualism, and other nonspiritual trends. The modern Christian church is not the community of dynamic believers that Jesus commissioned to continuously effect the spiritual transformation of successive generations of humankind.

So-called Christianity has become a social and cultural movement as well as a religious belief and practice. The stream of modern Christianity drains many an ancient pagan swamp and many a barbarian morass; many olden cultural watersheds drain into this present-day cultural stream as well as the high Galilean tablelands which are supposed to be its exclusive source.

10. The Future

Christianity has indeed done a great service for this world, but what is now most needed is Jesus. The world needs to see Jesus living again on earth in the experience of spirit-born mortals who effectively reveal the Master. It is futile to talk about a revival of primitive Christianity; you must go forward from where you find yourselves. Modern culture must become spiritually infused with a new revelation of Jesus' life and illuminated with a new understanding of the doctrine of life eternal. And Jesus, when lifted up, will attract all people. Jesus' disciples should be sources of inspiration and enhanced living to all. Religion is only an exalted humanism until it is made divine by the discovery of the reality of the presence of the Creator in personal experience.

The beauty and sublimity, the humanity and divinity, the simplicity and uniqueness, of Jesus' life on earth present such a striking and appealing picture of human-saving and Creator-revealing that the theologians and philosophers of all time should be effectively restrained from daring to form creeds or create theological systems of spiritual bondage out of such a transcendental bestowal of the Creator in mortal form. In Jesus the universe produced a mortal in whom the spirit of love triumphed over the material handicaps of time and overcame the fact of physical origin.

Ever bear in mind — the Creator and mortals need each other. They are mutually necessary to the full and final attainment of eternal personality experience in the divine destiny of universe finality.

“The realm of the Creator is within you” was probably the greatest pronouncement Jesus ever made, next to the declaration that this Creator is a living and loving spirit.

In winning souls for the Master, it is not the first mile of compulsion, duty, or convention that will transform the world, but rather the *second* mile of free service and liberty-loving devotion that shows the Jesusonian reaching forth to grasp others in love and sweep them on under spiritual guidance toward the higher and divine goal of mortal existence. Christianity even now willingly goes the *first* mile, but humankind languishes and stumbles along in moral darkness because there are so few genuine second-milers — so few professed followers who really live and love as Jesus taught the disciples to live and love and serve.

The call to the adventure of building a new and transformed human society by means of the spiritual rebirth of Jesus’ family of the new realm should thrill all who believe as people have not been stirred since the days when they walked on earth as Jesus’ companions.

No social system or political regime which denies the reality of the Creator can contribute in any constructive and lasting manner to the advancement of human civilization. But Christianity, as it is subdivided and secularized today, presents the greatest single obstacle to its further advancement.

Ecclesiasticism is at once and forever incompatible with that living faith, growing spirit, and firsthand experience of the faith-comrades of Jesus in the family of humanity in the spiritual association of the realm of the Creator. The praiseworthy desire to preserve traditions of past achievement often leads to the defense of outgrown systems of worship. The well-meant desire to foster ancient thought systems effectually prevents the sponsoring of new and adequate means and methods designed to satisfy the spiritual longings of the expanding and advancing minds of modern people. Likewise, the Christian churches of the twenty-first century stand as great, but wholly unconscious, obstacles to the immediate advance of the teachings of Jesus.

Many earnest people who would gladly yield loyalty to the real Jesus find it very difficult enthusiastically to support a church which exhibits so little of the spirit of Jesus’ life and teachings. Jesus did not found the so-called Christian church, but has consistently *fostered* it as the best existent exponent of the bestowal mission.

If the Christian church would only dare to espouse the Master’s program, thousands of apparently indifferent youths would rush forward to enlist in such a spiritual undertaking, and they would not hesitate to go all the way through with this great adventure.

Christianity is seriously confronted with the doom embodied in one of its own slogans: “A house divided against itself cannot stand.” The non-Christian world can hardly respect a sect-divided Christendom. The living Jesus is the only hope of a possible unification of Christianity. The true church — the Jesus community — is invisible, spiritual, and is characterized by *unity*, not necessarily by *uniformity*. Uniformity is the earmark of the physical world of mechanistic nature. Spiritual unity is the fruit of faith union with the living Jesus. The visible church should refuse to any longer handicap the progress of the invisible and spiritual family of the realm of the Creator. And this community is destined to become a *living organism* in contrast to an institutionalized social organization. It may well utilize such social organizations, but it must not be supplanted by them.

But the Christianity of today must not be despised. It is the product of the combined moral genius of many Creator-knowing people during many ages, and it has truly been one of the greatest powers for good on earth, and therefore no one should lightly regard it, notwithstanding its inherent and acquired defects. Christianity still contrives to move the minds of reflective people with mighty moral emotions.

But there is no excuse for the involvement of the church in commerce and politics; such unholy alliances are a flagrant betrayal of the Master. And the genuine lovers of truth will be slow to forget that this powerful institutionalized church has often dared to smother newborn faith and persecute truth bearers who chanced to appear in unorthodox ways.

It is all too true that such a church would not have survived unless there had been people in the world who preferred such a style of worship. Many spiritually indolent souls crave an ancient and authoritative religion of ritual and sacred traditions. Human evolution and spiritual progress are hardly sufficient to enable all people to dispense with religious authority. And the invisible family of the new realm may well include these family groups of various social and temperamental classes if they are only willing to become truly spirit-led children of the Creator. But in this community of Jesus there is no place for sectarian rivalry, group bitterness, nor assertions of moral superiority and spiritual infallibility.

These various groupings of Christians may serve to accommodate numerous different types of would-be believers among the various peoples of the world, but such division of Christendom presents a grave weakness when it attempts to carry the teachings of Jesus to non-Christians. These people do not yet understand that there is a *religion of Jesus* separate, and somewhat apart, from Christianity, which has more and more become a *religion about Jesus*.

The great hope of Urantia lies in the possibility of a new revelation of Jesus with a new and enlarged presentation of the message which would spiritually unite in loving service the numerous communities of present-day professed followers.

Even secular education could help in this great spiritual renaissance if it would pay more attention to the work of teaching youth how to engage in life planning and character progression. The purpose of all education should be to foster and further the supreme purpose of life, the development of a majestic and well-balanced personality. There is great need for the teaching of moral discipline in the place of so much self-gratification. On such a foundation religion may contribute its spiritual incentive to the enlargement and enrichment of mortal life, even to the security and enhancement of life eternal.

Christianity is a mighty religion, seeing that the commonplace disciples of a crucified carpenter set in motion those teachings which conquered the Roman world in three hundred years and then went on to triumph over the barbarians who overthrew Rome. And then, when this Christian religion became comatose for more than a thousand years as a result of an overdose of mysteries and paganism, it resurrected itself and virtually reconquered the whole Western world. Christianity contains enough of Jesus' teachings to immortalize it.

If Christianity could only grasp more of Jesus' teachings, it could do so much more in helping present day people to solve their new and increasingly complex problems.

Christianity suffers under a great handicap because it has become identified in the minds of all the world as a part of a particular social system, industrial life, and moral standards; and Christianity has unwittingly seemed to sponsor a society which staggers under the guilt of tolerating science without idealism, politics without principles, wealth without work, pleasure without restraint, knowledge without character, power without conscience, and industry without morality.

The hope of modern Christianity is that it should cease to sponsor particular social systems and industrial policies while it humbly bows itself before the cross it so valiantly extols, there to learn anew from Jesus the greatest truths mortals can ever hear — the living doctrine of the parenthood of the Creator and the family of humanity.

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The Faith of Jesus

Jesus enjoyed a sublime and wholehearted faith in the Creator, experiencing the ordinary ups and downs of mortal existence, but never doubting the certainty of the Creator's watchcare and guidance. Jesus' faith was the outgrowth of the insight born of the activity of the divine presence, the indwelling Adjuster. That faith was neither traditional nor merely intellectual; it was wholly personal and purely spiritual.

The human Jesus saw the Creator as being holy, just, and great, as well as being true, beautiful, and good. All these attributes of divinity were focused as the "will of the Creator." The concept of the Creator as a Parent was not original with Jesus, but it was exalted and elevated into a sublime experience by achieving a new revelation of the Creator and by proclaiming that every mortal creature is a child of this Parent of love.

Jesus did not resort to faith merely as a consolation in the midst of difficulties or as a comfort in threatened despair; faith was not just an illusory compensation for the unpleasant realities and the sorrows of living. In the very face of all the natural difficulties and the temporal contradictions of mortal existence, Jesus experienced the tranquility of supreme and unquestioned trust in the Creator and felt the tremendous thrill of living, by faith, in the very presence of the Universal Source. And this triumphant faith was a living experience of actual spirit attainment. Jesus' great contribution to the values of human experience was not through revealing so many new ideas about the Creator, but rather by so magnificently and humanly demonstrating a new and higher type of *living faith*. Never on all the worlds of this universe, in the life of any one mortal, did the Creator ever become such a *living reality* as in the human experience of Jesus of Nazareth.

In the Master's life on Urantia, this and all other worlds of the local creation discover a new and higher type of religion, religion based on personal spiritual relations with the Universal Source and wholly validated by the supreme authority of genuine personal experience. This living faith of Jesus was more than an intellectual reflection, and it was not a mystic meditation.

Theology may fix, formulate, define, and dogmatize faith, but in the human life of Jesus, faith was personal, living, original, spontaneous, and purely spiritual. This faith was not reverence for tradition nor a mere intellectual belief held as a sacred creed, but rather a sublime experience and a profound conviction. Jesus' faith was so real and all-encompassing that it absolutely swept away any spiritual doubts and effectively destroyed every conflicting desire. Nothing was able to tear Jesus away from the spiritual anchorage of this fervent, sublime, and undaunted faith. Even in the face of apparent defeat or in the throes of disappointment and threatening despair, Jesus calmly stood in the divine presence free from fear and fully conscious of spiritual invincibility, enjoying the invigorating assurance of the possession of unflinching faith, and in each of life's trying situations unfailingly exhibiting an unquestioning loyalty to the Creator's will. And this superb faith was undaunted even by the cruel and crushing threat of an ignominious death.

In a religious genius, strong spiritual faith many times leads directly to disastrous fanaticism, to exaggeration of the religious ego. But it was not so with Jesus, who was not unfavorably affected in practical life by this extraordinary faith and spirit attainment because such spiritual exaltation was a wholly unconscious and spontaneous soul expression of a personal experience with the Creator.

The all-consuming and indomitable spiritual faith of Jesus never became fanatical, for it never attempted to run away with well-balanced intellectual judgments concerning the proportional values of practical and

commonplace social, economic, and moral life situations. Jesus of Nazareth was a splendidly unified human personality, a perfectly endowed divine being; and was also magnificently co-ordinated as a combined human and divine being functioning on earth as a single personality. The Master always co-ordinated the faith of the soul with the wisdom-appraisals of seasoned experience. Personal faith, spiritual hope, and moral devotion were always correlated in a matchless religious unity of harmonious association with the keen realization of the reality and sacredness of all human loyalties — personal honor, family love, religious obligation, social duty, and economic necessity.

The faith of Jesus visualized all spirit values as being found in the realm of the Creator. Jesus saw in the advanced and ideal family of the Creator's realm the achievement and fulfillment of the "will of the Creator." Having conceived of the new realm as comprising the will of the Creator, Jesus became devoted to the cause of its realization with amazing self-forgetfulness and unbounded enthusiasm. But in all of this intense mission and throughout an extraordinary life, the fury of the fanatic nor the superficial frothiness of the religious egotist never appeared.

The Master's entire life was consistently conditioned by this living faith, this sublime religious experience. This spiritual attitude wholly dominated Jesus' thinking and feeling, believing and praying, and teaching and preaching. This personal faith in the certainty and security of the guidance and protection of the divine Parent imparted to Jesus' unique life a profound endowment of spiritual reality. And yet, despite such a very deep consciousness of close relationship with divinity, this Galilean, when addressed as Good Teacher, instantly replied, "Why do you call me good?" When we stand confronted by such splendid self-forgetfulness, we begin to understand how the Universal Source found it possible to so fully become manifest to Jesus and to be revealed through Jesus to the mortals of the realms.

Jesus brought to the Creator, as a mortal of the realm, the greatest of all offerings: the consecration and dedication of a mortal will to the majestic service of doing the divine will. Jesus always and consistently interpreted religion wholly in terms of the Creator's will. When you study the career of the Master, as concerns prayer or any other feature of the religious life, do not look as much at what was taught as at what was done. Jesus never prayed as a religious duty. Prayer was a sincere expression of spiritual attitude, a declaration of soul loyalty, a recital of personal devotion, an expression of thanksgiving, an avoidance of emotional tension, a prevention of conflict, an exaltation of intellection, an ennoblement of desire, a vindication of moral decision, an enrichment of thought, an invigoration of higher inclinations, a consecration of impulse, a clarification of viewpoint, a declaration of faith, a transcendental surrender of will, a sublime assertion of confidence, a revelation of courage, the proclamation of discovery, a confession of supreme devotion, the validation of consecration, a technique for the adjustment of difficulties, and the mighty mobilization of the combined soul powers to withstand all human tendencies toward selfishness, evil, and sin. Jesus lived just such a life of prayerful consecration to the doing of the Creator's will, and ended the mortal life triumphantly with just such a prayer. The secret of this unparalleled religious life was this consciousness of the presence of the Creator; and Jesus attained it by intelligent prayer and sincere worship — unbroken communion with the Creator — and not by leadings, voices, visions, or extraordinary religious practices.

In the earthly life of Jesus, religion was a living experience, a direct and personal movement from spiritual reverence to practical righteousness. The faith of Jesus bore the transcendent fruits of the divine spirit. This faith was not immature and credulous like that of a child, but in many ways it did resemble the unsuspecting trust of the child mind. Jesus trusted the Creator much as the child trusts a parent, and had a profound confidence in the universe — just such a trust as the child has in its parental environment. Jesus' wholehearted faith in the fundamental goodness of the universe very much resembled the child's trust in the security of its earthly surroundings. Jesus depended on the Creator as a child leans on its earthly parent, and never for one moment doubted the certainty of the Creator's overcare. Jesus was not seriously disturbed

by fears, doubts, and skepticism, and was not inhibited in the free and original expression of life by unbelief, combining the stalwart and intelligent courage of a full-grown adult with the sincere and trusting optimism of a believing child. Jesus' faith grew to such heights of trust that it was devoid of fear.

The faith of Jesus attained the purity of a child's trust. This faith was so absolute and undoubting that it responded to the charm of the contact of other beings and to the wonders of the universe. Jesus' sense of dependence on the divine was so complete and so confident that it yielded the joy and the assurance of absolute personal security. There was no hesitating pretense in this religious experience. In such a giant intellect of the full-grown adult the faith of the child reigned supreme in all matters relating to the religious consciousness. Notwithstanding that Jesus' faith was *childlike*, it was in no sense *childish*.

There was no requirement that the disciples believe in Jesus but rather to believe *with* Jesus, believe in the reality of the love of the Creator and in full confidence accept the security of the assurance of a relationship with the Creator. The Master desires that all followers should fully share this transcendent faith. The followers were most touchingly challenged not only to believe *what* Jesus believed, but also *as* Jesus believed. This is the full significance of the one supreme requirement, "Follow me."

Jesus' earthly life was devoted to one great purpose — doing the Creator's will, living the human life religiously and by faith. The faith of Jesus was trusting, like that of a child, but it was wholly free from presumption. Jesus made robust decisions, courageously faced manifold disappointments, resolutely surmounted extraordinary difficulties, and unflinchingly confronted the stern requirements of duty. It required a strong will and an unfailing confidence to believe what and *as* Jesus believed.

1. Jesus — The Person

Jesus' devotion to the Creator's will and the service of humanity was even more than mortal decision and human determination; it was a wholehearted consecration to such an unreserved bestowal of love. No matter how great the fact of the sovereignty of Michael, you must not take the human Jesus away. The Master has ascended on high as a mortal as well as a Deity; Jesus belongs to mortals; mortals belong to Jesus. How unfortunate it is that religion itself should be so misinterpreted as to take the human Jesus away from struggling mortals! Do not let the discussions of the humanity or the divinity of Jesus obscure the saving truth that this was a religious person who, by faith, achieved the knowing and the doing of the will of the Creator; Jesus was the most truly religious person who has ever lived on Urantia.

The time is ripe to witness the figurative resurrection of the human Jesus from the burial tomb amidst the theological traditions and the religious dogmas of twenty centuries. What a transcendent service if, through this revelation, Jesus should be recovered from the tomb of traditional theology and be presented as a living example to the Christian church and to all other religions! Surely the Christian community of believers will not hesitate to make such adjustments of faith and of practices of living as will enable it to "follow after" the Master in the demonstration of a real life of religious devotion to the doing of the Creator's will and of consecration to the unselfish service of humanity. Do professed Christians fear the exposure of a self-sufficient and unconsecrated attitude of social respectability and selfish economic maladjustment? Does institutional Christianity fear the possible jeopardy, or even the overthrow, of traditional ecclesiastical authority if the Jesus of Galilee is reinstated in the minds and souls of mortals as the ideal of personal religious living? The social readjustments, the economic transformations, the moral rejuvenations, and the religious revisions of Christian civilization would be drastic and revolutionary if the living religion of Jesus should suddenly supplant the theologic religion about Jesus.

To "follow Jesus" means to personally share the same religious faith and to enter into the spirit of the Master's life of unselfish service for humanity. One of the most important things in human living is to find

out what Jesus believed, to discover Jesus' ideals, and to strive for the achievement of Jesus' exalted life purpose. Of all human knowledge, that which is of greatest value is to know the religious life of Jesus.

The common people heard Jesus gladly, and they will again respond to the presentation of that sincere human life of consecrated religious motivation if such truths were again proclaimed to the world.

It should not be the aim of believers to literally imitate the outward life but rather to share Jesus' faith; to trust the Creator as Jesus trusted the Creator and to believe in mortals as Jesus believed in mortals. Jesus never argued about either the parenthood of the Creator or the family of humanity, but was a living illustration of the one and a profound demonstration of the other.

Just as people must progress from the consciousness of the human to the realization of the divine, so Jesus ascended from the nature of a mortal to the consciousness of the nature of the Creator. And the Master made this great ascent from the human to the divine by the conjoint achievement of the mortal intellect and the acts of the indwelling Adjuster. The fact-realization of the attainment of totality of divinity (all the while fully conscious of the reality of humanity) was attended by seven stages of faith consciousness of progressive divinization. These stages of progressive self-realization were marked by the following extraordinary events in the Master's bestowal experience:

1. The arrival of the Thought Adjuster.
2. The messenger of Immanuel who appeared to the twelve-year-old Jesus at Jerusalem.
3. The manifestations attendant on the baptism.
4. The experiences on the Mount of Transfiguration.
5. The morontia resurrection.
6. The spirit ascension.
7. The final embrace of the Paradise Creator, conferring unlimited sovereignty of this universe.

2. The Religion of Jesus

Someday a reformation in the Christian church may strike deep enough to get back to the unadulterated religious teachings of Jesus. You may *preach* a religion *about* Jesus, but you must *live* the religion *of* Jesus. In the enthusiasm of Pentecost, Peter unintentionally inaugurated a new religion, the religion of the risen and glorified Christ. The Apostle Paul later on transformed this new doctrine into Christianity, a religion embodying personal theologic views and portraying the *experience* with the Jesus of the Damascus road. The doctrine of the new realm is founded on the personal religious experience of Jesus of Galilee; Christianity is founded almost exclusively on the personal religious experience of the Apostle Paul. Almost the whole of the New Testament is devoted, not to the portrayal of the significant and inspiring religious life of Jesus, but to a discussion of Paul's religious experience and to a portrayal of Paul's religious convictions. The only notable exceptions to this statement, aside from certain parts of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, are the Book of Hebrews and the Epistle of James. Even Peter only once reverted to the religious life of the Master. The New Testament is a superb Christian document, but it is only meagerly Jesusonian.

Jesus' life portrays a transcendent religious growth from the early ideas of primitive awe and human reverence up through years of personal spiritual communion until finally arriving at that advanced and exalted status of the consciousness of oneness with the Creator. And so, in one short life, Jesus traversed that experience of religious spiritual progression which mortals begin on earth and ordinarily achieve only at the conclusion of a long sojourn in the spirit training schools of the successive levels of the pre-Paradise career. Jesus progressed from a purely human consciousness of the faith certainties of personal religious experience to the sublime spiritual heights of the positive realization of having a divine nature and to the consciousness of a close association with the Universal Source in the management of a universe. Jesus progressed from the humble status of mortal dependence to a sublime consciousness of achieved divinity. And this progressing ascent from the human to the divine was an exclusively mortal achievement. And having attained divinity, Jesus was still the same human being.

Mark, Matthew, and Luke retain something of the picture of the human Jesus who engaged in the superb struggle to ascertain the divine will and to do that will. John presents a picture of the triumphant Jesus walking on earth in the full consciousness of divinity. The great mistake that has been made by those who have studied the Master's life is that some have conceived of Jesus as entirely human, while others have thought of Jesus as only divine. Throughout the entire experience Jesus was truly both human and divine, and still is.

But the greatest mistake was made in that, while the human Jesus was recognized as *having* a religion, the divine Jesus almost overnight became a religion. Paul's Christianity made sure of the adoration of the divine Jesus, but it almost wholly lost sight of the struggling and valiant human Jesus of Galilee, who, by the valor of personal religious faith and the heroism of the indwelling Adjuster, ascended from the lowly levels of humanity to become one with divinity, becoming the new and living way by which all mortals may ascend from humanity to divinity. Mortals in all stages of spirituality and on all worlds may find in the personal life of Jesus that which will strengthen and inspire them as they progress from the lowest spirit levels up to the highest divine values, from the beginning to the end of all personal religious experience.

At the time of the writing of the New Testament, the authors not only most profoundly believed in the divinity of the risen Jesus, but they also devotedly and sincerely believed that Jesus would immediately return to earth to consummate the new realm. This strong faith in the Master's immediate return had much to do with the tendency to omit from the record those references which portrayed Jesus' purely human experiences and attributes. The whole Christian movement tended away from the human picture of Jesus toward the exaltation of the risen and soon-returning Deliverer.

Jesus founded the religion of personal experience in doing the will of the Creator and serving the human family; Paul founded a religion in which the glorified Jesus became the object of worship and the community consisted of believers in Jesus' divinity. In the bestowal of Jesus these two concepts were potential, and it is indeed a pity that the followers failed to create a unified religion which might have given proper recognition to both the human and the divine natures of the Master as they were inseparably bound up in Jesus' earth life and so gloriously set forth in the original doctrine of the new realm.

You would be neither shocked nor disturbed by some of the Master's strong pronouncements if you would only remember that Jesus was the world's most wholehearted and devoted religionist. Jesus was a wholly consecrated mortal, unreservedly dedicated to doing the Creator's will. Many apparently hard sayings were more of a personal confession of faith and a pledge of devotion than commands to the followers. And it was this very singleness of purpose and unselfish devotion that enabled Jesus to effect such extraordinary progress in the conquest of the human mind in one short life. Many of those declarations should be considered as a confession of personal demands rather than requirements for all the followers. In devotion

to the cause of the new realm, Jesus burned all bridges and sacrificed all hindrances to the doing of the Creator's will.

Jesus blessed the poor because they were usually sincere and pious, and condemned the rich because they were usually wanton and irreligious. Jesus would equally condemn the irreligious pauper and commend the consecrated and worshipful person of wealth.

Jesus led people to feel at home in the world, delivering them from the slavery of taboo and teaching them that the world was not fundamentally evil. Jesus did not long to escape from mortal life, and mastered a technique of acceptably doing the Creator's will while on this earth, attaining an idealistic religious life in the very midst of a realistic world. Jesus did not share Paul's pessimistic view of humankind. The Master viewed people as the children of the Creator and foresaw a magnificent and eternal future for those who chose survival. Jesus was not a moral skeptic, but viewed mortals positively, not negatively, seeing most people as weak rather than wicked, more distraught than depraved. But no matter what their status, they were all the Creator's children and Jesus' siblings.

Jesus taught people to place a high value on themselves in time and in eternity. Because of this high estimate of people, Jesus was dedicated to the unremitting service of humankind. And it was this infinite worth of the finite that made the golden rule a vital factor in Jesus' religion. Which mortals can fail to be uplifted by the extraordinary faith Jesus has in them?

Jesus offered no rules for social advancement, being on a religious mission, and religion is an exclusively individual experience. The ultimate goal of society's most advanced achievement can never hope to transcend Jesus' family of humanity based on the recognition of the parenthood of the Creator. The ideal of all social attainment can be realized only in the coming of this divine realm.

3. The Supremacy of Religion

Personal, spiritual religious experience is an efficient solvent for most mortal difficulties; it is an effective sorter, evaluator, and adjuster of all human problems. Religion does not remove or destroy human troubles, but it does dissolve, absorb, illuminate, and transcend them. True religion unifies the personality for effective adjustment to all mortal requirements. Religious faith — the positive leading of the indwelling divine presence — unfailingly enables the Creator-knowing person to bridge the gulf between the intellectual logic which recognizes the Universal First Cause as *It* and those positive affirmations of the soul which address this First Cause as the divine Parent of Jesus' teachings, the personal Creator of all mortals.

There are just three elements in universal reality: fact, idea, and relation. The religious consciousness identifies these realities as science, philosophy, and truth. Philosophy would be inclined to view these activities as reason, wisdom, and faith — physical reality, intellectual reality, and spiritual reality. We are in the habit of designating these realities as thing, meaning, and value.

The progressive comprehension of reality is the equivalent of approaching the Universal Source. The finding of the Source, the consciousness of identity with reality, is the equivalent of the experiencing of self-completion — self-entirety, self-totality. The experiencing of total reality is the full realization of the First Source and Center, the finality of the Creator-knowing experience.

The full summation of human life is the knowledge that mortals are educated by fact, ennobled by wisdom, and justified by religious faith.

Physical certainty consists in the logic of science; moral certainty, in the wisdom of philosophy; spiritual certainty, in the truth of genuine religious experience.

The minds of mortals can attain high levels of spiritual insight and corresponding spheres of divinity of values because they are not wholly material. There is a spirit nucleus in the mind — the Adjuster of the divine presence. There are three separate evidences of this spirit indwelling of the human mind:

1. Humanitarian relationships — love. The purely animal mind may be gregarious for self-protection, but only the spirit-indwelt intellect is unselfishly altruistic and unconditionally loving.
2. Interpretation of the universe — wisdom. Only the spirit-indwelt mind can comprehend that the universe is friendly to the individual.
3. Spiritual evaluation of life — worship. Only the spirit-indwelt person can realize the divine presence and seek to attain a fuller experience in and with this foretaste of divinity.

The human mind does not create real values; human experience does not yield universe insight. Concerning insight, the recognition of moral values and the discernment of spiritual meanings, all that the human mind can do is to discover, recognize, interpret, and *choose*.

The moral values of the universe become intellectual possessions by the exercise of the three basic judgments, or choices, of the mortal mind:

1. Self-judgment — moral choice.
2. Social-judgment — ethical choice.
3. Creator-judgment — religious choice.

Thus it appears that all human progress is effected by a technique of conjoint *revelatory evolution*.

Unless a divine lover lived in mortals, they could not unselfishly and spiritually love. Unless an interpreter lived in the mind, mortals could not truly realize the unity of the universe. Unless an evaluator dwelt with mortals, they could not possibly appraise moral values and recognize spiritual meanings. And this lover hails from the very source of infinite love; this interpreter is a part of Universal Unity; this evaluator is the child of the Center and Source of all absolute values of divine and eternal reality.

Moral evaluation with a religious meaning — spiritual insight — connotes the individual's choice between good and evil, truth and error, material and spiritual, human and divine, time and eternity. Human survival is in great measure dependent on consecrating the human will to the choosing of those values selected by this spirit-value sorter — the indwelling interpreter and unifier. Personal religious experience consists in two phases: discovery in the human mind and revelation by the indwelling divine spirit. Through oversophistication or as a result of the irreligious conduct of professed religionists, a person, or even a generation of people, may elect to suspend their efforts to discover the Deity who indwells them; they may fail to progress in and attain the divine revelation. But such attitudes of spiritual non-progression cannot persist because of the presence and influence of the indwelling Thought Adjusters.

This profound experience of the reality of the divine indwelling transcends the crude materialistic technique of the physical sciences. You cannot put spiritual joy under a microscope; you cannot weigh love in a balance; you cannot measure moral values; neither can you estimate the quality of spiritual worship.

The Hebrews had a religion of moral sublimity; the Greeks evolved a religion of beauty; Paul founded a religion of faith, hope, and charity. Jesus revealed and exemplified a religion of love: security in the Creator's love, with joy and satisfaction consequent upon sharing this love in the service of the human family.

Every time mortals make a reflective moral choice, they immediately experience a new divine invasion of the soul. Moral choosing constitutes religion as the motive of inner response to outer conditions. But such a real religion is not a purely subjective experience. It signifies the whole of the subjectivity of the individual engaged in a meaningful and intelligent response to total objectivity — the universe and its Maker.

The exquisite and transcendent experience of loving and being loved is not just a psychic illusion because it is so purely subjective. The one truly divine and objective reality that is associated with mortal beings, the Thought Adjuster, functions to human observation apparently as an exclusively subjective phenomenon. Contact with the highest objective reality, the Universal Source, is only through the purely subjective experience of knowing, worshipping, and of realizing a relationship with that Source.

True religious worship is not a futile monologue of self-deception. Worship is a personal communion with that which is divinely real, with that which is the very source of reality. Mortals aspire by worship to be better and eventually attain the *best*.

The idealization and attempted service of truth, beauty, and goodness is not a substitute for genuine religious experience — spiritual reality. Psychology and idealism are not the equivalent of religious reality. The projections of the human intellect may indeed originate false deities — deities in mortal image — but the true Creator-consciousness does not have such an origin. Creator-consciousness is resident in the indwelling spirit. Many religious systems come from the formulations of the human intellect, but Creator-consciousness is not necessarily a part of these grotesque systems of religious slavery.

The Creator is not the mere invention of mortal idealism, but is the very source of all such superanimal insights and values. The Creator is not a hypothesis formulated to unify the human concepts of truth, beauty, and goodness, but is the personality of love from whom all of these universe manifestations are derived. The truth, beauty, and goodness of the material world are unified by the increasing spirituality of the experience of mortals ascending toward Paradise realities. The unity of truth, beauty, and goodness can only be realized in the spiritual experience of the Creator-knowing personality.

Morality is the essential pre-existent soil of personal Creator-consciousness, the personal realization of the Adjuster's inner presence, but such morality is not the source of religious experience and the resultant spiritual insight. The moral nature is superanimal but sub-spiritual. Morality is equivalent to the recognition of duty, the realization of the existence of right and wrong. The moral zone intervenes between the animal and the human types of mind as morontia functions between the material and the spiritual spheres of personality attainment.

The evolutionary mind is able to discover law, morals, and ethics; but the bestowed spirit, the indwelling Adjuster, reveals to the evolving human mind the lawgiver, the source of all that is true, beautiful, and good; and such an illuminated person has a religion and is spiritually equipped to begin the long and adventurous search for the Universal Source.

Morality is not necessarily spiritual; it may be wholly and purely human, although real religion enhances all moral values, makes them more meaningful. Morality without religion fails to reveal ultimate goodness, and it also fails to provide for the survival of even its own moral values. Religion provides for the enhancement, glorification, and assured survival of everything morality recognizes and approves.

Religion stands above science, art, philosophy, ethics, and morals, but not independent of them. They are all indissolubly interrelated in human experience, personal and social. Religion is the supreme experience in the mortal nature, but finite language makes it impossible for theology to adequately depict real religious experience.

Religious insight possesses the power of turning defeat into higher desires and new determinations. Love is the highest motivation which mortals may utilize in their universe ascent. But love, divested of truth, beauty, and goodness, is only a sentiment, a philosophic distortion, a psychic illusion, a spiritual deception. Love must always be redefined on successive levels of morontia and spirit progression.

Art results from an attempt to escape from the lack of beauty in the material environment; it is a gesture toward the morontia level. Science is an effort to solve the apparent riddles of the material universe. Philosophy is an attempt at the unification of human experience. Religion is the supreme gesture, the magnificent reach for final reality, mortals' determination to find and be like the Creator.

In the realm of religious experience, spiritual possibility is potential reality. The forward spiritual urge is not a psychic illusion. All of universe romancing may not be fact, but much, very much, is truth.

Some people's lives are too great and noble to descend to the low level of being merely successful. The animal must adapt itself to the environment, but religious people transcend their environment and in this way escape the limitations of the present material world through this insight of divine love. This concept of love generates that superanimal effort to find truth, beauty, and goodness; and when mortals do find them, they are glorified in their embrace; they are consumed with the desire to live them, to do righteousness.

Do not be discouraged; human evolution is still in progress, and the revelation of the Creator to the world, in and through Jesus, will not fail.

The great challenge to modern people is to achieve better communication with the divine Monitor that dwells within the human mind. Mortals' greatest adventure consists in the well-balanced and sane effort to advance the borders of self-consciousness out through the dim realms of embryonic soul-consciousness in a wholehearted effort to reach the borderland of spirit-consciousness — contact with the divine presence. Such an experience constitutes Creator-consciousness, an experience mightily confirmative of the pre-existent truth of the religious experience of knowing the Creator. Such spirit-consciousness is the equivalent of the knowledge of the actuality of relationship with the Creator. Otherwise, the assurance of that relationship is the experience of faith.

And Creator-consciousness is equivalent to the integration of the self with the universe, and on its highest levels of spiritual reality. Only the spirit content of any value is imperishable. That which is true, beautiful, and good may not perish in human experience. If a mortal does not choose to survive, then the surviving Adjuster conserves those realities born of love and nurtured in service. And all these things are a part of the Universal Source. The Creator is living love, and this life of the Creator is in the divine Beings. And the spirit of the Creator is in the divine Beings' children — the mortals of the universes.