

THE SHEPHERD OF HERMAS

Translated by J.B.Lightfoot, 1891

Edited by Robby Charters, 1993

The Shepherd of Hermas is a very interesting (if not odd) work that has some hard things to say. Never the less, it is probably more relevant than many of us today would care to admit. They were the visions of a slave named Hermas, in which he is visited by "the shepherd", the angel of repentance

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

The Shepherd of Hermas was originally written somewhere between the last part of the first century and probably the first part of the second century. The *Didache* was written about that time, as well, although probably earlier. In that time period, most of the original Apostles had died --the last one, John, died AD 100-- and the canon of scripture hadn't been fully agreed on yet. In other words, many people were still not sure exactly which epistles and gospels were really inspired New Testament scripture, and which weren't. It was only later on that the leadership of the church decided more or less unanimously which books would make up the canon of scripture. (It was definitely the wisdom of God that they did, as I, for one, would hate to see what would happen if such a decision were left to the church in the state we've been in ever since!)

The Shepherd of Hermas is a series of visions, or revelations received by a slave, named Hermas, who lived in Rome. The "shepherd" is actually the angel of repentance who gives him most of the revelations in the second and third parts of the book. *The Shepherd of Hermas* made a great impression on the early church. In fact, many of the church fathers, such as Irenaeus, Origen, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian --thought he later changed his mind--, treated it as though it were divinely inspired scripture. Again, it had not yet been agreed at that point, exactly which books were, in fact scripture.

My own experience in reading *The Shepherd of Hermas*, is probably like many other's. I was confused by some of the strange, powerful statements that were made, and put it down, and didn't read it again until many years later. Then, I began to get something out of it. In fact, the more I read it, the more I am convinced that there is a vital message for the twentieth century church.

Part of the problem in reading the full text of what now exists, is that it was written by hand, and subsequently copied by hand. Rome, at that time, not being a major centre of Christianity as it became later, they were probably not as careful in preserving the writings as they were in places such as Ephesus, Antioch and Alexandria, where what now are known as New Testament scriptures were kept. Therefore, as the book was copied, it's possible that some people's pet doctrines crept in. If they sincerely believed something to be so, some people felt perfectly justified in "correcting" someone else's literary work, or at least making marginal notes. Later copiests mistook the marginal notes for corrections, and added them in. Therefore, if you read the full text --available at the *Christian History Library* web site (www.iclnet.org/pub/resources/christian-history.html) -- you will find certain other ideas that don't seem to make sense, but were floating around during the second century.

Since I don't know the original languages, nor do I have access to the original texts, I am not a qualified textual critic. However, I have edited the English translation as much as I dare to. I've left out some of the parts that would confuse rather than edify, with the opinion that they might not have been in the original visions of Hermas to begin with. Therefore this isn't a "version" based on a textual edition, but rather, an "abridged reader's edition", meant solely for the purpose of edifying the Body of Christ in the twentieth century. What I did find, however, is that when the questionable texts are removed, the whole thing reads even more smoothly than before, as though they didn't belong in the first place!

In reading, you will find that Hermas and his shepherding angel were neither Calvinists nor dispensationalists. I really can't help it -- they really weren't! However, if you are one who believes that it's just possible that a document can fail to support those two relatively recent doctrines, and yet be true to Scripture, you should be edified by the reading of *The Shepherd of Hermas*. One of the overpowering themes is cleansing oneself of double-mindedness. One truth that is emphasized is that, by following the desires that come as a natural part of the born-again experience, one is able to overcome sin. In this desire is the fear of God. For the double-minded Christian, the Christian life is extremely difficult, especially when confronted with some of the hard sayings in *The Shepherd...etc*. However, once repentance is made, and the soul is cleansed of a double mind, following these things comes very naturally. There are also some striking statements about faith and unbelief that would seem to have been spoken by some of the more radical Bible teachers of our

time. In all, the *Shepherd* will remind the reader of the book of James, only very much expanded.

Finally, I am in no way insinuating that these works be treated on a level with Holy Scripture. Though they were rejected from the canon of scripture, they were never the less acknowledged as profitable for personal edification; just as many books today, such as C.S.Lewis, A.W.Tozer, Martin Luther etc. are good reading, but definitely not part of the Bible. Moreover, many prophecies and visions by Elijah, the "sons of the prophets", Agabus, the believers in Corinth and many others were never included in Scripture (nor even suitable as such), though they were no doubt edifying to those who heard them. The Scripture is already complete without them, and we must test what we read by comparing it to revealed truth in scripture.

I trust that you will do just that, and what you find to apply in the light of Truth, you will receive for edification.

Read and be blessed.

Robby Charters

Part One - The Visions

Vision 1

1. The master, who reared me, had sold me to one Rhoda in Rome. After many years, I met her again, and began to love her as a sister. After a certain time I saw her bathing in the river Tiber; and I gave her my hand, and led her out of the river. So seeing her beauty, I reasoned in my heart, saying, "How happy I'd be, if I had such a one as a wife, both in beauty and in character." I merely reflected on this and nothing more.

After a certain time, I was journeying to Cumae, and glorifying God's creatures for their greatness and splendour and power. As I walked I fell asleep. A spirit took me, and bore me away through a pathless tract, through which no man could pass: for the place was precipitous, and broken into clefts because of the waters. When I had crossed the river, I came into the level country, and knelt down, and began to pray to the Lord and confess my sins.

Now, while I prayed, the heaven was opened, and I saw the lady, whom I had desired, greeting me from heaven, saying, "Good morrow, Hermas."

And, looking at her, I said to her, "Lady, what are you doing here?"

Then she answered me, "I was taken up, so that I might convict you of your sins before the Lord."

I said to her, "Do you convict me?"

"Not so," she said, "but hear these words, that I shall say to you. God, Who dwells in the heavens, and created, out of nothing the things which are, and increased and multiplied them for His holy Church's sake, is wroth with you, because you sinned against me."

I answered her and said, "Sin against you? In what way? Did I ever speak an unseemly word to you? Did I not always regard you as a goddess? Did I not always respect you as a sister? How could you falsely charge me, lady, with such villainy and uncleanness?"

Laughing she said to me, "The desire after evil entered into your heart. Come now, don't you think that it is an evil deed for a righteous man, if the evil desire should enter into his heart? It is indeed a sin and a great one too," she said; "for the righteous man entertains righteous purposes. While then his purposes are righteous, his repute stands steadfast in the heavens, and he finds the Lord easily propitiated in all that he does. But those who entertain evil purposes in their hearts, bring on themselves death and captivity, especially those who claim for themselves this present world, and boast in its riches, and don't cleave to the good things that are to come. Their souls shall rue it, seeing that they have no hope, but have abandoned themselves and their life. But do pray to God and He shall heal your sins, and those of your whole house, and of all the saints."

2. As soon as she had spoken these words the heavens were shut; and I was given over to horror and grief. Then I said within myself, "If this sin is recorded against me, how can I be saved? Or how shall I propitiate God for my sins which are full-blown? Or with what words shall I entreat the Lord that He may be propitious to me?"

While I was advising and discussing these matters in my heart, I saw before me a great white chair of snow-white wool; and there came an aged lady in glistening raiment, having a book in her hands, and she sat down alone, and she saluted me, "Good morrow, Hermas."

Then I, grieved and weeping, said, "Good morrow, lady."

And she said to me, "Why so gloomy, Hermas, you who are patient and good-tempered, and always smiling? Why so downcast in your looks, and far from cheerful?"

And I said to her, "Because of an excellent lady saying that I sinned against her."

Then she said, "Far be this thing from the servant of God! Nevertheless the thought did enter into your heart concerning her. Now to the servants of God such a purpose brings sin. For it is an evil and mad purpose to overtake a devout spirit that has been already approved, that it should desire an evil deed, and especially if it's Hermas the temperate, who abstains from every evil desire, and is full of all simplicity and of great guilelessness.

3. "Yet it is not for this that God is wroth with you, but so that you may convert your family, which has done wrong against the Lord and against you their parents. But out of fondness for your

children you did not admonish your family, but allowed it to become fearfully corrupt. Therefore the Lord is wroth with you. But He will heal all your past sins, which have been committed in your family; for by reason of their sins and iniquities you have been corrupted by the affairs of this world. But the great mercy of the Lord had pity on you and your family, and will strengthen you, and establish you in His glory. Only don't be careless, but take courage, and strengthen your family. For as the smith hammering his work conquers the task which he wills, so also does righteous discourse repeated daily conquer all evil. Therefore, don't cease to reprove your children; for I know that if they shall repent with all their heart, they shall be written in the books of life with the saints."

After these words of hers had ceased, she said to me, "Will you listen to me as I read?"

Then I said, "Yes, lady."

She said to me, "Be attentive, and hear the glories of God."

I listened with attention and with wonder to that which I had no power to remember; for all the words were terrible, such as man cannot bear. The last words however I remembered, for they were suitable for us and gentle:

"Behold, the God of Hosts, Who by His invisible and mighty power and by His great wisdom created the world, and by His glorious purpose clothed His creation with comeliness, and by His strong word fixed the heaven, and founded the earth on the waters, and by His own wisdom and providence formed His holy Church, which also He blessed -- behold, He removes the heavens and the mountains and the hills and the seas, and all things are made level for His elect, that He may fulfil to them the promise which He promised with great glory and rejoicing, if so be that they shall keep the ordinances of God, which they received, with great faith."

4. When she finished reading and arose from her chair, there came four young men, and they took away the chair, and departed towards the East.

Then she called me to her, and she touched my breast, and said to me, "Did my reading please you?"

And I said to her, "Lady, these last words pleased me, but the former were difficult and hard."

Then she spoke to me, saying, "These last words are for the righteous, but the former are for the heathen and the rebellious."

While she yet spoke with me, two men appeared, and took her by the arms, and they departed, in the direction the chair also had gone, towards the East. She smiled as she departed and, as she was going, she said to me, "Play the man, Hermas."

Vision 2

1. I was on the way to Cumae, at the same season as last year, and as I walked, I called to mind my last year's vision; and again a Spirit took me, and carried me away to the same place as last year. When I arrived at the place, I fell on my knees, and began to pray to the Lord, and to glorify His name, because he counted me worthy, and made known to me my former sins.

After I had risen up from prayer, I saw before me the aged lady, whom I had also seen last year, walking and reading a little book. And she said to me, "Can you report these things to the elect of God?"

I said to her, "Lady, I cannot recollect so much; but give me the little book, so that I may copy it."

"Take it," she said, "and be sure and return it to me."

I took it, and retiring to a certain spot in the country I copied it letter for letter: because I could not make out the syllables. When then I had finished the letters of the book, suddenly the book was snatched out of my hand; but by whom I did not see.

2. Now after fifteen days, when I had fasted and entreated the Lord earnestly, the knowledge of the writing was revealed to me. And this is what was written: --

"Your seed, Hermas, have sinned against God, and have blasphemed the Lord, and have betrayed their parents through great wickedness, yes, they have got the name of betrayers of parents, and yet they did not profit by their betrayal; and they further added to their sins wanton deeds and reckless wickedness; so the measure of their transgressions was filled up. But make these words known to all your children, and to your wife who shall be as your sister; for she too doesn't refrain from using

her tongue, thereby she does evil. But, when she hears these words, she will refrain, and will find mercy. After you have made known to them all these words, which the Master commanded me that they should be revealed to you, then all their sins which they sinned aforetime will forgiven them; yes, [not only these but] to all the saints that have sinned to this day, if they repent with their whole heart, and remove double-mindedness from their heart. You are therefore to say to the rulers of the Church, that they direct their paths in righteousness, that they may receive in full the promises with abundant glory. You therefore that work righteousness be steadfast, and don't be double-minded, that you may have admission with the holy angels. Blessed are you, as many as endure patiently the great tribulation that comes, and as many as shall not deny their life.

3. "But do you, Hermas, no longer bear a grudge against your children, neither suffer your sister to have her way, so that they may be purified from their former sins. For they shall be chastised with a righteous chastisement, unless you bear a grudge against them yourself. The bearing of a grudge works death. But you, Hermas, have had great tribulations of your own, by reason of the transgressions of your family, because you had no care from them. For you were neglectful of them, and were mixed up with your evil transactions. But herein is your salvation, in that you did not depart from the living God, and in your simplicity and your great continence. These have saved you, if you abide therein; and they save all who do such things, and walk in guilelessness and simplicity. These men prevail over all wickedness, and continue to life eternal. Blessed are all those who work righteousness. They shall never be destroyed. But you are to say to Maximus, 'Look out! Tribulation comes on you, if you think fit to deny a second time. THE LORD IS NEAR TO THEM THAT TURN TO HIM, as it is written in Eldad and Modat, who prophesied to the people in the wilderness.'"

4. Now, brethren, a revelation was made to me in my sleep by a youth of exceeding fair form, who said to me, "Whom do you think the aged woman is, from whom you received the book?"

I said, "The Sibyl."

"You are wrong," he said, "she is not."

"Who then is she?" I said.

"The Church," he said.

I said to him, "Why then is she aged?"

"Because," he said, "She was created before all things; therefore she is aged; and for her sake the world was framed."

Afterwards I saw a vision in my house. The aged woman came, and asked me, if I had already given the book to the elders. I said that I had not given it.

"You have done well," she said, "because I have words to add. When then I have finished all the words, it shall be made known through you to all the elect. You must therefore write two little books, and send one to Clement, and one to Grapte. So Clement shall send to the foreign cities, for this is his duty; while Grapte shall instruct the widows and the orphans. But you are to read the book to this city along with the elders that preside over the Church."

Vision 3

1. The third vision, which I saw, brethren, was as follows. After fasting often, and entreating the Lord to declare to me the revelation which He promised to show me by the mouth of the aged woman, that very night I saw the aged woman, and she said to me, "Seeing that you are so importunate and eager to know all things, come into the country where you abide, and about the fifth hour I will appear, and will show you what you ought to see."

I asked her, "Lady, to what part of the country?"

"Where you will," she said.

I selected a beautiful and retired spot; but before I spoke to her and named the spot, she said to me, "I will come, where you will."

I went then, brethren, into the country, and I counted up the hours, and came to the place where we had made our appointment, and I saw an ivory couch placed there, and there on the couch lay a linen cushion, and on the cushion was spread a coverlet of fine linen of flax.

When I saw these things so ordered, and no one in the place, I was amazed, and a fit of trembling seized me, and my hair stood on end; and a fit of shuddering came on me, because I was alone. When then I recovered myself, and remembered the glory of God, and took courage, I knelt down and confessed my sins to the Lord once more, as I had done on the former occasion.

Then she came with six young men, the same whom I had seen before, and she stood by me, and listened attentively to me as I prayed and confessed my sins to the Lord. And she touched me, and said:

"Hermas, make an end of constantly entreating for your sins; entreat also for righteousness, so that you may take some part to your family."

Then she raised me by the hand, and led me to the couch, and said to the young men, "Go, and build."

And after the young men had retired and we were left alone, she said to me, "Sit down here."

I said to her, "Lady, let the elders sit down first."

"Do as I bid you," she said, "sit down."

When then I wanted to sit down on the right side, she would not allow me, but beckoned with her hand that I should sit on the left side.

I was musing on this, and was sad because she would not permit me to sit on the right side.

She said to me, "Are you sad, Hermas? The place on the right side is for others, namely those who have already been well-pleasing to God, and have suffered for the Name's sake. But you still lack what it takes to sit with them. But continue to abide in your simplicity as you have done, and you will sit with them; that goes for you, and as many as will have done the deeds of those on the right, and have suffered what they have suffered."

2. "What did they suffer?" I asked.

"Listen," she answered. "Stripes, imprisonments, great tribulations, crosses, wild beasts, all for the Name's sake. Therefore to them belongs the right side of the Holiness -- to them, and to all who shall suffer for the Name. But for the rest is the left side.

"Howbeit, to both -- to those that sit on the right, and on the left -- are the same gifts and the same promises; only those who sit on the right have a certain glory. You indeed are very desirous to sit on the right with them, but your shortcomings are many; yet you will be purified from your shortcomings; yes, and all who are not double-minded shall be purified from all their sins to this day."

Then she again took me by the hand, and raised me, and seated me on the couch at the left hand, while she herself sat on the right.

And lifting up a certain glistening rod, she said to me, "Do you see a great thing?"

I said to her, "Lady, I see nothing."

She said to me, "Look; don't you see in front of you a great tower being built on the waters, of glistening square stones?"

Now the tower was being built foursquare by the six men that came with her. And countless other men were bringing stones, some of them from the deep, and others from the land, and were handing them to the six young men. They took them and built.

The stones that were dragged from the deep they placed in every case, just as they were, into the building, because they had been shaped, and they fit in their joining with the other stones; and they adhered so closely one with another that their joining could not possibly be detected; and the building of the tower appeared as if it were built of one stone. But of the other stones which were brought from the dry land, some they threw away, and some they put into the building; and others they broke in pieces, and threw to a distance from the tower. Now many other stones were lying round the tower, and they did not use them for the building; for some of them were mildewed, and others had cracks in them, and others were too short, and others were white and round, and did not fit into the building. I saw other stones thrown to a distance from the tower, and coming to the way, and yet not staying in the way, but rolling to where there was no way; and others falling into the fire and burning there; and others falling near the waters, and yet not able to roll into the water, although they desired to roll and to come to the water.

3. Then she said, "Listen to the parables of the tower; for I will reveal all things to you.

"The tower, which you see building, is myself, the Church, whom you've seen both now and the times before. Ask, therefore, what you will concerning the tower, and I will reveal it to you, so that you may rejoice with the saints."

I asked her, "Why is the tower built on waters, lady?"

"It is because your life is saved and shall be saved by water. But the tower has been founded by the word of the Almighty and Glorious Name, and is strengthened by the unseen power of the Master."

4. I asked her, "But the six young men who are building, who are they, lady?"

"These are the holy angels of God, that were created first of all, to whom the Lord delivered all His creation to increase and to build it, and to be masters of all creation. By their hands therefore the building of the tower will be accomplished."

"And who are the others who are bringing the stones?"

"They also are holy angels of God; but these six are superior to them. The building of the tower, then, shall be accomplished, and all alike shall rejoice in the (completed) circle of the tower, and shall glorify God because the building of the tower was accomplished."

I asked her, "Lady, I would like to know concerning the end of the stones, and their power, of what kind it is."

5. She answered and said to me, "The stones that are squared and white, and that fit together in their joints, these are the apostles and bishops and teachers and deacons, who walked after the holiness of God, and exercise their office of bishop and teacher and deacon in purity and sanctity for the elect of God, some of them have already fallen asleep, and others still living. Because they always agreed with one another, they both had peace among themselves and listened to one another. Therefore their joinings fit together in the building of the tower."

"But the ones that are dragged from the deep, and placed in the building, and fit together in their joinings with the other stones that are already built in, who are they?"

"These are those who suffered for the name of the Lord."

"But the other stones that are brought from the dry land, I would like to know who these are, lady."

She said, "Those that go to the building, and yet are not hewn, these the Lord has approved because they walked in the uprightness of the Lord, and rightly performed His commandments."

"But those that are brought and placed in the building, who are they?"

"They are young in the faith, and faithful; but they are warned by the angels to do good, because wickedness was found in them."

"But those whom they rejected and threw away, who are they?"

"These have sinned, and desire to repent, therefore they were not cast to a great distance from the tower, because they will be useful for the building, if they repent. Those that desire to repent, if they repent, will be strong in the faith, that is if they repent now while the tower is building. But if the building is finished, they no longer have any place, but shall be castaways. This is the only privilege they have, that they lie near the tower.

6. "But would you know about the ones that are broken in pieces, and cast away far from the tower? These are the sons of lawlessness. They received the faith in hypocrisy, and no wickedness was absent from them. Therefore they don't have salvation, for they are not useful because of their wickedness. Therefore they were broken up and thrown far away because of the wrath of the Lord, for they excited Him to wrath. But the rest whom you have seen lying in great numbers, not going to the building; of these: the ones that are mildewed are those who knew the truth, but did not abide in it, nor cleave to the saints. Therefore they are useless."

"But those that have the cracks, who are they?"

"These are the ones that have discord in their hearts against one another, and are not at peace among themselves; who have an appearance of peace, but when they depart from one another, their wickedness abides in their hearts. These are the cracks which the stones have. But those that are broken off short, these have believed, and have their greater part in righteousness, but have some

parts of lawlessness; therefore they are too short, and are not perfect."

"But the white and round stones, which did not fit into the building, who are they, lady?"

She answered, "These are the ones who have faith, but also have riches in this world. When tribulation comes, they deny their Lord because of their riches and their business affairs."

And I answered and said to her, "When then, lady, will they be useful for the building?"

"When," she replied, "their wealth, which leads their souls astray, is cut away, then they will be useful for God. For just as the round stone, unless it is cut away, and loses some portion of itself, cannot become square, so also those who are rich in this world, unless their riches are cut away, cannot become useful to the Lord. Learn first from yourself. When you had riches, you were useless; but now you are useful and profitable to life. Be useful to God, for you, yourself, also are taken from the same stones.

7. "But the other stones which you saw cast far away from the tower and falling into the way and rolling out of the way into the regions where there is no way, these are the ones that have believed, but because of their double heart they've abandoned the true way. Thus thinking that they can find a better way, they go astray and are severely distressed, as they walk about in the regions where there is no way. But those who have fallen into fire and are burned, these have finally rebelled from the living God, and it has never again entered into their hearts to repent because of the lusts of their wantonness and of the wickedness which they wrought. But the others, which have fallen near the waters and yet cannot roll into the water, would you know who are they? These are those who have heard the word, and would be baptized to the name of the Lord. Then, when they [are confronted with] the purity of the truth, they change their minds, and go back again after their evil desires."

So she finished the explanation of the tower. Still importunate, I asked her further: whether, for all these stones that were rejected and would not fit into the building of the tower, there was repentance, and had they a place in this tower.

"They can repent," she said, "but they cannot be fitted into this tower. Yet they shall be fitted into another place much more humble, but not until they have undergone torments, and have fulfilled the days of their sins. They shall be changed for this reason, because they participated in the Righteous Word; and then shall it befall them to be relieved from their torments, if [the realization of] the evil deeds, which they have done, comes into their heart; but if the [realization] doesn't come into their heart, they are not saved by reason of the hardness of their hearts."

8. When then I ceased asking her concerning all these things, she said to me; "Would you see something else?"

Being very desirous of seeing, I greatly rejoiced that I should see it.

She looked on me, and smiled, and she said to me, "Do you see seven women round the tower?"

"I see them, lady," I said.

"This tower is supported by them by the commandment of the Lord. Hear now their employments. The first of them, the woman with the strong hands, is called Faith; through her the elect of God are saved. And the second, that is girded about and looks like a man, is called Continnence; she is the daughter of Faith. Whoever then shall follow her, becomes happy in this life, for he shall refrain from all evil deeds, believing that, if he refrain from every evil desire, he shall inherit eternal life."

"And the others, lady, who be they?"

"They are daughters one of the other. The name of the one is Simplicity, of the next, Knowledge, of the next, Guilelessness, of the next, Reverence, of the next, Love. When you will do all the works of their mother, you can live."

"I would like to know, lady," I said, "what power each of them possesses."

"Listen then," she said, "to the powers which they have. Their powers are mastered each by the other, and they follow each other in the order in which they were born. From Faith is born Continnence, from Continnence Simplicity, from Simplicity Guilelessness, from Guilelessness Reverence, from Reverence Knowledge, from Knowledge Love. Their works then are pure and reverent and divine. Whoever therefore shall serve these women, and shall have strength to master their works, shall have his dwelling in the tower with the saints of God."

Then I asked her concerning the seasons, whether the consummation is even now. But she cried aloud, saying, "Foolish man, don't you see that the tower is still a-building? Therefore whenever the tower is finished, the end comes; but it shall be built up quickly. Ask me no more questions: this reminder is sufficient for you and for the saints, and is the renewal of your spirits. But it was not revealed to yourself alone, but in order that you might show these things to all. After three days -- for you must understand first, and I charge you, Hermas, first with these words, which I am about to speak to you -- (I charge you to) tell all these things into the ears of the saints, that hearing them and doing them they may be purified from their wickedness, and yourself also with them.

9. "Hear me, my children. I brought you up in much simplicity and guilelessness and reverence, through the mercy of the Lord, Who instilled righteousness into you, so that you might be justified and sanctified from all wickedness and all crookedness. But you will not cease from your wickedness. Now then hear me and be at peace among yourselves, and have regard one to another, and assist one another, and do not partake of the creatures of God alone in abundance; but share them also with those who are in want. For some men through their much eating bring weakness on the flesh, and injure their flesh: whereas the flesh of those who have nothing to eat is injured by their not having sufficient nourishment, and their body is ruined. This exclusiveness therefore is hurtful to you who have and do not share with those who are in want. Look to the judgment that's coming. You then who have more than enough, seek out those who are hungry, while the tower is still unfinished; for after the tower is finished, you will desire to do good, and will find no place for it. Look, therefore, you who exult in your wealth, lest those that are in want shall moan, and their moaning shall go up to the Lord, and you with your abundance of good things be shut outside the door of the tower. Now therefore I say to you who are rulers of the Church, and that occupy the chief seats; don't be like the sorcerers. The sorcerers indeed carry their drugs in boxes, but you carry your drug and your poison in your heart. You are case-hardened, and you will not cleanse your hearts and mix your wisdom together in a clean heart that you may obtain mercy from the Great King. Look therefore, children, lest these divisions of yours deprive you of your life. How is it that you wish to instruct the elect of the Lord, while you yourselves have no instruction? Instruct one another therefore, and have peace among yourselves, that I also may stand gladsome before the Father, and give an account concerning you all to your Lord."

10. When then she ceased speaking with me, the six young men, who were building, came, and took her away to the tower, and another four lifted the couch, and took it also away to the tower. I didn't see the face of these, because they were turned away.

As she went, I asked her to reveal to me concerning the three forms, in which she had appeared to me.

She answered and said to me; "As concerning these things you must ask another that they be revealed to you."

Now she was seen of me, brethren, in my first vision of last year, as a very aged woman and seated on a chair. In the second vision her face was youthful, but her flesh and her hair were aged, and she spoke to me standing; and she was more gladsome than before. But in the third vision she was altogether youthful and of exceeding great beauty, and her hair alone was aged; and she was gladsome exceedingly and seated on a couch. Touching these things I was very greatly anxious to learn this revelation.

I saw the aged woman in a vision during the night, saying to me, "Every enquiry needs humility. Therefore, fast, and you will receive what you asks from the Lord."

So I fasted one day; and that very night there appeared to me a young man.

11. "Listen," he said, "concerning the three forms, of which you enquire. In the first vision why did she appear to you an aged woman and seated on a chair? Because your spirit was aged, and already decayed, and had no power by reason of your infirmities and acts of double-mindedness. As aged people, no longer having any hope of renewing their youth, expect nothing else but to fall asleep, so you also, being weakened with the affairs of this world, gave yourselves over to repining, and didn't cast your cares on the Lord; but your spirit was broken, and you were aged by your sorrows."

12. "But in the second vision you saw her standing, and with her countenance more youthful and more gladsome than before; but her flesh and her hair aged. Listen to this parable also," he said. "Imagine an old man, who has now lost all hope because of his weakness and his poverty, and expects nothing but the last day of his life. Suddenly an inheritance is left him. He hears the news, rises up, and full of joy, clothes himself with strength, and no longer lies down, but stands up. His spirit, which was broken by reason of his former circumstances, is renewed again, and he no longer sits, but takes courage; so it was with you, when you heard the revelation which the Lord revealed to you. He had compassion on you, and renewed your spirits, and you laid aside your maladies, and strength came to you, and you were made powerful in the faith, and the Lord rejoiced to see you put on your strength. Therefore He showed you the building of the tower; yes, and other things also shall He show you, if you be at peace among yourselves with your whole heart.

13. "But in the third vision you saw her younger and fair and gladsome, and her form fair. Just as when some piece of good tidings comes to a mourner, immediately he forgets his former sorrow, and admits nothing but the tidings which he has heard, and from then on, is strengthened to that which is good, and his spirit is renewed because of the joy which he has received; so also you have received a renewal of your spirits by seeing these good things. Whereas you saw her seated on a couch, the position is a firm one; for the couch has four feet and stands firmly; for the world too is upheld by means of four elements. Those then that have fully repented shall be young again, and founded firmly, seeing that they have repented with their whole heart.

There you have the revelation entire and complete. You must ask nothing more as touching revelation; but if anything be lacking still, it shall be revealed to you."

Vision 4

1. The fourth vision which I saw, brethren, twenty days after the former vision, was a type of the impending tribulation. I was going into the country by the Campanian Way. From the high road, it is about ten stades; and the place is easy for travelling.

While I was walking alone, I entreated the Lord that He would accomplish the revelations and the visions which He showed me through His holy Church, that He may strengthen me and may give repentance to His servants which have stumbled, so His great and glorious Name may be glorified, for that He held me worthy that He should show me His marvels.

As I gave glory and thanksgiving to Him, there answered me as it were the sound of a voice, "Don't be of a doubtful mind, Hermas."

I began to question in myself and to say, "How can I be of doubtful mind, seeing that I am so firmly founded by the Lord, and have seen glorious things?"

I went on a little, brethren, and what did I see? -- a cloud of dust rising as it were to heaven, and I began to say within myself, "Can it be that cattle are coming, and raising a cloud of dust?" for it was just about a stade from me. As the cloud of dust became greater and greater, I suspected that it was something supernatural.

Then the sun shone out a little, and what did I see? -- a huge beast like some sea-monster, and from its mouth fiery locusts issued forth. And the beast was about a hundred feet in length, and its head was as it were of pottery. And I began to weep, and to entreat the Lord that He would rescue me from it. And I remembered the word which I had heard, "Don't be of a doubtful mind, Hermas."

Therefore, brethren, having put on the faith of the Lord and having called to mind the mighty works that He had taught me, I took courage and gave myself up to the beast. Now the beast was coming on with such a rush, that it might have ruined a city. I come near it, and, huge monster as it was, it stretched itself on the ground, and merely put forth its tongue, and didn't stirred at all until I had passed by it. The beast had on its head four colours; black, then the colour of fire and blood, then gold, then white.

2. Now after I had passed the beast, and had gone forward about thirty feet, and there, a virgin met me, arrayed as if she were going forth from a bride-chamber, all in white and with white sandals, veiled up to her forehead, and her head-covering consisted of a turban, and her hair was white. I knew from the former visions that it was the Church, and I became more cheerful.

She saluted me, saying, "Good morrow, my good man"; and I saluted her in turn:

"Lady, good morrow."

She asked me, "Did nothing meet you?"

I said to her, "Lady, such a huge beast, that could have destroyed whole peoples: but, by the power of the Lord and by His great mercy, I escaped it."

"You escaped it well," she said, "because you cast your care on God, and opened your heart to the Lord, believing that you can be saved by nothing else but by His great and glorious Name. Therefore the Lord sent His angel, who is over the beasts, whose name is Segri, and shut its mouth, so that it would not hurt you. You have escaped a great tribulation by reason of your faith; and because, though you saw so huge a beast, you did not doubt in your mind. Therefore, go and declare to the elect of the

Lord His mighty works, and tell them that this beast is a type of the great tribulation which is to come. If therefore you prepare yourselves beforehand, and repent and turn to the Lord with your whole heart, you shall be able to escape it -- if your heart is made pure and without blemish, and if for the remaining days of your life you serve the Lord blamelessly. Cast your cares on the Lord and He will set them straight. Trust in the Lord, you men of doubtful mind, for He can do all things, yes, He both turns away His wrath from you, and again He sends forth His plagues on you who are of doubtful mind. Woe to those who hear these words and are disobedient; it would have been better for them had they not been born."

3. I asked her concerning the four colours, which the beast had on its head.

"Listen," she said; "the black is this world in which you dwell; and the fire and blood colour shows that this world must perish by blood and fire. The golden part is you who have escaped from this world. As gold is tested by the fire and is made useful, so you also are being tested. As the gold loses its dross, so you also shall cast away all sorrow and tribulation, and shall be purified, and shall be useful for the building of the tower. The white portion is the coming age, in which the elect of God shall dwell; because the elect of God shall be without spot and pure to eternal life. Wherefore, don't cease to speak in the ears of the saints. You have now the symbolism of the tribulation which is coming in power, but if you are willing, it shall amount to nothing. Remember the things that are written beforehand."

With these words she departed, and I didn't see in what direction she went; for a noise was made; and I turned back in fear, thinking that the beast was coming.

Revelation 5

As I prayed in the house, and sat on the couch, there entered a man glorious in his visage, in the garb of a shepherd, with a white skin wrapped about him, and with a wallet on his shoulders and a staff in his hand. He saluted me, and I saluted him in return.

He immediately sat down by my side, and he said to me, "I was sent by the most holy angel, so as to dwell with you the remaining days of your life. Don't be confounded, but strengthen yourself in my commandments which I am about to command you. For I was sent," he said, "so that I might show you again all the things which you saw before, merely the heads which are convenient for you. First of all, write down my commandments and my parables; and the other matters you are to write down as I shall show them to you. The reason why," he said, "I command you to write down first the commandments and parables is, that you may read them off-hand, and may be able to keep them."

So I wrote down the commandments and parables, as he commanded me. If then, when you hear them, you keep them and walk in them, and do them with a pure heart, you shall receive from the Lord all things that He promised you; but if, when you hear them, you do not repent, but still add to your sins, you shall receive from the Lord the opposite. All these the shepherd, the angel of repentance, commanded me so to write.

Part Two - The Mandates

Mandate the First

"First of all, BELIEVE THAT GOD IS ONE, even He Who created all things and set them in order, and brought all things from non-existence into being, Who comprehends all things, being alone incomprehensible. Believe Him therefore, and fear Him, and in this

fear be continent. Keep these things, and you will cast off all wickedness from yourself, and will clothe yourself with every excellence of righteousness, and will live to God, if you keep this commandment."

Mandate the Second

He said to me; "KEEP SIMPLICITY AND BE GUILLELESS, and you will be as little children, who don't know the wickedness which destroys the life of men.

"First of all, speak evil of no man, neither take pleasure in listening to a slanderer. If you believe the slander, you yourself also will have a grudge against your brother. So then you will be responsible for the sin of the one who speaks the evil.

Slander is evil; it is a restless demon, never at peace, but always having its home among factions. Refrain from it therefore, and you will have success at all times with all men. But clothe yourself in reverence, wherein is no evil stumbling-block, but all things are smooth and gladsome. Part Two - The Mandates

"Work that which is good. Give freely of your labours, which God gives you, to all who are in want, not questioning to whom you should give, and to whom you should not give. Give to all; for to all God desires that there should be given of His own bounties. They then who receive shall render an account to God why they receive it, and to what end; for those who receive in distress shall not be judged, but those who receive by false pretence shall pay the penalty. He, then, who gives is guiltless; for as he received from the Lord the ministry to perform, he has performed it in sincerity, by making no distinction to whom to give or not to give. This ministry then, when sincerely performed, becomes glorious in the sight of God. Therefore he who ministers thus sincerely shall live to God. Therefore keep this commandment, as I have told you, that your own repentance and that of your household may be found to be sincere, and your heart pure and undefiled."

Mandate the Third

Again he said to me; "LOVE TRUTH, and let nothing but truth proceed out of your mouth, so that the Spirit which God made to dwell in this flesh, may be found true in the sight of all men. Thus shall the Lord, Who dwells in you, be glorified; for the Lord is true in every word, and with Him there is no falsehood. Those therefore who speak lies set the Lord at naught, and become robbers of the Lord, for they do not deliver up to Him the deposit which they received. They received from Him a spirit free from lies. If they should return this to him as a lying spirit, they have defiled the commandment of the Lord and have become robbers."

When I heard these things, I wept bitterly. Seeing this, he said, "Why do you weep?"

"Because, Sir," I said, "I don't know if I can be saved."

"Why so?" he said.

"Because, Sir," I said, "never in my life have I spoken a true word, but I always lived deceitfully with all men and dressed up my falsehood as truth before all men; and no man ever contradicted me, but confidence was placed in my word. How then, Sir," I said, "can I live, seeing that I have done these things?"

"Your supposition," he said, "is right and true, for it behoved you as a servant of God to walk in truth, and no complicity with evil should abide with the Spirit of truth, nor bring grief to the Spirit which is holy and true."

"Never, Sir," I said, "have I clearly heard words such as these."

"Now then," he said, "you've heard. If you keep these things, and from now on speak nothing but truth, you will be able to secure life for yourself. Whoever shall hear this command, and abstain from falsehood, that most pernicious habit, shall live to God."

Mandate the Fourth

"I charge you," he said, "to KEEP PURITY, and don't let a thought enter into your heart concerning another's wife, or concerning fornication, or concerning any other such evil deed; for in so doing you commit a great sin. Remember your own wife always, and you will never go wrong. Should this desire enter into your heart, you will go wrong, and should any other as evil as this, you commit sin. This desire in a servant of God is a great sin; and if any man does this evil deed, he works out death for himself. Therefore look to it. Abstain from this desire; because, where holiness dwells, there lawlessness ought not to enter into the heart of a righteous man."

I said to him, "Sir, permit me to ask you a few more questions."

"Say on," he said.

"Sir," I said, "if a man who is faithful in the Lord, and has a wife, detect her in adultery, does the husband sin in living with her?"

"So long as he is ignorant," he said, "he doesn't sin; but if the husband know of her sin, and the wife doesn't repent, but continue in her fornication, and her husband live with her, he makes himself responsible for her sin and an accomplice in her adultery."

"What then, Sir," I asked, "shall the husband do, if the wife continues in this case?"

"Let him divorce her," he said, "and let the husband abide alone: but if after divorcing his wife he should marry another, he likewise commits adultery."

"If then, Sir," I said, "after the wife is divorced, she repent and desire to return to her own husband, shall she not be received?"

"Certainly," he said, "if the husband doesn't receive her, he sins and brings great sin on himself; nay, one who has sinned and repented must be received. For the sake of her repentance therefore the husband ought not to marry. This is the manner of acting enjoined on husband and wife.

"Not only," he said, "is it adultery, if a man pollutes his flesh, but whoever does things which are like what the heathen do, commits adultery. Therefore if a man continues in such deeds as these and doesn't repent, [the wife must] keep away from him, and don't live with him. Otherwise, you [the wife] also are a partaker of his sin. For this cause you were enjoined to remain single, whether husband or wife; for in such cases repentance is possible.

"I," he said, "am not giving an excuse that this matter should be concluded thus, but to the end that the sinner should sin no more. But as concerning his former sin, there is One Who is able to give healing; it is He Who has authority over all things."

I asked him again, saying, "Sir, declare to me this further matter also."

"Say on," he said.

"If a wife, Sir," I said, "or it may be, a husband fall asleep, and one of them marries, does the one that marries sin?"

"He doesn't sin," he said, "but if he remain single, he invests himself with more exceeding honour and with great glory before the Lord; yet even if he should marry, he doesn't sin.

"Preserve purity and holiness therefore, and you will live to God. All these things, which I speak and shall hereafter speak to you, guard from this time forward, from the day when you were committed to me, and I will dwell in your house. But for your former transgression there shall be remission, if you keep my commandments. Yes and all shall have remission, if they keep my commandments, and walk in this purity."

Mandate the Fifth

1. "BE LONG-SUFFERING AND UNDERSTANDING," he said, "and you will have the mastery over all evil deeds, and will work all righteousness. If you are LONG-SUFFERING, the Holy Spirit who abides in you will be pure, not being darkened by another evil spirit, but dwelling in a large room will rejoice and be glad with the vessel in which he dwells, and will serve God with much cheerfulness, having prosperity in himself.

"But if any ANGRY TEMPER approaches, the Holy Spirit, being delicate, is straitened, not having the place clear, and seeks to retire from the place; for he is choked by the evil spirit, and has

no room to minister to the Lord as he desires, being polluted by angry temper.

"The Lord dwells in long-suffering, but the devil in angry temper. Thus both spirits dwelling together is inconvenient and evil for that man in whom they dwell. For if you take a little wormwood, and pour it into a jar of honey, is not the whole of the honey spoiled, and all that honey ruined by a very small quantity of wormwood? It destroys the sweetness of the honey, and it no longer has the same attraction for the owner, because it is rendered bitter and has lost its use. But if the wormwood is not put into the honey, the honey is found sweet and becomes useful to its owner. You see then that long-suffering is very sweet, beyond the sweetness of honey, and is useful to the Lord, and He dwells in it. But angry temper is bitter and useless. If angry temper is mixed with long-suffering, long-suffering is polluted and the man's intercession is no longer useful to God."

"I would like to know, Sir," I said, "the working of angry temper, that I may guard myself from it."

"Yes, truly," he said, "if you don't guard yourself from it -- you and your family -- you have lost all your hope. But guard yourself from it; for I am with you. Yes, and all men should hold aloof from it, all who as have repented with their whole heart, for I will be with them and will preserve them; because they all were justified by the most holy angel.

2. "Hear now," he said, "the working of ANGRY TEMPER, how evil it is, and how it subverts the servants of God by its own working, and how it leads them astray from righteousness. It does not lead astray those that are full in the faith, nor can it work on them, because the power of the Lord is with them; but those who are empty and double-minded, it leads astray.

"When it sees such men in prosperity it insinuates itself into the heart of the man, and for no cause whatever the man or the woman is embittered on account of worldly matters, either about meats, or some triviality, or about some friend, or about giving or receiving, or about follies of this kind. All these things are foolish and vain and senseless and inexpedient for the servants of God.

"But LONG-SUFFERING is great and strong, and has a mighty and vigorous power, and is prosperous in great enlargement, gladsome, exultant, free from care, glorifying the Lord at every season, having no bitterness in itself, remaining always gentle and tranquil. This LONG-SUFFERING therefore dwells with those whose faith is perfect.

"But ANGRY TEMPER is in the first place foolish, fickle and senseless; then from foolishness is engendered bitterness, and from bitterness wrath, and from wrath anger, and from anger spite; then spite being composed of all these evil elements becomes a >great sin and incurable. When all these spirits dwell in one vessel, where the Holy Spirit also dwells, that vessel cannot contain them, but overflows.

"The delicate spirit therefore, not being accustomed to dwelling with an evil spirit nor with harshness, departs from a man of this kind, and seeks to dwell with gentleness and tranquillity. Then, when it has removed itself from that man in whom it dwelt, that man becomes emptied of the righteous spirit, and henceforward, being filled with the evil spirits, he is unstable in all his actions, being dragged about hither and thither by the evil spirits, and is altogether blinded and bereft of his good intent.

"Thus then it happens to all persons of ANGRY TEMPER. Refrain therefore from ANGRY TEMPER, the most evil of evil spirits. But clothe yourself in LONG-SUFFERING, and resist angry temper and bitterness, and you will be found in company with the holiness which is beloved of the Lord. See then that you never neglect this commandment; for if you master this commandment, you will be able likewise to keep the remaining commandments, which I am about to give you. Be strong in them and endowed with power; and

let all be endowed with power, as many as desire to walk in them.

Mandate the Sixth

1. "I charged you," he said, "in my first commandment to guard FAITH and FEAR and TEMPERANCE."

"Yes, Sir," I said.

"But now," he said, "I wish to show you their powers also, so that you may understand what is

the power and effect of each. Their effects are twofold. Now they are prescribed alike to the righteous and the unrighteous. Therefore, trust righteousness, but don't trust unrighteousness; because the way of righteousness is straight, but the way of unrighteousness is crooked. Walk in the straight and level path, and leave the crooked one alone. For the crooked way has no tracks, but only pathlessness and many stumbling-stones, and is rough and thorny. It is therefore harmful to those who walk in it. But those who walk in the straight way, walk on the level and without stumbling: for it is neither rough nor thorny. You see then that it is more expedient to walk in this way."

"I am pleased, Sir," I said, "to walk in this way."

"You shall walk," he said, "yes, and whoever shall turn to the Lord with his whole heart shall walk in it.

2. "Hear now," he said, "concerning faith. There are TWO ANGELS with a man, one of RIGHTEOUSNESS and one of WICKEDNESS."

"How then, Sir," I said, "shall I know their workings, seeing that both angels dwell with me?"

"Hear," he said, "and understand their workings. The angel of righteousness is delicate and bashful and gentle and tranquil. When this one enters into your heart, he speaks with you of righteousness, of purity, of holiness, and of contentment, of every righteous deed and of every glorious virtue. When all these things enter into your heart, know that the angel of righteousness is with you. Trust him therefore and his works.

"Now see the works of the angel of wickedness also. First of all, he is quick-tempered and bitter and senseless, and his works are evil. overthrowing the servants of God. Whenever then he enters into your heart, know him by his works."

"I don't know how I shall discern him, Sir," I replied.

"Listen," he said. "When a fit of angry temper or bitterness comes on you, know that he is in you. Then the desire of much business and the costliness of many viands and drinking bouts and of many drunken fits and of various luxuries which are unseemly, and the desire of women, and avarice, and haughtiness and boastfulness, and whatever things are akin and like to these -- when these things enter into your heart, know that the angel of wickedness is with you. Therefore, recognising his works, stand aloof from him, and trust him in nothing, for his works are evil and inexpedient for the servants of God.

"Here then you have the workings of both the angels. Understand them, and trust the angel of righteousness. But from the angel of wickedness stand aloof, for his teaching is evil in every matter; for though one is a man of faith, and the desire of this angel enters into his heart, that man, or that woman, must commit some sin. And if again a man or a woman is exceedingly wicked, and the works of the angel of righteousness comes into that man's heart, he must of necessity do something good.

"You see then," he said, "that it is good to follow the angel of righteousness, and to bid farewell to the angel of wickedness. This commandment declares what concerns faith, so that you may trust the works of the angel of righteousness, and doing them may live to God. But believe that the works of the angel of wickedness are difficult; so by not doing them you will live to God."

Mandate the Seventh

"FEAR THE LORD," he said, "and keep His commandments. So keeping the commandments of God you will be powerful in every deed, and your actions shall be incomparable. While you fear the Lord, you will do all things well.

"This is the fear with which you ought to be afraid, and you will be saved. But DON'T FEAR THE DEVIL; for, if you fear the Lord, you will be master over the devil, because there is no power in him. In whom is no power, neither is there fear of him; but in Whom power is glorious, likewise, there is fear of Him. Everyone that has power has fear, whereas he who has no power is despised of all.

"But fear the WORKS of the devil, for they are evil. While then you fear the Lord, you will fear the works of the devil, and will not do them, but abstain from them.

Fear therefore is of two kinds. If you desire to do evil, fear the Lord, and you will not do it. If you desire to do good, again, fear the Lord and you will do it. Therefore the fear of the Lord is powerful and great and glorious. Fear the Lord then, and you will live to Him; yes, and as many of those who keep His commandments as shall fear Him, shall live to God."

Mandate the Eighth

"I told you," he said, "that the creatures of God are twofold; -- TEMPERANCE ALSO IS TWOFOLD. In some things it is right to be temperate, but in other things it is not right."

"Make known to me, Sir," I said, "in what things it is right to be temperate, and in what things it is not right."

"Listen," he said. "Be temperate as to what is evil, and don't do it; but don't be temperate as to what is good, but do it. If you are temperate as to what is good, so as not to do it, you commit a great sin; but if you are temperate as to what is evil, so as not to do it, you do great righteousness. Therefore, be temperate in abstaining from all wickedness, and do that which is good."

"What kinds of wickedness, Sir," I said, "are they from which we must be temperate and abstain?"

"Listen," he said; "from adultery and fornication, from the lawlessness of drunkenness, from wicked luxury, from many viands and the costliness of riches, and vaunting and haughtiness and pride, and from falsehood and evil-speaking and hypocrisy, malice and all blasphemy. These works are the most wicked of all in the life of men. From these works therefore the servant of God must be temperate and abstain; for he who is not temperate and therefore doesn't abstain from these, cannot live to God. Listen then to what follows on these."

"Why, are there still other evil deeds, Sir?" I said.

"Aye," he said, "there are many, from which the servant of God must be temperate and abstain; theft, falsehood, deprivation, false witness, avarice, evil desire, deceit, vain-glory, boastfulness, and whatever things are like to these. Don't you think that these things are wrong, yes, very wrong, for the servants of God? In all these things he who serves God must exercise temperance. Be temperate, therefore, and refrain from all these things, that you may live to God, and be enrolled among those who exercise self-restraint in them. These then are the things from which you should restrain yourself.

"Now hear," he said, "the things, in which you should not exercise self-restraint, but do them. Exercise no self-restraint in that which is good, but do it."

"Sir," I said, "show me the power of the good also, that I may walk in them and serve them, so that by doing them it may be possible for me to be saved."

"Hear," he said, "the works of the good likewise, which you must do, and towards which you must exercise no self-restraint. First of all, there is faith, fear of the Lord, love, concord, words of righteousness, truth, patience; nothing is better than these in the life of men. If a man keeps these, and doesn't exercise self-restraint from them, he becomes blessed in his life. Hear now what follow on these; to minister to widows, to visit the orphans and the needy, to ransom the servants of God from their afflictions, to be hospitable (for in hospitality, benevolence has a place from time to time), to resist no man, to be tranquil, to show yourself more submissive than all men, to reverence the aged, to practise righteousness, to observe brotherly feeling, to endure injury, to be long-suffering, to bear no grudge, to exhort those who are sick at soul, not to cast away those that have stumbled from the faith, but to convert them and to put courage into them, to reprove sinners, not to oppress debtors and indigent persons, and whatever actions are like these. Do these things," he said, "seem to you to be good?"

"Why, what, Sir," I said, "can be better than these?"

"Then walk in them," he said, "and don't abstain from them, and you will live to God. Therefore, keep this commandment. If you do good and not abstain from it, you will live to God; yes, and all shall live to God who act so. And again if you do no evil, and abstain from it, you will live to God; yes, and all shall live to God, who shall keep these commandments, and walk in them."

Mandate the Ninth

He said to me; "REMOVE FROM YOURSELF A DOUBTFUL MIND. Don't doubt at all whether to ask of God, saying within yourself, 'How can I ask a thing of the Lord and receive it, seeing that I have committed so many sins against Him?' Don't reason like this, but turn to the Lord with your whole heart. Ask of Him, nothing wavering, and you will know His exceeding compassion, so that He will surely not abandon you, but will fulfil the petition of your soul.

"God is not as men who bear a grudge, but Himself is without malice and has compassion on His creatures. Therefore, cleanse your heart from all the vanities of this life, and from the things mentioned before; and ask of the Lord, and you will receive all things, and will lack nothing of all your petitions, if you ask of the Lord nothing wavering.

"If you waver in your heart, you will surely receive none of your petitions. For those that waver towards God are the doubtful-minded. They never obtain any of their petitions. Those who are complete in the faith make all their petitions trusting in the Lord, and they receive, because they ask without wavering, nothing doubting; for every doubtful-minded man, if he doesn't repent, shall hardly be saved.

"Therefore, cleanse your heart from doubtful-mindedness. Put on faith, for it is strong, and trust God so that you will receive all your petitions which you ask.

"If after asking anything of the Lord, you receive your petition somewhat tardily, don't be of a doubtful mind because you did not receive of your soul at once. Assuredly it is by reason of some temptation or some transgression, of which you are ignorant, that you receive your petition so tardily. Therefore, don't cease to make your soul's petition, and you shall receive it. But if you grow weary, and doubt as you ask, blame yourself and not Him who gives to you.

"See to this doubtful-mindedness; for it is evil and senseless, and uproots many from the faith, yes, even very faithful and strong men. Indeed this doubtful-mindedness is a daughter of the devil, and works great wickedness against the servants of God.

Therefore despise doubtful-mindedness and gain the mastery over it in everything, clothing yourself with faith which is strong and powerful. Faith promises all things and accomplishes all things; but doubtful-mindedness, as having no confidence in itself, fails in all the works that it does.

"You see then," he said, "that faith is from above from the Lord, and has great power; but doubtful-mindedness is an earthly spirit from the devil, and has no power. Therefore serve FAITH which has power, and hold aloof from DOUBTFUL-MINDEDNESS which has no power; and you will live to God; yes, and all those shall live to God who are so minded."

Mandate the Tenth

"Put away SORROW from yourself," he said, "for she is the sister of doubtful-mindedness and of angry temper.

"SORROW is more evil than all the spirits, and is most fatal to the servants of God, and beyond all the spirits destroys a man. Therefore clothe yourself in CHEERFULNESS, which has favour with God always, and is acceptable to Him, and rejoice in it.

"Every cheerful man works good, and thinks good, and despises sadness; but the sad man is always committing sin. In the first place he commits sin, because he grieves the Holy Spirit, which was given to the man being a cheerful spirit; and in the second place, by grieving the Holy Spirit he does lawlessness, in that he does not intercede nor confess to God. The intercession of a sad man never at any time has power to ascend to the altar of God."

"Why," I said, "doesn't the intercession of him that is saddened ascend to the altar?"

"Because," he said, "sadness is seated at his heart. Thus sadness mingled with the intercession does not allow the intercession to ascend pure to the altar. As vinegar when mingled with wine in the same vessel doesn't have the same pleasant taste, so likewise sadness mingled with the Holy Spirit does not have the same intercession. Therefore cleanse yourself from this wicked sadness, and you will live to God; yes, and all shall live to God, who shall cast away sadness from themselves and clothe themselves in all cheerfulness."

Mandate the Eleventh

He showed me men seated on a couch, and another man seated on a chair. And he said to me, "Do you see those that are seated on the couch?"

"I see them, Sir," I said.

"These," he said, "are faithful, but the one who sits on the chair is a FALSE PROPHET who destroys the mind of the servants of God -- I mean, of the doubtful-minded, not of the faithful.

"These doubtful-minded ones then come to him, as to a soothsayer, and enquire of him what shall befall them. He, the false prophet, having no power of a divine Spirit in himself, speaks with them according to their enquiries and fills their souls as they themselves wish. Being empty himself he gives empty answers to empty enquirers; for whatever enquiry may be made of him, he answers according to the emptiness of the man.

"But he also speaks some true words; for the devil fills him with his own spirit, if so be he shall be able to break down some of the righteous. Many therefore who are strong in the faith of the Lord, clothed with the truth, don't cleave to such spirits, but hold aloof from them; but as many as are doubters and frequently change their minds, practise soothsaying like the Gentiles, and bring on themselves greater sin by their idolatries. He who consults a false prophet on any matter is an idolater and emptied of the truth, and senseless.

"No Spirit given of God needs to be consulted; but, having the power of Deity, speaks all things of itself, because it is from above, even from the power of the divine Spirit. But the spirit which is consulted, and speaks according to the desires of men, is earthly and fickle, having no power; and it doesn't speak at all, unless it is consulted."

"How then, Sir," I said, "shall a man know who of them is a prophet, and who a false prophet?"

"Hear," he said, "concerning both the prophets; and, as I shall tell you, so must you test the prophet and the false prophet. By his life test the man who has the divine Spirit. In the first place, he who has the divine Spirit, which is from above, is gentle and tranquil and humble-minded, and abstains from all wickedness and vain desires of this present world, and holds himself inferior to all men, and gives no answer to any man when enquired of, nor speaks in solitude (for neither does the Holy Spirit speak when a man wishes him to speak); but the man speaks when God wishes him to speak.

"When the man who has the divine Spirit comes into an assembly of righteous men, who have faith in a Divine Spirit, and intercession is made to God by the gathering of those men, then the angel of the prophetic spirit, who is attached to him, fills the man, and the man, being filled with the Holy Spirit, speaks to the multitude, according as the Lord wills. In this way, then, the Spirit of the Deity shall be manifest. This is the greatness of the power as touching the Spirit of the Deity of the Lord.

"Hear now," he said, "concerning the earthly and vain spirit, which has no power, but is foolish. In the first place, that man who seems to have a spirit exalts himself, and desires to have a chief place, and straightway he is impudent and shameless and talkative and conversant in many luxuries and in many other deceits, and receives money for his prophesying, and if he doesn't receive, he doesn't prophesy.

"Now can a divine Spirit receive money and prophesy? It is not possible for a prophet of God to do this, but the spirit of [these false] prophets is earthly.

"In the next place, it never approaches an assembly of righteous men; but avoids them, and cleaves to the doubtful-minded and empty, and prophesies to gratify their desires; for they too are empty whom it answers. The empty vessel placed together with the empty is not broken, but they agree one with the other.

"But when he comes into an assembly full of righteous men who have a Spirit of Deity, and intercession is made from them, that man is emptied, and the earthly spirit flees from him in fear, and that man is struck dumb and is altogether broken in pieces, being unable to utter a word. If you pack wine or oil into a closet, and place an empty vessel among them, and again desire to unpack the closet, the vessel which you placed there empty, you will still find empty the same as before. Thus also the empty prophets, whenever they come to the spirits of righteous men, are found [as

empty] as they came.

"I have given you the life of both kinds of prophets. Therefore test, by his life and his works, the man who says that he is moved by the Spirit. But trust the Spirit that comes from God, and has power; but put no trust at all in the earthly and empty spirit; for in it there is no power, for it comes from the devil.

"Listen [then] to the parable which I shall tell you. Take a stone, and throw it up to heaven -- see if you can reach it; or again, take a squirt of water, and squirt it up to heaven -- see if you can bore through the heaven."

"How, Sir," I said, "can these things be? For both these things which you have mentioned are beyond our power."

"Well then," he said, "just as these things are beyond our power, so likewise the earthly spirits have no power and are feeble. Now take the power which comes from above. The hail is a very small grain, and yet, when it falls on a man's head, what pain it causes! Or again, take a drop which falls on the ground from the tiles, and bores through the stone. You see then that the small things from above falling on the earth have great power. So likewise the divine Spirit coming from above is powerful.

Therefore, trust this Spirit, but hold aloof from the other."

Mandate the Twelfth

1. He said to me; "Remove from yourself all EVIL DESIRE, and clothe yourself in the DESIRE WHICH IS GOOD and holy; for clothed with this desire you will hate the evil desire, and will bridle and direct it as you will.

"The evil desire is wild, and only tamed with difficulty because it is terrible. Because of its wildness it is very costly to men. More especially, if a servant of God gets entangled in it, and has no understanding, he is put to fearful costs by it. It is costly to such men as are not clothed in the good desire, but are mixed up with this life. These men then it hands over to death."

"Of what sort, Sir," I said, "are the works of the evil desire, which hand men over to death? Make them known to me, so that I may hold aloof from them."

"Through the following works, the evil desire brings death to the servants of God:

2. "Before all is the desire for the wife or husband of another, and for extravagance of wealth, and for many needless dainties, and for drinks and other luxuries, many and foolish. Every luxury is foolish and vain for the servants of God.

"These desires then are evil, and bring death to the servants of God, for this evil desire is a daughter of the devil. You must, therefore, abstain from the evil desires, that so abstaining you may live to God. As many as are mastered by them, and don't resist them, are done to death utterly; for these desires are deadly.

"But clothe yourself in the desire of righteousness, and, having armed yourself with the fear of the Lord, resist them. The fear of God dwells in the good desire. If the evil desire sees you armed with the fear of God and resisting [the evil desire], it shall flee far from you, and shall no longer be seen of you, being in fear of your weapons.

"When you are crowned for your victory over it, come to the desire of righteousness, and deliver to her the victor's prize which you have received, and serve her, according as she herself desires. If you serve the good desire, and are subject to her, you will have power to master the evil desire, and to subject her, according as you will."

3. "I would like to know, Sir," I said, "in what ways I ought to serve the good desire."

"Listen," he said; "practice righteousness and virtue, truth and the fear of the Lord, faith and gentleness, and as many good deeds as are like these. Practising these you will be well-pleasing as a servant of God, and will live to Him; yes, and every one who shall serve the good desire shall live to God."

So he completed the twelve commandments, and he said to me; "You have these commandments; walk in them, and exhort your hearers so that their repentance may become pure for the rest of the days of their life. Fulfil this ministry which I have given you, with all diligence to

the end, and you will effect much. You will find favour among those who are about to repent, and they will obey your words, for I will be with you, and will compel them to obey you."

I said to him; "Sir, these commandments are great and beautiful and glorious, and are able to gladden the heart of the man who is able to observe them, But I don't know whether these commandments can be kept by a man, because they are very hard."

He answered, "If you set it before yourself so that they can be kept, you will easily keep them, and they will not be hard; but if it once enters into your heart that they cannot be kept by a man, you will not keep them. But now I say to you; if you don't keep them, but neglect them, you will not have salvation, neither your children nor your household, since you have already pronounced judgement against yourself that these commandments cannot be kept by a man."

4. These things he said to me very angrily, so that I was confounded, and feared him exceedingly; for his form was changed, so that a man could not endure his anger. When he saw that I was altogether disturbed and confounded, he began to speak more kindly [and cheerfully] to me, and he said:

"Foolish fellow, void of understanding and of doubtful mind, don't you perceive the glory of God, how great and mighty and marvellous it is, how that He created the world for man's sake, and subjected all His creation to man, and gave all authority to him, so that he should be master over all things under the heaven?"

"If then, man is lord of all the creatures of God and masters all things, cannot he also master these commandments? Aye," he said, "the man that has the Lord in his heart can master all these commandments."

"But those who have the Lord on their lips, while their heart is hardened, and are far from the Lord, to them these commandments are hard and inaccessible. Therefore, you, who are empty and fickle in the faith, set your Lord in your heart, and you shall perceive that nothing is easier than these commandments, nor sweeter, nor more gentle."

"Be converted, you who walk after the commandments of the devil, the commandments which are so difficult and bitter and wild and riotous; and don't fear the devil, for there is no power in him against you. I will be with you, I, the angel of repentance, who have the mastery over him. The devil has fear alone, but his fear has no force. Therefore, don't fear him; and he will flee from you."

5. I said to him, "Sir, listen to a few words from me."

"Say what you will," he said.

"Man, Sir," I said, "is eager to keep the commandments of God, and there is no one who doesn't asks the Lord, that he may be strengthened in His commandments, and be subject to them; but the devil is hard and overmasters them."

"He cannot," he said, "overmaster the servants of God, who set their hope on Him with their whole heart. The devil can wrestle with them, but he cannot overthrow them. If then you resist him, he will be vanquished, and will flee from you in disgrace."

"But," he said, "as many as are utterly empty, fear the devil as if he had power. When a man has filled amply sufficient jars with good wine, and among these jars a few are quite empty, he comes to the jars, and does not examine the full ones, for he knows that they are full; but he examines the empty ones, fearing lest they have turned sour; because empty jars soon turn sour, and the taste of the wine is spoilt. So also the devil comes to all the servants of God tempting them."

"As many then as are complete in the faith, oppose him mightily, and he departs from them, not having a place where he can find an entrance. So he comes next to the empty ones, and finding a place goes into them, and further he does what he wills in them, and they become submissive slaves to him."

6. "But I, the angel of repentance, say to you; Don't fear the devil; for I was sent," he said, "to be with you who repent with your whole heart, and to strengthen you in the faith. Believe, therefore, on God, you who by reason of your sins have despaired of your life, and are adding to your sins, and weighing down your life; for if you turn to the Lord with you whole heart, and work righteousness the remaining days of your life, and serve Him rightly according to His will, He will give healing to your former sins, and you will have power to master the works of the devil."

"But don't fear the threatening of the devil all; for he is unstrung, like the sinews of a dead man. Hear me therefore, and fear Him, Who is able to do all things, to save and to destroy, and observe these commandments, and you shall live to God."

I said to him, "Sir, now am I strengthened in all the ordinances of the Lord, because you are with me; and I know that you will crush all the power of the devil, and we shall be masters over him, and shall prevail over all his works. I hope, Sir, that I am now able to keep these commandments which you have commanded, the Lord enabling me."

"You will keep them," he said, "if your heart be found pure with the Lord; yes, and all shall keep them, as many as shall purify their hearts from the vain desires of this world, and shall live to God."

Part Three - The Parables

A Parable (no. 1)

He said to me; "You know that you, who are the servants of God, are dwelling in a foreign land; for your own city is far from this one. If then you know your own city, in which

1. After I had written out this book completely, the angel who had delivered me to the shepherd came to the house where I was, and sat on a couch, and the shepherd stood at his right hand. Then he called me, and spoke thus to me; "I delivered you," he said, "and your house to this shepherd, so you would be protected by him."

"True, Sir," I said.

"If therefore," he said, "you desire to be protected from all annoyance and all cruelty, and to have success in every good work and word, and all the power of righteousness, walk in his commandments, which I have given you, and you will be able to get the mastery over all wickedness. If you keep his commandments, all evil desire and the sweetness of this world shall be subject to you; moreover success shall attend you in every good undertaking. Embrace his gravity and self-restraint, and tell all men that he is held in great honour and dignity with the Lord, and is a ruler of great authority, and powerful in his office. To him alone in the whole world has authority over repentance been assigned.

2. "I speak these things to you, so you may persevere. For he has given a good account of you to me. You therefore must speak these words to others, so they too who have practised or shall practise repentance may be of the same mind as you are; and he may give a good report of them to me, and I to the Lord."

"I too, Sir," I said, "declare to every man the mighty works of the Lord; for I hope that all who have sinned in the past, if they hear these things, will gladly repent and recover life."

"Continue," he said, "in this mastery, and complete it to the end. Whoever fulfils his commandments shall have life; yes such a man [shall have] great honour with the Lord. But those who don't keep his commandments, fly from their life, and oppose him, and don't follow his commandments, but deliver themselves over to death; and each one becomes guilty of his own blood. But I bid you to obey these commandments, and you will have a remedy for your sins.

3. "Moreover, I have sent these virgins to you, so they may dwell with you; for I have seen that they are friendly towards you. You have them therefore as helpers, so you may be the better able to keep his commandments; for it is impossible that these commandments be kept without the help of these virgins. I see too that they are glad to be with you. But I will charge them, that they not depart at all from your house. Only purify your house; for in a clean house they will dwell gladly. For they are clean and chaste and industrious, and all have favour in the sight of the Lord. If, therefore, they shall find your house pure, they will continue with you; but if the slightest pollution arise, they will depart from your house at once. For these virgins don't love pollution in any form."

I said to him, "I hope, Sir, that I shall please them, so they may gladly dwell in my house for ever; and just as he to whom you delivered me makes no complaint against me, so they likewise shall make no complaint."

He said to the shepherd, "I perceive," he said, "that he wishes to live as the servant of God, and that he will keep these commandments, and will place these virgins in a clean habitation."

With these words he again delivered me over to the shepherd, and called the virgins, and said to them; "Inasmuch as I see you are glad to dwell in this man's house, I commend to you him and his house, that you don't depart at all."

But they heard these words gladly.

4. He said then to me, "Perform like a man in this ministry; declare to every man the mighty works of the Lord, and you will have favour in this ministry. Whoever shall walk in these commandments, shall live and be happy in his life; but whoever shall neglect them, shall not live, and shall be unhappy in his life. Charge all men who are able to do right, that they not cease to practise good works; for it is useful for them.

"I say moreover that every man ought to be rescued from misfortune; for he who has need, and suffers misfortune in his daily life, is in great torment and want. Whoever therefore rescues [anyone] from a penury life of this kind, wins great joy for himself. For he who is harassed by misfortune of this sort is afflicted and tortured with equal torment as one who is in chains. For many men on account of calamities of this kind, because they can't bear them any longer, lay violent hands on themselves. He then who knows the calamity of a man of this kind and doesn't rescue him, commits great sin, and becomes guilty of the man's blood.

"Therefore do good works, whoever of you has received [benefits] from the Lord, lest, while you delay to do them, the building of the tower is completed. It is on your account that the work of the building has been interrupted. Unless then you hasten to do right, the tower will be completed, and you shut out."

When he had finished speaking with me, he rose from the couch and departed, taking with him the shepherd and the virgins. He said to me, however, that he would send the shepherd and the virgins back to my house again. *h* you shall dwell, why do you prepare fields and expensive displays and buildings and dwelling chambers here [in this city] which are superfluous? Therefore, he who prepares these things for this city does not purpose to return to his own city. O foolish and double-minded and miserable man, don't you perceive that all these things are foreign, and are under the power of another? For the lord of this city shall say, 'I do not wish you to dwell in my city; go forth from this city, for you do not conform to my laws.'

"You, therefore, who have fields and dwellings and many other possessions, when you are cast out by him, what will you do with your field and your house and all the other things that you prepared for yourself? For the Lord of this country said to you justly, 'Either conform to my laws, or depart from my country.' What then will you do, who are under law in your own city? For the sake of your fields and the rest of your possessions will you altogether repudiate your law, and walk according to the law of this city? Be careful, lest it becomes inexpedient to repudiate [this city's] law; for if you should desire to return again to your own city, you will certainly not be received and will be shut out from it.

"Therefore, watch out; [since you are] dwelling in a strange land, and prepare nothing more for yourself but a living that is sufficient for you, and make ready so that, whenever the master of this city may desire to cast you out for your opposition to his law, you may go forth joyfully, free from all insult. Take heed, you who serve God and have Him in your heart: work the works of God, being mindful of His commandments and of the promises He made, and believe Him, that He will perform them, if His commandments are kept.

"Therefore, instead of fields buy souls that are in trouble, as each is able, and visit widows and orphans, and do not neglect them. Spend your riches on all your displays which you received from God, on fields and houses of this kind. For to this end the Master enriched you, so that you might perform these ministries for Him. It is much better to purchase fields and possessions and houses of this kind, which you will find in your own city, when you visit it. This lavish expenditure is beautiful and joyous, not bringing sadness or fear, but joy.

"The expenditure of the heathen, then, don't practise; for it is not convenient for you the servants of God. But practice your own expenditure, in which you can rejoice; and do not corrupt, nor touch what is another man's, nor lust after it; for it is wicked to lust after other men's possessions. But perform your own task, and you will be saved."

Another Parable (no. 2)

As I walked in the field, and noticed an elm and a vine, and was distinguishing them and their fruits, the shepherd appeared to me and said; "What are you meditating within yourself?"

"I am thinking, Sir," I said, "about the elm and the vine. They are excellently suited to one another."

"These two trees," he said, "are appointed for an example to the servants of God."

"I would like to know, Sir," I said, "the example of which you speak."

"This vine," he said, "bears fruit. but the elm is an unfruitful stock. Yet this vine, unless it climbs up the elm, cannot bear much fruit. When it is spread on the ground, the fruit that it does bear is rotten, because it is not suspended on the elm. When then the vine is attached to the elm, it bears fruit both from itself and from the elm. You see then that the elm also bears fruit, not less than the vine, but rather more."

"How more, Sir?" I said.

"Because," he said, "the vine, when hanging on the elm, bears its fruit in abundance, and in good condition; but, when it is spread on the ground, it bears little fruit, and even that is rotten. This parable therefore is applicable to the servants of God, to poor and to rich alike."

"How, Sir?" I said; "instruct me."

"Listen," he said; "the rich man has much wealth, but in the things of the Lord he is poor, being distracted about his riches, and his confession and intercession with the Lord is very scanty. Even that which he gives is small and weak and doesn't have power above. When the rich man goes to the poor, and assists him in his needs, believing that for what he does to the poor man he shall obtain a reward with God -- because the poor man is rich in intercession and confession, and his intercession has great power with God -- the rich man then supplies all things to the poor man without wavering. But the poor man being supplied by the rich makes intercession for him, thanking God for the one who gave to him. The other is still more zealous to assist the poor man, so that he may sustain his life: for he knows the intercession of the poor man is acceptable and rich before God.

"They both then accomplish their work; the poor man makes intercession, wherein he is rich; this he renders again to the Lord Who supplies him with it. The rich man, in the same way, furnishes to the poor man, nothing doubting, the riches which he received from the Lord. This work is great and acceptable with God, because [the rich man] has understanding concerning his riches, and works for the poor man from the bounties of the Lord, and accomplishes the ministry of the Lord rightly.

"In the sight of men the elm seems not to bear any fruit, and they don't know, nor perceive that if there comes a drought, the elm having water nurtures the vine, and the vine having a constant supply of water bears fruit twofold, both for itself and for the elm. So likewise the poor, by interceding with the Lord for the rich, establishes their riches; and again the rich, supplying their needs to the poor, establish their souls. So then both are made partners in the righteous work. He who does these things shall not be abandoned by God, but shall be written in the books of the living. Blessed are the rich, who understand that they are enriched from the Lord; for they who have this mind shall be able to do some good work."

Another Parable (no. 3)

He showed me many trees which had no leaves, but they seemed to me to be, as it were, withered; for they were all alike.

He said to me; "See these trees?"

"I see them, Sir," I said, "they are all alike, and are withered."

He answered and said to me; "These trees that you see are those who dwell in this world."

"Why then, Sir," I said, "are they as if they were withered, and alike?"

"Because," he said, "neither the righteous are distinguishable, nor the sinners in this world, but they are alike. For this world is winter to the righteous, and they are not distinguishable, as they dwell with the sinners. As in winter the trees, having shed their leaves, are alike, and are not distinguishable as to which are withered, and which alive, so also in this world neither the just nor the sinner are distinguishable, but they are all alike."

Another Parable (no. 4)

He showed me many trees again, some of them sprouting, and others withered, and he said to me; "See these trees?"

"I see them, Sir," I said, "some of them sprouting, and others withered."

"These trees," he said, "which are sprouting are the righteous, who shall dwell in the world to

come; for the world to come is summer to the righteous, but winter to the sinners. When the mercy of the Lord shines forth, then those who serve God shall be made manifest; yes, and all men shall be made manifest, and recognised as to what sort they are. So also the fruits of the righteous shall be manifest, and all even the very smallest shall be known to be flourishing in that world. But the Gentiles and the sinners, just as you saw the trees which were withered, thus shall they be found, withered and unfruitful in that world. They shall be burnt up as fuel, and shall be manifest, because their practice in their life has been evil. The sinners shall be burned, because they sinned and didn't repent; and the Gentiles shall be burned, because they didn't know the One who created them. Therefore, bear fruit, so that in the summer your fruit may be known.

"Abstain from overmuch business, and you will never fall into any sin. Those who busy themselves overmuch, sin much also, being distracted about their business, and in no wise serving their own Lord.

"How then," he said, "can such a man ask anything of the Lord and receive it, seeing that he doesn't serve the Lord? Those who serve Him shall receive their petitions, but those who don't serve the Lord shall receive nothing.

"If any one works just one single action [at a time], he is also able to serve the Lord; for his mind is not corrupted from [following] the Lord. He shall serve Him, because he keeps his mind pure. If you do these things, you will be able to bear fruit for the world to come; yes, and whoever shall do these things, shall bear fruit."

Another Parable (no. 5)

1. As I was fasting and seated on a certain mountain, and giving thanks to the Lord for all He had done to me, I saw the shepherd seated by me and saying; "Why have you come here in the early morning?"

"I am fasting, Sir," I said.

"What," he said, "is this fast which you are fasting?"

"As I was accustomed, Sir," I said, "so I fast."

"You don't know how to fast to the Lord," he said. "Neither is this a fast, this unprofitable fast which you make to Him."

"Why, Sir," I said, "do you say this?"

"I tell you," he said, "this is not a fast, which you think you are fasting; but I will teach you what is a complete fast and acceptable to the Lord. Listen," he said; "God doesn't desire such a vain fast; for by so fasting to God you will do nothing for righteousness. But fast to God such a fast as this; do no wickedness in your life, and serve the Lord with a pure heart; observe His commandments and walk in His ordinances, and let no evil desire rise up in your heart; but believe God. Then, if you will do these things, and fear Him, and control yourself from every evil deed, you will live to God; and if you do these things, you will accomplish a great fast, and one acceptable to God.

2. "Hear this parable which I shall tell you relating to fasting. A certain man had an estate, and many slaves. A portion of his estate he planted as a vineyard; and choosing out a certain slave who was trusty and well-pleasing [and] held in honour, he called him to him and said to him; 'Take this vineyard which I have planted, and fence it till I come, but do nothing else to the vineyard. Now keep this commandment, and you will be free in my house.'

"Then the master of the servant went away to travel abroad. When he had gone away, the servant fenced the vineyard.

"Having finished the fencing of the vineyard, he noticed that the vineyard was full of weeds. He reasoned within himself, saying, 'This commandment of my lord I have carried out. Now, I will dig this vineyard, and it shall be neater; and when it has no weeds it will yield more fruit, because it isn't choked by the weeds.'

"He dug the vineyard, and plucked up all the weeds. That vineyard became very neat and flourishing, when it had no weeds to choke it.

"After a time the master of the servant came, and went into the vineyard. Seeing the vineyard fenced neatly, and dug as well, and all the weeds plucked up, and the vines flourishing, he rejoiced

exceedingly at what his servant had done. So he called his beloved son, who was his heir, and the friends who were his advisers, and told them what he had commanded his servant, and how much he had found done. They rejoiced with the servant at the testimony which his master had borne to him.

"He said to them; 'I promised this servant his freedom, if he should keep the commandment which I commanded him; but he kept my commandment and did a good work besides to my vineyard, and pleased me greatly. For this work therefore which he has done, I desire to make him joint-heir with my son, because, when the good thought struck him, he did not neglect it, but fulfilled it.'

"In this purpose the son of the master agreed with him, that the servant should be made joint-heir.

"After a few days, his master made a feast, and sent to him many dainties from the feast. But when the servant received the dainties sent to him by the master, he took, what was sufficient for him, and distributed the rest to his fellow-servants. His fellow-servants, when they received the dainties, rejoiced, and began to pray for him, that he might find greater favour with the master, because he had treated them so handsomely.

"All these things which had taken place his master heard, and again rejoiced greatly at his deed. So the master called together again his friends and his son, and announced to them the deed that he had done with regard to his dainties which he had received; and they still the more approved of his resolve, that his servant should be made joint-heir with his son."

3. I said, "Sir, I can't understand these parables unless you explain them for me."

"I will explain," he said. "Keep the commandments of the Lord, and you will be well-pleasing to God, and will be enrolled among the number of those who keep His commandments. But if you do any good thing outside the commandment of God, you will win for yourself more exceeding glory, and will be more glorious in the sight of God than you would otherwise have been. If then, while you keep the commandments of God, you add these services likewise, you will rejoice, if you observe them according to my commandment.

"This fasting," he said, "if the commandments of the Lord are kept, is very good. This then is the way, that you will keep this fast which you are about to observe. First of all, keep yourself from every evil word and every evil desire, and purify your heart from all the vanities of this world. If you keep these things, this fast shall be perfect for you.

"Having fulfilled what is written, on the day on which you fast you must taste nothing but bread and water. From your meats, which you would have eaten, you must reckon up the amount of that day's expenditure, which you would have incurred, and give it to a widow, or an orphan, or to one in want. So must you humble your soul, so that he who has received from your humiliation may satisfy his own soul, and may pray for you to the Lord. If then you accomplish this fast, as I have commanded you, your sacrifice shall be acceptable in the sight of God, and this fasting shall be recorded; and the service so performed is beautiful and joyous and acceptable to the Lord. These things you must so observe, you and your children and your whole household; and, observing them, you will be blessed; yes, and all those, who shall hear and observe them, shall be blessed, and whatever things they shall ask of the Lord, they shall receive."

Parable of the Shepherds

1. As I sat in my house, and glorified the Lord for all the things I had seen, and was considering concerning the commandments, how that they were beautiful and powerful and gladsome and glorious and able to save man's soul, I said within myself; "Happy would I be, if I walked in these commandments; yes, and whoever shall walk in them shall be blessed."

As I spoke these things within myself, I saw him suddenly seated by me, and saying as follows; "Why are you of a doubtful mind concerning the commandments, which I commanded you? They are beautiful. Don't doubt at all; but clothe yourself in the faith of the Lord, and you will walk in them. I will strengthen you in them. These commandments are suitable for those who meditate

repentance; for if they don't walk in them, their repentance is in vain.

"You then who repent, cast away the evil doings of this world which crush you; and, by putting on every excellence of righteousness, you shall be able to observe these commandments, and to add no more to your sins. If then you add no further sin at all, you will depart from your former sins. Walk then in these commandments, and you shall live to God. These things have all been told you from me."

After he had told these things to me, he said to me, "Let us go into the country, and I will show you the shepherds of the sheep."

"Let us go, Sir," I said.

We came to a certain plain, and he showed me a young man, a shepherd, clothed in a light cloak, of saffron colour. He was feeding a great number of sheep, and these sheep were, as it were, well fed and very frisky, and were gladsome as they skipped about this way and that. The shepherd himself was all gladsome over his flock; and the very visage of the shepherd was exceedingly gladsome; and he ran about among the sheep.

2. He said to me; "See this shepherd?"

"I see him, Sir," I said.

"This," he said, "is the angel of self-indulgence and of deceit. He crushes the souls of the servants of God, and perverts them from the truth, leading them astray with evil desires, wherein they perish. They forget the commandments of the living God, and walk in vain deceits and acts of self-indulgence, and are destroyed by this angel, some of them to death, and others to corruption."

I said to him, "Sir, I don't understand what you mean by 'to death,' and 'to corruption'."

"Listen," he said; "the sheep which you saw gladsome and skipping about, these are the ones who have been turned apart from God utterly, and have delivered themselves over to the lusts of this world. In these, therefore, there is no repentance to life. The Name of God is being blasphemed through them. The life of such persons is death.

"The sheep, which you saw not skipping about, but feeding in one place, these are those who have delivered themselves over to acts of self-indulgence and deceit, but have not uttered any blasphemy against the Lord. These then have been corrupted from the truth. In these there is hope of repentance, wherein they can live. Corruption, then, has hope of a possible renewal, but death has eternal destruction."

Again we went forward a little way, and he showed me a great shepherd like a wild man in appearance, with a white goatskin thrown about him; and he had a kind of wallet on his shoulders, and a staff very hard and with knots in it, and a great whip. His look was very sour, so that I was afraid of him. This shepherd kept receiving from the younger shepherd, those sheep that were frisky and well-fed, but not skipping about, and putting them in a certain spot, which was precipitous and covered with thorns and briars, so that the sheep could not disentangle themselves from the thorns and briars. They pastured, entangled in this situation, and were beaten by him, until they were in great misery. He kept driving them about to and fro, and giving them no rest, and altogether those sheep didn't have a happy time.

3. When then I saw them so lashed with the whip and vexed, I was sorry for their sakes, because they were so tortured and had no rest at all. I said to the shepherd who was speaking with me; "Sir, who is this shepherd, who is so hard-hearted and severe, and has no compassion at all for these sheep?"

"He is one of the just angels, and presides over punishment. He receives those who wander away from God, and walk after the lusts and deceits of this life, and punishes them, as they deserve, with fearful and various punishments."

"I would like to learn, Sir," I said, "of what sort are those punishments."

"Listen," he said. "The various tortures and punishments are tortures belonging to the present life; for some are punished with losses, and others with want, and others with various maladies, and others with every kind of unsettlement, and others with insults from unworthy persons and with suffering in many other respects.

"Many, being unsettled in their plans, set their hands to many things, and nothing ever goes

forward with them. Then they say that they do not prosper in their doings, and it does not enter into their heart that they have done evil deeds, but they blame the Lord.

"When they are afflicted with every kind of affliction, then they are delivered over to me for good instruction, and are strengthened in the faith of the Lord, and serve the Lord with a pure heart the remaining days of their life. If they repent, [the realisation of] the evil works which they have done rises up in their hearts, and then they glorify God, saying that He is a just Judge, and that they suffered justly each according to his doings. They serve the Lord from then on with a pure heart, and are prosperous in all their doings, receiving from the Lord whatever things they may ask. Then they glorify the Lord because they were delivered over to me, and they no longer suffer any evil thing."

Parable of the Willow Tree

1. He showed me a great willow, overshadowing plains and mountains. Under the shadow of the willow all had come who are called by the name of the Lord. By the willow there stood an angel of the Lord, glorious and very tall, having a great sickle. He was lopping branches from the willow, and giving them to the people who sheltered beneath the willow. He gave them little rods about a cubit long. After all had taken the rods, the angel laid aside the sickle, and the tree was still sound, just as I had first seen it.

I marvelled within myself, saying, "How is the tree sound after so many branches have been lopped off?"

The shepherd said to me, "Don't marvel that the tree remained sound, after so many branches were lopped off; but wait until you see all things, and it shall be shown to you what it is."

The angel who gave the rods to the people demanded them back from them again. According as they had received them, so also they were summoned to him, and each of them returned their rod. The angel of the Lord took them, and examined them.

From some he received the rods withered and eaten as it were by grubs: the angel ordered those who gave up the rods like these to stand apart.

Others gave them up withered, but not grub-eaten; and these again he ordered to stand apart.

Others gave them up half-withered; these also stood apart.

Others gave up their rods half withered and with cracks; these also stood apart.

Others gave up their rods green and with cracks; these also stood apart.

Others gave up their rods one half withered and one half green; these also stood apart.

Others brought their rods two parts of the rod green, and the third part withered; these also stood apart.

Others gave them up two parts withered, and the third part green; these also stood apart.

Others gave up their rods nearly all green, but a very small portion of their rods were withered, just the end; but they had cracks in them; these also stood apart.

In those of others there was a very small portion green, but the rest of the rods were withered; these also stood apart.

Others came bringing their rods green, as they received them from the angel; and the most part of the multitude gave up their rods in this state; and the angel rejoiced exceedingly at these; these also stood apart.

Others gave up their rods green and with shoots; these also stood apart; and at these again the angel rejoiced exceedingly.

Others gave up their rods green and with shoots; and their shoots had, as it were, a kind of fruit. Those were exceeding glad some, whose rods were found in this state. Over them the angel exulted, and the shepherd was very glad some over them.

2. The angel of the Lord commanded crowns to be brought. The crowns were brought, made as it were of palm-branches; and he crowned the men who had given up the rods which had the shoots and some fruit, and sent them away into the tower.

The others also he sent into the tower; those who had given up the rods green and with shoots, but the shoots were without fruit; and he set a seal on them. All those who went into the tower had

the same raiment, white as snow. Those who had given up their rods green as they received them, he sent away, giving them a white robe, and seals.

After the angel had finished these things, he said to the shepherd; "I am going away; but these you must send away to [their places within] the walls, according as each deserves to dwell. Examine their rods carefully, and so send them away. But be careful in examining them. Take heed lest any escape you," he said. "Still if any escape you, I will test them at the altar." When he had thus spoken to the shepherd, he departed.

After the angel had departed, the shepherd said to me; "Let us take the rods of all and plant them, to see whether any of them shall be able to live."

I said to him, "Sir, these withered things, how can they live?"

He answered and said to me; "This tree is a willow, and this class of tree clings to life. If the rods shall be planted and get a little moisture, many of them will live. Afterwards let us try to pour some water over them. If any of them shall be able to live, I will rejoice with it; but if it doesn't live, I at least shall not be found neglectful."

So the shepherd bade me call them, just as each one of them was stationed. They came row after row, and they delivered up the rods to the shepherd. The shepherd took the rods, and planted them in rows, and after he had planted them, he poured much water over them, so that the rods could not be seen for the water.

After he had watered the rods, he said to me; "Let us go now, and after a few days let us return and inspect all the rods; for He who created this tree wills that all those who have received rods from this tree would live. I myself hope that the greater part of these little rods, after they have received moisture and been watered, will live."

3. I said to him; "Sir, inform me what this tree is. I am perplexed, because, though so many branches were cut off, the tree is sound, and nothing appears to have been cut from it; I am therefore perplexed at this."

"Listen," he said; "this great tree which overshadows plains and mountains and all the earth is the law of God which was given to the whole world; and this law is the Son of God preached to the ends of the earth. The people that are under the shadow are those who have heard the preaching, and believed on Him; but the great and glorious angel is Michael, who has the power over this people and is their captain. This is the one who puts the law into the hearts of the believers; therefore he himself inspects them to whom he gave it, to see whether they have observed it. But you see the rods of every one; for the rods are the law. You see these many rods rendered useless, and you will notice all those who have not observed the law, and will see the abode of each one."

I said to him; "Sir, why did he send away some into the tower, and leave others for you?"

"As many," he said, "as transgressed the law which they received from him, these he left under my authority for repentance; but as many as already satisfied the law and have observed it, these he has under his own authority."

"Who then, Sir," I said, "are those who have been crowned and go into the tower?"

"As many," he said, "as wrestled with the devil and overcame him in their wrestling, are crowned. These are those who suffered for the law. But the others, who likewise gave up their rods green and with shoots, though not with fruit, are those who were persecuted for the law, but did not suffer nor yet deny their law. But those who gave them up green just as they received them, are sober and righteous men, who walked altogether in a pure heart and have kept the commandments of the Lord. But all else you will know, when I have examined these rods that have been planted and watered"

4. After a few days we came to the place, and the shepherd sat down in the place of the angel, while I stood by him. He said to me; "Gird yourself with a garment of raw flax, and minister to me."

So I girded myself with a clean garment of raw flax made of coarse material.

When he saw me girded and ready to minister to him, "Call," said he, "the men whose rods have been planted, according to the rank as each presented their rods."

I went away to the plain, and called them all; and they stood all of them according to their ranks.

He said to them; "Let each man pluck out his own rod, and bring it to me."

The first ones to give up their rods, were those who had the withered and chipped rods, and they were found accordingly withered and chipped. He ordered them to stand apart.

Then those, who had the withered but not chipped, gave theirs up; and some of them gave up the rods green, and others withered and chipped as by grubs. Those then who gave them up green he ordered to stand apart; but those who gave them up withered and chipped he ordered to stand with the first.

Then those who had the half-withered and with cracks, gave theirs up; and many of them gave them up green and without cracks; and some gave them up green and with shoots, and fruits on the shoots, such as those had who went to the tower crowned; and some gave them up withered and eaten, and some withered and uneaten, and some such as they were, half-withered and with cracks. He ordered them to stand each one apart, some in their proper ranks, and others apart.

5. Then those who had their rods green, but with cracks gave theirs up. These all gave them up green, and stood in their own company. The shepherd rejoiced over these, because they all were changed and had put away their cracks.

Those likewise who had one half green and the other half withered gave theirs up. The rods of some were found entirely green, of some half-withered, of some withered and eaten, and of some green and with shoots. These were all sent away each to his company.

Then those who had two parts green and the third withered gave theirs up; many of them gave them up green, and many half-withered, and others withered and eaten. These all stood in their own company.

Then those who had two parts withered and the third part green gave theirs up. Many of them gave them up half-withered, but some withered and eaten, others half-withered and with cracks, and a few green. These all stood in their own company.

Then those who had had their rods green, but a very small part withered and with cracks gave theirs up. Of these some gave them up green, and others green and with shoots. These also went away to their own company.

Then those who had a very small part green and the other parts withered gave theirs up. The rods of these were found for the most part green and with shoots and fruit on the shoots, and others altogether green. At these rods the shepherd rejoiced very greatly, because there were found so. These went away each to his own company.

6. After the shepherd had examined the rods of all, he said to me, "I told you that this tree clings to life. See," he said, "how many repented and were saved?"

"I see, Sir," I said.

"It is," he said, "so that you may see the abundant compassion of the Lord, how great and glorious it is, and He has given [His] Spirit to those who are worthy of repentance."

"Why then, Sir," I said, "didn't they all repent?"

"To those, whose heart He saw about to become pure and to serve Him with all their heart, to them He gave repentance; but those whose craftiness and wickedness He saw, who intend to repent in hypocrisy, to them He didn't give repentance, lest haply they should again profane His name."

I said to him, "Sir, now then show me concerning those who have given up their rods, what type of man each of them is, and their situation, so that when they hear this, those who believed and have received the seal and have broken it and did not keep it sound may fully understand what they are doing, and repent, receiving from you a seal, and may glorify the Lord, because He had compassion on them and sent you to renew their spirits."

"Listen," he said; "those whose rods were found WITHERED AND GRUB-EATEN, these are the renegades and traitors to the Church, who blasphemed the Lord in their sins, and still further were ashamed of the Name of the Lord, which was invoked on them. These then perished altogether to God. You see how not one of them repented, although they heard the words which you spoke to them, which I commanded you. From men of this kind, life departed.

"Those [who had the WITHERED BUT NOT GRUB-EATEN rods] who gave them up green and undecayed, these also are near them; for they were hypocrites, and brought in strange doctrines, and perverted the servants of God, especially those who had sinned, not permitting them to repent,

but persuading them with their foolish doctrines. These then have hope of repenting. But you see that many of them have indeed repented from the time when you spoke to them my commandments. Yes, and others still will repent. As many as shall not repent, have lost their life; but as many of them as repented, became good; and their dwelling was placed within the first walls, and some of them even ascended into the tower. You see then," he said, "that repentance from sins brings life, but not to repent brings death.

7. "As many as gave up [the rods] HALF-WITHERED, AND WITH CRACKS in them, hear also concerning these. Those whose rods were half-withered throughout are the double-minded; for they neither live nor are dead. But those who have them half-withered and cracks in them, these are both double-minded and slanderers, and are never at peace among themselves but always causing dissensions. Yet even to these, repentance is given. You see, that some of them have repented; and there is still," he said, "hope of repentance among them. As many of them as have repented, have their abode within the tower; but as many of them as have repented tardily shall abide within the walls; and as many as don't repent, but continue in their doings, shall die the death.

"Those who have given up their rods GREEN AND WITH CRACKS, these were found faithful and good at all times, but they have a certain emulation one with another about the first places and about glory of some kind or another. All these are foolish in having[emulation] one with another about first places. Yet these also, when they heard my commandments, being good, purified themselves and repented quickly. Therefore they have their habitation within the tower. But if any one shall again turn to dissension, he shall be cast out from the tower and shall lose his life. Life is for all those who keep the commandments of the Lord. But in the commandments there is nothing about first places, or about glory of any kind, but about long-suffering and humility in man. In such men, therefore, is the life of the Lord, but in factious and lawless men is death.

8. "Those who gave up their rods HALF GREEN AND HALF WITHERED, these are those who are mixed up in business and don't cleave to the saints. Therefore only one half of each one lives, but the other half is dead. Many then when they heard my commandments repented. As many as repented, have their abode within the tower. But some of them altogether stood aloof. These then have no repentance; for by reason of their business affairs they blasphemed the Lord and denied Him. So they lost their life for the wickedness that they committed. But many of them were doubtful-minded. These still have place for repentance, if they repent quickly, and their dwelling shall be within the tower; and if they repent tardily, they shall dwell within the walls; but if they don't repent, they too have lost their life.

"Those who have given up TWO PARTS GREEN AND THE THIRD PART WITHERED, these are those who have denied with manifold denials. Many of them therefore repented, and departed to dwell inside the tower; but many utterly rebelled from God; these lost their life finally. Some of them were double-minded and caused dissensions. For these then there is repentance, if they repent speedily and don't continue in their pleasures; but if they continue in their doings, they likewise procure for themselves death.

9. "Those who have given up their rods TWO THIRDS WITHERED AND ONE THIRD GREEN, these are men who have been believers, but grew rich and became renowned among the Gentiles. They clothed themselves with great pride and became high-minded, and abandoned the truth and did not cleave to the righteous, but lived together after the manner of the Gentiles, and this path appeared the more pleasant to them Yet they didn't depart from God, but continued in the faith, though they didn't do the works of the faith.

"Many of them therefore repented, and they had their habitation within the tower. But others at the last, living with the Gentiles, and being corrupted by the vain opinions of the Gentiles, departed from God, and worked the works of the Gentiles. These therefore were numbered with the Gentiles.

"But others of them were doubtful-minded, not hoping to be saved because of the deeds which they had done; and others were double-minded and made divisions among themselves. For these then who were double-minded by reason of their doings there is still repentance; but their repentance ought to be speedy, so that their dwelling may be within the tower; but for those who don't repent, but continue in their pleasures, death is nigh.

10. "Those who gave up their rods GREEN, YET WITH THE EXTREME ENDS WITHERED AND WITH CRACKS; these were found at all times good and faithful and glorious in the sight of God, but they sinned to a very slight degree by reason of the little desires and because they had somewhat against one another. But, when they heard my words, the greater part quickly repented, and their dwelling was assigned within the tower. But some of them were double-minded, and some being double-minded made a greater dissension. In these then there is still a hope of repentance, because they were found always good; and hardly shall one of them die.

"Those who gave up their RODS WITHERED, YET WITH A VERY SMALL PART GREEN, these are those who believed, but practised the works of lawlessness. Still they never separated from God, but bore the Name gladly, and gladly received into their houses the servants of God. So hearing of this repentance they repented without wavering, and they practised all excellence and righteousness. Some of them even suffer persecution willingly, knowing the deeds that they did. All these then shall have their dwelling within the tower."

11. After he had completed the interpretations of all the rods, he said to me; "Go, and tell all men to repent, and they shall live to God; for the Lord in His compassion sent me to give repentance to all, though some of them do not deserve it for their deeds; but being long-suffering the Lord wills those who were called through His Son to be saved."

I said to him; "Sir, I hope that all when they hear these words will repent; for I am persuaded that each one, when he fully knows his own deeds and fears God, will repent."

He answered and said to me; "As many, as shall repent from their whole heart and cleanse themselves from all the afore-mentioned evil deeds, and add nothing further to their sins, shall receive healing from the Lord for their former sins, unless they are double-minded concerning these commandments, and they shall live to God. But as many," he said, "as shall add to their sins and walk in the lusts of this world, shall condemn themselves to death. But do walk in my commandments, and live to God; yes, and as many as shall walk in them and shall do rightly, shall live to God."

Having shown me all these things he said to me, "Now the rest will I declare [to you] after a few days."

Parable of the Tower

1. After I had written down the commandments and parables of the shepherd, the angel of repentance, he came to me and said to me; "I wish to show you all things that the Holy Spirit, Which spoke with you in the form of the Church, showed to you. That Spirit is the Son of God. When you were weaker in the flesh, it was not declared to you through an angel; but when you were enabled through the Spirit, and grew mighty in your strength so that you could even see an angel, then at length, the building of the tower was shown to you, through the Church. In a fair and seemly manner you were shown all things, as it were by a virgin; but now by an angel, though by the same Spirit. Yet must you learn everything more accurately from me. To this end also was I appointed by the glorious angel to dwell in your house, so that you might see all things mightily, not terrified by anything, even as before."

He took me away to Arcadia, to a certain rounded mountain, and set me on the top of the mountain, and showed me a great plain, and round the plain twelve mountains, the mountains having each a different appearance.

The first was black as soot;

The second was bare, without vegetation;

The third was thorny and full of briars;

The fourth had the vegetation half-withered, the upper part of the grass green, but the part by the roots withered, and some of the grass became withered, whenever the sun had scorched it;

The fifth mountain had green grass and was rugged;

The sixth mountain was full with clefts throughout, some small and some great, and the clefts had vegetation, but the grass was not very luxuriant, but rather as if it had been withered;

The seventh mountain had smiling vegetation, and the whole mountain was in a thriving

condition, and cattle and birds of every kind fed on that mountain; and the more the cattle and the birds fed, so much the more did the herbage of that mountain flourish.

The eighth mountain was full of springs, and every kind of creature of the Lord drank of the springs on that mountain.

The ninth mountain had no water at all, and was entirely desert; and it had in it wild beasts and deadly reptiles, which destroy mankind.

The tenth mountain had very large trees and was umbrageous throughout, and beneath the shade lay sheep resting and feeding.

The eleventh mountain was thickly wooded all over, and the trees thereon were very productive, decked with various kinds of fruits, so that one seeing them would desire to eat of their fruits.

The twelfth mountain was altogether white, and its aspect was cheerful; and the mountain was most beautiful in itself.

2. In the middle of the plain he showed me a great white rock, rising up from the plain. The rock was loftier than the mountains, being four-square, so that it could contain the whole world. Now this rock was ancient, and had a gate hewn out of it; but the gate seemed to me to have been hewed out quite recently. The gate glistened beyond the brightness of the sun, so that I marvelled at the brightness of the gate.

Around the gate stood twelve virgins. The four that stood at the corners seemed to me to be more glorious [than the rest]; but the others likewise were glorious. [The four] stood at the four quarters of the gate, and virgins stood in pairs between them.. They were clothed in linen tunics and girded about in seemly fashion, having their right shoulders free, as if they intended to carry some burden. Thus were they prepared, for they were very cheerful and eager.

After I had seen these things, I marvelled in myself at the greatness and the glory of what I was seeing. Again I was perplexed concerning the virgins, that delicate as they were they stood up like men, as if they intended to carry the whole heaven.

3. I saw six men come, tall and glorious and alike in appearance. They summoned a multitude of men. The others also which came were tall men and handsome and powerful. The six men ordered them to build a tower above the gate. There arose a great noise from those men who had come to build the tower, as they ran this way and that round the gate. For the virgins standing round the gate told the men to hasten to build the tower. Now the virgins had spread out their hands, as if they would take something from the men.

The six men ordered stones to come up from a certain deep place, and to go to the building of the tower. There went up ten stones square and polished, not hewn from a quarry. The six men called to the virgins, and ordered them to carry all the stones which should go to the building of the tower, and to pass through the gate and to hand them to the men who were about to build the tower. The virgins laid the first ten stones which rose out of the deep on each other, and they carried them together, stone by stone.

4. Just as they stood together around the gate, in that order they carried them. Those who seemed to be strong enough stooped under the corners of the stone, while the others stooped at the sides of the stone. So they carried all the stones. They carried them right through the gate, as they were ordered, and handed them to the men for the tower; and these took the stones and built.

Now the building of the tower was on the great rock and above the gate. Those ten stones then were joined together, and they covered the whole rock. Those formed a foundation for the building of the tower. The rock and the gate supported the whole tower.

After the ten stones, another twenty-five stones came up from the deep, and these were fitted into the building of the tower, being carried by the virgins, like the former.

After these thirty-five stones came up. These likewise were fitted into the tower. After these came up other forty stones, and these all were put into the building of the tower.

So four rows were made in the foundations of the tower. [The stones] ceased coming up from the deep, and the builders likewise ceased for a little.

Again the six men ordered the multitude of the people to bring in stones from the mountains for the building of the tower. They were brought in accordingly from all the mountains, of various

colours, shaped by the men, and were handed to the virgins; and the virgins carried them right through the gate, and handed them in for the building of the tower.

When the various stones were placed in the building, they became all alike and white, and they lost their various colours. But some stones were handed in by the men for the building, and these did not become bright; but remained just as they were found; for they were not handed in by the virgins, nor had they been carried in through the gate. These stones, then, were unsightly in the building of the tower. Then the six men, seeing the stones that were unsightly in the building, ordered them to be removed and carried below into their own place from which they were brought.

Then they said to the men who were bringing the stones in; "Abstain for your parts altogether from handing in stones for the building; but place them by the tower, so that the virgins may carry them through the gate, and hand them in for the building. For if," they said, "they are not carried in through the gate by the hands of these virgins, they cannot change their colours. Therefore don't labour in vain."

5. The building was finished for the day, yet the tower wasn't finally completed, because it was to be carried up still higher. There was a cessation in the building. The six men ordered the builders to retire for a short time all of them, and to rest; but the virgins they ordered not to retire from the tower. I thought the virgins were left to guard the tower.

After all had retired and rested, I said to the shepherd; "how is it, Sir," I said, "that the building of the tower was not completed?"

"The tower," he said, "cannot yet be finally completed, until its master come and test this building, so that if any stones are found crumbling, he may change them; for the tower is being built according to His will."

"I would like to know, Sir," I said, "what is this building of this tower, and concerning the rock and gate, and the mountains, and the virgins, and the stones that came up from the deep, and were not shaped, but went just as they were into the building; and why ten stones were first placed in the foundations, then twenty five, then thirty-five, then forty, and concerning the stones which had gone to the building and were removed again and put away in their own place -- concerning all these things set my soul at rest, Sir, and explain them to me."

"After a few days we shall come here, and you will see the sequel that overtakes this tower and will understand all the parables accurately."

After a few days we came to the place where we had sat, and he said to me, "Let us go to the tower; for the owner of the tower is coming to inspect it."

We came to the tower, and there was no one at all by it, save the virgins alone. The shepherd asked the virgins whether the master of the tower had arrived. They said that he would be there directly to inspect the building.

6. After a little while, I looked, and saw an array of many men coming, and in the midst a man of such lofty stature that he over topped the tower. The six men who superintended the building walked with him on the right hand and on the left, and all those who worked at the building were with him, and many other glorious attendants around him. The virgins who watched the tower ran up and kissed him, and they began to walk by his side around the tower.

That man inspected the building so carefully, that he felt each single stone; and he held a rod in his hand and struck each single stone that was built in. When he smote, some of the stones became black as soot, others mildewed, others cracked, others broke off short, others became neither white nor black, others rough and not fitting in with the other stones which were found unsound for the building. So he ordered all these to be removed from the tower, and to be placed by the side of the tower, and other stones to be brought and put into their place.

The builders asked him from what mountain he desired stones to be brought and put into their place. He would not have them brought from the mountains, but ordered them to be brought from a certain plain that was nearby. The plain was dug, and stones were found there bright and square, but some of them too were round. All the stones which there were anywhere in that plain were brought every one of them, and were carried through the gate by the virgins. The square stones were hewed, and set in the place of those which had been removed; but the round ones were not placed in the

building, because they were too hard to be shaped, and to work on them was slow. So they were placed by the side of the tower, as though they were intended to be shaped and placed in the building; for they were very bright.

7. So then, having accomplished these things, the glorious man who was lord of the whole tower called the shepherd to him, and delivered to him all the stones which lay by the side of the tower, which were cast out from the building, and said to him; "Clean these stones carefully, and set them in the building of the tower, these, I mean, which can fit with the rest; but those which will not fit, throw far away from the tower." Having given these orders to the shepherd, he departed from the tower with all those with whom he had come. The virgins stood round the tower watching it.

I said to the shepherd, "How can these stones go again to the building of the tower, seeing that they have been disapproved?"

He answered, "See these stones?"

"I see them, Sir," I said.

"I myself," he said, "will shape the greater part of these stones and put them into the building, and they shall fit in with the remaining stones."

"How, Sir," I said, "can they, when they are chiselled, fill the same space?"

He said to me in answer, "As many as shall be found small, shall be put into the middle of the building; but as many as are larger, shall be placed nearer the outside, and they will bind them together."

With these words he said to me, "Let us go away, and after two days let us come and clean these stones, and put them into the building; for all things round the tower must be made clean, lest haply the master comes suddenly and finds the circuit of the tower dirty, and become wroth, and so these stones shall not go to the building of the tower, and I shall appear to be careless in my master's sight."

After two days we came to the tower, and he said to me; "Let us inspect all the stones, and see those which can go to the building."

I said to him, "Sir, let us inspect them."

8. So commencing first we began to inspect the BLACK stones; and just as they were when set aside from the building, such also they were found. The shepherd ordered them to be removed from the tower and to be put on one side.

Then he inspected those that were MILDEWED, and he took and shaped many of them, and ordered the virgins to take them up and put them into the building. The virgins took them up and placed them in the building of the tower in a middle position. But therest he ordered to be placed with the black ones; for these also were found black.

Then he began to inspect those that had the CRACKS; and of these he shaped many, and he ordered them to be carried away by the hands of the virgins for the building. They were placed towards the outside, because they were found to be sounder. But the rest could not be shaped owing to the number of the cracks. For this reason therefore they were cast aside from the building of the tower.

Then he proceeded to inspect the STUNTED ones, and many among them were found black, and some had contracted great cracks; and he ordered these also to be placed with those that had been cast aside. But those of them which remained he cleaned and shaped, and ordered to be placed in the building. So the virgins took them up, and fitted them into the middle of the building of the tower; for they were somewhat weak.

Then he began to inspect those that were HALF WHITE AND HALF BLACK, and many of them were now found black; and he order these also to be taken up with those that had been cast aside. But all the rest were found white, and were taken up by the virgins; for being white they were fitted by the virgins themselves into the building. But they were placed towards the outside, because they were found sound, so that they could hold together those that were placed in the middle; for not a single one of them was too short.

Then he began to inspect the HARD AND ROUGH; and a few of them were cast away, because they could not be shaped; for they were found very hard. But the rest of them were shaped and

taken up by the virgins and fitted into the middle of the building of the tower; for they were somewhat weak.

Then he proceeded to inspect those that had the SPOTS, and of these some few had turned black and were cast away among the rest; but the remainder were found bright and sound, and these were fitted by the virgins into the building; but they were placed towards the outside, owing to their strength.

9. Then he came to inspect the WHITE AND ROUND stones, and he said to me; "What shall we do with these stones?"

"How do I know, Sir?" I said.

He said to me, "Don't you Perceive anything concerning then?"

"I, Sir," I said, "do not possess this art, neither am I a mason, nor can I understand."

"Don't you see," he said, "that they are very round; and if I wish to make them square, very much must be chiselled off from them? Yet some of them must of necessity be placed into the building."

"If then, Sir," I said, "it must needs be so, why distress yourself, and why not choose out for the building those you will, and fit them into it?"

He chose out from them the large and the bright ones, and shaped them; and the virgins took them up, and fitted them into the outer parts of the building. But the rest, which remained over, were taken up, and put aside into the plain whence they were brought; they were not however cast away, "Because," he said, "there remains still a little of the tower to be built. The master of the tower is exceeding anxious that these stones be fitted into the building, for they are very bright."

Twelve women were called, most beautiful in form, clad in black, girded about and having the shoulders bare, with their hair hanging loose. These women, I thought had a savage look. The shepherd ordered them to take up the stones which had been cast away from the building, and to carry them off to the same mountains from which they had been brought. So they took them up joyfully, and carried away all the stones and put them in the place from which they had been taken.

After all the stones had been taken up, and not a single stone still lay round the tower, the shepherd said to me; "Let us go round the tower, and see that there is no defect in it."

I proceeded to go round it with him. When the shepherd saw that the tower was very comely in the building, he was exceedingly glad; for the tower was so well built, that when I saw it I coveted the building of it. The stone-work appeared as if hewn out of the rock; for it seemed to me to be all a single stone.

10. I, as I walked with him, was glad to see so brave a sight. The shepherd said to me; "Go and bring plaster and fine clay, so I may fill up the shapes of the stones that have been taken up and put into the building; for all the circuit of the tower must be made smooth."

I did as he bade, and brought them to him.

"Assist me," he said, "and the work will speedily be accomplished."

So he filled in the shapes of the stones which had gone to the building, and ordered the circuit of the tower to be swept and made clean. The virgins took brooms and swept, and they removed all the rubbish from the tower, and sprinkled water, and the sight of the tower was made cheerful and very seemly.

The shepherd said to me, "All," he said, "has now been cleaned. If the Lord comes to inspect the tower, he has nothing for which to blame us."

Saying this, he desired to go away. But I caught hold of his wallet, and began to adjure him by the Lord that he would explain to me what he had showed me.

He said to me; "I am busy for a little while, and then I will explain everything to you. Wait for me here till I come."

I said to him; "Sir, when I am here alone what shall I do?"

"You are not alone," he said; "for these virgins are here with you."

"Commend me then to them," I said.

The shepherd calls them to him and said to them; "I commend this man to you till I come," and he departed.

So I was alone with the virgins; and they were most cheerful, and kindly disposed to me,

especially the four of them who were the more glorious in appearance.

11. The virgins said to me; "Today the shepherd won't come here."

"What shall I do then?" I said.

"Wait for him," they said, "till evening; and if he comes, he will speak with you; but if he doesn't come, you must stay here with us till he comes."

I said to them; "I will await him till evening, and if he doesn't come, I will depart home and return early in the morning."

But they answered me, "You were entrusted to us; you can't depart from us."

"Where then," I said, "shall I remain?"

"You must pass the night with us," they said, "as a brother, not as a husband; for you are our brother, and henceforward we will dwell with you; for we love you dearly."

But I was ashamed to abide with them. The one who seemed to be the chief of them began to kiss and to embrace me; and the others seeing her embrace me, they too began to kiss me; and to lead me round the tower, and to sport with me. I had become as it were a younger man, and I also began to sport with them. Some of them began to dance, others to skip, others to sing. But I kept silence and walked with them round the tower, and was glad with them.

But when evening came I wished to go away home; but they would not let me go, but detained me. I spent the night with them, and slept by the side of the tower. The virgins spread their linen tunics on the ground, and made me lie down in the midst of them, and they did nothing else but pray; and I prayed with them without ceasing and not less than they. The virgins rejoiced that I so prayed. I stayed there with the virgins until the second hour of the morning.

Then came the shepherd, and said to the virgins; "Have you done him any injury?"

"Ask him," they said.

I said to him, "Sir, I was rejoiced to stay with them."

"On what did you dine?" he said.

"I dined, Sir," I said, "on the words of the Lord the whole night through."

"Did they treat you well?" he said.

"Yes, Sir," I said.

"Now," he said, "what would you hear first?"

"In the order as you showed to me, Sir, from the beginning," I said; "I request you, Sir, to explain to me exactly in the order that I shall enquire of you."

"According as you desire," he said, "so will I interpret to you, and I will conceal nothing whatever from you."

12. "First of all, Sir," I said, "explain this to me. The rock and the gate, what is it?"

"This rock," he said, "and gate is the Son of God."

"How, Sir," I said, "is the rock ancient, but the gate recent?"

"Listen," he said, "and understand. The Son of God is older than all His creation, so that He became the Father's adviser in His creation. Therefore also He is ancient."

"The gate, then, why is it recent, Sir?" I said.

"Because," he said, "He was made manifest in the last days of the consummation; therefore the gate was made recent, so they who are to be saved may enter through it into the kingdom of God."

"Did you see," he said, "the stones which came through the gate have gone to the building of the tower, but those that didn't come through it were cast away again to their own place?"

"I saw, Sir," I said.

"Thus," he said, "no one shall enter into the kingdom of God except he receives the name of His Son. For if you wish to enter into any city, and that city is walled all around and has one gate only, can you enter into that city except through the gate?"

"Why, how, Sir," I said, "is it possible otherwise?"

"If then you can't enter into the city except through the gate itself, even so," he said, "a man cannot enter into the kingdom of God except by the name of His Son who is beloved by Him."

"Did you see," he said, "the multitude that is building the tower?"

"I saw it, Sir," I said.

"They," he said, "are all glorious angels. With these then the Lord is walled around. But the gate is the Son of God; there is one entrance only to the Lord. No one then shall enter in to Him otherwise than through His Son.

"Did you see," he said, "the six men, and the glorious and mighty man in the midst of them, who walked about the tower and rejected the stones from the building?"

"I saw him, Sir," I said.

"The glorious man," he said, "is the Son of God, and those six are the glorious angels who guard Him on the right hand and on the left. Of these Glorious angels not one shall enter in to God without Him; whoever shall not receive His name, shall not enter into the kingdom of God."

13. "But the tower," I said, "what is it?"

"The tower," he said, "why, this is the Church."

"These virgins, who are they?"

"They," he said, "are holy spirits; and no man can otherwise be found in the kingdom of God, unless these shall clothe him with their garment; for if you receive only the name, but don't receive the garment from them, you profit nothing. For these virgins are powers of the Son of God. If therefore you bear the Name, and don't bear His power, you will bear His Name to no effect.

"These stones," he said, "which you saw cast away, these bore the Name, but didn't clothed themselves with the raiment of the virgins."

"Of what sort, Sir," I said, "is their raiment?"

"The names themselves," he said, "are their raiment. Whoever bears the Name of the Son of God, ought to bear the names of these also; for even the Son Himself bears the names of these virgins. As many stones as you saw enter into the building of the tower, being given by their hands and waiting for the building, they have been clothed in the power of these virgins. For this cause you see the tower made a single stone with the rock. So also those who have believed in the Lord through His Son and clothe themselves in these spirits, shall become one spirit and one body, and their garments all of one colour. Such persons as bear the names of the virgins have their dwelling in the tower."

"The stones then, Sir," I said, "which are cast aside, why were they cast aside? For they passed through the gate and were placed in the building of the tower by the hands of the virgins."

"These all," he said, "received the name of the Son of God, and likewise received the power of these virgins. When they received these spirits, they were strengthened, and were with the servants of God, and had one spirit and one body and one garment. They had the same mend, and did righteousness. After a certain time they were persuaded by the women whom you saw clad in black raiment with their shoulders bare and their hair loose, and beautiful in form. When they saw them they desired them, and clothed themselves with their power; but they stripped off from themselves the power of the virgins. They then were cast away from the house of God, and delivered to these [women]. But those who were not deceived by the beauty of these women remained in the house of God. So you have the interpretation of those who were cast aside."

14. "What then, Sir," I said, "if these men, being such as they are, should repent and put away their desire for these women, and return to the virgins, and walk in their power and in their works? Shall they not enter into the house of God?"

"They shall enter," he said, "if they put away the works of these women, and take again the power of the virgins, and walk in their works. This is the reason why there was also a cessation in the building, so that, if these don't repent, then others will go, and these shall be cast away finally."

For all these things I gave thanks to the Lord, because He had compassion on all who called on His name, and sent the angel of repentance to us who had sinned against Him, and refreshed our spirit, and, when we were already ruined and had no hope of life, restored our life.

"Now, Sir," I said, "show me why the tower is not built on the ground, but on the rock and on the gate."

"Listen," he said.

"The name of the Son of God is great and incomprehensible, and sustains the whole world. If then all creation is sustained by the Son of God, what do you think of those who are called by Him, and bear the name of the Son of God, and walk according to His commandments? Don't you see

then what kind of men He sustains? -- Those who bear His name with their whole heart. He Himself then has become their foundation, and He sustains them gladly, because they are not ashamed to bear His name."

15. "Declare to me, Sir," I said, "the names of the virgins, and of the women who are clothed in the black garments."

"Hear," he said, "the names of the more powerful virgins, those who are stationed at the corners. The first is FAITH, the second, CONTINENCE, and the third, POWER, and the fourth, LONGSUFFERING. But the others stationed between them have these names --SIMPLICITY, GUILLESSNESS, PURITY, CHEERFULNESS, TRUTH, UNDERSTANDING, CONCORD, LOVE. He who bears these names and the name of the Son of God shall be able to enter into the kingdom of God.

"Hear," he said, "likewise the names of the women who wear the black garments. Of these also four are more powerful than the rest; the first is UNBELIEF; the second, INTEMPERANCE; the third, DISOBEDIENCE; the fourth, DECEIT; and their followers are called, SADNESS, WICKEDNESS, WANTONNESS, IRASCIBILITY, FALSEHOOD, FOLLY, SLANDER, HATRED. The servant of God who bears these names shall see the kingdom of God, but shall not enter into it."

"But the stones, Sir," I said, "that came from the deep, and were fitted into the building, who are they?"

"The first," he said, "that is, the TEN, that were placed in the foundations, are the first generation;

"The TWENTY-FIVE are the second generation of righteous men;

"The THIRTY-FIVE are God's prophets and His ministers;

"The FORTY are apostles and teachers of the preaching of the Son of God."

"Why then, Sir," I said, "did the virgins give in these stones also for the building of the tower and carry them through the gate?"

"Because these first," he said, "bore these spirits, and they never separated from one another, neither the spirits from the men nor the men from the spirits, but the spirits abode with them till they fell asleep. If they had not had these spirits withthem, they would not have been found useful for the building of this tower."

16. "Why, Sir," I said, "did the stones come up from the deep, and why were they placed into the building, though they bore these spirits?"

"It was necessary for them," he said, "to rise up through water, so they might be made alive; for otherwise they could not enter into the kingdom of God, except they had put aside the deadness of their former life. So these likewise who had fallen asleep received the seal of the Son of God and entered into the kingdom of God. For before a man has borne the name of the Son of God, he is dead; but when he has received the seal, he lays aside his deadness, and resumes life. The seal then is the water: so they go down into the water dead, and they come up alive. Thus to them also this seal was preached, and they availed themselves of it so they might enter into the kingdom of God."

"Why, Sir," I said, "did the forty stones also come up with them from the deep, though they had already received the seal?"

"Because," he said, "these, the apostles and the teachers who preached the name of the Son of God, after they had fallen asleep in the power and faith of the Son of God, preached also to those who had fallen asleep before them, and themselves gave to them the seal of the preaching. Therefore they went down with them into the water, and come up again. But these went down alive and again came up alive; whereas the others who had fallen asleep before them went down dead and came up alive. So by their means they were quickened into life, and came to the full knowledge of the name of the Son of God. For this cause also they came up with them, and were fitted with them into the building of the tower and were built with them, without being shaped; for they fell asleep in righteousness and in great purity. Only they didn't have this seal. You have then the interpretation of these things also."

"I have, Sir," I said.

17. "Now then, Sir, explain to me concerning the mountains. Why are their forms so diverse from one another?"

"Listen," he said. "These twelve mountains are twelve tribes that inhabit the whole world. To these [tribes] then the Son of God was preached by the Apostles."

"Explain to me, Sir, why they are various -- these mountains -- and each has a different appearance."

"Listen," he said. "These twelve tribes which inhabit the whole world are twelve nations; and they are various in understanding and in mind. As various, then, as you saw these mountains to be, such also are the varieties in the mind of these nations, and such their understanding. I will show to you the conduct of each"

"First, Sir," I said, "show me this, why the mountains being so various, yet, when the stones were set into the building, became bright and of one colour, just like the stones that came up from the deep."

"Because," he said, "all the nations that dwell under heaven, when they heard and believed, were called by the one name of the Son of God. So having received the seal, they had one understanding and one mind, and one faith became theirs and one love, and they bore the spirits of the virgins along with the Name; therefore the building of the tower became of one colour, even bright as the sun. But after they entered in together, and became one body, some of them defiled themselves, and were cast out from the society of the righteous, and became again the same as they were before, or rather even worse."

18. "How, Sir," I said, "did they become worse, after they had fully known God?"

"He who doesn't know God," he said, "and commits wickedness, has a certain punishment for his wickedness; but the one who knows God fully ought no longer to commit wickedness, but to do good. If then the one who ought to do good commits wickedness, does he not seem to do greater wickedness than the man who doesn't know God? therefore those who have not known God, and commit wickedness, are condemned to death; but those who have known God and seen His mighty works, and yet commit wickedness, shall receive a double punishment, and shall die eternally.

"In this way therefore shall the Church of God be purified. As you saw the stones removed from the tower and delivered over to the evil spirits, they too shall be cast out; and there shall be one body of those who are purified, just as the tower, after it had been purified, became, as it were, made of one stone. Thus shall it be with the Church of God also, after she has been purified, and the wicked and hypocrites and blasphemers and double-minded and those who commit various kinds of wickedness have been cast out. When these have been cast out, the Church of God shall be one body, one understanding, one mind, one faith, one love. Then the Son of God shall rejoice and be glad in them, because He has received His people back pure."

"Great and glorious, Sir," I said, "are all these things. Once more, Sir, show me the force and the doings of each one of the mountains, so that every soul that trusts in the Lord, when it hears, may glorify His great and marvellous and glorious Name."

"Listen," he said, "to the variety of the mountains and of the twelve nations.

19. "From the FIRST mountain, which was BLACK, those who have believed are such as these; rebels and blasphemers against the Lord, and betrayers of the servants of God. For these there is no repentance, but there is death. For this cause also they are black; for their race is lawless.

"From the SECOND mountain, the BARE one, those who believed are such as these; hypocrites and teachers of wickedness. These then are like the former in not having the fruit of righteousness. For, even as their mountain is unfruitful, so likewise such men as these have a name indeed, but they are void of the faith, and there is no fruit of truth in them. For these then repentance is offered, if they repent quickly; but if they delay, they will have their death with the former."

"Why, Sir," I said, "is repentance possible for them, but not for the former? For their doings are almost the same."

"On this account," he said, "is repentance offered for them, because they didn't blaspheme their Lord, nor became betrayers of the servants of God; yet from the desire of gain they played the hypocrite, and taught each other after the desires of sinful men. But they shall pay a certain penalty;

yet repentance is ordained for them, because they are not become blasphemers or betrayers.

20. "From the THIRD mountain, which had THORNS AND BRIARS, those who believed are such as these; some of them are wealthy and others are entangled in many business affairs. The briars are the wealthy, and the thorns are those who are mixed up in various business affairs. These then, who are mixed up in many and various business affairs, don't cleave to the servants of God, but go astray, being choked by their affairs, but the wealthy unwillingly cleave to the servants of God, fearing lest they may be asked for something by them. Such men therefore shall hardly enter into the kingdom of God. For as it is difficult to walk on briars with bare feet, so also it is difficult for such men to enter the kingdom of God. But for all these repentance is possible, but it must be speedy, so that in respect to what they omitted to do in the former times, they may now revert to [past] days, and do some good. If then they shall repent and do some good, they shall live to God; but if they continue in their doings, they shall be delivered over to those women, which shall put them to death.

21. "From the FOURTH mountain, which had MUCH VEGETATION, the upper part of the grass GREEN AND the part towards the roots WITHERED, and some of it dried up by the sun, those who believe are such as these; the double-minded, and those who have the Lord on their lips, but don't have Him in their heart. Therefore their foundations are dry and without power, and their words only live, but their works are dead. Such men are neither alive nor dead. They are, therefore, like to the double-minded; for the double-minded are neither green nor withered; for they are neither alive nor dead. For as the Grass is withered up when it saw the sun, so also the double-minded, when they hear of tribulation, through their cowardice worship idols and are ashamed of the name of their Lord. Such are neither alive nor dead. Yet those also, if they repent quickly, shall be able to live; but if they don't repent, they are delivered over already to the women who deprive them of their life.

22. "From the FIFTH mountain, which had GREEN GRASS AND WAS RUGGED, those who believed are such as these; they are faithful, but slow to learn and stubborn and self-pleasers, desiring to know all things, and yet they know nothing at all. By reason of this their stubbornness, understanding stood aloof from them, and a foolish senselessness entered into them; and they praised themselves as having understanding, and they desire to be self-appointed teachers, senseless though they are. Owing then to this pride of heart many, while they exalted themselves, have been made empty; for stubbornness and vain confidence is a mighty demon. Of these then many were cast away, but some repented and believed, and submitted themselves to those who had understanding, having realised their own senselessness. Yes, and to the rest who belong to this class, repentance is offered; for they did not become wicked, but rather foolish and without understanding. If these then shall repent, they shall live to God; but if they don't repent, they shall have their abode with the women who work evil against them.

23. "Those who believed from the SIXTH mountain, which had GREAT AND SMALL CLEFTS, and in the clefts herbage withered, are such as these; those who have the small clefts, these are those who have aught against one another, and from their backbiting they are withered in the faith; but many of these repented. Yes, and the rest shall repent, when they hear my commandments; for their backbiting are but small, and they shall quickly repent. But those who have great clefts, these are persistent in their backbiting and bear grudges, nursing wrath against one another. These then were thrown right away from the tower and rejected from its building. Such persons therefore shall live, with difficulty.

"If God and our Lord, Who rules over all things and has the authority over all His creation, bears no grudge against those who confess their sins, but is propitiated, does man, who is mortal and full of sins, bear a grudge against man, as though he were able to destroy or save him? I say to you -- I, the angel of repentance -- to as many as hold this heresy: put it away from you and repent, and the Lord shall heal your former sins, if you shall purify yourselves from this demon; but if not, you shall be delivered to him to be put to death.

24. "From the SEVENTH mountain, on which was GREEN AND SMILING HERBAGE, and the whole mountain thriving, and cattle of every kind and the fowls of heaven were feeding on the

herbage on that mountain, and the green herbage, on which they fed, only grew the more luxuriant, those who believed are such as these; they were ever simple and guileless and blessed, having nothing against one another, but rejoicing always in the servants of God, and clothed in the Holy Spirit of these virgins, and having compassion always on every man, and out of their labours they supplied every man's need without reproach and without misgiving. The Lord then seeing their simplicity and entire childliness made them abound in the labours of their hands, and bestowed favour on them in all their doings. But I say to you who are such -- I, the angel of repentance -- remain to the end such as you are, and your seed shall never be blotted out. For the Lord has put you to the proof, and enrolled you among our number, and your whole seed shall dwell with the Son of God; for of His Spirit you received.

25. "From the EIGHTH mountain, where there were the MANY SPRINGS, and all the creatures of the Lord drank of the springs, those who believed are such as these; apostles and teachers, who preached to the whole world, and who taught the word of the Lord in soberness and purity, and kept back no part at all for evil desire, but walked always in righteousness and truth, even as also they received the Holy Spirit. Such therefore shall have their entrance with the angels.

26. "From the NINTH mountain, which was DESERT, which had the reptiles and wild beasts in it which destroy mankind, those who believed are such as these; those who have the spots are deacons who exercised their office ill, and plundered the livelihood of widows, and orphans, and made gain for themselves from the ministrations which they had received to perform. If they abide in the same evil desire, they are dead and there is no hope of life for them; but if they turn again and fulfil their ministries in purity, it shall be possible for them to live. But those who are mildewed, these are those who denied and didn't turned again to their Lord, but having become barren and desert, because they don't cleave to the servants of God but remain alone, they destroy their own souls. For as a vine left alone in a hedge, if it meet with neglect, is destroyed and wasted by the weeds, and in time becomes wild and is no longer useful to its owner, so also men of this kind having given themselves up in despair and become useless to their Lord, by growing wild. To these then repentance comes, unless they are found to have denied from the heart; but if a man is found to have denied from the heart, I don't know whether it is possible for him to live.

If a man therefore will repent, let him do so speedily before the tower is completed; but if not, he shall be destroyed by the women and put to death. The stunted, these are the treacherous and backbiters; and the wild beast which you saw on the mountain are these. For as wild beasts with their venom poison and kill a man, so also do the words of such men poison and kill a man. These then are broken off short from their faith through the conduct which they have in themselves; but some of them repented and were saved; and the rest who are of this kind can be saved, if they repent; but if they don't repent, they shall meet their death from those whose power they are possessed.

27. "From the TENTH mountain, where were TREES SHELTERING CERTAIN SHEEP, those who believed are such as these; bishops, hospitable persons, who gladly received into their houses at all times the servants of God without hypocrisy. These bishops at all times without ceasing sheltered the needy and the widows in their ministry and conducted themselves in purity at all times. These all shall be sheltered by the Lord for ever. Those, therefore, who have done these things are glorious in the sight of God, and their place is even now with the angels, if they shall continue to the end serving the Lord.

28. "From the ELEVENTH mountain, where there were TREES FULL OF VARIOUS KINDS OF FRUITS, those who believed are such as these; those who suffered for the Name of the Son of God, suffering readily with their whole heart, and yielding up their lives."

"Why then, Sir," I said, "have all the trees fruits, but some of their fruits are more beautiful than others?"

"Listen," he said; "all who have ever suffered for the Name's sake are glorious in the sight of God, and the sins of all these were taken away, because they suffered for the name of the Son of God. Now hear why their fruits are various, and some surpassing others.

"As many," he said, "as were tortured and didn't deny, when brought before the magistrates, but

suffered readily, these are the more glorious in the sight of the Lord; their fruit is that which surpasses. But as many as become cowards, and were lost in uncertainty, and considered in their hearts whether they should deny or confess, and yet suffered, their fruits are less, because this design entered into their heart; for this design is evil, that a servant should deny his own lord.

"See to it, therefore, you who entertain this idea, lest this design remain in your hearts, and you die to God. But you who suffer for the Name's sake ought to glorify God, because God deemed you worthy that you should bear this name, and that all your sins should be healed. Reckon yourselves blessed therefore; yes, rather think that you have done a great work, if any of you shall suffer for God's sake. The Lord bestows life on you, and you don't perceive it; for your sins weighed you down, and if you had not suffered for the Name of the Lord, you would have died to God by reason of your sins.

"These things I say to you who waver as touching denial and confession. Confess that you have the Lord, lest denying Him you be delivered into prison. If the Gentiles punish their slaves, if any one deny his lord, what do you think the Lord will do to you, He Who has the authority over all things? Away with these designs from your hearts, so that you may live forever to God.

29. "From the TWELFTH mountain, which was WHITE, those who believed are such as these; who are as very babes, into whose heart no guile enters, nor have they learnt what wickedness is, but they remained babes for ever. Such as these then dwell without doubt in the kingdom of God, because they didn't defile the commandments of God in anything whatsoever, but continued as babes all the days of their life in the same mind.

"As many of you therefore as shall so continue," he said, "and shall be as infants not having guile, shall be more glorious even than all those who have been mentioned before; for all infants are glorious in the sight of God, and stand first in His sight. Blessed then are you, as many as have put away wickedness from you, and have clothed yourselves in guilelessness: you shall live to God chiefly of all."

After he had finished the parables of the mountains, I said to him, "Sir, now explain to me concerning the stones that were taken from the plain and placed in the building in the room of the stones that were taken from the tower, and concerning the round[stones] which were placed in the building, and concerning those that were still round."

30. "Hear," he said, "likewise concerning all these things. The stones which were taken from the plain and placed in the building of the tower in the room of those who were rejected, are the roots of this white mountain. When those who believed from this mountain were all found guileless, the Lord of the tower ordered these from the roots of this mountain to be put into the building of the tower. For He knew that if these stones should go to the building of the tower, they would remain bright and not one of them would turn black. But if he had added [stones] from the other mountains, he would have been obliged to visit the tower again, and to purify it.

"Now all these have been found white, who have believed and who shall believe; for they are of the same kind. Blessed is this kind, for it is innocent!

"Likewise, hear now concerning those round bright stones. All these are from this white mountain. Now here why they have been found round. Their riches have darkened and obscured them a little from the truth, yet they never departed from God, nor did any evil word proceed from their mouth, but all equity and virtue which comes from the truth. When therefore the Lord perceived their mind, that they could favour the truth, and likewise remain good, He commanded their possessions to be cut from off them, yet not to be taken away altogether, so they might be able to do some good with what has been left to them, and might live to God, for they come from a good kind. So therefore they have been cut away a little, and placed in the building of this tower.

31. "The other [stones], which have remained round and have not been fitted into the building, because they have not yet received the seal, have been replaced in their own position, for they were found very round. This world and the vanities of their possessions must be cut from off them, and then they will fit into the kingdom of God. It is necessary that they should enter into the kingdom of God; because the Lord has blessed this innocent kind.

"Of this kind then not one shall perish. Yes, even though any of them being tempted by the most

wicked devil has committed any fault, he shall return speedily to his Lord. Blessed I pronounce you all to be -- I, the angel of repentance -- whoever of you are guileless as infants, because your part is good and honourable in the sight of God.

"Moreover I bid all of you, whoever has received this seal, keep guilelessness, and bear no grudge, and don't continue in your wickedness nor in the memory of the offences of bitterness; but become of one spirit, and heal these evil clefts and take them away from among you, so that the owner of the flocks may rejoice concerning them. For he will rejoice, if he finds all things whole.

"But if he find any part of the flock scattered, woe to the shepherds. For if the shepherds themselves shall have been found scattered, how will they answer for the flocks? Will they say they were harassed by the flock? No credence will be given them. For it is an incredible thing that a shepherd should be injured by his flock; and he will be punished the more because of his falsehood. I am the shepherd, and it behoves me most strongly to render an account for you.

32. "Amend yourselves therefore, while the tower is still in course of building. The Lord dwells in men who love peace; for to Him peace is dear; but from the contentious and those who are given up to wickedness He keeps afar off.

"Therefore, restore your spirit to Him whole as you received it. For suppose you have given to a fuller a new garment whole, and desire to receive it back again whole, but the fuller give it back to you torn, will you receive it thus? Will you not at once blaze out and attack him with reproaches, saying; 'The garment which I gave you whole; why have you rent it and made it useless? Look, because of the rent, which you have made in it, it's useless!' Will you not then say all this to a fuller even about a rent which he has made in your garment? If you are angered in the matter of your garment, and complain because you didn't receive it back whole, what do you think the Lord will do to you, He, Who gave you the spirit whole, and you have made it absolutely useless, so it cannot be of any use at all to its Lord? Its use began to be useless, when it was corrupted by you. Therefore, won't the Lord of this spirit punish you with death for this deed?"

"Certainly," I said, "all those whomever He shall find continuing to bear malice, He will punish."

"Don't trample," he said, "on His mercy, but rather glorify Him, because He is so long-suffering with your sins, and is not like to you. Practise repentance which is expedient for you.

33. "All the above, I, the shepherd, the angel of repentance, have declared and spoken to the servants of God. If you shall believe and hear my words, and walk in them, and amend your ways, you shall be able to live. But if you continue in wickedness and in bearing malice, no one of this kind shall live to God. All things which were to be spoken by me have [now] been spoken to you."

The shepherd said to me, "Have you asked me all your questions?"

I said, "Yes, Sir."

"Why then have you not enquired concerning the shape of the stones placed in the building, in that we filled up their shapes?"

I said, "I forgot, Sir."

"Listen now," he said, "concerning them. These are those who have heard my commandments now, and have practised repentance with their whole heart. So when the Lord saw that their repentance was good and pure, and that they could continue therein, he ordered their former sins to be blotted out. These shapes then were there former sins, and they have been chiselled away so they wouldn't appear."

Epilogue

1. After I had written out this book completely, the angel who had delivered me to the shepherd came to the house where I was, and sat on a couch, and the shepherd stood at his right hand. Then he called me, and spoke thus to me; "I delivered you," he said, "and your house to this shepherd, so you would be protected by him."

"True, Sir," I said.

"If therefore," he said, "you desire to be protected from all annoyance and all cruelty, and to have success in every good work and word, and all the power of righteousness, walk in his commandments, which I have given you, and you will be able to get the mastery over all

wickedness. If you keep his commandments, all evil desire and the sweetness of this world shall be subject to you; moreover success shall attend you in every good undertaking. Embrace his gravity and self-restraint, and tell all men that he is held in great honour and dignity with the Lord, and is a ruler of great authority, and powerful in his office. To him alone in the whole world has authority over repentance been assigned.

2. "I speak these things to you, so you may persevere. For he has given a good account of you to me. You therefore must speak these words to others, so they too who have practised or shall practise repentance may be of the same mind as you are; and he may give a good report of them to me, and I to the Lord."

"I too, Sir," I said, "declare to every man the mighty works of the Lord; for I hope that all who have sinned in the past, if they hear these things, will gladly repent and recover life."

"Continue," he said, "in this mastery, and complete it to the end. Whoever fulfils his commandments shall have life; yes such a man [shall have] great honour with the Lord. But those who don't keep his commandments, fly from their life, and oppose him, and don't follow his commandments, but deliver themselves over to death; and each one becomes guilty of his own blood. But I bid you to obey these commandments, and you will have a remedy for your sins.

3. "Moreover, I have sent these virgins to you, so they may dwell with you; for I have seen that they are friendly towards you. You have them therefore as helpers, so you may be the better able to keep his commandments; for it is impossible that these commandments be kept without the help of these virgins. I see too that they are glad to be with you. But I will charge them, that they not depart at all from your house. Only purify your house; for in a clean house they will dwell gladly. For they are clean and chaste and industrious, and all have favour in the sight of the Lord. If, therefore, they shall find your house pure, they will continue with you; but if the slightest pollution arise, they will depart from your house at once. For these virgins don't love pollution in any form."

I said to him, "I hope, Sir, that I shall please them, so they may gladly dwell in my house for ever; and just as he to whom you delivered me makes no complaint against me, so they likewise shall make no complaint."

He said to the shepherd, "I perceive," he said, "that he wishes to live as the servant of God, and that he will keep these commandments, and will place these virgins in a clean habitation."

With these words he again delivered me over to the shepherd, and called the virgins, and said to them; "Inasmuch as I see you are glad to dwell in this man's house, I commend to you him and his house, that you don't depart at all."

But they heard these words gladly.

4. He said then to me, "Perform like a man in this ministry; declare to every man the mighty works of the Lord, and you will have favour in this ministry. Whoever shall walk in these commandments, shall live and be happy in his life; but whoever shall neglect them, shall not live, and shall be unhappy in his life. Charge all men who are able to do right, that they not cease to practise good works; for it is useful for them.

"I say moreover that every man ought to be rescued from misfortune; for he who has need, and suffers misfortune in his daily life, is in great torment and want. Whoever therefore rescues [anyone] from a penury life of this kind, wins great joy for himself. For he who is harassed by misfortune of this sort is afflicted and tortured with equal torment as one who is in chains. For many men on account of calamities of this kind, because they can't bear them any longer, lay violent hands on themselves. He then who knows the calamity of a man of this kind and doesn't rescue him, commits great sin, and becomes guilty of the man's blood.

"Therefore do good works, whoever of you has received [benefits] from the Lord, lest, while you delay to do them, the building of the tower is completed. It is on your account that the work of the building has been interrupted. Unless then you hasten to do right, the tower will be completed, and you shut out."

When he had finished speaking with me, he rose from the couch and departed, taking with him the shepherd and the virgins. He said to me, however, that he would send the shepherd and the virgins back to my house again.

