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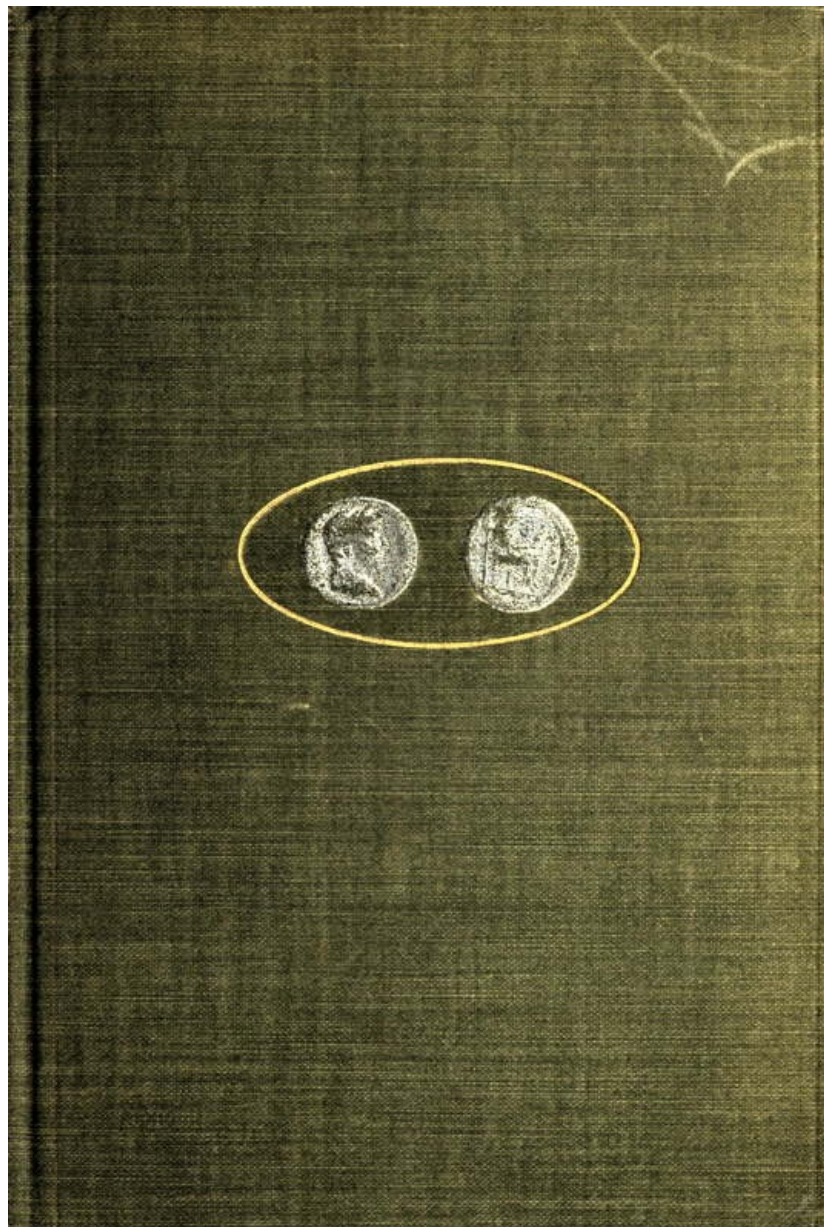
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AS OTHERS SAW HIM

A RETROSPECT

A. D. 54

"It cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem"

LUKE xiii. 33



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TO AGLAOPHONOS, PHYSICIAN OF THE GREEKS AT CORINTH, MESHULLAM BEN ZADOK, A SCRIBE OF THE JEWS AT ALEXANDRIA, GREETING:—

It was a joy and a surprise to me to hear news after many days from thee, my master and my friend. To thee I owe whatever I have of Greek wisdom; for when in the old days at the Holy City thou soughtest me for instruction in our Law, I learnt more from thee than I could impart to thee. Since I last wrote to thee, I have come to this great city, where many of my nation dwell, and

almost all the most learned of thy tongue are congregated. Truly, it would please me much, and mine only son and his wife, if thou couldst come and take up thy sojourn among us for a while.

Touching the man Saul of Tarsus, of whom thou writest, I know but little. He is well instructed in our Law, both written and oral, having received the latter from the chief master among those of the past generation, Gamaliel by name. Yet he is not of the disciples of Aaron that love peace; for when I last heard of him he was among the leaders of a riot in which a man was slain. And now I think thereon, I am almost certain that the slain man was of the followers of Jesus the Nazarene, and this Saul was

among the bitterest against them. And yet thou writest that the same Saul has spoken of the Nazarene that he was a god like Apollo, that had come down on earth for a while to live his life among men. Truly, men's minds are as the wind that bloweth hither and thither.

But as for that Jesus of Nazara, I can tell thee much, if not all. For I was at Jerusalem all the time he passed for a leader of men up to his shameful death. At first I admired him for his greatness of soul and goodness of life, but in the end I came to see that he was a danger to our nation, and, though unwillingly, I was of those who voted for his death in the Council of Twenty-Three. Yet I cannot tell thee all I know in the compass of a letter, so I have written it at large for thee, and it will be delivered unto thee even with this letter. And in my description of events I have been at pains to distinguish between what I saw myself and what I heard from others, following in this the example of Herodotus of Halicarnassus, who, if he spake rude Greek, wrote true history. And so farewell.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
I. THE MAN WITH THE SCOURGE	9
II. THE UPBRINGING	21
III. EARLIER TEACHING. SERMON IN THE SYNAGOGUE OF THE GALILÆANS	37
IV. THE TWO WAYS	55
V. THE WOMAN TAKEN IN ADULTERY. THE RICH YOUNG MAN	63
VI. THE TESTINGS IN THE TEMPLE	75
VII. THE SECOND SERMON	87
VIII. THE REBUKING OF JESUS	99
IX. JESUS IN THE TEMPLE	111
X. THE ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM	121
XI. THE CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE	133
XII. THE WOES	145
XIII. THE GREAT REFUSAL	155
XIV. THE MEETING OF THE HANANITES	167
XV. THE EXAMINATION BEFORE THE SANHEDRIM	181
XVI. CONDEMNATION AND EXECUTION	195
EPILOGUE	207

I. THE MAN WITH THE SCOURGE.

I was crossing one morning the Xystus Bridge on my way to the Temple, when I saw issuing from the nearest gate a herd of beasts of sacrifice. Fearing that something untoward had occurred, I hurried to the gate, and when I entered the Court of the Gentiles, I found all in confusion. The tables of the money-changers had been overturned, and the men were gathering their moneys

from the ground. And in the midst I saw one with a scourge in his hand. His face was full of wrath and scorn, his eyes blazed, and on his left temple stood out a vein all blue, throbbing with his passion. He was neither short nor tall, but of sturdy figure, and clad in rustic garb.

[pg 12] Now, as the money-changers were escaping from his wrath, one of them ran against a little child that was in the court, and it fell screaming. The fellow took no heed, but went on his course. But the man with the scourge went to the little child and raised it to its feet, and pressed it to his side; the hand that rested on the curly head was that of a workman, with broken nails, and yet the fingers twitched with the excitement of the man. But, looking to his face, I saw that a wonderful change had come over it. From rage, it had turned to pity and love; the eyes that had flashed scorn on the money-changers now looked down with tenderness on the little child. I remember thinking to myself, "This man cannot say the thing that is not; his face bewrayeth him."

[pg 13] Meanwhile the money-changers and those with them had collected together near the gate by which I had entered, and stood there whispering and muttering among themselves. All at once they turned towards the man as he was soothing the little child, and shouted out together, "*Mamzer! Mamzer!*" which in our tongue signifieth one born out of wedlock. Then the man looked up from the little child, his face once more full of rage, and the blue vein throbbing on his temple. He took a step towards the men, and then he stopped. His face changed to a look of pity, and the men themselves, in fear and shame, slunk away before his look through the gate and were gone.

Then he turned towards those that had for sale doves as sacrifices for the women and the poor. To these he spoke in a tone that was calm and yet full of authority, and then I noticed that his voice had the burr of our northern peasantry. He said unto them, "Take these things hence; make not my Father's house a house of merchandise." And these, too, went away through the gates, carrying with them the wicker cages full of doves. Ever since that time the doves have been for sale in Hanan's Bazaar on the Mount of Olives.

[pg 14] Now I must tell thee that at this time there had been much disputing between the Pharisees and the Sadducees as to the sale of beasts for sacrifice. The Pharisees held that each man might buy such beasts wherever he would; but the Sadducees, being mainly priests, or of priestly blood, would have it that the beasts of sacrifice could only be purchased from the salesmen duly authorized by the High Priest; for they said, "Who shall tell that the beasts are according to the Law, if they are bought from any chance person?" Yet many thought they only did this in order that they might share the profit from the sale of the animals. And, indeed, the great riches of the High Priests came mainly from this source. When, therefore, I saw the man with the scourge getting rid of these sacrificial animals from the courts of the Temple, my first thought was that he was of the sect of the Pharisees. Yet these are rarely found in the country parts, and the man bore no great marks of special piety; his phylacteries were not broader than my own; the fringes of his garment were not more conspicuous, nor did he seem as one of the fanatics who are so many in our land. He had done what he had done in all calmness, and with a certain air of authority. My wonder was aroused to think what manner of man this could be, who did the work of the Pharisees, and was not one himself.

[pg 15] While I thus thought, the man turned to a group of men clad in the same rustic garb, saying, "Be ye rather approved money-changers, holding fast the good and casting forth the false;"¹ and, after other words, he turned from them and went up the steps leading to the Women's Court.

Now thou knowest, Aglaophonos, that at the entrance of this court standeth an inscription which saith, "LET NONE OF ALIEN BIRTH PASS WITHIN THE TEMPLE CLOISTERS: HE THAT TRANSGRESSES IS GUILTY OF DEATH." As the man with the scourge would enter the Women's Court, the Roman sentry stopped him, and pointed to this inscription with his spear. He shook his head, saying in faulty Greek, "Jewish I am," and showed the soldier the fringes of his garment after the Jewish fashion. Then the sentry drew back, and the man passed through.

[pg 16] Thereupon I went up to the men to whom the man with the scourge had spoken, and greeted them with the greeting of peace.

"Peace unto thee, master," said one of them in the same northern accent I had noticed in their leader.

"Who is that man," I said, "that has just gone into the Temple cloister?"

"Jesus of Nazara, in Galilee."

"And whose son is he?" I asked.

The man looked at his companions ere he answered,—

"Of Joseph ben Eli the carpenter, and Miriam his wife."

"And what is his trade?" I continued.

"A wheelwright," he said; "the best wheels and yokes in all Capernaum are made by him."

"But is he of the country-folk,² or a pupil of the wise?"

"Nay, master, he knoweth the Law and the Prophets."

[pg 17] "Of what party is he? Boethusian he cannot be, nor Sadducee; but is he Pharisee or Zealot, Essene or Baptist?"

"He is of no party."

"But from whom hath he received the tradition of the elders? At whose feet has he sat? Whom calleth he master?"

"He hath been baptized by Jochanan his kinsman, but none calleth he master."

"If he have not the tradition, he cannot teach the Law, for his words will not be binding. Doth he sit in judgment or pronounce *Din*?"

"Nay, master, he but teacheth us to be good."

"Ah," said I, "he is but a homolist of the Hagada; he addeth naught to the *Halacha*. Then what is his motto?"³

"He saith, 'Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.'"

Then I took the man away from his companions, and out of hearing of the Roman sentry, and asked him in a low tone, "And who shall be the king thereof?"

But the man answered not, but said only, "Lo! he cometh."

[pg 18] And, indeed, at that moment Jesus came down by the steps he had ascended and beckoned to his companions. And as they went towards him I was surprised, and at the same time horrified, to see amongst them two persons whom I little thought to find in any public place in Jerusalem, still less in the courts of the Temple. One was a woman in the yellow veil of a *hetæra*; the other, a mere *Nathin* who had no name among men, but was called *Dog o' Dogs*. These two pressed close to Jesus; the woman rushed forward with a sob and raised the hem of his garment to her lips, while to the man he spoke some friendly words, smiling on him as they walked towards the entrance.

[pg 19] I was astonished. The man had seemed so careful of the purity of the Temple that he would not allow even the necessary arrangements for its service to be performed in its precincts, yet he allowed its courts to be defiled by the vilest of the vile. Perchance, I thought, he had prevailed upon them to perform the vows enjoined by the Law, and cleanse themselves of their sin. Or was it that he was ignorant of their characters, being but newly come from rural parts? He must, indeed, be different from other rabbis, who kept themselves apart from all transgressors against the Law till they had repented and done penance.

While I thus meditated, I saw the High Priest Hanan, whom ye Hellenes call Annas, enter into the court of the Gentiles with his guard. Thou rememberest the man, Aglaophonos—how his tyranny extended over all the city. He was still called High Priest, though Valerius Gratus, the Procurator, had deposed him years before, lest haply he might regain the regal power of the Maccabæans. Still, even after his deposition, he had sufficient power to get his sons or sons-in-law named High Priests. It was one of the latter, Joseph Caiaphas, who at that time held the office; yet the people still called Hanan High Priest, and he himself wore on high days the bells and pomegranates round his tunic as a sign of his dignity. Thou must remember his keen-cut face, his nose like an eagle's, his long white beard, bent neck, and sinewy hand. Was it thou or I that first called him "the Old Vulture"?

[pg 20] He had heard of the insult to his dignity by the removal, without his orders, of the money-changers and others to whom the people paid the fees from which he and his made such display in his grand dwelling on the Mount of Olives. "Where is he? where is he?" he cried, as he came bustling up, with neck extended, and looking more than ever like a bird of prey. He soon found that the man he sought had gone; but he had given his orders, and before I left the court, I saw the money-changers reënter and the cattle driven back. I had to attend a meeting of the Sanhedrim, for that year I had risen to the third and highest bench of disciples who sit under its members when they give judgment. Next year I was elected of the Seventy-One myself in the section of Israelites. It must, therefore, have been in the sixteenth year of Tiberius the Emperor, nearly five-and-twenty years ago, that I thus saw for the first time Jesus the Nazarene.

II. THE UPBRINGING.

[pg 23] Thou canst imagine the wonder and excitement in Jerusalem at this bold deed of the Nazarene. Not even the oracle of Delphi is regarded with so much reverence as our sacred fane, and none in our time had dared to interfere with its regulations, which have all the sacredness of our traditions. And of these none was regarded by the priestly guardians of the Temple as of greater weight for them than the right of sale of beasts of sacrifice. It is from this, as I have said, that the priestly order gain their wealth, and no more deadly blow could be struck at their power than to deprive them of this. Hence had the Pharisees protested against this right, but none had hitherto dared to carry out the protest in very deed. All the poor and all the pious would have been glad if they could buy their offerings to the Lord wheresoever they would.

[pg 24] But more than all, men of Jerusalem were amazed at the daring of the Galilæan stranger in opposing the High Priest Hanan. This man had been the tyrant of the Temple and of the city for the whole span of a generation of men, and no man had dared say him nay for all that time. Even the Romans, who had deposed him from his position as High Priest, had not dared to interfere with him otherwise. Yet had this rude countryman, who had never been seen, never been known to set foot in Jerusalem before, dared to strike at the root of his power and wealth. Thou canst not wonder that men were curious to know what manner of man he might be who had dared this great thing, and busy rumor ran through all the bazaars of Jerusalem, asking, Who is this Jesus of Nazara? All that I learnt of his kindred and early life I learnt at this time, and I here set it forth in order.

[pg 25] It was natural that I should first direct my inquiries as to his birth, for the insulting cry of the money-changers still rang in my ears. Thou knowest our pride of birth; I learnt from thee to abate it. Every man in Israel taketh his place in the nation according as he is a son of Aaron or of Levi, a simple Israelite, or a proselyte that fears the Lord; each man knoweth his own and his neighbor's genealogy. The greatest slur upon a man is to accuse him of "mixture," the greatest insult is to call him "bastard." Why had the money-changers cast this slur upon the Nazarene? Thou and I, Aglaophonos, who boast to be citizens of the Kosmos, would not think the worse of him if the taunt were true. Yet thou canst understand how great, even if he only thought it to be true, would be the influence of such a slur on this mans mind and on his career. If in after-days he showed himself so careless of the nation's hopes, may it not have been that he felt himself in some way outside the nation?

[pg 26] Now I found, upon inquiry among the Galilæans settled in Jerusalem, that some such scandal had arisen about his birth. There had even been talk that Joseph ben Eli would have put away his wife, but for the stern penalties which our Law inflicts upon the misdoer. Yet there may have been naught but suspicion in the matter, for the two lived together, and Miriam bore several children to Joseph after this Jesus. But between him and them there was never good will, and I have heard things told of this Jesus which seem to show some harshness in his treatment of them, and even of his mother. Once when he was told that his mother and brethren were without, and would see him, he as it were repudiated them, saying, "Who are my mother and my brothers? Whosoever doeth the will of God, the same is my brother and sister and mother." Again, when once his mother came to him and would speak to him, he said to her, "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" The man whom I had seen so tenderly thoughtful to a little child could not have spoken thus unless he had felt himself placed by some means outside the natural ties of men.

[pg 27] Of Jesus' upbringing I could learn little. When he was at the age of thirteen, when each Jewish male child becomes a Son of the Covenant (*Bar Mitzva*), and, as we think, takes his sins upon his own soul, his parents brought him to Jerusalem. On this occasion, as some still remember, he showed remarkable knowledge of the Law, when, as is customary, they read the portion of the Law set down for the Sabbath reading next after his birthday, and he was examined in its meaning by the learned men present. Yet he fulfilled not this promise of devotion to the Law as he grew in years. I cannot learn that he dusted himself with the "dust of the wise," as the sages have commanded.⁴ Not having sat at the feet of any of the holders of tradition, he could not pronounce decisions of the Law.

[pg 28] His father brought him up to his own trade, that of carpenter. With us manual toil is not despised, as among you Hellenes; there is a saying among us, "Whoso bringeth not his son up to a handicraft traineth him for a robber." Jesus was a good and capable worker, and devoted himself especially to the making of yokes and wheels at Capernaum, where he had settled, some five hours' journey from his native place. Here he would often read the *Haphtaroth*, or prophetic lessons, in the synagogue, and explain it after the manner of the Hagada.

Thus he would have passed his life, a wheelwright on week-days, a preacher on the Sabbath and festivals, but for a strange event that occurred in his own family. Among us Jews, none has more honor than the *Nabi*, the man who speaks the word of wisdom in the name of God. How know we that a man is a *Nabi*? Chiefly by his words, but mainly by his eyes, in which there shines the light of prophecy. Now, when Jesus was about thirty years old, three or four years before I first saw him, the light of prophecy came in the eyes of his cousin, Jochanan ben Zacharia Ha-Cohen. Thou

[pg 29]

knowest, Aglaophonos, that amongst us there is a sect of Essenoi, who answer in much to the Pythagoreans among the Hellenes. These Essenoi eat no flesh, they dwell not in the cities of men, they perform frequent lustrations, nor will they admit any into their community until they have been baptized of them; they care little for the Temple service, and in this above all distinguish themselves from either Pharisees or Sadducees. Their belief in the angels is strong, and they use magic for the healing of sickness.

[pg 30]

Now, this Jochanan, the cousin of Jesus, seems to have adopted in many things the views of these Essenoi: he separated himself from men, and ate no flesh, nor did he go up to the Temple on the three great festivals of the year; and above all, when men began to follow after him, he would admit none to communion with him till he had baptized them in running water, and for this he was called among the folk Jochanan the Baptizer. Yet he was not an Essene, for he joined not their communion, nor established any distinction of orders among the men who came out to him; he was more like unto the prophets of old, who taught as individuals new truths about life; and his great teaching was this: "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." And men went out to him, asking him in what they should repent so as to become worthy of the kingdom. Above all, those who were despised of the people because they did the work of the Romans, by being their tax-gatherers or their soldiers, feared the wrath to come in the new kingdom which he preached, and asked him in what they should alter their ways. But to them he was by no means hard, saying only to the tax-gatherers, "Act justly," and to the soldiers, "Do no violence." To the poor he was tender and merciful, but exhorted the rich to divide their possessions with the poor. In this way he drew unto him all who were despised of the people, and those who were poor and miserable. Thus he attracted the notice of the rulers, who feared that he was preparing to rebel against them; for they said, "Wherefore does this man attract to him the discontented and the soldiery?"

[pg 31]

Now, when the family of Jesus heard that their relative was gaining a name among men, they sent to Jesus, asking him to go with them unto his cousin; but he, as I have heard, at first refused, saying, "Wherein have I sinned, that I should be baptized of Jochanan?" Yet afterwards he consented unto this, and went out to be baptized of his cousin. And when he saw the power for good that Jochanan exercised, his spirit was exalted, and he felt that he too had within him the same power. Many strange things have I heard of what happened to this Jesus when he submitted to be baptized by his cousin. And as none but Jesus would have known his feelings on that occasion, these reports must have come from him. Among us it is the custom that each Jew should select from the Psalms some *stichos* which should serve as the motto of his life, and identify him when he appeareth before the Angel of Death. Now, it would appear that as Jesus was being baptized of Jochanan he heard the Daughter⁵ of the Voice of God say to him the *stichos* of the psalm, "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." Whether this was a protest of his soul against the slur cast upon his birth, what man shall say? But henceforth he spake of the fatherhood of God as if it had to him a deeper sense than to most of us Jews, though with us, as I have oft explained to thee, it is the central feeling of our faith.

[pg 32]

Jesus did not remain long out in the wilderness with his cousin; he, indeed, early recognized his superiority, though he was his master and his teacher. For at the first the teaching of Jesus differed but in little from the teaching of Jochanan. He summed up his whole aim in the words which I had heard his followers use in the Temple: "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand;" and this he must have learnt from his cousin. So, too, like Jochanan, he mingled with the tax-gatherers and the soldiery, and above all addressed himself to the poor, and, as I was to see, exhorted the rich to distribute their possessions. In all these things he was but the follower of his cousin Jochanan. It is no wonder, therefore, that when Jesus separated himself from Jochanan, and began to be a teacher of men, many left Jochanan and followed after Jesus; and until this Jochanan met with a violent end at the hands of the rulers, there was in some sort a rivalry if not between the men themselves, at least between the followers of Jochanan and of Jesus.

[pg 33]

But even from the first there was a difference in Jesus' manner of teaching, if not in the teaching itself. He, indeed, did not wait for men to come out to him in the wilderness, but returned to the towns and villages around the Sea of Galilee. Many of the fishermen left their work to follow him, and become, as he said, "fishers of men." He preached as before in the synagogues on the words of the prophets, but now he commenced to go forth to preach and teach among the people in their homes. Yet it was observed that he went not only among the rich and powerful, who are used in our country to receive all who come at meal-times, but most of all among the poor, and those despised of men for their ill life or their degraded occupations. Nor did he despise those who know not the Law nor keep its commands, but mixed freely with them, thereby incurring the wrath of those among us, and there are many, who are eager for the credit of the Law. Still, though he lived his life among the low and the vile, he practiced none of their ways, nor was aught of low or vile seen in him or those with him. Yet he turned against him many who would have been well disposed towards him, in that he followed his cousin's example, and spake kindly to the tax-gatherers and to the soldiers, whom the greater part of the Jews regard as the enemies of their country.

[pg 34]

Now, as he began to live his life among the people, he began to do many signs and wonders, like all our great teachers and prophets. In truth, we say, how shall a man be accounted a prophet unless he can do wonders? Indeed, as Jesus himself said, "Why marvel ye at the signs? I give unto you an inheritance such as the whole world holds not." And the manner of his wonders was this: if a man was afflicted with a demon of madness, he would cause him to fix his eyes upon his, and after a while would speak sternly and suddenly to the demon within him, who would depart from

[pg 35] him, rending his soul. So, too, would he do with women who were torn asunder by the demons fighting within. To these he would speak calmly after he had fixed their eyes, and, behold, a great calm would come upon them. But he used no exorcisms or magic in his healing, nor spake he in the name of God, but with the tone of one having authority in himself. Hence many thought he had within him a greater Daimon than those afflicted men and women whom he healed. Thence it was thought that for this reason the demons of madness often returned to those whom he had freed for a while with greater violence after he had gone forth from the place of their habitation. There was much murmuring against him for that he did his healing, not in the name of God, but in his own name and his own authority.

[pg 36] Yet he claimed no authority to decide the questions of the Law; though many applied to him in difficult cases, these he referred to the learned in the Law, saying, "Do ye as the scribes command." Yet it was complained that he paid no great attention to their commands himself, nor for his followers. Nor did he rebuke men when he saw them transgressing the Law even in the greater transgressions. Thus I have heard it said of him, that once with his followers, he met a man laboring on the Sabbath day, a sin which, according to the Law, was punished with stoning. But all he said unto him was this: "Man, if thou knowest what thou doest, blessed art thou; but if thou knowest not, accursed art thou, and a transgressor of the Law."⁶ This is, indeed, a dark saying. Is each man, then, to choose for himself which commands of the Law he shall do, and which not? The fence of the Law, which our Sages have built up with such labor and toil, would be stricken down at one stroke. Yet perhaps in this he only followed the principle of our Sages who have said, "The Sabbath was made for you, not you for the Sabbath."

Such was the manner of life of this Jesus up to the time when I first saw him in the Temple. Men knew not what to make of him; many regarded him as a prophet because of the signs and the wonders which he did; and those who were looking forward to the blessed day in which Israel would be free again under its own king hoped that he was Elijah come again to prepare the way for the new kingdom.

III. EARLIER TEACHING. SERMON IN THE SYNAGOGUE OF THE GALILÆANS.

[pg 39] It must have been a year after I had first seen Jesus that I saw him again the second time in Jerusalem. It fell out in this wise: I was proceeding one morning to the meeting of the Sanhedrim, when, as I came near the Synagogue of the Galilæans in the Fish-Market, I found a crowd of men entering in. I asked one of them what was going forward, and he said, "Jesus the Nazarene will expound the Law." So I determined to take the morning service in this synagogue rather than with my colleagues in the Temple, and went in, the people giving way before me, as was my due as a member of the Sanhedrim.

[pg 40] Now, this synagogue of the Galilæans differed in naught from the rest of the synagogues of the Jews. It cannot be that thou hast not visited one of these when thou wast in the Holy City, but perchance thy memory is dim after all these years, and I will in a few words explain to thee its arrangement. In the wall at the west end was the cabinet containing the scrolls of the Law, with a curtain before it, for this is, as it were, the Holy of Holies of the synagogue. The men go up to this, on to the platform before it, by three steps. Then comes a vacant space, in the midst of which stands a dais, with a reading-desk whereon the Law is read: this we call by your Greek name *bema*. Then in the rest of the hall sit the folk, arranged in benches one after another, somewhat as in your theatres. Now, as I came in, they had said the morning psalms, and most of the Eighteen Blessings, and shortly after the reading of the Law began. The curtain was drawn aside from the holy ark, the scroll of the Law was taken thence, to the singing of psalms unto the *bema*. Then, as is customary, the messenger of the congregation summoned first to the reading of the Law a Cohen, a descendant of Aaron, one of the priestly caste. And after he had read some verses of the Law in the holy tongue, the dragoman read its translation into Chaldee, so as to be understood of the unlearned folk, and of the women who were in the gallery outside the synagogue, and separated from it by a grating. Then after the priest came a Levite, who also read some verses, and after him an ordinary Israelite. Then the messenger of the synagogue called out, "Let Rabbi Joshua ben Joseph arise." Then Jesus the Nazarene went up to the *bema* and read his appointed verses, and these were translated as before by the dragoman. And after the reading of the Law was concluded, the *Parnass*, or president of the congregation, requested Jesus to read the *Haphtara*, the lesson from the prophets; and this he did, using the cantillation with which we chant words of Holy Scripture. Yet never heard I one whose voice so thrilled me, and

[pg 41]

[pg 42]

brought home to one the import of the great words; and this was strange, for his accent was, as I had before noticed, that of the Galilæan peasantry, at which we of Jerusalem were wont to scoff. Then, after the Law had been returned to the ark with song and psalm, Jesus turned round to the people on the *bema* and began his discourse. It is near five-and-twenty years since I heard him, and much have I forgotten in that long time. But many of his sayings still ring in my ears, and I will here put down, as far as possible in order, all that I can remember of the discourse.⁷

[pg 43]

“It hath been written by the Prophet Esaias: Behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. Yea, behold a man and his work before him. He that worketh not, let him not eat. Yet he that plougheth, let him plough in hope; he that thresheth, thresh in hope of partaking. Howbeit, he who longs to be rich is like a man who drinketh seawater: the more he drinketh the more thirsty he becomes, and never leaves off drinking till he perish. Blessed is he who also fasts that he may feed the poor: for it is more blessed to give than to receive. Yet let thy alms sweat into thy hands until thou know to whom thou givest. Where there are pains, thither hastens the physician: that which is weak shall be saved by that which is strong. For the sake of the weak I was weak, for the sake of the hungry I hungered, for the sake of the thirsty I thirsted. But woe to those who have yet hypocritically taken from others; who are able to help themselves, and yet wish to take from others: for each man shall give account in the day of judgment.

[pg 44]

“That which thou hatest thou shalt not do to another. Good things must come; he is blessed through whom they come. Love covereth a multitude of sins; so never be joyful save when you look upon your brother’s countenance in love. Let not the sun go down upon your wrath. For the greatest of crimes is this: if a man shall sadden his brother’s spirit. Blessed, too, are they who mourn for the perdition of unbelievers. Do not give occasion to the Wicked One. Who is the Wicked One? He that tempts. Yet none shall reach the kingdom of heaven unless he have been tempted: for our Father which is in heaven would rather the repentance of a sinner than his correction. Yet he will cleanse the house of his kingdom from all offence. Be, therefore, careful and prudent and wise, lest any of you be caught in the snares of the devil, for that ancient enemy goes about buffeting.

“If thou hast seen thy brother, thou hast seen thy Lord, God the Father, whose fatherland is everywhere, in heaven and upon earth. Far and near, the Lord knoweth his own. So grieve not the holy spirit which is in you, nor extinguish the light which shines in you. Guard the flesh pure, and the signet spotless, so that ye may take hold upon eternal life. For our possessions are in heaven; therefore, sons of men, purchase unto yourselves by these transitory things which are not yours, what is yours, and shall not pass away.”

[pg 45]

I cannot tell thee, Aglaophonos, how deeply this discourse affected me. Just as the Hellenes are eager to find each day some new beauty in man or the world, or some new truth about the relation of things, so we Hebrews rejoice in finding new ideals in the relations of men. Each of our Sages prides himself on this—that he has said some maxim of wisdom that none had thought of before him, and so each of them is remembered in the minds of men by one or more of his favorite maxims. But it is rare if in a whole lifetime a sage sayeth more than one word fit to be treasured up among men. Yet was this man Jesus dropping pearls of wisdom from his mouth in prodigal profusion. As each memorable word fell from his lips, a murmur of delighted surprise passed round the synagogue, and each man looked to his neighbor with brightened eyes. Some of the thoughts, indeed, I had heard from other of our Sages, but never in so pointed a form, surely never in such profusion from a single sage.

[pg 46]

And if what was said delighted us, the manner in which it was said entranced us still more. The voice of the speaker answered to the thoughts he expressed, as the Kinnor of David, according to our Sages, turned the wind into music. When he spoke of love, his voice was as the cooing dove; when he denounced the oppressor, it clanged like a silver trumpet. Indeed, his whole countenance and bearing changed in like manner, so that every word he uttered seemed to be the outcome of his whole being.

But most of all was it the vividness of his eyes that impressed his words upon us. I had seen them flashing with scorn in the Temple, I now saw them melting with tenderness in the synagogue; and there was this of strange in them, that they seemed to speak other and deeper words. As he gazed upon us, I felt as if all my inmost being was bare to the gaze of those eyes. They seemed to know all my secret thoughts and sins; and yet I felt not ashamed, for as they saw the sins, so they seemed to speak forgiveness of them.

[pg 47]

What I felt then, others felt with me, for, as I afterwards learnt, each man felt the same as the eyes of Jesus fell upon him; and most curious it was that each man thought as I did, that the eyes of the speaker were upon him during the whole of the discourse. I have seen here in Alexandria portraits of men painted by your subtlest artists, in which, from whatever place you looked at them, the eyes seemed to gaze upon you. So was it with Jesus. Not alone did I, who was, as a member of the Sanhedrim, sitting immediately before him, feel his eyes pierce to my soul, but all who were in that synagogue felt the same. Nor did the effect die away after I had left the synagogue; for days and days afterwards, whenever I closed my eyes, or gazed for long on the wall, I could see the eyes of Jesus, and with it his whole face gazing upon me.

I had left the synagogue a little before the others, because a messenger had been sent from the

[pg 48] Sanhedrim to seek for a member who should make up the quorum of Twenty-Three; and this messenger, hearing that a member of the Sanhedrim was in the synagogue of the Galilæans, sent in to summon me. When the sitting was over, I sought for Jesus again, but found that he had left the city. And for a time I neither saw nor heard aught more of him, save such rumors as came to the Holy City from Galilee. About this time many joined themselves unto him, going whithersoever he went. Those, too, who had joined themselves to Jochanan passed over to him, for Jochanan had been slain by Herod, whom he had rebuked for his wicked living. It was, indeed, said that Herod had also captured this Jesus when he found that he was following in the footsteps of Jochanan; but this proved to be untrue, and the multitude thronged more and more after Jesus, and from this time he began to teach them regularly, after the manner of our Sages. Yet he did not pronounce decisions of Halacha on questions of our Law; indeed, he disclaimed all interference with such questions. "I am not come," he said, "to take away from the Law of Moses, nor to add to the Law of Moses am I come." Only one saying of his have I heard of wherein he said aught at variance with the Torah. When the children of a man who had recently died asked him in what way should the property be divided, he said, "Let son and daughter inherit alike." In this, as in other things, he was more favorable to the claims of the women than the Law and the Sages. For this reason, perhaps, it was that many women followed after him, even joined in prayer with him and those with him, against the custom of our nation. Hence arose much scandal among the more rigidly pious among us, who follow the saying of Joseph ben Jochanan, "Engage not in much converse with women." But I have heard naught of evil that resulted from this free mingling of men and women among his followers. Yet Jesus was not against the due subordination of women, for he also said, "Let the wife be in subordination to her husband."

[pg 49]

[pg 50] Thou must know that among us our Sages are of two kinds, the Halachists and the Hagadists. The former deal with matters of the Law according to the tradition they have received from their teacher; but the latter expound the words of the Scripture, and deal with the moral relations of man to man. Some of our Sages, indeed, like the great Hillel, who died when I was a child, have been equally masters both of the Halacha and the Hagada; and in many ways the teaching of Jesus seems to have resembled, if it did not follow, that of Hillel. I must tell thee one anecdote about this Hillel which is well known amongst us. He was distinguished for his evenness of temper, and men would often in sport try to make him lose it. A heathen came before him one day, and declared that he would become a Jew if only Hillel would tell him the whole Law while he stood upon one foot, hoping thereby to irritate Hillel by his presumption. But Hillel said only, "What thou wilt not for thyself, do not to thy neighbor. This is the whole of the Law; all the rest is but commentary thereon. Go and learn." Now, among the disciples of Hillel was one who compiled for the heathen a summary of the Law in the spirit of Hillel; and it seemed to me, from what I heard of Jesus' teaching, that he had learnt much from this summary, which is called "THE TWO WAYS." I will have a copy written out for thee, for it is very short.

[pg 51] Now, in all the teaching of Jesus which I heard of about this time, he seems to have expanded, but in no wise modified, the teaching of "The Two Ways." Above all, he seems to have warned men against the evil feelings within, that lead to sins against the Law, and therein differed somewhat from the practice of our Sages, who think that by doing the Law and keeping to it rightful feelings shall grow, and evil thoughts fly away.

[pg 52] Yet while in many ways Jesus seemed to be of the School of Hillel, in others he cast in his lot with the men among us who claim to be especially favored of God, because—thou wilt smile, Aglaophonos—because they are poor. Thou hast read our Psalms, and knowest with what insistence the poor and the righteous, the rich and the wicked, are identified in them. Many of our nation have taken this to heart, and as it were pride themselves upon their humility, as some of them call themselves *Ebionim*, or the Poor; some, the *Zaddikim*, or Righteous; some, *Chasidim*, or Pious. Thou canst not call them a sect, for in a way they include the whole nation. In the Eighteen Blessings which form the staple of our daily prayers, the Lord is blessed as the Guardian and Refuge of the *Zaddikim*. Now, it was chiefly among these men, whether they called themselves *Ebionim*, or *Zaddikim*, or *Chasidim*, that Jesus found his chief adherents, though he seems to give his preference to the *Ebionim*, who have always been insisting upon the blessedness of the poor. Now, these men consider themselves to be beyond all others the servants of the Lord, and identify themselves with that picture of the servant which has been given by the Prophet Esaias. Thus in all these ways Jesus appealed to the more earnest part of our nation, and in him were conjoined most of the movements that had touched us most deeply. If any had said at this time, "Jesus the Nazarene is a follower of Jochanan the Baptizer, and preaches 'The Two Ways' to the Poor," none could have gainsaid him.

[pg 53] Yet all were wondering what he would say to the other side of our nation's hopes. The life of our nation had begun with a deliverance; our chief national feast recalls that deliverance from Egypt to us every year as the spring comes round. We have become subject to all the great kingdoms that have grown up round us, yet again and again we have been delivered from each. Thou and I have often wondered how it has come about that both Hellenes and Hebrews, who feel ourselves in different ways higher than these stolid Romans who rule us, have yet become subject to them. Thy nation hath acquiesced in their rule; my people never will. Every man who promises greatness among us is hoped for as the Deliverer. Many men about this time began to ask, Will Jesus the Nazarene be the Deliverer?

[pg 54]

IV. THE TWO WAYS.

[pg 57] Now, this is the "CATECHISM OF THE TWO WAYS" which I have had copied out for thee, for in it is the essence of the teaching of Jesus, as he himself recognized in speaking to me, as thou wilt shortly hear.

"There are two ways, one of life and one of death, but there is a great difference between the two ways. Now, the way of life is this: first, Thou shalt love God who made thee; secondly, thy neighbor as thyself, and all things whatsoever thou wouldest not should be done to thee, do thou also not do to another. Thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not corrupt boys, thou shalt not commit fornication, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not use witchcraft, thou shalt not use enchantments, thou shalt not kill an infant whether before or after birth, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods.

[pg 58] "Thou shalt not forswear thyself, thou shalt not bear false witness, thou shalt not revile, thou shalt not bear malice.

"Thou shalt not be double-minded nor double-tongued; for duplicity of tongue is a snare of death.

"Thy speech shall not be false nor vain.

"Thou shalt not be covetous, nor an extortioner, nor a hypocrite, nor malignant, nor haughty. Thou shalt not take evil counsel against thy neighbor.

"Thou shalt hate no man, but some thou shalt rebuke, and for some thou shalt pray, and some thou shalt love above thine own soul.

"My child, flee from all evil, and from all that is like unto it.

"Be not soon angry, for anger leadeth to murder; nor given to party-spirit, nor contentious, nor quick-tempered, for from all these are generated murders.

"My child, be not lustful, for lust leadeth to fornication; neither be a filthy talker, nor a lifter-up of the eyes, for from all these things are generated adulteries.

[pg 59] "My child, be not thou an observer of birds, for it leadeth to idolatry; nor a charmer, nor an astrologer, nor a user of purifications; nor be thou willing to look on those things, for from all these is generated idolatry.

"My child, be not a liar, for lying leadeth to theft; nor a lover of money, nor fond of vainglory, for from all these things are generated thefts.

"My child, be not a murmurer, for it leadeth to blasphemy; neither self-willed, nor evil-minded, for from all these things are generated blasphemies.

"Be thou long-suffering, and merciful, and harmless, and quiet, and good, and trembling continually at the words which thou hast heard.

"Thou shalt not exalt thyself, nor shalt thou give presumption to thy soul. Thy soul shall not be joined to the lofty, but with the just and lowly shalt thou converse.

"The events that happen to thee shalt thou accept as good, knowing that without God nothing taketh place.

"My child, thou shalt remember night and day him that speaketh to thee the word of God.

[pg 60] "But thou shalt seek out day by day the faces of the saints, that thou mayest rest in their words.

"Thou shalt not desire division, but shalt make peace between those at strife; so thou shalt judge justly. Thou shalt not respect a person in rebuking for transgressions.

"Thou shalt not be of two minds whether it shall be or not.

"Be not one that stretcheth out his hands to receive, but shutteth them close for giving.

"If thou hast, thou shalt give with thine hands a ransom for thy sins.

"Thou shalt not hesitate to give, nor when thou givest shalt thou murmur, for thou shalt know who is the good recompenser of the reward.

"Thou shalt not turn away from him that needeth, but shalt share all things with thy brother, and shalt not say that they are thine own; for if ye are fellow-sharers in that which is imperishable, how much more in perishable things.

[pg 61] "Thou shalt not take away thine hand from thy son or from thy daughter, but from their youth up shalt thou teach them the fear of God.

"Thou shalt not in thy bitterness lay commands on thy man-servant or thy maid-servant, who hope in the same God, lest they should not fear him who is God over you both; for He cometh not to call men according to the outward appearance, but to those whom the Spirit hath prepared.

"But ye, servants, shall be subject to your masters as to a figure of God in reverence and fear.

"Thou shalt hate all hypocrisy, and everything which is not pleasing to the Lord.

"Thou shalt not forsake the commandments of the Lord, but shalt keep what thou hast received, neither adding thereto nor taking away from it.

"Thou shalt confess thy transgressions, and shalt not come to thy prayer with an evil conscience. This is the way of life.

[pg 62] "But the way of death is this. First of all, it is evil and full of curse; murders, adulteries, lusts, fornications, thefts, idolatries, witchcrafts, sorceries, robberies, false-witnessings, hypocrisies, double-heartedness, deceit, pride, wickedness, self-will, covetousness, filthy talking, jealousy, presumption, haughtiness, flattery.

"Persecutors of the good, hating truth, loving a lie, not knowing the reward of righteousness, not cleaving to that which is good nor to righteous judgment, watching not for the good but for the evil, far from whom is meekness and patience, loving vain things, seeking after reward, not pitying the poor, not toiling with him who is vexed with toil, not knowing Him that made them, murderers of children, destroyers of the image of God, turning away from him that is in need, vexing him that is afflicted, advocates of the rich, lawless judges of the poor, wholly sinful.

"Take heed that no one make thee to err from this way of teaching, since he teacheth thee not according to God."

V. THE WOMAN TAKEN IN ADULTERY. THE RICH YOUNG MAN.

[pg 65] It must have been many months after I had heard him discourse in the Galilæan synagogue that I again saw Jesus the Nazarene. We in Jerusalem had our own concerns to think of.

[pg 66] At this time the long monopoly of rule by the Sadducees was gradually being broken. Of the three divisions of the Sanhedrim, that of the ordinary Israelites had become almost entirely composed of the Pharisees; I myself had been elected as one of that party, and even in the other two sections of the Priests and of the Levites, many, especially among the latter, held with the Pharisees. Nor was this without influence upon the political issues of the times. The Sadducees, being the sacerdotal party, had no cause why they should be dissatisfied with the position they held in the State under the Romans; but we of the Pharisees felt far otherwise about the national hopes for deliverance. Since my days the influence of the Pharisees has become predominant in the nation, and I foresee that the struggle between us and the Romans cannot be delayed for long. At the time of which I am writing, the hegemony had not yet passed over to the Pharisees, and it was of import for us all to know whether any man of influence was on our side, or on that of the Sadducees, or whether he cared for neither, and cast in his lot with the smaller sects.

[pg 67] Now, it happened about this time that I was attending my place in the Sanhedrim of Israelites, to judge of a case of adultery. But in this matter our Sages, and especially those of the Pharisaic tradition, had made great changes in the Law as laid down for us by Moses; for he, as thou knowest, commands that a woman taken in adultery shall be stoned to death. Now, for a long time among us there has been an increasing horror of inflicting the death penalty. If a Sanhedrim inflicts capital punishment more than once in seven years, it is called a Sanhedrim of murderers. Yet the Law of Moses declared that whosoever was guilty of adultery would be put to death. What, then, was to be done? It is against the principle of justice that any should be punished for an offence of which he is ignorant. Hence, in capital offences, our Sages, to mercy inclined, have

laid it down that a man must be assumed to be ignorant of the guilt of the offence, unless it be proved that he had been solemnly warned of its gravity; and in our Law proof can only be given by two simultaneous witnesses. Hence it is impossible to obtain conviction for a woman who hath committed adultery, unless proof is given that she hath been previously warned by two persons at once. This can scarcely ever be. No Jewish woman in my time has ever been stoned as the Law commands for this sin. Some think that this is too great a leniency, and of evil result for the morality of the folk.

[pg 68] When I arrived at the hall of polished stones near the Temple, in which the Sanhedrim holds its sittings, the trial had nearly come to a conclusion. The inquiry had been made if any two credible witnesses had given the woman the preliminary caution, and none answering to the call, it remained only for the *Ab Beth Din*, the president of the court, to dismiss the prisoner with the words of caution and advice which are customary on such occasions: "My daughter, perhaps thou wert led into sin by too much wine, or by thoughtlessness, or perhaps by thy youth; perchance it was mixing in crowds, or wicked companions that led thee to sin: go, and for the sake of the great Name, do not bring it to pass that thou must be destroyed by the water of jealousy." And with these words the court was dismissed, and several of us were appointed to take the woman to her home, and induce the man, her husband, to take her to him once again. Now, as we were passing through the courts of the Temple, we saw Jesus the Nazarene in one of the smaller courts, seated, teaching the people, some of whom sat at his feet. But it seemed to some of us a favorable opportunity to test what he would say as regards the Law of Moses relating to adultery: [pg 69] for if he would declare that the Law must be carried out in all its rigor, that would show that our Sages were more merciful than he; if, on the other hand, he adopted the opinion of our Sages, that would in so far commit him to support their attitude towards the Law in general. In any case, it seemed a suitable occasion to test his power of dealing with the Law, and it is customary among us to put such test cases before the younger Sages.

We therefore turned aside and entered into the smaller court, and all rose to do honor to the Sanhedrim. Then one of us said to him, "Rabbi, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now, Moses in the Law hath commanded that such should be stoned: what sayest thou?" Now, when the man told him that the woman had been taken in the very act of adultery, a deep blush passed over his face, and he turned his eyes downwards. Then he bent down to the ground, hiding his face altogether from us, and writing, as it were, something on the sand of the floor. Now, at first, I thought of the cry of the money-changers that I had heard, and felt ashamed in my soul that such a question should be brought before this man, of all men: for our Sages have said, [pg 70] "The greatest of sins is this—to bring a blush upon thy neighbor's face in public." But the others thought not of this, but once more they asked him, "Rabbi, what sayest thou shall be done in this case?" Then, without raising his head, Jesus said in a low tone, "Let him among you that is without sin cast the first stone." Then we saw that his shame had been for us, and for our want of feeling in putting such a question in the very presence of her who had sinned. And in this matter we hold that sin can be in thought as well as in act, and which of us could say that we were without sin even in thought? So, in very shame, we turned and went, and left Jesus alone with the woman.

Yet, after we had come away from him, Matathias ben Meshullam said, "That is well,—we are rightly rebuked; but yet, dost thou not see that this man hath not answered our question, nor do we know, as we wished, what attitude he takes towards the carrying out of the Law? I hear that [pg 71] each morning he preaches to the people in the Temple. Let us now tomorrow put such questions to him that he cannot evade, and find out to which of our parties he belongs; for this is a man that is getting great weight with the people, and it imports us to know where he stands with regard to us." So it was determined among us that the next morning a Sadducee and a Pharisee should put to him queries which should determine what views he held on the great questions which distinguished the two great parties of the State.

But that very afternoon I was to learn that this Jesus had to deal with questions with which none of our parties concerned themselves. For, as I was coming near to Gethsemane, I met Jesus with a band of men and women going out towards Bethany, and I passed them with the salutation of "Peace." But as I passed, a young man whom I knew, that had recently come into great possessions upon the death of his father, came up and asked, "Who is that man whom thou hast just greeted?" and I said, "Jesus the Nazarene." Then, suddenly, he set off running to catch them up, and being curious, I turned and followed him. When I reached them I found the young man kneeling before Jesus, gazing up to him, and he said, "Good Master, I have inherited great possessions; what shall I do that I may inherit the life everlasting?" Jesus said to him, "Call not me 'Good;' none is good but the One. If thou wouldest enter into life, do the commandments." [pg 72] The young man asked, "Which?" Jesus said, using the doctrine of "The Two Ways," "Do not kill, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not bear false witness, do not defraud, honor thy father and thy mother, and love thy neighbor as thyself." Then the young man said, "All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?" Then Jesus said, "One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell all thou hast, and give unto the poor, and thou shalt have heavenly treasures: come then and follow me." The young man began to scratch his head, and seemed in doubt. Then Jesus said unto him, "How is it thou canst say, 'I have done the Law and the Prophets,' since it is written in the Law, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself'?" Behold, many of thy brothers, sons of Abraham, are clothed but in dung, and die for hunger, while thy house is full of many goods, and there goeth not forth aught from it unto them." But the young man rose, and went away in sorrow and confusion. Then Jesus looked round upon those who were there, and said, "How hard it is for [pg 73]

them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for an elephant to go through a needle's eye, as the saying is, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." Then a murmur arose among all those present, and they began to move on, and I left them. And I said to myself, "This man is neither Pharisee, nor Sadducee, nor Herodian; these be the thoughts of the Ebionim."

[pg 74]

VI. THE TESTINGS IN THE TEMPLE.

[pg 77] Now, on the morrow, many of us who had agreed together to test the opinions of this Jesus went to the Temple and found Jesus walking in the corridors. Then he that was of most authority among us said unto Jesus, "Rabbi, we would ask certain questions of thee;" and Jesus answered, "Ask, and it shall be answered unto thee."

[pg 78] Thou must know that among us Jews there be two chief schools of thought, or rather thou mightest say, parties of the State. The one holds with the High Priest and the rulers, and is mainly made up of those whom ye Hellenes call the Best, and their retainers. These be known as the Sadducees, for their leaders are mainly of the family of the High Priest Sadduk. Now, the other party is in some sort the party of the Demos, in that they seek to lessen the power of the High Priests and their families. But with us, as thou knowest, all things turn upon religion, and this second party differ chiefly from the Sadducees, for that they are more in earnest with the matters of the Law, and chiefly they fear the influence of thy nation, Aglaophonos, in drawing the Israelite away from the Law. Therefore have they increased precept upon precept, so as to make, as they say, a fence round the Law. And as they would separate themselves from the heathen by this fence, they call themselves Pharisees, that is, Separatists.

[pg 79] Now, it was nowise easy to learn whether a man was of the one party or the other. For he might be eager for the Law, and so be Pharisaic in color, and yet approve of the dominion of the priests, and thus be a Sadducee. Yet in one chief matter of thought they went asunder contrariwise, and that was concerning the resurrection of the dead. Now, with regard to that, the Sadducees held that naught was said in the Law of Moses, and therefore no son of Israel need concern himself with it. But the Pharisees, on the other hand, laid great weight upon this. So here was a touchstone by which to learn whether this Jesus followed the one or the other of the two great divisions of our nation.

[pg 80] Then, as was agreed upon, Kamithos the Sadducee came forward to ask him the question which should determine whether he held with them that there was no resurrection from the dead, or with the rest of the nation. He said, "Rabbi, it is written in the Torah, if brethren dwell together, and one of them die and have no son, the wife of the dead one shall not marry without, unto a stranger; her husband's brother shall take her to him to wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. Suppose, now, there are seven brethren, and the first takes a wife, and dying leaves no son; and the second takes her, as is our custom, and dies without leaving any seed; and the third likewise, and so on, till the whole seven had married her, and yet had no son; then the woman dies also: when they shall rise from the dead together, whose wife shall she be of them? for all seven had her to wife." And Jesus answered and said, "Ye are at fault, and know not the Scriptures, nor the power of God; for in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are even as the angels which are in heaven. And as an indication from Scripture that the dead rise, is it not written in the book of Moses, when God spake to him from the bush, saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living; therefore are ye in error."

And we were surprised at the subtlety of the man; and chiefly men marvelled at the wisdom of this man in finding what we call a support, that is, a text of Scripture on which to hang the doctrine of the life after death, which many believe to have grown up among us since the sacred Scriptures were written: for in them little, if anything, was said of the world to come. Now, Jesus in his answer had happened upon a text which said that Abraham and Isaac and Jacob were living when they were dead to this world, and the people marvelled greatly thereat.

[pg 81] Now, it had been agreed upon, that after the Sadducees had asked their question and been answered, I should stand forth and test this man Jesus on behalf of the Pharisees. Now, one of our Sages hath said, "Be as careful of a little precept as of a great one;" whereas our great master Hillel had, as I have told thee, summed up the whole Law in one precept, "Love thy neighbor as thyself." Therefore, we of the Pharisees wished to know whether this Jesus agreed with the one sage or the other; so I spake unto him and said, "Rabbi, which is the first

[pg 82]

commandment, by doing which I shall inherit the life everlasting?" But at first he answered me not directly, but said, "How readeest thou?" Then I remembered me the words of the "Catechism of the Two Ways," and answered, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself: whatsoever thou wouldest not for thyself, do not to another." And he said unto me, "Thou hast answered right; and the first of the commandments is the *Shema*: 'Hear, O Israel; the Lord thy God is one God.' And the second is like, namely this: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.' There is none other commandment greater than these. This do, and thou shalt live." Then I was rejoiced, and said unto him, "Well, Rabbi, thou hast said the truth: there is one God, and there is none other but him; and to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as one's self, is more than all the burnt offerings and sacrifices." Then Jesus became gracious unto me, and said, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God."

[pg 83]

But then I would learn further from this man who spake so well, and ask him the question which is current in our schools on this subject, and I said to him, "But, Rabbi, who is my neighbor?" and he answered with a *mashal*, or parable, and said, "To what is the matter like? A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho; and he fell among robbers, which both stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance a certain priest was going down that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And in like manner a Levite also, when he came to the place, and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a certain Israelite,⁸ as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he was moved with compassion, and came to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring on them oil and wine; and he set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said, 'Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, I, when I come back again, will repay thee.' Which of these three, thinkest thou, proved neighbor unto him that fell among the robbers?" Then I said, "Not the priest, nor the Levite, though they held office in Israel, but the simple Israelite who showed mercy upon him." Then Jesus said unto me, "Go and do thou likewise;" and at this moment we were all summoned to the mid-day sacrifice in the Temple.

[pg 84]

When Jesus had departed, after the sacrifice, we all met together and discussed his answers, which had stamped him in our minds as a master in the art of question and answer, which is with us as favorable a trial of skill as oratory or poetry with you Hellenes. Now, as regards the question of the Sadducees, men thought he had spoken more openly; for though he had evaded a direct answer to the question of the seven brothers and their wife, he had yet implied that they all would have a part in the life to come. Some regretted that the question had not been put differently, and the problem set—if a son had been born through the seventh brother: for this might have thrown light upon the question of the schools, whether the brother's widow was to be still regarded as his wife if seed had been raised to him after his death. But as to the support which Jesus had taken from Scripture for the life everlasting, though here again he had answered question by question, it was decided that he was against the Sadducees on this point.

[pg 85]

But on the questions which I had put to him, all had agreed that he had answered as a Pharisee, even as Hillel might have answered, for he had yea-said the doctrine which I had cited from the beginning of "The Two Ways" in which the doctrine of Hillel is summed up; and even as to my further question, as to who is the *chaber*, or neighbor, though opinions were divided, most thought that he had spoken as a Pharisee might have spoken: for thou knowest, Aglaophonos, that our nation is divided into three great classes—the *Cohanim*, or Priests; the Levites; and the common Israelites. Now, of these, the two former are the officials of the Temple, and most if not all of the Sadducees are from this class. And, in declaring himself on the side of the third class of simple Israelites, Jesus had, we all thought, declared himself on the side of the Pharisees.

[pg 86]

VII. THE SECOND SERMON.

[pg 89]

I cannot clearly remember at what season of the year it was that I next saw Jesus; indeed, I am surprised to think that, after the lapse of nearly five-and-twenty years, I can still remember almost all that passed on the various occasions when I was in his presence. Yet I think it was about the time of the feast which we hold in memory of the rededication of the Temple under the Maccabæans that I again saw and heard the Galilæan stranger; for I mind me that I had just been taking the eight-branch candlestick which we use in the ceremonials of this feast to Petachayah the silversmith to be mended, when on my return I saw a throng collected round the synagogue of the Galilæans, and entering in, found that Jesus was to preach that day. The same ceremonial was gone through as I have already described to thee: the Law was taken from the ark with

[pg 90] rejoicing; priest and Levite and four ordinary Israelites were summoned to hear it read, and again the crier called, "Let Rabbi Joshua, the son of Rabbi Joseph, arise." Now, it chanced that this time, I, as a member of the Sanhedrim, was summoned to the reading of the Law immediately after Jesus, and for a time, as is customary, we stood together upon the *bema*. I observed that, as the reading of the Law proceeded, the eyes of the Nazarene became fixed upon the ark, and a veil of mysterious tenderness seemed to come over them, as if he were in communion with the *Shechinah*, or Glory, itself. It seemed to me that afterwards, when he read the *Haphtara* from the prophets, and when he preached, something remained in him of this mystical communion.

[pg 91] Perhaps it was for this that we seemed to miss that sense of individual address which we had before observed in his eyes. No longer did these speak to us other and deeper thoughts than the words of the preacher; they seemed to dream of divine things, and so caused us also to be rapt in mystic musings. I cannot on this account recall for you all or even many of the words which he uttered on this occasion. He began with some plain teaching about practice. Soon he went on to speak of himself in a marvellous way, as if he would imply that communion with him and with the Most High were one and the same, and then in his last words he seemed to speak of the Last Things. And here again his words seemed as if he identified himself with the great Judge.

[pg 92] Now, this is not so strange to our mode of thinking in Israel as thou mightest think. Almost all our prophets speak the oracles of God as if they were using the very words of the Lord. Thou canst read in the Greek translation of the Seventy many passages of the prophets in which the very words of the Lord are given. Yet in most, if not all, cases the prophet beginneth, "Thus saith the Lord," or endeth, "This is the word of the Lord." But with this Jesus it was otherwise. He spoke as the ancient prophets do, but whether from his rapt intentness in the message he was delivering, or because he felt his spirit for the time merged in the divine, he spoke as if the message was his. And as he spoke, I saw looks of amazement pass between many in the synagogue, and one old graybeard rose as if to protest, and then, shaking his withered hands above his head, went out of the synagogue.

I will here set down for thee as many of the words that fell from Jesus' lips on this occasion as I can remember. They are but few, but many of them are weighty, and I have told thee above the general lines of thought which seemed to run through his discourse; and these are the words as far as I remember them.⁹

[pg 93] "Cultivate faith and hope, through which is born that love of God and man which gives the eternal life. Those are the sons of God who walk in the spirit of God. What you preach before the folk, do in deed before every one. Accept not anything from any man, and possess not anything in this world. For the Father wisheth to be given to each man from his own gifts. Cleave unto the saints: for they that cleave unto them shall be sanctified. Yet shall there be schisms and heresies: for there is a shame which leadeth to death, as there is a shame which leadeth to life. Is it not enough for the disciples to be as the Master? If in a little you are not faithful, who shall give unto you what is much? Seek the great, and the little will be added to you; seek the heavenly, and the things of earth will be superadded.

"He that wonders shall reign, he who reigns shall find rest. My secret is for me, and for those that are mine are the things which eye saw not, and ear heard not, which entered not into the heart of man, whatsoever things God prepared for them that love him. Those who wish to see me, and wish to cling to the kingdom, must take me through affliction and suffering. For he that is near me is near the fire, he that is far from me is far from the kingdom. Where one is, there too am I; where twain are, there too will I be. As any of you sees himself in the water or in the mirror, so let him see me in himself.

[pg 94] "They that love me shall receive the crown. I will choose me the good, those good whom my Father in the heavens hath given me. Let the lawless continue in lawlessness, the just be justified. Behold, I make the last as the first, and all things new. In whatsoever state I find you, in that also will I judge you."

Never heard I any who spoke of himself as this man did. For days and days afterwards some of his words came to me again and again. Whenever I was alone I seemed to hear his voice saying, "Where one is, there too am I; where twain are, there too will I be." Whenever I gazed on the running stream or looked on the polished steel of the mirror, again I seemed to hear him say, "As any of you sees himself in the water or in the mirror, so let him see me in himself." And, in truth, at times my features seemed to fade away, and the face of Jesus gaze upon me.

[pg 95] Others thought not as I. When we assembled after the sermon, to talk over it, as is our custom, I found that most had been chiefly touched by certain sayings at the end of the sermon, in which Jesus seemed to speak of the future life and the last judgment. Thou knowest, Aglaophonos, that with regard to these matters I incline more to the teaching of the Sadducean sect, who hold that Holy Scripture speaketh not of these things, and that, therefore, we need not and should not think thereon. But there were few who held that doctrine in the synagogue that day, and these thought most of the words in which Jesus seemed to claim the prerogatives of the Divine Judge. "I was amazed," quoth Serachyah ben Pinchas, "when he spoke of judging us himself in the last days: it wanted but a little that I had rent my garments at the blasphemy. But surely, thought I to

myself, the man will shortly tell us, 'These are the words of the Lord,' and so I refrained."

[pg 96] Now I will tell thee of a most strange event that happened with me and this Jesus. A day or two after this, I was sitting in my room and studying the words of Torah, and had fallen into deep thought on the things of this life and the next, and gradually I fell thinking of certain words that I had heard from Jesus the Nazarene, as I have before told you. Hast thou ever felt, Aglaophonos, as if some one was gazing upon thee, and thou couldst not refrain from looking round to see who it was? So I felt at this moment, and I looked up from the sacred scroll, and lo! Jesus the Nazarene stood before me, gazing upon me with those piercing eyes I can never forget. His face was pale and indistinct, but the eyes shone forth as if with tenderness and pity. Then he seemed to lean forward, and spoke to me in a low yet piercing voice these words: "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and the Christ shall shine upon thee." I had shrunk back from his gaze, and was, indeed, in all amaze and wonder that he should be in the room; but when I looked again, behold, he was gone, there was no man there.

[pg 97] But this is not all the wonder of that event, for, being startled, and, indeed, somewhat fearful at his sudden appearance and disappearance, I arose and went out into the highway, and went out to walk on the Gethsemane road. Now, as I came clear of the city, I saw a group of men coming down the opposite hill, and when they came near, behold, it was Jesus and some of his friends. I was astonished and surprised beyond all measure, for how could Jesus have just been with me, and be now coming from Gethsemane? And when they were passing me, Jesus glanced at me very slightly, as at a stranger—he that had spoken to my soul but a few minutes since.

Now, after they had passed me, there came one running after them whom I knew—one Meshullam ben Hanoch—and I stopped him and asked him whither he was going, and he said, "Stay me not. I have run all the way from Bethany to catch up that man thou seest there, Jesus the Nazarene;" and with that he took up his running and left me.

[pg 98] I knew not what to think. I had seen and heard Jesus in my own house in Jerusalem, and lo! at that very same time, as I now learned, he had been at Bethany. What thinkest thou, Aglaophonos,—can a man be in two places at one and the same time? or can it be that the mind of man, and the power of his eye, can go forth from his body and create a vision of another man that hath all the semblance of reality? I know not what to think; but I have heard that, even after his death, those who were nearest and dearest to Jesus saw him and heard him even as I did. Nor do I wonder at this, after what has occurred to myself.

VIII. THE REBUKING OF JESUS.

[pg 101] Now, it chanced that about this time I was invited to a feast at the house of Elisha ben Simeon, one of the leaders of the Pharisees in Jerusalem. His son had become thirteen years old that week, and, as is our custom, was received into the holy congregation as a Son of the Covenant on the Sabbath. He had been summoned up to the reading of the Law, and had himself read aloud a portion of it; for from this day onward he was to be treated in all matters of religion as if he were a man. Being a friend of his father, I had attended his synagogue, and heard the lad's pure voice for the first time in his life declare publicly his faith in the Most High.

After the service in the synagogue, his friends accompanied the father and the lad to their house, and with them went I, who had known the father from our schoolboy days, and the little lad from the time of his birth.

[pg 102] Now, it chanced that, as we came near the door of Elisha's house, we met Jesus the Nazarene, and two or three with him. So Elisha greeted them, and invited them courteously to join the feast, as is the custom among us. And Jesus and the others assented, and followed into the house with us. "To table, to table!" cried Elisha, pointing to the couches standing round the well-filled board.

When we were all seated, the host and his son came round with an ewer and basin to perform the washing of the hands prescribed by the Law. But when they came to the Galilæan strangers, these refused, saying, "We wash not before meals."

"Then we must serve ye last," said Elisha, with a smile. But the others took not the matter so pleasantly; for since we have one common dish, which is handed round to the guests for them to take their food with their fingers, it is considered gross ill-breeding for a man not to perform the ceremony of washing before meals.

[pg 103] Then Elisha took a seat at the centre of the table, and said the grace before meals. Then he broke bread, and, dipping a morsel into salt for each of the guests, he called his son to him to carry it round. When he saw that each of the guests had a piece of bread dipped in salt, Elisha recited the blessing on the bread, "Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, who bringest forth bread from the earth," and all said "Amen." And one of the guests said to Elisha, "I am glad we are not in Babylon."

"How so, Phineas?" said Elisha to the man, who was well known at all feasts at that time in Jerusalem.

And Phineas said, "For there they only eat bread with their bread."

"Nay, that would not suit thee, Phineas. Thou art no Nazarite;" and most of the guests who knew him laughed.

Then Elisha clapped his hands, and the slaves took round the first course of salted fish; then afterwards the cold baked meats—for, being the Sabbath, the food had been prepared the day before.

Then one of the guests said to one of the Galilæans, "Is it true that you allow fowl to be boiled in milk in your country?"

"Yes, truly; why not?" said the Galilæan.

[pg 104] "Is it not written thrice in the Law," said the guest, "Thou shalt not seethe the kid in its mother's milk?"

"In our country," said the Galilæan, "fowls give no milk." And we all of us laughed, save only Jesus.

"Nay, but the Sages have carried their prohibition even unto fowls, lest the people be led to confuse flesh and flesh."

By this time we had arrived at the third and last course of salted olives, lettuces, and radishes. And again the bowl and ewer were passed round, and this time the Galilæans did not refuse the water. Then the new son of the covenant recited in his clear voice the grace after meals. And all rose, while the slaves removed the remnants. Then said Elisha, "It is not well that when so many are together we should depart without discussing some words of the Law. My little Lazarus here would fain learn some new thing from the many learned men present on this day of his being received into Israel."

"Well, then," said one of the company, "I should like to put a question to our friends here from Galilee." And they said, "Speak, Rabbi."

[pg 105] And he addressed himself to Jesus, and said, "Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashed hands?"

Then Jesus spoke out, and as he spoke he strode up and down the room, with his hand clutching the air, and the vein throbbing on his left temple. "Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, 'This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.'" Then facing us all, he added, "For ye lay aside the commandment of God, and hold the tradition of men."

"How so, master?" said Elisha; "prove thy words."

[pg 106] "It is said in the Word of God, 'Honor thy father and thy mother,' and yet the Sages say, 'If a man be asked by his father or mother to honor them with a gift, and he say, 'I vow that thing to the Almighty,' then it is *Corban*,' and put aside for the Lord, so that his parents cannot enjoy thereof. Thus by your tradition about vows ye make the Word of God concerning honor to parents of none effect, and many like things ye do."

Then Elisha said, "But the Sages are by no means at one in that matter of the vows, and in particular many of them declare all the vows annulled that would work against our duty to our parents, or even against our love to our neighbor. Yet, even if we take the more stricter tradition, in what manner that absolves us from washing our hands before meals, I see not."

"Nay, it is the same thing," replied Jesus. "Ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and platter, but your inward thoughts are full of ravening and wickedness. Ye fools! did not the Holy One, blessed be He, who made that which is without, make also that which is within? Therefore give for alms that which is within, kindly thoughts and friendly feelings. If ye do that, all things are clean unto you."

Then I said unto Jesus, for this matter touched us scribes nearly, "Master, in speaking thus against tradition thou reproachest us also that be scribes."

[pg 107] And he answered, "Woe, woe unto ye, scribes! which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the higher seats in the synagogues, and the chief places at feasts, which devour widows' houses, and for a show make long prayers."

Then an angry murmur rose among all the folk there assembled at the harsh words of the stranger, when suddenly was heard the voice of Simeon ben Lazarus, the father of Elisha, a very old man, who sat in the corner and said:—

“Young man, fourscore years and two have I lived upon this earth; a Pharisee have I been from the day I became a son of the covenant, like little Lazarus there; a scribe was I during all the working days of my life. I did what the Law and the Sages command, yet never thought I in so doing of men’s thoughts or praises. Surely, if the Lord command, a good Jew will obey. And as in many things, many acts of this life, the Law speaketh not in plain terms, surely we should follow the opinion of those who devote all their life to the study of the Law.

[pg 108] “I have never sought the praises of men, their greetings or their honors, in obeying the Law. In all that I have done I have sought one thing—to fulfil the will of our Father which is in heaven.

“As for what thou sayest, that inward thought and outward act should go together in the service of God and man, that is a verity, and often have I heard the saying from the great Hillel—may his memory be for a blessing! But if outward act may be clean when inward thought may be unclean, how, on the other hand, can we know the purity of what is within, except it be decided by the cleanliness of what is without? How, above all, shall we teach our little ones, like my Lazarus there, to feel what is good and seemly, except by first teaching them to do the acts that are seemly and good?

[pg 109] “And as for what thou sayest as to the hypocrisy of us Pharisees and scribes, I say unto thee,—and in a few days I must see the face of my Maker,—I say unto thee, I have known many an Ebionite, which thou seemest to be, who was well spoken within, but ill doing without. So, too, I have known many a scribe and many a Pharisee who neither carried their good deeds on their shoulders, nor said, ‘Wait, I have to finish some godly deed;’ nor set off their good deeds against their sins; nor boasted of their sacrifices for godly works; nor did they seek out their sins that they might pay for them by their virtues; nor were they Pharisees from fear of the Divine punishment. They were Pharisees from love of the Lord, and did throughout their life what they knew to be his commands.”

But Jesus spoke gently unto the old man, and said naught but, “Nay, master, I spoke not of thee, nor of men like thee. These be the true Pharisees; the rest but have the Pharisaic color.”

“That is so,” said old Simeon. “I have heard what King Jannaus said: ‘Fear not the Pharisees, nor those who are no Pharisees; but fear the colored ones, who are only Pharisees in appearance, who do the deeds of Zimri and demand the rewards of Phineas.’ ”

[pg 110] But before the old man could finish there was a movement at the doorway, and a high, thin voice cried out, “Where is this kidnapper of souls? where is this filcher of young lives? where is Jesus the Nazarene?”

“Behold me,” said Jesus, turning towards the voice; and an old man, with the rent garment of the mourner, and with hair all distraught, came up to the Nazarene with arms outstretched and clutching fingers.

“Give me my son, my Elchanan!” he cried. “Thou hast taken him from me last Passover, saying, ‘Father and mother, yea, all that a man hath, shall he give up to follow me.’ He left me to follow thee; what hast thou done with him?—my Elchanan! my Elchanan!”

“He died, and is at peace.”

“Then give him back to me again. Thou canst do all things, men say: make whole the sick, let see the blind, cause the lame to walk, and give peace to the troubled mind. Give me, then, back my Elchanan thou hast taken from me.”

“There is One alone that can quicken the dead,” said Jesus, and walked sternly past him.

IX. JESUS IN THE TEMPLE.

[pg 113] But a few days after what I have narrated to thee, I had attended a full meeting of the Sanhedrim in the hall of hewn stones in the Priests’ Court of the Temple. When the session was over, we went forth, and, turning to the right, passed into the Court of the Israelites, and so through

[pg 114] Nicanor's Gate into the Court of the Women. Now, as we went down the fifteen steps that lead into this court, we could see, through the Beautiful Gate at the other end of it, that something unusual was occurring in the outer court of all, the Court of the Gentiles. So I and some of the other younger members of the Sanhedrim passed rapidly through the Court of the Women, and, hurrying through the Beautiful Gate, found Jesus preaching to the people under Solomon's Porch. Now, it is usual for the people to make way when any member of the Sanhedrim passes by; but the people were so engrossed with the words of Jesus that they took no note of me and my companions, and we had to stand at the edge of the crowd and listen as best we might, and so great was the crowd that I could scarcely hear what the Nazarene was saying, until gradually those near us, recognizing the marks of our dignity, made way for us till we got nearer.

Never saw I Jesus in so exalted a state. Though he was not tall, as I have said, he seemed to tower above the crowd. The mid-day sun of winter was shining full upon the Temple, and though Jesus was in the shadow of the porch, the sunlight from the Temple walls shone back upon his eyes and hair, which gleamed with the glory of the sun. He looked and spake as a king among men. And, indeed, he was claiming to be something even greater than a king. I could not hear very distinctly from where I was at first, but towards the last, as I got nearer, I heard him say these words:—

[pg 115] "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. He that loveth his life shall lose it. If a man keep my word he shall never see death, but has passed from death unto life. He that believeth in me, the works that I do shall he do also. Yet can the Son do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do. I am the door: by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved. I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. I am the Light of the world. I am the good Shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. I am the Bread of Life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger. I am the true Vine, and my Father is the Husbandman. I am the Vine, ye are the branches. If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. Before Abraham was I am."

[pg 116] Now, as Jesus was saying these words, and many like unto them, his form seemed to expand, his eye flashed with the light of prophecy, and all men were amazed at the power of his words. Never had they heard man speak of himself with such confidence. If he had been very God, he could not have said more of his own power over men's souls. Our prophets have spoken boldly indeed, but none of them had boasted of the power of the Lord in such terms as this man spake of himself. Could he be mad, I thought, to say such things? Yet in all other matters he had shown a wisdom and a sound sense equal to the greatest of our Sages. Or had he found that by speaking thus of himself, men, and above all, women, were best moved to believe as he would have them believe, to act as he would have them act? Might it not be the simplest of truths that for them, to them, he was indeed the Way, the Truth, and the Life?

And, indeed, when I looked around and saw the effect of his words on those who were listening, I could in part understand his power among men and women. They drank in his words as travellers at the well of the oasis. They lived upon his eyes, and it was indeed strange to see every man's body bent forward as of a straining hound at the chase. If ever men worshipped a man, these were worshipping Jesus.

[pg 117] And I? What was it with me that his words failed to move me as they did those around me? Why did his eyes rather repel than attract me? Was it thy teaching, Aglaophonos, that had taught me the way of thy race: to measure all things in the balance of wisdom; to be moved in all acts by reason, not feeling? Was it from thee I learnt to think about the causes of this man's influence, even while I and others were under it? Perhaps not alone; for much that this man was saying would have repelled my Jewish instincts even had I never come under thy influence. What struck thee among us Jews, I remember, was that while we see the Deity everywhere, we localize him nowhere. Alone among the nations of men we refuse to make an image of our God. We alone never regarded any man as God Incarnate. Those among us who have been nearest to the Divine have only claimed to be—they have only been recognized to be—messengers of the Most High. Yet here was this man, as it seemed, claiming to be the Very God, and all my Jewish feeling rose against the claim.

[pg 118] Nor was I alone in this feeling I was soon to learn. Before Jesus had finished his harangue, cries arose from different quarters of the crowd. "Blasphemy!" "Blasphemer!" "He blasphemes!" arose on all sides. These cries awakened men as if from a sleep, all turning round to see whence they came. And the very turning round, as it were, removed them from the influence of Jesus and his eyes. In a moment, many of those who just before were hanging upon Jesus' words joined in the cry, "Blasphemer! blasphemer!" One of the boldest of those who began the cry called out, "Blasphemer! Stone him!"

But Jesus drew himself up, and looked upon the crowd with flashing eyes, and said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! Sodom is justified of thee." For a moment all were silent, but soon the cries arose again: "Blasphemer! blasphemer! Stone him!"

[pg 119] Then began great commotion among the people. While some called out, "Stone him!" "Stone him!" others cried, "Sacrilege!" "Sacrilege!" "No stoning in the Temple!" And one called out with a jeer, "In the Temple ye cannot stone, for lo! here there be no stones;" and a bitter, scornful

laugh followed his words. Then some who were nearest to Jesus sought to lay hands on him, while others, his friends, stood round him and prevented their approaching, and all was confusion and tumult. When suddenly the blare of a trumpet sounded through the courts, and all cried, "The Romans! the Romans!"

Then round by the royal porch came a company of Roman soldiers to change the sentries at mid-day, and they halted near the Beautiful Gate. And as they came near the crowd began to disperse, and Jesus and his friends went their way from the courts of the Temple.

[pg 120] That day, there was no talk in Jerusalem but of the event in the Temple. Men marvelled at the way in which this Jesus had spoken of himself. "The prophets spake not thus," they said. "Yet how can a man be greater than a prophet, who speaketh the words of the Most High? Even if we had once more a king over us in Israel, he could not be as great as a prophet, and no king would speak of himself as Jesus this day hath spoken of himself." But what if this man were destined to be the Christ, the God-given Ruler that should restore the throne of David? But how could that be, since none of the signs and portents of the last times had come upon the earth? Who had seen the blood trickle from the rocks? or the fiery sword appear in the midnight sky? Had babes a year old spoken like men? But others said, "Nay, the kingdom of God will not come with expectation. As it hath been said, 'Three things come unexpectedly—a scorpion, a treasure-trove, and the Messiah.'" And again, others said, "Perchance this is not the Messiah ben David, but the Messiah ben Joseph, who shall be slain before the other cometh." Thus the minds of men and their words went hither and thither about the sayings of this man Jesus in the Temple.

X. THE ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM.

[pg 123] I heard naught and saw naught of Jesus the Nazarene till the very last week of his life, and that was the week before the Passover. The winter had been a severe one, and much misery had arisen among the folk through the exactions of the Romans; indeed, an attempt had been made to throw off the Roman yoke. In several places the people had assembled in arms and attacked the soldiery, and in some cases had slain their sentries. Pilate had but sent off a cohort into the district, and all signs of discontent went underground. One of the leaders of the revolt, Jesus Bar Abbas, had been captured and thrown into prison. He, indeed, had attempted an insurrection in Jerusalem itself, where he was well known and popular among the common folk. When he was arrested, a riot had occurred, and one of the soldiers was slain who had been sent to arrest him; [pg 124] wherefore he lay now in prison on the charges of rebellion and murder. Yet many thought that this man had been put forth to try the temper of the people and the power of the Romans, in preparation for a more serious attempt to shake off the oppressor.

Yet who should lead the people? Jochanan, the only man whom of recent times the people followed gladly, had been done to death by Herod. One man alone since his death had won the people's heart, to wit, Jesus the cousin of Jochanan. He, and he alone, could lead the people against the Romans, and all men wondered if he would. In the midst of their wonder came news that Jesus the Nazarene was coming up to the Holy City for the Feast of Passover, the feast of redemption from Egypt. Would it prove this year a feast of redemption from the Romans? All hope of this depended upon this Jesus.

[pg 125] It was twenty-one years ago, but I can remember as if it were yesterday the excitement in Jerusalem when the news came that Jesus of Nazareth had arrived in the neighborhood, and was spending his Sabbath at the village of Bethany. All those who were disaffected against the Romans cried out, "A leader! a leader!" All those who were halt, sick, or blind, cried out, "A healer! a healer!" Wherever we went, there was no talk but of the coming deliverance. As I approached one group of men I heard them say, "When will it be? When will he give the sign? Will it be before or after the feast?" "Nay," said one of the crowd, a burly blacksmith he, "what day for the deliverance but the Passover day? But be it when it may, let him give the sign, and I shall be ready."

"And prove a new Maccabee," said one in the crowd, referring to his hammer, whereat a grim laugh arose.

The next day being the first of the week, which the Romans call the Day of the Sun, I was pondering the words of the Law in my little study chamber near the roof of my father's house in the Street of the Bakers near Herod's Palace, which at that time was inhabited by the Procurator, when suddenly I heard the patter of many feet in the street beneath me, and looking out, I saw

[pg 126] them all hurrying, as it seemed, to the Temple. I put on my sandals, and taking my staff in my hand and drawing my mantle over my head, hurried out after the passers-by. But when they came to the Broad Place before the Water Gate, they turned sharp to the right, and went down the Tyropœon as far as the Fountain Gate, where I overtook them. There I found all the most turbulent of the city population. Some of the men I knew had been engaged in the recent riot under Jesus Bar Abbas. Others were the leading Zealots in Jerusalem, and all were men eager for the freeing of the city from the Romans. And among them, too, were others who cared not for freedom, nor hated the Romans, but would only be too pleased if the city were given up to disorder and rapine. While these waited there, we heard cries from behind us, and looking back, saw filing out from the Temple courts on to the Xystus Bridge, and down into the Tyropœon, the brigade of beggars who pass almost their whole life in the Court of the Gentiles. These came down slowly, for among them were many halt and some blind, and all were old and feeble of limb.

[pg 127] "Why come they forth from the courts?" I asked; "and why are we waiting?" Then said one near me, "Knowest thou not that Jesus the Nazarene enters the city to-day? And men say he is to deliver us." And at that moment a cry arose among the folk, "Lo! there he is." Looking south, for a time I could see nothing, for the mid-day sun of the spring solstice was shining with that radiance which we Jews think is only to be seen in our land. But after a while I could discern, turning the corner of the Jericho Road near En Rogel, a mounted man, surrounded by a number of men and women on foot. "It is Jesus—it is Jesus!" all cried; "let us to meet him!" And with that, all but the lame rushed forward to meet him, and I with them.

[pg 128] It is but three hundred paces from the Fountain Gate to En Rogel, and the Nazarene and his friends had advanced somewhat to meet us, but in that short space the enthusiasm of the crowd had arisen to a very fever, and as we neared him one cried out, and all joined in the cry, "Hosanna Barabba! Hosanna Barabba!" and then they shouted our usual cry of welcome, "Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord!" and one bolder than his fellows called out, "Blessed be the coming of the kingdom!" At that there was the wildest joy among the people. Some tore off branches of palms, and stood by the way and waved them in front of Jesus; others took off each his *talith* and threw it down in front of the young ass on which Jesus rode, as if to pave the way into the Holy City with choice linen. But when I looked upon the face of Jesus, there were no signs there of the coming triumph; he sat with his head bent forward, his eyes downcast, and his face all sad. And a chill somehow came over me. I thought of that play of the Greeks which thou gavest me to read, in which the king of men, driving to his own palace at Argos, is enticed to enter it, stepping upon soft carpets like an idol of your gods, and so incurs the divine jealousy.

[pg 129] As we approached the Fountain Gate, the beggars from the Temple had come down to it, and joined in the shouting and the welcome; and one of them, Tobias ben Pinchas by name, who had, ever since men had known him, walked with a crutch, suddenly, in his excitement, raised his crutch and waved it over his head, and danced before Jesus, crying, "Hosanna Barabba! Hosanna Barabba!" and all men cried out, "A miracle, a miracle! what cannot this man perform?" And so, with a crowd surrounding him, Jesus entered Jerusalem and went up into the Temple. But I that year had been appointed one of the overseers who distributed the unleavened bread to the poor of the city for the coming Passover, and I had then to attend the meeting of my fellow-overseers.

[pg 130] That night there was no talk in Jerusalem but of the triumphant entry of Jesus. The city was crowded by Israelites who had come up to the capital for the festival, and a whisper went about that many of the strangers had been summoned by Jesus to Jerusalem to help in the coming revolt. During that night, wherever a Roman sentry stood, a crowd of the unruly would collect round him and jeer at him; and in one place the sentry had to use his spear, and wounded one of the crowd. So great was the tumult that, when the sentries were changed for the midnight watch, a whole company of soldiers accompanied the officer's guard and helped to clear the streets. Meanwhile, where was Jesus? And what was he doing in the midst of this tumult? I made inquiry, for perchance he might have been holding disputations about the Law, as is the custom with our Sages; but I learnt that he had left the city at the eleventh hour, and gone back to the village of Bethany, where he was staying. But I was thinking through all that evening of the strange contrast between the triumphant joy of his followers and the saddened countenance of the Nazarene.

[pg 131] Men knew not what was to become of this movement in favor of him. Most of the lower orders were hoping for a rising against the Romans to be led by this Jesus. Shrewder ones among the Better thought that the man was about to initiate a change in the spiritual government of our people. Some thought he would depose the Sadducees, and place the Pharisees in their stead. Others feared that he would carry into practice the ideals of the *Ebionim*, and raise the Poor against the Rich. Others said, "Why did he not enter by the gate of the Essenes, for he holdeth with them?" All knew that the coming Passover would be a trying time for Israel, owing to the presence of the man Jesus in Jerusalem, and the manifest favor in which he was held by the common folk. But amidst all this I could see only the pale, sad face of Jesus.

[pg 132]

XI. THE CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE.

[pg 135] On the morrow, being the second day of the week, which the Romans call the Day of the Moon, Jesus of Nazara came early into Jerusalem, and as soon as it was known that he had entered the city, all those that had gone out to greet him on the previous day, and many more with them who had heard of the miracle that he had performed, went to meet him in the Broad Place. And near upon the time of the mid-day sacrifice, Jesus and all these men went up to the Temple.

Now, I have told thee how, when Jesus had first come to Jerusalem, he had driven forth from the Court of the Gentiles all those who were engaged in selling beasts of sacrifice, or in changing foreign moneys for the shekels. But the money-changers and others had been replaced by the orders of the High Priest Hanan, and nothing had come of this action, nor in his later visits to Jerusalem had he done aught in the matter, and it was thought that he had acknowledged the right and the power of the priests to have the monopoly of the sale of sacrifices. Now, that day of the Moon was the tenth day of the month Nisan, and upon it were purchased all the lambs for the forthcoming Passover sacrifices, as it is said in the Law, "In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house." As this Paschal sacrifice is the only home sacrifice of us Jews, thou mightest imagine that each householder could obtain his lamb whence he would; but the priests say "No" to this, for if a man could take any chance lamb, it might not be without blemish. So it had grown to be a custom that, on the morning of the tenth day of Nisan, the heads of households in Jerusalem should wend their way to the courts of the Temple, there to select each man a lamb. And the priests had their profit in this, for they claimed from those who sold the lambs dues for every animal allowed to be in the courts. And the sellers again were agreeable to this, for none that had not the favor could sell the Paschal lambs. Whence it was that the price of a lamb in the Paschal week was more than three times as much as at any time of the year, and the poorer people murmured greatly.

[pg 137] Thus it happened that upon this day, when Jesus came into the courts of the Temple, these were crowded with all the householders of Jerusalem, and much chaffering and haggling was going on in the purchase of the lambs for the Passover. But Jesus, with the favor he had won from the people, was for this day at least Ruler of Jerusalem, and men wondered what he would do with regard to this sale and purchase of the beasts of sacrifice; for on his first coming to Jerusalem, as I have told thee, he had driven the sellers away, but afterwards, when they had been restored to their places, he had seemed to acquiesce. What would he do now, men thought, as they saw him advancing over the Xystus Bridge, the head of a vast concourse of people who would do all that he told them?

[pg 138] They had not long to wait, for no sooner had he entered the Temple courts, than he spake to those around him, and ordered them to remove the tables of the money-changers, with their weights and scales, without which no purchase could be; and no man dared say him nay, for all knew that the people were with him. And they, indeed, were rejoiced, for they took this as permission to buy their Paschal lambs where they would; and many of those who had been bargaining in the courts of the Temple went off at once to the market, and got them their lambs from thence. All this I heard of in the inner courts of the Temple, for it chanced that day that I had to offer a sin offering, and was waiting my turn in the Court of the Israelites while the priests were preparing the mid-day sacrifice. And I saw one coming up to Hanan and to Joseph Caiaphas, who were presiding over the sacrifice, and they spake earnestly to one another, and stopped the sacrifice, and came through the Court of the Israelites and went down the Court of the Women, and all of us followed them thither. And when we came to the Beautiful Gate, and turned to the right round the corner of the Temple, behold, we saw the flocks of Paschal lambs being driven through the Western Gates. And in the midst of the court stood Jesus, surrounded by a multitude clamoring and shouting. Then saw I Hanan lean over to Joseph Caiaphas, his son-in-law, and speak somewhat to him. Then the latter advanced in front of the priests and the scribes, who had come forth with him, and asked, "Who hath done this?" And Jesus said, "It is I." Then spake Joseph again and said, "Tell us, by what authority doest thou these things? And who gave thee this authority?"

[pg 139] Now, Joseph the High Priest was clad this day in the robes of his office, with tiara on head, the ephod on his breast, and silver bells and pomegranates round the edge of his garment. Whereas Jesus the Nazarene wore his wonted garb of a common country workman. Yet for the moment this common workman was the greater power of the two; since all men knew how he had been received by the people when he had come into Jerusalem, and that what he willed, all the people of Jerusalem willed also at that time. So all were hushed to hear what this Jesus would say to the question of the High Priest, since now they thought he must declare himself, and justify the power he was exercising.

[pg 140] But here again, as on former occasions, Jesus answered not directly to the question of the priests, but rather questioned them. He said, "I also ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of Jochanan, was it from heaven or of men? Answer me." And they answered and said unto Jesus, "We cannot tell." Then said Jesus unto them, "Then neither will I tell by what authority I do these things. To what is the matter

[pg 141] like? There was a man had two sons. And the man came to the first, and said, 'My son, go work in my vineyard.' But he said, 'I will not.' Howbeit afterward he repented, and went to work. But the man went to the second, and spake in like manner. But he answered, 'I go, sir.' But yet he went not. Whether of these twain did the will of his father?" And we all answered, "The first." Then Jesus looked slowly around at us all, and said, "This I say unto you, the publicans and harlots enter into the kingdom of heaven before you. For Jochanan came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye heeded him not, but the harlots and the publicans heeded him: but ye, even when ye saw this, repented not."

[pg 142] Now, at this public insult to all of priestly rank, I saw dart forward Hanan the High Priest, as if he would have rent the man Jesus. But Caiaphas his son-in-law caught him by the wrist, and whispered words in his ear. But Hanan broke loose, and called out in a loud voice, "My guard, my guard!" Whereat many of the folk who had come with Jesus into the Court of the Gentiles came forward round him, and put their hands to their weapons. He indeed said naught, nor seemed aware of the conflict that threatened. But Caiaphas turned, and in a loud voice said, "I go to perform the mid-day sacrifice," and walked slowly out of the court back to the Temple. And we all followed him.

Now, when we returned from performing the sacrifice, Jesus had left the courts of the Temple, which had become bare and empty of people. And as I went homeward to my house in the Street of the Bakers, I looked down from the Xystus Bridge, and saw trooping down the Tyropœon Jesus and a great multitude of the people, who crowded round him, as if eager to touch the hem of his garment. I stood and watched till they reached the Fountain Gate, through which he passed; and shortly afterwards I could see him on the road to the Fountain of Rogel, still accompanied by many of the people.

[pg 143] What was to come of that day's work I knew not. For the first time the discontent of the common folk with the management of the Temple by the priests had come to a head, and had resulted in this open conflict between Jesus and the High Priests. The city was full of strangers excited by thoughts of the coming festival. The common people had not yet calmed themselves from the thoughts of rebellion which had been raised by the rising of Jesus Bar Abbas and others. The whole city was as tow ready for the spark of fire.

[pg 144]

XII. THE WOES.

[pg 147] Now, on the morrow, being the third day of the week, Jesus of Nazara came again into the city, and the rumor of his coming spread through all the streets and places of Jerusalem. And going forth after the morning prayers, I found Jesus with many around him in the Broad Place before the Water Gate. And as I approached near to them, I saw the crowd part asunder and a procession coming through, and almost all the men there bowed and did reverence to the men who were passing through. Now, these were mostly of the Pharisaic sect, who were going to the Great Beth Hamidrash, to pursue the study of the Law and to give decisions on legal questions which the common folk put to them. And at their head walked Jochanan ben Zaccai, the President of the Tribunal. He was regarded as the most capable exponent of the Law since the death of Hillel, whose favorite pupil he had been, and men were wont to refer to him for decision in all the most difficult questions of life. He was walking at the head of the procession in his long *talith* with large borders and in his broad phylacteries. And he passed Jesus with a salutation, indeed, but in it was mingled some of the pride and contempt with which the masters of the Law regarded all those whom they call the Country-folk.

[pg 148] When these had passed, Jesus turned round to the people, and spake these words:

"The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not. For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, and love the chief place at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, 'Rabbi, Rabbi.'

[pg 149] "But be not ye called Rabbi: for One is your Master, and all ye are brethren.

"And call no man your father upon the earth: for One is your Father, which is in heaven.

“Neither be ye called Masters, for One is your Master.

“But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.

“But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows’ houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.

[pg 150] “Woe unto you, blind guides, which say, ‘Whosoever shall swear by the Temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the Temple, he is bound!’ Ye fools and blind! for whether is greater, the gold, or the Temple that sanctifieth the gold? And, ‘Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is bound!’ Ye fools and blind! for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift? Whoso, therefore, shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon. And whoso shall swear by the Temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein. And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon.

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the Law, judgment, mercy, and faith; these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

“Ye blind guides, which strain out the gnat and swallow a camel!

[pg 151] “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee! cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, ‘If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.’ Fill ye up, then, the measure of your fathers. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?”

[pg 152] And all the people were astonished at these words, for in many of his sayings and most of his actions Jesus had seemed to incline more to the sect of the Pharisees than to any other section of the house of Israel. And, indeed, in the opening words of his discourse he had granted their right to interpret the Law and to lead the people. Yet wherefore had he denounced them all without distinction as men insincere and void of truth? Hypocrites there were among them as among other classes of men. Often, indeed, their acts did not go with their words; but of what man can it be said that all his acts and words go together? These men were occupied in building a rampart to the Law, and holding the fortress against enemies without and dissensions within. Those ramparts might confine our actions within a narrow space, yet is it not well for all men to be kept perforce in the path of duty? I know thou thinkest otherwise, Aglaophonos. Thy Master the Stagyrite has taught thee that man should be a law unto himself; but we Jews willingly bear the yoke of the Law, because we believe it to be the yoke of the Lord. And in this matter Jesus had in every way shown himself to be a Jew of the Jews. Why, then, was he so in wrath against the interpreters of the Law?

[pg 153]

Yet were the common folk not displeased at these sayings of Jesus; nay, rather they applauded them. For in many ways our Sages have failed to find favor with the common folk of Israel; for besides that they would regulate their lives at every point, so that no man dare do this or do that except in the way the Sages prescribe, but chiefly the rabbis were out of favor with the folk for that they did openly despise and condemn all but those who were learned in the Law. The unlearned they called the Country-folk. Wherefore did the people hear with pleasure the bitter words Jesus spake against the scribes and the Pharisees.

[pg 154] The night of that same day an event occurred which roused the city of Jerusalem to a pitch of expectation such as I had never seen there. Two young Zealots, artisans, that were popular with their fellows for their kindness of heart and good humor, fell into an altercation with a Roman officer near the Sheep Gate, not far from Antonia, where all the Roman soldiers lie. Without a word of warning, the Roman officer drew his sword and killed one of these young men, and when his companion and the passers-by rebuked him, and would have seized him to take him before the procurator, he gave a signal, and a multitude of soldiers poured forth from Antonia and struck without mercy among the crowd. Five were killed and many were wounded, and the whole city was in an uproar at this proof of Roman insolence. “How long, O Lord?” the graybeards said,

raising their hands to heaven. And the younger men said, "Let us but wait the coming of Jesus the Liberator; surely before the Passover he will free us from the rule of the *Goyim*."

XIII. THE GREAT REFUSAL.

[pg 157] Thou canst imagine with what feelings of expectation all Jerusalem awaited the coming of Jesus next morning. Many of the Pharisees had come together the eve before, and spoken of the public insult Jesus had given to their sect on the preceding day. Hanan the High Priest, we heard, had quarrelled furiously with his son-in-law Joseph Caiaphas, for that he had not allowed him to summon his guard after the humiliation he had put upon them in the Temple. Yet neither the Pharisees nor the Sadducees who followed the High Priests dared lay hands upon this Jesus, because of the evident favor in which he was held by the common folk of Jerusalem, and above all by the many from country parts who had come up, like him, to spend the Passover in the Holy City. Among all these there was no talk but of Jesus the Liberator; nay! many spake of him as

[pg 158] Jesus the Christ. And if he were indeed to be the Christ, the King of Israel, the Founder of the New Kingdom, it could not be that he would suffer longer the yoke of the Romans to lie upon the neck of Israel.

Yet there was one thing that perplexed many, and opinion went hither and thither among the minds of men concerning it. The Christ who was to deliver Israel and to rule over mankind, was he not to be the son of David? Yet this Jesus was of Galilee, where the admixture of blood had been greatest in all Israel. "There is no unleavened bread in all Galilee," the scoffers used to say, meaning thereby that their genealogy was sprinkled with yeast, as we call foreign admixture. And for this man's genealogy, who could declare it? Many, indeed, as I have told thee, thought him to have no right even to be called son of his father. A *mamzer* shall not sit in the congregation of Israel. How, then, could one ascend Israel's throne?

[pg 159] When, therefore, Jesus came next morning from his lodging in Bethany, all Jerusalem turned out to welcome him, for the Passover was coming anear, and if aught was to be done to clear the city of the Romans, it must be done quickly, must be done on that day. Never saw I the courts of the Temple so crowded as on that day when I came thither, and found Jesus standing in the Court of the Gentiles, with almost all the leading men of Jerusalem and many of the common folk surging about him. Scarce room was left for the Roman sentry to march his guard in front of the Beautiful Gate. Yet he took no heed of us barbarians, but with shield and spear shouldered his way backward and forward, backward and forward, a sign to all men that the house of God was in the hands of God's enemies.

[pg 160] Never saw I the men of Jerusalem so exultant as on that morning. Wherever I looked, joy—a grim joy—was on every man's countenance, and there was no man there but was armed, save only Jesus himself and some ten or a dozen men who had come with him from Bethany, and these, indeed, were the only men who had not shown joy. Never had I seen the Nazarene with a countenance so saddened and weary. Yestermorn he had been flashing with anger and indignation as he spake his words against the Pharisees, but on this day his force seemed to be spent, and he appeared like one who had passed through a great agony.

Now, as they were standing there, I saw a man, one of the leaders of the Zealots, armed as if for battle, go up and lay a hand upon one of those with Jesus. He spake eagerly with him, and pointed with his thumb to the Roman soldier as he passed to and fro. But the other shook his head vehemently, and took his arm away from the grasp of the Zealot and turned his back upon him.

[pg 161] Now, at this moment certain of the Pharisees came through the crowd and advanced to Jesus. So great was the crowd that I heard not at first what they said unto him; but it must have been some question about the matter that was in all men's minds, for I heard his reply, and that, as was his wont, was in the form of a counter-question to their inquiry, for he said, "What think *ye* of the Christ? Whose son is he?" And they, speaking with the thought of all Israel, said, "The Christ is the son of David."

Then all men watched with expectancy to hear what the Nazarene would say to this; for if he agreed with them, then would he deny himself to be the Christ: for his genealogy had by no means been proven. But yet, how could he disprove the belief of all Israel, that the Christ was the Son of David? Yet that did he after the manner of our Sages, using words of Scripture as his confirmation; for he said unto them, "How then is it that David himself saith in the Book of

Psalms, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool?" David therefore himself calleth the Christ Lord; how then can the Christ be his son?"

[pg 162] At this the Pharisees knew not what to say, for no man had hitherto used that *stichos* of the Psalms, and they knew not what to reply. But the common folk were rejoiced exceedingly; joy spread on their faces, and I saw many a fist raised and shaken in exultant defiance at the Roman sentry, who walked hither and thither on his guard as if he were a living mass of steel.

Thereupon certain of the crowd who were known to be followers of Herod had speech with Jesus, and spake to him: "Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for no man; that thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in all truth—tell us, therefore, what thinkest thou: is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar or not? shall we give, or shall we not give?" All men were silent, and drew their breath to hear what Jesus might say to this. For if he claimed to be the Anointed One, to whom but to the King of Israel should Israel's tribute be paid?

[pg 163] But he said unto them, "Why tempt ye me? Bring me a denarius, that I may see it." And they brought one and put it into his hand. And he held it forth unto them, and said, "Whose is this image and superscription?" And they answered, "Cæsar's." And then Jesus said unto them, "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's." And these Herodians marvelled at the subtlety with which he had answered them, but the common folk were amazed and dumfounded at his answer. And soon I heard one say to another, "He denieth: he would pay tribute to Cæsar." And gradually all the men drew away from him, leaving him alone with only the company with him from Bethany.

[pg 164] But he, seeing this, turned to one of those with him, and said, "Peter, of whom do the kings of the earth take custom? of their own children, or of the aliens?" And Peter answered and said, "Of the aliens." Then Jesus said to him, "Then are the children free?" And Peter said to him, "Yes." Then said Jesus unto him, "Then do thou also give, as being an alien to them." The common folk heard this, indeed, but were in no wise satisfied. If they were to give tribute to the Romans for whatever cause, they were still to be under subjection to Rome, and then Jesus refused to be their Liberator; that had become clear to them of a sudden. And they drew still further away from him. And a deep silence of mortification fell upon all men there, so that thou couldst hear distinctly the tread of the Roman sentry as he moved on his march.

[pg 165] Amid the deep silence suddenly came a gentle tinkling, as of silver bells; it came nearer and nearer, and a crier called out, "Way for the High Priests!" Then Hanan the High Priest, with Caiaphas his son-in-law, and others of the priests accompanied by their guard, came down the steps from the Beautiful Gate. The Roman sentry stopped his march and stood upright, with spear on ground, and all made way as the procession of the High Priests passed through the court. All men were silent, and thou couldst hear the tinkling of the silver bells which were attached to the hems of the High Priests' garments. Hanan walked at the head of the procession with his usual haughty gait, and had nearly passed through the court, when he saw Jesus and those with him. At once he halted, and summoned one of the crowd to him. Then we saw much eager talk between this man and the High Priest. And Hanan summoned the captain of his guard, who would have turned towards Jesus, but that Joseph Caiaphas stayed him and spake unto Hanan, pointing to the Roman sentry. After much talk between these, the High Priests resumed their march and left the Temple. And all the other men began to pass away from the court, leaving Jesus and his men alone with none to listen to him. For the word passed swiftly in the mouths of all the men of Jerusalem,—“He refuseth; he would have us be slaves of the Romans forever.”

[pg 166]

XIV. THE MEETING OF THE HANANITES.

[pg 169] The next day being the fifth day of the week, and the thirteenth day of the month Nisan in that year, many rumors went about the city as to the man Jesus. There were who said that he had been seized by the guards of Hanan; others said that he had left the village of Bethany and gone no man knew whither. But for that day Jesus came not into Jerusalem, and men's minds were occupied more with one of the difficulties of our Law which form the occupation and delight of our Sages. I must explain this unto thee, for upon it turn the events of the next day, so fateful for the man about whom thou art inquiring. Thou canst easily understand what I shall say, for thou hast, I know, a copy of the Scriptures in Greek, for did I not procure it for thee?

It is said in the Law, thou wilt find, that the Passover lamb is to be killed in the twilight between

[pg 170] the fourteenth and the fifteenth of Nisan, and it is also said in our Law that the whole of the lamb must be consumed that evening. Now, in the years when the fifteenth of Nisan, which is the first day of the Passover, falleth upon the Sabbath, the killing and roasting of the lamb would take place on the Sabbath eve, when no killing must take place and no fire must be lit. Hence arises a conflict of the Law of the Passover with the Law of the Sabbath. Now, the older view was, that the Passover was superior to the Sabbath, and its law was to be followed in preference. This the priests held and followed, and in this they seemed to have the authority of the great Hillel, who also declared the Passover superior to the Sabbath.

[pg 171] But many among the Pharisees and the more pious preferred to slay the Passover lamb on the eve between the thirteenth and the fourteenth day of Nisan, and to eat it on the fourteenth day; that is, in those years when the Passover fell on the Sabbath, as was the case in the year of which I am now writing. It would appear that Jesus and his followers held with the latter opinion, for, as I have heard, on the eve of the fourteenth of Nisan he came stealthily into the city of Jerusalem, and ate the Passover lamb concealed in an upper chamber of one of his friends in the city. It showeth how earnest this man was in following the larger precepts of the Law, though in smaller matters he seemed to neglect it. For by this time he must have known that he was no longer safe in Jerusalem; and, indeed, he proved this by his secret entry into it. Yet in order to fulfil the Law, which saith, "The Passover lamb is to be eaten in Jerusalem," he risked his own and his followers' lives. Yet was he careful of them; for, as thou shalt soon hear, as soon as he had gone through the meal prescribed by the Law, he escaped out of Jerusalem.

[pg 172] Now, that night I was standing at the door of my house, looking upon the city bathed in the light of the moon, which was near its full, when suddenly a man seized me by the arm and said, "Thou art wanted." I looked, and behold it was Simon Kantheros, my brother-in-law. And I said to him, "Who wants me? and wherefore?" And Simon answered me and said, "Hanan the High Priest has summoned suddenly a meeting of the Sanhedrim at his house on the Mount of Olives." Then said I, "But if it be at his house, it can only be the Priestly Sanhedrim of Twenty-Three that he summons." "Nay, nay, man," answered Simon, "the case is urgent. He saith, 'any member of the Sanhedrim.' Come, then, with me, and quickly." So with that I seized my mantle and my staff, and went forth with him.

[pg 173] So we hurried across the market-place towards the Fish Gate, and as we passed near the Tower Antonia, we saw the flashing of red lights, and heard hoarse cries of command, and knew not what was toward. But when we arrived at the Fish Gate, we found them changing the sentries of the first watch, and knew that the second watch had begun. At first the sentry would not let us through the gate; but the officer was called, and Simon showed him his badge as member of the Sanhedrim. But even this would not have sufficed, but that Simon then pointed to his toga and the purple stripe, which showed that he was a Roman citizen of rank. Thereat the officer spake to the sentry, and we passed through the gate, and turned sharply to the right, and went down the road which leads to the valley of the Kidron. And as we were passing the Brook Kidron, we looked and saw dots of red light moving up the hill from the Garden of Gethsemane. And as we advanced up the hill of the Mount of Olives, we could see from time to time these red sparks preceding us; and when we came within sight of the High Priest's house, we saw them enter in and disappear.

[pg 174] Soon we ourselves had come up to the gate, and when we knocked, a wicket was opened, and a face peered out, and our names were asked. When we had told them, the gate was closed, and we had to wait some time. But at last the door was opened, and the captain of the guard received us. He took us through the passage which led into the open court, with the water-basin in the centre, round which we skirted, and ascended the steps into the inner house. And again we stopped before the hall-door while our names were asked, and again we had to wait till the door was at last opened. Then at last we entered the hall, and found Joseph Caiaphas the High Priest and many of his kinsmen seated round a long table. Caiaphas rose, and motioned us to two seats at the end of this table, and we seated ourselves.

[pg 175] When my eyes had become accustomed to the light, I looked round, and said the greeting of peace unto those I knew of the assembly. I can still remember many of their names. There was Ishmael ben Phabi, who had at first replaced Hanan as High Priest. There were also the four sons of Hanan—Eleazar, Jonathan, Theophilus, and Matthias. Then there were Kamithos the priest, and his two sons, Simon and Joseph. And beside these, I remember two men of my own generation—Elioni ben Kantheros and Chananyah ben Nedebai. Most of these men had been, or were afterwards, High Priests, and were all at this time members of the Priestly Sanhedrim. On the left of Caiaphas was a low stool, and, even as I looked, Hanan ben Seth the High Priest came in swiftly from a side door, and took a seat thereon. He glanced sharply round at each of us, counting our numbers, and we were exactly three and twenty. And when he saw me, he rose and spake somewhat harshly, "Meshullam ben Zadok, what dost thou here? This is a meeting of the Priestly Sanhedrim. Thou art a son of Israel." And I answered and said, "Simon Kantheros here, my kinsman, summoned me to the meeting, saying that any member of the Sanhedrim could attend." The High Priest thought for a moment—he seemed as if he were counting us again—then he said, "Be it so; thou art at least a true son of Israel, and this is not a formal meeting of the priests." He sat him down again, and we waited. At last an attendant entered by the same door, and, going up to the High Priest, spake to him. He nodded quickly, and dismissed him with a wave of his hand. And when he had passed through the door, Hanan the High Priest rose, and spake to us these words:—

[pg 176] "Kinsmen and colleagues, ye have all heard, if ye have not witnessed, how Jesus of Nazara

[pg 177] entered the Holy City on the first day of this week, amid the acclamations of his followers and many of the lower people, who even went so far as to hail him as the Deliverer. Now, to-morrow, as ye know, is the Passover. Who knows, if the thoughts of deliverance from Egypt, which come at that time, may not cause this man, or, if not him, his followers, to attempt a rising against the Romans our masters? We know that any such attempt would be entirely futile, but the very attempt itself would be the ruin of the nation. Ye know the character of the man Pontius Pilate. 'Tis but a short time since he slew, of wanton cruelty, certain Galilæans, even while they were making sacrifices, and all for mere suspicion of disaffection. Ye cannot but remember the building of Solomon's Aqueduct. Because money was taken from the Temple treasury for the building thereof, the people were inflamed, and would have risen against them. What did he but send his soldiers, disguised in civil garb and armed with clubs, among the people, when they came to make their protest? And without warning, and in mere wanton cruelty, did he give the signal for massacre. If he did this at a mere threat of a rising, what will happen should an actual rising take place to-morrow? It is our duty to see that such a calamity fall not upon this nation because of the presence of this rude provincial in our midst. Better one man should die than the nation should suffer. No time was to be lost, and I therefore have had this Jesus arrested, and he now awaits our pleasure in the atrium.

[pg 178] "Before I summon him to our presence, I would briefly state to you what seems to me and some of our friends here the right course to be followed. We purpose to hand him over at dawn to Pontius Pilate, to deal with him as he will. For he, by his spies, and by the demonstration on the first day of the week, must be aware of the danger of a rising to-morrow night, caused by this man's presence in our city. Indeed, it is for the very purpose of preventing a rising that he cometh up each year about the Passover to Jerusalem. Let it, then, be his care to prevent it how he will; we shall have done our part, and he cannot punish the nation, or us its leaders.

"But some of you will say, Why should we deliver this man up to the Romans, perhaps, or even probably, to his death? I say, that even apart from the danger which he offers to the State, he is worthy of death for his manifest blasphemies. He speaketh of himself as very God, and claims to be the Anointed One, and puts aside the Law as it pleaseth him. I say naught of his insolence in the Temple cloisters, for this matter concerns us that be priests, and in the matter of judgment we must not take account of aught that deals with our private concerns; yet it is manifest that he hath no reverence for the Lord's house: witnesses shall prove to you that he hath said he would sweep it away and build another. I wonder not that horror is expressed in your faces at this blasphemy.

[pg 179] "Yet, as ye know, our Law hath in mercy provided that none shall be condemned unless on the testimony of witnesses. The Law shall be fulfilled. Even now, as I speak, one of his followers, Judas, a man of Kerioth, is drawing forth from him his blasphemies before two witnesses, concealed, as is the custom. And even if he fail, I know this man Jesus; in his arrogance he will not scruple to repeat his blasphemies, even before us.

[pg 180] "Time presses, and I have but this to add before the prisoner is summoned: it is a wise provision of our Law, that in capital charges no final condemnation shall occur until the second day of the trial. The day before the Passover began this eve. If we keep to the Law, no condemnation can take place till after the first day of the Passover, by which time all the mischance may have come to pass. If the power of life and death were solely in our hands, I would not depart in aught from the wise provision of our forefathers; but, in truth, if this man be put to death, it will not be our doing, for his fate rests with Pilate. I would remind the younger members of the Sanhedrim that the final decision is not with us, and if they vote for this man's death, as I cannot doubt they will, considering the pressing danger to our nation, they need not fear to be called members of a bloodthirsty Sanhedrim, since his death, if death he suffers, will be at the hands of the Roman Procurator. In this strait I propose, therefore, to examine this man at once, and if, as I doubt not, he avows his guilt, to wait till the morning for his final condemnation, and in this way fulfil the Law. Summon the prisoner to our presence." Then, turning to Caiaphas, he said, "This is a matter between us and the Romans, for whom thou, Joseph, art the High Priest. Take thou, then, the interrogatory."

XV. THE EXAMINATION BEFORE THE SANHEDRIM.

[pg 183] Then from the lower end of the hall entered Jesus the Nazarene, with his arms bound with withes behind his back, and he was led by the captain of the guard up to the centre of the table opposite Caiaphas the High Priest. Then Caiaphas rose, and, looking at a paper in his hand which Hanan

had given him, said unto Jesus, "Jesus of Nazara, thou art accused before us of blasphemy, and of leading the people of Israel astray: what sayest thou thereto?" Jesus gazed haughtily at him, and answered, "I spake openly to all the world, I have taught in the synagogue and in the Temple, and in secret I have said nothing. Why askest thou me? Ask them which heard me what I have said unto them. Behold, they know what I have said." Then one of the men who had led Jesus in struck him with the palm of his hand, and said, "Answerest thou the High Priest so?" But Jesus turned, and said to him in a milder voice, "If I have said aught that is evil, bear witness thereof; but if well, why smitest thou me?" And Caiaphas the High Priest bade the man begone and bring in the witnesses. Then one man came forward and said he had heard Jesus call himself the Son of God. And another, that he had spoken of himself as if he were very God, and could do all that the Holy One, blessed be He, can perform. And yet another came forward and said he had heard Jesus speak of himself as Son of Man, and had thereby, as he thought, claimed to do what the Son of Man is said to do in the Prophets Daniel and Enoch. But no two of these witnesses agreed as to time and seasons, as is required by our Law. At last, however, two of them declared that on the preceding day in the Temple they had heard him say, "I will destroy this Temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another without hands." Now, during all this time Jesus had said naught, but looked before him with that rapt expression that I had seen upon him on the second occasion when I had heard him preach in the synagogue of the Galilæans. So Caiaphas the High Priest spake to him, saying, "Answerest thou naught to what these men witness against thee?" And Jesus made as if he heard not.

Then Hanan the High Priest leaned over to Caiaphas his son-in-law and spake some words to him. Then Caiaphas, rising, spake thus to Jesus: "Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Holy One, blessed be He?" Then Jesus raised his head, and gazing fixedly at the High Priest, said in a loud voice, "Thou hast said. And hereafter ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven." Then Hanan the High Priest rose and rent his clothes, as is our wont in time of mourning or when blasphemy is heard, and he called out in his keen, shrill voice, "What need we any further witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy; what think ye?" And he waved his hand to the captain of the guard, who removed the prisoner.

When the door was closed behind him, Hanan said, "What need we of further words? let us proceed to the judgment." And glancing over to Chananyah ben Nedebai, he said, "Chananyah, thou art the youngest; it is thine to pronounce judgment first. Is not this man guilty of death for his manifest blasphemy here before us?" And Chananyah said, "Yea." And so said all till Hanan had called upon thirteen to give judgment. Then said Hanan, "This man is for certain condemned to death, or at least to be handed over to the Roman Procurator: for already a majority of two have declared his death, even if all the rest were for an acquittal, as I cannot think possible. The Court will rise and reassemble at the time of the saying of the morning prayer, in order to confirm this judgment. Ye will not have long to wait, for even now I heard the crowing of the cock, and the dawn cannot be far off."

Then the Court broke up, and many of the younger members met together and discussed the case. And I was somewhat surprised to find that very few words of compassion were raised for Jesus. The stubborn conduct of the prisoner had set them against him in the first place, and his wild outburst had confirmed their ill thoughts of him. But most of all they were influenced by the thought that this was but a preliminary trial, and could only result in handing him over to the Roman Procurator, with whom the last word would be. None of them had seen aught of Jesus but during the last few days in the Temple, when he had interfered with their order and prerogatives. I cannot say I was convinced, either by Hanan's harangue at first, or by these men's arguments afterwards. But I was somewhat perplexed, feeling myself in some wise an intruder in their midst, not being of the priestly order. And as is my custom in such cases, I went out into the open air down the steps into the atrium.

There I found a great fire had been lit in the court, for the night was chilly. Near the fire Jesus was seated, with the High Priest's guard around him. As I came near, behold, one of the guard threw part of his mantle across the face of Jesus so as to blindfold him, and then struck him, saying, "Thou art a Prophet; prophesy who hath struck thee." And all the soldiers laughed and jeered. Then sought I the captain of the guard and told him this, and he said, "They mean naught of ill—they be rude fellows; howbeit, I will stop them." And he went up to them and reproved them. And I paced up and down the courtyard, with the silent stars above and the glowing fire beneath, till an apparitor of the High Priest summoned me, saying, "It beginneth to dawn at the back of the house; the Council will resume its sitting."

When I entered the council-chamber, I found all seated as before, but in the midst was a smaller table, at which was seated a scribe, with a roll in front of him. Then Hanan the High Priest came in, and said, "Ye have all had the time of deliberation prescribed by our sages in capital cases, or at least as much time as the urgency of the matter permits. We must proceed to the formal ratification of this man's sentence, for I cannot doubt that ye will see fit to confirm the righteous judgment which your zeal for the Lord caused you to pass just now upon this man. And again I would bid you remember you are voting, not so much for this man's death, as whether he is to be delivered to the Romans. Scribe, read the roll." And with that the scribe began to read our names, and we all answered to them. Then said Hanan, "We will now proceed to the voting," and called upon Chananyah ben Nedebai to record his vote. And he voted as before, for death. Then each in his turn, and all voted as before. And when my name was called upon I arose and hesitated, and Hanan looked over to me and said, "Thou speakest here by our courtesy,

[pg 190] Meshullam ben Zadok; if thou disagree with the unanimous opinion of thy colleagues, thou hadst best instruct us in thy reasons. What sayest thou? Is not he guilty of death who is guilty of blasphemy against the Most High?" "Yea," said I. "And was not this man Jesus manifestly guilty of blasphemy before us?" "Yea," said I. Then said Hanan swiftly to the scribe, "He voteth for death," and waved me down to my seat. And thereafter all the remaining members of the Council voted for death, finishing with Hanan as the oldest, who merely gave a grim nod to the scribe.

[pg 191] By this time it was quite light, and all the Council and many of Hanan's household joined together to say the morning prayers. After prayers most of the Council, with Hanan and Caiaphas at our head, followed the soldiers who guarded Jesus down from the Mount of Olives. As we came near the Brook Kidron, behold, a man with haggard face darted out from the shrubs by the wayside, and rushing up to Hanan the High Priest, dashed down at his feet a bag which chinked, and then disappeared into the wayside again. But Hanan only motioned with his finger to the bag at his feet, and the captain of his guard lifted it up and poured out its contents into his hand, and, behold, it was a number of new shekels from the Temple treasury. Then Hanan smiled grimly, and bade the captain put them aside. Thereupon we resumed our march, and soon came to the Aldgate. There we inquired where the Procurator was, and learnt that he had taken up his dwelling at the Palace of Herod, so that he might be in Jerusalem during the Passover, as was his wont, for fear of a rising at that time. Then we marched across and halted in front of the palace. And on our way the rumor spread throughout the city that Jesus the Nazarene was being carried before the Procurator, and soon our procession was joined by all who were free from household duties. I have explained to thee, have I not, how that for those of the older opinion this sixth day of the week was the day on which the Paschal lamb was to be sacrificed, and for all good Jews the morning would be devoted to the final search after the leaven. That morning, therefore, all the householders of Jerusalem and all the heads of families were occupied in the search after leaven, or in preparation for the Paschal sacrifice, and it was only the younger men, and those who cared not for acts of piety, who followed our procession on the way to Herod's Palace.

[pg 192] Now, all those of the Council were of the older opinion as to the Paschal sacrifice, and were about to perform it on the evening of that day. Wherefore it behoved them not to enter the dwellings of the heathen during that day, since it is their custom to bury the bodies of men in their gardens or in their houses, which render them a defilement to us Jews. Therefore on the day of a sacrifice no Jew may enter a heathen's house, above all the High Priest, upon whose sanctity the holiness of the nation depends. When, therefore, we came within twenty paces of the Procurator's dwelling, Hanan caused our procession to halt, and a summons to be sounded upon the trumpet. Thereat a lictor appeared, who asked our business, and to him Hanan gave a message to the Procurator. And here for the first time since he had been arrested I could see the countenance of Jesus near me, and it surprised me much to observe that all traces of anxiety and weariness had disappeared from it. He seemed relieved and resigned, and paid no heed to what was passing around him, seeming only to commune with himself, or perhaps, I should say, with some inward friend and comforter.

[pg 193] Then Pontius Pilate came forward and spake to Joseph Caiaphas the High Priest, and asked him what he would with him. And Caiaphas answered and said, pointing to Jesus, "This man have we captured and brought unto thee, finding that he was perverting the people, and declaring that he was the Anointed One of Israel, and therefore the rightful King of the Jews. Him therefore have we brought to thee, seeing it is a matter which toucheth our master the Emperor." Thereupon Pontius Pilate turned round, and said something in the barbarian tongue, and the guard of Roman soldiers came forward and took Jesus from the High Priest's guard, and took him with them up the steps of the palace. Then Pilate courteously invited the High Priests to enter the judgment-hall with him; but they, in answer, pointed out that on that holy day they dared not enter to any house but their own and the house of God. Then Pilate turned his back with scant courtesy, and reëntered the palace, and we and the common people remained outside waiting.

[pg 194]

XVI. CONDEMNATION AND EXECUTION.

[pg 197] And after a while of waiting, Pontius Pilate reappeared, and coming down to Caiaphas said, "He hath confessed; he shall join the other criminals that are to be executed this day." Then one among those who were waiting in the crowd came forward unto Pilate, and said unto him, "Master, it is a grace of our lord the Emperor that at our Passover there be released unto us one of the prisoners that are condemned to death." And Pilate answered and said, "That is so: whom will ye that I release?" And many of those in the crowd called out, "Jesus." And Pilate stepped back, and summoned to him a lictor. And shortly after soldiers came forward in the portico,

[pg 198]

bearing with them Jesus the Nazarene. Upon him was a purple robe of royalty, and upon his brow had been placed the faded rose-wreath of some reveller which had been put on in haste, and some of the thorns had torn the flesh, and blood was trickling down. When the people saw him, many cried out, "Not this Jesus, but Jesus Bar Abbas." And one man among the crowd called out, "Better Jesus Bar Abba¹⁰ than Jesus Bar Amma;"¹¹ and laughter and jeers followed. Then Pilate seemed puzzled, and called to him one of his lictors, who spake earnestly to him for a time, and then received an order from him. And going up the steps, he entered the palace. And shortly afterwards there came forward the man Jesus Bar Abbas of Jerusalem, of whom I have spoken to thee before. Now, he had been very popular among the folk, and had lost his liberty in a rising against the Romans, in which a Roman sentry had been slain. And there stood the two Jesuses—the one that had risen against the Romans, and the one that had told the people they should pay tribute to their Roman lords. It was manifest that the new-comer, who had done naught against the Romans, was more in favor with Pilate the Procurator, while the folk who had welcomed him on the first day of the week, on this the sixth day reviled and despised him because he had refused to lead a rising against the Romans as the other one had done. Then Pilate called out to them and said, "Whom will ye that I release unto you: Jesus who is called Bar Abbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?" And almost all the multitude cried, "Jesus Bar Abbas! Jesus Bar Abbas!" Then Pilate gave command, and the soldiers took tuck Jesus the Nazarene into the palace again, while others removed the fetters from Jesus Bar Abbas, and he came down the steps and disappeared among the crowd.

[pg 199]

[pg 200]

After a while, there came forward from the side gate a company of Roman soldiers, who took their stand in front of the steps of the palace, moving the crowd away therefrom. And shortly after, other soldiers brought down from above three men, each carrying two pieces of timber, one fixed across the top of the other, like unto the letter *tau*. One of these was Jesus the Nazarene, clad once more in his own garments, and without the rose-wreath; yet couldst thou see the mark of the thorns upon his brow. The others were, as I learnt, malefactors that had been condemned for robbery.

Just at this moment one touched me on the shoulder, and, turning, I found it was one of the servants of my household, who spake unto me and said, "Meshullam ben Zadok, thy father would speak with thee." And as the house was not far off, I went with him and spake to my father, who would have me accompany him on the search for leaven on that morn. For at that time I was betrothed, and next year I should have a house of my own, and would have to conduct the search for leaven as a master of a household. So I went round the house with my father—peace be upon him!—and searched for the leaven.

[pg 201]

By the time the search for the leaven had been concluded, the hour had come for the mid-day meal, at which all the members of my family assembled. But I hurried forth, as soon as the grace after meals had been said, to ascertain what had been the fate of the Nazarene. I could not go to the place of execution, for it is not seemly for a member of the Sanhedrim to attend an execution. I soon learnt that the Roman soldiers had conducted Jesus and the two others to the Hill Golgotha, somewhat apart from the place of stoning, where our Jewish executions were held.

[pg 202]

As I have explained to thee, Aglaophonos, our Sages have mercifully interpreted the words of the Law relating to the four modes of capital punishment among us—stoning, burning, beheading, and strangulation. For stoning they have substituted throwing down from a height after the criminal has been made to feel naught by drinking a mixture of frankincense, myrrh, and vinegar, which the ladies of Jerusalem supply as one of their pious duties. The criminal condemned to be burnt is in reality strangled, and then a lighted wick placed for a moment in his open mouth. In every way the aim of the Sages is to shorten the sufferings of the condemned man. But the Romans, at least in their execution of all but Roman citizens, seem rather to aim at the opposite of this; for they have selected, as their method of execution for slaves and criminals that are not citizens, suspension on a cross, by which all the organs of the body are strained and tortured till some vital organ gives way. It was this cruel form of punishment that the Romans were dealing out to Jesus the Nazarene. It happeneth oft that men live for two or three days on the cross, till they die even of hunger. I learnt to my dismay that Jesus had refused, with words of menace, to take the draught of myrrh and wine which the ladies of Jerusalem, as I have said, prepare for all men condemned to capital punishment, so that they may not feel the pain and torture.

[pg 203]

I could not go to the place of execution, as a member of the Sanhedrim. I hurried, therefore, to the northern slopes of the Temple mount, whence one can see Golgotha. At first I could discern naught, for sombre clouds covered all the heights of Scopus. But suddenly a flash came forth from them, followed by a dull roll of thunder, and I could see for a moment three crosses raised side by side on the top of Golgotha. Which of these held Jesus I knew not. I only knew that there was dying one who had seemed born to do honor to his nation, to help to deliver Israel from the men who were now torturing him to his death. Since the night before, events had so hurried past me that I had had no time to think of their import till now, when I sat me down in the purple shadow of Antonia, and gazed upon the hill of execution, where from time to time flashes showed me the three crosses on the hill.

This, then, was the end of the hopes connected with Jesus of Nazara, and of the empire which he had wielded over men's minds! But five days ago welcomed as a king, to-day executed with the ignominy reserved for the basest slave. Each day of his sojourn in Jerusalem he had made another and yet another class of the nation his enemies. First he threatens the power of the

[pg 204] priests; next he insults their opposites, the Pharisees; and then he puts to naught the hope of the common folk that he would help them rise against the Romans. Between Sabbath and Sabbath he had lost every friend; not even his immediate followers stood by his side in the hour of trial.

And yet no man had appeared in Israel for many generations endowed in so high a degree with all the qualities which mark us Israelites out from the nations around. He was tender to the poor; and which of the nations has given thought for its poor, their feelings as well as their welfare, like unto Israel? He bare the yoke of the Law willingly, yet as a son, not as a slave, of the Most High. God was to him, as to all of us, as an ever-present Father, to love, to chasten, and to reward; not as a harsh taskmaster or as a boon-companion, as with the commoner minds of thy people, Aglaophonos; nor as a vain figment of the reason, as with thy higher minds.

[pg 205] Even in what thou regardest as defects in our nation, this Jesus seemed also to share. Thou makest us the reproach that we give no thought to the beauties and grandeur of nature, and in nothing that I had seen and heard of him did the Nazarene differ from the rest of us in this. Thou complainest that we look upon life with all too much seriousness. "Ye cannot see the smile upon the face of things," thou saidst once to me. In this surely Jesus was a Jew of the Jews. We never saw him smile, still less heard him laugh. Thou wouldst hold up to me as a model Socrates thy teacher, who taught the Hellenes truth with a smile. That man there, dying upon the cross, had tried to teach Israel the truth with tears and threats.

Herein he followed the exemplar of our prophets. Only in Israel have the men who have led us farthest reviled us most. As our God, who has been to us a Father, has chastened us while he loved us, so our prophets have rebuked us their brethren. Many generations of men have passed since the last of the prophets spake his words of loving reproof. Now has appeared this Jesus, who again takes up their work.

[pg 206] But in one thing, and that a great thing, he differs from our prophets. All these spake never but as messengers of the Most High. This man alone of the prophets speaketh in his own name: therefore he hath been a stumbling-block and an offence unto us. He spake as one having authority, and it seemed to us as arrogance. And when we would speak with him in the gates, and know his own thought, he evaded our questionings and eluded our testings. He seemed aloof from us and our desires. All Israel was pining to be freed from the Roman yoke, and he would have us pay tribute to Rome for aye. Did he feel himself in some way as not of our nation? I know not; but in all ways we failed to know him.

And as I was communing thus, the sun shone forth from a rift in the clouds and illumined for a space the crown of Calvary, and I stretched forth my hands to the figures on the cross, and cried aloud in my perplexity, "Jesus, what art thou?" And then I bethought me, and my hands fell to my side, and I said, "What wert thou, Jesus?" Naught answered me but the distant rumbling from the gloomy clouds.

But the sun was setting over Israel, and I turned to my father's house, there once more to celebrate the Feast of the Deliverance from Egypt.

[pg 207]

EPILOGUE.

[pg 208] Thus far had I written to thee, Aglaophonos, as to what I knew of that Jesus the Nazarene about whom thou hast made so earnest inquiry. I had minded to hand it to Alphæus ben Simon, my cousin, who goeth this week in the galley to Cyprus, and thence would have passed it on to thee by the hands of one of our brethren who visit Greece from year to year. But there has happened to me an event which has given me much to think of with regard to this very matter of Jesus. It chanced that the day before yesterday I went from the Jewish quarter in this city of Alexandria for my usual walk along the Lochias, which adjoins it. There it is my custom to catch the sea air and to watch the vessels put into the Inner Port. Now, it chanced that as I came upon the Lochias, the vessel of Joppa had just hove-to in the Inner Port, and the passengers were being landed up the Broad Steps. Now these, by their *talith* and their faces, I knew to be Jews, and I went up to them, and greeted them with the greeting of peace. But among them one came to me with the look of recognition in his eyes, and said, "Knowest thou me not, Meshullam ben Zadok?" And, behold, it was Rufus ben Simon, whom I had known before I left the Holy City. So I welcomed him, and brought him home to this house of mine. And here he remaineth till the morrow, when he starteth forth to go to Cyrene.

Now, in my inquiries about old friends left behind, and new things that had happened since I went away, I failed not to ask about the followers of the Nazarene. To my wonder, I found that

[pg 209]

this Rufus had become one of them, even though he was but a child when Jesus died. Yet is he a good Jew in all else. He eateth only our meat, and keepeth our Sabbaths and festivals. But he avers that the Anointed One, whom we expect, has already appeared, and that he was Jesus the Nazarene. And upon my inquiry how he could know aught of Jesus but from the common talk, he put in my hand some Memorabilia of him, written down in Hebrew by one of his chief followers, Matathias.¹² This have I read again and again, and pondered much thereon. Nor have I been able to sleep these two nights for the new thoughts about Jesus that have come to me from reading these memoirs of him.

[pg 210]

For, behold, he appeareth in these records of him by his own followers in far other wise than he showed himself to us in public at Jerusalem. In all his public acts among us he was full of scornful rebukes; among his own followers he was tender and loving. Scarcely ever could we get him to speak out to us plainly his views about matters of public concern. He would always give us an answer full of evasion and enigma, but to his followers he would explain all his meaning over and over again, illustrated with parable. There at Jerusalem he almost always turned to the people his harsher side. I saw him on every occasion on which he appeared in public in Jerusalem, and, save only in his sermons, he was always rebuking one or another, just like the prophets of old. And the manner of his rebuking towards us was as with scorpions, whereas among his own he would mingle tenderness even with his reproaches. Nor, saving his sermons, which few heard but those who already followed him, had he aught novel to tell us about the things of life. He seemed to us as if he would destroy the temple of our faith, nor in his public actions did he give any promise of building it up anew. Yet to those with him he would continually be telling what to do and how to do it, till, behold, a new manner of life, fair and seemly, stood before them, fulfilled of Jewish righteousness, with a tender mercy which was the man's very own.

[pg 211]

I need not detail to thee, Aglaophonos, what these acts and words were which have given me an altogether new light as to the character and thoughts of the man Jesus. From certain words of thine in thy letter, which I understood not then when I first read it, I can see now that thou must have had some such account of the life and death of Jesus before thee as this which Rufus hath shown unto me. Now I can understand wherefore thou hast inquired about this Jesus with such eager insistence. And to thee as a Gentile the revelation of his character would come with more attractive force than to us that be Jews. For in almost every way this Jesus fulfilleth the idea of a Jew as we have it in these later days. Working with his hands, yet teaching with his voice; obedient to the Law, yet ever eager to take a new law upon himself; doing acts of love among men, yet rebuking in love their ill acts, and doing all things as in the presence of the Glory;—in all this Jesus was as the best of our Sages.

[pg 212]

“Wherefore, then, did ye suffer him to be killed?” thou wilt ask me, and indeed I ask myself. If I were to answer thee in the way Jesus was wont to answer us, I would say, “Why did ye Hellenes condemn Socrates to the hemlock?” For he was as much the Ideal of the Hellenes as Jesus of the Jews. Every Hellene would be eloquent and reasonable, and that was Socrates. Every Jew would be wise and good and pious, and that was Jesus. Yet each of these men, if I read their lives aright, died the death of a criminal, because he cared not for that which his fellow-countrymen cared for most. Socrates died because he would force his countrymen to examine by their reason the ideas and ideals which they all accepted. Jesus died for the same reason, but also for another—for that he cared naught for our national hopes. We were all panting for national freedom; he would have naught of it. Whether it was that he felt in some sort to be not of our nation, I know not; but in all his teaching he dealt with us as men, not as Jews. It is this, I can see, that has attracted thee to his doctrine, whereas thou wert always scornful of our Jewish pretensions, as thou calledst them.

[pg 213]

Yet herein again was he at one with the best thoughts of our Sages. Our God is the God of all, and his Law shall be one day the Law of all. If we yearn for the universal realm of the Messiah, it is as much for the sake of the world as for ourselves. But methinks I see in the thoughts of this Jesus an idea quite other than ours as to what the Anointed One shall be and shall do. We hope for him as a Deliverer and a Conqueror with force of arms by God's aid. Now, Jesus seemed not to think of the Anointed One in any way like this. His mind seemed to be filled rather with the picture of the Servant of God as drawn by the Prophet Esaias. Thou knowest the passage, Aglaophonos; I remember thy laughter when first I read it thee, that men could look forward to contempt and hatred as a good. Truly the idea is far different from the saying of the barbarian, “Woe to the conquered!” And surely to us all, Jew and Gentile, Greek and barbarian, the greatest of joys is this—to worst an equal foe in fair fight. But to Esaias the prophet, and to Jesus the Nazarene after him, the higher victory is with him that is worsted in the battle of life. That will come as good tidings to nine out of every ten of men.

[pg 214]

Therefore, if Jesus thought of himself as the Anointed One, it was as being anointed with the woes of the vanquished, with the sweat and the blood of the lowly and despised. Now I know why he seemed so sad when he was greeted at Jerusalem as a victor. He had spent his life in trying to impress a new ideal upon his people, and they had welcomed him only as the fulfilment of the old ideal which he desired to replace. None of thy poets have given a drama with more of *eironeia* in it than this.

Yet why did he remain silent before us as to these ideas of his? If, indeed, these were his ideas; for even with the new light given by the Hebrew Memorabilia, I can see his thought but dimly. Why spake he not his own thought to the people in Jerusalem, and tell us no longer to hope for worldly dominion as the best means for spreading the Law of the Lord, but rather to be as

servants of God, even as Esaias the Prophet hath spoken? Was it that he wished to carry out the description of the prophet even to every iota of his text? For, behold, the prophet sayeth, "He let himself be humbled, and opened not his mouth." If so, then was the death of Jesus but a sublime suicide.

[pg 215] For surely by this silence he has committed a grievous sin against us his people. For if we committed aught of sin and crime that handed him over to the Romans as a pretender to empire, he indeed shared our sin and crime by his silence. Ye Hellenes were at least greater in fault than we in the matter of Socrates; for ye condemned him after he had spoken his whole mind and made known his whole thought to his people; whereas we condemned one who, I make bold to say, was even greater than thy Socrates, mainly because of what seemed to us his sullen and arrogant silence, broken only by a confession of guilt when he knew he was not guilty.

But yet, let me not be as harsh in judgment upon him after his death, as perhaps I was when I allowed the sentence to be declared against him without protest. He, least of all men, could have died with a lie upon his lips. In some sort and in some way he must have combined the thought of the triumphant Messiah and of the despised Servant of God. For in those Memorabilia of him which have come into my hands during the last days as being a message from him that is dead, I find these two things combined. He speaketh ever of the blessedness of the poor and the humble and the despised, even as the Ebionim speak. So that if a man would be blessed, he would choose a lowly career, even as did Jesus. Yet withal he speaketh oft of himself as the Son of Man, and every Jew that heard him would think he knew what he thereby claimed. For in the Prophets Daniel and Enoch it is clearly said that the Son of Man would come in victory over the world; and what other could this universal victor be than the Anointed One whom the prophets had foretold? If Jesus put another meaning upon the prophetic words, why spake he not his meaning fully unto the people? All we may have gone like sheep astray, but he that might have been our shepherd went apart alone with God.

[pg 217] O Jesus, why didst thou not show thyself to thy people in thy true character? Why didst thou seem to care not for aught that we at Jerusalem cared for? Why, arraigned before the appointed judges of thy people, didst thou keep silence before us, and, by thus keeping silent, share in pronouncing judgment upon thyself? We have slain thee as the Hellenes have slain Socrates their greatest, and our punishment will be as theirs. Then will Israel be even as thou wert, despised and rejected of men—a nation of sorrows among the nations. But Israel is greater than any of his sons, and the day will come when he will know thee as his greatest. And in that day he will say unto thee, "My sons have slain thee, O my son, and thou hast shared our guilt."

[pg 218]

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Footnotes

1. This, like most other utterances of Jesus, found in this book but not in the Gospels, is also found in the early patristic literature.—ED.
2. Ὀχλος τοῦ ἀγροῦ, seemingly the translation of the Hebrew גֵּרָה עַם used for those unlearned in the Law; this term seems to have passed through much the same history as "pagan."—ED.

3. Each of the Jewish rabbis used to sum up his teaching in some pregnant sentence. These are given in the Talmudic treatise, *The Ethics of the Fathers*.—ED.
4. José ben Joeser said, “Let thy place be a place of meeting for the wise; dust thyself with the dust of their feet, and drink greedily of their teaching” (*Pirke Aboth*, i. 4).—ED.
5. The rabbis use this expression, *Bath Kol*, for any supernatural revelation.—ED.
6. This Logion is only found elsewhere in one MS. of the Gospels, viz., in the Codex Bezae at Cambridge.—ED.
7. It must have been from a report of this discourse, and that given on [p. 92](#), that the majority of those utterances of Jesus have been derived which are known in modern theology as “Agrapha.”—ED.
8. The gospel version reads “Samaritan.”—ED.
9. See note on [p. 42](#).—ED.
10. *Bar Abba* means “son of his father.”
11. *Bar Amma* means “son of his mother.”—ED.
12. Probably the so-called Primitive Gospel, the common foundation of our Synoptics. But the date is somewhat early.—ED.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK AS OTHERS SAW HIM: A RETROSPECT, A.D.
54 ***

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