

THE SHEPHERD OF HERMAS.

VISION I.

THE master, who reared me, had sold me to one Rhoda in Rome. After many years, I met her again, and began to love her as a sister. After a certain time I saw her bathing in the river Tiber; and I gave her my hand, and led her out of the river. So, seeing her beauty, I reasoned in my heart, saying, 'Happy were I, if I had such an one to wife both in beauty and in character.' I merely reflected on this and nothing more. After a certain time, as I was journeying to Cumæ, and glorifying God's creatures for their greatness and splendour and power, as I walked I fell asleep. And a Spirit took me, and bore me away through a pathless tract, through which no man could pass: for the place was precipitous, and broken into clefts by reason of the waters. When then I had crossed the river, I came into the level country, and knelt down, and began to pray to the Lord and to confess my sins. Now, while I prayed, the heaven was opened, and I see the lady, whom I had desired, greeting me from heaven, saying, 'Good morrow, Hermas.' And, looking at her, I said to her, 'Lady, what doest *thou* here?' Then she answered me, 'I was taken up, that I might convict thee of thy sins before the Lord.' I said to her, 'Dost thou now convict me?' 'Nay, not so,' said she, 'but hear the words, that I shall say to thee. God, Who dwelleth in the heavens, and created out of nothing the things which are, and increased and multiplied them for His holy Church's sake, is wroth with thee, for that thou didst sin against me.' I answered her and said, 'Sin against thee? In what way? Did I ever speak an unseemly word unto thee? Did I not always regard thee as a goddess? Did I not always respect thee as a sister? How couldst thou falsely charge me, lady, with such villainy and uncleanness?' Laughing she saith unto me, 'The desire after evil entered into thine heart. Nay, thinkest thou not that it is an evil deed for a righteous man, if the evil desire should enter into his

heart? It is indeed a sin and a great one too,' saith she; 'for the righteous man entertaineth righteous purposes. While then his purposes are righteous, his repute stands stedfast in the heavens, and he finds the Lord easily propitiated in all that he does. But they that entertain evil purposes in their hearts, bring upon themselves death and captivity, especially they that claim for themselves this present world, and boast in its riches, and cleave not to the good things that are to come. Their souls shall rue it, seeing that they have no hope, but have abandoned themselves and their life. But do thou pray unto God, and He shall heal thine own sins, and those of thy whole house, and of all the saints.'

2. As soon as she had spoken these words the heavens were shut; and I was given over to horror and grief. Then I said within myself, 'If this sin is recorded against me, how can I be saved? Or how shall I propitiate God for my sins which are full-blown? Or with what words shall I entreat the Lord that He may be propitious unto me?' While I was advising and discussing these matters in my heart, I see before me a great white chair of snow-white wool; and there came an aged lady in glistening raiment, having a book in her hands, and she sat down alone, and she saluted me, 'Good morrow, Hermas.' Then I, grieved and weeping, said, 'Good morrow, lady.' And she said to me, 'Why so gloomy, Hermas, thou that art patient and good-tempered, and art always smiling? Why so downcast in thy looks, and far from cheerful?' And I said to her, 'Because of an excellent lady's saying that I had sinned against her.' Then she said, 'Far be this thing from the servant of God! Nevertheless the thought did enter into thy heart concerning her. Now to the servants of God such a purpose bringeth sin. For it is an evil and mad purpose to overtake a devout spirit that hath been already approved, that it should desire an evil deed, and especially if it be Hermas the temperate, who abstaineth from every evil desire, and is full of all simplicity and of great guilelessness.

3. 'Yet it is not for this that God is wroth with thee, but that thou mayest convert thy family, that hath done wrong against the Lord and against you their parents. But out of fondness for thy children thou didst not admonish thy family, but didst suffer it to become fearfully corrupt. Therefore the Lord is wroth with thee. But He will heal all thy past sins, which have been committed in thy family; for by reason of their sins and iniquities thou hast been corrupted by the affairs of this world. But the great mercy of the Lord had pity on thee and thy

family, and will strengthen thee, and establish thee in His glory. Only be not thou careless, but take courage, and strengthen thy family. For as the smith hammering his work conquers the task which he wills, so also doth righteous discourse repeated daily conquer all evil. Cease not therefore to reprove thy children; for I know that if they shall repent with all their heart, they shall be written in the books of life with the saints.' After these words of hers had ceased, she saith unto me, 'Wilt thou listen to me as I read?' Then say I, 'Yes, lady.' She saith to me, 'Be attentive, and hear the glories of God.' I listened with attention and with wonder to that which I had no power to remember; for all the words were terrible, such as man cannot bear. The last words however I remembered, for they were suitable for us and gentle. 'Behold, the God of Hosts, Who by His invisible and mighty power and by His great wisdom created the world, and by His glorious purpose clothed His creation with comeliness, and by His strong word fixed the heaven, and founded the earth upon the waters, and by His own wisdom and providence formed His holy Church, which also He blessed—behold, He removeth the heavens and the mountains and the hills and the seas, and all things are made level for His elect, that He may fulfil to them the promise which He promised with great glory and rejoicing, if so be that they shall keep the ordinances of God, which they received, with great faith.'

4. When then she finished reading and arose from her chair, there came four young men, and they took away the chair, and departed towards the East. Then she calleth me unto her, and she touched my breast, and saith to me, 'Did my reading please thee?' And I say unto her, 'Lady, these last words please me, but the former were difficult and hard.' Then she spake to me, saying, 'These last words are for the righteous, but the former are for the heathen and the rebellious.' While she yet spake with me, two men appeared, and took her by the arms, and they departed, whither the chair also had gone, towards the East. And she smiled as she departed and, as she was going, she saith to me, 'Play the man, Hermas.'

VISION 2.

1. I was on the way to Cumæ, at the same season as last year, and I called to mind my last year's vision as I walked; and again a Spirit taketh me, and carrieth me away to the same place as last year. When then I arrived at the place, I fell upon my knees, and began to pray to

the Lord, and to glorify His name, for that he counted me worthy, and made known unto me my former sins. But after I had risen up from prayer, I behold before me the aged lady, whom also I had seen last year, walking and reading a little book. And she saith to me, 'Canst thou report these things to the elect of God?' I say unto her, 'Lady, I cannot recollect so much; but give me the little book, that I may copy it.' 'Take it,' saith she, 'and be sure and return it to me.' I took it, and retiring to a certain spot in the country I copied it letter for letter: for I could not make out the syllables. When then I had finished the letters of the book, suddenly the book was snatched out of my hand; but by whom I did not see.

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

'Thy seed, Hermas, have sinned against God, and have blasphemed the Lord, and have betrayed their parents through great wickedness, yea, they have got the name of betrayers of parents, and yet they did not profit by their betrayal; and they still further added to their sins wanton deeds and reckless wickedness; and so the measure of their transgressions was filled up. But make these words known to all thy children, and to thy wife who shall be as thy sister; for she too refraineth not from using her tongue, wherewith she doeth evil. But, when she hears these words, she will refrain, and will find mercy. After that thou hast made known unto them all these words, which the Master commanded me that they should be revealed unto thee, then all their sins which they sinned aforetime are forgiven to them; yea, and to all the saints that have sinned unto this day, if they repent with their whole heart, and remove double-mindedness from their heart. For the Master sware by His own glory, as concerning His elect; that if, now that this day has been set as a limit, sin shall hereafter be committed, they shall not find salvation; for repentance for the righteous hath an end; the days of repentance are accomplished for all the saints; whereas for the Gentiles there is repentance until the last day. Thou shalt therefore say unto the rulers of the Church, that they direct their paths in righteousness, that they may receive in full the promises with abundant glory. Ye therefore that work righteousness be steadfast, and be not double-minded, that ye may have admission with the holy angels. Blessed are ye, as many as endure patiently the great tribulation that cometh, and as many as shall not deny their life. For the

Lord swear concerning His Son, that those who denied their Lord should be rejected from their life, even they that are now about to deny Him in the coming days; but to those who denied Him aforetime, to them mercy was given of His great lovingkindness.

3. 'But do thou, Hermas, no longer bear a grudge against thy children, neither suffer thy sister to have her way, so that they may be purified from their former sins. For they shall be chastised with a righteous chastisement, unless thou bear a grudge against them thyself. The bearing of a grudge worketh death. But thou, Hermas, hast had great tribulations of thine own, by reason of the transgressions of thy family, because thou hadst no care for them. For thou wast neglectful of them, and wast mixed up with thine evil transactions. But herein is thy salvation, in that thou didst not depart from the living God, and in thy simplicity and thy great continence. These have saved thee, if thou abidest therein; and they save all who do such things, and walk in guilelessness and simplicity. These men prevail over all wickedness, and continue unto life eternal. Blessed are all they that work righteousness. They shall never be destroyed. But thou shalt say to Maximus, "Behold tribulation cometh (upon thee), if thou think fit to deny a second time. *The Lord is nigh unto them that turn unto Him*, as it is written in Eldad and Modat, who prophesied to the people in the wilderness.'"

4. Now, brethren, a revelation was made unto me in my sleep by a youth of exceeding fair form, who said to me, 'Whom thinkest thou the aged woman, from whom thou receivedst the book, to be?' I say, 'The Sibyl.' 'Thou art wrong,' saith he, 'she is not.' 'Who then is she?' I say. 'The Church,' saith he. I said unto him, 'Wherefore then is she aged?' 'Because,' saith he, 'she was created before all things; therefore is she aged; and for her sake the world was framed.' And afterwards I saw a vision in my house. The aged woman came, and asked me, if I had already given the book to the elders. I said that I had not given it. 'Thou hast done well,' she said, 'for I have words to add. When then I shall have finished all the words, it shall be made known by thy means to all the elect. Thou shalt therefore write two little books, and shalt send one to Clement, and one to Grapte. So Clement shall send to the foreign cities, for this is his duty; while Grapte shall instruct the widows and the orphans. But thou shalt read (the book) to this city along with the elders that preside over the Church.

VISION 3.

The third vision, which I saw, brethren, was as follows. After fasting often, and entreating the Lord to declare unto me the revelation which He promised to show me by the mouth of the aged woman, that very night the aged woman was seen of me, and she said to me, 'Seeing that thou art so importunate and eager to know all things, come into the country where thou abidest, and about the fifth hour I will appear, and will show thee what thou oughtest to see.' I asked her, saying, 'Lady, to what part of the country?' 'Where thou wilt,' saith she. I selected a beautiful and retired spot; but before I spoke to her and named the spot, she saith to me, 'I will come, whither thou wilt.' I went then, brethren, into the country, and I counted up the hours, and came to the place where I appointed her to come, and I see an ivory couch placed there, and on the couch there lay a linen cushion, and on the cushion was spread a coverlet of fine linen of flax.

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

Then she came with six young men, the same whom I had seen before, and she stood by me, and listened attentively to me, as I prayed and confessed my sins to the Lord. And she touched me, and said: 'Hermas, make an end of constantly entreating for thy sins; entreat also for righteousness, that thou mayest take some part forthwith to thy family.' Then she raiseth me by the hand, and leadeth me to the couch, and saith to the young men, 'Go ye, and build.' And after the young men had retired and we were left alone, she saith to me, 'Sit down here.' I say to her, 'Lady, let the elders sit down first.' 'Do as I bid thee,' saith she, 'sit down.' When then I wanted to sit down on the right side, she would not allow me, but beckoned me with her hand that I should sit on the left side. As then I was musing thereon, and was sad because she would not permit me to sit on the right side, she saith to me, 'Art thou sad, Hermas? The place on the right side is for others, even for those who have already been well-pleasing to God, and have suffered for the Name's sake. But thou lackest much that thou shouldest sit with them; but as thou abidest in thy simplicity, even so

continue, and thou shalt sit with them, thou and as many as shall have done their deeds, and have suffered what they suffered.'

2. 'What did they suffer?' say I. 'Listen,' saith she. 'Stripes, imprisonments, great tribulations, crosses, wild beasts, for the Name's sake. Therefore to them belongs the right side of the Holiness—to them, and to all who shall suffer for the Name. But for the rest is the left side. Howbeit, to both, to them that sit on the right, and to them that sit on the left, are the same gifts, and the same promises, only they sit on the right and have a certain glory. Thou indeed art very desirous to sit on the right with them, but thy shortcomings are many; yet thou shalt be purified from thy shortcomings; yea, and all that are not double-minded shall be purified from all their sins unto this day.'

When she had said this, she wished to depart; but, falling at her feet, I entreated her by the Lord that she would show me the vision which she promised. Then she again took me by the hand, and raiseth me, and seateth me on the couch at the left hand, while she herself sat on the right. And lifting up a certain glistening rod, she saith to me, 'Seest thou a great thing?' I say to her, 'Lady, I see nothing.' She saith to me, 'Look thou; dost thou not see in front of thee a great tower being builded upon the waters, of glistening square stones?' Now the tower was being builded foursquare by the six young men that came with her. And countless other men were bringing stones, some of them from the deep, and others from the land, and were handing them to the six young men. And they took them and builded. The stones that were dragged from the deep they placed in every case, just as they were, into the building, for they had been shaped, and they fitted in their joining with the other stones; and they adhered so closely one with another that their joining could not possibly be detected; and the building of the tower appeared as if it were built of one stone. But of the other stones which were brought from the dry land, some they threw away, and some they put into the building; and others they broke in pieces, and threw to a distance from the tower. Now many other stones were lying round the tower, and they did not use them for the building; for some of them were mildewed, and others had cracks in them, and others were too short, and others were white and round, and did not fit into the building. And I saw other stones thrown to a distance from the tower, and coming to the way, and yet not staying in the way, but rolling to where there was no way; and others falling into the fire and burning there; and others falling near the waters, and yet not able to

roll into the water, although they desired to roll and to come to the water.

3. When she had shown me these things, she wished to hurry away. I say to her, 'Lady, what advantage is it to me to have seen these things, and yet not to know what the things mean?' She answered and said unto me, 'Thou art an over-curious fellow, in desiring to know all that concerns the tower.' 'Yea, lady,' I said, 'that I may announce it to my brethren, and that they [may be the more gladdened and] when they hear [these things] may know the Lord in great glory.' Then said she, 'Many shall hear; but when they hear, some of them shall be glad, and others shall weep. Yet even these latter, if they hear and repent, shall likewise be glad. Hear thou therefore the parables of the tower; for I will reveal all things unto thee. And trouble me no more about revelation; for these revelations have an end, seeing that they have been completed. Nevertheless thou wilt not cease asking for revelations; for thou art shameless.

'The tower, which thou seest building, is myself, the Church, which was seen of thee both now and aforetime. Ask, therefore, what thou wilt concerning the tower, and I will reveal it unto thee, that thou mayest rejoice with the saints.' I say unto her, 'Lady, since thou didst hold me worthy once for all, that thou shouldest reveal all things to me, reveal them.' Then she saith to me, 'Whatsoever is possible to be revealed to thee, shall be revealed. Only let thy heart be with God, and doubt not in thy mind about that which thou seest.' I asked her, 'Wherefore is the tower builded upon waters, lady?' 'I told thee so before,' said she, 'and indeed thou dost enquire diligently. So by thy enquiry thou discoverest the truth. Hear then why the tower is builded upon waters; it is because your life is saved and shall be saved by water. But the tower has been founded by the word of the Almighty and Glorious Name, and is strengthened by the unseen power of the Master.'

4. I answered and said unto her, 'Lady, this thing is great and marvellous. But the six young men that build, who are they, lady?'

'These are the holy angels of GOD, that were created first of all, unto whom the Lord delivered all His creation to increase and to build it, and to be masters of all creation. By their hands therefore the building of the tower will be accomplished.' 'And who are the others who are bringing the stones?' 'They also are holy angels of God; but these six are superior to them. The building of the tower then shall be accomplished, and all alike shall rejoice in heart (as they stand) round the tower,

and shall glorify God that the building of the tower was accomplished.' I enquired of her, saying, 'Lady, I could wish to know concerning the end of the stones, and their power, of what kind it is.' She answered and said unto me, 'It is not that thou of all men art especially worthy that it should be revealed to thee; for there are others before thee, and better than thou art, unto whom these visions ought to have been revealed. But that the name of God may be glorified, it hath been revealed to thee, and shall be revealed, for the sake of the doubtful-minded, who question in their hearts whether these things are so or not. Tell them that all these things are true, and that there is nothing beside the truth, but that all are stedfast, and valid, and established on a firm foundation.

5. 'Hear now concerning the stones that go to the building. The stones that are squared and white, and that fit together in their joints, these are the apostles and bishops and teachers and deacons, who walked after the holiness of God, and exercised their office of bishop and teacher and deacon in purity and sanctity for the elect of God, some of them already fallen on sleep, and others still living. And because they always agreed with one another, they both had peace among themselves and listened one to another. Therefore their joinings fit together in the building of the tower.' 'But they that are dragged from the deep, and placed in the building, and that fit together in their joinings with the other stones that are already builded in, who are they?' 'These are they that suffered for the name of the Lord.' 'But the other stones that are brought from the dry land, I would fain know who these are, lady.' She said, 'Those that go to the building, and yet are not hewn, these the Lord hath approved because they walked in the uprightness of the Lord, and rightly performed His commandments.' 'But they that are brought and placed in the building, who are they?' 'They are young in the faith, and faithful; but they are warned by the angels to do good, because wickedness was found in them.' 'But those whom they rejected and threw away, who are they?' 'These have sinned, and desire to repent, therefore they were not cast to a great distance from the tower, because they will be useful for the building, if they repent. They then that shall repent, if they repent, will be strong in the faith, if they repent now while the tower is building. But if the building shall be finished, they have no more any place, but shall be castaways. This privilege only they have, that they lie near the tower.

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

'But they that have the cracks, who are they?' 'These are they that have discord in their hearts against one another, and are not at peace among themselves; who have an appearance of peace, but when they depart from one another, their wickednesses abide in their hearts. These are the cracks which the stones have. But they that are broken off short, these have believed, and have their greater part in righteousness, but have some parts of lawlessness; therefore they are too short, and are not perfect.'

'But the white and round stones, which did not fit into the building, who are they, lady?' She answered and said to me, 'How long art thou foolish and stupid, and enquirest everything, and understandest nothing? These are they that have faith, but have also riches of this world. When tribulation cometh, they deny their Lord by reason of their riches and their business affairs.' And I answered and said unto her, 'When then, lady, will they be useful for the building?' 'When,' she replied, 'their wealth, which leadeth their souls astray, shall be cut away, then will they be useful for God. For just as the round stone, unless it be cut away, and lose some portion of itself, cannot become square, so also they that are rich in this world, unless their riches be cut away, cannot become useful to the Lord. Learn first from thyself. When thou hadst riches, thou wast useless; but now thou art useful and profitable unto life. Be ye useful unto God, for thou thyself also art taken from the same stones.'

7. 'But the other stones which thou sawest cast far away from the tower and falling into the way and rolling out of the way into the regions where there is no way, these are they that have believed, but by reason of their double heart they abandon their true way. Thus thinking that they can find a better way, they go astray and are sore distressed, as they walk about in the regions where there is no

way. But they that fall into the fire and are burned, these are they that finally rebelled from the living God, and it no more entered into their hearts to repent by reason of the lusts of their wantonness and of the wickednesses which they wrought. But the others, which fall near the waters and yet cannot roll into the water, wouldest thou know who are they? These are they that heard the word, and would be baptized unto the name of the Lord. Then, when they call to their remembrance the purity of the truth, they change their minds, and go back again after their evil desires.' So she finished the explanation of the tower. Still importunate, I asked her further, whether for all these stones that were rejected and would not fit into the building of the tower there was repentance, and they had a place in this tower. 'They can repent,' she said, 'but they cannot be fitted into this tower. Yet they shall be fitted into another place much more humble, but not until they have undergone torments, and have fulfilled the days of their sins. And they shall be changed for this reason, because they participated in the Righteous Word; and then shall it befall them to be relieved from their torments, if the evil deeds, that they have done, come into their heart; but if these come not into their heart, they are not saved by reason of the hardness of their hearts.'

8. When then I ceased asking her concerning all these things, she saith to me; 'Wouldest thou see something else?' Being very desirous of beholding, I was greatly rejoiced that I should see it. She looked upon me, and smiled, and she saith to me, 'Seest thou seven women round the tower?' 'I see them, lady,' say I. 'This tower is supported by them by commandment of the Lord. Hear now their employments. The first of them, the woman with the strong hands, is called Faith; through her are saved the elect of God. And the second, that is girded about and looketh like a man, is called Continence; she is the daughter of Faith. Whosoever then shall follow her, becometh happy in his life, for he shall refrain from all evil deeds, believing that, if he refrain from every evil desire, he shall inherit eternal life.' 'And the others, lady, who be they?' 'They are daughters one of the other. The name of the one is Simplicity, of the next, Knowledge, of the next, Guilelessness, of the next, Reverence, of the next, Love. When then thou shalt do all the works of their mother, thou canst live.' 'I would fain know, lady,' I say, 'what power each of them possesseth.' 'Listen then,' saith she, 'to the powers which they have. Their powers are mastered each by the other, and they follow each other, in the order in which they were born.'

From Faith is born Continencc, from Continencc Simplicity, from Simplicity Guilelessness, from Guilelessness Reverence, from Reverence Knowledge, from Knowledge Love. Their works then are pure and reverent and divine. Whosoever therefore shall serve these women, and shall have strength to master their works, shall have his dwelling in the tower with the saints of God.' Then I asked her concerning the seasons, whether the consummation is even now. But she cried aloud, saying, 'Foolish man, seest thou not that the tower is still a-building? Whensoevcr therefore the tower shall be finished building, the end cometh; but it shall be built up quickly. Ask me no more questions: this reminder is sufficient for you and for the saints, and is the renewal of your spirits. But it was not revealed to thyself alone, but in order that thou mightest show these things unto all. After three days—for thou must understand first, and I charge thee, Hermas, first with these words, which I am about to speak to thee—(I charge thee to) tell all these things into the ears of the saints, that hearing them and doing them they may be purified from their wickednesses, and thyself also with them.

9. 'Hear me, my children. I brought you up in much simplicity and guilelessness and reverence, through the mercy of the Lord, Who instilled righteousness into you, that ye might be justified and sanctified from all wickedness and all crookedness. But ye will not to cease from your wickedness. Now then hear me and be at peace among yourselves, and have regard one to another, and assist one another, and do not partake of the creatures of God alone in abundance, but share them also with those that are in want. For some men through their much eating bring weakness on the flesh, and injure their flesh: whereas the flesh of those who have nought to eat is injured by their not having sufficient nourishment, and their body is ruined. This exclusiveness therefore is hurtful to you that have and do not share with them that are in want. Look ye to the judgment that cometh. Ye then that have more than enough, seek out them that are hungry, while the tower is still unfinished; for after the tower is finished, ye will desire to do good, and will find no place for it. Look ye therefore, ye that exult in your wealth, lest they that are in want shall moan, and their moaning shall go up unto the Lord, and ye with your [abundance of] good things be shut outside the door of the tower. Now therefore I say unto you that are rulers of the Church, and that occupy the chief seats; be not ye like unto the sorcerers. The sorcerers indeed carry their

drugs in boxes, but ye carry your drug and your poison in your heart. Ye are case-hardened, and ye will not cleanse your hearts and mix your wisdom together in a clean heart, that ye may obtain mercy from the Great King. Look ye therefore, children, lest these divisions of yours deprive you of your life. How is it that ye wish to instruct the elect of the Lord, while ye yourselves have no instruction? Instruct one another therefore, and have peace among yourselves, that I also may stand gladsome before the Father, and give an account concerning you all to your Lord.'

10. When then she ceased speaking with me, the six young men, who were building, came, and took her away to the tower, and other four lifted the couch, and took it also away to the tower. I saw not the face of these, for they were turned away. And, as she went, I asked her to reveal to me concerning the three forms, in which she had appeared to me. She answered and said to me; 'As concerning these things thou must ask another, that they may be revealed to thee.' Now she was seen of me, brethren, in my first vision of last year, as a very aged woman and seated on a chair. In the second vision her face was youthful, but her flesh and her hair were aged, and she spake to me standing; and she was more gladsome than before. But in the third vision she was altogether youthful and of exceeding great beauty, and her hair alone was aged; and she was gladsome exceedingly and seated on a couch. Touching these things I was very greatly anxious to learn this revelation. And I see the aged woman in a vision of the night, saying to me, 'Every enquiry needs humility. Fast therefore, and thou shalt receive what thou askest from the Lord.' So I fasted one day; and that very night there appeared unto me a young man, and he saith to me, 'Seeing that thou askest me revelations offhand with entreaty, take heed lest by thy much asking thou injure thy flesh. Sufficient for thee are these revelations. Canst thou see mightier revelations than those thou hast seen?' I say unto him in reply, 'Sir, this one thing alone I ask, concerning the three forms of the aged woman, that a complete revelation may be vouchsafed me.' He saith to me in answer, 'How long are ye without understanding? It is your double-mindedness that maketh you of no understanding, and because your heart is not set towards the Lord.' I answered and said unto him again, 'From thee, Sir, we shall learn the matters more accurately.'

11. 'Listen,' saith he, 'concerning the three forms, of which thou enquirest. In the first vision wherefore did she appear to thee an aged

woman and seated on a chair? Because your spirit was aged, and already decayed, and had no power by reason of your infirmities and acts of double-mindedness. For as aged people, having no longer hope of renewing their youth, expect nothing else but to fall asleep, so ye also, being weakened with the affairs of this world, gave yourselves over to repining, and cast not your cares on the Lord; but your spirit was broken, and ye were aged by your sorrows.' 'Wherefore then she was seated on a chair, I would fain know, Sir.' 'Because every weak person sits on a chair by reason of his weakness, that the weakness of his body may be supported. So thou hast the symbolism of the first vision.

12. 'But in the second vision thou sawest her standing, and with her countenance more youthful and more gladsome than before; but her flesh and her hair aged. Listen to this parable also,' saith he. 'Imagine an old man, who has now lost all hope of himself by reason of his weakness and his poverty, and expecteth nothing else save the last day of his life. Suddenly an inheritance is left him. He heareth the news, riseth up and full of joy clothes himself with strength, and no longer lieth down, but standeth up, and his spirit, which was now broken by reason of his former circumstances, is renewed again, and he no longer sitteth, but taketh courage; so also was it with you, when ye heard the revelation which the Lord revealed unto you. For He had compassion on you, and renewed your spirits, and ye laid aside your maladies, and strength came to you, and ye were made powerful in the faith, and the Lord rejoiced to see you put on your strength. And therefore He showed you the building of the tower; yea, and other things also shall He show you, if with your whole heart ye be at peace among yourselves.

13. 'But in the third vision ye saw her younger and fair and glad-some, and her form fair. For just as when to some mourner cometh some piece of good tidings, immediately he forgetteth his former sorrows, and admitteth nothing but the tidings which he hath heard, and is strengthened thenceforth unto that which is good, and his spirit is renewed by reason of the joy which he hath received; so also ye have received a renewal of your spirits by seeing these good things. And whereas thou sawest her seated on a couch, the position is a firm one; for the couch has four feet and standeth firmly; for the world too is upheld by means of four elements. They then that have fully repented shall be young again, and founded firmly, seeing that they have re-

pented with their whole heart. There thou hast the revelation entire and complete. Thou shalt ask nothing more as touching revelation; but if anything be lacking still, it shall be revealed unto thee.'

[VISION 4.]

1. The fourth vision which I saw, brethren, twenty days after the former vision which came unto me, for a type of the impending tribulation. I was going into the country by the Campanian Way. From the high road, it is about ten stades; and the place is easy for travelling. While then I am walking alone, I entreat the Lord that He will accomplish the revelations and the visions which He showed me through His holy Church, that He may strengthen me and may give repentance to His servants which have stumbled, that His great and glorious Name may be glorified, for that He held me worthy that He should show me His marvels. And as I gave glory and thanksgiving to Him, there answered me as it were the sound of a voice, 'Be not of doubtful mind, Hermas.' I began to question in myself and to say, 'How can I be of doubtful mind, seeing that I am so firmly founded by the Lord, and have seen glorious things?' And I went on a little, brethren, and behold, I see a cloud of dust rising as it were to heaven, and I began to say within myself, 'Can it be that cattle are coming, and raising a cloud of dust?' for it was just about a stade from me. As the cloud of dust waxed greater and greater, I suspected that it was something supernatural. Then the sun shone out a little, and behold, I see a huge beast like some sea-monster, and from its mouth fiery locusts issued forth. And the beast was about a hundred feet in length, and its head was as it were of pottery. And I began to weep, and to entreat the Lord that He would rescue me from it. And I remembered the word which I had heard, 'Be not of doubtful mind, Hermas.' Having therefore, brethren, put on the faith of the Lord and called to mind the mighty works that He had taught me, I took courage and gave myself up to the beast. Now the beast was coming on with such a rush, that it might have ruined a city. I come near it, and, huge monster as it was, it stretcheth itself on the ground, and merely put forth its tongue, and stirred not at all until I had passed by it. And the beast had on its head four colours; black, then fire and blood colour, then gold, then white.

2. Now after I had passed the beast, and had gone forward about thirty feet, behold, there meeteth me a virgin arrayed as if she were going forth from a bride-chamber, all in white and with white sandals, veiled up to her forehead, and her head-covering consisted of a turban, and her hair was white. I knew from the former visions that it was the Church, and I became more cheerful. She saluteth me, saying, 'Good morrow, my good man'; and I saluted her in turn, 'Lady, good morrow.' She answered and said unto me, 'Did nothing meet thee?' I say unto her, 'Lady, such a huge beast, that could have destroyed whole peoples: but, by the power of the Lord and by His great mercy, I escaped it.' 'Thou didst escape it well,' saith she, 'because thou didst cast thy care upon God, and didst open thy heart to the Lord, believing that thou canst be saved by nothing else but by His great and glorious Name. Therefore the Lord sent His angel, which is over the beasts, whose name is Segri, and *shut its mouth, that it might not hurt thee.* Thou hast escaped a great tribulation by reason of thy faith, and because, though thou sawest so huge a beast, thou didst not doubt in thy mind. Go therefore, and declare to the elect of the Lord His mighty works, and tell them that this beast is a type of the great tribulation which is to come. If therefore ye prepare yourselves beforehand, and repent (and turn) unto the Lord with your whole heart, ye shall be able to escape it, if your heart be made pure and without blemish, and if for the remaining days of your life ye serve the Lord blamelessly. Cast your cares upon the Lord and He will set them straight. Trust ye in the Lord, ye men of doubtful mind, for He can do all things, yea, He both turneth away His wrath from you, and again He sendeth forth His plagues upon you that are of doubtful mind. Woe to them that hear these words and are disobedient; it were better for them that they had not been born.'

3. I asked her concerning the four colours, which the beast had upon its head. Then she answered me and said, 'Again thou art curious about such matters.' 'Yes, lady,' said I, 'make known unto me what these things are.' 'Listen,' said she; 'the black is this world in which ye dwell; and the fire and blood colour showeth that this world must perish by blood and fire; and the golden part are ye that have escaped from this world. For as the gold is tested by the fire and is made useful, so ye also [that dwell in it] are being tested in yourselves. Ye then that abide and pass through the fire will be purified by it. For as the gold loses its dross, so ye also shall cast away all sorrow and

tribulation, and shall be purified, and shall be useful for the building of the tower. But the white portion is the coming age, in which the elect of God shall dwell; because the elect of God shall be without spot and pure unto life eternal. Wherefore cease not thou to speak in the ears of the saints. Ye have now the symbolism also of the tribulation which is coming in power. But if ye be willing, it shall be nought. Remember ye the things that are written beforehand.' With these words she departed, and I saw not in what direction she departed; for a noise was made; and I turned back in fear, thinking that the beast was coming.

REVELATION 5.

As I prayed in the house, and sat on the couch, there entered a man glorious in his visage, in the garb of a shepherd, with a white skin wrapped about him, and with a wallet on his shoulders and a staff in his hand. And he saluted me, and I saluted him in return. And he immediately sat down by my side, and he saith unto me, 'I was sent by the most holy angel, that I might dwell with thee the remaining days of thy life.' I thought he came to tempt me, and I say unto him, 'Why, who art thou? For I know,' say I, 'unto whom I was delivered.' He saith to me, 'Dost thou not recognise me?' 'No,' I say. 'I,' saith he, 'am the shepherd, unto whom thou wast delivered.' While he was still speaking, his form was changed, and I recognised him as being the same, to whom I was delivered; and straightway I was confounded, and fear seized me, and I was altogether overwhelmed with distress that I had answered him so wickedly and senselessly. But he answered and said unto me, 'Be not confounded, but strengthen thyself in my commandments which I am about to command thee. For I was sent,' saith he, 'that I might show thee again all the things which thou didst see before, merely the heads which are convenient for you. First of all, write down my commandments and my parables; and the other matters thou shalt write down as I shall show them to thee. The reason why,' saith he, 'I command thee to write down first the commandments and parables is, that thou mayest read them off-hand, and mayest be able to keep them.' So I wrote down the commandments and parables, as he commanded me. If then, when ye hear them, ye keep them and walk in them, and do them with a pure heart, ye shall receive from the Lord all things that He promised you; but if, when ye hear them, ye do not repent, but still add to your sins, ye shall receive from the Lord the opposite. All these the shepherd, the angel of repentance, commanded me so to write.

MANDATE THE FIRST.

'First of all, believe that God is One, even He Who created all things and set them in order, and brought all things from non-existence into being, Who comprehendeth all things, being alone incomprehensible. Believe Him therefore, and fear Him, and in this fear be continent. Keep these things, and thou shalt cast off all wickedness from thyself, and shalt clothe thyself with every excellence of righteousness, and shalt live unto God, if thou keep this commandment.'

MANDATE THE SECOND.

He saith to me; 'Keep simplicity and be guileless, and thou shalt be as little children, that know not the wickedness which destroyeth the life of men. First of all, speak evil of no man, neither take pleasure in listening to a slanderer. Otherwise thou that hearest too shalt be responsible for the sin of him that speaketh the evil, if thou believest the slander, which thou hearest; for in believing it thou thyself also wilt have a grudge against thy brother. So then shalt thou be responsible for the sin of him that speaketh the evil. Slander is evil; it is a restless demon, never at peace, but always having its home among factions. Refrain from it therefore, and thou shalt have success at all times with all men. But clothe thyself in reverence, wherein is no evil stumbling-block, but all things are smooth and gladsome. Work that which is good, and of thy labours, which God giveth thee, give to all that are in want freely, not questioning to whom thou shalt give, and to whom thou shalt not give. Give to all; for to all God desireth that there should be given of His own bounties. They then that receive shall render an account to God why they received it, and to what end; for they that receive in distress shall not be judged, but they that receive by false pretence shall pay the penalty. He then that giveth is guiltless; for as he received from the Lord the ministration to perform it, he hath performed it in sincerity, by making no distinction to whom to give or not to give. This ministration then, when sincerely performed, becomes glorious in the sight of God. He therefore that ministereth thus sincerely shall live unto God. Therefore keep this commandment, as I have told thee, that thine own repentance and that of thy household may be found to be sincere, and [thy] heart pure and undefiled.'

MANDATE THE THIRD.

Again he saith to me; 'Love truth, and let nothing but truth proceed out of thy mouth, that the Spirit which God made to dwell in this flesh, may be found true in the sight of all men; and thus shall the Lord, Who dwelleth in thee, be glorified; for the Lord is true in every word, and with Him there is no falsehood. They therefore that speak lies set the Lord at nought, and become robbers of the Lord, for they do not deliver up to Him the deposit which they received. For they received of Him a spirit free from lies. This if they shall return a lying spirit, they have defiled the commandment of the Lord and have become robbers.' When then I heard these things, I wept bitterly. But seeing me weep he saith, 'Why weepest thou?' 'Because, Sir,' say I, 'I know not if I can be saved.' 'Why so?' saith he. 'Because, Sir,' I say, 'never in my life spake I a true word, but I always lived deceitfully with all men and dressed up my falsehood as truth before all men; and no man ever contradicted me, but confidence was placed in my word. How then, Sir,' say I, 'can I live, seeing that I have done these things?' 'Your supposition,' he saith, 'is right and true, for it behoved thee as a servant of God to walk in truth, and no complicity with evil should abide with the Spirit of truth, nor bring grief to the Spirit which is holy and true.' 'Never, Sir,' say I, 'heard I clearly words such as these.' 'Now then,' saith he, 'thou hearest. Guard them, that the former falsehoods also which thou spakest in thy business affairs may themselves become credible, now that these are found true; for they too can become trustworthy. If thou keep these things, and from henceforward speak nothing but truth, thou shalt be able to secure life for thyself. And whosoever shall hear this command, and abstain from falsehood, that most pernicious habit, shall live unto God.'

MANDATE THE FOURTH.

1. 'I charge thee,' saith he, 'to keep purity, and let not a thought enter into thy heart concerning another's wife, or concerning fornication, or concerning any such like evil deeds; for in so doing thou committest a great sin. But remember thine own wife always, and thou shalt never go wrong. For should this desire enter into thine heart, thou wilt go wrong, and should any other as evil as this, thou committest sin. For this desire in a servant of God is a great sin; and if any man doeth this evil deed, he worketh out death for himself. Look to it

therefore. Abstain from this desire; for, where holiness dwelleth, there lawlessness ought not to enter into the heart of a righteous man.' I say to him, 'Sir, permit me to ask thee a few more questions.' 'Say on,' saith he. 'Sir,' say I, 'if a man who has a wife that is faithful in the Lord detect her in adultery, doth the husband sin in living with her?' 'So long as he is ignorant,' saith he, 'he sinneth not; but if the husband know of her sin, and the wife repent not, but continue in her fornication, and her husband live with her, he makes himself responsible for her sin and an accomplice in her adultery.' 'What then, Sir,' say I, 'shall the husband do, if the wife continue in this case?' 'Let him divorce her,' saith he, 'and let the husband abide alone: but if after divorcing his wife he shall marry another, he likewise committeth adultery.' 'If then, Sir,' say I, 'after the wife is divorced, she repent and desire to return to her own husband, shall she not be received?' 'Certainly,' saith he, 'if the husband receiveth her not, he sinneth and bringeth great sin upon himself; nay, one who hath sinned and repented must be received, yet not often; for there is but one repentance for the servants of God. For the sake of her repentance therefore the husband ought not to marry. This is the manner of acting enjoined on husband and wife. Not only,' saith he, 'is it adultery, if a man pollute his flesh, but whosoever doeth things like unto the heathen committeth adultery. If therefore in such deeds as these likewise a man continue and repent not, keep away from him, and live not with him. Otherwise, thou also art a partaker of his sin. For this cause ye were enjoined to remain single, whether husband or wife; for in such cases repentance is possible. I,' said he, 'am not giving an excuse that this matter should be concluded thus, but to the end that the sinner should sin no more. But as concerning his former sin, there is One Who is able to give healing; it is He Who hath authority over all things.'

2. I asked him again, saying, 'Seeing that the Lord held me worthy that thou shouldst always dwell with me, suffer me still to say a few words, since I understand nothing, and my heart has been made dense by my former deeds. Make me to understand, for I am very foolish, and I apprehend absolutely nothing.' He answered and said unto me, 'I,' saith he, 'preside over repentance, and I give understanding to all who repent. Nay, thinkest thou not,' saith he, 'that this very act of repentance is understanding? To repent is great understanding,' saith he. 'For the man that hath sinned understandeth that he hath done evil before the Lord, and the deed which he hath done entereth into his

heart, and he repenteth, and doeth no more evil, but doeth good lavishly, and humbleth his own soul and putteth it to torture because it sinned. Thou seest then that repentance is great understanding.' 'It is on this account therefore, Sir,' say I, 'that I enquire everything accurately of thee; first, because I am a sinner; secondly, because I know not what deeds I must do that I may live, for my sins are many and various.' 'Thou shalt live,' saith he, 'if thou keep my commandments and walk in them; and whosoever shall hear these commandments and keep them, shall live unto God.'

3. 'I will still proceed, Sir,' say I, 'to ask a further question.' 'Speak on,' saith he. 'I have heard, Sir,' say I, 'from certain teachers, that there is no other repentance, save that which took place when we went down into the water and obtained remission of our former sins.' He saith to me; 'Thou hast well heard; for so it is. For he that hath received remission of sins ought no longer to sin, but to dwell in purity. But, since thou enquirest all things accurately, I will declare unto thee this also, so as to give no excuse to those who shall hereafter believe, or those who have already believed, on the Lord. For they that have already believed, or shall hereafter believe, have not repentance for sins, but have only remission of their former sins. To those then that were called before these days the Lord has appointed repentance. For the Lord, being a discernor of hearts and foreknowing all things, perceived the weakness of men and the manifold wiles of the devil, how that he will be doing some mischief to the servants of God, and will deal wickedly with them. The Lord then, being very compassionate, had pity on His handiwork, and appointed this (opportunity of) repentance, and to me was given the authority over this repentance. But I say unto you,' saith he, 'if after this great and holy calling any one, being tempted of the devil, shall commit sin, he hath only one (opportunity of) repentance. But if he sin off-hand and repent, repentance is unprofitable for such a man; for he shall live with difficulty.' I say unto him, 'I was quickened into life again, when I heard these things from thee so precisely. For I know that, if I shall add no more to my sins, I shall be saved.' 'Thou shalt be saved,' he saith, 'thou and all, as many as shall do these things.'

4. I asked him again, saying, 'Sir, since once thou dost bear with me, declare unto me this further matter also.' 'Say on,' saith he. 'If a wife, Sir,' say I, 'or, it may be, a husband fall asleep, and one of them marry, doth the one that marrieth sin?' 'He sinneth not,' saith he, 'but if he remain single, he investeth himself with more exceeding honour

and with great glory before the Lord; yet even if he should marry, he sinneth not. Preserve purity and holiness therefore, and thou shalt live unto God. All these things, which I speak and shall hereafter speak unto thee, guard from this time forward, from the day when thou wast committed unto me, and I will dwell in thy house. But for thy former transgressions there shall be remission, if thou keepest my commandments. Yea, and all shall have remission, if they keep these my commandments, and walk in this purity.'

MANDATE THE FIFTH.

I. 'Be thou long-suffering and understanding,' he saith, 'and thou shalt have the mastery over all evil deeds, and shalt work all righteousness. For if thou art long-suffering, the Holy Spirit that abideth in thee shall be pure, not being darkened by another evil spirit, but dwelling in a large room shall rejoice and be glad with the vessel in which he dwelleth, and shall serve God with much cheerfulness, having prosperity in himself. But if any angry temper approach, forthwith the Holy Spirit, being delicate, is straitened, not having [the] place clear, and seeketh to retire from the place; for he is being choked by the evil spirit, and has no room to minister unto the Lord, as he desireth, being polluted by angry temper. For the Lord dwelleth in long-suffering, but the devil in angry temper. Thus that both the spirits then should be dwelling together is inconvenient and evil for that man in whom they dwell. For if you take a little wormwood, and pour it into a jar of honey, is not the whole of the honey spoiled, and all that honey ruined by a very small quantity of wormwood? For it destroyeth the sweetness of the honey, and it no longer hath the same attraction for the owner, because it is rendered bitter and hath lost its use. But if the wormwood be not put into the honey, the honey is found sweet and becomes useful to its owner. Thou seest [then] that long-suffering is very sweet, beyond the sweetness of honey, and is useful to the Lord, and He dwelleth in it. But angry temper is bitter and useless. If then angry temper be mixed with long-suffering, long-suffering is polluted and the man's intercession is no longer useful to God.' 'I would fain know, Sir,' say I, 'the working of angry temper, that I may guard myself from it.' 'Yea, verily,' saith he, 'if thou guard not thyself from it—thou and thy family—thou hast lost all thy hope. But guard thyself from it; for I am with thee. Yea,

and all men shall hold aloof from it, as many as have repented with their whole heart. For I will be with them and will preserve them; for they all were justified by the most holy angel.

2. 'Hear now,' saith he, 'the working of angry temper, how evil it is, and how it subverteth the servants of God by its own working, and how it leadeth them astray from righteousness. But it doth not lead astray them that are full in the faith, nor can it work upon them, because the power of the Lord is with them; but them that are empty and double-minded it leadeth astray. For when it seeth such men in prosperity it insinuates itself into the heart of the man, and for no cause whatever the man or the woman is embittered on account of worldly matters, either about meats, or some triviality, or about some friend, or about giving or receiving, or about follies of this kind. For all these things are foolish and vain and senseless and inexpedient for the servants of God. But long-suffering is great and strong, and has a mighty and vigorous power, and is prosperous in great enlargement, gladsome, exultant, free from care, glorifying the Lord at every season, having no bitterness in itself, remaining always gentle and tranquil. This long-suffering therefore dwelleth with those whose faith is perfect. But angry temper is in the first place foolish, fickle and senseless; then from foolishness is engendered bitterness, and from bitterness wrath, and from wrath anger, and from anger spite; then spite being composed of all these evil elements becometh a great sin and incurable. For when all these spirits dwell in one vessel, where the Holy Spirit also dwelleth, that vessel cannot contain them, but overfloweth. The delicate spirit therefore, as not being accustomed to dwell with an evil spirit nor with harshness, departeth from a man of that kind, and seeketh to dwell with gentleness and tranquillity. Then, when it hath removed from that man, in whom it dwells, that man becometh emptied of the righteous spirit, and henceforward, being filled with the evil spirits, he is unstable in all his actions, being dragged about hither and thither by the evil spirits, and is altogether blinded and bereft of his good intent. Thus then it happeneth to all persons of angry temper. Refrain therefore from angry temper, the most evil of evil spirits. But clothe thyself in long-suffering, and resist angry temper and bitterness, and thou shalt be found in company with the holiness which is beloved of the Lord. See then that thou never neglect this commandment; for if thou master this commandment, thou shalt be able likewise to keep the remaining commandments, which I am about to give thee. Be strong in them and

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

MANDATE THE SIXTH.

1. 'I charged thee,' saith he, 'in my first commandment to guard faith and fear and temperance.' 'Yes, Sir,' say I. 'But now,' saith he, 'I wish to show thee their powers also, that thou mayest understand what is the power and effect of each one of them. For their effects are twofold. Now they are prescribed alike to the righteous and the unrighteous. Do thou therefore trust righteousness, but trust not unrighteousness; for the way of righteousness is straight, but the way of unrighteousness is crooked. But walk thou in the straight [and level] path, and leave the crooked one alone. For the crooked way has no tracks, but only pathlessness and many stumbling-stones, and is rough and thorny. So it is therefore harmful to those who walk in it. But those who walk in the straight way walk on the level and without stumbling: for it is neither rough nor thorny. Thou seest then that it is more expedient to walk in this way.' 'I am pleased, Sir,' say I, 'to walk in this way.' 'Thou shalt walk,' he saith, 'yea, and whosoever shall turn unto the Lord with his whole heart shall walk in it.'

2. 'Hear now,' saith he, 'concerning faith. There are two angels with a man, one of righteousness and one of wickedness.' 'How then, Sir,' say I, 'shall I know their workings, seeing that both angels dwell with me?' 'Hear,' saith he, 'and understand their workings. The angel of righteousness is delicate and bashful and gentle and tranquil. When then this one enters into thy heart, forthwith he speaketh with thee of righteousness, of purity, of holiness, and of contentment, of every righteous deed and of every glorious virtue. When all these things enter into thy heart, know that the angel of righteousness is with thee. [These then are the works of the angel of righteousness.] Trust him therefore and his works. Now see the works of the angel of wickedness also. First of all, he is quick-tempered and bitter and senseless, and his works are evil, overthrowing the servants of God. Whenever then he entereth into thy heart, know him by his works.' 'How I shall discern him, Sir,' I reply, 'I know not.' 'Listen,' saith he. 'When a fit of angry temper or bitterness comes upon thee, know that he is in thee. Then the desire of much business and the costliness of many viands and drinking bouts and of many drunken fits and of various

luxuries which are unseemly, and the desire of women, and avarice, and haughtiness and boastfulness, and whatsoever things are akin and like to these—when then these things enter into thy heart, know that the angel of wickedness is with thee. Do thou therefore, recognising his works, stand aloof from him, and trust him in nothing, for his works are evil and inexpedient for the servants of God. Here then thou hast the workings of both the angels. Understand them, and trust the angel of righteousness. But from the angel of wickedness stand aloof, for his teaching is evil in every matter; for though one be a man of faith, and the desire of this angel enter into his heart, that man, or that woman, must commit some sin. And if again a man or a woman be exceedingly wicked, and the works of the angel of righteousness come into that man's heart, he must of necessity do something good. Thou seest then,' saith he, 'that it is good to follow the angel of righteousness, and to bid farewell to the angel of wickedness. This commandment declareth what concerneth faith, that thou mayest trust the works of the angel of righteousness, and doing them mayest live unto God. But believe that the works of the angel of wickedness are difficult; so by not doing them thou shalt live unto God.'

MANDATE THE SEVENTH.

'Fear the Lord,' saith he, 'and keep His commandments. So keeping the commandments of God thou shalt be powerful in every deed, and thy doing shall be incomparable. For whilst thou fearest the Lord, thou shalt do all things well. But this is the fear wherewith thou oughtest to be afraid, and thou shalt be saved. But fear not the devil; for, if thou fear the Lord, thou shalt be master over the devil, for there is no power in him. [For] in whom is no power, neither is there fear of him; but in whom power is glorious, of him is fear likewise. For every one that hath power hath fear, whereas he that hath no power is despised of all. But fear thou the works of the devil, for they are evil. While then thou fearest the Lord, thou wilt fear the works of the devil, and wilt not do them, but abstain from them. Fear therefore is of two kinds. If thou desire to do evil, fear the Lord, and thou shalt not do it. If again thou desire to do good, fear the Lord and thou shalt do it. Therefore the fear of the Lord is powerful and great and glorious. Fear the Lord then, and thou shalt live unto Him; yea, and as many of them that keep His commandments as shall fear Him, shall live unto God.' 'Wherefore, Sir,' say I,

‘didst thou say concerning those that keep His commandments, “They shall live unto God”?’ ‘Because,’ saith he, ‘every creature feareth the Lord, but not every one keepeth His commandments. Those then that fear Him and keep His commandments, they have life unto God; but they that keep not His commandments have no life in them.’

MANDATE THE EIGHTH.

‘I told thee,’ saith he, ‘that the creatures of God are twofold; for temperance also is twofold. For in some things it is right to be temperate, but in other things it is not right.’ ‘Make known unto me, Sir,’ say I, ‘in what things it is right to be temperate, and in what things it is not right.’ ‘Listen,’ saith he. ‘Be temperate as to what is evil, and do it not; but be not temperate as to what is good, but do it. For if thou be temperate as to what is good, so as not to do it, thou committest a great sin; but if thou be temperate as to what is evil, so as not to do it, thou doest great righteousness. Be temperate therefore in abstaining from all wickedness, and do that which is good.’ ‘What kinds of wickedness, Sir,’ say I, ‘are they from which we must be temperate and abstain?’ ‘Listen,’ saith he; ‘from adultery and fornication, from the lawlessness of drunkenness, from wicked luxury, from many viands and the costliness of riches, and vaunting and haughtiness and pride, and from falsehood and evil-speaking and hypocrisy, malice and all blasphemy. These works are the most wicked of all in the life of men. From these works therefore the servant of God must be temperate and abstain; for he that is not temperate so as to abstain from these cannot live unto God. Listen then to what follows upon these.’ ‘Why, are there still other evil deeds, Sir?’ say I. ‘Aye,’ saith he, ‘there are many, from which the servant of God must be temperate and abstain; theft, falsehood, deprivation, false witness, avarice, evil desire, deceit, vain-glory, boastfulness, and whatsoever things are like unto these. Thinkest thou not that these things are wrong, yea, very wrong,’ [saith he,] ‘for the servants of God? In all these things he that serveth God must exercise temperance. Be thou temperate, therefore, and refrain from all these things, that thou mayest live unto God, and be enrolled among those who exercise self-restraint in them. These then are the things from which thou shouldest restrain thyself. Now hear,’ saith he, ‘the things, in which thou shouldest not exercise self-restraint, but do them. Exercise no self-restraint in that which is good, but do it.’ ‘Sir,’ say I, ‘show me the power of the good also, that I

may walk in them and serve them, that doing them it may be possible for me to be saved.' 'Hear,' saith he, 'the works of the good likewise, which thou must do, and towards which thou must exercise no self-restraint. First of all, there is faith, fear of the Lord, love, concord, words of righteousness, truth, patience; nothing is better than these in the life of men. If a man keep these, and exercise not self-restraint from them, he becomes blessed in his life. Hear now what follow upon these; to minister to widows, to visit the orphans and the needy, to ransom the servants of God from their afflictions, to be hospitable (for in hospitality benevolence from time to time has a place), to resist no man, to be tranquil, to show yourself more submissive than all men, to reverence the aged, to practise righteousness, to observe brotherly feeling, to endure injury, to be long-suffering, to bear no grudge, to exhort those who are sick at soul, not to cast away those that have stumbled from the faith, but to convert them and to put courage into them, to reprove sinners, not to oppress debtors and indigent persons, and whatsoever actions are like these. Do these things,' saith he, 'seem to thee to be good?' 'Why, what, Sir,' say I, 'can be better than these?' 'Then walk in them,' saith he, 'and abstain not from them, and thou shalt live unto God. Keep this commandment therefore. If thou do good and abstain not from it, thou shalt live unto God; yea, and all shall live unto God who act so. And again if thou do not evil, and abstain from it, thou shalt live unto God; yea, and all shall live unto God, who shall keep these commandments, and walk in them.'

MANDATE THE NINTH.

He saith to me; 'Remove from thyself a doubtful mind and doubt not at all whether to ask of God, saying within thyself, "How can I ask a thing of the Lord and receive it, seeing that I have committed so many sins against Him?" Reason not thus, but turn to the Lord with thy whole heart, and ask of Him nothing wavering, and thou shalt know His exceeding compassion, that He will surely not abandon thee, but will fulfil the petition of thy soul. For God is not as men who bear a grudge, but Himself is without malice and hath compassion on His creatures. Do thou therefore cleanse thy heart from all the vanities of this life, and from the things mentioned before; and ask of the Lord, and thou shalt receive all things, and shalt lack nothing of all thy petitions, if thou ask of the Lord nothing wavering. But if thou waver

in thy heart, thou shalt surely receive none of thy petitions. For they that waver towards God, these are the doubtful-minded, and they never obtain any of their petitions. But they that are complete in the faith make all their petitions trusting in the Lord, and they receive, because they ask without wavering, nothing doubting; for every doubtful-minded man, if he repent not, shall hardly be saved. Cleanse therefore thy heart from doubtful-mindedness, and put on faith, for it is strong, and trust God that thou wilt receive all thy petitions which thou askest; and if after asking anything of the Lord, thou receive thy petition somewhat tardily, be not of doubtful mind because thou didst not receive the petition of thy soul at once. For assuredly it is by reason of some temptation or some transgression, of which thou art ignorant, that thou receivest thy petition so tardily. Do thou therefore cease not to make thy soul's petition, and thou shalt receive it. But if thou grow weary, and doubt as thou askest, blame thyself and not Him that giveth unto thee. See to this doubtful-mindedness; for it is evil and senseless, and uprooteth many from the faith, yea, even very faithful and strong men. For indeed this doubtful-mindedness is a daughter of the devil, and worketh great wickedness against the servants of God. Therefore despise doubtful-mindedness and gain the mastery over it in everything, clothing thyself with faith which is strong and powerful. For faith promiseth all things, accomplisheth all things; but doubtful-mindedness, as having no confidence in itself, fails in all the works which it doeth. Thou seest then,' saith he, 'that faith is from above from the Lord, and hath great power; but doubtful-mindedness is an earthly spirit from the devil, and hath no power. Do thou therefore serve that faith which hath power, and hold aloof from the doubtful-mindedness which hath no power; and thou shalt live unto God; yea, and all those shall live unto God who are so minded.'

MANDATE THE TENTH.

1. 'Put away sorrow from thyself,' saith he, 'for she is the sister of doubtful-mindedness and of angry temper.' 'How, Sir,' say I, 'is she the sister of these? For angry temper seems to me to be one thing, doubtful-mindedness another, sorrow another.' 'Thou art a foolish fellow,' saith he, '[and] perceivest not that sorrow is more evil than all the spirits, and is most fatal to the servants of God, and beyond all the spirits destroys a man, and crushes out the Holy Spirit, and yet again saves it.' 'I, Sir,' say I, 'am without understanding, and I understand

not these parables. For how it can crush out and again save, I do not comprehend.' 'Listen,' saith he. 'Those who have never investigated concerning the truth, nor enquired concerning the deity, but have merely believed, and have been mixed up in business affairs and riches and heathen friendships, and many other affairs of this world—as many, I say, as devote themselves to these things, comprehend not the parables of the deity; for they are darkened by these actions, and are corrupted and become barren. As good vineyards, when they are treated with neglect, are made barren by the thorns and weeds of various kinds, so men who after they have believed fall into these many occupations which were mentioned before, lose their understanding and comprehend nothing at all concerning righteousness; for if they hear concerning the deity and truth, their mind is absorbed in their occupations, and they perceive nothing at all. But they that have the fear of God, and investigate concerning deity and truth, and direct their heart towards the Lord, perceive and understand everything that is said to them more quickly, because they have the fear of the Lord in themselves; for where the Lord dwelleth, there too is great understanding. Cleave therefore unto the Lord, and thou shalt understand and perceive all things.

2. 'Hear now, senseless man,' saith he, 'how sorrow crusheth out the Holy Spirit, and again saveth it. When the man of doubtful mind sets his hand to any action, and fails in it owing to his doubtful-mindedness, grief at this entereth into the man, and grieveth the Holy Spirit, and crusheth it out. Then again when angry temper cleaveth to a man concerning any matter, and he is much embittered, again sorrow entereth into the heart of the man that was ill-tempered, and he is grieved at the deed which he hath done, and repenteth that he did evil. This sadness therefore seemeth to bring salvation, because he repented at having done the evil. So both the operations sadden the Spirit; first, the doubtful mind saddens the Spirit, because it succeeded not in its business, and the angry temper again, because it did what was evil. Thus both are saddening to the Holy Spirit, the doubtful mind and the angry temper. Put away therefore from thyself sadness, and afflict not the Holy Spirit that dwelleth in thee, lest haply He intercede with God [against thee], and depart from thee. For the Spirit of God, that was given unto this flesh, endureth not sadness neither constraint.

3. 'Therefore clothe thyself in cheerfulness, which hath favour with God always, and is acceptable to Him, and rejoice in it. For every

cheerful man worketh good, and thinketh good, and despiseth sadness ; but the sad man is always committing sin. In the first place he committeth sin, because he grieveth the Holy Spirit, which was given to the man being a cheerful spirit ; and in the second place, by grieving the Holy Spirit he doeth lawlessness, in that he doth not intercede with neither confess unto God. For the intercession of a sad man hath never at any time power to ascend to the altar of God.' 'Wherefore,' say I, 'doth not the intercession of him that is saddened ascend to the altar?' 'Because,' saith he, 'sadness is seated at his heart. Thus sadness mingled with the intercession doth not suffer the intercession to ascend pure to the altar. For as vinegar when mingled with wine in the same (vessel) hath not the same pleasant taste, so likewise sadness mingled with the Holy Spirit hath not the same intercession. Therefore cleanse thyself from this wicked sadness, and thou shalt live unto God ; yea, and all they shall live unto God, who shall cast away sadness from themselves and clothe themselves in all cheerfulness.'

MANDATE THE ELEVENTH.

He shewed me men seated on a couch, and another man seated on a chair. And he saith to me, 'Seest thou those that are seated on the couch?' 'I see them, Sir,' say I. 'These,' saith he, 'are faithful, but he that sitteth on the chair is a false prophet who destroyeth the mind of the servants of God—I mean, of the doubtful-minded, not of the faithful. These doubtful-minded ones then come to him as to a soothsayer and enquire of him what shall befall them. And he, the false prophet, having no power of a divine Spirit in himself, speaketh with them according to their enquiries [and according to the lusts of their wickedness], and filleth their souls as they themselves wish. For being empty himself he giveth empty answers to empty enquirers ; for whatever enquiry may be made of him, he answereth according to the emptiness of the man. But he speaketh also some true words ; for the devil filleth him with his own spirit, if so be he shall be able to break down some of the righteous. So many therefore as are strong in the faith of the Lord, clothed with the truth, cleave not to such spirits, but hold aloof from them ; but as many as are doubters and frequently change their minds, practise soothsaying like the Gentiles, and bring upon themselves greater sin by their idolatries. For he that consulteth a false prophet on any matter is an idolater and emptied of the truth, and senseless. For no Spirit given of God needeth to be consulted ; but,

having the power of deity, speaketh all things of itself, because it is from above, even from the power of the divine Spirit. But the spirit which is consulted, and speaketh according to the desires of men, is earthly and fickle, having no power; and it speaketh not at all, unless it be consulted.' 'How then, Sir,' say I, 'shall a man know who of them is a prophet, and who a false prophet?' 'Hear,' saith he, 'concerning both the prophets; and, as I shall tell thee, so shalt thou test the prophet and the false prophet. By his life test the man that hath the divine Spirit. In the first place, he that hath the [divine] Spirit, which is from above, is gentle and tranquil and humble-minded, and abstaineth from all wickedness and vain desire of this present world, and holdeth himself inferior to all men, and giveth no answer to any man when enquired of, nor speaketh in solitude (for neither doth the Holy Spirit speak when a man wisheth Him to speak); but the man speaketh then when God wisheth him to speak. When then the man who hath the divine Spirit cometh into an assembly of righteous men, who have faith in a divine Spirit, and intercession is made to God by the gathering of those men, then the angel of the prophetic spirit, who is attached to him, filleth the man, and the man, being filled with the Holy Spirit, speaketh to the multitude, according as the Lord willeth. In this way then the Spirit of the deity shall be manifest. This then is the greatness of the power as touching the Spirit of the deity of the Lord. Hear now,' saith he, 'concerning the earthly and vain spirit, which hath no power but is foolish. In the first place, that man who seemeth to have a spirit exalteth himself, and desireth to have a chief place, and straightway he is impudent and shameless and talkative and conversant in many luxuries and in many other deceits, and receiveth money for his prophesying, and if he receiveth not, he prophesieth not. Now can a divine Spirit receive money and prophesy? It is not possible for a prophet of God to do this, but the spirit of such prophets is earthly. In the next place, it never approacheth an assembly of righteous men; but avoideth them, and cleaveth to the doubtful-minded and empty, and prophesieth to them in corners, and deceiveth them, speaking all things in emptiness to gratify their desires; for they too are empty whom it answereth. For the empty vessel placed together with the empty is not broken, but they agree one with the other. But when he comes into an assembly full of righteous men who have a Spirit of deity, and intercession is made from them, that man is emptied, and the earthly spirit fleeth from him in fear, and that man is struck dumb and is

altogether broken in pieces, being unable to utter a word. For, if you pack wine or oil into a closet, and place an empty vessel among them, and again desire to unpack the closet, the vessel which you placed there empty, empty in like manner you will find it. Thus also the empty prophets, whenever they come unto the spirits of righteous men, are found just such as they came. I have given thee the life of both kinds of prophets. Therefore test, by his life and his works, the man who says that he is moved by the Spirit. But do thou trust the Spirit that cometh from God, and hath power; but in the earthly and empty spirit put no trust at all; for in it there is no power, for it cometh from the devil. Listen [then] to the parable which I shall tell thee. Take a stone, and throw it up to heaven—see if thou canst reach it; or again, take a squirt of water, and squirt it up to heaven—see if thou canst bore through the heaven.' 'How, Sir,' say I, 'can these things be? For both these things which thou hast mentioned are beyond our power.' 'Well then,' saith he, 'just as these things are beyond our power, so likewise the earthly spirits have no power and are feeble. Now take the power which cometh from above. The hail is a very small grain, and yet, when it falleth on a man's head, what pain it causeth! Or again, take a drop which falls on the ground from the tiles, and bores through the stone. Thou seest then that the smallest things from above falling on the earth have great power. So likewise the divine Spirit coming from above is powerful. This Spirit therefore trust, but from the other hold aloof.'

MANDATE THE TWELFTH.

1. He saith to me; 'Remove from thyself all evil desire, and clothe thyself in the desire which is good and holy; for clothed with this desire thou shalt hate the evil desire, and shalt bridle and direct it as thou wilt. For the evil desire is wild, and only tamed with difficulty; for it is terrible, and by its wildness is very costly to men; more especially if a servant of God get entangled in it, and have no understanding, he is put to fearful costs by it. But it is costly to such men as are not clothed in the good desire, but are mixed up with this life. These men then it hands over to death.' 'Of what sort, Sir,' say I, 'are the works of the evil desire, which hand over men to death? Make them known to me, that I may hold aloof from them.' 'Listen,' [saith he,] 'through what works the evil desire bringeth death to the servants of God.'

2. 'Before all is desire for the wife or husband of another, and for extravagance of wealth, and for many needless dainties, and for drinks and other luxuries, many and foolish. For every luxury is foolish and vain for the servants of God. These desires then are evil, and bring death to the servants of God. For this evil desire is a daughter of the devil. Ye must, therefore, abstain from the evil desires, that so abstaining ye may live unto God. But as many as are mastered by them, and resist them not, are done to death utterly; for these desires are deadly. But do thou clothe thyself in the desire of righteousness, and, having armed thyself with the fear of the Lord, resist them. For the fear of God dwelleth in the good desire. If the evil desire shall see thee armed with the fear of God and resisting itself, it shall flee far from thee, and shall no more be seen of thee, being in fear of thine arms. Do thou therefore, when thou art crowned for thy victory over it, come to the desire of righteousness, and deliver to her the victor's prize which thou hast received, and serve her, according as she herself desireth. If thou serve the good desire, and art subject to her, thou shalt have power to master the evil desire, and to subject her, according as thou wilt.'

3. 'I would fain know, Sir,' say I, 'in what ways I ought to serve the good desire.' 'Listen,' saith he; 'practise righteousness and virtue, truth and the fear of the Lord, faith and gentleness, and as many good deeds as are like these. Practising these thou shalt be well-pleasing as a servant of God, and shalt live unto Him; yea, and every one who shall serve the good desire shall live unto God.'

So he completed the twelve commandments, and he saith to me; 'Thou hast these commandments; walk in them, and exhort thy hearers that their repentance may become pure for the rest of the days of their life. This ministration, which I give thee, fulfil thou with all diligence to the end, and thou shalt effect much. For thou shalt find favour among those who are about to repent, and they shall obey thy words. For I will be with thee, and will compel them to obey thee.'

I say to him; 'Sir, these commandments are great and beautiful and glorious, and are able to gladden the heart of the man who is able to observe them. But I know not whether these commandments can be kept by a man, for they are very hard.' He answered and said unto me; 'If thou set it before thyself that they can be kept, thou wilt easily keep them, and they will not be hard; but if it once enter into thy heart that they cannot be kept by a man, thou wilt not keep them. But now I say unto thee; if thou keep them not, but neglect them,

thou shalt not have salvation, neither thy children nor thy household, since thou hast already pronounced judgment against thyself that these commandments cannot be kept by a man.'

4. And these things he said to me very angrily, so that I was confounded, and feared him exceedingly; for his form was changed, so that a man could not endure his anger. And when he saw that I was altogether disturbed and confounded, he began to speak more kindly [and cheerfully] to me, and he saith; 'Foolish fellow, void of understanding and of doubtful mind, perceivest thou not the glory of God, how great and mighty and marvellous it is, how that He created the world for man's sake, and subjected all His creation to man, and gave all authority to him, that he should be master over all things under the heaven? If then,' [he saith,] 'man is lord of all the creatures of God and mastereth all things, cannot he also master these commandments? Aye,' saith he, 'the man that hath the Lord in his heart can master [all things and] all these commandments. But they that have the Lord on their lips, while their heart is hardened, and are far from the Lord, to them these commandments are hard and inaccessible. Therefore do ye, who are empty and fickle in the faith, set your Lord in your heart, and ye shall perceive that nothing is easier than these commandments, nor sweeter, nor more gentle. Be ye converted, ye that walk after the commandments of the devil, (the commandments which are so) difficult and bitter and wild and riotous; and fear not the devil, for there is no power in him against you. For I will be with you, I, the angel of repentance, who have the mastery over him. The devil hath fear alone, but his fear hath no force. Fear him not therefore; and he will flee from you.'

5. I say to him, 'Sir, listen to a few words from me.' 'Say what thou wilt,' saith he. 'Man, Sir,' I say, 'is eager to keep the commandments of God, and there is no one that asketh not of the Lord, that he may be strengthened in His commandments, and be subject to them; but the devil is hard and overmastereth them.' 'He cannot,' saith he, 'overmaster the servants of God, who set their hope on Him with their whole heart. The devil can wrestle with them, but he cannot overthrow them. If then ye resist him, he will be vanquished, and will flee from you disgraced. But as many,' saith he, 'as are utterly empty, fear the devil as if he had power. When a man has filled amply sufficient jars with good wine, and among these jars a few are quite empty, he comes to the jars, and does not examine the full

ones, for he knows that they are full ; but he examineth the empty ones, fearing lest they have turned sour. For empty jars soon turn sour, and the taste of the wine is spoilt. So also the devil cometh to all the servants of God tempting them. As many then as are complete in the faith, oppose him mightily, and he departeth from them, not having a place where he can find an entrance. So he cometh next to the empty ones, and finding a place goeth into them, and further he doeth what he willeth in them, and they become submissive slaves to him.

6. 'But I, the angel of repentance, say unto you ; Fear not the devil ; for I was sent,' saith he, 'to be with you who repent with your whole heart, and to strengthen you in the faith. Believe, therefore, on God, ye who by reason of your sins have despaired of your life, and are adding to your sins, and weighing down your life ; for if ye turn unto the Lord with your whole heart, and work righteousness the remaining days of your life, and serve Him rightly according to His will, He will give healing to your former sins, and ye shall have power to master the works of the devil. But of the threatening of the devil fear not at all ; for he is unstrung, like the sinews of a dead man. Hear me therefore, and fear Him, *Who is able to do all things, to save and to destroy*, and observe these commandments, and ye shall live unto God.' I say to him, 'Sir, now am I strengthened in all the ordinances of the Lord, because thou art with me ; and I know that thou wilt crush all the power of the devil, and we shall be masters over him, and shall prevail over all his works. And I hope, Sir, that I am now able to keep these commandments which thou hast commanded, the Lord enabling me.' 'Thou shalt keep them,' saith he, 'if thy heart be found pure with the Lord ; yea, and all shall keep them, as many as shall purify their hearts from the vain desires of this world, and shall live unto God.'

PARABLES WHICH HE SPAKE WITH ME.

He saith to me ; 'Ye know that ye, who are the servants of God, are dwelling in a foreign land ; for your city is far from this city. If then ye know your city, in which ye shall dwell, why do ye here prepare fields and expensive displays and buildings and dwelling-chambers which are superfluous ? He, therefore, that prepareth these things for this city does not purpose to return to his own city. O foolish and double-minded and miserable man, perceivest thou not that all these things are foreign, and are under the power of another ? For the lord

of this city shall say, "I do not wish thee to dwell in my city; go forth from this city, for thou dost not conform to my laws." Thou, therefore, who hast fields and dwellings and many other possessions, when thou art cast out by him, what wilt thou do with thy field and thy house and all the other things that thou preparedst for thyself? For the lord of this country saith to thee justly, "Either conform to my laws, or depart from my country." What then shalt thou do, who art under law in thine own city? For the sake of thy fields and the rest of thy possessions wilt thou altogether repudiate thy law, and walk according to the law of this city? Take heed, lest it be inexpedient to repudiate thy law; for if thou shouldest desire to return again to thy city, thou shalt surely not be received [because thou didst repudiate the law of thy city], and shalt be shut out from it. Take heed therefore; as dwelling in a strange land prepare nothing more for thyself but a competency which is sufficient for thee, and make ready that, whensoever the master of this city may desire to cast thee out for thine opposition to his law, thou mayest go forth from his city and depart into thine own city, and use thine own law joyfully, free from all insult. Take heed therefore, ye that serve God and have Him in your heart: work the works of God being mindful of His commandments and of the promises which He made, and believe Him that He will perform them, if His commandments be kept. Therefore, instead of fields buy ye souls that are in trouble, as each is able, and visit widows and orphans, and neglect them not; and spend your riches and all your displays, which ye received from God, on fields and houses of this kind. For to this end the Master enriched you, that ye might perform these ministrations for Him. It is much better to purchase fields [and possessions] and houses of this kind, which thou wilt find in thine own city, when thou visitest it. This lavish expenditure is beautiful and joyous, not bringing sadness or fear, but bringing joy. The expenditure of the heathen then practise not ye; for it is not convenient for you the servants of God. But practise your own expenditure, in which ye can rejoice; and do not corrupt, neither touch that which is another man's, nor lust after it; for it is wicked to lust after other men's possessions. But perform thine own task, and thou shalt be saved.'

ANOTHER PARABLE.

As I walked in the field, and noticed an elm and a vine, and was distinguishing them and their fruits, the shepherd appeareth to me and

saith; 'What art thou meditating within thyself?' 'I am thinking, [Sir,] say I, 'about the elm and the vine, that they are excellently suited the one to the other.' 'These two trees,' saith he, 'are appointed for a type to the servants of God.' 'I would fain know, [Sir,] say I, 'the type contained in these trees, of which thou speakest.' 'Seest thou,' saith he, 'the elm and the vine?' 'I see them, Sir,' say I. 'This vine,' saith he, 'beareth fruit, but the elm is an unfruitful stock. Yet this vine, except it climb up the elm, cannot bear much fruit when it is spread on the ground; and such fruit as it beareth is rotten, because it is not suspended upon the elm. When then the vine is attached to the elm, it beareth fruit both from itself and from the elm. Thou seest then that the elm also beareth [much] fruit, not less than the vine, but rather more.' 'How more, Sir?' say I. 'Because,' saith he, 'the vine, when hanging upon the elm, bears its fruit in abundance, and in good condition; but, when spread on the ground, it beareth little fruit, and that rotten. This parable therefore is applicable to the servants of God, to poor and to rich alike.' 'How, Sir?' say I; 'instruct me.' 'Listen,' saith he; 'the rich man hath much wealth, but in the things of the Lord he is poor, being distracted about his riches, and his confession and intercession with the Lord is very scanty; and even that which he giveth is small and weak and hath not power above. When then the rich man goeth up to the poor, and assisteth him in his needs, believing that for what he doth to the poor man he shall be able to obtain a reward with God—because the poor man is rich in intercession [and confession], and his intercession hath great power with God—the rich man then supplieth all things to the poor man without wavering. But the poor man being supplied by the rich maketh intercession for him, thanking God for him that gave to him. And the other is still more zealous to assist the poor man, that he may be continuous in his life: for he knoweth that the intercession of the poor man is acceptable and rich before God. They both then accomplish their work; the poor man maketh intercession, wherein he is rich [which he received of the Lord]; this he rendereth again to the Lord Who supplieth him with it. The rich man too in like manner furnisheth to the poor man, nothing doubting, the riches which he received from the Lord. And this work is great and acceptable with God, because (the rich man) hath understanding concerning his riches, and worketh for the poor man from the bounties of the Lord, and accomplisheth the ministration of the Lord rightly. In the sight of men then the elm seemeth not to bear fruit,

and they know not, neither perceive, that if there cometh a drought, the elm having water nurtureth the vine, and the vine having a constant supply of water beareth fruit twofold, both for itself and for the elm. So likewise the poor, by interceding with the Lord for the rich, establish their riches, and again the rich, supplying their needs to the poor, establish their souls. So then both are made partners in the righteous work. He then that doeth these things shall not be abandoned of God, but shall be written in the books of the living. Blessed are the rich, who understand also that they are enriched from the Lord. For they that have this mind shall be able to do some good work.'

ANOTHER PARABLE.

He showed me many trees which had no leaves, but they seemed to me to be, as it were, withered; for they were all alike. And he saith to me; 'Seest thou these trees?' 'I see them, Sir,' I say, 'they are all alike, and are withered.' He answered and said to me; 'These trees that thou seest are they that dwell in this world.' 'Wherefore then, Sir,' say I, 'are they as if they were withered, and alike?' 'Because,' saith he, 'neither the righteous are distinguishable, nor the sinners in this world, but they are alike. For this world is winter to the righteous, and they are not distinguishable, as they dwell with the sinners. For as in the winter the trees, having shed their leaves, are alike, and are not distinguishable, which are withered, and which alive, so also in this world neither the just nor the sinners are distinguishable, but they are all alike.'

ANOTHER PARABLE.

He showed me many trees again, some of them sprouting, and others withered, and he saith to me; 'Seest thou,' saith he, 'these trees?' 'I see them, Sir,' say I, 'some of them sprouting, and others withered.' 'These trees,' saith he, 'that are sprouting are the righteous, who shall dwell in the world to come; for the world to come is summer to the righteous, but winter to the sinners. When then the mercy of the Lord shall shine forth, then they that serve God shall be made manifest; yea, and all men shall be made manifest. For as in summer the fruits of each several tree are made manifest, and are recognised of what sort they are, so also the fruits of the righteous shall be manifest, and all [even the very smallest] shall be known to be flourishing in that world. But the Gentiles and the sinners, just as thou sawest the

trees which were withered, even such shall they be found, withered and unfruitful in that world, and shall be burnt up as fuel, and shall be manifest, because their practice in their life hath been evil. For the sinners shall be burned, because they sinned and repented not; and the Gentiles shall be burned, because they knew not Him that created them. Do thou therefore bear fruit, that in that summer thy fruit may be known. But abstain from overmuch business, and thou shalt never fall into any sin. For they that busy themselves overmuch, sin much also, being distracted about their business, and in no wise serving their own Lord. How then,' saith he, 'can such a man ask anything of the Lord and receive it, seeing that he serveth not the Lord? [For] they that serve Him, these shall receive their petitions, but they that serve not the Lord, these shall receive nothing. But if any one work one single action, he is able also to serve the Lord; for his mind shall not be corrupted from (following) the Lord, but he shall serve Him, because he keepeth his mind pure. If therefore thou doest these things, thou shalt be able to bear fruit unto the world to come; yea, and whosoever shall do these things, shall bear fruit.'

ANOTHER PARABLE.

I. As I was fasting and seated on a certain mountain, and giving thanks to the Lord for all that He had done unto me, I see the shepherd seated by me and saying; 'Why hast thou come hither in the early morn?' 'Because, Sir,' say I, 'I am keeping a station.' 'What,' saith he, 'is a station?' 'I am fasting, Sir,' say I. 'And what,' saith he, 'is this fast [that ye are fasting]?' 'As I was accustomed, Sir,' say I, 'so I fast.' 'Ye know not,' saith he, 'how to fast unto the Lord, neither is this a fast, this unprofitable fast which ye make unto Him.' 'Wherefore, Sir,' say I, 'sayest thou this?' 'I tell thee,' saith he, 'that this is not a fast, wherein ye think to fast; but I will teach thee what is a complete fast and acceptable to the Lord. Listen,' saith he; 'God desireth not such a vain fast; for by so fasting unto God thou shalt do nothing for righteousness. But fast thou [unto God] such a fast as this; do no wickedness in thy life, and serve the Lord with a pure heart; observe His commandments and walk in His ordinances, and let no evil desire rise up in thy heart; but believe God. Then, if thou shalt do these things, and fear Him, and control thyself from every evil deed, thou shalt live unto God; and if thou do these things, thou shalt accomplish a great fast, and one acceptable to God.'

2. 'Hear the parable which I shall tell thee relating to fasting. A certain man had an estate, and many slaves, and a portion of his estate he planted as a vineyard; and choosing out a certain slave who was trusty and well-pleasing (and) held in honour, he called him to him and saith unto him; "Take this vineyard [which I have planted], and fence it [till I come], but do nothing else to the vineyard. Now keep this my commandment, and thou shalt be free in my house." Then the master of the servant went away to travel abroad. When then he had gone away, the servant took and fenced the vineyard; and having finished the fencing of the vineyard, he noticed that the vineyard was full of weeds. So he reasoned within himself, saying, "This command of my lord I have carried out. I will next dig this vineyard, and it shall be neater when it is digged; and when it hath no weeds it will yield more fruit, because not choked by the weeds." He took and digged the vineyard, and all the weeds that were in the vineyard he plucked up. And that vineyard became very neat and flourishing, when it had no weeds to choke it. After a time the master of the servant [and of the estate] came, and he went into the vineyard. And seeing the vineyard fenced neatly, and digged as well, and [all] the weeds plucked up, and the vines flourishing, he rejoiced [exceedingly] at what his servant had done. So he called his beloved son, who was his heir, and the friends who were his advisers, and told them what he had commanded his servant, and how much he had found done. And they rejoiced with the servant at the testimony which his master had borne to him. And he saith to them; "I promised this servant his freedom, if he should keep the commandment which I commanded him; but he kept my commandment and did a good work besides to my vineyard, and pleased me greatly. For this work therefore which he has done, I desire to make him joint-heir with my son, because, when the good thought struck him, he did not neglect it, but fulfilled it." In this purpose the son of the master agreed with him, that the servant should be made joint-heir with the son. After some few days, his master made a feast, and sent to him many dainties from the feast. But when the servant received [the dainties sent to him by the master], he took what was sufficient for him, and distributed the rest to his fellow-servants. And his fellow-servants, when they received the dainties, rejoiced, and began to pray for him, that he might find greater favour with the master, because he had treated them so handsomely. All these things which had taken place his master heard, and again rejoiced greatly at his deed. So the master

called together again his friends and his son, and announced to them the deed that he had done with regard to his dainties which he had received ; and they still more approved of his resolve, that his servant should be made joint-heir with his son.'

3. I say, 'Sir, I understand not these parables, neither can I apprehend them, unless thou explain them for me.' 'I will explain everything to thee,' saith he ; 'and will show thee whatsoever things I shall speak with thee. Keep the commandments of the Lord, and thou shalt be well-pleasing to God, and shalt be enrolled among the number of them that keep His commandments. But if thou do any good thing outside the commandment of God, thou shalt win for thyself more exceeding glory, and shalt be more glorious in the sight of God than thou wouldest otherwise have been. If then, while thou keepest the commandments of God, thou add these services likewise, thou shalt rejoice, if thou observe them according to my commandment.' I say to him, 'Sir, whatsoever thou commandest me, I will keep it ; for I know that thou art with me.' 'I will be with thee,' saith he, 'because thou hast so great zeal for doing good ; yea, and I will be with all,' saith he, 'whosoever have such zeal as this. This fasting,' saith he, 'if the commandments of the Lord are kept, is very good. This then is the way, that thou shalt keep this fast [which thou art about to observe]. First of all, keep thyself from every evil word and every evil desire, and purify thy heart from all the vanities of this world. If thou keep these things, this fast shall be perfect for thee. And thus shalt thou do. Having fulfilled what is written, on that day on which thou fastest thou shalt taste nothing but bread and water ; and from thy meats, which thou wouldest have eaten, thou shalt reckon up the amount of that day's expenditure, which thou wouldest have incurred, and shalt give it to a widow, or an orphan, or to one in want, and so shalt thou humble thy soul, that he that hath received from thy humiliation may satisfy his own soul, and may pray for thee to the Lord. If then thou shalt so accomplish this fast, as I have commanded thee, thy sacrifice shall be acceptable in the sight of God, and this fasting shall be recorded ; and the service so performed is beautiful and joyous and acceptable to the Lord. These things thou shalt so observe, thou and thy children and thy whole household ; and, observing them, thou shalt be blessed ; yea, and all those, who shall hear and observe them, shall be blessed, and whatsoever things they shall ask of the Lord, they shall receive.'

4. I entreated him earnestly, that he would show me the parable

of the estate, and of the master, and of the vineyard, and of the servant that fenced the vineyard, [and of the fence,] and of the weeds which were plucked up out of the vineyard, and of the son, and of the friends, the advisers. For I understood that all these things are a parable. But he answered and said unto me ; 'Thou art exceedingly importunate in enquiries. Thou oughtest not,' [saith he,] 'to make any enquiry at all; for if it be right that a thing be explained unto thee, it shall be explained.' I say to him ; 'Sir, whatsoever things thou showest unto me and dost not explain, I shall have seen them in vain, and without understanding what they are. In like manner also, if thou speak parables to me and interpret them not, I shall have heard a thing in vain from thee.' But he again answered, and said unto me ; 'Whosoever,' saith he, 'is a servant of God, and hath his own Lord in his heart, asketh understanding of Him, and receiveth it, and interpreteth every parable, and the words of the Lord which are spoken in parables are made known unto him. But as many as are sluggish and idle in intercession, these hesitate to ask of the Lord. But the Lord is abundant in compassion, and giveth to them that ask of Him without ceasing. But thou who hast been strengthened by the holy angel, and hast received from him such (powers of) intercession and art not idle, wherefore dost thou not ask understanding of the Lord, and obtain it from Him?' I say to him, 'Sir, I that have thee with me have (but) need to ask thee and enquire of thee ; for thou showest me all things, and speakest with me ; but if I had seen or heard them apart from thee I should have asked of the Lord, that they might be shown to me.'

5. 'I told thee just now,' saith he, 'that thou art unscrupulous and importunate, in enquiring for the interpretations of the parables. But since thou art so obstinate, I will interpret to thee the parable of the estate and all the accompaniments thereof, that thou mayest make them known unto all. Hear now,' saith he, 'and understand them. The estate is this world, and the lord of the estate is He that created all things, and set them in order, and endowed them with power ; and the servant is the Son of God, and the vines are this people whom He Himself planted ; and the fences are the [holy] angels of the Lord who keep together His people ; and the weeds, which are plucked up from the vineyard, are the transgressions of the servants of God ; and the dainties which He sent to him from the feast are the commandments which He gave to His people through His Son ; and the friends and advisers are the holy angels which were first created ; and the

absence of the master is the time which remaineth over until His coming.' I say to him; 'Sir, great and marvellous are all things and all things are glorious; was it likely then,' say I, 'that I could have apprehended them?' 'Nay, nor can any other man, though he be full of understanding, apprehend them.' 'Yet again, Sir,' say I, 'explain to me what I am about to enquire of thee.' 'Say on,' he saith, 'if thou desirest anything.' 'Wherefore, [Sir,]' say I, 'is the Son of God represented in the parable in the guise of a servant?'

6. 'Listen,' said he; 'the Son of God is not represented in the guise of a servant, but is represented in great power and lordship.' 'How, Sir?' say I; 'I comprehend not.' 'Because,' saith he, 'God planted the vineyard, that is, He created the people, and delivered them over to His Son. And the Son placed the angels in charge of them, to watch over them; and the Son Himself cleansed their sins, by labouring much and enduring many toils; for no one can dig without toil or labour. Having Himself then cleansed the sins of His people, He showed them the paths of life, giving them the law which He received from His Father. Thou seest,' saith he, 'that He is Himself Lord of the people, having received all power from His Father. But how that the lord took his son and the glorious angels as advisers concerning the inheritance of the servant, listen. The Holy Pre-existent Spirit, Which created the whole creation, God made to dwell in flesh that He desired. This flesh, therefore, in which the Holy Spirit dwelt, was subject unto the Spirit, walking honourably in holiness and purity, without in any way defiling the Spirit. When then it had lived honourably in chastity, and had laboured with the Spirit, and had cooperated with it in everything, behaving itself boldly and bravely, He chose it as a partner with the Holy Spirit; for the career of this flesh pleased [the Lord], seeing that, as possessing the Holy Spirit, it was not defiled upon the earth. He therefore took the son as adviser and the glorious angels also, that this flesh too, having served the Spirit unblameably, might have some place of sojourn, and might not seem to have lost the reward for its service; for all flesh, which is found undefiled and unspotted, wherein the Holy Spirit dwelt, shall receive a reward. Now thou hast the interpretation of this parable also.'

7. 'I was right glad, Sir,' say I, 'to hear this interpretation.' 'Listen now,' saith he. 'Keep this thy flesh pure and undefiled, that the Spirit which dwelleth in it may bear witness to it, and thy flesh may be justified. See that it never enter into thine heart that this flesh of

thine is perishable, and so thou abuse it in some defilement. [For] if thou defile thy flesh, thou shalt defile the Holy Spirit also; but if thou defile †the flesh†, thou shalt not live.' 'But if, Sir,' say I, 'there has been any ignorance in times past, before these words were heard, how shall a man who has defiled his flesh be saved?' 'For the former deeds of ignorance,' saith he, 'God alone hath power to give healing; for all authority is His. [But now keep thyself, and the Lord Almighty, Who is full of compassion, will give healing for thy former deeds of ignorance,] if henceforth thou defile not thy flesh, neither the Spirit; for both share in common, and the one cannot be defiled without the other. Therefore keep both pure, and thou shalt live unto God.'

[PARABLE THE SIXTH.]

1. As I sat in my house, and glorified the Lord for all things that I had seen, and was considering concerning the commandments, how that they were beautiful and powerful and gladsome and glorious and able to save a man's soul, I said within myself; 'Blessed shall I be, if I walk in these commandments; yea, and whosoever shall walk in them shall be blessed.' As I spake these things within myself, I see him suddenly seated by me, and saying as follows; 'Why art thou of a doubtful mind concerning the commandments, which I commanded thee? They are beautiful. Doubt not at all; but clothe thyself in the faith of the Lord, and thou shalt walk in them. For I will strengthen thee in them. These commandments are suitable for those who meditate repentance; for if they walk not in them, their repentance is in vain. Ye then that repent, cast away the evil doings of this world which crush you; and, by putting on every excellence of righteousness, ye shall be able to observe these commandments, and to add no more to your sins. If then ye add no further sin at all, ye will depart from your former sins. Walk then in these my commandments, and ye shall live unto God. These things have [all] been told you from me.' And after he had told these things to me, he saith to me, 'Let us go into the country, and I will show thee the shepherds of the sheep.' 'Let us go, Sir,' say I. And we came to a certain plain, and he sheweth me a young man, a shepherd, clothed in a light cloak, of saffron colour; and he was feeding a great number of sheep, and these sheep were, as it were, well fed and very frisky, and were gladsome as they skipped about hither and thither; and the shepherd himself was all gladsome

over his flock; and the very visage of the shepherd was exceedingly gladsome; and he ran about among the sheep.

2. And he saith to me; 'Seest thou this shepherd?' 'I see him, Sir,' I say. 'This,' saith he, 'is the angel of self-indulgence and of deceit. He crusheth the souls of the servants of God, and perverteth them from the truth, leading them astray with evil desires, wherein they perish. For they forget the commandments of the living God, and walk in vain deceits and acts of self-indulgence, and are destroyed by this angel, some of them unto death, and others unto corruption.' I say to him, 'Sir, I comprehend not what means "unto death," and what "unto corruption".' 'Listen,' saith he; 'the sheep which thou sawest gladsome and skipping about, these are they who have been turned asunder from God utterly, and have delivered themselves over to the lusts of this world. In these, therefore, there is not repentance unto life. For the Name of God is being blasphemed through them. The life of such persons is death. But the sheep, which thou sawest not skipping about, but feeding in one place, these are they that have delivered themselves over to acts of self-indulgence and deceit, but have not uttered any blasphemy against the Lord. These then have been corrupted from the truth. In these there is hope of repentance, wherein they can live. Corruption then hath hope of a possible renewal, but death hath eternal destruction.' Again we went forward a little way, and he showeth me a great shepherd like a wild man in appearance, with a white goatskin thrown about him; and he had a kind of wallet on his shoulders, and a staff very hard and with knots in it, and a great whip. And his look was very sour, so that I was afraid of him because of his look. This shepherd then kept receiving from the young man, the shepherd, those sheep that were frisky and well-fed, but not skipping about, and putting them in a certain spot, which was precipitous and covered with thorns and briars, so that the sheep could not disentangle themselves from the thorns and briars, but [became entangled among the thorns and briars. And so they] pastured entangled in the thorns and briars, and were in great misery with being beaten by him; and he kept driving them about to and fro, and giving them no rest, and altogether those sheep had not a happy time.

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

at all for these sheep?' 'This,' saith he, 'is the angel of punishment, and he is one of the just angels, and presides over punishment. So he receiveth those who wander away from God, and walk after the lusts and deceits of this life, and punisheth them, as they deserve, with fearful and various punishments.' 'I would fain learn, Sir,' say I, 'of what sort are these various punishments.' 'Listen,' saith he; 'the various tortures and punishments are tortures belonging to the present life; for some are punished with losses, and others with want, and others with divers maladies, and others with [every kind] of unsettlement, and others with insults from unworthy persons and with suffering in many other respects. For many, being unsettled in their plans, set their hands to many things, and nothing ever goes forward with them. And then they say that they do not prosper in their doings, and it doth not enter into their hearts that they have done evil deeds, but they blame the Lord. When then they are afflicted with every kind of affliction, then they are delivered over to me for good instruction, and are strengthened in the faith of the Lord, and serve the Lord with a pure heart the remaining days of their life. But, if they repent, the evil works which they have done rise up in their hearts, and then they glorify God, saying that He is a just Judge, and that they suffered justly each according to his doings. And they serve the Lord thenceforward with a pure heart, and are prosperous in all their doings, receiving from the Lord whatsoever things they may ask; and then they glorify the Lord because they were delivered over unto me, and they no longer suffer any evil thing.'

4. I say unto him; 'Sir, declare unto me this further matter.' 'What enquirest thou yet?' saith he. 'Whether, Sir,' say I, 'they that live in self-indulgence and are deceived undergo torments during the same length of time as they live in self-indulgence and are deceived.' He saith to me, 'They undergo torments for the same length of time.' 'Then, Sir,' say I, 'they undergo very slight torments; for those who are living thus in self-indulgence and forget God ought to have been tormented sevenfold.' He saith to me, 'Thou art foolish, and comprehendest not the power of the torment.' 'True,' say I, 'for if I had comprehended it, I should not have asked thee to declare it to me.' 'Listen,' saith he, 'to the power of both, [of the self-indulgence and of the torment]. The time of the self-indulgence and deceit is one hour. But an hour of the torment hath the power of thirty days. If then one live in self-indulgence and be deceived for one day, and be tormented for one day,

the day of the torment is equivalent to a whole year. For as many days then as a man lives in self-indulgence, for so many years is he tormented. Thou seest then,' saith he, 'that the time of the self-indulgence and deceit is very short, but the time of the punishment and torment is long.'

5. 'Inasmuch, Sir,' say I, 'as I do not quite comprehend concerning the time of the deceit and self-indulgence and torment, show me more clearly.' He answered and said unto me; 'Thy stupidity cleaveth to thee; and thou wilt not cleanse thy heart and serve God. Take heed,' [saith he,] 'lest haply the time be fulfilled, and thou be found in thy foolishness. Listen then,' [saith he,] 'even as thou wishest, that thou mayest comprehend the matter. He that liveth in self-indulgence and is deceived for one day, and doeth what he wisheth, is clothed in much folly and comprehendeth not the thing which he doeth; for on the morrow he forgetteth what he did the day before. For self-indulgence and deceit have no memories, by reason of the folly, wherewith each is clothed; but when punishment and torment cling to a man for a single day, he is punished and tormented for a whole year long; for punishment and torment have long memories. So being tormented and punished for the whole year, the man remembers at length the self-indulgence and deceit, and perceiveth that it is on their account that he is suffering these ills. Every man, therefore, that liveth in self-indulgence and is deceived, is tormented in this way because, though possessing life, they have delivered themselves over unto death.' 'What kinds of self-indulgence, Sir,' say I, 'are harmful?' 'Every action,' saith he, 'is self-indulgence to a man, which he does with pleasure; for the irascible man, when he gives the reins to his passion, is self-indulgent; and the adulterer and the drunkard and the slanderer and the liar and the miser and the defrauder and he that doeth things akin to these, giveth the reins to his peculiar passion; therefore he is self-indulgent in his action. All these habits of self-indulgence are harmful to the servants of God; on account of these deceits therefore they so suffer who are punished and tormented. But there are habits of self-indulgence likewise which save men; for many are self-indulgent in doing good, being carried away by the pleasure it gives to themselves. This self-indulgence then is expedient for the servants of God, and bringeth life to a man of this disposition; but the harmful self-indulgencies aforementioned bring to men torments and punishments; and if they continue in them and repent not, they bring death upon themselves.'

[PARABLE THE SEVENTH.]

After a few days I saw him on the same plain, where also I had seen the shepherds, and he saith to me, 'What seekest thou?' 'I am here, Sir,' say I, 'that thou mayest bid the shepherd that punisheth go out of my house; for he afflicteth me much.' 'It is necessary for thee,' saith he, 'to be afflicted; for so,' saith he, 'the glorious angel ordered as concerning thee, for he wisheth thee to be proved.' 'Why, what so evil thing have I done, Sir,' say I, 'that I should be delivered over to this angel?' 'Listen,' saith he. 'Thy sins are many, yet not so many that thou shouldest be delivered over to this angel; but thy house has committed great iniquities and sins, and the glorious angel was embittered at their deeds, and for this cause he bade thee be afflicted for a certain time, that they also might repent and cleanse themselves from every lust of this world. When therefore they shall repent and be cleansed, then shall the angel of punishment depart.' I say to him; 'Sir, if they perpetrated such deeds that the glorious angel is embittered, what have I done?' 'They cannot be afflicted otherwise,' saith he, 'unless thou, the head of the [whole] house, be afflicted; for if thou be afflicted, they also of necessity will be afflicted; but if thou be prosperous, they can suffer no affliction.' 'But behold, Sir,' say I, 'they have repented with their whole heart.' 'I am quite aware myself,' saith he, 'that they have repented with their whole heart; well, thinkest thou that the sins of those who repent are forgiven forthwith? Certainly not; but the person who repents must torture his own soul, and must be thoroughly humble in his every action, and be afflicted with all the divers kinds of affliction; and if he endure the afflictions which come upon him, assuredly He Who created all things and endowed them with power will be moved with compassion and will bestow some remedy. And this (will God do), if in any way He perceive the heart of the penitent pure from every evil thing. But it is expedient for thee and for thy house that thou shouldest be afflicted now. But why speak I many words to thee? Thou must be afflicted as the angel of the Lord commanded, even he that delivered thee unto me; and for this give thanks to the Lord, in that He deemed thee worthy that I should reveal unto thee beforehand the affliction, that foreknowing it thou mightest endure it with fortitude.' I say to him; 'Sir, be thou with me, and I shall be able to endure all affliction [easily].' 'I will be with thee,' saith he; 'and I will ask the angel that punisheth to afflict thee more lightly; but thou shalt be afflicted for a short time, and thou shalt be restored

again to thy house. Only continue to be humble and to minister unto the Lord with a pure heart, thou and thy children and thy house, and walk in my commandments which I command thee, and thus it will be possible for thy repentance to be strong and pure. And if thou keep these commandments with thy household, all affliction shall hold aloof from thee ; yea, and affliction,' saith he, 'shall hold aloof from all who-soever shall walk in these my commandments.'

[PARABLE THE EIGHTH.]

I. He showed me a [great] willow, overshadowing plains and mountains, and under the shadow of the willow all have come who are called by the name of the Lord. And by the willow there stood an angel of the Lord, glorious and very tall, having a great sickle, and he was lopping branches from the willow, and giving them to the people that sheltered beneath the willow ; and he gave them little rods about a cubit long. And after all had taken the rods, the angel laid aside the sickle, and the tree was sound, just as I had seen it. Then I marvelled within myself, saying, 'How is the tree sound after so many branches have been lopped off?' The shepherd saith to me, 'Marvel not that the tree remained sound, after so many branches were lopped off ; but wait until thou seest all things, and it shall be shown to thee what it is.' The angel who gave the rods to the people demanded them back from them again ; and according as they had received them, so also they were summoned to him, and each of them returned the several rods. But the angel of the Lord took them, and examined them. From some he received the rods withered and eaten as it were by grubs : the angel ordered those who gave up rods like these to stand apart. And others gave them up withered, but not grub-eaten ; and these again he ordered to stand apart. And others gave them up half-withered ; these also stood apart. And others gave up their rods half-withered and with cracks ; these also stood apart. And others gave up their rods green and with cracks ; these also stood apart. And others gave up their rods one half withered and one half green ; these also stood apart. And others brought their rods two parts of the rod green, and the third part withered ; these also stood apart. And others gave them up two parts withered, and the third part green ; these also stood apart. And others gave up their rods nearly all green, but a very small portion of their rods was withered, just the end ; but they had cracks in them ; these also stood apart. And in those of others there was a very small

portion green, but the rest of the rods was withered ; these also stood apart. And others came bringing their rods green, as they received them from the angel ; and the most part of the multitude gave up their rods in this state ; and the angel rejoiced exceedingly at these ; these also stood apart. And others gave up their rods green and with shoots ; these also stood apart ; and at these again the angel rejoiced exceedingly. And others gave up their rods green and with shoots ; and their shoots had, as it were, a kind of fruit. And those men were exceeding gladsome, whose rods were found in this state. And over them the angel exulted, and the shepherd was very gladsome over them.

2. And the angel of the Lord commanded crowns to be brought. And crowns were brought, made as it were of palm-branches ; and he crowned the men that had given up the rods which had the shoots and some fruit, and sent them away into the tower. And the others also he sent into the tower, even those who had given up the rods green and with shoots, but the shoots were without fruit ; and he set a seal upon them. And all they that went into the tower had the same raiment, white as snow. And those that had given up their rods green as they received them, he sent away, giving them a [white] robe, and seals. After the angel had finished these things, he saith to the shepherd ; 'I go away ; but these thou shalt send away to (their places within) the walls, according as each deserveth to dwell ; but examine their rods carefully, and so send them away. But be careful in examining them. Take heed lest any escape thee,' saith he. 'Still if any escape thee, I will test them at the altar.' When he had thus spoken to the shepherd, he departed. And, after the angel had departed, the shepherd saith to me ; 'Let us take the rods of all and plant them, to see whether any of them shall be able to live.' I say unto him, 'Sir, these withered things, how can they live?' He answered and said unto me ; 'This tree is a willow, and this class of trees clingeth to life. If then the rods shall be planted and get a little moisture, many of them will live. And afterwards let us try to pour some water also over them. If any of them shall be able to live, I will rejoice with it ; but if it live not, I at least shall not be found neglectful.' So the shepherd bade me call them, just as each one of them was stationed. And they came row after row, and they delivered up the rods to the shepherd. And the shepherd took the rods, and planted them in rows, and after he had planted them, he poured much water over them, so that the rods could not be seen for the water. And after he had watered the rods, he saith to me ; 'Let us go now, and after a

few days let us return and inspect all the rods ; for He Who created this tree willeth that all those who have received rods from this tree should live. And I myself hope that these little rods, after they have got moisture and been watered, will live the greater part of them.'

3. I say to him ; 'Sir, inform me what this tree is. For I am perplexed herewith, because, though so many branches were cut off, the tree is sound, and nothing appears to have been cut from it ; I am therefore perplexed thereat.' 'Listen,' saith he ; 'this great tree which overshadows plains and mountains and all the earth is the law of God which was given to the whole world ; and this law is the Son of God preached unto the ends of the earth. But the people that are under the shadow are they that have heard the preaching, and believed on Him ; but the great and glorious angel is Michael, who hath the power over this people and is their captain. For this is he that putteth the law into the hearts of the believers ; therefore he himself inspecteth them to whom he gave it, to see whether they have observed it. But thou seest the rods of every one ; for the rods are the law. Thou seest these many rods rendered useless, and thou shalt notice all those that have not observed the law, and shalt see the abode of each severally.' I say unto him ; 'Sir, wherefore did he send away some into the tower, and leave others for thee?' 'As many,' saith he, 'as transgressed the law which they received from him, these he left under my authority for repentance ; but as many as already satisfied the law and have observed it, these he has under his own authority.' 'Who then, Sir,' say I, 'are they that have been crowned and go into the tower?' ['As many,' saith he, 'as wrestled with the devil and overcame him in their wrestling, are crowned:] these are they that suffered for the law. But the others, who likewise gave up their rods green and with shoots, though not with fruit, are they that were persecuted for the law, but did not suffer nor yet deny their law. But they that gave them up green just as they received them, are sober and righteous men, who walked altogether in a pure heart and have kept the commandments of the Lord. But all else thou shalt know, when I have examined these rods that have been planted and watered.'

4. And after a few days we came to the place, and the shepherd sat down in the place of the angel, while I stood by him. And he saith to me ; 'Gird thyself with a garment of raw flax, and minister to me.' So I girded myself with a clean garment of raw flax made of coarse material. And when he saw me girded and ready to minister to him,

‘Call,’ saith he, ‘the men whose rods have been planted, according to the rank as each presented their rods.’ And I went away to the plain, and called them all; and they stood all of them according to their ranks. He saith to them; ‘Let each man pluck out his own rod, and bring it to me.’ Those gave them up first, who had had the withered and chipped rods, and they were found accordingly withered and chipped. He ordered them to stand apart. Then those gave them up, who had the withered but not chipped; and some of them gave up the rods green, and others withered and chipped as by grubs. Those then that gave them up green he ordered to stand apart; but those that gave them up withered and chipped he ordered to stand with the first. Then those gave them up who had had the half-withered and with cracks; and many of them gave them up green and without cracks; and some gave them up green and with shoots, and fruits on the shoots, such as those had who went into the tower crowned; and some gave them up withered and eaten, and some withered and uneaten, and some such as they were, half-withered and with cracks. He ordered them to stand each one apart, some in their proper ranks, and others apart.

5. Then those gave them up who had their rods green, but with cracks. These all gave them up green, and stood in their own company. And the shepherd rejoiced over these, because they all were changed and had put away their cracks. And those gave them up likewise who had the one half green and the other half withered. The rods of some were found entirely green, of some half-withered, of some withered and eaten, and of some green and with shoots. These were all sent away each to his company. Then those gave them up who had two parts green and the third withered; many of them gave them up green, and many half-withered, and others withered and eaten. These all stood in their own company. Then those gave them up who had two parts withered and the third part green. Many of them gave them up half-withered, but some withered and eaten, others half-withered and with cracks, and a few green. These all stood in their own company. Then those gave them up who had had their rods green, but a very small part [withered] and with cracks. Of these some gave them up green, and others green and with shoots. These also went away to their own company. Then those gave them up who had a very small part green and the other parts withered. The rods of these were found for the most part green and with shoots and fruit on the shoots, and others altogether green. At these rods the shepherd rejoiced very

[greatly], because they were found so. And these went away each to his own company.

6. After [the shepherd] had examined the rods of all, he saith to me, 'I told thee that this tree clingeth to life. Seest thou,' saith he, 'how many repented and were saved?' 'I see, Sir,' say I. 'It is,' saith he, 'that thou mayest see the abundant compassion of the Lord, how great and glorious it is, and He hath given (His) Spirit to those that are worthy of repentance.' 'Wherefore then, Sir,' say I, 'did they not all repent?' 'To those, whose heart He saw about to become pure and to serve Him with all the heart, to them He gave repentance; but those whose craftiness and wickedness He saw, who intend to repent in hypocrisy, to them He gave not repentance, lest haply they should again profane His name.' I say unto him, 'Sir, now then show me concerning those that have given up their rods, what manner of man each of them is, and their abode, that when they hear this, they that believed and have received the seal and have broken it and did not keep it sound may fully understand what they are doing, and repent, receiving from thee a seal, and may glorify the Lord, that He had compassion upon them and sent thee to renew their spirits.' 'Listen,' saith he; 'those whose rods were found withered and grub-eaten, these are the renegades and traitors to the Church, that blasphemed the Lord in their sins, and still further were ashamed of the Name of the Lord, which was invoked upon them. These then perished altogether unto God. But thou seest how not one of them repented, although they heard the words which thou spakest to them, which I commanded thee. From men of this kind life departed. But those that gave up the green and undecayed (rods), these also are near them; for they were hypocrites, and brought in strange doctrines, and perverted the servants of God, especially them that had sinned, not permitting them to repent, but persuading them with their foolish doctrines. These then have hope of repenting. But thou seest that many of them have indeed repented from the time when thou spakest to them my commandments; yea, and (others) still will repent. And as many as shall not repent, have lost their life; but as many of them as repented, became good; and their dwelling was placed within the first walls, and some of them even ascended into the tower. Thou seest then,' [saith he,] 'that repentance from sins bringeth life, but not to repent bringeth death.'

7. 'But as many as gave up (the rods) half-withered, and with cracks in them, hear also concerning these. Those whose rods were half-

withered throughout are the double-minded; for they neither live nor are dead. But those that have them half-withered and cracks in them, these are both double-minded and slanderers, and are never at peace among themselves but always causing dissensions. Yet even to these,' [saith he,] 'repentance is given. Thou seest,' [saith he,] 'that some of them have repented; and there is still,' saith he, 'hope of repentance among them. And as many of them,' saith he, 'as have repented, have their abode within the tower; but as many of them as have repented tardily shall abide within the walls; and as many as repent not, but continue in their doings, shall die the death. But they that have given up their rods green and with cracks, these were found faithful and good at all times, [but] they have a certain emulation one with another about first places and about glory of some kind or other; but all these are foolish in having (emulation) one with another about first places. Yet these also, when they heard my commandments, being good, purified themselves and repented quickly. They have their habitation, therefore, within the tower. But if any one shall again turn to dissension, he shall be cast out from the tower and shall lose his life. Life is for all those that keep the commandments of the Lord. But in the commandments there is nothing about first places, or about glory of any kind, but about long-suffering and humility in man. In such men, therefore, is the life of the Lord, but in factious and lawless men is death.

8. 'But they that gave up their rods half green and half withered, these are they that are mixed up in business and cleave not to the saints. Therefore the one half of them liveth, but the other half is dead. Many then when they heard my commandments repented. As many then as repented, have their abode within the tower. But some of them altogether stood aloof. These then have no repentance; for by reason of their business affairs they blasphemed the Lord and denied Him. So they lost their life for the wickedness that they committed. But many of them were doubtful-minded. These still have place for repentance, if they repent quickly, and their dwelling shall be within the tower; and if they repent tardily, they shall dwell within the walls; but if they repent not, they too have lost their life. But they that have given up two parts green and the third part withered, these are they that have denied with manifold denials. Many of them therefore repented, and departed to dwell inside the tower; but many utterly rebelled from God; these lost their life finally. And some of them were double-minded and caused dissensions. For these then

there is repentance, if they repent speedily and continue not in their pleasures; but if they continue in their doings, they likewise procure for themselves death.

9. 'But they that have given up their rods two thirds withered and one third green, these are men who have been believers, but grew rich and became renowned among the Gentiles. They clothed themselves with great pride and became high-minded, and abandoned the truth and did not cleave to the righteous, but lived together after the manner of the Gentiles, and this path appeared the more pleasant unto them; yet they departed not from God, but continued in the faith, though they wrought not the works of the faith. Many of them therefore repented, and they had their habitation within the tower. But others at the last living with the Gentiles, and being corrupted by the vain opinions of the Gentiles, departed from God, and worked the works of the Gentiles. These therefore were numbered with the Gentiles. But others of them were doubtful-minded, not hoping to be saved by reason of the deeds that they had done; and others were double-minded and made divisions among themselves. For these then that were double-minded by reason of their doings there is still repentance; but their repentance ought to be speedy, that their dwelling may be within the tower; but for those who repent not, but continue in their pleasures, death is nigh.

10. 'But they that gave up their rods green, yet with the extreme ends withered and with cracks; these were found at all times good and faithful and glorious in the sight of God, but they sinned to a very slight degree by reason of little desires and because they had somewhat against one another. But, when they heard my words, the greater part quickly repented, and their dwelling was assigned within the tower. But some of them were double-minded, and some being double-minded made a greater dissension. In these then there is still a hope of repentance, because they were found always good; and hardly shall one of them die. But they that gave up their rods withered, yet with a very small part green, these are they that believed, but practised the works of lawlessness. Still they never separated from God, but bore the Name gladly, and gladly received into their houses the servants of God. So hearing of this repentance they repented without wavering, and they practise all excellence and righteousness. And some of them even suffer persecution willingly, knowing the deeds that they did. All these then shall have their dwelling within the tower.'

11. And after he had completed the interpretations of all the rods,

he saith unto me ; ' Go, and tell all men to repent, and they shall live unto God ; for the Lord in His compassion sent me to give repentance to all, though some of them do not deserve it for their deeds ; but being long-suffering the Lord willeth them that were called through His Son to be saved.' I say to him ; ' Sir, I hope that all when they hear these words will repent ; for I am persuaded that each one, when he fully knows his own deeds and fears God, will repent.' He answered and said unto me ; ' As many,' [saith he,] ' as [shall repent] from their whole heart [and] shall cleanse themselves from all the evil deeds afore-mentioned, and shall add nothing further to their sins, shall receive healing from the Lord for their former sins, unless they be double-minded concerning these commandments, and they shall live unto God. [But as many,' saith he, ' as shall add to their sins and walk in the lusts of this world, shall condemn themselves to death.] But do thou walk in my commandments, and live [unto God ; yea, and as many as shall walk in them and shall do rightly, shall live unto God.'] Having shown me all these things [and told me them] he saith to me ; ' Now the rest will I declare (unto thee) after a few days.'

[PARABLE THE NINTH.]

1. After I had written down the commandments and parables of the shepherd, the angel of repentance, he came to me and saith to me ; ' I wish to show thee all things that the Holy Spirit, Which spake with thee in the form of the Church, showed unto thee. For that Spirit is the Son of God. For when thou wast weaker in the flesh, it was not declared unto thee through an angel ; but when thou wast enabled through the Spirit, and didst grow mighty in thy strength so that thou couldst even see an angel, then at length was manifested unto thee, through the Church, the building of the tower. In fair and seemly manner hast thou seen all things, (instructed) as it were by a virgin ; but now thou seest (being instructed) by an angel, though by the same Spirit ; yet must thou learn everything more accurately from me. For to this end also was I appointed by the glorious angel to dwell in thy house, that thou mightest see all things mightily, in nothing terrified, even as before.' And he took me away into Arcadia, to a certain rounded mountain, and set me on the top of the mountain, and showed me a great plain, and round the plain twelve mountains, the mountains having each a different appearance. The first was black as soot ; the second was bare, without vegetation ; the third was thorny and full of briars ;

the fourth had the vegetation half-withered, the upper part of the grass green, but the part by the roots withered, and some of the grass became withered, whenever the sun had scorched it; the fifth mountain had green grass and was rugged; the sixth mountain was full with clefts throughout, some small and some great, and the clefts had vegetation, but the grass was not very luxuriant, but rather as if it had been withered; the seventh mountain had smiling vegetation, and the whole mountain was in a thriving condition, and cattle and birds of every kind did feed upon that mountain; and the more the cattle and the birds did feed, so much the more did the herbage of that mountain flourish. The eighth mountain was full of springs, and every kind of creature of the Lord did drink of the springs on that mountain. The ninth mountain had no water at all, and was entirely desert; and it had in it wild beasts and deadly reptiles, which destroy mankind. The tenth mountain had very large trees and was umbrageous throughout, and beneath the shade lay sheep resting and feeding. The eleventh mountain was thickly wooded all over, and the trees thereon were very productive, decked with divers kinds of fruits, so that one seeing them would desire to eat of their fruits. The twelfth mountain was altogether white and its aspect was cheerful; and the mountain was most beauteous in itself.

2. And in the middle of the plain he showed me a great white rock, rising up from the plain. The rock was loftier than the mountains, being four-square, so that it could contain the whole world. Now this rock was ancient, and had a gate hewn out of it; but the gate seemed to me to have been hewed out quite recently. And the gate glistened beyond the brightness of the sun, so that I marvelled at the brightness of the gate. And around the gate stood twelve virgins. The four then that stood at the corners seemed to me to be more glorious (than the rest); but the others likewise were glorious; and they stood at the four quarters of the gate, and virgins stood in pairs between them. And they were clothed in linen tunics and girt about in seemly fashion, having their right shoulders free, as if they intended to carry some burden. Thus were they prepared, for they were very cheerful and eager. After I had seen these things, I marvelled in myself at the greatness and the glory of what I was seeing. And again I was perplexed concerning the virgins, that delicate as they were they stood up like men, as if they intended to carry the whole heaven. And the shepherd saith unto me; 'Why questionest thou within thyself and art perplexed, and bringest sadness on thyself? For whatsoever things thou canst not

comprehend, attempt them not, if thou art prudent ; but entreat the Lord, that thou mayest receive understanding to comprehend them. What is behind thee thou canst not see, but what is before thee thou beholdest. The things therefore which thou canst not see, let alone, and trouble not thyself (about them) ; but the things which thou seest, these master, and be not over curious about the rest ; but I will explain unto thee all things whatsoever I shall show thee. Have an eye therefore to what remaineth.'

3. I saw six men come, tall and glorious and alike in appearance ; and they summoned a multitude of men. And the others also which came were tall men and handsome and powerful. And the six men ordered them to build a tower above the gate. And there arose a great noise from those men who had come to build the tower, as they ran hither and thither round the gate. For the virgins standing round the gate told the men to hasten to build the tower. Now the virgins had spread out their hands, as if they would take something from the men. And the six men ordered stones to come up from a certain deep place, and to go to the building of the tower. And there went up ten stones square and polished, [not] hewn from a quarry. And the six men called to the virgins, and ordered them to carry all the stones which should go unto the building of the tower, and to pass through the gate and to hand them to the men that were about to build the tower. And the virgins laid the first ten stones that rose out of the deep on each other, and they carried them together, stone by stone.

4. And just as they stood together around the gate, in that order they carried them that seemed to be strong enough and had stooped under the corners of the stone, while the others stooped at the sides of the stone. And so they carried all the stones. And they carried them right through the gate, as they were ordered, and handed them to the men for the tower ; and these took the stones and builded. Now the building of the tower was upon the great rock and above the gate. Those ten stones then were joined together, and they covered the whole rock. And these formed a foundation for the building of the tower. And [the rock and] the gate supported the whole tower. And, after the ten stones, other twenty-five stones came up from the deep, and these were fitted into the building of the tower, being carried by the virgins, like the former. And after these thirty-five stones came up. And these likewise were fitted into the tower. And after these came up other forty stones, and these all were put into the building of the tower. So

four rows were made in the foundations of the tower. And (the stones) ceased coming up from the deep, and the builders likewise ceased for a little. And again the six men ordered the multitude of the people to bring in stones from the mountains for the building of the tower. They were brought in accordingly from all the mountains, of various colours, shaped by the men, and were handed to the virgins; and the virgins carried them right through the gate, and handed them in for the building of the tower. And when the various stones were placed in the building, they became all alike and white, and they lost their various colours. But some stones were handed in by the men for the building, and these did not become bright; but just as they were placed, such likewise were they found; for they were not handed in by the virgins, nor had they been carried in through the gate. These stones then were unsightly in the building of the tower. Then the six men, seeing the stones that were unsightly in the building, ordered them to be removed and carried [below] into their own place whence they were brought. And they say to the men who were bringing the stones in; 'Abstain for your parts altogether from handing in stones for the building; but place them by the tower, that the virgins may carry them through the gate, and hand them in for the building. For if,' [say they,] 'they be not carried in through the gate by the hands of these virgins, they cannot change their colours. Labour not therefore,' [say they,] 'in vain.'

5. And the building was finished on that day, yet was not the tower finally completed, for it was to be carried up [still] higher; and there was a cessation in the building. And the six men ordered the builders to retire for a short time [all of them], and to rest; but the virgins they ordered not to retire from the tower. And methought the virgins were left to guard the tower. And after all had retired [and rested], I say to the shepherd; 'How is it, Sir,' say I, 'that the building of the tower was not completed?' 'The tower,' he saith, 'cannot yet be finally completed, until its master come and test this building, that if any stones be found crumbling, he may change them; for the tower is being built according to His will.' 'I would fain know, Sir,' say I, 'what is this building of this tower, and concerning the rock and gate, and the mountains, and the virgins, and the stones that came up from the deep, and were not shaped, but went just as they were into the building; and wherefore ten stones were first placed in the foundations, then twenty-five, then thirty-five, then forty, and concerning the stones that had gone to the building and were removed again and put away in their own

place—concerning all these things set my soul at rest, Sir, and explain them to me.’ ‘If,’ saith he, ‘thou be not found possessed of an idle curiosity, thou shalt know all things. For after a few days we shall come here, and thou shalt see the sequel that overtaketh this tower and shalt understand all the parables accurately.’ And after a few days we came to the place where we had sat, and he saith to me, ‘Let us go to the tower; for the owner of the tower cometh to inspect it.’ And we came to the tower, and there was no one at all by it, save the virgins alone. And the shepherd asked the virgins whether the master of the tower had arrived. And they said that he would be there directly to inspect the building.

6. And, behold, after a little while I see an array of many men coming, and in the midst a man of such lofty stature that he overtopped the tower. And the six men who superintended the building walked with him on the right hand and on the left, and all they that worked at the building were with him, and many other glorious attendants around him. And the virgins that watched the tower ran up and kissed him, and they began to walk by his side round the tower. And that man inspected the building so carefully, that he felt each single stone; and he held a rod in his hand and struck each single stone that was built in. And when he smote, some of the stones became black as soot, others mildewed, others cracked, others broke off short, others became neither white nor black, others rough and not fitting in with the other stones, and others with many spots; these were the varied aspects of the stones which were found unsound for the building. So he ordered all these to be removed from the tower, and to be placed by the side of the tower, and other stones to be brought and put into their place. And the builders asked him from what mountain he desired stones to be brought and put into their place. And he would not have them brought from the mountains, but ordered them to be brought from a certain plain that was nigh at hand. And the plain was dug, and stones were found there bright and square, but some of them too were round. And all the stones which there were anywhere in that plain were brought every one of them, and were carried through the gate by the virgins. And the square stones were hewed, and set in the place of those which had been removed; but the round ones were not placed in the building, because they were too hard to be shaped, and to work on them was slow. So they were placed by the side of the tower, as though they were intended to be shaped and placed in the building; for they were very bright.

7. So then, having accomplished these things, the glorious man who was lord of the whole tower called the shepherd to him, and delivered unto him all the stones which lay by the side of the tower, which were cast out from the building, and saith unto him; 'Clean these stones carefully, and set them in the building of the tower, these, I mean, which can fit with the rest; but those which will not fit, throw far away from the tower.' Having given these orders to the shepherd, he departed from the tower with all those with whom he had come. And the virgins stood round the tower watching it. I say to the shepherd, 'How can these stones go again to the building of the tower, seeing that they have been disapproved?' He saith unto me in answer; 'Seest thou,' saith he, 'these stones?' 'I see them, Sir,' say I. 'I myself,' saith he, 'will shape the greater part of these stones and put them into the building, and they shall fit in with the remaining stones.' 'How, Sir,' say I, 'can they, when they are chiseled, fill the same space?' He saith unto me in answer, 'As many as shall be found small, shall be put into the middle of the building; but as many as are larger, shall be placed nearer the outside, and they will bind them together.' With these words he saith to me, 'Let us go away, and after two days let us come and clean these stones, and put them into the building; for all things round the tower must be made clean, lest haply the master come suddenly and find the circuit of the tower dirty, and he be wroth, and so these stones shall not go to the building of the tower, and I shall appear to be careless in my master's sight.'

And after two days we came to the tower, and he saith unto me; 'Let us inspect all the stones, and see those which can go to the building.' I say to him, 'Sir, let us inspect them.'

8. And so commencing first we began to inspect the black stones; and just as they were when set aside from the building, such also they were found. And the shepherd ordered them to be removed from the tower and to be put on one side. Then he inspected those that were mildewed, and he took and shaped many of them, and ordered the virgins to take them up and put them into the building. And the virgins took them up and placed them in the building of the tower in a middle position. But the rest he ordered to be placed with the black ones; for these also were found black. Then he began to inspect those that had the cracks; and of these he shaped many, and he ordered them to be carried away by the hands of the virgins for the building. And they were placed towards the outside, because they were found to be

sounder. But the rest could not be shaped owing to the number of the cracks. For this reason therefore they were cast aside from the building of the tower. Then he proceeded to inspect the stunted (stones), and many among them were found black, and some had contracted great cracks; and he ordered these also to be placed with those that had been cast aside. But those of them which remained he cleaned and shaped, and ordered to be placed in the building. So the virgins took them up, and fitted them into the middle of the building of the tower; for they were somewhat weak. Then he began to inspect those that were half white and half black, and many of them were (now) found black; and he ordered these also to be taken up with those that had been cast aside. †But all the rest were [found white, and were] taken up by the virgins; for being white they were fitted by [the virgins] them[selves] into the building.† But they were placed towards the outside, because they were found sound, so that they could hold together those that were placed in the middle; for not a single one of them was too short. Then he began to inspect the hard and rough; and a few of them were cast away, because they could not be shaped; for they were found very hard. But the rest of them were shaped [and taken up by the virgins] and fitted into the middle of the building of the tower; for they were somewhat weak. Then he proceeded to inspect those that had the spots, and of these some few had turned black and were cast away among the rest; but the remainder were found bright and sound, and these were fitted by the virgins into the building; but they were placed towards the outside, owing to their strength.

9. Then he came to inspect the white and round stones, and he saith unto me; 'What shall we do with these stones?' 'How do I know, Sir?' say I. [And he saith to me,] 'Perceivest thou nothing concerning them?' 'I, Sir,' say I, 'do not possess this art, neither am I a mason, nor can I understand.' 'Seest thou not,' saith he, 'that they are very round; and if I wish to make them square, very much must needs be chiseled off from them? Yet some of them must of necessity be placed into the building.' 'If then, Sir,' say I, 'it must needs be so, why distress thyself, and why not choose out for the building those thou wilt, and fit them into it?' He chose out from them the large and the bright ones, and shaped them; and the virgins took them up, and fitted them into the outer parts of the building. But the rest, which remained over, were taken up, and put aside into the plain whence they were brought; they were not however cast away, 'Because,' saith he,

‘there remaineth still a little of the tower to be builded. And the master of the tower is exceedingly anxious that these stones be fitted into the building, for they are very bright.’ So twelve women were called, most beautiful in form, clad in black, [girded about and having the shoulders bare,] with their hair hanging loose. And these women, methought, had a savage look. And the shepherd ordered them to take up the stones which had been cast away from the building, and to carry them off to the same mountains from which also they had been brought; and they took them up joyfully, and carried away all the stones and put them in the place whence they had been taken. And after all the stones had been taken up, and not a single stone still lay round the tower, the shepherd saith unto me; ‘Let us go round the tower, and see that there is no defect in it.’ And I proceeded to go round it with him. And when the shepherd saw that the tower was very comely in the building, he was exceedingly glad; for the tower was so well builded, that when I saw it I coveted the building of it; for it was builded, as it were, of one stone, having one fitting in it. And the stone-work appeared as if hewn out of the rock; for it seemed to me to be all a single stone.

10. And I, as I walked with him, was glad to see so brave a sight. And the shepherd saith to me; ‘Go and bring plaster and fine clay, that I may fill up the shapes of the stones that have been taken up and put into the building; for all the circuit of the tower must be made smooth.’ And I did as he bade, and brought them to him. ‘Assist me,’ saith he, ‘and the work will speedily be accomplished.’ So he filled in the shapes of the stones which had gone to the building, and ordered the circuit of the tower to be swept and made clean. And the virgins took brooms and swept, and they removed all the rubbish from the tower, and sprinkled water, and the site of the tower was made cheerful and very seemly. The shepherd saith unto me, ‘All,’ saith he, ‘hath now been cleaned. If the lord come to inspect the tower, he hath nothing for which to blame us.’ Saying this, he desired to go away. But I caught hold of his wallet, and began to adjure him by the Lord that he would explain to me [all] what he had showed me. He saith to me; ‘I am busy for a little while, and then I will explain everything to thee. Await me here till I come.’ I say to him; ‘Sir, when I am here alone what shall I do?’ ‘Thou art not alone,’ saith he; ‘for these virgins are here with thee.’ ‘Commend me then to them,’ say I. The shepherd calleth them to him and saith to them; ‘I commend this man to you till I come,’ and he departed. So I was alone

with the virgins; and they were most cheerful, and kindly disposed to me, especially the four of them that were the more glorious in appearance.

11. The virgins say to me; 'Today the shepherd cometh not here.' 'What then shall I do?' say I. 'Stay for him,' say they, 'till eventide; and if he come, he will speak with thee; but if he come not, thou shalt stay here with us till he cometh.' I say to them; 'I will await him till evening, and if he come not, I will depart home and return early in the morning.' But they answered and said unto me; 'To us thou wast entrusted; thou canst not depart from us.' 'Where then,' say I, 'shall I remain?' 'Thou shalt pass the night with us,' say they, 'as a brother, not as a husband; for thou art our brother, and henceforward we will dwell with thee; for we love thee dearly.' But I was ashamed to abide with them. And she that seemed to be the chief of them began to kiss and to embrace me; and the others seeing her embrace me, they too began to kiss me, and to lead me round the tower, and to sport with me. And I had become as it were a younger man, and I commenced myself likewise to sport with them. For some of them began to dance, [others to skip,] others to sing. But I kept silence and walked with them round the tower, and was glad with them. But when evening came I wished to go away home; but they would not let me go, but detained me. And I stayed the night with them, and I slept by the side of the tower. For the virgins spread their linen tunics on the ground, and made me lie down in the midst of them, and they did nothing else but pray; and I prayed with them without ceasing, and not less than they. And the virgins rejoiced that I so prayed. And I stayed there with the virgins until the morning till the second hour. Then came the shepherd, and saith to the virgins; 'Have ye done him any injury?' 'Ask him,' say they. I say to him, 'Sir, I was rejoiced to stay with them.' 'On what didst thou sup?' saith he. 'I supped, Sir,' say I, 'on the words of the Lord the whole night through.' 'Did they treat thee well?' saith he. 'Yes, Sir,' say I. 'Now,' saith he, 'what wouldest thou hear first?' 'In the order as thou showedst to me, Sir, from the beginning,' say I; 'I request thee, Sir, to explain to me exactly in the order that I shall enquire of thee.' 'According as thou desirest,' saith he, 'even so will I interpret to thee, and I will conceal nothing whatever from thee.'

12. 'First of all, Sir,' say I, 'explain this to me. The rock and the gate, what is it?' 'This rock,' saith he, 'and gate is the Son of God.' 'How, Sir,' say I, 'is the rock ancient, but the gate recent?'

'Listen,' saith he, 'and understand, foolish man. The Son of God is older than all His creation, so that He became the Father's adviser in His creation. Therefore also He is ancient.' 'But the gate, why is it recent, Sir?' say I. 'Because,' saith he, 'He was made manifest in the last days of the consummation; therefore the gate was made recent, that they which are to be saved may enter through it into the kingdom of God. Didst thou see,' saith he, 'that the stones which came through the gate have gone to the building of the tower, but those which came not through it were cast away again to their own place?' 'I saw, Sir,' say I. 'Thus,' saith he, 'no one shall enter into the kingdom of God, except he receive the name of His Son. For if thou wishest to enter into any city, and that city is walled all round and has one gate only, canst thou enter into that city except through the gate which it hath?' 'Why, how, Sir,' say I, 'is it possible otherwise?' 'If then thou canst not enter into the city except through the gate itself, even so,' saith he, 'a man cannot enter into the kingdom of God except by the name of His Son that is beloved by Him. Didst thou see,' saith he, 'the multitude that is building the tower?' 'I saw it, Sir,' say I. 'They,' saith he, 'are all glorious angels. With these then the Lord is walled around. But the gate is the Son of God; there is this one entrance only to the Lord. No one then shall enter in unto Him otherwise than through His Son. Didst thou see,' saith he, 'the six men, and the glorious and mighty man in the midst of them, him that walked about the tower and rejected the stones from the building?' 'I saw him, Sir,' say I. 'The glorious man,' saith he, 'is the Son of God, and those six are the glorious angels who guard Him on the right hand and on the left. Of these glorious angels not one,' saith he, 'shall enter in unto God without Him; whosoever shall not receive His name, shall not enter into the kingdom of God.'

13. 'But the tower,' say I, 'what is it?' 'The tower,' saith he, 'why, this is the Church. 'And these virgins, who are they?' 'They,' saith he, 'are holy spirits; and no man can otherwise be found in the kingdom of God, unless these shall clothe him with their garment; for if thou receive only the name, but receive not the garment from them, thou profitest nothing. For these virgins are powers of the Son of God. If [therefore] thou bear the Name, and bear not His power, thou shalt bear His Name to none effect. And the stones,' saith he, 'which thou didst see cast away, these bare the Name, but clothed not themselves with the raiment of the virgins.' 'Of what sort, Sir,' say I, 'is their raiment?' 'The names themselves,' saith he, 'are their raiment. Who-

soever beareth the Name of the Son of God, ought to bear the names of these also ; for even the Son Himself beareth the names of these virgins. As many stones,' saith he, 'as thou sawest enter into the building of the tower, being given in by their hands and waiting for the building, they have been clothed in the power of these virgins. For this cause thou seest the tower made a single stone with the rock. So also they that have believed in the Lord through His Son and clothe themselves in these spirits, shall become one spirit and one body, and their garments all of one colour. But such persons as bear the names of the virgins have their dwelling in the tower.' 'The stones then, Sir,' say I, 'which are cast aside, wherefore were they cast aside? For they passed through the gate and were placed in the building of the tower by the hands of the virgins.' 'Since all these things interest thee,' saith he, 'and thou enquirest diligently, listen as touching the stones that have been cast aside. These all,' [saith he,] 'received the name of the Son of God, and received likewise the power of these virgins. When then they received these spirits, they were strengthened, and were with the servants of God, and they had one spirit and one body [and one garment]; for they had the same mind; and they wrought righteousness. After a certain time then they were persuaded by the women whom thou sawest clad in black raiment, and having their shoulders bare and their hair loose, and beautiful in form. When they saw them they desired them, and they clothed themselves with their power, but they stripped off from themselves the power of the virgins. They then were cast away from the house of God, and delivered to these (women). But they that were not deceived by the beauty of these women remained in the house of God. So thou hast,' saith he, 'the interpretation of them that were cast aside.'

14. 'What then, Sir,' say I, 'if these men, being such as they are, should repent and put away their desire for these women, and return unto the virgins, and walk in their power and in their works? Shall they not enter into the house of God?' 'They shall enter,' saith he, 'if they shall put away the works of these women, and take again the power of the virgins, and walk in their works. For this is the reason why there was also a cessation in the building, that, if these repent, they may go into the building of the tower; but if they repent not, then others will go, and these shall be cast away finally.' For all these things I gave thanks unto the Lord, because He had compassion on all that called upon His name, and sent forth the angel of repentance to us

that had sinned against Him, and refreshed our spirit, and, when we were already ruined and had no hope of life, restored our life. 'Now, Sir,' say I, 'show me why the tower is not built upon the ground, but upon the rock and upon the gate.' 'Because thou art senseless,' saith he, 'and without understanding [thou askest the question].' 'I am obliged, Sir,' say I, 'to ask all questions of thee, because I am absolutely unable to comprehend anything at all; for all are great and glorious and difficult for men to understand.' 'Listen,' saith he. 'The name of the Son of God is great and incomprehensible, and sustaineth the whole world. If then all creation is sustained by the Son [of God], what thinkest thou of those that are called by Him, and bear the name of the Son of God, and walk according to His commandments? Seest thou then what manner of men He sustaineth? Even those that bear His name with their whole heart. He Himself then is become their foundation, and He sustaineth them gladly, because they are not ashamed to bear His name.'

15. 'Declare to me, Sir,' say I, 'the names of the virgins, and of the women that are clothed in the black garments.' 'Hear,' saith he, 'the names of the more powerful virgins, those that are stationed at the corners. The first is Faith, and the second, Continenence, and the third, Power, and the fourth, Longsuffering. But the others stationed between them have these names—Simplicity, Guilelessness, Purity, Cheerfulness, Truth, Understanding, Concord, Love. He that beareth these names and the name of the Son of God shall be able to enter into the kingdom of God. Hear,' saith he, 'likewise the names of the women that wear the black garments. Of these also four are more powerful than the rest; the first is Unbelief; the second, Intemperance; the third, Disobedience; the fourth, Deceit; and their followers are called, Sadness, Wickedness, Wantonness, Irascibility, Falsehood, Folly, Slander, Hatred. The servant of God that beareth these names shall see the kingdom of God, but shall not enter into it.' 'But the stones, Sir,' say I, 'that came from the deep, and were fitted into the building, who are they?' 'The first,' saith he, 'even the ten, that were placed in the foundations, are the first generation; the twenty-five are the second generation of righteous men; the thirty-five are God's prophets and His ministers; the forty are apostles and teachers of the preaching of the Son of God.' 'Wherefore then, Sir,' say I, 'did the virgins give in these stones also for the building of the tower and carry them through the gate?' 'Because these first,' saith he, 'bore these spirits, and they

never separated the one from the other, neither the spirits from the men nor the men from the spirits, but the spirits abode with them till they fell asleep; and if they had not had these spirits with them, they would not have been found useful for the building of this tower.'

16. 'Show me still further, Sir,' say I. 'What desirest thou to know besides?' saith he. 'Wherefore, Sir,' say I, 'did the stones come up from the deep, and wherefore were they placed into the building, though they bore these spirits?' 'It was necessary for them,' saith he, 'to rise up through water, that they might be made alive; for otherwise they could not enter into the kingdom of God, except they had put aside the deadness of their [former] life. So these likewise that had fallen asleep received the seal of the Son of God and entered into the kingdom of God. For before a man,' saith he, 'has borne the name of [the Son of] God, he is dead; but when he has received the seal, he layeth aside his deadness, and resumeth life. The seal then is the water: so they go down into the water dead, and they come up alive. Thus to them also this seal was preached, and they availed themselves of it that they might enter into the kingdom of God.' 'Wherefore, Sir,' say I, 'did the forty stones also come up with them from the deep, though they had already received the seal?' 'Because,' saith he, 'these, the apostles and the teachers who preached the name of the Son of God, after they had fallen asleep in the power and faith of the Son of God, preached also to them that had fallen asleep before them, and themselves gave unto them the seal of the preaching. Therefore they went down with them into the water, and came up again. But these went down alive [and again came up alive]; whereas the others that had fallen asleep before them went down dead and came up alive. So by their means they were quickened into life, and came to the full knowledge of the name of the Son of God. For this cause also they came up with them, and were fitted with them into the building of the tower and were builded with them, without being shaped; for they fell asleep in righteousness and in great purity. Only they had not this seal. Thou hast then the interpretation of these things also.' 'I have, Sir,' say I.

17. 'Now then, Sir, explain to me concerning the mountains. Wherefore are their forms diverse the one from the other, and various?' 'Listen,' saith he. 'These twelve mountains are [twelve] tribes that inhabit the whole world. To these (tribes) then the Son of God was preached by the Apostles.' 'But explain to me, Sir, why they are various—these mountains—and each has a different appearance.' 'Listen,' saith he.

‘These twelve tribes which inhabit the whole world are twelve nations ; and they are various in understanding and in mind. As various, then, as thou sawest these mountains to be, such also are the varieties in the mind of these nations, and such their understanding. And I will show unto thee the conduct of each.’ ‘First, Sir,’ say I, ‘show me this, why the mountains being so various, yet, when their stones were set into the building, became bright and of one colour, just like the stones that had come up from the deep.’ ‘Because,’ saith he, ‘all the nations that dwell under heaven, when they heard and believed, were called by the one name of [the Son of] God. So having received the seal, they had one understanding and one mind, and one faith became theirs and [one] love, and they bore the spirits of the virgins along with the Name ; therefore the building of the tower became of one colour, even bright as the sun. But after they entered in together, and became one body, some of them defiled themselves, and were cast out from the society of the righteous, and became again such as they were before, or rather even worse.’

18. ‘How, Sir,’ say I, ‘did they become worse, after they had fully known God?’ ‘He that knoweth not God,’ saith he, ‘and committeth wickedness, hath a certain punishment for his wickedness ; but he that knoweth God fully ought not any longer to commit wickedness, but to do good. If then he that ought to do good committeth wickedness, does he not seem to do greater wickedness than the man that knoweth not God? Therefore they that have not known God, and commit wickedness, are condemned to death ; but they that have known God and seen His mighty works, and yet commit wickedness, shall receive a double punishment, and shall die eternally. In this way therefore shall the Church of God be purified. And as thou sawest the stones removed from the tower and delivered over to the evil spirits, they too shall be cast out ; and there shall be one body of them that are purified, just as the tower, after it had been purified, became made as it were of one stone. Thus shall it be with the Church of God also, after she hath been purified, and the wicked and hypocrites and blasphemers and double-minded and they that commit various kinds of wickedness have been cast out. When these have been cast out, the Church of God shall be one body, one understanding, one mind, one faith, one love. And then the Son of God shall rejoice and be glad in them, for that He hath received back His people pure.’ ‘Great and glorious, Sir,’ say I, ‘are all these things. Once more, Sir,’ [say I,] ‘show me the force and the doings of each one of the mountains, that every soul that

trusteth in the Lord, when it heareth, may glorify His great and marvellous and glorious name.' 'Listen,' saith he, 'to the variety of the mountains and of the twelve nations.

19. 'From the first mountain, which was black, they that have believed are such as these; rebels and blasphemers against the Lord, and betrayers of the servants of God. For these there is no repentance, but there is death. For this cause also they are black; for their race is lawless. And from the second mountain, the bare one, they that believed are such as these; hypocrites and teachers of wickedness. And these then are like the former in not having the fruit of righteousness. For, even as their mountain is unfruitful, so likewise such men as these have a name indeed, but they are void of the faith, and there is no fruit of truth in them. For these then repentance is offered, if they repent quickly; but if they delay, they will have their death with the former.' 'Wherefore, Sir,' say I, 'is repentance possible for them, but not for the former? For their doings are almost the same.' 'On this account,' he saith, 'is repentance offered for them, because they blasphemed not their Lord, nor became betrayers of the servants of God; yet from desire of gain they played the hypocrite, and taught each other [after] the desires of sinful men. But they shall pay a certain penalty; yet repentance is ordained for them, because they are not become blasphemers or betrayers.

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

21. 'And from the fourth mountain, which had much vegetation,

the upper part of the grass green and the part towards the roots withered, and some of it dried up by the sun, they that believed are such as these ; the double-minded, and they that have the Lord on their lips, but have Him not in their heart. Therefore their foundations are dry and without power, and their words only live, but their works are dead. Such men are neither alive nor dead. They are, therefore, like unto the double-minded ; for the double-minded are neither green nor withered ; for they are neither alive nor dead. For as their grass was withered up when it saw the sun, so also the double-minded, when they hear of tribulation, through their cowardice worship idols and are ashamed of the name of their Lord. Such are neither alive nor dead. Yet these also, if they repent quickly, shall be able to live ; but if they repent not, they are delivered over already to the women who deprive them of their life.

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

23. 'But they that believed from the sixth mountain, which had clefts great and small, and in the clefts herbage withered, are such as these ; they that have the small clefts, these are they that have aught against one another, and from their backbitings they are withered in the faith ; but many of these repented. Yea, and the rest shall repent, when they hear my commandments ; for their backbitings are but small, and they shall quickly repent. But they that have great clefts, these are persistent in their backbitings and bear grudges, nursing wrath against one another. These then were thrown right away from the tower and rejected from its building. Such persons therefore shall with difficulty

live. If God and our Lord, Who ruleth over all things and hath the authority over all His creation, beareth no grudge against them that confess their sins, but is propitiated, doth man, who is mortal and full of sins, bear a grudge against man, as though he were able to destroy or save him? I say unto you—I, the angel of repentance—unto as many as hold this heresy, put it away from you and repent, and the Lord shall heal your former sins, if ye shall purify yourselves from this demon; but if not, ye shall be delivered unto him to be put to death.

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

25. 'And from the eighth mountain, where were the many springs, and all the creatures of the Lord did drink of the springs, they that believed are such as these; apostles and teachers, who preached unto the whole world, and who taught the word of the Lord in soberness and purity, and kept back no part at all for evil desire, but walked always in righteousness and truth, even as also they received the Holy Spirit. Such therefore shall have their entrance with the angels.

26. 'And from the ninth mountain, which was desert, which had [the] reptiles and wild beasts in it which destroy mankind, they that believed are such as these; they that have the spots are deacons that exercised their office ill, and plundered the livelihood of widows and orphans, and made gain for themselves from the ministrations which they had received to perform. If then they abide in the same evil desire, they are dead and there is no hope of life for them; but if they turn again and fulfil their ministrations in purity, it shall be possible for them to live.

But they that are mildewed, these are they that denied and turned not again unto their Lord, but having become barren and desert, because they cleave not unto the servants of God but remain alone, they destroy their own souls. For as a vine left alone in a hedge, if it meet with neglect, is destroyed and wasted by the weeds, and in time becometh wild and is no longer useful to its owner, so also men of this kind have given themselves up in despair and become useless to their Lord, by growing wild. To these then repentance cometh, unless they be found to have denied from the heart; but if a man be found to have denied from the heart, I know not whether it is possible for him to live. And this I say not in reference to these days, that a man after denying should receive repentance; for it is impossible for him to be saved who shall now deny his Lord; but for those who denied Him long ago repentance seemeth to be possible. If a man therefore will repent, let him do so speedily before the tower is completed; but if not, he shall be destroyed by the women and put to death. And the stunted, these are the treacherous and backbiters; and the wild beasts which thou sawest on the mountain are these. For as wild beasts with their venom poison and kill a man, so also do the words of such men poison and kill a man. These then are broken off short from their faith through the conduct which they have in themselves; but some of them repented and were saved; and the rest that are of this kind can be saved, if they repent; but if they repent not, they shall meet their death from those women of whose power they are possessed.

27. 'And from the tenth mountain, where were trees sheltering certain sheep, they that believed are such as these; bishops, hospitable persons, who gladly received into their houses at all times the servants of God without hypocrisy. [These bishops] at all times without ceasing sheltered the needy and the widows in their ministration and conducted themselves in purity at all times. These [all] then shall be sheltered by the Lord for ever. They therefore that have done these things are glorious in the sight of God, and their place is even now with the angels, if they shall continue unto the end serving the Lord.

28. 'And from the eleventh mountain, where were trees full of fruit, decked with divers kinds of fruits, they that believed are such as these; they that suffered for the Name [of the Son of God], who also suffered readily with their whole heart, and yielded up their lives.' 'Wherefore then, Sir,' say I, 'have all the trees fruits, but some of their fruits are more beautiful than others?' 'Listen,' saith he; 'all as many as ever suffered

for the Name's sake are glorious in the sight of God, and the sins of all these were taken away, because they suffered for the name of the Son of God. Now hear why their fruits are various, and some surpassing others. As many,' saith he, 'as were tortured and denied not, when brought before the magistracy, but suffered readily, these are the more glorious in the sight of the Lord; their fruit is that which surpasseth. But as many as became cowards, and were lost in uncertainty, and considered in their hearts whether they should deny or confess, and yet suffered, their fruits are less, because this design entered into their heart; for this design is evil, that a servant should deny his own lord. See to it, therefore, ye who entertain this idea, lest this design remain in your hearts, and ye die unto God. But ye that suffer for the Name's sake ought to glorify God, because God deemed you worthy that ye should bear this name, and that all your sins should be healed. Reckon yourselves blessed therefore; yea, rather think that ye have done a great work, if any of you shall suffer for God's sake. The Lord bestoweth life upon you, and ye perceive it not; for your sins weighed you down, and if ye had not suffered for the Name [of the Lord], ye had died unto God by reason of your sins. These things I say unto you that waver as touching denial and confession. Confess that ye have the Lord, lest denying Him ye be delivered into prison. If the Gentiles punish their slaves, if any one deny his lord, what think ye the Lord will do unto you, He Who hath the authority over all things? Away with these designs from your hearts, that ye may live for ever unto God.

29. 'And from the twelfth mountain, which was white, they that believed are such as these; they are as very babes, into whose heart no guile entereth, neither learnt they what wickedness is, but they remained as babes for ever. Such as these then dwell without doubt in the kingdom of God, because they defiled the commandments of God in nothing, but continued as babes all the days of their life in the same mind. As many of you therefore as shall so continue,' saith he, 'and shall be as infants not having guile, shall be more glorious [even] than all them that have been mentioned before; for all infants are glorious in the sight of God, and stand first in His sight. Blessed then are ye, as many as have put away wickedness from you, and have clothed yourselves in guilelessness: ye shall live unto God chiefest of all.'

After he had finished the parables of the mountains, I say unto him, 'Sir, now explain to me concerning the stones that were taken from the plain and placed in the building in the room of the stones that were

taken from the tower, and concerning the round (stones) which were placed in the building, and concerning those that were still round.'

30. 'Hear,' saith he, 'likewise concerning all these things. The stones which were taken from the plain and placed in the building of the tower in the room of those that were rejected, are the roots of this white mountain. When then they that believed from this mountain were all found guileless, the lord of the tower ordered these from the roots of this mountain to be put into the building of the tower. For He knew that if these stones should go to the building [of the tower], they would remain bright and not one of them would turn black. But if he had added (stones) from the other mountains, he would have been obliged to visit that tower again, and to purify it. Now all these have been found white, who have believed and who shall believe; for they are of the same kind. Blessed is this kind, for it is innocent! Hear now likewise concerning those round and bright stones. All these are from this white mountain. Now hear wherefore they have been found round. Their riches have darkened and obscured them a little from the truth, yet they never departed from God, nor did any evil word proceed from their mouth, but all equity and virtue which comes from the truth. When therefore the Lord perceived their mind, †that they could favour the truth,† and likewise remain good, He commanded their possessions to be cut from off them, yet not to be taken away altogether, so that they might be able to do some good with that which hath been left to them, and might live unto God, for that they come of a good kind. So therefore they have been cut away a little, and placed in the building of this tower.

31. 'But the other (stones), which have remained round and have not been fitted into the building, because they have not yet received the seal, have been replaced in their own position, for they were found very round. For this world and the vanities of their possessions must be cut from off them, and then they will fit into the kingdom of God. For it is necessary that they should enter into the kingdom of God; because the Lord hath blessed this innocent kind. Of this kind then not one shall perish. Yea, even though any one of them being tempted by the most wicked devil have committed any fault, he shall return speedily unto his Lord. Blessed I pronounce you all to be—I, the angel of repentance—whoever of you are guileless as infants, because your part is good and honourable in the sight of God. Moreover I bid all of you, whoever have received this seal, keep guilelessness,

and bear no grudge, and continue not in your wickedness nor in the memory of the offences of bitterness; but become of one spirit, and heal these evil clefts and take them away from among you, that the owner of the flocks may rejoice concerning them. For he will rejoice, if he find all things whole. But if he find any part of the flock scattered, woe unto the shepherds. For if the shepherds themselves shall have been found scattered, how will they answer for the flocks? Will they say that they were harassed by the flock? No credence will be given them. For it is an incredible thing that a shepherd should be injured by his flock; and he will be punished the more because of his falsehood. And I am the shepherd, and it behoveth me most strongly to render an account for you.

32. 'Amend yourselves therefore, while the tower is still in course of building. The Lord dwelleth in men that love peace; for to Him peace is dear; but from the contentious and them that are given up to wickedness He keepeth afar off. Restore therefore to Him your spirit whole as ye received it. For suppose thou hast given to a fuller a new garment whole, and desirest to receive it back again whole, but the fuller give it back to thee torn, wilt thou receive it thus? Wilt thou not at once blaze out and attack him with reproaches, saying; "The garment which I gave thee was whole; wherefore hast thou rent it and made it useless? See, by reason of the rent, which thou hast made in it, it cannot be of use." Wilt thou not then say all this to a fuller even about a rent which he has made in thy garment? If therefore thou art thus vexed in the matter of thy garment, and complainest because thou receivest it not back whole, what thinkest thou the Lord will do to thee, He, Who gave thee the spirit whole, and thou hast made it absolutely useless, so that it cannot be of any use at all to its Lord? For its use began to be useless, when it was corrupted by thee. Will not therefore the Lord of this spirit for this thy deed punish [thee with death]?' 'Certainly,' I said, 'all those, whomsoever He shall find continuing to bear malice, He will punish.' 'Trample not,' said he, 'upon His mercy, but rather glorify Him, because He is so long-suffering with your sins, and is not like unto you. Practise then repentance which is expedient for you.

33. 'All these things which are written above I, the shepherd, the angel of repentance, have declared and spoken to the servants of God. If then ye shall believe and hear my words, and walk in them, and amend your ways, ye shall be able to live. But if ye continue in wickedness and in bearing malice, no one of this kind shall live unto God.

All things which were to be spoken by me have (now) been spoken to you.' The shepherd said to me, 'Hast thou asked me all thy questions?' And I said, 'Yes, Sir.' 'Why then hast thou not enquired of me concerning the shape of the stones placed in the building, in that we filled up their shapes?' And I said, 'I forgot, Sir.' 'Listen now,' said he, 'concerning them. These are they that have heard my commandments now, and have practised repentance with their whole heart. So when the Lord saw that their repentance was good and pure, and that they could continue therein, he ordered their former sins to be blotted out. These shapes then were their former sins, and they have been chiseled away that they might not appear.'

PARABLE THE TENTH.

1. After I had written out this book completely, the angel who had delivered me to the shepherd came to the house where I was, and sat upon a couch, and the shepherd stood at his right hand. Then he called me, and spake thus unto me; 'I delivered thee,' said he, 'and thy house to this shepherd, that thou mightest be protected by him.' 'True, Sir,' I said. 'If therefore,' said he, 'thou desirest to be protected from all annoyance and all cruelty, to have also success in every good work and word, and all the power of righteousness, walk in his commandments, which I have given thee, and thou shalt be able to get the mastery over all wickedness. For if thou keep his commandments, all evil desire and the sweetness of this world shall be subject unto thee; moreover success shall attend thee in every good undertaking. Embrace his gravity and self-restraint, and tell it out unto all men that he is held in great honour and dignity with the Lord, and is a ruler of great authority, and powerful in his office. To him alone in the whole world hath authority over repentance been assigned. Seemeth he to thee to be powerful? Yet ye despise the gravity and moderation which he useth towards you.'

2. I say unto him; 'Ask him, Sir, himself, whether from the time that he hath been in my house, I have done ought out of order, whereby I have offended him.' 'I myself know,' said he, 'that thou hast done nothing out of order, nor art about to do so. And so I speak these things unto thee, that thou mayest persevere. For he hath given a good account of thee unto me. Thou therefore shalt speak these words to others, that they too who have practised or shall practise repentance may be of the same mind as thou art; and he may give a good report of

them to me, and I unto the Lord.' 'I too, Sir,' I say, 'declare to every man the mighty works of the Lord; for I hope that all who have sinned in the past, if they hear these things, will gladly repent and recover life.' 'Continue therefore,' said he, 'in this ministry, and complete it unto the end. For whosoever fulfil his commandments shall have life; yea such a man (shall have) great honour with the Lord. But whosoever keep not his commandments, fly from their life, and oppose him, and follow not his commandments, but deliver themselves over to death; and each one becometh guilty of his own blood. But I bid thee obey these commandments, and thou shalt have a remedy for thy sins.

3. 'Moreover, I have sent these virgins unto thee, that they may dwell with thee; for I have seen that they are friendly towards thee. Thou hast them therefore as helpers, that thou mayest be the better able to keep his commandments; for it is impossible that these commandments be kept without the help of these virgins. I see too that they are glad to be with thee. But I will charge them that they depart not at all from thy house. Only do thou purify thy house; for in a clean house they will gladly dwell. For they are clean and chaste and industrious, and all have favour in the sight of the Lord. If, therefore, they shall find thy house pure, they will continue with thee; but if the slightest pollution arise, they will depart from thy house at once. For these virgins love not pollution in any form.' I say unto him, 'I hope, Sir, that I shall please them, so that they may gladly dwell in my house for ever; and just as he to whom thou didst deliver me maketh no complaint against me, so they likewise shall make no complaint.' He saith unto the shepherd, 'I perceive,' saith he, 'that he wishes to live as the servant of God, and that he will keep these commandments, and will place these virgins in a clean habitation.' With these words he again delivered me over to the shepherd, and called the virgins, and said to them; 'Inasmuch as I see that ye are glad to dwell in this man's house, I commend to you him and his house, that ye depart not at all from his house.' But they heard these words gladly.

4. He said then to me, 'Quit you like a man in this ministry; declare to every man the mighty works of the Lord, and thou shalt have favour in this ministry. Whosoever therefore shall walk in these commandments, shall live and be happy in his life; but whosoever shall neglect them, shall not live, and shall be unhappy in his life. Charge all men who are able to do right, that they cease not to practise

good works ; for it is useful for them. I say moreover that every man ought to be rescued from misfortune ; for he that hath need, and suffereth misfortune in his daily life, is in great torment and want. Whosoever therefore rescueth from penury a life of this kind, winneth great joy for himself. For he who is harassed by misfortune of this sort is afflicted and tortured with equal torment as one who is in chains. For many men on account of calamities of this kind, because they can bear them no longer, lay violent hands on themselves. He then who knows the calamity of a man of this kind and rescueth him not, committeth great sin, and becometh guilty of the man's blood. Do therefore good works, whoever of you have received (benefits) from the Lord, lest, while ye delay to do them, the building of the tower be completed. For it is on your account that the work of the building has been interrupted. Unless then ye hasten to do right, the tower will be completed, and ye shut out.'

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