

THE SON OF THE HIGHEST

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PREFACE

This story is intended as a sequel to "The Ten Camels." Like its predecessor it was first written to meet the demands of the Author's little daughter for "Another Bible Story, Mother."

The Author claims no credit for the viewpoints or interpretations presented herein. Other and wiser minds were used of God to bring forth meat in due season from the storehouse of God's Word for the household of faith.

An attempt has been made to present the glorious truths of the Word of God in language simple enough for the child's mind to grasp. No "New Light" is offered but the events of the life of the "Prince of Peace" are—as far as possible—placed in the proper sequence. This has not been easy, as the different Gospels—being written so long after the events narrated therein took place—do not agree in all particulars; some placing certain events early, and some later in the life of the Master.

The Author wished to express thankfulness to God for revealing through His wise and faithful servant the Truths herein offered and to acknowledge the assistance rendered by the compilers of the "New Self-interpreting Bible Library" in placing the events of the Master's life in proper order. Without the help of this work the task would have been more difficult.

At the request of her little daughter the author has ventured to intersperse sundry original poems through the volume. It is with humility and joy in His service that this book is offered for your perusal. May it prove a blessing in assisting our little ones to a better understanding of the Mission of our Great King and the appreciation of the Character of our Mighty Creator.

Yours in His Service,

L.K.P.

THE ARRIVAL OF THE HIGH PRIEST

(From the Order of Melchisedec)

"Now what is this?" The shepherds cry.

"This light that slants adown the sky.

It is not time for morning's light

To scatter all the shades of night.

What is this music that we hear

That sounds So sweet upon the ear?

Why seems yon star to throb and glow

And o'er the earth its bright rays throw?

"See how it lights the sleeping fold

And turns the foliage to gold.

Now who is this that stands before us?

A hush of wonder settles o'er us.

Bow low your heads and worship God,

For surely Holy is this sod.

List to the message that He brings,

Who comes to earth with shining wings."

"Look up ye men of Israel

And still your anxious fear;

I bring to you from Heaven

Glad tidings of good cheer.

For unto you in David's town

Is born a Savior King.

This is the blessed message

Jehovah bids me bring.

Lo you shall find the Baby wrapped
In swaddling clothes and laid
Within a lowly manger.
Haste then, Be unafraid.”
Then glory o’er the shepherds spilled,
And suddenly the Heavens filled
With an angelic throng who sang
An anthem glorious that rang
A down the starry night.
”Glory to God in the Highest
and on the Earth be Peace,
Good will to men from this time forth
Begin and never cease.
Begin and never cease!”
See in yon lowly cattle shed
On Mary’s arm a downy head.
Two little flower- petal hands
That flutter o’er the swaddling bands.
The shepherds kneel there in amaze
As on the miracle they gaze.
Then back to Heaven they wing their way.
The throbbing star withdraws its ray.
They have transferred a perfect life
From Heaven’s glory to Earth’s strife.
Escorting thus God’s Firstborn Son

Beheld His life on Earth begun.
The mightiest feature of God's Plan
That should redeem the sons of man.
He who created all the stars
And flung the red veil over Mars,
Before whom angels worshipping
Were wont their offerings to bring,
He—second only to our god—
For love of man has graced earth's sod.
Now Mary tends His infant cry
While wondering shepherds kneel close by.

These verses are included at the request of little "Linnet" who loves them very dearly. Perhaps other children will love them also.

L.K.P.

CHAPTER 1—ANGEL MESSENGERS FROM HEAVEN

”Mother dear, you promised me that you would tell me all about Jesus,” said a little fair-haired girl one winter night.

Linnet, for it was our little friend, whom you met in the stories of the “Ten Camels,” was sitting at her mother’s knee. Her health had improved greatly since the days when Mother sat by her bedside and told her those stories, but her love for the Word of God had not changed.

”Yes, darling,” Mother replied, ”I have not forgotten. Now where shall we start the story? You know it will take many evenings to tell all about our wonderful King. Perhaps there is no better way we could spend the long winter evenings.”

”It is always best to start at the beginning, is it not, Mother?” ”Yes, dear, it is. Now where would you say the beginning of the story of Jesus would be?” Mother smiled.

”Way back when God made the earth and the stars, Mother. You told me Jesus was with God then.”

”You are right, dear. Jesus was ‘The firstborn of every creature,’ ‘The beginning and the ending of the creation of God,’ ‘For by Him were all things made that were made.’ I am sure you have not forgotten how God was the first and how He made Jesus—who was then called—can you remember, dear?”

”He was called the ‘Logos,’ was He not, Mother?”

”That is right, dear. Do you remember what the word Logos meant?”

”Yes, Mother, The Messenger or Word. He was called Michael too, was He not?” Linnet asked.

”Yes, dear. ‘The Logos’ was really His title, and the name He was known by—in olden times—was Michael. It means ‘Like God.’ You will remember, dear, God promised to send this great Messenger to earth. Can you tell me the first promise about His coming, that is in the Bible?”

”It was when God said He would send ‘The Seed of the woman’ to crush Satan’s head.”

”That is right, dear. That was the very first promise God made to Adam and Eve after they sinned.”

”Why did God say ‘The seed of the woman’ Mother? Why did He not just say He would send His Son?” asked Linnet. ”Why did He call Jesus by such a funny name?”

”You remember, dearest, how Mother showed you that every thing has a

father and mother. Even the trees and flowers have two parents.”

”I think it is So funny, Mother, that a big tree should have such a tiny father and mother as those little yellow things in the flowers. My father and mother are big and tree’s are So tiny.”

Mother laughed. ”It does seem funny, dear. The stamens and pistils of the flower are the real parents of the plant. Everyone who has ever lived (except Jesus) has had two parents. Jesus really had two also but only one on earth. God was His Father and Mary His mother. God was really giving the people a sign by which they might know His Messenger. He put it that way So that no one would understand till He wished them to. If Satan had understood he would not have been in such a hurry to get Cain to kill Abel. It was because he thought every good man might be the ‘seed of the woman’ that he had caused all good people trouble. In this way Satan was used to test and try those who wanted to serve God. You see if we are good when everything goes right it does not mean much, but if we are good when it is easier and more pleasant to do wrong, just because we want to please God, then He knows that we really love Him. So He has allowed Satan to make it hard to be good, during this age. When God said that the ‘seed of the woman should bruise the serpent’s head,’ He was showing us that we must look for someone who had no earthly father,”Mother explained. ”All down through the years of the world’s history, people watched for the promised Messenger of God. For many years He did not appear and people could not understand. Had God forgotten? When a good man DID come and did some great deed, the people hoped that he was the one for whom they were looking, but the good men all died and sin went on. Soon people grew weary of watching for the Prophet and turned from god to worship idols. Noah tried to lead them back to the True God but he was only able to save his own family. Then his children began to look to idols and to turn from God also.

”After many years God called Abraham to leave the city where the idol worshippers lived and to go to Palestine. You remember what a good man Abraham was. God talked to him and told him many things.”

”God told him that Jesus would be born in his family, did He not, Mother?” Linnet asked.

”Yes dear. I see you have not forgotten. Abraham thought that Isaac was the promised seed but he was only used as a picture.

God made many pictures in those days. Some day we will tell you about them all. When Moses came to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt, the people thought that he was the Messenger whom God had promised, but Moses himself, said, ”A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up to you from among your brethren. He will be like me and you must listen to Him. It will come to pass that whoever will not hear Him, will be cut off from among the people.” That meant that they would die if they disobeyed the true Seed. So Moses showed them that he was not the real

Messenger but that he was another picture. God sent many people to the children of Israel to help them when they were in trouble and each time they hoped that it was the one who would take away sin. All died in time and Satan and sin lived on.

”Satan hated these good men and always did all he could either to make them turn from God to sin, or to kill them, because he was always looking for the one who was to destroy him. When David came and was such a fine king and destroyed their enemies and made them a great nation, the Israelites were sure he was the Messiah. Then he died and Solomon came who was so rich and wise at first, that the people felt sure the time had come at last. But Solomon sinned and died and the kingdom was divided. Many grew discouraged but David had left many prophecies that showed that the Messiah was still to come and he and Solomon were just pictures of some one greater. They all had earthly fathers so they could not be the ‘Seed of the woman,’ but the people still did not understand. They had no way of knowing that God had permitted Satan a time to rule over the earth and see what he could do with it.”

”That was a week of God’s days, was it not, Mother?”

”Yes, dear, and one of God’s days is as long as one thousand years of ours. Nearly four of these great days had passed when the time came for the next part of God’s Plan. God had already sent word through His prophet, Daniel, that Jesus would come four hundred and eighty years after the king of Persia ordered the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem which the people of Babylon had destroyed. He showed, what they could not believe or understand, that they would refuse their King and He would be killed, and their nation punished.

”That was why the people were expecting Jesus to come, but they expected that He would come as a great king and prophet and would lead them to battle against their enemies. The prophets had told them many things about Jesus and what He would be like, and the pictures God had made, told them much more, but they did not search His Word to see what the coming King would be like. Isaiah told them that the new King would be the son of a young, Jewish woman, who would be of the family of King David, but not of Solomon’s family. The prophets said He would be born in Bethlehem but would be called a Nazarene. They told them that God would call His son out of Egypt; that He would have no riches or beauty that they should wish Him to be their King. They told them that he would take away their sicknesses and heal their diseases, and that they would refuse to have Him and would kill Him. One prophet told them of how He would ride into the city on an ass, and another said that one who shared His food would betray Him. Another said that He would be sold for thirty pieces of silver, and His clothes would be divided among His enemies. Another told how He would be buried with the rich but His body would not decay; that none of His bones would be broken. They said He would be pure, harmless and good.

”With all these things to show what their new King would be like, it seems hard to see why they did not know Him when He came, but we must remember that He was also to be a greater Prophet than Moses, a greater Leader than Joshua and a greater King than David or Solomon. So the people could not picture such a man. We must remember, too, that most of the people could not read for themselves and had to trust the Scribes and Pharisees to tell them what god’s Word said. Now everyone can read for themselves, but they do not always do it. Many trust leaders still, just as the Jews did and So never really know what the Bible does teach.”

”That is why I want to learn all about the Bible, Mother. I want to know what God really said So I won’t make mistakes. I want to be able to teach other children, too,”said Linnet, leaning on her mother’s knee and looking up into her face. She was only seven and just starting school, but her heart was filled with love for God and the Great King.

”We must lean before we can teach, darling. Remember how Elijah had to stay three years by the brook and feed on the bread the ravens brought and drink the water from the brook? So you, too, must feed on God’s Word and drink deep of Truth before you can teach others,”Mother said.

”Our great Father, God, and the Logos, were watching the things that were happening on the earth. They knew the time had come for the next part of God’s Plan. We can imagine Jesus—who was the Logos then—saying to His Father, ‘There are So many fine people among them, Father, and even those who are wicked have much that is fine in them, but they are deceived by Satan and are dying. I long to lift them up and help them.’

”Then God might say, ‘You know, dear Son, that nothing can be done to help them till Adam’s debt is paid. I cannot change my ruling that death must pay for sin.’

”Then Jesus would say, ‘If someone else paid Adam’s debt and died for him, the penalty could be lifted. I would gladly pay that debt, for though they are So sinful and weak, I love them. I know you love them, too, Father, and that you have planned that if someone will take Adam’s place they may yet be forgiven and taught how to live right.’

”Do you realize, dear Son, that the one who pays that debt must be born among them as a babe and live and suffer with them? Do you see how they will hate him and kill him?”

”Yes, Father, I know. I understand many of the pictures you have told me to make. I know that Isaac pictured the one who would lay down His life willingly for them. I am willing to face anything, to suffer and die for them. I know you would do it yourself but the Universe cannot be left without a God to govern it, and You are Divine and cannot die. Let me go Father. I will do my best to help them.’

”Then God would say, ‘If you do that work for Me I will give you back your life. Indeed I will do more. I will make you Divine, as I am, and you shall sit at my right hand and I will give the world into your hands to lift up and bless all the people there and teach them how to live. You may restore them to the perfect life Adam had—if they will obey our laws. Then the will of God shall be done on earth even as it is done in Heaven.’

”I am ready, Father. I love the people of the earth even while they are sinners, and I know they will be well worth any sacrifice.’ So Jesus, who was still the Logos and the very greatest in Heaven, next to His Father, God, agreed to be our Savior and Helper.”

”Does it not make you love Him, Mother? I want to show Him how much I love Him. I want to be true to Him.” Linnet spoke earnestly and there were tears in Mother’s eyes as she said, ”You will, my darling. Now, we can picture god and His dear son talking over the best way the Plan could be carried out. When everything was arranged, the angel Gabriel was sent to the earth with a message to one of the people of Judea.

”Zacharias was a priest at that time and it was the time of the Atonement sacrifices. He had taken the incense into the Holy Place and was burning it on the golden Altar when he saw a man standing near the Altar. Only the priests were allowed to go into the Holy Place So Zacharias felt sure he was dreaming, but he was a bit frightened.

”The stranger said, ‘Do not be afraid, Zacharias. God knows how much you have always wanted a child. He has heard your prayers and your wife’s prayers and has sent me to tell you He is going to give you a son and you must call him John. He will go before the Messiah and tell of His coming.’

”Zacharias had prayed for many years for a son but none had come to them and at last he had grown old and had given up all hope. Now he just could not believe the message of the angel. He said, ‘How am I to know this is true? I am an old man and my wife is old, too. I know it is just a dream.’

”The angel said, ‘Zacharias, I am the angel, Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and He has sent me to tell you this. Now because you did not believe my message, you will be dumb and will not be able to speak until all that I have told you has taken place.’

Then the angel disappeared and left Zacharias alone. When he went out to the people he had to show them his wishes by signs, for he could not speak to them. The people said, ”He has seen an angel.’ Zacharias finished his work at the temple in Jerusalem and then he went to his home. The angel went back to heaven and waited awhile. About six months later God sent him again with a message to a young girl in Nazareth.”

"I know who she was, Mother; she was Mary, and the angel told her about how God had chosen her to be Jesus' mother and to take care of Him," Linnet interrupted.

"That is correct. You will remember how she asked the angel how she could be the mother of the Baby Jesus when she was not married. She did not understand that the Baby must have no earthly father. The angel said, 'The power of God will overshadow you, and the holy child shall be called the Son of God.' At last the 'Seed of the woman' was to come to the earth.

"Up in Heaven Jesus gave himself willingly into God's hands and the great Creator, who had made both angels and men by His power, now caused a deep sleep to come over His dear Son. Jesus must give up His life as an angel and be changed into a tiny human being that was placed, by God's great power, in the 'seed house' of His earthly mother Mary.

"Even there God was able to watch over Him and to guard Mary from all harm. Mary remembered that the angel had told her that her cousin Elizabeth was to have a baby, too, so she went away to the hill country where Zacharias and Elizabeth lived, to see her cousin. She must have wondered how she could make Elizabeth understand the wonderful thing that had happened to her, but she did not need to worry because Elizabeth knew all about it. The angel had prepared her for Mary's coming and she welcomed her cousin gladly. Her first words were, 'How is it that the mother of my Lord has come to me?' Mary's heart was full of joy and she praised God. She stayed with her cousin till the time came for the baby John to be born, and then she returned to her own home.

"Perhaps Joseph—her cousin to whom she was engaged—sent for her. You remember that in those days, if a girl's father and mother died, her nearest relative who was not married had to take her to be his wife. Mary's parents were dead and Joseph was the one who must marry Mary and care for her. When Mary told Joseph about the angel's visit and the Baby that was to come, he must have thought that she was just making up a story. He was quite angry and was going to send her away but God sent His angel to Joseph, and the angel said, 'Mary has told you the truth. She has been chosen of God for that greatest honor ever to be given to a woman. The child that will come to her is the Son of God and the great Prophet He has promised.' So Joseph took Mary to his own home to be his wife. He was very good to her.

"Elizabeth's little son came, as the angel said he would, and when he was eight days old the priest from the temple came home to give the baby his name and to mark him as God had commanded all boy babies born to the Children of Israel must be marked. Many friends of the family came, too, for it was quite a ceremony, something like a christening to the people of the churches. When they would have given the baby its name the priest said, 'What is the child to be called?' Elizabeth said, 'He is to

be called John.'

'''But none of your family is called by that name. Why not give him his father's name? Call him Zacharias. What does his father think?'

''Zacharias could not speak but he motioned to them to bring a pen and paper and he wrote, 'His name is John.' Then the last thing the angel foretold had come to pass and the old man found that he could talk again. He said, 'Blessed be the God of Israel for He has visited His people and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David, even as He promised by the mouth of all His holy prophets. He will save us from our enemies for He will keep His promise to Abraham that we should be saved, and should serve Him without fear. You, my son, shall be called the 'Prophet of God' and will prepare His way before Him.'

''They did not realize that the rulers of the people would kill Jesus, for they did not know that the Ransom must be paid first and many years must pass, while god was choosing out the Church to be the Bride of Christ, before the promises of God could come to Israel.

''John grew up and lived in the hill country, till the time came for him to give his message to Israel.

''Six months after John was born, another wonderful thing happened. Do you know what that was?''

''It was the coming of Jesus, was it not, Mother?''asked Linnet.

Mother had been knitting steadily as she talked, and now she stopped to measure her work before she went on with the story.

''Yes, dearest. Mary was living in Nazareth, and you will remember the prophets had said Jesus must be born in Bethlehem. Perhaps Mary wondered about that, for Nazareth was quite a long distance from Bethlehem and there were no cars or trains. One day a messenger arrived in the little town and told the people that the Roman Emperor had made a law that everyone must pay a tax. In order to make it easier to collect this tax he said everyone must return to their own tribe and to the town from which their family came. There they must have their names written in a big book and they must pay the tax. It meant a lot of trouble for the people, but the rulers did not care about that. Joseph and Mary were both of the family of David and their hometown was Bethlehem. They had to get ready at once and take food and water for the journey. It was too far for Mary to walk, So she had to ride on a donkey. Perhaps Joseph rode one, too. The poor people mostly had donkeys to travel on. Only the very rich could afford horses and chariots. They rode or walked slowly along the dusty roads. It was about the first of October and the weather was quite mild So they could ride or walk and not be too cold. Palestine has very little really cold weather. At night they would either sleep in one of the little towns or camp in the hills.

”It was getting late when at last they reached the little town of Bethlehem. Mary was very tired and they went at once to the inn, or hotel, as we call it in our country. The innkeeper was very sorry, but there were so many visitors that all the rooms were taken, and there was no place for them.

”“Could you not give us some kind of room for the night? We are not particular, but my wife is not well and she is very weary with the long journey. Just a shelter and some place where she can sleep. Surely there is some place,” Joseph urged.

”The innkeeper looked closer and saw that here was real need. ‘I am very sorry. The only place we have that is not taken up is a small room at the back of the house. It is not much more than a shed, but we could fix a place there for your wife.’

”So Mary did not have to sleep out in the hills. A bed was prepared for her in the little shed and the innkeeper’s wife was very kind to her. People did not then, have beds as we have; they slept on thin mattresses placed right on the floor. Mary was glad of any place to rest and something warm to eat. Some say the room was a cave, and most pictures show it as a stable, but there is nothing in God’s Word to say that Jesus was born in a stable or cattle shed, nor that any animals were there. The mistake has come through the fact that Jesus laid in a manger and in most places a manger is only in a stable, but in the East people carry little net hammocks which they hang up to put food in for their animals and these are called manger. It was possible that when the Baby was born there was no cot for Him, and Mary used the little net manger as a bed for her little Son. It would be a rather unusual but very comfortable bed for the tiny Baby.

”Out in the hills not far from the little town of Bethlehem were some shepherds, keeping watch over their sheep. The Eastern shepherds lead their sheep through the hills and valleys in the daytime and at night take them to folds, which are enclosures where wild animals cannot hurt the sheep. The shepherds sleep by the gate of the fold, so nothing can get in to kill the sleeping animals. Several shepherds often use one fold and in the morning each one calls his own sheep out and they follow him.

”On this night several shepherds were lying around their camp fire talking and watching over their sheep. Some of them would be dozing. Suddenly, a bright light shone round about them. It seemed as if a door in Heaven had been opened and the light shone out on them. Then they saw a stranger dressed in bright clothing standing near them and they knew it must be an angel and were afraid.

”“Do not be afraid!” said the angel, ‘I have come to bring you good news of great joy that shall come to all people. There is a Baby born in the City of David tonight, who is to be Christ the Lord. You will know Him by the fact that He is sleeping in a manger.’

”Then there was suddenly a great crowd of angels; they seemed to fill the Heavens, and they all started to sing a wonderful song of Praise to God. Part of it the shepherds remembered and have passed down to us—

‘Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth peace

And good will to all men,’ they sang.”

”That is the hymn we sing on Christmas morning before we open our gifts, is it not, Mother?”said Linnet.

”Yes, dear. It was sung by the angels on the morning Jesus was born, and we sing it still at Christmas, for that is the day the world keeps by which to remember the birth of Jesus.”

”I think it is one of the loveliest hymns we ever sing, Mother,”said the little girl, ”and I love it more because it is a song from Heaven.”

”Yes, it is the only song we have that we know came from Heaven,”Mother answered. ”The angels went back to heaven then and the shepherds stood there talking. ‘Let us go down to Bethlehem and see this wonderful thing that has come to pass,’ they said. Soon they were standing at the door of the inn.

”‘Was there a Baby born here, tonight?’ they asked and the surprised innkeeper said, ‘Why yes, there was a Baby Boy born in the shed at the back, a short time ago. How did you know about it?’

”‘We saw a vision of angels who told us that a Baby was born here who is to be the promised Messiah. We came to see Him.’

”The innkeeper took them to see the Baby and when they saw that He was indeed sleeping in one of the little mangers, they worshipped Him, for they knew that this was no common baby but the Son of the Great God of Heaven. You may be sure the innkeeper and his wife were pretty good to Mary and Joseph and the Baby after that.

”Now, dearest, it is getting late, even for a big girlie, and you must run off and get ready for bed,”Mother said.

”You will tell me more tomorrow, will you not, Mother?”

”Indeed I will, darling. I would like you to try and learn the little verse tonight and remember it.

”‘Glory to God in the Highest and on the earth peace and good will to all men.’”

”That is easy to learn, Mother. Now I will get ready for bed. Come and kiss me goodnight when I am all ready.”

THE VISIT OF THE WISE MEN (POEM)

On camels tall, that rock and sway,
With vestments bright and trappings gay,
We see a little band.

With swarthy face and haughty air
They seem to scorn the squalor there
That reeks on every hand.

The narrow streets that teem with life,
The quarreling urchins' constant strife;
The curs that snarl and bark.

"A Holy city!" One protests.

"'Tis filled with poverty and pests
And odors vile and stark."

Then—in the open Market Place
Where cattle stamp and sheep find space,
Their mission they proclaim.

"Where is the Palace of the King
And where the New Born prince? We bring
Him gifts. His power acclaim.

"His star ascended in the East.

We've ridden fast with tiring beasts
To worship the Messiah.
Come show us where He may be found
That we, with worship true, profound
His favor may acquire."

Then consternation settles down

On Palace great and through the town.
The King his wise men calls.
The strangers wait with haughty mein
While hasting messengers are seen
In street and Palace halls.
"In Bethlehem,"the wise men speak
"The prophets say the Prince you seek
At this time should be born.
His coming we have long expected
Tis well that He should be protected.
He brings our Promised Morn.
"If you should find Him, learn His name.
Our mighty monarch of great fame
Requests that you return
And bring him word—for Palace gates
Will ope' to Him whom Israel waits—
The King for whom we yearn."
Thro' dusty roads the wise men speed
To seek the King—the promised"Seed"—
For God their steps now guides.
Night falling, finds them on their way.
The star enfolds with glowing ray.
The place where Christ resides.
They kneel before a little Child,
Who—with His mother, gentle, mild—

Greets them with dignity.
They give Him gold and frankincense
And jewels rare to recompense
This gentle majesty.
How Mary's heart thrills at the sight,
She knows her little son's birthright
As Monarch of all lands.
The eastern kings shall bring their gold
To Him—the son of God—she holds
His eager, Baby hands.
What fate awaits this tiny boy?
Her heart is torn twixt fear and joy.
What power He must wield.
She clasps Him in her loving arms,
Trembling the while with vague alarms,
"Oh God! My Baby shield!"
She seems to hear the march of men;
Hears mothers mourning babies slain,
The earth torn with their grief.
"Twas said a sword must pierce my heart,"
She murmurs as the teardrops start.
"Oh Father, send relief!"
Then thro' the mist light seems to shine,
A foretaste of some joy Divine
To flood the earth at last.
She sees the Kingdom yet to be;

She feels her Child's great destiny

When all earth's toil is past.

L.K.P.

CHAPTER 2—THE VISIT OF THE WISE MEN

"Daddy is busy writing letters, Mother," said Linnet the next evening, "and the boys have gone out. Could you tell me another story about Jesus?"

"Well, darling, I think I might. It is nice to sit here by the fire and talk and knit," Mother answered, and Linnet drew up a small stool and made herself comfortable by her mother's knee.

Mother began, "In the little house in Bethlehem, where Mary and Joseph had decided to remain after the baby Jesus was born, the little fellow was growing, as all babies grow, very quickly. When He was about two months old, they took Him to the temple in Jerusalem to present Him to God and to offer an offering or sacrifice to God. You may remember that when the Israelites were leaving Egypt God saved all the firstborn of the Egyptians, and in return He said that the oldest son in every family was to be given to Him. God never asks human sacrifices, so He said that, to show they realized that the eldest child belonged to Him, they were to redeem or buy that child back. This was done by giving a lamb to the priests to be sacrificed in place of the child. Because some of the people were very poor and could not afford a lamb, God said they might give two young pigeons or a dove that would cost only a few cents.

"Mary and Joseph were very poor and so they took two pigeons as a sacrifice to redeem this precious child. While they were in the temple a man came in. He was very old and very good and served faithfully, and in a vision God had shown him that he would not die until he had seen the Promised Messiah. When this old man, whose name was Simeon, saw Jesus he came at once and took the Baby in his arms. His old face lighted up, and he said, 'Blessed be the God of Israel! Now Lord, let Thy servant die in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy glory and the salvation Thou hast prepared for Thy people and for all men. A light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of Thy people Israel.'

Then he turned to Mary and said, 'This child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign that shall be spoken against; (Yes, a sword—a great sorrow—shall pierce your heart, also) that the thoughts of many minds may be shown.'

"Then an old woman called Anna, who was a prophetess and who had lived many years in the temple, came in. She, too, came to see the Baby and thanked God for His coming, saying He was the Messiah. Mary and Joseph then returned to their home in Bethlehem where Joseph worked

as a carpenter.

”At the time when Jesus was born there were some wise men, or kings, living in a country far away from Palestine. These men were called magi, because they studied the stars and claimed that they could tell what was going to happen by their movements. There are many people still who believe this. Perhaps there is some truth in the belief, but we would rather learn what is coming from God’s Word.

”These magi or wise men were studying the stars when Jesus was born and they saw a star they had never seen before. They knew it was a sign that a great ruler was coming to the earth. Perhaps the sign was given to them by God, in a way they could accept and believe. They were sure, from their studies, that this great ruler was to be born in Palestine and to be of the family of David and that He was to be the King of Judea and, in time, of the whole world. They determined to go at once and see the new King and to take great gifts to Him to help Him in His work.

”They loaded food and money and jewels on camels and started out for Palestine. It was a long journey and they traveled for many days across the desert on their camels. Now we could make the whole journey in a few days, but there were no trains or autos then and they must travel slowly on camels, camping at night.

”When at last they did reach Palestine they did not know where to look for the child. They thought that such a great Prince would surely be the son of some rich person, perhaps the King, and that everyone in the country would know of the great event. So they went to Jerusalem and asked the people there, where they could find the great Prince who was born to be King of the Jews.

The people sent them to Herod’s Palace. They had heard of no King, for only a very few people knew about Jesus’ birth. The King was troubled. He said, ‘There has been no king born here. What do you mean?’

”‘There HAS been a great King born in Judea. We have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him. He will rule over all the world some day,’ the wise men insisted.

”Then Herod, who was the king at that time, remembered that he had heard something about a prophecy that said the Messiah was to come soon. He sent for his wise men and asked them, ‘Where is that new King supposed to be born? I know there is a prophecy in the book of the Law about a ruler to be born near this time. Does it say where?’

”‘The prophets say He will be born in Bethlehem of Judea. One prophecy reads, ‘Thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judea, art not the least among the princes of Judah; for out of you shall He come forth to me who is to rule my people Israel,’ ‘ the king’s wise men replied.

”Then Herod sent for the wise men from the East and said to them, ‘I

have not heard of the birth of any Prince, but there is a prophecy that says the great Prince is to be born in the little town of Bethlehem, where David lived. God there and seek Him. If you do find Him be sure and come and tell me. Such a great Prince should be living here in the Royal Palace and I would like to go and worship Him too and take care of Him.'

"The wise men promised and at once set out for Bethlehem. They left Jerusalem in the morning but it was about twenty- five miles away and it was getting dark before they saw the little village in the hills. They had been wondering how they were going to know the right Baby, but when they saw the little town in the hills, they saw that the new star they had seen in their own land was shining again and it was very bright. Its rays shone down directly on a little house that was set all by itself on the hillside. As they came nearer, the little house was lighted up by the rays of the star and So they knew that it was a sign from God that there they would find the young Child they sought. When they came to the door Mary was surprised to see such richly dressed people stopping at her little home. Joseph, too, wondered what their visit might mean.

"The wise men asked, 'Where is the Child that is born King of the Jews? We have seen His star in the East and have come a great distance to find Him.'

"Mary knew they meant Jesus and she brought Him out to them. We do not know how old He was or how long the wise men had been in coming. He might even have been walking, though it does not seem likely He was old enough for that. The wise men knelt before the tiny Child and promised to serve Him and then they brought out their gifts. They had gold and silver—a small fortune—and lovely jewels. These, they said, were to be used for the work of the Kingdom and for the care of the little King. No doubt the young child was delighted with the pretty gifts. Then the wise men gave Him rich gifts of spices that were called incense and myrrh. These were used to anoint the bodies of Kings who had died.

"They did not stay long with the little family but probably stayed for the night in the hotel and started back for their own country in the morning. During the night the angel who was watching over Jesus, came to them in the hotel and told them not to go back to Jerusalem and tell Herod where to find the Child, for Herod only wished to kill Him. Herod was jealous and was afraid that if the Child lived, he would lose his high position.

"The wise men obeyed the angel and slipped quietly away from Bethlehem and went back to their homes. When Herod had waited several days and the wise men did not return he began to get annoyed; then someone told him that they had gone home without telling him if they had found the Child. Herod was So very angry that he called his servants and ordered that soldiers should be sent to Bethlehem to kill all the babies under two years of age in the town of Bethlehem. Herod was a very wicked and cruel man and thought that in this way he would be

sure of killing Jesus.

”In the little home in Bethlehem, Mary and Joseph and the young Child were sleeping quietly. Baby Jesus would be sleeping on a little mat or in a cradle such as Eastern mothers often use for their little ones. Suddenly Joseph woke and sat up. He was sure someone had called him. He listened and thought he heard someone say, ‘Joseph! Wake up.’ He got up and looked around and there he saw the same angel who had told him to marry Mary and take care of her.

”He asked, ‘Is something wrong?’ ”The angel answered, ‘You must wake Mary and take her and the young child at once to Egypt. Herod has heard of the Child and will try to kill Him. Do not lose any time. Stay in Egypt till I come and tell you it is safe to come back.’

”‘We will go at once,’ Joseph replied. Then the angel disappeared and Joseph woke Mary and they packed what things they would need for their journey, on their donkeys. They were glad now of the money the wise men had brought and they packed it also. Before morning came they had slipped quietly out of their little house. Mary would ride on one of the donkeys with the sleeping child in her arms and Joseph would either walk or ride another donkey loaded with the clothing and food and water, for it was a long journey to Egypt and they must cross places where there was no water and where robbers hid in the hills.

”They knew that the angel would be near them and would be taking care of them, even though they could not see him. They reached Egypt after many days travel and Joseph found plenty of work there. God was watching over them and no wild animal or robber disturbed them. ”Back in Bethlehem a terrible thing had happened. The very morning after Mary and Joseph and the Baby had slipped away from their home, the people were surprised to see a band of soldiers marching into their little town. What was their horror when the soldiers started searching the homes of the people and killing every baby they could find!

”Why did not God tell all the mothers to take their babies away, Mother? Why did He let the wicked soldiers kill them?” Linnet asked.

”God knows So much more than we do, dear one. He knew that if all the people of Bethlehem were to start out of the town to hide their babies Herod would send His soldiers after them and not only all the other babies, but Jesus also would be killed. He knew too of the terrible things that were going to happen to the people of that country in the years to come. He could look ahead through the years and see that some of those babies would spend years in sickness and sorrow, and many would be killed, in even worse ways, when the City of Jerusalem was destroyed. He could see what was hidden from the people and He knew it would be best for them to sleep till the Kingdom was set up and then be given back to their parents. He knew that some of them would grow up to be very wicked too, and So He let them die and sleep till the world’s troubles are over. Then He will wake them up again and there will be no sickness or

suffering in the world.”

”Was that why He let my little sister sleep, too, Mother?” ”Yes, dearest. God always does what is best for us. Now, dear one, it is getting late and my little girl must go to school in the morning. There will be many evenings hen we can have the other stories.”

”But Mother, did God not punish that wicked old king for having those little babies all killed?” Linnet inquired.

”Yes, darling. God sent a dreadful and painful disease and the king suffered terribly before he died. God knows how to punish wicked men. He knows also how to care for His little ones who trust Him.

”Here is a lovely little verse for you tonight. ”Trust in the Lord and do good; So shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.’ ”
Psalms 37:3

IN THE TEMPLE OF GOD

Upon Moriah's mount the Temple stands,
Its stately beauty all the town commands.
With golden porch and pillars rising high,
Where God stooped down to hear His people's cry.
Within the pillared courts the white robed priests,
With hand unerring, slay the proffered beasts.
The smoke of daily sacrifice ascending
Atones for sin and transgressions unending.
A young lad walks with reverential tread
Through halls and courts where Abraham once led
His loyal son to make a sacrifice
To picture that which should for sin suffice. Now on that hallowed spot,
God's first born Son—
Sensing the mighty work He has begun—
Seeks counsel of the doctors grave and stern,
The deep things of His Father's Word to learn.
He asks them questions, which they cannot answer,
Of Him who yet shall stand, man's willing sponsor.
With Him, they search the parchments old and hoary,
Probing the depths of prophecy and story.
Deep earnestness, in Childhood seldom seen,
Within those dark, deep eyes of His must gleam.
His voice is serious and grave and sad—
Small wonder that they marvel at the lad.
There Mary, seeking her son So anxiously,

Finds Him searching the Scriptures earnestly.

”Why have you left us thus in doubt and fear?”

”My Father’s business called me, Mother dear.”

Convinced that not until His manhood’s prime

Can God accept His offering sublime,

The lad returns with them, their wishes heeding,

To serve them well and wait the Father’s leading.

Like Jesus I must wait for Him to guide me,

Trusting in Him, whatever may betide me.

Searching His Word, must serve Him everyday.

And wait for Him to show His better way.

L.K.P.

CHAPTER 3—THE BOY JESUS IN THE TEMPLE

”Do I get my story, tonight, Mother, or are you too tired?” Linnet asked.

The supper things ere all washed up and everything was cleared away. Mother was feeling a bit weary after her day’s work but the story hour had come to be a part of the day.

”I guess you do dear—if you wish. You helped me with the work and I can surely give you a little time in return. Where did we stop last night? Do you remember?”

”We left Jesus and His parents in Egypt. You told me about how the wicked king had all the babies in Bethlehem killed,”Linnet answered.

”That’s is right dear. Well, we will start from there. We do not know just how long Jesus was in Egypt. Perhaps not very long, for historians tell us that Herod died a short time after he committed that terrible deed.”

”What is a historian, Mother?”asked the little girl. ”A person who writes the true story of things that happen,”Mother answered. ”Ever since time began, there have been people who kept records of the events of their lives. That is how we know all the story of mankind.

”Sometime after Herod died, the angel came again to Jesus’ parents and told them that it was now safe for them to return to Palestine, but not to go back to Bethlehem for the new king was the son of the wicked Herod and was just as cruel as he had been. So Mary and Joseph went back and made their home in Nazareth, which was a little town near the Sea of Galilee. It had been Mary’s home before and they had many friends there. In this way God arranged that all the things the prophets had foretold about the Messiah’s birth should be fulfilled. Jesus was of the family of David and He was born in Bethlehem and called up out of Egypt, yet He was called a Nazarene because He spent most of His life in Nazareth.

”Every year after they returned from Egypt, Mary and Joseph used to go up to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover. They always left their little boy with friends in Nazareth, because the journey was too long and tiring for a child. When Jesus was twelve years old, however, they decided that He was old enough to go to Jerusalem.”

”How far was it to the city, Mother?”

”About one hundred miles, dear. It would not seem long to us, for if we had a car we could go that distance in an afternoon. The people had to walk then and it would take them about four days, on the road, spending the nights in the little villages along the way. It was one of the laws of the Jewish people that everyone who could, must go to the city for the Feast of the Passover. They took gifts to the priests and sacrifices to God for their sins. The people were much more used to walking than we are

today. Those who had donkeys would ride much of the way. Generally a lot of people would be going together from the little towns and this was a protection from the robbers who often hid in the hills and attacked people who traveled alone. Mary and Joseph and Jesus joined such a party and traveled slowly along the dusty roads. There were many things to see and Jesus would be very much interested in everything.

”They would travel through the land where Joseph, the son of Jacob, had gone to seek his brothers. They had to go through the country of Samaria and past Jacob’s well, and past Bethel where Abraham had lived. It was much the same road as the one over which Abraham had gone to offer up Isaac on Mount Moriah, many years before. Indeed the Great Temple at Jerusalem was built on that very mountain. What a wonderful trip it must have seemed to Jesus, who had never been to the city since he had been taken to the Temple to give Him to God, when He was a tiny Baby.

”After about four day’s journey, they came in sight of the beautiful city, with its great stone walls, built right on the tops of the mountains. The Temple could be seen for a great distance.

”How wonderful the high walls and narrow crowded streets must have seemed to the young boy. He liked the bazaars, which were like open-air stores built right on the streets, where beautiful pottery, rugs, linen and silks were sold. But there was nothing that interested Him as much as the great Temple. They would go there to make sacrifices to God and He would see the beautiful gate and the mighty pillars, and the porch that King Solomon had built.

”Jesus knew all about Abraham and Isaac and He would think of how Abraham had climbed this very hill, carrying the fire for that sacrifice. He would think of Isaac stumbling up the hill with the load of dry wood that was to be used to burn the offering to God. If He could remember what had happened before He came to the world as a little Baby, He would know far more about that, than anyone could teach Him, for He—as the great Logos—had given God’s messages to Abraham and had watched to see that Isaac was not harmed. He would think of how Isaac had been willing to die, rather than let his father disobey God.

”Of course we do not know just how much Jesus could remember. Perhaps it would all seem like a dream to Him for He was just a boy and He was all human, even though He had God for His Father. You see, if He had not been all human He could not have taken Adam’s place, for god cannot accept a price too high or too low, and Adam was human even though he was perfect.

”Lots of people think Jesus was really a god, but that is not true. The Bible tells us that ‘He became flesh’ and ‘took on Himself the form of a man.’

”If you had been born in England and had lived there while you were

very young and then had moved to Canada and started a new life in a new land you would not be able to remember much about the old life in England. Soon it would all seem like a dream. Jesus had made a much greater journey. Not only had He traveled across the Universe, but He had also been changed from a great angel to a tiny human Baby, and had started life anew in an altogether different world. The only difference between Jesus and the boys around Him would be that He was perfect and they were not. His mind was also perfect and He would have a better memory than any of them. He had not any of the sicknesses the other boys had, for He had no earthly father to pass weakness and illness on to Him. Even His wonderful and perfect mind would not make the years in Heaven seem nearer.

”Mary would have told Him of His wonderful birth and how He was set aside for a special work for God. Jesus wanted to start the great work for His Father as soon as possible but He would not be sure just how soon He could start. He would want to see the old Books of the Law that were always kept in the Temple. While the other boys of their party were roaming through the streets and buying strange sweets in the bazaars, Jesus was in the Temple. The old Doctors of the Law—as those who lived in the Temple and studied the old Books, were called—were interested in this quiet, earnest young boy. His questions made them think. Soon Jesus had them searching through the old parchments to find answers to His questions.

”Because He was such an unusual boy, they let Him go to places where older people were not allowed. He would ask all about Daniel’s prophecy and try to find out just when the Messiah was to show Himself to the people. He would learn all about Moses’ prophecy and Isaiah’s. In this way He would know what he must do to carry out God’s Word. So interested did the boy become that He forgot all about time and meals.

”Mary and Joseph knew that He was pretty well able to take care of Himself. They did not worry much about Him, because He had never been one to get into mischief or to make trouble for them. When He did not come home for a meal they would just think that He was with some of His young friends.

”Soon the feast was over and the people began to go to their homes. The party for Nazareth all gathered together and Mary thought that Jesus was with the other boys in the party. They all started off together, hundreds of people, walking along slowly, chatting and laughing, or riding the little gray donkeys, visiting each other as they strolled along on their way back to their homes. They did not hurry. Mary and Joseph, not seeing Jesus, still thought that He was with His young friends. Most boys of twelve need care and attention but Jesus had always shown great wisdom and had never given them any cause for worry.

”When night came they all camped together. Mary felt a bit disturbed when Jesus did not come that evening to their camp, but she was not really frightened. When morning came and He had not shown up, Mary

and Joseph began to question their friends about Him, and when it came noon and they could not find anyone who had seen their little boy they were really alarmed. Soon it became evident that Jesus was not anywhere in the crowd and Mary remembered how the King had tried to have Him killed, when He was a Baby. They had felt that all the danger was over. Could Herod have found out who He was?

”As soon as they were sure He was not among the crowd, they turned back to search for Him in the city. Three days had passed before they found Him in the Temple still searching the old parchments and asking eager questions of the amazed Doctor of the Law, who wondered what kind of a boy this could be, who had no interest outside of God’s Word.

”Mary was annoyed at first, ‘Jesus!’ she cried. ‘Why have you treated us like this? Did you not realize that we would be worried about you? We have searched for you for three days.’

”‘I am So sorry you were worried, Mother,’ said the boy earnestly. ‘I thought that you would realize that I must be about my Father’s business. I did not know it was So long.’

”Mary understood. She knew that He was God’s Son and that He had a special work to do for God. She did not scold Him. Jesus had found out, by His search of the Word of God, that no Jewish boy could start a special work until He was of age. In our country a man is counted of age at eighteen.”

”What do you mean by being of age, Mother?”asked Linnet. ”It means to be counted a man and to be able to decide things for yourself. A boy under that age has to have the consent of his parents before he can do any great deed. He cannot even sign papers promising to pay for anything he wishes to buy.

”Among the Jewish people, a man had to be thirty years old before he was counted of age. Jesus had seen also that He must reach perfect manhood before He could take Adam’s place. So, He went quietly home with Mary and Joseph and obeyed them and helped them in every way possible. Joseph was a carpenter and when Jesus was not attending the school in Nazareth He worked with His father at the most simple kind of carpenter work.”

”Did they have schools like our, Mother?”Linnet asked. ”Indeed they did not, dear. The children went to the home of the Rabbi or teacher and there they all sat on the floor around their teacher and repeated the lesson after Him. That was the way they learned. They did not have any pencils, but used quills from big birds, sharpened and split, for pens. They had no paper but used a kind of thin skin, called parchment, of sheep’s skin. Instead of books, these long pieces of parchment were rolled on round sticks and were called scrolls. The Word of God was taught by Levites or Rabbis.

”Jesus had a perfect mind and was able to learn the queer Hebrew letters very easily and He did not forget what He learned. So the years passed quickly till He was thirty years old. We are not told if they went to the City for the Passover every year after that, but it is likely that they did. Jesus would not again cause Mary and Joseph any worry. It seems that, sometime during those years, Joseph died.”

”Did Jesus have any brothers or sisters, Mother?” ”We are not sure of that, dearest. The Bible speaks of His brothers and sisters coming with Mary to see Him, but the same word is used in the Hebrew for brothers as for cousins. It is quite likely He did have, and that they lived around Nazareth. The people of Nazareth once said of Him, ‘Is not this Jesus, the carpenter of Nazareth and do not His brothers and sisters live among us?’

”We would be sure that He had brothers and sisters both, but for the fact that the same word can mean cousins in our language.”

”I guess if Jesus had to learn, and to go to school, I should not mind going, should I, Mother?” Linnet asked.

”That is right, dear. Jesus was God’s Son and perfect but He had to learn to read and write and He had to study God’s Word. So we should be willing to follow His example.

Suddenly Linnet laughed. ”It must have seemed funny to Jesus—who made this big world and the trees and even Adam—to have to use a saw and hammer, Mother. Can’t you just see Him making a chicken pen as Buddy had to, for his little bantams?”

”Yes, dear. It shows His great humility, that He was willing to work at such simple tasks. He wants us to be like Him, not too proud to do the smallest task that comes our way. I do not doubt that He often washed dishes for His mother and dug up her garden. When one is really very great, he is big enough to do the tiniest task. It is only the proud and haughty person, who does not amount to much, that thinks himself too big for a little job. I am sure that when Jesus washed the dishes, every dish shone.”

”We have a little verse about His boyhood. It says, ‘Jesus increased in stature—that means size—and in favor with God and man.’ {Matthew 2:52}

”And now we have some little tasks of our own to do, dear, and must lay the story aside for a time. Tomorrow we may have time for another.”

THE HIGH PRIEST AT JORDAN

For thirty years He goes His way,
Learning earth's problems every day.
He sees man's grief and feels his pain,
Knows want and hunger, sun and rain,
And thus He learns at such close view
Just why men do the things they do.
He learns the impulses that creep
Across their lives, the sudden sweep
Of wild emotion, uncontrolled,
That shatters reason with its hold.
He feels their love and sees their hate,
Knows all their trials, small and great,
"Tempted in all points as are we,"
Yet always gains the victory.
And then—at thirty years of age—
Knowingly turns the darkest page.
He sees the race God meant to be
Noble and strong and brave and free
Made slaves by Satan's cruel power
Back there in Eden's witching hour.
He sees how—by the death of one—
The bonds of sin may be undone;
Offers Himself in Adam's place
To be the Savior of our race.
A perfect life for a perfect life.

His own—unforfeited by strife
Can pay man's debt and set him free.
So He chose death for you and me.
Baptized in Jordan then by John
He took that mighty contract on.
'Twas then—His will to God's resigned—
His own death warrant that He signed.
'Twas then, begotten by God's spirit—
In recognition of His merit—
A spark of life Divine was given
That should bear fruitage up in Heaven.
From "The Order of Melchisedec."

L.K.P.

CHAPTER 4—JESUS AT JORDAN THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVEN

”Are you awake, Mother?”Whispered a soft voice, and Mother lifted a sleepy head from her pillow. ”It is Sunday and I thought we could have a nice talk before the others got up.”

”Sometimes I wish you would sleep in for once.”Mother smiled and turned back the covers for the little pajama clad figure that stood shivering in the chilly, winter air.

”It isn’t very early, Mother. You don’t really mind, do you?” Linnet crept in and snuggled close. ”I saw Daddy had gone to the den to sleep.”

”Daddy knows your tricks, young lady, and he likes to sleep in on Sunday morning after his hard week’s work. Was there something you wanted to talk about specially?”

”I thought you might tell me more about Jesus, Mother,”Linnet answered.

”So early in the morning? You are simply insatiable.”

”What does that mean, Mother?”

”Never you mind, young lady.”Mother laughed. ”Well, where do we start this time?”

”After the visit of Jesus to the Temple, when He talked to the Doctors of the Law. Why did they call them ‘Doctors,’”Mother? I thought Doctors always made sick people well.”

”Not always, dear. We call men who are very clever at any profession, doctors. We have Doctors of Law, who are very clever lawyers, Doctors of Science and Doctors of Music, and many other kinds of Doctors. The kind you are thinking of are called ‘Doctors of Medicine.’ Well, I told you how Jesus went back home with Mary and Joseph and obeyed them and—now, what was that verse I gave you?”

”Jesus increased in size and knowledge and in favor with God and man,”Linnet answered after a moment’s thought.

”Pretty nearly right. The word ‘stature’ means size,”Mother answered. ”We know nothing about the next eighteen years of Jesus’ life. Many weird and strange tales have been invented by people who wish to put forth their own ideas about those years. Some say He went to India or Egypt and learned the mysteries of the idol worship in those parts but we know that is not true. Some say He went to England and built a church there and that it is still there, but that is also untrue. The Bible says ‘He returned to Nazareth and was subject unto His parents, and increased in

wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.' We know, too, that He was well known about Nazareth as a carpenter. So we know that He worked in His father's shop during those years.

"Not everyone realizes that He could not start His work for God until He had reached the age of thirty. They do not realize what His work was, either. Do you?"

"It was to take Adam's place and pay his debt, Mother."

"When you know that, dearest, you have the foundation to all wisdom. All true knowledge is built on that foundation," Mother answered. "When Jesus was thirty, He was ready to begin God's work. His cousin John had started his work for God six months earlier—when he was thirty. Do you know what John's work was, dear?"

"Yes, Mother. The angel said he was to go before Jesus and tell the people that He was coming, So they would be ready for Him," answered Linnet.

"That is right, dear. The prophets had foretold His coming, saying there would be 'A voice crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord and make His paths straight,' and another prophet had said, 'I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of the Lord.' So the people expected a great prophet like Elijah to come before the Messiah, and tell them about Him. John did this work. He started as soon as he was thirty, preaching in the towns and villages and telling the people that the Messiah was coming and that they must stop doing things they knew were wrong and turn back to God and serve Him faithfully. Many people went out to hear John, who dressed as Elijah did, in rough clothes made of camel's hair and looked very wild, for he did not shave and his hair whiskers were long and black.

"The people liked John and many followed him, and turned back to worship God. John made them go down into the water of the river Jordan and show that they meant to turn from their sins by being baptized."

"What does it mean to be baptized, Mother?" asked Linnet. Jennie told me she was baptized in their church.

"Jennie was christened by having a few drops of water sprinkled on her head when they gave her a name, dear. To be baptized means to be laid down right under the water, as a sign that one had given one's life to God. John made the people do this as a sign that they had washed their sins away and were going to live a new life and do what was right," Mother explained. "Many people went to John and were baptized. No doubt, Jesus knew all about the work John was doing and He knew that the time was drawing near for His own great work. It is quite likely that He still had much of the gold and silver and jewels that the kings of the East had brought Him as a Baby, So he would use it in His great

work. When He had almost reached His thirtieth birthday, He decided that He would take a trip to see John, who was baptizing people in the river Jordan. John had been preaching to the people and telling them of Jesus. He said 'I indeed baptize with water but there cometh one after me, whose shoes I amnot worthy to untie. He it is who comes after me, but will be preferred before me. His fan is in His hand and He will thoroughly purge His threshing floor.' The people did not understand just what John meant by that but they realized that he meant them to understand there would be a greater Prophet, following him.

"One day while John was preaching he was surprised to see Jesus among the crowd of people who were listening to him. He had heard from his mother and father about Jesus' birth and he knew that He was the Son of God, but So that there would be no mistake, the angel of God, who had sent him to teach to people, had given him a sign, saying that whoever he saw the spirit or power of God come down and rest on, was the Messiah.

"After John had finished speaking, Jesus went to him and said, 'John, I want you to baptize me.'

"'Why, Jesus!' John answered, 'It would be better if you baptized me. I have never been nearly as good as you are. You have no sins to wash away.'

"'Do what I ask, John, please. It is right that we should fulfill all righteousness.'

"So John took Jesus down into the water of the river and they walked out together till the water was over their waists. Then John laid Jesus right down under the water, in the sign of baptism. When he lifted Jesus up again, there was a bright light from Heaven, that seemed as if a window in Heaven had opened, and John saw what looked like a white dove, fluttering down through the light. When it touched Jesus it disappeared and John heard a voice say, 'This is My beloved Son. I am well pleased with Him. Listen to Him.'

"Then John knew for sure that Jesus was the Son of God. Jesus went away at once, for He wished to be alone with God." Why did the spirit come down like a dove, Mother?"

"A dove has always been the sign of Peace, dearest, and Jesus was to be the 'Prince of Peace,' " Mother answered.

"Why did Jesus ask John to baptize Him when He had never done anything wrong, Mother?"

"Jesus wished to give a sign to His dear Father in Heaven that He was still willing to die for Adam,"Mother answered. "There was no better way He could show that. It was then that Jesus laid down His life for us. From then on Jesus lived entirely under His Father's orders. The power of God that was given to Him then, was greater than the power any many

had ever had. It opened Jesus' mind to the meaning of all the Scriptures he had learned and all the pictures He had made in the years when He was the Logos. It made Him able to remember all the years in Heaven and it gave Him power over everything. Suddenly Jesus felt that He must get right away from every person and talk to God and find out all His will for Him, So He went away out into the lonely wilderness and was there for forty days and nights, just talking to God.

"Mother, when God changed the Logos to a little Baby, He was still the same person, was He not?" asked Linnet.

"Yes, my darling," Mother answered.

"But, Mother, how could He be the same and yet when He was with God He was a great angel and when He was here you said He was just a perfect man. How could that be and how did God change Him?"

"That is a very deep question and one that many wise men have not been able to answer. God can do things that we cannot do. We know that the angels can take the forms of men, for they often did, in the old days; but Jesus was not an angel in the form of a man, for if He had been, He could not have taken Adam's place. He would have been greater than Adam, and God's laws are just. Perhaps we can get some idea of the way the change was made, from the way a gardener changes his flowers. Suppose he has a rose of a lovely color but the flowers are imperfect. He wishes to grow a rose of the same color but perfect in shape. Do you know how he does it?"

"No, Mother. How?"

"He chooses a rose on his bush, that is just the right color. Then he pulls out the petals that make it so pretty, and with a pair of tweezers he pulls out the stamens that are the fathers of the flowers. He has nothing left but a seed box and the pistil, or mother of the plant. Now he chooses a perfect rose of the shape he wants from another bush; he may even get this rose from a greenhouse. He pulls off all the petals, takes away its form and glory, till he gets down to the center and the stamens. Then he brushes the pollen—the life of the flower—on to the pistil of the first rose. This life goes down into the seed box and fertilizes the seeds. You may remember how I showed you the pollen in the flowers last summer. The life or pollen is now the new seed, and when it is ripe it is ready to grow into a plant that will have flowers the color of one rose and the shape of the other. The gardener ties a little cover over the seed box to protect it, so that the bees cannot drop any other pollen on it."

"That is very interesting, Mother, Let's try it sometime."

"Perhaps we may, when summer comes if we remember," Mother answered.

"Now you see how a gardener goes about the work of making a perfect

rose from an imperfect one. Now our Heavenly Father needed a perfect man to take the place of Adam and there were no perfect men on earth. He had promised through His prophets, 'I will provide a ransom,' and So when the time came to keep His promise, He used much the same method as the gardener does in developing a perfect rose. Just as the gardener took a perfect bloom and pulled off all its petals, until he had just the seed box and the pistils, So our Father took the angelic nature with all its glory and honor away from the Logos, till only the life remained; then He used that life much the same as the gardener used the pollen, for the perfect Baby He was making. So Mary's little Son was a perfect human being and the only one that had ever lived, since Adam sinned. Yet the life was the life of the great Logos. Jesus had the same life and mind and thoughts.

"Suppose you were to have an illness that turned your hair white and made you very thin and tall, instead of chubby as you are now, suppose during that illness, even you skin changed in its color. You would still be my little Linnet, though you would look So different. You would know you were the same, for you would remember the same things and think the same thoughts. It is our minds that make us ourselves, rather than what we look like—flesh, eyes, and hair, etc.

"Now, to go back to where we left our story. Can you imagine what it meant to Jesus, after being thirty years away from His Home and His Father—thirty years when He had never heard His Father's voice or even had a letter from Him—to hear that voice speak? Can't you just imagine what Jesus must have felt when God spoke those words, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.' "

"I guess He felt as I did, Mother, when I was at sister's for a week and you and Daddy came to bring me home. I had been having So much fun, but when I heard your voice I nearly cried, I was So glad. I thought of all the things at home and my pussy and doggie and I could not wait to get home."

"Yes, dear, Jesus must have felt like that, only much more so, for He had been away So long. He had to get away where He could be alone to talk to God and to think of the home He could not see, till His life here was ended."

"How did His life end, Mother? Do you mean when He was killed?"

"Yes, my Pet. But that is getting ahead of our story. You remember I told you that Jesus was away out in the hills talking to God for forty days and forty nights. In all that time, we are told, He did not stop to eat or to drink. He may have lived in the little house where John had lived, or in a cave in the hills, for there were many caves in the hills around Judea. God kept Him alive and they talked together, as Moses had talked with God on the Mountain of Sinai. Jesus learned the meaning of all the pictures He had been told to make in the days when He was the Logos.

”‘The Heavens were opened to Him,’ the Bible says. This might mean that the understanding of God’s Plan was made clear to Him; but we do not believe God told Him every part of that Plan, for years after, He said to His disciples, concerning the end of this age, ‘But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the father.’ He knew God’s Plan and the part he must take in it but not the time when it would be completed. After He had returned to Heaven God showed Him everything, for He had previously said to His disciples after he had risen from the dead, ‘All power is given unto Me in Heaven and in earth.’

”When the forty days were over Jesus was ready to return to Palestine to begin His work for God. Then He found that He was weak and hungry. Now Satan had been watching and he understood that Jesus was indeed the ‘Seed of the woman’ who was to put a stop to all his wicked works, and he made up his mind to try to get Jesus to follow him, or at least to work with him. You know when Mother says, ‘Linnet, do not touch this,’ and you begin to think, ‘I wonder why Mother says, do not touch that. I wonder what is in it. Mother would not know if I touched it.’ That is Satan whispering to you and trying to get you to disobey Mother. Perhaps the way Satan tempted Jesus was like this. He would steal up beside Him and make Him think, ‘I have not had anything to eat for forty days. No wonder I feel weak and hungry. I wonder if this great power my Father has given me is real. If it is, I could make these stones turn into bread and eat them. Then I would not feel So weak and hungry. What a great power this is that God has given me, I could even use it with which to gain a living. People would pay to see the wonderful things I could do.’

”Then Jesus would see where those thoughts were leading Him, and we are told that He answered, ”It is written, man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that god has spoken.’ He would think, (and the thoughts would not be suggested by Satan now) ‘god is my Father and He will see that I have the food I need. He did not give me this power to feed myself, or to get a living by, but for the service of mankind and to show them how God can feed and care for them. I must not use my great power for selfish ends. That would not please my Father. It was in this way that Lucifer went, and he lost my Father’s love by his selfishness. I will do what my Father wishes and try never to displease Him.’

”Then Satan would be very angry. After awhile he thought of another plan. He suggested another line of thought. ‘Suppose I were to go up to the very top of the Temple on the Sabbath day or on some feast day and then throw myself off. God has promised in His Word that he would protect me and not let me hurt myself in any way. The prophecy says, He shall give His angels charge concerning thee and they shall bear thee up in their hands lest thou dash thy foot against a stone. Surely then if I were to jump off the top of the Temple into the crowd, where everyone could see me, they would think I was an angel just come down from Heaven. They would receive me and I would be made a great prophet and be accepted at once, and everyone would know that I am God’s

Son. I would not have to suffer and die. I would be a king and then I could show them the wrong things they are doing.’ Then Jesus thought, ‘No that would not be right. The Bible says, Thou shalt not test the Lord thy God, and that would be testing His power to save me. He would not want me to do anything dangerous or foolish. Then I know He does not want people to be made to serve Him by such methods. He wants them to love Him and know Him as He is and to serve Him because they can see His wisdom and power. I must win their love and show them by my life what God is really like. Then only those who love the good things will be drawn to God by my message. He does not want everyone at present. I am to choose out a people for Him, and if I did that I would win the proud and ambitious and not the meek and humble, for god’s Word says, ‘Blessed are the meek. No, I cannot do anything like that.’

”So old Satan was fooled again. Soon he thought of another plan. Perhaps this was suggested by the fact that in returning to Palestine from the wilderness Jesus had to cross some very high hills. Now from the top of one of these high mountains He could see out all over the land. You remember God had once taken Moses to the top of Mount Nebo where he could see all the land of Canaan. Perhaps it was from this very mountain that Jesus was looking when Satan’s next temptation came. He would look out over Palestine and think—‘Satan is the prince of this present world. He is my greatest enemy and will do everything he can to hurt and destroy me. If I were to get him to work with me we could soon make the earth perfect. Of course I would have to acknowledge his power and use his methods. It would be So much easier than opposing him. If I could make peace with him and work with him, I could gain his friendship and then I would not have to face years of weakness and poverty and hardship. I know he will stir the people against me and they will all hate me. He has many people in his service. It would mean that I must accept him as my leader and king.’ Then we can almost see Jesus spring up and say, ‘I will never serve the Lord Thy God only. I have told my Father that I am willing to suffer and die to save these poor, deluded people, and I meant it. I did not realize that it was Satan trying to get me to turn aside from the word God has given men, and I nearly fell into the trap he laid for me.’

”Then Satan knew that he was recognized and the Jesus would not even let Himself think the thoughts he suggested. So he went away.

”Jesus rested awhile and then we are told God sent His angel to give Him food and to strengthen Him.

”That is the way God does with His children today. He tests them to see if they really mean all they say. When we say, ‘I am going to try to please God. I am not going to get angry anymore,’ Satan comes sneaking around and he thinks, ‘Oh, are you not? I will show you! Then he makes someone say something mean or do something to make you angry. If you forget your promise and get angry, then Satan laughs, and says ‘I made her break her promise.’ Now God could protect us from Satan but He wants to see if we really mean it. If we try really hard not

to get angry, and breathe a little prayer under our breath, 'Please, Father, help me,' or if we say to our selves, 'I know that is you, Satan. You want me t get angry, and break my promise. Well, I meant what I said, and I am not going to. See!' Then Satan will leave us alone. God will help us if we ask Him, but He wants us to try for ourselves. You know your will power will never grow unless you use it. If you fight Satan off once then you will be stronger to fight him the next time.

"Mother, if I say I won't get angry and promise God not to, and then I do, will God be very angry with me?"asked Linnet.

"God is slow to anger and plenteous in mercy, dear. He watches to see if you really do love Him and want to serve Him. If you do not even try to keep your promise, then He knows you did not mean it when you made it. He does not accept that kind of service. He judges us by our actions, not our words. If you really try, and fail, He will forgive you, and the fact of trying will make you stronger. If you try again and again, each time you get stronger and soon you will not fail. But if you do not try, you will get weaker and weaker and will do still sores things. God will not give you big muscles. You have muscles and you can make them grow by using them. It is the same with your will."

"Then I am going to really try So I can have God's love and care, Mother."

"If you really try He will help you, but He will not do it all."

"That is just like you, Mother. You won't do my sums for me,"said Linnet ruefully. "You always make me do my best first, then you look them over."

"If I did them for you, dear, you would never learn,"Mother laughed.

"Now, let us see if we cannot find a nice verse for this story to help you remember it. How is this one?"

"'It is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.' Matthew 4:7

"That is easy to lean, Mother, and it will remind me how Satan tried to get Jesus to do wrong."

"And how he tries to get Linnet to do wrong, too,"Mother answered.

"Now I am sure I heard Daddy getting up, So we had better hurry and get dressed and have breakfast with him.

THE HIGH PRIEST'S MISSION

We watch Him go upon His way
Laying His life down every day;
Turning aside from wealth and fame;
Choosing a life of want and shame;
Well knowing that at any hour
He could assert His sovereign power
If but His Heavenly gifts He's choose
For self- advancement once to use.
But no, He heals man's tortured forms
And stills their cruel mental storms.
Now from mankind He stoops to seek
Some kindred souls, men brave but meek,
Whom He can trust to carry on
The mighty work He has begun.
Not to the rich or great he turned.
They would the sacrifice have spurned.
But poor and lowly fishermen
Who toiled all night in patience then,
Toil unrewarded, turned away
To toil again another day.
From such He chose a faithful few
Ready the will of God to do,
And trained them gently day by day
To do God's will, walk in His way.
God's plan now clearly by Him seen,

He knew long years must intervene
Before Man's schooling should have ended.
He knew how much on Him depended.
How He must start the Heavenly order
Of Melchisedec, on Israel's border,
Then—passing to the Holy Place—
Before the Heavenly Father's face
His offering for men lay down,
And there receive the Victor's crown.
Our Great High Priest, He led the way
Doing His good work every day.
For three long years and half a year,
Healing and helping, far and near.
Restored their dead to life again,
Thus a great picture gave to men
Of all His kingdom should accomplish
When men were no more sinful, selfish,
But yielded to God's holy will,
Lord, for the kingdom wait we still.
From "The Order of Melchisedec."
L.K.P.

CHAPTER 5—BEGINNING HIS MISSION

”Tell me more about Jesus, Mother,” Linnet said that evening, when everything was quiet, and the rest of the family were busy. So Mother began.

”When He was traveling slowly home to Nazareth after His long, quiet time in the wilderness with God, Jesus passed by the place where John was still teaching and baptizing the people. John saw Him and said to the people were listening to him, ‘Do you see the man? Well, that is the Lamb of God who is going to take away the sins of the whole world.’ John was referring to the fact that the Jews always sacrificed a lamb at Passover and used its blood to put on the doorposts as a sign that God was covering their sins. In this way he showed them that Jesus was to take the place of their Passover lamb.

”Two of John’s disciples left the group and followed Jesus. He turned and saw them following Him and asked, ‘What is it you wish?’

”‘Where do you live, Master?’ they asked.

”Jesus replied, ‘Come and see.’

”So they went with Him to the house where He was staying that night. He talked to them of the coming Kingdom, and the more He said, the surer they became that John was right and this was the promised ‘Messiah.’ One of them was named Andrew, and when he left Jesus he went to find his brother Simon who was also looking for the coming great prophet.

”Andrew said, ‘Simon, we have found the Messiah.’ Simon went with Andrew to see Jesus and as soon as Jesus saw him He said, ‘You are Simon, the son of Jonas. You will be called Peter.’

”Andrew and Simon were fishermen and their home was near the Sea of Galilee, not far from Nazareth where Jesus lived So many years.

”The next morning Jesus started again on the long walk to Nazareth and it seems that Simon, whom we know better by the name Jesus gave him—Peter—and Andrew, also went along. On the way Jesus saw Philip and He said, ‘come with me Philip.’ Philip lived in Bethsaida, near the home of Andrew and Peter. His brother Nathaniel was there for the feast also, and they were both going back to their home.

”Philip was sure that Jesus was indeed the Messiah. He left Him with the other two and went to look for Nathaniel. After a little time he found him and said, ‘O Nathaniel, we have found the great prophet whom Moses told us was to come and of whom all our prophets have spoken. He is Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph, the carpenter.’

”Nathaniel did not believe it at first. He thought his brother was fooled.

He said, 'No prophet comes from Nazareth. You know what a miserable little village it is.'

"'Come and see Him for yourself' Philip answered, and Nathaniel went with him to where Jesus was waiting their coming.

"When they came near, Jesus looked at Nathaniel and said, 'Here is an Israelite indeed. A man who is honest and without deceit.'

"'How do you know me?' asked Nathaniel.

"'I saw you when you were under the fig tree, before Philip called you,' was Jesus' answer.

"It is said by the people who have visited Palestine that the wild fig trees have long, drooping branches and that a person sitting in their shade cannot be seen by people passing and that often when the people of that country wish to be alone to pray or to think, they will choose one of these trees because no one can see them. Perhaps Nathaniel, who was watching for the coming of the Messiah had been praying under one of the trees. If this was so, we can understand his astonishment when Jesus said, 'I saw you when you were under the fig tree.' He would know that if Jesus could see him there, He was more than just a man. He was convinced and replied, in a tone of wonder, 'Master, if you know about that you must be the Son of God.'

"Do you believe me because I said I saw you there, Nathaniel?' Jesus asked. 'You shall see greater signs than that. Someday you will see the Heavens opened and the angels of god going up and coming down upon the Son of Man.

"Jesus was referring to the dream that Jacob had when he saw a ladder reaching up to Heaven and the angels going up and down it, while god sat at the top on a white throne. You remember I told you that the ladder was a picture of Jesus who would someday open the way for messages from God to come to the earth. Jesus said, 'I am the way, the truth and the life.' We can only reach God through Jesus, So He is really like a ladder to Heaven. Jesus meant that some day Nathaniel would understand this.

"Nathaniel was interested and joined the others on their walk to Nazareth and Jesus talked to them about God and the great Kingdom He was going to set up on earth, some day.

"They walked along slowly, till at last they reached Nazareth, and there they were told that they were all asked to attend the wedding of one of their friends. Jesus' mother was also invited and it is likely that she was waiting till Jesus came home, So that they could go together.

"I told you that a wedding in that country was different from one in our own land. There the parents of the young couple arranged the wedding,

or engagement, and the young people stayed in their own homes while the man got a home ready for his bride. When everything was all ready he would invite all his friends to come to a great feast that would last for perhaps a week or more. Guests did not stay at the house all that time but came and went as they pleased, sharing the good things the young man provided. There would be all sorts of fruits and fancy cooking, and lots of wine to drink. About the middle of the week, the young man and a number of his friends would go to the home of the bride, who would be told when they were coming and who must be all ready in her wedding dress and have her chain of coins on her head. She would be all covered with a veil, and the only way he could know her would be by the coins that he had given her when they were engaged. She must go with him to their new home and there would be a great procession with music and dancing. Then the feast would go right on. People would be coming and going all the time.

”Jesus and His disciples went with Mary to their friend’s house in the little town of Cana, which was near Nazareth. There were many people there and they went among the guests and talked to old friends. After awhile Mary came to Jesus and said, ‘Son, they have run out of wine for the guests.’

”Perhaps Mary knew of the great power God had given Him, or it may be that she was so used to His looking after things for her, and knowing His loving and thoughtful nature she would feel sure He would know where they could get some wine to help their friends out.

”Jesus replied, ‘do not worry, it is really not our concern, and even if it were, it’s not yet time to interfere.’ (Our Bible gives a very poor idea of Jesus’ words and their meaning.)

”Mary smiled for she knew that Jesus would not see their friends put to shame, as they would be if there were not enough wine provided for the invited guests. She said to the servants, ‘Do whatever He says and ask no question.’

”Perhaps she was as much surprised as anyone when He said, ‘I see you have six big water pots here. Fill them with water.’ The servants obeyed. Then Jesus said, ‘Now take some of the water to the Master of the feast and see what he says about it.’

”They found that the water had indeed turned into wine and the Master of the feast tasted it and said to the Bridegroom, ‘Most people when they give a feast serve the best wine first, and then when it runs short, they serve what is not so good, but you have kept the best wine till the last.’ He had no idea where the wine had come from.

”This was the first wonderful thing that Jesus did, and it is thought that it was meant to show that when He came again to set up His Kingdom, His first work would be to fill certain Christian minds—pictured by the vessels—with the pure water of His truth which would turn into good

and true teachings or doctrines, (which are always pictured by good wine) and He would send His servants to give this wine of truth to the people of His true Church, and to all who would come to the feast of truth that would then be prepared. This is what He did when He returned, as we know.

”After the wedding was over, Jesus and His mother and their friends went to Capernaum, where Jesus intended to start His mission. Andrew, Peter, Philip and Nathaniel went along, and it is likely that they went back to their trade as fishermen for a time and spent their leisure hours with Jesus, learning of Him.

”Jesus Himself went around the little villages and towns healing the sick with His new power, and preaching to the people. John was still preaching in Judea and baptizing all who wished to live good lives and serve God.

”It must have been about the beginning of November when Jesus started His great work, and we have very little information of the work He did these first months. When spring came, and with it the Passover Season, Jesus went to Jerusalem, as He usually did, for the feast. Many of His friends went too. This time it would seem different from any visit He had made, for He was no longer just one of the Jewish people but the acknowledged Son of God. Now He had a great power that He did not have before. He could have done some great and startling thing, if He had wished, but that was not what God would want Him to do. However, each time He had gone to the Temple He had seen something that made Him very angry. Now He determined to do something about it. You see, Jesus loved His Father and whenever He went to the Temple it made Him very sad to find people buying and selling sheep and chickens and birds, right in the porch of the Temple.”

”What did they do that for, Mother”Linnet had been listening quietly without her usual string of questions, tonight. Perhaps she felt a bit tired.

”Well you see dear,”Mother answered, ”The Temple was not just like our church. You remember that their services called for animals to be killed and burned, as a sacrifice for the people’s sins. When the people came from a long distance they did not like to have to carry sheep or pigeons for sacrifices, So some of the people thought it would be a good money- making business to keep sheep and other things right there at the Temple, to sell to the people who wanted to make a sacrifice.

”Soon they began to bring them right into the porch of the Temple, and they set up booths, or counters, as we call them in the store, where they sold all sorts of things. You can imagine what it was like. The cattle would smell and the sheep would be bleating and there would be an awful lot of dirt and noise. Each merchant would have a different corner and he would try to get people to buy from him, then people came from different parts of the world to the Temple and they could not always get the right kind of money; So some other men put up tables and offered to

change their money to Hebrew money for them. They charged them a big price for this and often cheated the people who came to get their money changed. Soon Solomon's beautiful porch of pillars was no better than a sheep market. The people had no reverence for God.'

"They have sales in the churches now, Mother. I know because some of the girls at school go there, to buy things at the bazaars. They say it is to get money for God." Linnet remarked. "They usually have the sale in the basement though, Mary told me."

"It is just as wicked as what they did in Jesus' day, dear. They didn't buy and sell right in the Temple either, but in the porch.

"Jesus had often seen what was going on but He had no authority to do anything, for He was not yet even of age. Now, however, it was different for He was a man and God had appointed Him to be His representative."

"What is a representative, Mother?"

"That is a big word all right, dear. It means a person who takes your place or does something for you. When I send you down town pay a bill for me, you are my representative. Jesus had come to take the Father's place and show people what He was like.

"He knew God would not be pleased with the use the people were making of the Temple; So He took a rope and made a whip of it and drive the merchants and money changers and the animals out of the Temple. He said, 'It is written, My house shall be called a house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves.'

"He looked So angry that the merchants were afraid. They had the permission of the rulers, yet they knew that it was wrong to buy and sell in the Temple. The people who had come with Jesus were glad to see the Temple cleaned up. They did not like to have to walk through filth and evil smells to get to the Temple courts. People today would not like to go to church and find the seats all covered with crumbs and dirt.

"In those days there was only one Temple of God in the whole world. There were synagogues in all the towns where people went to study and to worship God. They were something like our churches only that there was no minister or priest paid to talk every Sunday. All the people went to the synagogue and the women sat on one side, the men on the other. Any of the men who wished might ask for a hymn, or pray or read from the Bible and explain the Scriptures.

"The Temple was a special place for giving offerings to God. The people knew that the glory of God was supposed to come right into the Holy of Holies and that God heard the prayers that were offered in faith, and accepted offerings to pay for their sins. It was more sacred than a church.

”We have no Temple, have we, Mother?”

”No, dear. We do not need to have a Temple. We can serve God anywhere, for Jesus has opened the way to God for us and if we speak to God in Jesus’ name and have faith, He will hear us.”

”It must have been lovely to live then, Mother, and see Jesus and hear Him speak. I wonder what He looked like,” Linnet remarked.

”It is said that He was very fine looking, with deep brown eyes, and hair that fell around His shoulders in soft curls. Men did not cut their hair then as short as they do now. Jesus usually spoke very quietly. He did not shout or jump around and bang the tables as some speakers do now. He generally sat and talked quietly. He told the people all about God and how He wished them to live and pray.

”Their priests and rabbis had taught them many things that were not true, just as many teachers do now, and Jesus showed the people where these teachings were false. Jesus could tell them the truth, because He had been in Heaven with God and knew just what He was like. He knew all about their laws too, for He had a perfect memory and did not forget the things He had read.

”A church should be a place where people can go to study God’s Word freely, a place kept sacred for worshipping Him. When it gets to be a place where paid preachers give their own views on subjects, and sales and bazaars are given, it ceases to have any meaning.

”God has His own people everywhere and He wishes them to serve Him every day and all the day. He wants us to study His Word and obey it, all the time. It is no use going to church on Sunday to worship god and serve Him, and then do as we please all the rest of the week.

”You can get just as close to Jesus in your own bedroom as anywhere. Jesus said, ‘When you pray, go into your own room and shut the door and do not let anyone hear you; then God, who sees always, will hear and answer you openly.’

”If we pray to show others how good we are, god will not listen to us. We may go to Him when we are in trouble and He will help us.”

”But, Mother, sometimes we need god’s help and cannot go away quietly to ask for it. What can we do, then?”

”Remember, dear, if you are trying to serve and please god, His angels are always beside you, watching over you. Any call for help to God is heard and answered at once by them. When your brother was little he used to be rather careless in crossing the roads. One day he was in a hurry and he saw a car coming and just waited for it to pass, then dashed across right behind it. He did not see that there was another car following it. He heard the horn and looked up to see it almost on top of

him. There was no time to get away but he said afterwards, 'There was just time to ask God to help me, Mother. I said, Please, God, help me, and the next thing I knew I was in a man's arms.'

"Was he hurt, Mother?" Linnet asked. "Did God answer Him?"

"Indeed He did answer, dearest. Brother was just hurt enough to make him more careful. You can see the scar on his cheek if you look closely. God stopped the car somehow. Even the man who was driving did not know how, and though brother fell and cut his face, the car never touched him. He never again crossed a road without looking.

"Now darling, no matter what happens, there is always time for a word to God, and He always answers. We do not have to make a sacrifice of an animal, as the Jews did before God would listen to them, for Jesus has taken our sins away.

"Learn this little verse and try to remember it, 'The Lord chooseth those to worship Him, who worship Him in spirit and in truth.' { John 4:24} Now, Goodnight, darling, and 'Sweet dreams.' "

WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?

What think ye of Christ, He who calleth His own

To turn from the earth and its toys

To follow His footsteps o'er mountain ways steep

And find in His favor true joys?

Our Shepherd and Leader, our Brother and Lord,

He leadeth where pastures are green

And where living waters, refreshing and cool,

And fountains of life may be seen.

Dear Lord, we will follow o'er moorland and fen,

Tho' the night may be lonesome and cold,

Tho' the stones bruise our feet and the wild winds are keen,

And steep is the way to the fold.

For Thou art our Shepherd, our loved Advocate,

Thou hidest our sins by Thy grace;

Plead our cause with our Father, Thy merit supply,

And give us Thy strength for the race.

CHAPTER 6—A RULER COMES TO SEE JESUS

”I like those verses, Mother. I love poems because they are so easy to learn. I am glad you are putting some of them in my little book of stories. The dishes are all finished and my homework is done. Can I have another story now?”

”I think you might, dear. How would you like to bring your bible and we will read from it tonight?”

”I would love that, Mother. I am getting to know a lot of words now and I can read my Bible, except where there are big words I cannot understand.” Linnet ran to bring her Bible and Mother turned to the Gospel of John, Chapter 3, and together they read the first twenty- one verses.

””Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher sent from God, for no man can do those miracles which thou doest, except God be with Him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of god.” ‘ ‘ Mother read.

”Why did Jesus say that, Mother?” asked Linnet, following the words in her own Bible.

”John wrote about that visit many, many years after Jesus died, dearest, and as we are not told that John was present, we can only understand that Nicodemus told John what he could remember of the talk he had with Jesus and John wrote down what he could remember. In the second verse you see he tells Jesus that he knows, by the great works He did, that He is the Master who came from God. It is thought that this talk took place on Jesus’ first visit to Jerusalem. Nicodemus had probably been there when Jesus drove the merchants out of the Temple and then may have heard His talk to the people. If we had the whole conversation I think it would have been about like this. ‘Master we know you are a teacher sent from God because no man could do the things you do unless God was helping him. Still I cannot understand about this Kingdom you speak of setting up. Is it to be an earthly Kingdom? The rules of life you lay down would never work under the rule of the Roman Empire. How can we have a part in this Kingdom?’

”Then Jesus would answer, ‘Unless a man be born again he cannot see my Kingdom.’ Perhaps Jesus really meant, he cannot understand about my Kingdom, not ‘see’ it with the eyes, but see it with the mind. That puzzled Nicodemus for he did not understand what Jesus meant. So he says, in the next verse, ‘How can a man be born when he is old? Must he become a little baby again and live another life?’ You see there are some people who teach that when a person dies, his spirit has to go into another body and live another life. That false teaching was common in Jesus’ day and Nicodemus must have thought perhaps that was what Jesus meant. Then, Jesus explains in the fifth verse, ‘Except a man be born of water and of the spirit he cannot enter into the Kingdom of god.

That which is born of the spirit is spirit and that which is born of the flesh is flesh. Do not wonder at my words, You must be born again. The wind blows where it likes and you hear the sound of it but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the spirit.'

"I cannot understand that, Mother. What did Jesus mean?" said Linnet.

"Very few people have ever understood what Jesus meant by these words. He did not intend everyone to know His meaning. Only those who really study His Word can grasp it. Jesus, you remember, had lived in Heaven with God and knew all about the different kinds of life. A fish lives in the water, it breathes water, as we breathe air, and it drinks air as we drink water. It does not need feet for it does not need to walk. It has no hands either, yet it gets along quite well without them. Its blood is cold, where ours is warm. We know about fish because we can see them. Jesus meant that because His Kingdom would be made up of spirit beings like angels, we would have to be spirit beings, before we could see the rulers of that Kingdom. When one speaks of a kingdom one may mean the country, or those who rule it. In this case Jesus knew Nicodemus wanted to know about how he could be a ruler in the New Kingdom. So He explained that to share as a ruler in the Kingdom, Nicodemus would have to be changed to a spirit or an angel. What do you think angels are like, dear?"

Why, I think they would be something like us, Mother, but very bright and beautiful. I wish we could see them. Why can't we?"

"Can you hear any music, Linnet?"

"Not now, Mother. Why?"

"Turn on the radio, and listen." Mother answered, and in a minute soft music filled the air around them. "Where did that come from, Linnet?"

"From the radio, Mother." Just then a voice said, "You have been listening to the—orchestra in London, England."

"It came from London, Mother."

"Now turn the radio off, dear. See there is no music now, yet they are still playing. You see the air all around us is filled with music all the time. It travels over the airwaves but we cannot hear it unless we have a radio. Do you know why?"

"No, Mother. I never thought of it. Why?"

"It is because our ears are made to hear only what comes to us over certain airwaves. Men found that out and they also found a way to make machines that could pick up music from other airwaves and change it to the ones we could hear. Now insects have ears but they do not hear on

the same wavelength that we do. They cannot hear us speak. You notice a butterfly will not fly away frightened when you speak. That is because his ears cannot hear your voice. But they do hear sounds we cannot hear. A fish's ears are on a still different wavelength. You know that when you turn the dial on the radio you change the wavelength. Each radio station broadcasts on a different wavelength and the makers of radio have numbered the wavelengths which they can pickup, So we can choose the station we wish to hear.

"It is the same with our eyes. They operate on a certain wavelength and we cannot see anything but what is on that wave. That is why angels can be around us and we cannot see them. Jesus could not explain it that way to Nicodemus because there were no radios or wireless then. So He said, 'You know that there is a wind blowing, because you can hear it and see the trees move, but you cannot see it, or see where it comes from or where it goes to. That is the way it is with spirits. You may feel their influence and see the result of their work, but you cannot see them. In order to have a part in the rulership of My Kingdom you must become a spirit being. Now you are born of the flesh—you are a human being with a body of flesh and blood and bones. Spirits are made of a different material to that, and before you can be part of that Kingdom you will have to lay aside your body of flesh and blood and be born of the spirit, as a spirit being; then you can see and hear other spirits, and the world they live in.' "

"What is a spirit made of, Mother?"

"We do not know, dear. We only know that they are as real as we are, but far more powerful. Your dolly looks like you, but it is made of a different material, So spirit beings may look us but are made of different material."

"How can people be changed to spirits and have part in Jesus' Kingdom, Mother?" asked Linnet.

"That was just what Nicodemus wanted to know. Whether Jesus explained further than John tells us, we cannot tell. I told you how God might make a perfect man in an imperfect earth. The method He uses to change earthly people to spirit beings is perhaps not unlike that. When Jesus offered Himself to God at the river Jordan and was baptized, God gave Him some of His spirit power. That power made Jesus able to understand god's Word and plan, and it made Him able to do things no one else could do. But it did more than that; it started a spirit life that would live when He was raised from the dead, after he laid down the body of flesh, which paid Adam's debt. So when a person gives his life to Jesus and agrees to follow Him, God has promised to give him a small portion of His spirit or power also, So that when this life is over, he may still live with god when raised from death. That was what Jesus explained to Nicodemus, but he could not grasp the thought. You see in verse 9 he asks, 'How can these things be?' and Jesus said, 'If I cannot make you understand earthly things, how can you understand heavenly

things?’ Let us read the next few verses. Here Jesus tells the ruler that no one had ascended to heaven up to that time. There were people then that thought (as some do now) that every good person who died went right to heaven. Jesus was telling him that He was the only one that had ever come down from heaven, and that no one had ever gone there. All were asleep. Then He said He Himself must be ‘lifted up’—crucified on a cross like the brass serpent Moses made in the wilderness, which was a picture of Jesus—so that people who believed in Him, ‘should not perish, but have eternal life.’ You see He was trying to make the ruler understand that He must pay Adam’s debt so that God could let all people live. The next verse (16) is one of the loveliest in the Bible—‘For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but should have everlasting life.’ Then Jesus says in the next verse, ‘God sent not His son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved.’ ‘

”Saved from what, Mother?”

”What was wrong with them, Linnet?”

”Just about everything I guess, Mother.” Linnet replied after thinking awhile.

”That is about right, dear, but the chief trouble was that they were all dying, and they could not be well and strong and have perfect life till Adam’s debt was paid. Jesus said that unless we believe that He had come to pay that debt, we must still share the condemnation. Suppose you were locked up in the woodshed and could not get out, and I came down and offered to lift you out through the window, and you said, ‘No! I want to get out at the door. You can’t lift me through the window. I won’t let you. Unlock the door and I will come out.’ Suppose Mother said, ‘I have not the key and cannot get the door open. This is the only way I can get you out.’ Now you would have to believe that I could lift you and you would have to come to me, before I could reach you. That is the way with us. Jesus had opened the way of escape for us but we must believe in Him and come to Him before He can free us. He says here in the 18th verse, ‘He that believeth not is condemned already.’ That is as I said, if you would not believe and come to me, you would have to stay there. Suppose you liked the woodshed and wanted to stay in it, I could not help you. So Jesus says, ‘Men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil.’ You see if you were into mischief in the woodshed and were afraid to come to me, for fear I would find out and punish you, you could not get out; could you?”

”I see what you mean, Mother. People who like to do wrong will not come to Jesus. They will pretend that He cannot help them and go on doing wrong.

”That is just what I mean and what Jesus was telling Nicodemus. He said that those who were doing good things would bring them to the light

because they would know there was nothing to be afraid of. If we are good and come to Jesus and believe in Him, He will lift us up out of the death that is the penalty of sin. We may have to sleep for a while but we will but to sleep in the full trust and hope that Jesus will soon come and awaken us.

”Let us remember this, ‘God So loved the world that He sent His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not die, but should have everlasting life.’ “

What think ye of Christ? He is life, love and truth.

He is all, more than all to His own.

No sorrows afflict us, no trials can come

That He has not felt it and known.

He is joy for our sorrow and peace for our pain,

He makes all our efforts complete.

He fills every need, turns our losses to gain,

And”He maketh straight paths for our feet.”

What think ye of Christ? Oh what words can express

What we think of our Savior and King? Had I but the tongue of an angel
of light

His praises unceasing I’d sing,

But our tongues are all tied and our language is frail

And not till we lay our lives down,

And arise in His likeness beyond death’s thin veil

Exchanging the cross for the crown,

Can we sing as we wish, or praise as we would

His wonderful, wonderful love.

CHAPTER 7—THE WOMAN AT THE WELL

Well darling, can you remember what our last story was about?" Mother asked, the next evening when the story hour had come round again.

"Yes, Mother. It was about Nicky—Nicky, something or other, who came to see Jesus and asked about the Kingdom." Linnet answered.

"Nicodemus, Yes. Can you remember what our verse was?"

Linnet thought for a while, then she repeated the verse, God So lived the world that He gave His only son that whoever believes in Him should not die." Linnet always got the right thought though not always the right words.

"That is pretty good for So small a girl. 'Should not perish but should have everlasting life,' is the way the Bible puts it. Perish really means die though, but everyone does not realize that. Now we shall see what happened after the ruler left Jesus. Nicodemus must have found this great Teacher different from others whom he had heard before. He had no doubt heard other speakers who jumped around and banged the tables and shouted to try to force people to see things their way. Jesus never made any effort to force other people to accept His views. That was not His way.

"You see Jesus was not trying to get people to join His church. He was looking for those who already belonged to God and who wished to have His Son for their Leader. So He spoke great truths in a quiet voice and the really earnest people came from all around to hear Him. He healed their sick people too. Nicodemus went back home and thought a great deal about what Jesus had said, but Jesus and His friends went out into the country and into the little towns around and taught the people. His disciples baptized those who came to them and wished to turn away from their sins. John was preaching not far away and one day some of his disciples came to him and said: "Do you remember the man you pointed out one day and said He was the Messiah? He is teaching the people on the other side of the river. Many people are coming to hear Him and are being baptized.'

"John replied, 'If God had not given Him that work to do, He would have no success. I told you I am not the Messiah but I have been sent to tell you that He is coming. He who has the Bride is the Bridegroom, but his friend is glad to hear the Bridegroom speak; So I am very glad to know that the Messiah has come. His work must increase, but mine is nearly done. He came from Heaven and He is the greatest of all, for He can tell what He has seen and heard. Whoever follows Him and listens to Him is proving the truth of God's Word. God has given Him His power in full measure, for He loves His Son and speaks through Him, for He has given all things to Him. Whoever believes in Jesus will have life, but those who refuse Him will not see life, for God's anger will remain on them. They will not be forgiven, but will still be under the

condemnation of Adam.’

”So John pointed his followers to Jesus and did not try to gain any honor for himself. He was a very great and good man. Not long after this the wicked king Herod heard that John had said he (Herod) had sinned, because he had taken his brother’s wife and this was against the law. The woman was as bad as Herod for she was willing to do what she knew was not right, to have the position of queen. In those days a king did pretty much what he liked, and no one dared to say anything. When the king heard what John had said he was very angry and he had John arrested and put into prison.

”When Jesus heard of it He knew that John’s work was over but that His own work had just begun. Jesus knew that it was God’s plan that John should sleep till the resurrection day and then have a great part in the earthly portion of the Kingdom. He could not help him and He felt it would be looking for trouble to stay near Jerusalem where Herod had such power; So He started back toward Galilee where Herod had less power; So He started back toward Galilee where Herod had less power. There He would be safe to continue God’s work.

”Jesus did not hurry, but traveled slowly, teaching and healing the sick as He went. He had to go through Samaria on the way. You may remember that Samaria was part of the country where the ten tribes that broke away from King Solomon’s rule had lived. Those tribes had been carried away captives about five hundred years before this, and strangers had settled in the country and had married some of the Israelitish girls. When the people of Israel had returned and wished to rebuild the temple, these people had offered to help at first, and then, when their help was refused, they had been angry and had tried to stop the work. The Jews would have nothing to do with them, though they claimed to serve God also. They did not go down to Jerusalem to the feasts but worshipped God in the places the kings of Israel had provided for them.

”While crossing through this country Jesus became very tired and He sat down on Jacob’s well to rest, while the disciples went on to the nearest town to buy some food, for they had nothing to eat with them. While Jesus was resting, a woman came from the town to get some water. They did not have taps on their houses as we have. They had to carry all the water they needed in big jars on their heads. The well was very deep and it was impossible to get water to drink without a jar. There was a stone wall built around the well and Jesus was sitting there when the woman went to get water.

”He said to her, ‘Please give me a drink.’

”The woman gave it to Him but said, ‘How is it that you who are a Jew ask me for a drink? You must know I am a Samaritan woman and the Jews never have anything to do with Samaritans.’

”Jesus replied, ‘If you knew who I am you would ask me for living

water.”

”I know what He meant, Mother. Water means truth always, does it not?” Linnet spoke quickly.

”Yes, dear. The woman did not understand and she said, ‘You have nothing to draw water with and the well is very deep. How would you get this ‘living water’ you speak of? Are you greater than our father Jacob who dug this well?’

”Jesus took a drink of the cool water she gave Him and then said, ”Those who drink this water get thirsty soon again. Those who drink the water I give them never get thirsty any more, for the water I can give is like a spring that bubbles up in them.”

”What did He mean by that, Mother?”

”He meant that if we have the pure truth of god’s Word in our hearts it will satisfy us always and we will be thinking of it all the time; everything we see will remind us of it. When we see a storm coming up we think of the great storm of trouble that will come to the world. When we see the lovely sunshine we think of the time when there will be no storms. The birds’ songs make us think of God who made them. Water reminds us of His Word, and So that glorious truth is in our minds all the time and we are not looking for some other and better truth, because it is the best we could every have.

”Some people are always looking for truth and never finding it. They go to one church for a while and they are not satisfied, then they leave it and try another and it seems no better. Only the real truth of God’s Word will ever satisfy the hungry and thirsty heart. Jesus said, ‘Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. He knew that they would finally come to His Word and there they would find what they desired. The woman at the well was interested and she said, ‘Please give me some of this water So I may not have to come away out here when I want a drink.’ She did not understand, but Jesus knew her heart, He knew that she had longed for the Truth and could not find it in their churches. He said, ‘God and call your husband and come to me.’

”The woman answered, ‘I have no husband.’ Jesus replied sadly, ‘You are speaking the truth all right, for you have been married five times and the man you are living with is not your husband.’

”She simply gasped. No one knew about those things but herself. ‘You must be a prophet indeed, if you know that. Tell me something. The Jews say that it is impossible to worship God truly, unless one goes to their Temple, but our people have always worshipped God right here in this mountain. Now who is right?’

”Jesus said, ‘Believe me, the time is coming soon when you will not worship God either here or in Jerusalem. You people do not understand

what it is that you are worshipping, whereas the Jew do understand that. We have that advantage over you but the hour will soon come when those who wish to serve God will serve Him in spirit and in truth. God is a spirit and He seeks people to serve Him who will serve Him with their whole heart.'

"This was a new thought to the woman but she felt that it was true So she said thoughtfully, 'I know that the Messiah will soon come, and when He does come He will explain all these things to us.'

"Then Jesus smiled at her and said, 'I am the Messiah.'

"Just then the disciples returned from the city with food and the woman left her water jar there and ran to the town and called the people together.

"I have met the most wonderful man,' she cried. He has told me things no one could know, unless He was a prophet. I believe He is the Messiah we are waiting for. Come and see Him.'

"The people hurried out to see Jesus. Meantime the disciples had been trying to get Him to eat the food they had brought, but Jesus did not feel hungry now. He felt that there was a work for Him to do in that little town and the thought of His great work made Him feel satisfied. He said, 'I have food of which you do not know.'

"They thought He meant that He had been given some food, but Jesus saw they did not understand and He said, 'My food consists of doing the work My Father has given me. It is enough just to know I am serving Him. Look around you. You would say that it will be four months till the harvest, but I say the harvest of God is ripe and the field of the world is full of wheat. Whoever assists in gathering it, will have a rich reward from God.' "

"What did Jesus mean by the wheat, Mother?"

"The Bible speaks of God's true children as wheat, or sheep, or sometimes as trees, dear. This time Jesus meant that there were many true children of God who were hungry to hear about Him and to have a part in His great Kingdom. He added, 'I have sent you to reap in fields where others sowed the seed,' meaning that the prophets had written truths that had made people love god and wish to serve Him truly, and their work was to tell them all about God and His love for them and the Kingdom which He was going to set up. He could look ahead and see how these people would come to love God So much that they would be glad to serve Him, no matter what it cost, and they would be gathered into the Kingdom from even the Samaritan nation.

"The woman returned and brought a great many people with her. Jesus sat there and talked to them of god and they begged Him to come to their town and stay with them and teach them more. Jesus went, for He wished the disciples to see that God had children in every nation, even

among those whom the Jews despised. The people believed in Him and turned from their sins to live as God wished them to.

”When Jesus left them and started on to Galilee the people said to the woman, ‘You are right. He is indeed the Messiah. We know now for we have heard Him for ourselves.’ Jesus cured many sick people while He was there.

”Shall we take Jesus’ words for our text tonight? ‘Whosoever shall drink of the water I shall give him will never thirst.’ We have that truth and we need never look for anything else. It makes us glad and happy and it satisfies us.

”What happened when Jesus got to Galilee, Mother? Tell me more about Him. I am not sleepy yet.”

Mother looked at her watch and saw that it was still quite early. So she continued her story. ”Jesus traveled slowly, stopping where the people wished to hear Him; healing their sick and blind and lame. He went through Cana, where He had turned the water into wine. The people welcomed Him and while He was there a nobleman came to Him and said, ‘Master, my son is very ill in Capernaum. I have come to meet you and ask will you come down and make him better; he is very near dying.’

”Jesus looked at him. He saw the anxiety and trouble in his face. He read his love for this boy and His voice was very soft and kind as He answered, ‘Do not worry. Your son will live.’ So great was the man’s faith in Jesus that he started at once for home alone and on the way his servants met him, coming to tell him the boy was better. ‘When did he begin to get better?’ the father asked, and the servant told him. It was at the very moment when Jesus said, ‘Your son will live.’ After that the nobleman and all his family believed in Jesus and loved Him.

”Jesus left Cana and walked on to Nazareth, His disciples were with Him, that is, those who had gone with Him to Jerusalem and were returning to their homes. They had to go through Nazareth to get to the Sea of Galilee. It was Saturday—which was the Jews Sabbath—when they reached Nazareth, So Jesus went into the synagogue. The Jews always went to the synagogue on the Sabbath to study the Word of God. There were already a lot of people seated in the synagogue when Jesus entered. All the women sat on one side and all the men on the other. The women wore veils and took no part in the service except to join in the hymns and listen to what the men said. One man would start a hymn and another would offer a prayer. One would read a verse out of the Book of the Law and try to explain it and there would be a discussion about it. In this way the common people were able to learn a little about their law. When Jesus entered and took His seat someone passed Him the Book of the Law. He turned to the sixty- first chapter of the book of Isaiah and read the first two verses, ‘The spirit of the Lord is upon me; because He has appointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor. He has sent me to heal the broken- hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives,

recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are bound and to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.’

”Then Jesus closed the book and began to speak simply and earnestly. He said, ‘This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears.’ Then He began to explain God’s Word to them and to tell them that He was the Son of God and that God had sent Him to teach them about Him and show them how to live as God wished them to. We have no record of His words but we know that some of the people were very much impressed, but others said, ‘Who is this man that He should teach us? Was He not a carpenter? Do not His people still live here?’

”Jesus saw that they were not receiving His message. Their own pride would not let them learn anything from one they looked down on as a common workman. He said, ‘You would like to say, Doctor, make yourself well. We have heard that you have done great deeds in other places. Do some here too. But I tell you that no prophet ever is honored or respected in his own country. There were many widows in Israel when Elijah was sent to the people, but Elijah did not go to any of them. God sent him instead to the poor woman of Zerepath. She received him. There were also many lepers in Israel in Elisha’s day, but the prophet did not go around healing them. He healed the leper Naaman, who was a Syrian.’

”The people got very angry for they thought that Jesus meant that he would not help them or heal their sick. They resented His speaking as if He was as great as Elijah and Elisha—thought indeed He was much greater. They jumped up in a rage and rushed at Him and put Him right out of their synagogue. Then they pushed and shoved Him along the street. Someone shouted, ‘Let us throw Him over the cliff,’ and they started toward the high cliffs around their city intending to throw Jesus over and kill Him, but God was protecting Him. Perhaps there were those among the crowd who were trying to help Him, as well as those among the crowd who would gladly kill Him. Perhaps God by His great power simply made them unable to see Jesus, even when they were looking at Him, or unable to recognize Him. His disciples joined Him and they left Nazareth. They did not have to steal through the side streets, but walked along the main road while their enemies searched for Him to kill Him.”

”I cannot see why they wanted to kill Him, Mother. He could have done So much for them,”said Linnet.

”You remember what Jesus said to Nicodemus, dearest? ‘The darkness hateth the light because it knows that its deeds are evil.’ When a person is doing something wrong and someone comes along and catches him at it, he is sure to be afraid, and fear makes him angry. The leaders of the people in Nazareth had been teaching the people things that were not true, and So when Jesus came and said God had sent Him, they were afraid that God would punish them for their wrongdoing and take away their power; So they wished to kill Jesus before He told the people that

they had been fooling them,"Mother explained. "All down through the years people have done the same things. Then we must understand also that Satan had not given up hope of having Jesus killed, and he would be there in the crowd whispering evil thoughts to those who were under his power."

Where did Jesus go then, Mother?" Linnet inquired.

"He went to Capernaum, where He had intended to go, and the next Sabbath found Him among His friends in the synagogue there. While He was speaking to the people a man came in, who was under the influence of Satan. We would call him insane. He shouted, 'Why are you bothering us? You let us alone. We know who you are. You are the Holy One of God. Why do you seek to destroy us before the time?'

Why did he say the, Mother?"

"It was Satan speaking through him. You see Satan was afraid that Jesus would take away his rulership and he knew that God was allowing him to rule over the earth and the time was not yet up. Satan did not understand that Jesus had just come to pay Adam's debt, So that the rest of God's plan could be carried out. Jesus simply said to the evil spirit that was making the man say such things, 'You be quiet and leave that man alone.' The evil spirit had to obey, and at once the man seemed as sane and quiet as anyone there. The wild look was gone, and the people said, 'What kind of a man is this that even the evil spirits obey Him?'

"After the service was over Jesus went to Peter's house and they found that while they had been away in Jerusalem Peter's wife's mother, who lived with them, had taken very ill. The family was quite worried about her and must have been hoping that Jesus would soon come. He went to her room at once and took her hand, saying kindly, 'Rise and be well again,' or something like that, and at the touch of His hand the fever was all gone and she was well again. She got up then, dressed and helped get something for them all to eat."

"He did not give her any nasty medicine to take; did He Mother?"

"No, dear, Jesus never gave anyone pills or medicine. He gave them some of His own strength. Everytime He made a sick person better, He poured out a little of His perfect life. He also took a little of their sickness Himself. The Bible says, 'Himself took our sicknesses and bore our sorrows.' Each person He cured left Him a little weaker. They were stronger and He was weaker, but that was part of the work He had agreed to do for us."

"Did the people know that, Mother?"

"No, dearest. He never let them guess. Perhaps they would see that He looked tired, but they would not guess the reason. He gave His strength gladly. It is only by understanding and studying God's Word that we can

see these things. Now, what was that verse we were going to have for tonight?"

"I forget, Mother." Linnet confessed and Mother smiled. "No wonder, dear. We have talked a lot since then. It was about water and it was what Jesus said to the woman."

"Now I remember, 'Whosoever shall drink of the water that I shall give him shall never get thirsty.'"

PURE IN HEART

"Blessed are the pure in heart,"

So the loving Master said.

"They shall see the Father's face,

By His spirit they are led."

Oh, dear Lord, you know my nature,

Know how weak I am and frail,

You have seen how all my efforts

Seem to come to naught and fail.

Better than myself, you know me;

Know my struggles and my pain;

Know how grievously I've fallen.

Lord, the crown I cannot gain.

"Yes, My child," the Master answers,

"I do know you through and through.

But though I see all your failures,

I see your successes too.

If your heart approved your actions,

Sadly I might turn aside,

But your meek, discouraged spirit

Proves that sin does not abide

In the heart that you have offered,

To me as a sacrifice.

Do not grieve about your failures,

Always will my grace suffice.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit"

For they know my changeless love
They can always see their failures.
They shall dwell with me above.
Only pride can cause to stumble
Those who seek to follow Me.
Pride sees but its own successes
And its failures cannot see.
Pride can never grow discouraged;
For the child that looks to God—
Seeing all His great perfection, —
Meekly fears the chastening rod.
"I would closer walk with Thee; Lord.
Poor in spirit let me grow,
Humbly seeing all Thy beauty,
All my imperfection know.
Christ's white robe is thrown about me.
Hide me in its ample folds."
Like a shepherd with a weakling,
Closely in His arms Christ holds
All the faltering and the stumbling
Ones among His children here.
Let us simply trust Him always,
Clinging closer when we fear.
Let me see, not my own failure,
But the Savior's love and grace;

Just forget my faulty nature,
Looking in the Master's face.
Have the faith that justifies me,
When my efforts are in vain.
I would closer cling and trust Him.
I the great reward would gain.
I will tell Him of my stumbling.
He will take me to His breast.
He will bear me through the portals,
Then in Heaven I shall find rest.
"From"Stray Petals."

CHAPTER 8—THE GREAT TEACHER

Another evening had come, and with it the story hour. Mother was sitting by the fire and her little girl was sitting at her knee, on a low stool. Her busy fingers were stitching a wall picture that Mother had stamped for her. It was a picture of Jesus, talking to a crowd of people, and the stitches were very simple and easily worked.

”How is your picture coming on, Linnet?” Mother asked.

”Very slowly, Mother. I cannot work as fast as you can. I have nearly finished Jesus’ coat. Does it not look nice? What was He talking about? The people seem So interested.”

”Let me see, dear.” Mother laid aside her knitting and looked at her little daughter’s work. ”That would be the Sermon on the Mount.”

”Why do you call it that, Mother?”

”Because Jesus went up on the side of a mountain, and the people crowded into the flat space below to listen to Him. See He is standing on a big rock above them. That was some time after our last story. Do you remember where it stopped?”

”When Jesus made Peter’s mother better,” Linnet answered. ”That is right. It was shortly after that happened that Jesus was standing on the shore of the Sea of Galilee and a big crowd of people had followed Him. They had crowded Him So that He was nearly pushed into the water. Peter had his fishing boat there and Jesus asked him to let Him use it. He got into the boat and Peter rowed out a little from the shore and Jesus taught the people from the boat. After He had finished telling the people many things about the Kingdom Jesus said to Peter, ‘Row out a bit and see if you can catch some fish.’

”Peter said, ‘Why, Master, we have been fishing all night and we didn’t catch any fish. Still, if you say So I will try again.’

”So, after rowing out a short distance, Peter and Andrew threw in their nets, and when they went to pull them in they could not lift them. They called to two of their friends, James and John, who were in their own boat near by, to come and help them. James and John had also been fishing with no luck. They had been listening to Jesus and must have heard His command to their friends. They did not think there was a fish anywhere near. Now when Peter and Andrew called them, they hurried out to help them and there were So many fish that both the boats would not hold them. The nets were breaking with the weight. They put all the fish they could into the two boats and they nearly sank before they could get to shore. Peter knelt at Jesus’ feet and said, ‘Master, I am not good enough to be honored by your presence. I am a sinful man.’

”I think Jesus stroked Peter’s head as He answered, ‘Do not be troubled,

Peter. You are just the man I need for my work. From now on you shall catch men instead of fish.'

"Our great ministers today would probably have turned in scorn from Peter. They would have chosen some well-dressed man who had gone to college. Peter had not even learned to read and write. His clothes smelled of fish, but Jesus looked right into Peter's honest heart and loved him. As soon as they reached the land Peter and Andrew and James and John sold their fish and gave up all their business. They were determined to give all their time, from then on, to serving Jesus. They felt that they must study all they could and learn more of God's Word. Jesus was weary, for He had healed a great many people and His strength was failing, so He took His disciples with Him and went away into a lonely place to rest.

"He did not get much chance to rest, for a great many people searched for Him till they found where He had gone, and followed Him. They begged Him to stay with them and teach them. He taught them for awhile, then, seeing how greatly He was needed, He went slowly through the towns and villages, healing the sick and teaching the people about God.

His travels occupied a lot of time so it was some months before He reached Capernaum again. There, while He was teaching a crowd of people in the home of a friend, some people came, bringing a man who was paralyzed and unable to move. They could not get near the door because of the crowd. They went around by a back street and got up on top of the house and then they took off part of the roof and let the man down with ropes, still on his mattress, right in front of Jesus. Jesus looked at the poor, helpless man and saw that while he was sick, he was still more troubled over the wrong deeds he had done in his life. Jesus said, 'Do not be troubled, my son, for all your sins have been forgiven.' There were some scribes and Pharisees there who thought they were better than anyone else. They felt that they knew more about God than other people, for they could read the Scriptures. They said to each other, 'Does this man presume to pretend He has the authority to forgive sins? No one but God can do that. He is a very wicked man.'

"Jesus knew what they were saying, and He answered, 'Why do you murmur among yourselves? Is it easier to say, Your sins are forgiven, or, 'Rise up and walk? Now, so that you may know I can forgive sins'— then He turned to the sick man and said, 'Rise up and walk. Take your bed with you, and go to your own home.'

"The sick man who had not walked for many years, felt strength flowing into him, and he tried to get up and found he could. He stood up and he was well and he rolled up his mattress and turned to go home. The crowd parted and let him pass through them. Shortly after that Jesus was going through the streets and He saw a man behind a desk working. Jesus knew him and knew too that he was one chosen of God to be one of His followers. He said, 'Follow me, Matthew' and Matthew left his

desk and went with Jesus.”

”Mother, Mary says we should go to the priests and tell them when we do wrong and they will forgive us. She says that is what she has to do. That is not right; is it?”

”The Pharisees were right, Linnet, when they said, ‘No one could forgive sins but God.’ They did not know that God had put that work into Jesus’ hands. Suppose I want my fence fixed, I have to go to the owner of the house and tell him about it. He is the only one who can have the fence fixed, for he owns the place. I go down to his office and his clerk is there. The owner of the house is away but he has left the clerk in charge. I tell him about the fence and he sends a man to fix it. Still it is true that only the owner of the house can have the fence fixed. The clerk was his representative.”

”I know now what that word means, Mother. It is the one who does things for you.

”You do not often forget, do you dear? Now you see God only can forgive sins, but He has made Jesus His representative. That gives Jesus the same right but it does not give that right to anyone else. No one stands between us and Jesus and when you make any mistake you can go right to Jesus and He will wipe it away.”

”Mary says God has a big book and He writes down every wrong thing we do. Then when we die He will look to see if we have too many wrong things written there, then we cannot go to Heaven,” said Linnet. ”Has God a book like that, Mother?”

”No darling. There is a verse which says, ‘God opened the books, and the dead—who had been raised were judged out of the things written there. The books are the Books of the Bible and when people are raised in the Kingdom they will be judged as worthy of living or unworthy of living, by the way they obey the laws written in the Bible. People who do not understand God’s Word mistake this verse to mean that everything they do is written in a book. God does not work that way.

”Soon after Jesus and His disciples returned to Capernaum it was getting near the time for the Passover again. So Jesus and the disciples started out again to travel slowly in the direction of Jerusalem, healing and teaching as they went. John is the only one who tells us of this visit.”

I thought that John was in prison, Mother.”

”That was John the Baptist—Jesus’ cousin. This John was the one who was fishing in the other boat when Peter and Andrew caught all the fish. He was a very dear friend of Jesus and was now one of the disciples. You will hear of him often. He tells us that when Jesus was in Jerusalem He went with His disciples to see a pool of water, which was very near the sheep market. This pool was a medicinal spring and at certain times

the water would suddenly bubble up. It was thought by the people that an angel touched the water and that anyone who was ill and could get into the water at once, would be cured of their disease. There was always a lot of mineral in the water at the time and this mineral was very healing. We have mineral springs in our own country where people with rheumatism go to bathe in the water and it cures many people. People had built porches around this spring where sick folks could wait till the water bubbled. Only a few people were cured and it was thought that only those who got in first would get better. It was the Sabbath day and there were many people around. Jesus saw a man there, who had been sick for thirty- eight Years, always waiting to be healed. He was all alone and he looked So discouraged, that Jesus felt sorry for him.

”Jesus read the man’s thoughts and knew all about him. He said to him, ‘Would you like to be made well and strong?’

”The poor man answered, ‘Master, I have no one to put me into the water and someone else always gets in first.’ Jesus took his hand and said, ‘Rise up and walk.’ Strength seemed to flow into the poor man’s body from the Master’s hand. He tried and found he could he could move and he got up slowly, astonished to find he was well and strong. Jesus said, ‘Now take your bed and go home,’ and the man obeyed. As he was walking along with his bed on his shoulder, some people met him and said, ‘Do you not know that this is the Sabbath. It is a sin to carry your bed on the Sabbath.’ The poor man said, ‘I have not walked for many years and the man who made me better told me to take my bed and go home. I am obeying Him.’

”‘Who was He?’ I do not know,’ answered the poor man. Later on Jesus found him in the Temple where he went at once to make an offering and give thanks to God. Jesus smiled down at him and said, ‘Now you are well and strong again, be careful not to sin any more, lest some worse trouble come to you.’ ”Then the man knew it was Jesus who had cured him and he told everyone. The leaders of the Jews came to Jesus and told Him that He had broken the Sabbath day, for it was a sin to heal people on the Sabbath. How funny it must have seemed to Jesus to have these people telling Him what was a sin. He had given them those laws Himself and He knew more than they did about them. ‘He just said, ”My Father works till now, and I work also.’

”The Jews got angry and wanted to kill Him but Jesus said, ‘Indeed I assure you the Son can do nothing but what He has seen His Father do. The Father loves the Son and shows Him all the things He does. He will show Him how to do greater things than this that you may wonder. The Father can even raise the dead and So the Son can make alive those whom He chooses. The Father has given the work of judging men into the hands of His Son, So that all men may honor the Son even as they do the Father. I tell you truly that whoever believes in me, has passed out from the death sentence and has gained age- lasting life. Indeed I tell you that the time is coming when all who are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Many and shall come forth. You sent to John to

ask about me and he told you who I am. He was a bright light and you were willing for a time to listen to him. Go and search your Scriptures for they tell you all about me. I have come to you in the name of the Father and you do not believe me, but if someone comes in his own name you will believe him. You do not seek the glory of God but you are seeking glory and position for yourselves. Since you will not believe the words of God's prophets, how can you believe me?"

"The Jews were So angry they tried to kill Jesus, but He left the city and started back to Capernaum with His friends. They did not hurry but walked along slowly. On the way, possibly later that same day, they were walking through a field of wheat, and many people were with them, for there was always a big crowd who went to the city for the Passover, and they walked home to their different towns together. Among the crowd there were some Pharisees. They saw Jesus' disciples picking ears of wheat from the side of the road and rubbing the wheat in their hands and blowing away the chaff So they could eat the wheat, for they were hungry. The Pharisees went to Jesus and told Him. They said it was a sin. Jesus said that God had made the Sabbath for man and not man for the Sabbath. Then He said, 'Surely you have read how David ate the shewbread in the Temple, and how the priests in the Temple work on your Sabbath and you do not blame them. There is one here who is greater than your temple. God says, I will have mercy and not sacrifice. The Son of God is Lord even of the Sabbath.'

"They must have been about a week walking home. When they reached Capernaum Jesus went to the synagogue to teach the people. There was a man in the synagogue that had a withered hand. It was small and useless and the Pharisees watched to see if Jesus would heal him. They wanted to find fault with Him. Jesus knew what they were thinking and at first He paid no attention to the man. After awhile the Pharisees came to Him and said, 'Is it right to heal people on the Sabbath?' Jesus said, 'If you had a sheep and it fell into a hole on the Sabbath would you pull it out or leave it there to die?' They did not answer for every one of them knew he would pull it out and hope no one saw him. Jesus looked at them in disgust at their selfish greed. Then He said to the man, 'Stretch out your hand,' then to the Pharisees he said, 'It is right to do good on the Sabbath.'

"The man had stretched out his hand for Jesus to see and when he looked at it he found that it had grown and was as good as his other hand. The Pharisees were angry and went out to lay plans to have Jesus killed, but Jesus went away with His disciples. A great crowd followed Him and He went away out of the city to a quiet place in the hills. It was then that He gave the talk that your picture shows.

"Away out there in the hills, He sat down on a big stone. Yes, dear, I know your picture shows Him standing, but if you will bring your Bible we will read what it says." Linnet brought her Bible and together they read Matthew 5. 'Jesus went up into a mountain and when He was set, His disciples came unto Him and He opened His mouth and taught them

saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of God.'

"What did Jesus mean by the poor in spirit, Mother?"

"He meant those who felt themselves to be of little account—those who were not proud like the Pharisees. People who have learned in the schools of men are apt to think they know a great deal. They are not willing to learn from Jesus. They cannot gain the Kingdom of God, for to have God's love and favor, one must be willing to be taught and not think one knows all there is to know.

"Now let us see who else Jesus says is blessed. 'Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.' What does it mean to mourn, Linnet?"

"You said Mrs. Jones was mourning for her son, Mother. I guess it means to be very sorry."

'Yes, dear, it means to be very sad, and usually it is over someone who has died. Now when do you think those who mourn for the death of their loved ones will be comforted?' Mother asked.

"When God wakes them up again, Mother," answered Linnet.

"Yes, dear. That will be the time when 'God shall wipe away all tears from off all faces' as the Bible says. Now the next verse says, 'Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth.' That is quoted from one of David's Psalms. It means that when the Kingdom comes, people will be ruled, not by the proud and haughty as they are now, but by the meek—those who are willing to learn God's laws. Then we have the next verse, 'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled.' "

"You explained that verse to me before, Mother. It means that God will give the Truth to those who really want it," said Linnet.

"Yes, dear. That is just what it does mean. Then take the next of the sayings of Jesus, 'Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy.'

"What is mercy, Mother?"

"Mercy really means loving kindness. If we are loving and kind to others God will be loving and kind to us. Now, we have one that is harder to understand—'Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.' The pure in heart are those who really mean to be good. You may make mistakes, you may forget and yet be pure in heart. Those who never wish to do wrong, are pure in heart. It means never having a thought or a wish that is wrong in God's sight. God does not judge His own children by their deeds, but by their thoughts. He does not count our mistakes against us. Then we have another 'Blessed' that is, 'Blessed are the peace-makers for they shall be called the children of

God.' What would my little girl think a peacemaker is?"

'I do not know, Mother?"

"It is one who makes peace between those who are quarreling," Mother said. "Suppose your little cousin has a candy and his brother wants it. They have a scrap over it but you come and say, 'Let me see the candy, boys; why, I think we could cut that in two and then you would both have a piece.' The boys agree and forget their quarrel and you cut the candy and both are satisfied; then you are a peacemaker. Suppose your little friends come to play. You want to play house, Jennie wants to play school and Mary wishes to play store, and you cannot agree, then one says, "We can easily play all three games. Linnet can be the mother and we will be at school, then when we get home from school mother can say, 'Let's all go shopping.' So everyone is satisfied and happy. What did Jesus say about peacemakers?"

"They shall be called the children of God," answered Linnet.

"Yes, dear. Jesus was the great Peacemaker. He was God's Son and when He returns to set up His Kingdom He will bring real and lasting peace to the earth. He is also called 'The Prince of Peace.' Those who try to prevent quarrels are like Jesus. They have the love of God in their hearts. Now then, we see that the next verse says, 'Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.' You know it is easy to be good when it does not cost anything. God's people are those who are good because they love Him. They do not care what it costs. They would rather tell the truth and be punished for it, than tell a falsehood. You may have noticed that of all the 'Blesseds' there are only a few that promise God's Kingdom. It is for the poor in spirit, that is those who are not proud; the pure in heart, that is, those who never do a wrong thing willingly; and those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, that is, those who are good even when they may suffer for it. Only to these is the Kingdom of Heaven promised. God has other good things for other people.

"Now, dearest, we will not try to tell you all the things Jesus said to the people at that time. This is enough for a small girl to remember.

"For a special verse, though, you may learn this one, 'Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.' When you are older you may do as I did when I was about ten years old, you may learn all Jesus ' Sermon on the Mount."

THESE THINGS I KNOW

I know my Heavenly Father
Is watching over me,
I know He sees the hidden things
That my eyes cannot see,
The perils that surround me,
Each snare So well concealed
To His all- seeing vision
Lies openly revealed.
If I but trust Him fully
He will bear me safely past
The pitfalls set for careless feet
And guide me Home at last.
When trials and temptations
Assail on every side,
And storm- clouds round me gather,
Beneath His wings I hide.
When friends whom I have trusted
Bring only pain and grief,
In His abiding presence
I find a sweet relief.
I know these are but trials
Which He permits to come
To teach me needed lessons
And make me long for Home.
I know that I must pass each test

And grow more wise, more sweet,
Then in His Heavenly mansions
I shall find joy complete.
The friends who sometimes hurt me
Are angels of His grace
To teach me love and patience
That I may see His face.
Then I will praise Him for the storms,
The sorrows and the pain
That minister to me while here
And bring eternal gain.
From "Stray Petals."

CHAPTER 9—LESSONS AND MIRACLES

”Mother, did the people not all soon get to love Jesus for the good and kind things He did?” Linnet asked one evening as she sat working at her embroidery.

”No, darling, they did not. Of course there were always those who did love Him, but He was the most loved and the most hated man who ever lived. Those who loved Him would gladly have given their lives for Him, while those who hated Him were always trying to make trouble for Him and would have killed Him cheerfully and felt they were doing right. Satan likes to rouse people against those who are good, by trying to make their good actions seem evil. So it was that when Jesus healed a man who could not speak or who was blind those who hated Jesus said that it was because Satan was helping Him that He could do such great things. They said, ‘Jesus is a wicked man. He does not obey our laws for He has been known to heal people on the Sabbath. He cures people by Satan’s power for He is a representative of Satan.’ Jesus knew what they were saying and He said to them, ‘If Satan cast himself out and fights against himself, then you should be glad, for that would soon bring the end of his rule. If it is true that I use Satan’s power to heal the sick, then it must be by the same power that your own people make sick folks well. If I am healing these people by the power of God it means that the power of God is working amongst you. No man can go into a strong man’s house and spoil his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. I tell you that those who are not openly for me are against me. You may speak against me and it will be forgiven, but if you speak against God’s spirit, you will not be forgiven, either now or in the age to come.’

”That was one of the dark sayings of Jesus that very few people understand. Most people think that Jesus meant that if they said anything against the ‘Holy Spirit’ which they believe is another god, they will be put into a great fire and burned forever. That was not Jesus’ meaning. In the first place it is the spirit or power of God that is meant and not another god. Jesus meant that anyone who made a statement like those wicked people had just made, knowing that it was untrue, would be punished in some way for it. They realized that the power Jesus was using came from God, and they were telling things they knew to be false, when they tried to make the people believe it was the power of Satan. In this way they were speaking against the power of God.”

”How would they be punished, Mother?”

”Perhaps they would someday need the help that only Jesus could give them, and they would not be able to get that help. Perhaps by not believing in Him and trying to do what was right they would rouse forces that would cause them distress and trouble. We know that all those who worked against God at that time were killed some years after in the wars that destroyed their city and nation. Those who followed Jesus knew when that trouble was about to come and went away to other places and escaped. Those wicked people’s sins were still counted against them for

they did not turn to God for His forgiveness. The spirit or power of God showed them that what they said and did was wrong, but they would not try to do what was right.

”Perhaps this little story will help you to understand. Once there were two little boys whose mother said to them, ‘Jack and Tommy, I have just planted some seeds in the patch of ground by the walk. If either of you run through it I will make him spend the rest of the afternoon in his room for a punishment.

”The boys really meant to obey mother but they started to play ball and in their fun they forgot all about the garden. Soon Jack threw his ball and it went right into the center of Mother’s garden plot. Jack wanted that ball and he started to walk across the garden to get it. ‘Don’t go there, Jack,’ called Tommy. ‘Mother said if we walked there she would punish us.’

”‘Oh, I forgot all about that, but I am going to get my ball anyway, even if I have to walk all over her garden. She shouldn’t have planted it where we like to play.’ ‘No, don’t Jack. Mother will get it for you,’ said Tommy. ‘I’ll go if I want to, smarty,’ Jack said, and gave Tommy a push that sent him right into Mother’s garden. ‘Mother’s an old meanie!’ said Jack as he walked in to get the ball. Mother saw it all from the window and she came out and made Jack go to his room for the rest of the afternoon, but she did not punish Tommy. She said, ‘You tried to do what was right, Tommy, so I will forgive you for the damage you did, but Jack must be punished.’ That is the way it is with God. He will forgive us for our unwilling mistakes, but he will not forgive us when we sin against His spirit, which shows us what is right. He will send a punishment of some sort for the deliberate and willing sin, but the punishment will be one that will not be too severe, and will just teach us that we must obey Him.”

”Mother, I read some of the Sermon on the Mount after I went to my room last night and I found a verse that puzzled me. You know Jennie told me that in her Sunday school they said that God sends us to hell if we do wrong. This verse says, ‘Whosoever shall say ‘thou fool’ shall be in danger of hell fire.’ Does that mean that hell is really a fire where people will be burned? That is what they teach in Jennie’s class.”

”Let us look at that verse, dearest. See, Jesus says, whoever gets angry with his brother is in danger of judgment. He does not say ‘is judged’ but ‘is in danger.’ He says, whoever says ‘Raca,’ that means, ‘You are crazy,’ is in danger of the council, and whoever says ‘thou fool’ is in danger of hell fire.

”Go to Daddy’s desk and bring me the big black book and we will see what that word really means.” Linnet brought the big Concordance that gave the meanings of all Bible words and Mother turned the pages till she found the word they were looking for. See here it is, ‘hell- fire’ and the meaning is Gehenna. Now we must look to see what Gehenna

means. Here it is. 'The valley outside Jerusalem where all rubbish was destroyed.' Now we see what Jesus meant. Whoever made a practice of calling others a fool, was in danger of the rubbish dump.

"Watch out, Linnet! If you lean over So far you are in danger of falling!" said Mother suddenly.

Linnet straightened her chair and laughed. "But I did not fall, Mother."

"Now you see, my dear." Mother smiled. "You may be in danger and not fall. Jesus simply meant that a person who gets angry is in danger, for every time we get angry it makes it easier to get angry again, and an uncontrolled temper may sometime lead us to hurt someone and be judged for it. So a person who calls everyone else crazy or a fool, when they try to tell him something he does not already know, is in danger of being denied the truth that will bring him into God's Kingdom, and he may be cast out as rubbish."

'Now I see, Mother. I wondered what that verse meant,' said the little girl.

"We must always remember, dearest, that God is just and never punishes any more severely than they deserve, for any sin. No one could ever do anything wicked enough to deserve to be put in a fire and made to suffer for years. The worst sin any man can commit is to kill another person. Those who do that are not worth of life and God's Word says their own life must be taken as a punishment; but even the man who kills, will be raised and given a chance to see if he will do right. The man he killed will be raised also. So God could not ask that the man who kills a man, be made to stay dead forever. He must suffer the same fate as the man he hurt."

"Then if Mary hits me, it is right for me to hit her back," said Linnet. Mother laughed. "That does not follow, dear. True, it is a just punishment for Mary, but Jesus has told us that if we are to be His, we are to follow the law of love. You remember He said we must be better than the Scribes and Pharisees. Do you know what the law of love is? We call it the 'Golden rule.' "

"Yes, Mother. It is 'Do unto others as you would like them to do to you.' "

"That is right, dear. Jesus' children must try to be more than just, if they would be like God. He is far more than just; He is merciful also. You would not like Mary to hit you, So you must not hit Mary even though it would be a just punishment. Jesus said to leave God to punish those who sin against us. He also said, 'If any man hits you on one cheek, turn the other also,' meaning that we must not strike back but leave God to punish the evildoers.

"While Jesus was up on the mountain teaching the people, He chose

from His followers twelve who were to be called 'Apostles.' They were to study with Him always and to them He gave special powers. Among them were Peter, and his brother Andrew, James and his brother John, Philip and another Simon (not Peter). There were six others of whom we hear very little. There were Thomas, Judas, and Matthew and Bartholomew and another Judas who is better known as Jude, and a man called Thaddeus. To these Jesus gave power to heal the sick and injured and He sent them out to teach the gospel (good- news) of the coming Kingdom, to the people.

"Then He went back to Capernaum. There a Captain in the Roman army, who had a hundred soldiers under his orders, came to Jesus and said, 'Master, my servant is very sick. I am very fond of him. Would you please make him better?'

"Jesus said, 'I will go down to your house and see him.' But the soldier said, 'I am not good enough for you to come to my house. I know that if you will just speak a word my servant will be better.' Jesus was surprised and said, 'I have not found anyone in all Israel who has as great faith in me as this soldier has. Your servant is healed.' The soldier was satisfied for he said, 'I too have servants who do as I tell them, and I must obey those who are over me. So I know that you too have forces that obey your command.' He went home and found his servant was well again. Jesus said to those around Him, 'Truly I have not found such faith in Israel and I tell you this, Many shall come from the east and the west and the north and the south and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in My Kingdom, but many of those who are the children of Israel will be cast out.' Jesus knew already that the Jewish leaders would refuse to accept Him and would miss their opportunity of sharing in His Kingdom, but that many who were Gentiles would have faith in Him and follow Him.

"it was the day after this that Jesus started again to go through the villages preaching and teaching. He was nearing the little village of Nain, which was near Nazareth, when He and those who were with Him met a procession coming out of the town on its way to the graveyard, to bury a young man who had died. Perhaps Jesus knew them, for He had lived all His life in that part of the country. He saw the mother of the dead man walking near the stretcher they were carrying him on and she was crying. The dead man was her only son and her husband was dead too, So she would have no one to take care of her. Jesus knew all about that and He was sorry for her. He touched the body, to show the men who were carrying it that He wished to look again at the dead man. They stopped and set the stretcher down and Jesus uncovered the man's face and took his hand and said, 'Young man, I say to you, Wake up! And at once the dead man came to life. He opened his eyes and sat up and looked around. I expect the young man would say, 'What are you doing with me? I am not dead!'" Jesus gave him to his mother again. Those who saw what had happened said, 'Truly a great prophet has risen up among us and God has visited His people.'

”The story of this wonderful deed reached Jesus’ cousin, in prison. John was a servant of God and was not afraid to die. He knew that God would not let anything come to him that was not for his good. He knew that Jesus was the great Prophet and that He would take away the sins of the people, but during the long months in prison he got to thinking and wondering how one person could do all that the Scriptures said. How could Jesus pay Adam’s debt and yet be the great King and leader who would free the people and set up the promised Kingdom also? You see John did not know that Jesus would come twice, once to pay the debt and again—after many years—to be our King. He sent messengers to Jesus, while He was still at Nain teaching the people, to ask Him if He was the One who was to come, or if there would still be another Prophet.

”When the messengers came, Jesus was teaching the people and healing the sick. He did not answer them but told them to wait and watch. They stayed there and saw how Jesus was teaching the people and curing the sick and lame and blind. Soon they were sure that He was the Messiah. Then when the crowd was gone, Jesus said to them, ‘God now and tell John what you have seen and heard. Tell him how the blind and lame and sick are being healed and the poor are hearing of God. Tell him that blessed are those who are not offended with me.’

”Jesus knew that John must soon fall asleep and that he would not know of Jesus’ death till he wakened in the Kingdom. Then he would understand all about God’s Plan. To tell him those things while he was in prison would just upset him and Jesus was too kind for that. After the friends of John had gone away Jesus said to those who were nearby, ‘There has never been a greater prophet than John the Baptist. He is the one of whom the Scriptures said, “I will send my messenger before you to prepare your way.” Yet I tell you truly, that the one of whom the Kingdom will be greater than John.’ Jesus meant that John would die too soon to have a share as a ruler in the Heavenly part of the Kingdom, but he would be one of the earthly rulers. Those who followed Jesus and won a part as His Joint- heirs would be made great spirit beings like Jesus is since He was awakened from the dead, and they would have a higher place than John.

”Jesus told the people also that it would be easier for the people of Sodom and Gomorrah to obey the laws of that Kingdom than for those who had heard His message and refused it. He said that all the people of those old cities would be wakened and taught what was right. They had never had any chance to learn the real truth about God’s great love or about Jesus and how He paid Adam’s debt for us. If they had known they would have tried to do what was right. They had been very wicked but it was because they did not know any better. God hid much of His great truth from those who had great earthly learning and knowledge and He has shown it to us.

”While Jesus was in Capernaum He was invited to the home of one of the Pharisees. You see Jesus was very famous, and though this Pharisee was not a true follower of Jesus, he liked to have Him at his house. You

know that in the eastern countries people did not sit down to eat, as we do. They had long tables with low and very wide benches, all around them. These benches were often padded and cushioned and the people all lay down with their heads toward the table and their feet out. They laid left side and rested on the left elbow, and talked and rested as they ate. They did not use knives and forks but ate with their fingers and the food was always served So they could eat it. Meat was cut in pieces and there were little cakes and small pieces of bread. When there was a stew or gravy they dipped the bread into it. It was the custom then to have the servants wash the feet of invited guests, and pour perfume on their hair and kiss them if they were special friends.

”When Jesus came to Simon’s house that day, Simon managed to avoid meeting Him and he did not send a servant to wash His feet. He did not wish to show Jesus any honor, for fear of the other Pharisees who would be there. During the meal a woman, who was not very good, came to the house. Women did not sit down at the table with the men but they could come into the room quietly and listen to what the men were talking about. This woman stood there quietly listening. She loved Jesus and after awhile she may have noticed that His feet were dusty, at any rate she slipped up behind Him and poured a bottle of sweet perfume over them and wiped the dust from His feet. She was very sad for she had been thinking of all her wrong deeds and she was crying, because she felt So badly over her sins. Her tears fell on the Master’s feet and she wiped them off with her long, soft hair. The Pharisee saw what she was doing and he thought, ‘If this man were the Prophet He pretends to be He would know that this woman is not good and He would not let her touch Him.’

”Jesus could read his thoughts So He said, ‘Simon, I’d like to ask you a question.’ ‘What is it, Master?’ Simon said. Jesus answered, ‘Two men once owed a man some money. One owed him fifty pence and the other one owed him five hundred pence. He saw that they could not pay their debts and he told them both that they could just forget it. He forgave them their debts. Now which of the two would love him most?’ ‘Why, I guess the one that had owed him most,’ said Simon. ‘That is a good guess,’ Jesus said. Then he looked at the woman who was washing His feet and said, ‘Simon you see this woman? I came to your house as a guest but you did not wash my feet. You did not kiss me or pour perfume on my head, but this woman has washed my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. She has poured perfume on my feet and has kissed them. Now all her sins—and they are many—are forgiven her. He who has few sins to forgive has also little love to give in return for his forgiveness.’ Then to the woman Jesus said, ‘You need not worry, all yours sins are forgiven. Go in peace and sin no more.’ ”

”I guess that nasty old Pharisee felt pretty mean, Mother.” ”If he did not, he ought to have. The poor woman felt a sudden flood of peace and joy fill her heart and she went away. It is said that she became one of Jesus’ finest followers. Now, dearest, I know another person who has dusty feet and who is getting pretty tired. It is bedtime, dear. Get washed and

run along to bed.”

”Have you no verse for me to learn tonight, Mother?”

”I think perhaps we might take a few lines from one of Jesus’ prayers for a verse tonight. That prayer we believe was said about the time of our story. Here it is, ‘I thank Thee, Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because Thou has hidden these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes.’ { Matthew 11:25,26}

ON GALILEE

Wild waves leap up to meet an angry sky
And demon- driven clouds batter the sea;
While shrieking winds reach out with grasping hands
To seize the little ship that, fearfully,
Flies from their threatening fingers, thro' the night.
The stalwart fishermen, roused to alarm,
Find e'en their grizzled brows are damp with fright.
They tremble, tho' for years innured to storm.
He sleeps, So calmly and So peacefully,
A roll of sail the Master's only bed.
The spray of dashing wave and driving storm
Curling the soft, brown locks around His head.
The howling winds seem but a lullaby
To soothe His weary frame to deep repose.
The strength, poured out to meet the people's need,
Must be renewed. No fear the Master knows.
"How canst thou lie and sleep?" His henchmen cry
"Carest thou not tho' we should perish here?"
No cry of need has ever passed unanswered
By Him who seems unconscious of their fear.
He lifts His weary head from that hard pillow.
He knows their love. They cannot understand
The great vitality for man expended,
The need of rest to meet the vast demand.
He stands, So frail, and yet So great and mighty.

The tempest seems to wait His word to hear.
"Peace! Peace! Be Still!" Rings out the word of power.
The demons flee. The clouds tremble in fear,
Then slink away, like some cowed, angry monster
That fears and hates the trainer's stinging lash.
The waves subside, still rolling as in terror,
The thunder answers with a rumbling crash.
"Oh ye of little faith." The Lord reproves them.
"Know ye not that no power of earth or sea
Can wreck the ship where God's own Son is sleeping,
Or harm the one who trusts unfalteringly?"
Oh Jesus, take my life into Thy keeping.
Let me rest in Thy love and know no fear,
Convinced—no matter how life's storms assail me—
No harm can menace when my Lord is near.
From "Stray petals."

CHAPTER 10—A STORMY NIGHT ON GALILEE

”Mother, may I come into your bed? It’s Sunday morning and Daddy has gone to his den to sleep, So we won’t wake him,”said Linnet, and Mother turned the covers back So her little girl could snuggly in. ”Did you hear the storm last night, Mother? The wind blew and blew.”

”Yes, dearest. I heard it but I thought you were sleeping right through it.” Mother answered.

”It wakened me, Mother, and I was almost scared. I wanted to come down but I was afraid I would wake you and Daddy. Then when I came down this morning, I peeped in and saw you were alone. So I came in. Were you sleeping, Mother?”

”No, darling. I had been lying awake thinking. Do you know what I was thinking of? I was thinking of how Jesus once stopped a bigger storm than that.”

”Oh Mother, tell me. I was hoping you’d tell me a story.”

”It was not long after the last story we had,”Mother said.

”Jesus had been traveling through the country around the Sea of Galilee, teaching and preaching. He had grown rather weary for He had spent a great deal of His wonderful strength on the sick people He met. The people who were poor and not well educated believed n Him, but the rich and learned tried to trap Him into saying things they could use to turn the people against Him. One day they came to Him and said, ‘Master, give us a sign to show us that you have the authority to teach the people.’ Jesus had cured many people and had opened the eyes of the blind, but they would not accept such signs. Perhaps Satan was still using them to tempt Jesus to do some great deed, as he tempted Him after He came from the wilderness. Jesus answered, ‘A wicked and unfaithful people ask for a sign, but there shall no sign be given them except the sign of the prophet Jonah. Even as Jonah spent three days and three nights in the whale’s stomach, So shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.’ He meant to show them that the story of Jonah was a picture of Him, and if they had understood they might have gone home and learned something from that story, but they would not. Then Jesus said, ‘I tell you that the people of Nineveh to whom Jonah preached shall be raised up in the Kingdom and they will condemn you, for they listened to Jonah and there is one here who is greater than Jonah. The Queen of the south came to Solomon to hear his wisdom, but you will not believe though one who is greater than Solomon teaches you.’

”So small were these leaders of the people that they even came to complain to Jesus that they had seen His disciples eating bread when they had not washed their hands first.”

”What did Jesus say, Mother? Were His disciples’ hands dirty?”

”No, dear. Those people made a regular ceremony of washing before meals. Jesus knew that if His disciples had soiled hands, they would wash them. He knew, too, that these leaders made a big fuss about little things but took no care to do many things that were far worse. He said, ‘You make a big fuss about washing the outside of a dish but you do not trouble about the inside, because no one can see how dirty that is. The one who made the outside made the inside also. You try to keep your bodies very clean; that is right, but why don’t you clean up inside? You think that if you give money to the poor it does not matter what sins you do in secret. It is much more important to try to please God, than it is to please men.’ Then He told the people a little story. He said, ‘There was a rich man who had great fields and a fine house. He looked over his harvest one year and said, ‘Wherever am I going to store all this grain? I am so very rich that I have not room to keep all my wealth. I know what I will do. I will tear down my storehouses and build bigger ones.’ But God said, ”You are a very foolish man. What are these things worth? Tonight you are going to die and you cannot take them with you. Who will get all this wealth then?” ‘ Jesus showed the people that it was useless to spend all their lives trying to get riches that will do them no good. It is better to try to do good and please God. He said we should not worry about how to get nice clothes and rich foods, for it is far more important to gain God’s love and favor. God will take care of those who serve Him, and give them everything they need.

”Not long after this Jesus was very weary and thought He would go across the Sea of Galilee to some quiet place where he could rest for awhile. He and His disciples took a fishing boat, possibly Peter’s or John’s, and started across the Sea in the evening. Jesus lay down to rest on some sails that were folded up in the back of the boat, and the disciples rowed or let the wind carry them across the water, by the big sails. While they were crossing, a terrible storm came up. We know that Satan is called the prince of the air, and I have told you before how he can cause terrible storms, for he did raise a storm to kill Job’s children and animals.”

”Satan does not cause all the storms, does he, Mother?”

”No, dear, for you remember what God said to Noah, ‘When I bring a cloud over the earth I will put my bow in the cloud, and I will look at it and remember my promise never to destroy all the earth by a flood again.’”

”Then when there is a rainbow in the clouds we can be sure God is looking at them too, can we not, Mother?”asked Linnet.

”Yes, dear. That was His own word and we may be sure He never forgets. There was no rainbow in the clouds over Galilee on the night of which we are speaking. How do we know that, Linnet?”

”Because Satan brought the storm, Mother?”

”There is another reason. What makes a rainbow?”

”Oh, I know now. You have to have sunshine to make a rainbow, and it was night.”

”That is right. Now if Satan did bring that storm, we can see why he did it. He wanted to kill Jesus and His followers, and where could he get a better change? Here he had them all in one boat on the sea. The wind grew stronger and stronger till, in the night, you could not tell what was sky and what were waves. The sails had to be taken down, before the wind turned the boat over, and it was quite a task. Even then the disciples found they could not handle their ship. Never had they seen such a storm. People who are not used to sailing at night would be frightened by a small storm, but the disciples had spent all their lives on the Sea of Galilee and it must have been a terrible storm that frightened them. At last, they were sure they were all going to be drowned. They crawled back to where Jesus was sleeping. They did not realize how tired He was, and it made them cross to think He would sleep when they were in such danger. They called Him, and shook Him till He wakened up. ‘Master, do you not care if we are all drowned?’ they cried.

”Jesus wakened at last and looked around. To anyone else it would have been a terrifying sight, but Jesus was never afraid. He stood up and lifted His fine, beautiful face to the wind that seemed trying to tear His hair and clothing from Him. Then He held up His hand and said, ‘Peace! Be still.’ At once the sea subsided like a balloon that is pricked with a pin. The wind stopped so quickly that the disciples nearly fell over. The clouds parted and rolled away. The storm was over.

”‘What kind of a man is this?’ the disciples asked themselves in wonder. ‘Even the winds and the sea obey Him.’

”Then Jesus said to the disciples, ‘Why were you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?’”

”It must have been wonderful to see Him bossing the storm, Mother,” Linnet said. ”No one would ever need to be afraid of anything if Jesus was with them.”

”Jesus is with us too, at all times, dearest. He has promised, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’ If we are trusting in Him we need never be afraid of anything,” Mother answered. ”Soon He will come to take over His Kingdom, and then He will order the storms and troubles of earth to stop, and they too will cease, as suddenly as the storm on Galilee.”

”When will He come, Mother?”

”He has already come to gather His children but the time has not yet come for Him to take over His authority and rule over the earth. We know from the things that are happening that it is very near. For the

storm is already rising and it will not stop till Jesus says, 'Peace, be still.' Once when Jesus was talking to His disciples He told them they must always be ready for His coming So that they might be ready to greet Him. He did not tell them this for themselves, for He knew that many years must pass before He would come again and that they would all fall asleep before that

time should come. He told them So that they would write it down for us. You see Jesus knew that while it would be a great many years it would not be So many years for any one person, for no one ever lives more than about eighty years. People are usually about twenty before they understand and know about Jesus' coming, So few people have ever waited over sixty years. If He had said, 'I will be back in fifty years and I want you to hurry with the work of giving out the message So there will be enough tested and true Christians for the work,' they would have been rushing everywhere, but if He had said, 'It will be two thousand years,' they would have felt that there was no need to hurry. So Jesus knew that it was best not to tell us just when He would return, but He told us of things that would happen when He came to set up His Kingdom, So that those who were living and

watching for Him, would know when he came. Jesus said, 'Let your loins be girded (that means be dressed for the work) and your lights burning always and be like men who are waiting for their master, when he will return from the wedding. Be ready to open the door for him when he calls. Blessed are the servants whom their lord finds ready and waiting. He will come in and prepare a feast and will serve them himself. He may come in the evening or at midnight or in the morning, but no matter at what hour he comes he will want you to be ready.'

"How can we be ready for Jesus, Mother? We cannot keep dressed and awake all the time."

"We can, dear. We can have our robe of white linen, that is, Jesus' righteousness, you know, and the shoes of the gospel of peace, and the helmet of salvation, and the girdle of service, and what else?"

"I guess we will want to have our ten coins, Mother," said Linnet, remembering the story of the Bride who lost a coin.

"Yes, dearest. If we have those we will never be found undressed. Jesus did not mean clothes to cover our bodies but the truths of His Word. If we have them we will be ready and we will not mind when Jesus calls us. We will be glad to open the door and let Him in."

"Jesus often told the people stories, did He not, Mother?"

"Yes, dear. One day when He was teaching the people near the Sea of Galilee He said to them, "Once a man went out into his field and he sowed it all with good wheat seed. He scattered the seeds by hand and some fell by the pathway and the birds came and ate it. Some fell in

stony ground and it started to grow; but there was not much earth; So it soon withered and died. Some fell where there were thistles and the thistles grew So fast they choked the wheat out. But some seed fell in good, deep earth and it grew and yielded a good crop.'

"The disciples wondered what Jesus meant by that story. They could not figure it out and after the people had gone home, they came to Jesus and said, 'Master, what did you mean by that story?' Jesus said, 'Could you not understand? The field is the world, and I am sowing the seed—the message of the Kingdom, the truth. When I teach the people, some listen and are interested, but they do not understand; then Satan sends evil thoughts and influences to take away the memory of the truth they have heard. They are the ones pictured by the seed that fell on the pathway. Then there are some who have stony hearts. There is very little that is soft and good in them. The seed may start to grow; they may think about the things they have heard and try for a little while to do better, but as soon as the people begin to talk about them, or make fun of them, they will leave the truth, and the good it has done will wither and die. Then there are some who have good hearts, and they hear the truth and really mean to be good and to obey God's Word, but the love of riches or the cares and pleasures of this life are little thistles which crowd the good out, and they too go back into the world. Then there are some who are like the good soil. They hear the truth and try to live up to it. They do not care for riches or pleasure and the mocking of people does not affect them. They will become good Christians and will follow Me, and I will love them and give the Kingdom to them. They will bring forth fruit.'

"What kind of fruit, Mother?"

"The Bible tells us that the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, kindness, patience, faith, and goodness, dear. If we have those fruits, the Bays, 'They will make us neither barren nor unfruitful' but will give us an entrance into the Kingdom of God.

"Jesus told another story of a wheat field, saying, 'Once a man had a field and he planted it all with good wheat seed, but he had an enemy, who waited till he had finished sowing the seed and was asleep. This enemy came in the night and scattered tare seed—which is the seed of a very bad weed—all through the field. When the wheat began to grow the master's workmen came to him and said, 'Master did you not sow good seed in the field? How is it that it is full of tares?'

"The master said, 'Some enemy has done this.' 'Would you like us to go through the field and pull out the tares, Master?' 'No, for in pulling out the tares you would be sure to pull out some of the wheat. Let them grow together till the harvest time and then I will say to the reapers,' Go through the field first and cut all the tares and bind them up into bundles for burning. Then go over the field and gather the wheat into my barns.'

"What did that story mean, Mummy?"

”To get the full meaning of that story you need to know something about tares. They are weeds that look So much like wheat that it is almost impossible to tell them from the good grain, but the seed of tares is very small, while wheat has a large seed. When the harvest time comes and the wheat is ripe, the heads are heavy and fall over, but the tare seed, being So small, is light and the heads stand straight up. The picture was the same as in the first story. The field was the world and the one who sowed the good seed was Jesus and His Church. The good seed was the truth. After Jesus and the early disciples fell asleep, Satan came and sowed seeds of false teachings in the world. These teachings are many but there are three very big ones:

(1) The teaching that a person has something in him that cannot die.

(2) The teaching that God is going to send everyone who is bad to a terrible place called Hell.

(4) The teaching that God and Jesus are one person.

”These teachings are not in the Bible but were sowed in the world by Satan. Those who grow from such seed are like tares. They are imitation Christians. God knew that much of His true wheat—real Christian people—would be hurt if the tares were pulled up, for often there is one good Christian and many imitation ones, growing in one family or group. So He said to let them grow together till the harvest time. ‘The harvest is the end of the age.’ Then Jesus would be here and He would tell His messengers, or angels, to gather first all the imitation Christians into bundles. This means that all false churches and orders were to be gathered together into unions and groups, to be destroyed by the time of trouble that is now starting. Then Jesus said He would send the angels to gather all the true Christians—the good wheat—into His barn, the Kingdom of Heaven. Now the true Christians would be full of the truth of God’s Word, the good seed, and they would not be proud and haughty but humble and trusting in God. So it would not be hard to tell them apart. They would be willing to be taught of God and would be longing to know about Him, but the tares would be giddy, lightheaded people and very proud and satisfied with themselves. The way God would separate them would be with the sickle of Truth. God’s own children know the Truth of His Word when they hear it and come to Him.

”Now darling, that is enough for you to think about for one time. I hear Daddy getting up and we must go and get his breakfast. Here is a little verse for you for today. It will help you to remember the first part of our story. ‘He maketh the storm a calm So that the waves thereof are still, So He bringeth them into their desired haven.’ ” { Psalms 107:29,30}

THE TORCH OF TRUTH

He was rich, with unsearchable riches,
He had power none other but God
Had ever attained; the Eternal
Had given Him scepter and rod.
Son of the Creator Almighty;
Heir to the vast realms of light;
Yet He laid it aside and accepted
Poverty, sorrow and blight.
He was rich with omnipotent glory,
By the Father's great power He made
The Kingdoms, unseen but Eternal,
The glory that never can fade.
Yet His love sought the lost and the sinner,
He yearned o'er the fallen and weak.
He divested Himself of His glory
Man's life and redemption to seek.
He accepted the Father's arrangement
And yielded Himself to His Plan.
He laid down an archangel's glory
To be "Found in the form of a man."
He stood in the river of Jordan
Its cold waters dripped from His hair.
His life there was laid on God's altar;
Henceforth the hard cross He must bear.
The Heavens were opened to Jesus.

The dove of God's spirit came down
And the voice of the mighty Creator,
Acknowledge His dearly loved Son.
The torch of the Truth was there given.
He carried its light far and wide,
Till all who loved Truth were attracted
And came to the dear Savior's side.

CHAPTER 11—PARABLES AND MIRACLES

Sunday afternoon had come again and it was a cold, foggy day. The air was so damp and chill that Linnet could not go out to play and the fog was too thick for her little friends to come to play with her. She worked for awhile at her embroidery and read a little, but at last she came to Mother and said—

”Mother dear, please tell me a story. I just cannot find anything to do.”

”Is a story just the last resort then?” Mother asked.

”I did not mean it that way, Mother. You know I love your stories, but I was trying not to bother you today. I’ve played at everything I can think of, but it’s lonely having no little sister or brother to play with and my friends cannot come out today.”

”I know, my darling. Being the only little one in a big family has its drawbacks as well as its advantages.”

”If I only had my little sister, Mother, I could find lots to play. I wonder how long it will be before Jesus comes to wake her up. I guess I will be grown up then.”

”I guess you will, dearest. But then you will be able to take better care of her. You will seem more like a mother to her than a sister. Now let me see, what story did we have last night?”

”It was this morning, Mother, and you told me the story Jesus told the people. You know, the one about the tares and the wheat. There was one thing I wanted to ask you about that story, Mother. Jesus said that the tares were to be burned up. You said that God is not going to put the wicked people in a fire. What did He mean by burning the tares?”

”In all Jesus’ parables, dear, He used pictures to show His meaning. For instance, the wheat pictures the good people. Now, good people are not a bit like wheat in appearance. Neither are bad people a bit like tares. Jesus used those things as a picture because wheat is valuable and tares are just rubbish. So good people are of value to God while the wicked have no value, unless they change and become good. The fire was just a picture also. When you throw something worthless into a fire it is quickly destroyed. Jesus meant that the wicked systems that rose from the seed of false teachings would be destroyed. In this case he did not mean that the people would be destroyed, except in the sense that they would be seen for what they were. Everyone would know that they were not Christians at all but a very poor imitation. Here are two dimes. Look at them.”

”They are just dimes, Mother,” said Linnet. ”I have seen lots like that.”

”Yes, dear. But listen to them and see if you can hear a difference in the

sound of them." Mother dropped first one and then the other on the table. One fell with a dull thud, and the other had a ringing sound. "One sounds dull, Mother."

Mother smiled. "That one is no good, Linnet. It was given to Daddy by mistake. I guess the man who gave it to him thought it was good. It looks just like the other but it is made of lead and has no value. We kept it as a curio. Silver is of value, but lead has no worth."

"Silver, pictures truth, does it not, Mother?"

"Yes, dear. In the Bible silver is used as a picture of truth. So the Christian who has the truth is of value to God, while the one who has no truth has no value. If this coin had the writing ground off it would not be an imitation coin but just a piece of lead. Lead melts, and if I were to put this coin through the fire it would come out just a lump of very dirty metal. The silver coin would go through a fire unharmed, unless the fire was very hot. So the imitation Christians will go through the trouble that is coming on the earth and will come out just a lump of soiled metal. They will never be mistaken for Christians again."

"Did the fire in Jesus' picture mean trouble, Mother?"

"Yes, darling. It was all pictures. The world was the field; the sower of good seed of truth was Jesus and His Church; the sower of tares of error was Satan. The harvest was the end of the age—the time we are living in now. The reapers are the angels or messengers of God; the sickle they use is the Truth; the bundles are unions and associations of all sorts—Labor unions, Church unions, Medical associations, Ministerial associations, and So on. The fire is the trouble that is starting now which will destroy all false systems and set God's true people free. It will not destroy all the false Christians, but will show them up for what they are. Paul tells us, 'The fire of that day will prove every man's works, whether they be gold and silver, or wood, hay and stubble.' He also tells us that some Christians' works shall be burned up but they themselves will be 'saved, yet So as by fire.'"

"Did Jesus tell other stories, Mother?"

"Yes, dear. He said, 'the Kingdom of Heaven is like a mustard seed which a man took and planted in a field. He was not referring to our wild mustard which has a seed like a radish and grows into a troublesome weed for He said, of this seed, 'It is the least of all seeds but when it is grown it is the greatest of all herbs and becometh a tree So that birds of the air come and nest in its branches.'

"This meant that the truth may seem a small and unimportant thing, but when it was planted in the field of the world it would grow into a great church that would be like a tree, and birds—which pictured false teachings—would come and roost in its branches. That was just what happened, for the church which Jesus planted with the Truth, has become

as another prophecy said it would become, 'The home of every foul and unclean bird' or of every false teaching.

"Jesus said that the Kingdom would also be like three measures of good meal in which a woman hid some leaven."

"What is leaven, Mother?"

"Leaven is what we call yeast. It was considered a sign of evil by the Jews and during their Passover feast they were not allowed to have it in their homes or to use it in their cooking. They must throw it all away, as a sign that they had put evil or sin out of their hearts and homes. So Jesus said the Kingdom was like good meal—ground grain—which has been spoiled by having evil mixed in it. He said the leaven would spoil, or leaven, all the grain. He meant that the false teachings which the church would mix with the good seed of truth would finally spoil the whole thing and all Christians would be affected by it. That is true, for the errors of false teachings have indeed given all Christians wrong ideas about God till they have been spoiled by them. To please God we must put all the leaven of error out of our hearts and homes and keep just the pure seed of His Word.

"One of the prophets said of Jesus, 'I will open my mouth in dark sayings and I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.' { Matthew 13:35 } These stories of Jesus' were dark sayings that very few have ever understood. Jesus said that 'His Kingdom is also like a treasure hid in a field, which, when a man found it, he hid and for the joy of it went and sold everything he had and bought the field.' Here Jesus was speaking of Himself finding the true Church in the world and hiding it from all men while he went and sold or gave up all His great riches in Heaven, that He might buy the world with His life, So He could have the True Church for Himself. Then He said that the Kingdom was like a merchantman who was seeking for lovely pearls. He found one that was very valuable and very large and he sold all he had and bought it. So Jesus pictures His True Church as a valuable pearl."

"Jesus must have loved the Church to do So much for it, Mother."

"Darling, when we see how very much Jesus did love us, it makes us feel that we can never be good enough to be worth such love. If we have really given our lives to Him and are true and not imitation Christians, then we are a part of that Church which Jesus loved So much. A pearl is different from any other jewel. It looks to be all one. See I have one in my ring. See how it reflects, pale and lovely colors, yet seems to be white. It is really made up of thousands of very tiny scales, laid one over another. If we had a very strong magnifying glass we could see the separate scales. It is also different from any other gem in this. It grows in the body of a tiny shellfish—an oyster. When the oyster is hurt it pours out a little creamy fluid over the hurt, then it adds another and another layer till the hurt is all smoothed and covered by a lovely pearl.

To get the pearl the oyster must be killed by breaking open his shell. So the Church of God is made up of thousands of true Christians, and is developed by the sin and evil in the world. It cost the life of Jesus, and each Christian must himself die before he can be a part of that Kingdom.”

”A pearl is a wonderful thing, Mother. I think it is the prettiest of all the jewels. It looks so soft and white and yet has such pretty and faint colors. My pearls are not like yours, why?”

”Yours, dear, are only imitations. That is the difference. A true Christian reflects Jesus’ character. Blue for faithfulness, red for the ransom, green for everlasting life, purple for royalty, gold for the Divine nature and white for purity. Each color has a meaning. The false Christian, like the imitation pearl does not show those colors,” Mother explained.

”I want to be a true Christian and show all the colors, Mother,” said Linnet.

”It is not easy, dearest. It means always striving to follow Jesus and to do what He would, in your place. Jesus has agreed to make up all that we come short of perfection, if we really give our hearts to Him and try our very best. It is the ‘pure in heart’ not the pure in deed that will be the kings in the new age. No one who has ever lived, except Jesus, has ever been pure in deed.

”Jesus said also that His Kingdom is like a net which a man cast into the sea and it took in all sorts of fish. The good they kept but they threw the bad ones away. So the message of truth thrown out into the world has drawn people of all sorts into the Church. But now at the end of the age, as Jesus said, His messengers are sorting out the fish. They are separating the good Christians from the imitations. The good ones will be part of Jesus’ Kingdom, but the imitation ones will have to face the fire of trouble. Now when a fisherman sorts out his fish he throws the poor ones back into the water. So Jesus is today sorting out the good Christians, and those who are not worthy will be thrown back into the sea, that is, into the world again. When the Kingdom is set up Jesus will be the Ruler over all the world and He will then teach the imitation Christians, how to live aright. He will teach all the heathen too, till, as the Bible says, ‘The knowledge of God shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.’”

”Mother, you told me about how Jesus and His disciples were crossing the Sea of Galilee, and about the terrible storm, but you did not tell me where they went.”

”I believe you are right, dear. We did leave them out in the middle of the sea. That was a funny place to leave them, was it not? When the storm had passed they saw that it had blown them into a wild part of the country where some people called Gadarenes, lived. There was a little

town not far off and they started to go to it to get some food. They had to pass through rocky hills where there were big caves. In these caves a mad man was living. This man was under the control of some of Satan's evil angels. His mind was not very strong and the evil angels like to find someone like that and make him do strange and terrible things. This man was worse than most, for several of the evil angels were fighting to control his mind. He had become so wild, and fierce that no one could do anything with him. He had gone into one of the caves to live and he used to run after people who were traveling through the country and often hurt them. People had tried to chain him up but he broke the chains and go away and everyone was afraid of him. The Gadarenes kept pigs, which were considered unclean by the Jews because they have diseases that people can get by eating their meat.

"God had forbidden the Jews to eat the meat of pigs on that account and it was against the law to even keep them. Some men were herding a large drove of the forbidden creatures near the lake. Just as Jesus and His disciples were walking along toward the village the mad man came running down from his cave in the hills. The men who were keeping the pigs hid from him but Jesus was not afraid and neither were His disciples. The evil angels who were controlling the mad man, made him shout, 'What have we to do with you, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to torment us before the time?' As I told you the evil angels knew they were to be allowed six thousand years to rule the earth and they could not see why Jesus had come then.

"Jesus said, 'Come out of that man and leave him alone.' The wicked angels said, 'Let us go into the pigs then.' They had to do as Jesus told them and they wished to do some mischief. Jesus knew what they would do but the people who were keeping the pigs were lawbreakers, so He said, 'Very well, do what you will with the pigs, but leave this poor man alone.' So the evil spirits entered into the pigs causing them to run over a cliff and be drowned. The man who had been mad was now well again and his mind was clear. He was no longer fierce and wild but just like any other person. Those who had been with the pigs ran to the village and told the people what Jesus had done. They did not realize His wonderful power or think of the man He had cured, but were probably afraid they would be punished for breaking the law and raising pigs. So they came out of the city to meet Jesus and begged Him to go away and leave them alone."

"But Mother, Jesus could have healed their sick people and helped them so much," said Linnet. "How silly they were not to ask Him to come and teach them."

"People who are doing wrong are always afraid, dear. There are many people in the world today who are like those silly people, afraid to let Jesus come into their lives for fear He will punish them for their sins. So people do not like to be told that Jesus' Kingdom is coming, for they are afraid that it will stop their pleasure and evil deeds. Jesus could have made the people let Him in but He does not want those who do not love

and seek Him. He turned quietly back to the boat and went away and none of their sick people were made well.

”When he got back to Capernaum some of John’s disciples were there waiting to see Him. They asked Him, ‘Master, why do we, who are John’s disciples, have to fast (that means to go without certain foods) but your disciples eat when and what they please?’ Jesus replied, ‘When people are at a wedding they always have good things to eat while the bridegroom is with them; but if the bridegroom goes away they must refrain from eating till he comes back. They will for him.’ Then He added, ‘People do not put a piece of new cloth into an old linen garment for fear the new piece will shrink and spoil the old cloth. They do not use old wineskins to store new wine in either, for the new wine will ferment and tear the old skin, while a new skin will stretch.’ Jesus meant that He could not take His new teachings to the old Jewish churches, because they were so sure that what they believed was true, that the new teachings would cause trouble. So Jesus was going to start a new Church and give them the wonderful truths.

”So it has been down through the years. Whenever Jesus wished to give truths to His people He has always chosen the ones who had open minds and has shown them the new Truths, making a separate Church of them.

”Some of the Pharisees said to the disciples, ‘Why does your Master eat with people that He knows are not good? Why, He talks to and even shares food with sinners.’ Jesus heard their question and said, ‘People who are well do not need a doctor. I have come to save people from their sins. If you have no sins you do not need me. Sinners know that they have done wrong and I can help them.’”

”Mother, are there people who never have done anything wrong?”

”No, my darling. The Bible said, ‘All have sinned and come short of the glory of God,’ but there were then, and there are now, people who claim that they never do wrong. They are really self-righteous hypocrites like the Pharisees and they do not know that their very claim is false and they are more wicked in God’s sight than those who admit that they are sinners. Jesus cannot help those who claim to be good, any more than I could lift you out of the woodshed (which I told you about in an earlier story) if you would not come near me.

”While these men were asking Jesus questions, one of the rulers of the people came to Jesus and said, ‘Master my little daughter is very ill. Please come and touch her. I know if you touch her she will get better.’

”Jesus rose at once to go with the man, and His disciples followed to see what would happen. As they were walking through the street a woman followed them and pushed through the crowd to get near Jesus. This woman had been ill for many years and had gone to many doctors, but they could not cure her. Indeed she was growing worse all the time. Now she felt that if she could get close enough to Jesus to touch Him she

would be well. At last she managed to reach His side and she touched the hem of His robe. At once she felt better. Her strength returned and she was well. Now I told you that whenever Jesus made anyone better He gave to that person some of His own strength and health. He felt a sudden weakness come over Him and knew that He had lost strength.

”He turned quickly and said, ‘Who touched me?’ The disciples said, ‘Why Master, what a question when the people are crowding you like this.’ ‘Someone who was ill has touched me, for I felt strength go from me to heal them,’ Jesus answered. The woman came to Him and said, ‘Master, I touched you. I have been ill for many years and I knew if I could only reach you and touch you I would be well again. Now I am cured by your strength.’

”Jesus said, ‘It was your own faith that cured you. I could not have helped you if you had not believed. Do not be troubled, go in peace.’

”Just when the ruler was coming with Jesus, his servants pushed through the crowd to him and said, ‘Master, we have been seeking you. Your little girl is dead. There is no use troubling Jesus now. It is too late.’ The poor man was So sad. He had tried So hard to find Jesus and get help for his little girl. He loved her So much. Jesus saw how badly he felt and His loving heart was touched. ‘Do not be afraid or troubled. Only believe in me,’ He said gently, and they went on to the ruler’s house. When they got there they found many people, friends of the family and paid mourners, all crying over the little girl who was dead. Jesus said to them, ‘Why are you crying? The little girl is not (lost in) death. She is asleep.’

”‘You are crazy,’ they said, ‘I guess we know when anyone is dead.’ Then Jesus made them all go out of the room where the little girl was lying, all except the father and mother and His disciples, and He went to the child and took her little, white, cold hand. ‘Little girl! Wake up!’ He said, and the little girl opened her eyes and sat up. She was not even sick now. Jesus said to her mother, ‘Give her something to eat for she is hungry.’

”How that father and mother must have loved Jesus. He left them with their little girl and went away and as He was going down the street two blind men came running after Him calling, ‘Jesus, thou son of David, have pity on us!’ Jesus stopped and waited for them, ‘Do you really believe I can do this?’ He asked them. ‘Yes, Lord. We do believe,’ they answered. Then Jesus touched their eyes and at once they could see as well as anyone else.

”And now, wee lady, that is enough for this afternoon, for I must go and see about getting some supper for Daddy.”

”But I want a verse to learn, Mother.’

”Then here is one, ‘The eyes of the blind shall see and the ears of the

deaf shall be unstopped.' ” { Isaiah 35:5 }

”Who said that, Mother, and were they speaking of Jesus?”

”Those are the words of the prophet Isaiah, dear. They tell of what Jesus will do for all the blind people of the earth when He sets up His Kingdom. The things He did in Palestine were just samples to show what He will do then.”

CONTENTMENT

Oh, give me the gift of contentment, Lord,
Thy perfect peace in my soul,
For the storms of life break around me
And the billows over me roll.
Let me lie, in Thy love, unheeding
The roar of the stormy blast,
Knowing the billows will carry my barque
Safe into Port at last.
I ask not for peaceful pastures, Lord,
Where the flowers are always fair,
For danger lurks often in quiet vales
And perils await me there.
Take Thou my life in Thy loving hands,
Let me be, in Thy service spent.
Just choose the path where my feet must tread,
I will follow and be content.
Then, whether in poverty's lowly vale
Or climbing the mountain peak,
In the quiet peace of the country lanes
Or the noisy city street;
In sickness or health, in joy or grief,
'Tis the way the Master went.
Just lead me, Lord, as Thy love shalt choose,
I will follow and be content.
From "Stray Petals."

CHAPTER 12—STRIFE AND STORM

Mother had just finished reading the verses (opposite) to her little girl. Linnet loved to hear poems read, and she loved to learn them. Now she said:

”Why do there have to be storms, Mother? I love the quiet and the sunshine.”

”It seems to me I heard a little girl say how mush she loved a thunderstorm,” Mother laughed.

”I do too, Mother. I like to see the lightning flash and light all the sky and I like to hear the thunder. It gives me the nicest thrilly feeling. I guess I might be afraid of it if I did not know that Jesus is watching over us all the time and that God sends the storms as well as the sunshine. Somehow when you think that God is watching too, it gives you a nice comfortable feeling, like being in your arms.”

”That is how I want my little girl to feel,” Mother answered. ”I have never been afraid of a storm myself though they can get pretty bad sometimes. If we have a real faith in God we will never be afraid for we will know that God can take care of us no matter where we are.”

”Do I get a story tonight, Mother? I don’t know what I would do if I had not you to tell me stories.”

”That is why I am writing the stories down for you, my darling. You will soon be old enough to read them, and then when Mother is not able to tell you stories you will be able to read them and remember the days when you were little and the pleasant hours we had together, talking about God and His wonderful Bible. Then you will be able to read the stories in it, and understand them. Now let me see, our last story was about the little girl whom Jesus wakened up from the dead, was it not?”

”Yes, Mother. What happed after that?”

”Get your work then, dearest, and I will get my knitting, for I must get that little dress all finished and get it away to the wee baby who is to wear it.”

Soon Linnet was seated in her little chair, her busy fingers tracing the lines in her fancy work, and Mother’s fingers were making the knitting needles fly. Then Mother said: ”It was just after Jesus had healed the little daughter of Jairus, the ruler, that some news came to Him that made Him very sad, even though He knew that it must soon come. You remember that Herod, the wicked king, had shut up John the Baptist in prison, because John said the king had broken the laws of Israel by taking his brother’s wife.

”Herodias, the queen, had tormented Herod till he had sent soldiers to put

John in prison, but she was not yet satisfied. She felt that being queen should have made people forget the sin, but everywhere she went she felt that people avoided her because of what she had done. She felt that this was due to John's outspoken criticism. Herodias kept saying to Herod, 'Why do you not have him killed? He has insulted me.' Herod would answer, 'I dare not. All the people believe he is a prophet and there might be a riot. Then I might even lose my position as king.'

"'You are just a coward. You are the king and the people would not be able to do a thing. Everywhere I go they stare at me and I know they are thinking, there goes the queen. She must be a wicked woman because John said so. If it were not true they would have punished John for it. I hate that man and I will never be happy while he lives.'

"This had gone on for months. Then Herod had a birthday and Herodias thought of a plan to get her revenge on the prophet. She called her daughter, Salome, and said, 'Salome, I have thought of the grandest plan to get rid of that crazy prophet; I am going to have a big birthday party for the king. You know how he likes a celebration. At the party, when they have all been drinking wine and are felling quite merry, I want you to dance for the guests. He will be So pleased, for it is not everyone who can have a princess dance for him. You dance So nicely; He is sure to offer you some gift. Now, you must put him off; tell him that he would not give you what you want. The (you know what he is like) he will swear to give you what you desire. You must ask for John's head.'

"'He would never dare to have John killed. He is afraid,' sneered Salome.

"'That is why you must lead him on till he swears on his oath to give you what you ask for. He cannot go back on his oath before all his guests. Then we shall be rid of that troublesome prophet.'

"Salome did as her mother asked and danced at the king's party. Herod was delighted and offered her any gift she should choose. Salome pouted and said, 'You would never give me what I want.'

"'Of course I will. Have I not said you should have your desire?'

"'It is useless to ask. What I want I know you would refuse.'

"'I swear on my honor as a king that I will give you whatever you desire, even to the half of my kingdom,' cried the king who had had just enough wine to make him lose all caution.

"Then Salome laughed and said, 'All right, then, send your soldiers and have them bring me here, the head of John the Baptist, on a platter.'

"Herod's face turned white. 'What! He cried, for he could not believe he had heard her aright. 'You know very well that I dare not have John killed. He is a prophet and the people would mob me.'

”I knew you would not give me what I asked for, even if you did swear on your honor that you would, ‘Salome pouted.

”But Salome, that is not your wish. Your mother put you up to that. You could not wish such a thing. John never harmed you. Choose something else.’

”There is nothing else I want. You say John has not harmed me. Do you think it is very pleasant for me to have everyone pointing and staring at mother and me when we ride through the city? John has insulted me and I want his head.’

”Then the other guests who had all been drinking too, would say, ‘She has got you this time, Herod. What is a prophet compared to such a lovely dancer. Give her his head.’

”So Herodias’ wicked plot worked, and John was beheaded in prison and his head was brought to Salome. She took it to her mother and they rejoiced over their victory. They did not know that they had just carried out God’s plan for His faithful servant. God has a place for John in the earthly part of His Kingdom, when it is set up, and it was necessary that he should fall asleep and rest till the time had come for him to receive the reward for his faithful service. When the Kingdom is established, John will rise in all the glory of perfect manhood, and will be a king and ruler in the earth. Then Herod will be under John’s rule and will have to obey him and he will never have any life or blessings except from John’s hands. That is the perfect justice of God.

”Jesus knew all this, but the news of John’s death made Him very sad and thoughtful, for He knew that His own work was drawing to a close and soon He too must die. He had loved John the Baptist, dearly; now He felt that He must get away alone for a time to gain strength and aid for the work He had to do.

”So Jesus took His disciples and they took Peter’s boat and slipped away across the Sea of Galilee, to a place where they could be alone for a time, in the hills.

”They did not have long to rest however, for the people watched to see where they were going and then they gathered up all the sick people they could find and started around the lake after Jesus. The Sea of Galilee is really just a small lake even though it does have terrible storms at times.

”The people gathered up sick folk all along the way, and when Jesus and the disciples came from the little retreat in the hills, where they had been resting, to go back to the city, they found an immense crowd of people waiting for them by the seashore. Jesus felt sorry for them. He knew how far they had come and He could see how many sick and lame and blind people they had gathered up. He had not had long to rest and He knew He would be more weary than every when He had cured So many

sick people. He could have refused to help them but He knew that would not be doing God's will. He knew that God could have kept them from finding Him."

"I think they might have let Jesus rest awhile. Don't you Mother?"
Linnet asked.

"People seldom think of the worries or troubles of others, dear. Our own troubles always seem the most important. Of course the people did not realize that Jesus really took their sicknesses and that His own body suffered for everyone He cured. If we could just make a practice of trying to see other people's troubles and look at things from their standpoint we would become gentle and kind and sympathetic like Jesus. Jesus saw the people's great need of help and comfort and just forgot all His own trouble, 'He was moved with compassion for them and healed all their sick.' Jesus' motto was something like the hymn we sing at times.

'Go bury thy sorrow, the world has its share,

Go bury it deeply, go hide it with care.

Go think of it calmly, when curtained by night;

God tell it to Jesus and all will be right.'

"So He did not even speak harshly to the people even though He was tired and sad. When the last of the sick people were healed, the disciples noticed that it was getting near evening. They came to Jesus and said, 'Master, should you not send the people away so they can go to the towns and buy food for themselves? It is getting late and few, if any, troubled to bring food.

"Jesus smiled and said, 'they need not go away to buy food. You feed them.'

"'But Master!' cried the disciples. 'Where would we get enough to feed a crowd? There must be five thousand men and ever so many women and children.'

"'They said, 'We have only five small loaves of bread and two fishes left.'

"Then Jesus said, 'bring them to me and tell all the people to sit down on the grass.'

"Then Jesus took the bread and fish and asked God's blessing over them. Then He began to break the bread and fish into little pieces. The pieces seemed to grow under His touch and no matter how much He broke off there was still just as much left. He filled the baskets the disciples had, perhaps fish baskets, or they may have been just lunch baskets. When a

basket was filled he gave it to one of the disciples to pass around to the people, and then filled another. He just kept right on till everyone in that crowd had plenty to eat. Then Jesus said to the disciples; now gather up all that is left. And when they had gathered up the remainder they had twelve baskets full. Then Jesus told the astonished disciples to take the boat, and go across the Sea of Galilee, and He would come to them later.

”The disciples started away and Jesus quietly told the people that they had better set out at once for their homes, So that they would get there before it was too dark to see. As soon as they had all started off Jesus went up into the mountain to pray. He needed strength from God more than ever now. After awhile He felt better and decided to go to the disciples.

”They had rowed quite a distance across the water and a wind had blown up that made it difficult for them to make progress. It was blowing against them and they had to work hard to get anywhere at all. It was nearly morning and they were still some distance from land when one of the disciples saw something that astonished him. He was sure his eyes were deceiving him.

”‘What is that on the water?’ he asked the others. ‘It looks like a man can walk on water.’ They began to get frightened, but they heard Jesus’ voice calling to them.

”‘Do not be afraid. It is I. Be of good cheer.’

”Peter was the boldest and bravest of them all and he called, ‘If it is you, Lord Jesus, let me come to you.’ Jesus said, ‘Come,’ and Peter climbed right out of the boat and tried to walk. To his surprise—if he had started to think—the water seemed to grow smooth and hard under his feet and he could walk as well as if he had been on a sidewalk. He walked along fine for a few minutes.

”The disciples had been So astonished at what they had seen that they had stopped rowing. The wind had been blowing against them and, though they could not notice it, they were being blown back to where Jesus was coming. Now Peter was the sort of man who does things first and then starts to think afterwards. Now he began to think of what he was doing and he realized that no man could walk on water. He saw how the storm was blowing around him and he forgot to look to Jesus. His faith began to fail him and he started to sink. By that time he was nearly up to Jesus who was hurrying to meet him. He became frightened and called, ‘Master, save me, I am sinking!’

”Jesus reached him and caught him and lifted him to his feet again.

”‘O, thou of little faith,’ He said, ‘Why did you doubt? You were all right till your faith failed.’ Jesus helped Peter to the boat and they stepped in and at once the storm stopped and the clouds parted and they saw that they had reached the shore of the sea near Genneserat.

”By this wonderful deed Jesus gave us a beautiful picture of His coming. The world is like a stormy sea and the winds are blowing. They are winds of trouble and they make it very hard for us to reach the Heavenly Home to which we are traveling. Near morning Jesus comes to meet us across the stormy sea. It is nearly morning now and time for Him to come. We can go to meet him if we have faith as Peter had, for then we can see that He is coming. If we keep our faith in Him we will be safe no matter how the storms of life may blow, but if we begin to lose faith in Him and try to walk by ourselves we are apt to fall and go down in the sea. You know that the sea pictures the troubled mass of the people of the world. If we turn to Jesus for help as Peter did, He will lift us up and help us into the boat, which pictures His True Church. Then we will find, as the disciples did, that all our troubles have just blown us to the shore. When we take Jesus into the boat the storms of life will all be over.

”Do you remember the verse you had learned the other night? ‘He maketh the storm a calm, So that the waves thereof are still, So He bringeth them into their desired haven.’

”Now, dear one, we must leave the rest of the story of Jesus for another time. Here is a little verse for you tonight. ‘Trust in the Lord and do good, So shalt thou dwell in the land and verily thou shalt be fed.’ Remember, dear, if you are trusting in Him, you will never be in need of anything that is good for you.”

”Goodnight, Mother dear,” Linnet said, slipping on to Mother’s knee for a hug and kiss. ‘I am so glad I have you to tell me of Jesus. I feel as if I really know Him. I am glad you are writing the stories for me, too, and I am going to keep them always and I will read them to little sister, when Jesus wakes her up. She will be my special care and I am sure she will love the stories, too, because you wrote them.’

Then Linnet folded her work and slipped away to bed, after kissing her Daddy and older brother and sisters goodnight.

GATES OF PEARL

Down where the waters lie still and deep,
Undisturbed by the angry storms that sweep
Across the water and harry the waves
Or whistle their threats of watery graves,
A humble mollusk lay wounded and torn,
The lowliest creature that ever was born.
Ugly and gray was the shell outside
Concealing the beauteous tints that hide
In the pearly lining. Injured it lay
In the slime and mud of a rockbound bay.
It bore its hurt with a senseless calm
And covered its wound with a healing balm.
Covered with beauty the injured spot,
Layer on layer and knew it not.
Born of its suffering, bathed in the tide,
A great pearl grew in the injured side.
Translucent and lovely it slowly grew,
Hidden there far from mortal view.
Pearl fishermen came to the coast one day
And the injured mollusk was torn away
From the spot where its lowly life was spent.
It died when the wounded shell was rent.
The oyster died, but the pearl lived on
Glowing with all the hues of dawn;
Created by suffering, that glorious gem

Was placed in a monarch's diadem.
Far down in the lowliest strata of life,
Born in sorrow and nurtured in strife,
Lived a humble Christian who went his way
Just living his life from day to day.
Rough and uncouth did his shell appear,
In his heart was a faith that was bright and clear.
A great sorrow came and it wounded him sore,
Crushing the brave spirit more and more.
He bowed his head 'neath the heavy load
With tear filled eyes surveying the road.
But his faith poured forth like a healing balm
And covered his wound with a measure of calm.
Layer on layer the bright faith lay
Smoothing the injured spot away,
And a jewel grew in the wounded side
As his sorrow and pain he sought to hide.
A jewel of faith, both lovely and fair.
All the glorious tints of the rainbow were there.
The red of the ransom, the gold Divine
In the orange hues of God's purpose shine.
The green of the everlasting life
The blue of the faith that conquers strife.
While the indigo of our griefs we see
Through the purple shades of His Majesty.

All these, transposed on Christ's purity
Are seen in this gem born of agony.
The body must die but the pearl lives on
To grace the crown of our King in the dawn
Of that glorious day when He gathers each gem
And places them all in His diadem.
Our sorrows may lead to our soul's defeat
Or may bring us in tears to our Father's feet,
Where the soothing balm of a faith Divine
Will smooth all our hurts and His glories shine
In the stricken life, thus a glorious gem
May be born of our pain for His diadem.
The gates of that City of pearl are made,
Each showing the same translucent shade
Of sorrows o'ercome. As our Master learned
Obedience through suffering, So His followers—spurned
By the worldly wise—will be seen to shine
Like pearls with a radiance sublime
When—His kingdom established—all men shall see
The glorious light of His Majesty.
From "Stray Petals."

CHAPTER 13—DARK SAYINGS

”Did the people believe Jesus after He fed them all from such a little bit of food, Mother?” Linnet asked one day, as she was watching Mother peel fruit from the apple tree that grew in the back garden.

”What made you think of that story just now, Linnet?” Mother asked.

”I guess it was watching how many apples you had to peel to get enough for your pies, Mother,” Linnet answered. ”I was thing how nice it would be if you could feed the family as easily.”

Mother laughed, ”I would have an easier time of it, would I not? Now, what was that question? Oh, yes. Did they believe in Jesus after He fed them? Well, some did and some were like a great many people today. They were chiefly interested in getting food without effort. There have always been those who were willing to show an interest, if it meant a free meal. Jesus knew which they were. When the people whom He had fed came around the lake looking for Him they asked, ‘Master, how did you get across the lake?’ (They had seen the disciples take the boat and leave Jesus there, and then, when the morning came they went back to look for Him and He was gone; So they were puzzled.) Jesus said, ‘You have not come to seek Me because you learned something helpful from my talk, but because you ate of the bread and fish. You should work for the love of God and not to get free food or clothes. Food decays and clothes wear out, but the Word of God will last forever.’

”The people asked Him, ‘How can we know what the will of God is, So that we may do it?’

”Jesus answered, ‘It is God’s will that you listen to the messengers He sends, and obey them.’ Then the people asked, ‘Give us a sign that will prove to us that you are His messenger. Our fathers ate manna in the wilderness and were filled. Moses gave them bread from Heaven. The Scriptures say so.’

”Jesus said, ‘It was not Moses who gave you that bread, but God. He is My Father and the manna He gave you was a picture of the ONE whom He would send to give life to the world. Bread keeps people alive because it is a good food. I have come from Heaven to give life to the people of the earth. Those who come to me will never be hungry, for the Word which I will give them will satisfy them. All who truly serve God will come to me and will believe in me. I have not come from Heaven of my own desire or for my own pleasure but to do the will of my Father who sent me, and to show forth His character and His glory. It is His will that I should not lose anyone whom He has given me, for He has chosen them. Those who believe in me will gain everlasting life, for I will raise them up again at the last day.’

”Some of the Jews said, ‘How can this man be from Heaven? We know that He is the son of Joseph, the carpenter of Nazareth.’

”Jesus read their thoughts and said, ‘Do not murmur among yourselves. No one can come to me unless my Father draws him to me by His power. Those whom He does draw to me I will indeed raise up at the last day. It is written in the Law, ‘They shall all be taught of god’ I am the Father’s representative and whoever has seen me has seen the Father, for I am like Him, and whoever believes that I am His Son will gain everlasting life.’

”It was the same then as it has been ever since. Only those whom God chooses can understand the message of Jesus during this age, but this age is closing and the new age will soon be here, when every one will know God and understand His Plan for men. Jesus knew that there were many listening to Him who were there out of curiosity, and these would be better separated from His followers; So now He told them some very deep truths that He knew would drive them from Him, if they were not of those the Father had chosen. He said, ‘I am the bread from Heaven. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness but they are dead. If any man eats the bread I will give him he will never die. The bread which I will give is my flesh which I will give for the life of the world.’

”What did Jesus mean by that, Mother? It seems a funny thing to say,”Linnet spoke thoughtfully.

”I will try to put Jesus’ meaning in simple words So that you may understand. You know how Adam sinned and was put out of the garden So he could not get the perfect food and live forever.

He was condemned to death So he could not have the food that would keep him alive. Everyone who has ever lived has shared the punishment for Adam’s sin. The perfect food no longer exists, but if it were possible for us to have that food we would never die, except by accident.

”You know how Jesus came to give His earthly body in place of Adam’s and to die for Adam. Now by doing this Jesus would give Adam back the right to life and make it possible for god to be just and yet give Adam life. Anything that would give Adam and the human race the right to life would take the place of the perfect food. So Jesus meant that He would take the place of that food and give men life again, by dying for them. Now, bread will not keep us alive unless we eat it, that is, take it and use it as it is meant to be used. So Jesus’ death will do us no good unless we see that we need it and take it for ourselves. So unless we believe that Jesus’ flesh was given for our life and that His blood was shed to give us life, we are like the man who refuses to eat bread, So starves to death. We are like the child who is in a hole and will not let any person touch him, to lift him out. We take this ‘Bread from Heaven’ simply by believing that we are sinners condemned to die and that Jesus has taken our place and died for us and now we have the right to life.”

”But Mother, people still die. Is it because they do not believe?”

”No, my darling. It is because the time has not come for Jesus to give us the life He bought for us. God arranged, that when Satan’s rule was ended Jesus should have the Kingdom He bought, and be its Ruler. Then He will give everyone life. If we have given our lives to Jesus and have followed Him faithfully in this life, no matter what it costs us, then He will give us a higher form of life in His Kingdom. See, dear, I bought this chicken for you to eat; it is here for you but I am going to give it to you tomorrow. You must go to bed and sleep till tomorrow, and then you shall have your share of the chicken.

”Just so, Jesus bought our life and has the perfect food for us. It is already prepared for us but we may have to sleep until the morning of the perfect Sabbath day, before we can have our share of it. Because Jesus has arranged to give us life in the morning we need not be afraid to sleep in death, for we can believe Him and trust Him to wake us and give us our life in the Morning. Then there will be no pain or sickness. Now suppose it were possible for us to go right on living now. It would be like giving you that chicken dinner tonight. It would spoil our feast for tomorrow. Of course I could give it to you tonight, but a chicken dinner would be rather rich for a little girl at bedtime; then we would have nothing for tomorrow.”

”I don’t feel like having it tonight, anyway, Mother. I would have a tummy ache.”

”That is what is wrong with the world. They have eaten the sour grapes of sin and to have life given to them now, before they are cured and all sickness and pain taken away would do them no good. Jesus is very wisely keeping back the perfect food till morning. Then—when we have recovered from the result of sin—during the sleep of death, He will prepare the world for the feast by clearing up the house (the world) first. God knows that the evil must all be taken out of the world first, then we can enjoy the feast He has prepared for us. We will all enjoy the feast far better in the morning even if we have to sleep in death first, for all the trouble and evil will then be taken away, and everyone will be ready to enjoy God’s gift of life.

”The Jews could not understand what Jesus meant and said, ”What a foolish thing to say. How can this man give us His flesh to eat?”

”Then Jesus said to them very plainly, ‘I tell you that if you do not eat my flesh and drink my blood you can never have life at all, for my flesh is meat indeed and my blood is drink indeed.’ As I said before, Jesus meant we must accept His human body as the price for our sins and take it to ourselves before it could do us any good.

”Those whom God had not chosen, when they heard this saying went away and would have nothing more to do with Jesus. That was just what Jesus intended them to do. He wanted only those whom God had chosen. Now He turned to His disciples and asked

”Will you also leave Me?” Peter answered, ‘Lord, to whom shall we go? You only have the word of Life and we believe you are the Son of God.’

”Then Jesus said sadly, ‘I have chosen you twelve but one of you is a servant of Satan.’ You see Jesus knew all about Judas even then.

”After the Passover season that year the Scribes and Pharisees came to Jesus and complained about His disciples. They had heard about them eating without washing their hands. Jesus must have felt disgusted with them for making a fuss about such little things. He said, ‘You break the law yourselves. The Law says every man must take care of his parents but you say if they do not wish to support them they can claim that their money is being kept for a gift to God, and So they can avoid obeying the Law. You set aside God’s Law and make traditions of your own, thus you make the laws of God useless. It is indeed true which Isaiah said about you, ”In vain do these people pretend to worship me while they teach the rules of men instead of the laws of God.”’ Then Jesus turned to the people around Him and said, ‘Remember this, nothing you can put into your mouth can make you unclean. It is the things that come out of your mouth that will make you unclean in God’s sight.’

”Afterwards the disciples came to Jesus and said, ‘Master, you offended the rulers by what you said.’ Jesus replied, ‘The plants my Father has not planted must be pulled up. Do not worry about them, they are blind leaders of those who are blind. Both will fall into the ditch.’

”So dear, it is the same in the world today. There are many people who are pretending to teach God’s Word who do not understand it themselves. It would be far better if they would admit that they do not understand and let the people study for themselves, than to pretend they understand and try to lead the people to follow Jesus. They are blind as Jesus said and cannot lead anyone. The disciples asked Jesus what He meant by saying that it is what comes out of our mouths that makes us unclean. What do you think He meant, dear?”

”I do not know, Mother. I know there are lots of things we can eat that are not good for us. They make us very sick.”

”That is true, darling, but they do not make us unclean. Jesus meant that what we eat or drink does not make us wicked, though nowadays people do drink things that make them do evil things. What Jesus meant is that eating any food is not sinful, neither will a little mud on our fingers do us any great harm, but wicked thoughts and words will harm us. He said, out of the mouth can come either good words or bad. But they show what is in our hearts. If our hearts are pure and good we will not say wicked, cruel things.

”It is thought that it was in Jerusalem that the Pharisees asked Him these questions and that it was just after the Passover, for we are told that Jesus went back to Galilee through the country that is around Decapolis. He

healed many people on His way home and when He reached Galilee He once again fed a great big crowd with a few buns and fish. This time there were four thousand people.

”Jesus traveled through the country teaching and healing and no one who ever came to Him for help was turned away.”

”Tell me, Mother, why does Mary say her church is the only true one because Peter started it? Linnet asked. Mother’s pies were in the oven and she had nothing to do for a few minutes till they were all finished, So she said:

”Bring me the Bible, dear, and I will show you the verse that is used to prove that claim and show you what it really means.”

Linnet obeyed and Mother turned to Matthew 16:14 and read the verses to the 20 {th} verse. ”You see, dearest, Jesus asked the disciples who they thought He was and Peter answered for them all when he said, ‘You are the Christ, (that is, the anointed) the son of the living God.’ Jesus said, (in our words) ‘You are greatly blessed Peter, for it is the spirit of God that has shown you this truth. You are indeed Peter (a rock) and this truth is the rock on which I will build my Church and not even death or the grave (for the word ‘hell’ means ‘the grave’) will stop its being set up.’ Now Jesus did not mean that Peter was the rock that He would build His church on, as some people think, but that the truth that Peter had spoken would be the foundation of that Church. Peter

understood this and So did all the apostles. Many years after, one of them said, ‘Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ,’ (or Jesus the anointed). Then Jesus said, ‘I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.’ Now, a key is used to open a door and after God gave His holy spirit to the disciples Peter was the one who got up at once and told the Jewish people about the opportunity of entering the Kingdom. He used his first key and opened the door there to the Jews. Then three years after, god sent Peter to the home of a Gentile and showed how He was going to open the Kingdom to the Gentiles also. Up till then only Jews had the good news of the coming Kingdom, but then the door was opened to the Gentiles. This was the way Peter used his two keys. People wishing to find something to base their claim on, that their church was the only true one, chose these verses and made the claim that Peter founded their church. This was not true for it was Paul and not Peter who started that church and he started a true Church, but Satan sowed tares in the field and soon there were So many tares that the true wheat was mostly all killed. It was true then, and it is true today, that whoever believes that Jesus was the anointed Son of God has the key of the knowledge of God, and it will open a door if it is left on a nail, you must put it in the keyhole. It does not matter what church on earth we belong to, if we do not belong to Jesus’ true Church, we cannot be His.

”The key of truth will make us free if we use it right. If we wish to

belong to Jesus, we must study His Word and So find out what he would have us do. Whoever loves Jesus and gives his heart to Him, belongs to His true Church, even if he never goes to any church on earth.

”Here is a little verse from God’s Word to help you remember that. ‘This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.’ Jesus said that Himself and it is true.” { John 17:3 }

He loves me! Oh how much the thought entails!

Love that is perfect, love that never fails;

That strengthens me in sorrow and in strife;

Soothes all the trials and the cares of life.

Higher than highest heaven, So sublime

This love that lifts me up to heights Divine;

Enfolds, fills my grateful heart with praise

And lights my pathway with its golden rays.

So high it overlooks man’s awful sin

And plans the human race to save and win

Mankind for righteousness; to give them life

And free them from the bonds of sin and strife.

A love So deep that nothing can molest

The calm and stillness of its perfect rest;

So deep the very lowest of our race

In time can feel its power and know His grace.

Not e’en the silent shadows of the grave

Can hide from Him the soul He seeks to save

For, in due time He’ll call them back again

Reveal His love; mankind shall serve Him then.

Its length? It reaches out through endless ages,

This love that's sung by prophets and by sages,
The love that never fails, knows no cessation,
Eternity its limit of duration.
So broad this love it takes the whole world in.
It sees the vast extent of human sin,
Yet knows no barriers of blood or race
But reaches all with its unfailing grace.
It fills the universe, it lights the stars,
No selfishness its perfect beauty mars.
Increasing as the need for it increases,
It knows no limits, varies not, nor ceases.
Lord, let me lose myself in that great love
Knowing thou watchest o'er me from above,
Oh let me feel the everlasting arms
That shield from all that threatens or alarms.
Then shall the earthborn shadows flee away
And self shall be absorbed in love's pure ray.
Thine image on this faulty tablet trace
And every earth stain from my heart efface.
Till love like thine I may—in measure—know
And daily like Thy perfect image grow.
Then, by Thy grace I'll hear Thy sweet "Well Done!"
Life lost in love, Eternity begun.
From "Stray Petals"

CHAPTER 14—LOVE DIVINE

"Oh, Mother, it is So wet and cold today!" Linnet said. She had just come in from school on a cold January day. A heavy and wet snow had fallen and the roads were slushy. "The fire feels So nice and warm, and it looks So cozy in here."

"Pull up a stool, dearest, and sit here and get warm. That is right, hang up your coat where it will dry. How are those little feet? Nice and dry I see."

"They are dry, but So cold," Linnet answered, settling herself by the fire. Then she chatted merrily for a time about school, and its worries too, which always seem So big to a little girl. "I wish, I did not have to go to school, Mother. I would rather have you teach me and stay right here with you."

"I do not doubt it for a minute, dearest, but who would keep the home in order and do the sewing and get the meals if I spent all my time in teaching you?" Mother laughed. "Besides, dear, I would be a very poor teacher of reading, writing and 'rithmetic, I am afraid," Mother answered. "About all I can do is tell stories."

"I do love your stories, Mother, they make me love Jesus So much. I think I love Him best of all."

"Best of all next to our great Father, God, my darling. He must come first, you know."

"I love God, too, Mother, but Jesus always seems nearest. Jesus did So much for people," Linnet said thoughtfully.

"But we must remember, dear one, that behind everything Jesus did, was God. I have a little story, dear, that will show you how much God did."

"A Bible story, Mother?"

"Not exactly. Perhaps we might call it a parable. Do you remember what a parable is dear?" Mother asked.

"It is a story that means something else."

"Not a bad definition at that," Mother answered. "Someone has said, 'It is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning.' Jesus liked to use parables to teach the people and they are still very useful. Well, here is the story, but first how about getting your fancy work and we can both be busy.'

So Linnet brought her work and then Mother commenced the story.

"Once there was a great doctor who had many patients who depended on him to make and keep them well. This Doctor had an only son whom he loved very dearly. The son wished to be a Doctor too, as soon as he was

old enough. One day they were driving along a mountain road. The Doctor had been taking a short rest in the country and was going back to the hospital where several patients needed his attention. They were driving along a beautiful piece of road and stopped the dark for a minute to admire the scenery. Suddenly they heard a call for help. They looked across the valley to the steep cliffs opposite and there they could see, away up on the side of the mountain, a group of young people from the village. They were crowded together on a narrow ledge and a glance told the story. They had been climbing up the mountainside and a sudden landslide had cut off their pathway, both in front and behind them. It was impossible for them to get either up or down. The doctor pulled off his coat. 'There is only one thing to do,' he said. 'I must manage somehow to get to the ledge above them and drop them a rope. Once they are safe on that ledge they can make their way all right, but the place where they are is crumbling and there is no time to go to town for aid for them.'

""But, father!' cried the son. It is a very dangerous climb to that ledge and you might slip yourself.'

""One cannot stop to consider one's own danger when life is in peril,' the Doctor answered.

""The son replied, laying his hand on his father's shoulder, 'Let me go, Dad. Your life is too valuable to risk. There are hundreds of people depending on you. I am young and strong and I believe I can make it safely. For you to go might mean death to many of your patients, if you should fall. This is my job, Dad.'

""My son, do you know what it would mean to me, if anything happened to you? You are all I have in the world and you are more to me than my own life. I cannot let you take the chance,' cried the father.

""I must go, Dad. The world needs you. I am nothing, but you are a great Doctor and many people depend on you. This, I can do. If I lose my life, it will be in a good cause.' Then the father saw that His son must have this experience before he could be a great Doctor, too. He must face danger without faltering and learn to forget himself while serving others. The Doctor gave his consent and he sat there in the car and watched his son go down into the valley and cross it. He watched every step of the way, and could see the dangers of the pathway before his son could; many times his heart failed as he saw the boy he loved, in places where one misstep meant a terrible death. He could not even call to him, for the boy might have turned and slipped. Then he watched the boy with the heavy coil of rope on his back, climbing up and up, step by step. He saw the danger and would have given everything to spare his boy, but all he could do was sit and watch. At last the son reached the ledge above the young people and fastened the rope securely, then let it down to the group on the ledge below. One at a time he helped them to safety. Just as the last one reached the ledge and freedom, the son's foot slipped and he himself fell over the cliff. The father saw him fall into a

clump of trees far below. He left the car and hurried down into the valley to the side of his son. The boy was unconscious when his father reached him and the old man carried him back to the car. He took him to the hospital and worked for hours over him. The son lived, but no one ever knew what the father suffered. Now, to the young people on that ledge it looked as if the father had done nothing to save them, but the father's part was the hardest.

"That is the way it was with our Father, God, Linnet. He could not risk leaving the whole universe without anyone to look after it and come to save mankind, Himself. No one but God could guide the great worlds, and watch over the angels. It was an angel that made all the trouble on the earth. What would have happened if God had left the universe with only the angels to run it? Even God's dear Son—like the Doctor's son in our story—was not yet trained for the work and could not have taken the Father's place. Then had the Doctor slipped, his son could not have cured him. So when we think of all that, and realize what it must have meant to God to let Jesus come to the earth to save us, we can see how much God did. Jesus tried to show us God's great love, for He said, 'God So loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but should have eternal life.' The Heavenly Father could not have died for us, for He is Divine, but He could face the years alone and the anxiety of seeing His Son's danger, and then He could bring that dear Son back to life again. So when we think of all Jesus did for us we must remember that God was behind it all, like the Doctor in the car, watching, and that God was the One who sent Jesus to save us. The Son in the story knew that his father was watching over him and it gave him courage and strength for the long, hard climb. So Jesus too, knew of His Father's love and care over Him."

"Does God love us too, Mother, as He loves Jesus?"

"Jesus said—of those who try to serve God and do what is right—'The Father Himself loveth you.' Perhaps God feels, for the people of the world, much as the Doctor in the car felt for the people on the cliff, rather a pity and sorrow, like the love of a good man for all humanity, but, for those who put themselves under God's care and whom He adopts into His family, God has a very great love. He shows this love by sending rain and sunshine, and giving us the things we need and watching over and caring for us at all times. He lets us have experiences to teach us what is right and what is wrong. He also shows us what His plan is for the world So we can work for and with Him.

"Once Jesus gave the disciples a vision to show them something of God's purpose. He took Peter, James and John—who seemed to understand Him better than the others did—with Him up into a mountain, when He went to pray to His Father. The disciples were very tired and were resting and watching over Jesus So that none of His enemies would disturb Him. They saw a strange change come over the Master. His face seemed to glow like sunshine and His clothes looked as if they were on fire. He looked like some wonderful angel from Heaven. Then they saw

two old men talking to Him. Their words showed them to be Moses and Elijah, who had been dead for many years. They were talking to Jesus about the great Sacrifice He was to make, to pay Adam's debt and about the Kingdom that was to be."

"But Mother, how would Moses and Elijah be there, when they were dead?" asked Linnet.

"They were not really there, dear. It was a vision or a sort of dream, and was meant to show them that Jesus was really the One that both the prophets had said would come. Moses pictured the Law in all the things He did during his lifetime and Elijah was a picture of the true Church of God. So the vision was intended to show that both the old Law and the Church of God would center in Jesus. He was the center of all God's plan for the world. All the Old Testament or the 'Books of the Law,' as the Jews called them, were written to show the people that Jesus was coming. All the New Testament books were written to show that He had come and would come again."

"Were the disciples frightened Mother?"

"Yes, dear. They were frightened and they did not know just what to do. But later Peter said, 'Master, it is good for us to be here. If you wish we will make three tabernacles here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah.' That was like Peter. He wanted to say something. Just then a bright cloud seemed to cover Jesus and the two prophets, and a voice was heard from the cloud saying, 'This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!' So once again God gave His Son an assurance that He was doing what God wished and also showed to the disciples that Jesus was truly His Son. The disciples realized that it was God's voice they had heard and they bowed their heads in worship, and when they looked up again they were all alone with Jesus. They did not yet understand what the vision meant but they realized it was a vision.

"They said, 'Master, why do the Scribes say that Elijah must first come and restore all things?'"

"Jesus answered, 'It is indeed true that Elijah must first come and restore all things, and I tell you Elijah has already come and they did to him whatever they pleased. So also must the son of Man suffer at their hands.'

"The disciples realized that Jesus meant that John the Baptist had filled the picture of Elijah at that time. We know that both John and Elijah were pictures of the True Church that had to come and restore all the lost truths of God's Word before Jesus came to set up His Kingdom, but the disciples did not then understand that. Just as then, very few people knew the work John was doing, or recognized Jesus, So now, very few people realize that Jesus has come to gather His Church and setup His Kingdom on earth.

”Jesus tried to make His disciples understand that He was going to be killed by the Jews, but they could not just believe it or understand. Once Jesus told them very plainly that He would go to Jerusalem and there He would be taken prisoner and killed. Peter said, ‘No, no! Lord. That will never happen to you.’ Jesus realized that Peter would try to prevent His death and said, ‘Leave me alone Adversary. You do not understand God’s plan but still look at things from man’s viewpoint.’

”It is one who tries to stop you doing something you set out to do. We call Satan ‘the Adversary’ because he tries to keep us from serving God. Jesus knew that Peter wanted to see Him crowned King of all the earth. He said, ‘If any man wishes to be my disciple he must take up his cross and follow me. It will not be any gain to have everything the earth can give and yet lose your life. What would a man take in exchange for his life?’

”What is our cross, Mother?”asked Linnet. ”How can we take it and follow Jesus?”

”When we take up our cross to follow Jesus, we simply agree to take His will for us and not try to have our own way.” Mother answered.

”Suppose you planned to go for a picnic, and it rained and you could not go. Would you be angry or would you say, ‘It is God’s will for me,’ and be happy anyway?”

”I am afraid I would be cross, Mother. I hate to have my plans spoiled,”the little girl admitted.

””We all do, dear. But if we have agreed to take God’s will instead of our own, we must not complain when He changes our plans. That is our real cross. He sends us disappointments to test us and see if we are really willing to have Him guide our lives. If we are really His children we will try to be brave and just say ‘My Father knows best. I will not fret about it.’ If we can do that, soon He will give us something better. The apples on our tree look very nice when they are still green. My little girl would like to eat them but Mother says, ‘No dear, they will make you sick.’ If she says to herself, ‘I want them. I like them,’ and then eats them when Mother has forbidden it she may be ill. Then she will have pains and have to take nasty medicine. If she says cheerfully, ‘All right, Mother, I will wait till you say they are ripe enough to eat, Mother may give her something else nice instead. That is the way with God. If we cry and grumble over His will, we cannot expect a blessing. If we are good and obedient He will give us something better. God will provide good things for His children.

”Once when the disciples were with Jesus they were pretty short of money. A man came to gather taxes for the Government and he saw Peter and asked him. ‘Does your Master pay this tax?’ Peter said, ‘Yes,’ and went to find Jesus and see what to do. When Jesus saw him coming—before Peter had time to tell about the tax collector—Jesus said, ‘Peter, from whom do the kings of the earth gather taxes, from their

own people or strangers?’ Peter answered, ‘From strangers, Lord.’ Jesus said, ‘Then the children should not have to pay any, should they? However, for fear we should offend them, go down to the lake and take a fishhook and bait it and catch a fish. The first one you catch, open its mouth and you will find a silver coin in it. Take it and pay your tax and mine.’”

”Did Peter find the money in the fish, Mother?”

”Indeed he did, dear, and paid the taxes with it. You see god can always provide for His children if they trust in Him.”

”I wish I was big enough to do something for Jesus, Mother.”

”No one is too small to serve Him, Linnet. Once the disciples were having an argument about which of them would have the highest position in the Kingdom, and Jesus knew about it; So He called a little child who was playing near them and took the little one on His knee. He said to His disciples, ‘Do you see this child? Well, before you can have any part in my Kingdom you must be as humble and as full of faith and as easy to teach as this child is. Only those who are free from pride, and can learn life’s lessons and have perfect faith in God can share my Kingdom. Whoever receives one of my little ones receives me and whoever causes one of my little ones to stray away from me and to lose his place in that Kingdom would be better drowned before he can do such a wicked thing. The world will harm and mislead my little ones and will suffer for it.’

”Jesus continued, ‘If then you have given your life to me and there is something that is as dear to you as a hand, or a foot, or an eye, that is keeping you from following me, get rid of it. It is better to let your greatest treasure go, than to lose your share in that Kingdom. Be careful never to look down on anyone who claims to be serving me, for I tell you that each one who has given up the pleasure of the world to follow me, is under the special care of one of God’s angels, and those angels are always in touch with my Father in Heaven, for I have come to seek and save that which is lost.’”

”What was lost, Mother?”

”Man’s right to life was lost, dear, and So all men are dying. Jesus came to save the lives of men. Now many people who do not understand God’s Word, think that it was men’s souls that were lost, and that Jesus came to save people from going to hell—which they think is a lake of fire—but this is a mistaken view of God’s Word. God is loving and kind and would never make any of His creatures suffer, eternally. The pain and sickness and trouble in the world is not God’s doing, but the work of Satan. Adam lost life for himself and all of us. God sent Jesus to show us how we can get that life back again.

”In order to help us to understand this, Jesus told another little story. He said, ‘Once there was a man who had one hundred sheep, and one of

them got lost and the man left the other ninety and nine safe in the fold while he went away out into the mountains to find the lost one. When he found it he rejoiced more over it than over the ninety- nine that never got lost.'

''Jesus meant this to show them that, though He had thousands of angels in Heaven who had never sinned, He had come into the world, to find and save God's human children who had strayed away from the fold. He wanted them to see how precious mankind is in God's sight. Jesus said, 'I am the good Shepherd, the good Shepherd gives His life for His sheep.' He would have been just as willing to risk His life for the angels if they sinned. But it was the human race that strayed away from God and it was for them that Jesus left His home and suffered. There is a little verse that I love very much. I think you will love it too. It is part of a fine old hymn—

'But none of the righteous ever knew

How deep were the waters crossed,

Or how dark was the night that the Lord went through

Ere He found the sheep that was lost.'

''We cannot realize how very deep is God's love for His faithful children. But when we see how much Jesus loved us and how much He gave up and suffered to help us; when we think of how much it cost the Heavenly Father to let His dear Son leave Him and go through all that for us, it should make us love God So dearly that we would be willing to do anything for Him.

''Here is a little verse that assures us of God's love. Paul wrote it for us. 'Now our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, comfort your hearts.' '' { 2 Thessalonians 2:16}

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

When first I came to Jesus and rested in His love
I fed in sweet, green pastures. The sun shone bright above.
Long, peaceful days of plenty, my table well supplied
By Him whose love has called me and kept me by His side.
Fresh water, cool and sparkling, flowed to refresh my soul,
As joyfully I yielded my life to His control.
In tender arms He bore me whene're the way was steep.
How dear His tender pity for me, His infant sheep.
He shielded me from every blast. When weary grew my feet
I found the shelter of His arms a refuge sure, complete.
When torn by thorns and brambles how sweet His sympathy,
With soothing balm of Gilead His love anointed me.
Time passed, my feet grew stronger. Oft from His side I'd roam.
His rod and staff they comforted and brought me safely home.
Then—in His matchless wisdom—He led His trusting sheep
'Neath stormy skies, midst dangers great, up mountain bare and steep.
There oft the cruel boulders would cut my tender feet
Each wound brought proof of His dear love with sympathy replete.
How grand to follow ever on, just listening for His call,
To know that I can trust Him. To see His love in all
The strange experiences of life. To know His hand will guide,
Oh, may I never falter nor ever leave His side.
Nor ever ask the reason why His love had led me so,
But realize in His due time His purpose I shall know.
Here far above the valley's strife, He reveals a safe retreat,

Where food is pure and plentiful and water cool and sweet,
Here—'neath the blue of Heaven—keen blows the blast,
But my heart o'erflows with praises for the perils that are past.
What tho' the storm break round me, I know my Shepherd lives.
Though thunders shake the mountains, His love can shelter give.
I know His hand will guide me safe to the fold at last.
There in my Father's mansions, my weary journey past,
I'll hear the Heavenly Father's voice and see the Shepherd's face
The last veil—torn asunder—shall then reveal His grace.
There in the Heavenly fold of god I'll lay me down to rest
And sing my Saviour's praises in the Homeland of the blest.
From "Stray Petals."

CHAPTER 15—AT THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

”My head is aching, Mother, and I do not feel very good. Please sit by my bed and tell me a story of Jesus,” Linnet said one evening, soon after our last story. She had gone to bed early but could not sleep. Mother took her work and sat by the bed and talked quietly.

”We are getting close to the end of Jesus’ story, dear,” she said. ”During that last summer Jesus chose seventy of the most earnest of His disciples and sent them out through the towns and villages which He intended to visit later. They were to preach to the people about the coming Kingdom and prepare them for His coming later. He gave them power to heal the sick and lame and blind so that the people would believe He had sent them. He told them to go just two together to each town and He said to them, ‘I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. Do not take any money with you or any extra clothes and do not stop to talk to people you meet on the road, for the harvest is ripe and there are not many workmen to gather the wheat. When you go to any house, say, Peace be to this house, and if there are any of God’s people there, they will welcome you. Tell them of the coming Kingdom and stay with that family while you are there. Do not be fussy or complain about the food they give you. Remember that God has supplied it. If the people do not want to hear your message do not try to make them listen but go to some other place. Heal the sick and preach the good news of the coming Kingdom.’

”So the disciples went, as Jesus told them, and in almost every village they found some who wanted to hear of God. It was getting near the harvest time when the Jews always had a feast that was called the feast of the Tabernacles. It was like a big picnic. For seven days the people lived in little shelters made of the branches of trees. It was kept as a sort of Thanksgiving for the harvest and the people simply picnicked. In Jerusalem there were certain special services and sacrifices. Jesus planned to spend that feast with friends near Jerusalem. When the disciples had time to prepare the people for His coming, He started out, visiting in the different villages as he went. He found the people, for the most part, very glad to see Him.

”On the way, however, they had to pass through a village in Samaria. Here the people seemed offended because Jesus was going to Jerusalem for the feast. You remember the Samaritans thought that it was right to serve God in their holy mountain while the Jews always went to the Temple in Jerusalem. The villagers refused to let Jesus through their town or speak there. The disciples were very angry and asked Jesus to let them call down fire from Heaven and destroy them for turning Him away. Jesus must have felt very sad as He said, ‘How little you understand the spirit of truth. You have not felt the love of God or you could not make such a suggestion. I have not come to destroy men’s lives but to save them. It is their loss if they refuse our message.’ So Jesus left that village and went to another, where the people were glad to have Him. It is not right at any time to hurt, or try to punish anyone,

because they do not see things from our viewpoint. God will open their eyes in His own time.

”When they were entering the next village, Jesus and His twelve disciples met ten lepers. You remember that I told you lepers were people who had a terrible and incurable disease. They were not allowed to live with other people but must stay out in the hills alone and beg from strangers, unless they had friends who would bring them food. Whenever you went near a leper, he would cover his face So you could not see it, and call out, ‘Unclean, unclean!’ These lepers were standing outside the village and waiting for someone to bring them food. They had heard of Jesus and now they stood a short distance away and called, ‘Master, have pity on us.’ Jesus’ heart was touched with pity for them and He said, ‘Go and show yourselves to the Priest.’

”They turned, in wonder, to obey Him. Whenever a person had leprosy he had to go to the priests, as you would go to the doctor, to be examined to see if he really had the disease. If they were cured or the spots healed, they had to go to the priests then too, just as you had to go to the doctor after you had whooping cough and chicken pox, to get a certificate that you were all over it before you could go back to school. As the men started off toward the village to see the priest, one looked at another and cried, ‘Why you are cured! Your spots are all gone. Jesus must have cured you.’ The other said, ‘You are well, too. All your spots have gone; So He has cured you, too.’ And sure enough they were all better. How they danced and shouted and cheered. Now they could go to their homes again. Only one man thought of Jesus and what a wonderful thing He had done for him. He turned and ran back to kneel at Jesus’ feet and thank Him.

”Jesus said, ‘Were there not ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Has only one returned to give thanks to God? Arise and go to your home, my friend, my friend. Your faith has saved you.’

”The people in Jerusalem were looking for Jesus. They had expected he would go to the feast, but when Jesus did reach the city, He did not make Himself known at first. It was not till nearly the middle of the week that He went to the Temple and began to preach. Those who did not know Him asked, ‘Who is this Man? Where did He get So much knowledge about the Law. He has not attended our schools.’

”Jesus said, ‘My teaching is not my own but His who sent me. If any man will serve Him he shall know the teaching whether it is of God or not. When a person speaks his own thoughts he is seeking his own glory but the person who speaks only the message of the one who sends him is sure to give a true message. Moses was a true prophet. He spoke only God’s message. You claim to believe him but none of you obey him. Why is it that you plot to kill me?’

”You are crazy!’ some of the people replied. ‘Who wants to kill you?’

”“You have plotted to kill me for healing a man on the Sabbath’, Jesus replied.

”Why this must be the great teacher, the rulers have been searching for; He made the poor man well, that used to lie at the pool of Bethesda. Here He is speaking boldly in the Temple and they have not arrested Him. Is it possible that our rulers know He is the Christ and are afraid to touch Him? He must be utterly fearless. Still we know where this man came from and no man will know where the Messiah comes from.’

”The priests tried to get someone to arrest Jesus and sent soldiers to take Him but the Master said to them, ‘I will be with you for a little while longer, then I must return to the One who sent me. Then you will seek me but you will not be able to find me. Where I go you cannot follow me.’

”‘Now what does He mean? Where can He go that we cannot find Him? Will He go to the Gentiles?’ asked the people.

”They were puzzled by His words and stopped to listen, and they became so interested that they forgot why they had come. God was protecting Jesus and they could not arrest Him. On the last day of the feast, Jesus stood up in the Temple and called to the people, ‘If there is anyone here who is thirsty (for God’s truth) let him come to me. Whoever believes in me shall become like a spring of water in a dry place. He shall be filled with truth, even as God’s Word has foretold.’

”Some of the people were sure He was the Messiah and some wanted to kill Him, so they quarreled over Him. The soldiers, whom the priests had sent, could not get near to take Him prisoner. They went back to the priests without Him.

”‘Where is the man we sent you to arrest?’ the priests asked, and they said ‘No man ever spoke like this man.’ Has He fooled you too?’ cried the priests. ‘Have any of the rulers of the people believed in Him?’ Then Nicodemus—who came to Jesus by night—said, ‘Our law does not permit us to judge any man till we have heard Him, and know all about His actions.’

”‘What! Are you one of His disciples too?’ asked the priests. ‘Do you not know that no prophet has ever come from Nazareth?’ While they were quarreling over Him, Jesus left the city quietly and went to visit friends in the country. The next day He was back in the city again, teaching the people in the Temple.

”Then Jesus turned to those around Him and said, ‘I am the light of the world. He that followeth me shall not walk in the dark. I shall be leaving you soon and you will not be forgiven because you have refused to believe me. You will look for me and not be able to find me. You are of the earth but I am from above.’

”Someone in the crowd called out, ‘Who are you?’

”Jesus said, ‘I told you in the beginning who I am. I have many things to look into and judge. He who sent me is true and I speak the words He has commanded me to speak. When you have lifted up the Son of Man you will realize that I was indeed your Messiah and that I do these things by the power of God, who sent me to you. The Father is with me and is pleased with me because I seek to do His will and not my own.’

”Many of the people were convinced by Jesus’ quiet manner and fearless words. To these Jesus said, ‘If you continue to follow me and obey my words you will be my disciples indeed and you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.’

”They said, ‘But, Master, we have always been free. We are not the slaves of any man.’

”Jesus said, ‘Whoever commits a sin is a slave of that sin. If the Son of God sets you free from your sins, you will be free indeed. I know that the Jews are the children of Abraham by birth, yet they seek to kill me because my words do not please them, but I only speak the words that I have heard from my Father.’

”Someone in the crowd called out again, ‘Abraham is our father.’

”‘Oh, no,’ Jesus answered. ‘If you were true children of Abraham you would do the works he did. Abraham believed God’s Word and obeyed it. You hate me because I tell you the truth, and you plot to kill me though I have never harmed any of you. Abraham would never have done that.’

”‘We are God’s people!’ they answered. ‘No, you are not,’ said Jesus. ‘If you were His people you would love me because He sent me to you. You do the works of Satan who is your father. He was also a murderer from the beginning and hated the truth. He was a liar and the father of all lies. God’s children know His truth and obey it. I tell you that those who obey my words shall not see death.’

”‘Are you greater than Abraham? Abraham is dead and So are all the prophets, yet you dare to say that those who obey you will not see death.’ Who are you trying to make yourself out to be?’ the rulers of the people demanded.

”Jesus said, ‘I do not seek to honor myself. My Father honors me and you claim that my Father is you God. You do not even know Him. I know and obey Him. Abraham—looking down through the years - foresaw the time of my coming and was glad.’

”‘You speak as if you had known Abraham. You are not yet fifty years old,’ cried one of the people, and Jesus answered, ‘Before Abraham was, I am.’

”You may remember, dear, that ‘I am’ was the name that the angel, who was sent of God, gave when speaking to Moses. Jesus meant that He was this same messenger—the Logos—whom God had sent to Moses to help him in leading the people from Egypt. This was true but the people would not believe it and they rushed at Jesus to take Him prisoner and kill Him then, but God was watching over Him and he was able to slip quietly away. He went with His disciples out into the country around Jerusalem and taught the people wherever He went, healing their sick. Sometimes He went into the city, but those who hated Him realized that there would be trouble if they tried to harm Him, for So many of the people believed in Him and said, ‘When the Christ comes can he do greater things than this man does?’

”For our verse today we will take Jesus’ words, ‘Whoever commits sin, is the servant of sin.’ We wish to be Jesus’ servants and So we must try to avoid doing anything of which He would not approve.”

THE SECRET PLACE

There's a shelter safe and precious,
Where God's children may abide.
There's refuge from the tempest
Where in safety they may hide.
There's a place where all life's trials
Seem to fade like mists away;
Where Peace broods with spreading pinions
And night seems as bright as day.
There's a place where all the weary
Lay their burdens down and rest.
Where the sorrowful and lonely
May find comfort and be blessed;
Where the sin- sick may find healing,
Hungry souls be satisfied;
The repentant find new courage
And the homeless may reside.
There's a refuge for the sinner
When remorse has done its part.
There is hope e'en for the dying;
Solace for the broken heart.
Would you know this blessed refuge
That's provided by God's grace?
Know that god Himself invites you
To the Sacred Secret Place.
Underneath His wings abiding,

There no storms can e'er molest.

Safe in Christ our blessed refuge

Every weary soul may rest.

Oh, what joy and peace await us,

Oh, the fullness of His grace!

Oh, the bliss of simply resting,

Hiding in the Secret Place.

CHAPTER 16—LEARNING TO PRAY

Linnet knelt by her bedside, saying her evening prayer. Mother wondered as she stood nearby waiting to tuck her little daughter into bed for the night, how much her little one understood about the meaning of prayer. So, as Linnet slipped under the covers and said, "Mother, can't you stay for awhile with me and tell me a story? I am not sleepy yet." Mother said, "I was just thinking you might like me to tell you how Jesus taught His disciples to pray, dear. Would you?"

"I would love it, Mother. We say the Lord's Prayer every morning at school."

So Mother brought her knitting and seated herself in the little rocker by the bed and started her story.

"It was just after our last story and Jesus was traveling through the country around Jerusalem, with His disciples. Perhaps they had met some of John's disciples and had been talking to them, for the disciples said, 'Master, teach us how to pray, as John also taught his disciples.'

"You see before Jesus came to the earth people did not pray freely to God as His children do now. When they wished to talk to God they took a lamb from the flock or a young bull, or if they were poor, a couple of doves to the Temple and offered them for a sacrifice. If they were too far away to go to the Temple, they could take rough stones and build an altar and offer a sacrifice on it, asking God's forgiveness for their sins. Sometimes—when they were in great danger—the king would go himself to the Temple and ask God's help, always making a sacrifice first. Then the prophets would come with God's answer. You see all people were counted as being cut off from God's favor by Adam's sin and they were treated as prisoners.

"When Jesus came to the earth He was not a condemned prisoner, but the Prince of Peace, come to show us how to get in touch with God again. Jesus talked to God whenever and wherever he wished and knew that God would never fail to hear Him. The disciples saw this and they too wished to get in touch with God. Now God would have no dealings with sinners, but He arranged that people could come to Him, through Jesus, because Jesus was His son and was going to purchase the earth by His blood. I told you that the time when Jesus gave His life for sinners was when He was baptized in Jordan and the price was completed when He died. So at this time He was the prospective owner of the earth. Now it was possible for people to get in touch with God.

"Jesus said, 'When you pray, your manner of prayer should be something like this—'Our Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we also forgive those who trespass against us; leave us not in temptation but deliver us from evil.' "

”Did Jesus mean we should say that prayer always, Mother? That is not the prayer I say at night.”

”No, dear, Jesus warned us not to use ‘vain repetitions.’ That means, to say the same words over and over and not even understand what they mean. Now very few people who say the Lord’s Prayer have any idea of what they are saying. They have learned it all by heart and it is just a ‘vain repetition,’ just words with no meaning. Jesus said our prayer should be after that general idea. First, we should acknowledge that God is our Father. But god is not the Father of everyone. You remember that Jesus said to the Jewish rulers, ‘Ye are of your father, the Devil,’ for they were obeying the commands of that evil angel. Only those who have given themselves to God and have been taken into His family have the right to call God their Father. You are covered by that for both your father and mother have given their lives to God and you are our child. The Bible says, ‘The promises are to you and to your children,’ and you are covered till you are old enough to decide whether you wish to remain in God’s family or not.”

”Then I can call God my Father in Heaven, can I not, Mother?”

”Yes, my darling. You can and He counts you as His child,” Mother answered. ”Now what is the next part of that prayer?”

”Hallowed be Thy name. What does that mean, Mother?”

”Hallowed means praised. That simply means ‘All praise belongs to Thee,’ ”Mother explained. ”So first we must own God as our Father and then offer our praise to Him for all His goodness to us. Then we come to a part of the prayer to which very few people have ever given any thought—‘Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.’ Here we are asking God that His kingdom may soon come to the earth and that all men may do His will as the angels do in heaven. Most people do not expect God’s Kingdom to come on earth, but they think that when good people die they will be carried to heaven and do god’s will there. They say this prayer unthinkingly and do not realize what they are praying for. They do not think that their prayer will be answered.”

”But it will; won’t it, Mother?”

”Yes, dear. It will indeed be answered and very soon, to the great surprise of many who have made a ‘vain repetition’ of the Lord’s Prayer. The next part of our prayer should be an acknowledgment that it is from God that we get all the things we need, to live. ‘Give us this day our daily bread.’ We can say, ‘Lord, for tomorrow and its needs I do not pray, but keep me, guide me, help me, Lord, just for today.’ Jesus said, ‘Take no thought for tomorrow, tomorrow will take thought for the needs of itself.’ So we should ask God each day to give us the things we need, and realize that all we do receive is from Him. You remember the

children of Israel were told to gather each day, just enough Manna for the day's need and no more. This was to teach them the same lesson—to count on God to supply each day's needs. Then comes an important part of the prayer,

'Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.'

"What does trespass mean, Mother?"

"It means a little sin, dear. You see when we come to Jesus and give ourselves to Him, He has agreed to wipe out and forget all the sins that are past and to give us a fresh start, but we always make mistakes and do things that are not right. These are the trespasses for which we should ask God to forgive us each day. Every night we should ask forgiveness for the mistakes of the day, and we are told that 'He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.' But there is a condition, 'As I forgive those who trespass against me.' That means that if someone has made you angry or has hurt you or done something mean and you have not forgiven them, you are asking God not to forgive you. If you say you have forgiven them, and then intend to get even with them, by doing something mean to them, you are asking God to only pretend to forgive you and punish you tomorrow. So before you can pray that part of the prayer and mean it, you must see that you really forgive others. Then the next part of the prayer, as it is usually said, is wrong. 'Lead us not into temptation.' God never leads anyone into temptation. We are told, 'When any man is tempted let him not say he is tempted by God, for God tempts no man.' What Jesus said was 'Leave us not in temptation, but deliver us from evil,' or in our words, 'Do not leave me alone when Satan is trying to get me to do wrong but help me by saving me from the evil one.'

"So you see a proper prayer is one that at first owns God as a Father; then gives praise to Him for His goodness; admits that all we have comes from God; asks His forgiveness for the day's mistakes, first forgiving others; then asks God to help us and give us strength to keep from doing wrong. It does not matter what words we use in our prayer. Indeed God wants us to come to Him and talk to Him as we would to our own earthly father. He does not want us to use any special form."

"You did not say the rest of it, Mother. 'For thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory for ever and ever, Amen.'

"Neither did Jesus, dearest. That part was added by people who thought they knew better how to end a prayer than Jesus did. But there is no reason why we should not add it if we wish. It would be far better not to repeat the prayer at all but to just follow the directions and pray in our own words; then there is not so much change of making our prayer just a meaningless jumble of empty words. Many people have a form of prayer and never mean a word they say and they are not God's children and He does not pay any attention to their prayers. Jesus said, 'If your prayers are not answered at once do not think God has not heard you.' People ask for many things they do not really want. A mother took her little girl

through a big store once and the girl said, 'Mummy, buy me that dolly; I want it.' Mother said, 'Not today, dear. Wait till next week and I will see if you still want it.' By the time a week had passed the little girl had forgotten all about the doll and wanted roller skates instead. People are like that. God knows that it is not good for us to get everything for which we ask. He knows if we really, truly, wish a thing we will keep on asking for it and not change our minds. So Jesus said, 'If a man goes to his friend's door at midnight and knocks and wakes his friend, saying, 'Please get up and lend me two loaves of bread. I have some friends who have come unexpectedly and I have nothing in the house to feed them, and all the stores are closed,' the friend is apt to say, 'Go away and do not bother me. I am in bed. You will wake all the family.' But if the man keeps on calling, he will get up and let him have the bread, for he will know he must really need it.' So if there is some blessing we really wish from God, we should not stop asking for it, but be sure that God will hear us, if we are in earnest and the thing we wish is good for us.

"Of course, if what we ask would be harmful, God is like a father. If you coax Daddy to let you have something that he knows would make you sick, he will refuse it. So we must learn to trust God, and if the thing we have begged for is still not given, we may be sure it is because God sees it will hurt us."

"Mary says they always pray to the Virgin Mary, Mother. Is that right?"

"Jesus told us to whom we should pray, dearest. We cannot find anyone who knows more about God than he did. If you wanted Daddy to bring you something from the store would you come to me and ask me to ask Daddy to get it for you?"

"No, Mother. I would go to Daddy himself and ask him."

"That is the way it should be with us. Now, Mary was a very fine woman, but she died and had to sleep till Jesus comes to waken her. Jesus Himself showed us that Mary, though she was His earthly mother—was no more than any other member of His Church, for once when He was teaching the people, someone came to Him and said, 'Master, your mother and your brothers and sisters are waiting outside to speak to you.' Jesus must have foreseen the foolish claims some people would make about Mary; So He said, 'Who is my mother and who are my brothers and sisters?' Then He answered His own question by saying, 'Whoever shall do the will of my Father, God, shall be my mother or brother or sister.' Jesus meant that all who came to Him and became a part of His church would be just as dear to Him as if they were His earthly relatives. Neither Jesus nor Mary nor any of the disciples ever suggested that we should ask anyone to plead with Jesus for us. Indeed the Bible tells us Jesus is our advocate with the Father, that is, He stands along side of us, and covers us with the robe of His righteousness. And the Bible tells us there is just one mediator (one who will take the world's part and stand between them and another) between God and man, that is Jesus.

”Jesus said, ‘Whatever you ask of god in my name He will do it for you.’ This, however, was not an unconditional promise, for He said, ‘If my words abide in you, meaning, if we ask for things in the right way, the way in which He told us. So we know that God will hear us and give us what is wise and good, if we ask in Jesus’ name. We must not ask for anything in a selfish spirit, however. God does not hear prayers that are uttered in a spirit of selfishness. Jesus would not ask god for anything for Himself. He would not use His power to make the stones into bread when He was hungry. So we must remember to ask only for things that God would be willing for us to have. We may say, ‘I would like this, dear Father, if Thou are willing for me to have it, and it is according to thy will for me.’

”I think it would be a good idea for you to learn what Jesus did say about asking for things. Then you can remember.

”‘If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you.’ “{ John 15:7}

”What does it mean to abide in Him, Mother?”

”It means to be a part of His Church, dear—to live for Him and to have His words in our heart. If we have that we will never want anything that God would not be willing to let us have.” Stooping to kiss her girlie, Mother felt two soft arms steal round her neck and a soft voice said, ”I would like to talk to Jesus, Mother, and to our Father in Heaven but I just can’t seem to get the right words.”

”You can talk to God as you would to Daddy, dear. You can say something like this, ‘Dear Father up in Heaven, I do love Thee with all my heart.’ You know our Father wants our love and His first commandment was, ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God.’ Then you could say, ‘I want Thy kingdom to come quickly So that everyone will know and love Thee, as I do.’ That would be the same as saying, ‘Our Father in Heaven hallowed be Thy name, Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done as in Heaven So on earth,’ but it would make you feel much closer to God. Then you could say, ‘I thank Thee, dear Father, for all my nice clothes and my warm, cozy home and for seeing I have lots to eat, when many little children are cold and hungry. Please take care of me and provide for me.’ That is a simple way of saying, ‘Give us this day our daily bread.’ Then you could say, ‘Please forgive me all the little things I have done wrong today. I have forgiven everyone who has troubled me.’ Then the last part, ‘And dear Father, please help me to do what is right and if Satan tries to make me do naughty thing, help me to remember and do the thing which will please Thee.’

”That is just an idea, but if you get used to talking to God like that, you will find Him nearer and dearer each day, and you will be able to talk to Him at all times, as Jesus did. He wants your love, dear Girlie, and He will be very close to you always, if you just try to get close to Him.

Think of Him always as a loving Father. Now, goodnight, dear, and may the Father bless and keep my darling always.”

RESURRECTION

The sun shines down upon a little band,
Before an open tomb. Wondering they stand,
While ONE speaks in His great authority
And calls to him who joined the great majority.
Asleep within the tomb has Lazarus lain
For four long days. Must Jesus call in vain?
Hark! From the tomb there comes a stirring sound.
The awe- struck watchers quickly gather round.
A white form, stumbling, wrapped from head to feet
In linen grave clothes, startled watchers greet.
”Loose him! Clothe him in life’s habiliments”
’Tis Jesus speaks. ”Cut the entangling garments!”
And Lazarus, with heavy lidded eyes
Drowsy from sleep, looks round him in surprise.
They loose the grave clothes from his living form,
Rejoicing in his old, familiar charm.
A mantle, loaned by some one standing near,
Conceals his stalwart form, yet none appear
Eager to be the first to greet the dead
Or heap congratulations on his head.
There is a hush of simple wonderment,
Amazement in the hearts by sorrow rent.
That Lazarus had died there is no doubt

How comes he then to be up and about?

”Marvel not at this deed which I’ve done,”

We hear the Saviour say. ”The time will come

When all who sleep within the tomb shall wake

And come again their place on earth to take.

For at the voice of Him whom God has sent

The bands of death shall from the earth be rent.

The just and unjust all shall come again

When in His glory Christ o’er earth shall reign.

”The Lost Coin.”

CHAPTER 17—RAISING THE DEAD

Another evening, and another request for a story. This time Mother chose that most wonderful story of all—the raising of Lazarus. This is how the story came to be told.

”Mother, Jennie was asking me about the way Jesus will raise those who are dead. You know their friend, Annie, has just died and they all feel So very sorry. I was trying to explain that she is just asleep. Of course they thought that she had gone to heaven.”

”Yes, dear.” Mother replied. ”I knew that was the way they would try to find comfort. Although they know that Annie was not a special child of God, they know that she never did anything wicked enough to be punished by being made to suffer So terribly as they believe people do who go to hell. Annie was a nice girl even if she never gave herself to God. You see, when you think that people cannot die and that they just go on living forever, you must find some place for them to live. Since the Bible plainly shows that only the good go to Heaven, there must be some place for the wicked to go, and they think there are just two places. We know that Annie, like all who are not of God’s True Church, is just asleep and must stay asleep till Jesus calls her, and then live in His Kingdom on earth.”

”Jennie said you told her that Annie was better asleep So that she would not feel the pain of her sickness,”Linnet said.

”Yes, darling. We should always try t give a little comfort to those who mourn over the death of friends,”Mother answered.

”How does God wake people who are dead? You see Annie was—I cannot remember the word but Jennie said it meant that she was burned up. Why do they sometimes burn people instead of burying them?”
Linnet was puzzled.

”Some people have a horror of being buried lest they are not really dead, dear. And then some people hate the thought of lying in the cold ground. It really does not matter what is done to our bodies after we die, Linnet. They will turn into dust, just as god said they would. ‘Dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return.’ Fire just hurries up the change.”

”But how can God wake us up if our bodies have turned into dust?”
Linnet asked.

”That is a question that has puzzled many people. Paul says, ‘Thou sowest not the body that is to be,’ meaning that God will make a new body for us. God made Adam of the dust and it is just as easy to make a hundred bodies as one. God just planned what he wanted Adam to look like, and the way his body would work and then caused the atoms to come together in the shape He wished. God has powers far above ours So He can make ‘things that do appear, from things that are not seen,’

causing the atoms to come together in any shape He pleases. Our great scientists have discovered that nothing is really solid, but everything is made of tiny particles called atoms and electrons held together by some force they cannot understand. God alone can make these atoms take the shape He wishes.”

”Jesus can too, can He not, Mother?”

”When I said god that time, dearest, I really meant the power of god and he can give that power to anyone He wishes. Long ago angels did form bodies to use when they wanted to give a message from God to men. They could not be seen as spirit beings, So they made bodies that men could see and used them till they had given God’s message and then they dissolved them again. They could, by the power God gave them, make a body like yours or mine. It was by using this power for sinful purposes that some of the angels led men into such wickedness that God had to destroy them all with the flood. Then God took the power away from those angels, and they never could show themselves to men again.

”Now, when god wants to wake up anyone who has been dead for many years, He will just remember what they were like and then make the atoms take that shape again. Now suppose I wanted to keep your voice So that I could hear it whenever I wished. I could get a blank record for the phonograph, and a recording instrument, and have you sing or speak, and the phonograph would mark down on the record every note of your voice. Then, when I wanted to hear you speak, I would just put that record on the phonograph and I could hear every word you had said. Years ago before there were any radios, people used to go to studios and have records made of their voices to send to their friends. Today we often hear records of the voices of people who have been dead for many years, played over the radio, and you cannot tell that it is not a living person singing till the radio announcer says so.

”Now if a man can keep the record of a person’s voice for years, God can keep a record of even their thoughts, and So He will simply make a new body exactly like the old one but without its imperfections, and transfer to the new brain every thought of the old mind that is worth keeping, and you will have the same person only well and strong. If a person had a hand off, the new body would have that hand. Every person who has lived has been recorded in God’s memory.

”We have a story in the Bible that shows how easily God can waken those who are dead. You remember that Jesus had friends living near Jerusalem. Among these friends was a little family living in the village of Bethany that was just a few miles away from the city. There were two sisters, and their brother. If they had parents living we are not told of them. All three loved Jesus and he loved them, but He was especially fond of the boy who was called Lazarus. Some think that he was the ‘rich young ruler’ who once came to Jesus to ask how he could get to Heaven, and Jesus said, ‘Go sell all thou hast and give to the poor, and he went away very sad, for he had great possessions.’ They think it was the

same one, because the Bible says, 'Jesus looking at him loved him.' We do not know for I do not doubt Jesus loved many of the people He met.

"Lazarus, was pretty well off as things were counted in those days. He and his sisters had a large home and could afford to keep servants to help them with the work and could give big feasts for their friends. Now, after the things Jesus did in Jerusalem (you remember He went out into the country because the Jews wanted to kill Him) He did not go back to the city but went some distance away. While He was gone Lazarus took very ill. Mary and Martha were very much worried about him. Martha was a very fine woman and did a lot of work around the house. She liked to have everything just So and there was always lots of work for her to do. Mary was a quiet girl and liked best to sit at the Master's feet and listen to Him.

"Once when Jesus was visiting them, Martha went to Him and complained about Mary. She said, 'Master, please speak to my sister and tell her she ought to do more work around the house. Do you not see how she leaves me to attend to everything?' Now Jesus had seen many things. He had seen that Martha did a great deal of unnecessary work; things the servants could have attended to just as well. He saw how Mary would just drop everything and come to study God's Word; that was the one thing that mattered to Mary. Martha loved God's Word, too, but she was a very fussy and particular person. She wanted Jesus to find everything spotless when He came to their house. Then she always wanted to have the very best cooking. Jesus knew that Mary was not idle or lazy. She was just more interested in learning about God than she was in having everything perfect. So Jesus said, 'Martha, you are very fussy and particular—always troubled about little things. It is not necessary to cook So many things, one dish is enough for any meal. Mary has chosen the better things. She wishes first to learn about God So that she can serve Him. She has chosen the things that are really important and that must not be taken from her.'

"Now Jesus was far away and Lazarus was very ill. How the sisters wished that He were near them. They knew He could make their brother better. They could have sent for Jesus right away, as soon as Lazarus began to get ill, but they knew that the rulers wanted to kill the Master and they were afraid that if He came to their home, His enemies might catch Him and try to harm Him. So they would not send at once. After awhile Lazarus began to get much worse and they were afraid he would not get better. Then they sent a messenger to Jesus. They did not know just where He was but the messenger was to look for Him till he found Him and simply give Him this message—'Master, the one you love is ill.' They knew Jesus' great power and they hoped He would get the message in time and just speak the word and then they were sure everything would be all right.

"Jesus knew that Lazarus was sick and He knew what the result of it would be. He said to the disciples, 'Our friend Lazarus is ill, but this sickness is not unto death.'" Then Jesus stayed out in the country for two

days longer. The messenger came to Him with the message but still He did not go. He went on teaching the people and healing their sick.

”A man came to Him and asked Him, ‘Master what must I do to earn this eternal life you talk about? What is the most important thing?’

”Jesus said, ‘You know the law. What do you think? You know that you must keep the commandments. Which would you say was the greatest and most important?’

”The man who was a lawyer or student of the Law, answered, ‘Our most important law is ‘Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy strength, and thy neighbor as much as thyself.’

”Jesus said, ‘that is a good answer. On these two laws hang all the law and the prophets. If you do that you will earn eternal life.

”Now the lawyer knew he could not do that, So he said, ‘But Lord, who is my neighbor?’ Then Jesus told a little story. He said, ‘Once there was a man traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho.’ (Now that road is a rough and dangerous one and there are robbers in the hills who often attack travelers.) So Jesus said, ‘This poor man was attacked by robbers and they took all his money and even his clothes and left him lying beside the road, nearly dead. After awhile a priest came by. He saw the poor man lying there unconscious and he did not wish to be troubled So he went around another way and pretended he had not seen him. After awhile a Levite came along and he also turned aside and went on without helping the poor man. After awhile a Samaritan came by. He was a good-hearted and kind man and he stopped his donkey and examined the wounded man. He saw he was badly hurt but not dead. He saw, too, that he was So cold that he would soon die unless someone helped him; So to warm him, he took his own bag and gave him a drink of some wine he was carrying. Then he bound up his hurts, and put him on his own donkey, wrapping his own cloak around him to keep him warm. He took the man to the nearest hotel and paid the keeper to feed and care for him till he was well. Now who do you think was the neighbor of the man who was hurt?’

”The Lawyer answered, ‘I think it would be the man who was kind and helped him.’ Jesus said, ‘Well, you go and do things like that.’

”When two days had passed after Jesus got the message from Lazarus’ sisters, He said to His disciples, ‘Let us go into Judea again.’

”‘But Master, the last time you were there the Jews tried to kill you,’ the disciples said.

”‘There are twelve hours of daylight,’ Jesus answered. ‘If a man travels by day he is safe but if he walks in the dark he is apt to stumble.’ Then He said, ‘Our friend Lazarus is sleeping.’

”The disciples did not understand. They thought that he meant that Lazarus had recovered and was resting. But Jesus said plainly, ‘Lazarus is dead but I am going to wake him out of his sleep. I am glad for your sakes that I was not with him when he died, for this will help you to believe. Let us go to him.’

”Then Thomas said, ‘Let us all go with Jesus, even if we all die with Him.’

”So together they started for the little town of Bethany. Mary and Martha must have wondered that Jesus sent no message. Perhaps they thought that their messenger was too late. They had prepared Lazarus’ body for the grave, wrapping it in linen clothes with spices to try and keep the body as long as possible. It is very hot in Palestine and dead bodies decay very quickly. They laid Lazarus in their own tomb—a cave cut in a hillside—and put a big stone at the door.

”Their friends came from all around to mourn with them, as was the custom in Palestine. They had many people to feed and lots of work to do.

”Four days after Lazarus died a messenger came to Martha and whispered to her that Jesus was coming. Martha slipped out and went to meet the Master. The mourners were used to Martha being called to attend to affairs around the house So they thought nothing of it. They stayed with Mary who was weeping for her brother. Martha hurried to where Jesus was waiting with His friends. Jesus did not wish to take unnecessary chances and knew well that it was possible that some of His bitterest enemies might be at Martha’s house. He knew that God was well able to protect Him and would do so, till the right time came and His work was finished, but He knew also that God does not wish His children to run risks when it is not needed. Jesus knew that Martha would let Him know if His enemies were waiting for Him there. When Martha reached Jesus she cried, ‘Oh, Master, if you had only been here Lazarus would not have died!’ She did not get angry and scold Jesus for not coming when he got her message. She knew he would have come if it had been wise and right. She added softly, ‘I know that, even now whatever you ask of God He will do it for you.’ ”Jesus smiled down at her in tender affection, as he said, ‘Your brother will rise again, Martha.’

”Then Martha said something that shows she fully understood the great truth about all who are dead, rising in the Kingdom age. She said, ‘Yes, Master, I know he will rise, in the time of resurrection, at the last day when your Kingdom has come.’

”Then Jesus said, ‘Martha, I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, even though he has died, shall live again. Whoever lives and believes in me, when my Kingdom has come, shall never die. Do you believe this Martha?’

”And Martha said simply, ‘Yes, Lord. I believe you are the Son of God

whom we have been told by our prophets would come into the world.'

"Jesus must have asked for Mary, for Martha went at once back to her home and went straight to where Mary was sitting. Her eyes were bright with a new hope and happiness. She stooped and whispered to Mary, 'Mary, the Master has come and is asking for you.'

"Mary rose at once and went with Martha. The mourners and friends, seeing the girls both leaving in a hurry, thought that they were going to the cave where Lazarus was buried to mourn there for him. So they followed. Jesus was still waiting with His disciples where Martha had seen Him. A crowd had gathered around Him, for the word that he was there had spread quickly. Mary ran to Jesus' side and knelt at His feet. She could hardly speak for weeping and she sobbed out, 'Oh, master, if you had only been here he would not have died.' Jesus was touched by her grief and His own eyes filled with tears. He saw the people all mourning and felt the weight of the world's great sorrow. He must have realized at the time how everything depended on Him.

"He could stop death only by dying Himself. For thousands of years people had been dying and every death had brought pain and sorrow to other people. He knew that death must go on until the time came when he should have paid Adam's debt, and even then it must continue till the True Church of His followers had been chosen and tested and had also given their lives for His sake. How great must Jesus' responsibility have seemed at that time.

"Turning to Mary he said softly, and I am sure he lifted her gently to her feet as he said it, 'Where have ye laid him?' Martha said, 'Come and see, Lord.' And together they went to the tomb in the hillside, Martha helping Mary, who somehow felt a new peace and hope in her heart. It was a comfort just to know the Master was there.

"The sorrow of those around had made Jesus sad too, and the thought of all the death and sorrow of the world, for which he could as yet do nothing, filled his mind, and with them, 'Jesus wept.' Some of the Jews said, 'Behold how He loved Lazarus.' But others said, 'Could not this man who has done such great deeds and claims Divine power have kept Lazarus alive?'

"Soon they reached the place of the grave, and there was a big stone rolled up to close the door. Jesus said, 'Take the stone away.' Martha, who thought of everything, said, 'But, Lord, He has been dead for four days and the body will have begun to decay.'

"Jesus smiled through His tears. He loved dear, kind, Martha, with her practical nature. He answered gently, reproachfully, 'Martha, did I not tell you that if you would only believe, you should see the glory of God?' Then Martha gave orders for the men to roll the stone away from the mouth of the cave.

”It was all dark inside and they could not see, but Jesus stepped to the door of the tomb, and, lifting His eyes to Heaven He spoke to God So simply, just saying, ‘Father, I thank Thee because Thou hast heard my prayer. I know Thou hearest me always when I speak to Thee and dost never fail to answer, but I wish these people to realize that I have truly come from Thee.’

”Then He called in a loud voice, ‘Lazarus! Wake up and come out of there.’ The people heard a sound in the tomb and were frightened when they saw a figure stumbling towards the door. Lazarus must have looked much as people think a ghost looks. I told you how, in the East, they wrap a dead person with linen strips. They cover the body with spices and tie linen over the head, then they wrap the body from the neck to the toes, wrapping the legs separately round and round, like a person who had been badly hurt and is all bandaged up. This is to keep the body from decaying, as long as possible. No one could live long, even if they were alive when they were wrapped up, for they could not breathe and the cave was dark and cold. Their body was not put in a coffin as we do but laid on a stone shelf. Now you can imagine how Lazarus looked as he stumbled towards the cave door. He could not see. He had heard that voice breaking through the silence of death and calling him back to life.

”The people were So they did not know what to do but Jesus said to them, ‘Cut the cloths and loose him. Let him go.’ Someone took a knife and cut the strips of linen, first uncovering his head So that he could see and get some air. I imagine that the very first thing Lazarus said was, ‘Where am I? What have you tied me up like this for?’ You see, when a person dies it is just like going into a sound sleep when you do not even dream. Lazarus would not be able to remember anything, after he had been asleep in his bed at home. Someone would lend him a cloak; he was not sick now but well and strong and able to walk to his home.

”Now, most people believe that when folks die they go to Heaven or Hell. If this had been true, (we know that Lazarus must have been a good man for Jesus loved him), he would then have been in Heaven. Now, if you called a person back from Heaven He would not like it. He would say, ‘I was happy there. Why did you not leave me alone?’ For those who say good people go to Heaven always say what a wonderful and beautiful place Heaven is. Jesus said people do not go to Heaven, for He said, ‘No man has ascended up into Heaven.’ Jesus knew that people who died were in a deep sleep So He said, ‘Our friend Lazarus sleepeth.’ Then So that they would understand, and not think that Lazarus was in some kind of a trance, He added, ‘Lazarus is dead, I go to waken him from this sleep.’ So we have the assurance of Jesus, that death is really a deep sleep.”

”I guess Mary and Martha were pretty happy, Mother. Everyone must have believed that Jesus was really God’s Son then,” Linnet said.

”Many of those who saw what Jesus did, believed, but His enemies heard

about it, for the people were all talking of this most wonderful of all deeds. The Scribes and Pharisees hated Jesus more than ever. They saw that all the people were becoming convinced that Jesus was the Messiah and they knew that Jesus did not approve of their actions. If He ever got to be king He would show them up and the people would turn from them. All their power would be gone. They called a meeting and some of them said, 'This thing must be stopped at once. We have got to get rid of this Jesus or there will be trouble. We must find some way to have Him killed.' Then they offered a big reward to anyone who would tell them where they could catch Jesus when there was no one near to protect Him.

"Jesus knew that the time had not yet come for Him to give His life for the people So He again slipped away and went where they could not find Him.

"Now, dear, you are tired and you must get off to bed. Remember this, dear, that death is not a thing to be afraid of. It is a deep, sweet sleep, for Jesus has paid the debt of Adam and when the world is all straightened up and sickness and pain are finished, Jesus will wake us up again and the years we have slept will seem just a moment.

"Jesus has said, 'Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming when all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and shall come forth.' It will not make any difference if they were bad or good, if they believed in God or not, nor will it matter how they died. If they were shot or burned or drowned they must all come when Jesus calls, but they will not all come at once for 'The last shall be first and the first shall be last.' After the trouble is all over and the people who have lived through it have learned to love and obey God, those who were the last to die will be wakened, a few at a time, as the people want them back. Then more and more will be wakened till everyone who has died has come back. Of course those who have given their lives to God and have obeyed Him and served Him in this life and have been tested and tried will be wakened as Jesus was—great spirit beings, who will not be seen by the people of the earth. They will be with Jesus in Heaven. They are the only ones to whom God has promised spirit life."

"Mother, if everyone who has died is to be wakened, won't the bad people still be bad and cause trouble?"

"No, my darling, for Satan and the evil angels who deceived them will be bound and unable to lead them into mischief. Liquor, which has caused a great deal of the evil will be done away with and Jesus and His True Church will be the great spirit rulers of the new world. They will be watching everyone and will not let anyone do anything wrong. The Bible says they 'will rule the nations with a rod of iron.' Many of our worst criminals are really people with sick brains. They will all be wakened with healthy minds and will be ashamed of their sins. Then on one will steal, for everybody will be able to get all he desires and there will be no poor people. God's Word says, 'When the judgments of God are abroad in the earth the inhabitants thereof will learn righteousness.'

And again, 'They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain' saith the Lord.

There will be no sin, or trouble or sickness then. Those who have done evil in this life will be wakened and will be taught what is good and right. They will all learn of God and know Him as we do. If any of them will not obey the laws, and try to hurt others, they will find it is impossible, after they have been given every chance to advance, to go on and live. They will die and will never wake up again. For the Bible says, 'It shall come to pass that whoever WILL NOT obey that Prophet (The King Jesus and His Church) will be cut off from the land.'

"Men may deny Thee and defy thy power through changing years,

Fighting and struggling in Thy hand till death shall end their tears.

Yet—when Thy plan has run its course and evil is no more—

In Thy great love again to life Thou wilt each one restore.

They'll know Thee then, unchanging, grand, of tender pitying love,

And lips that cursed shall sound thy praise to Heaven's gates above.

Then men, redeemed and risen shall dwell in righteousness

And Christ shall reign above them to heal and help and bless."

"Now, let us repeat that verse from the Bible again and then you must run off to bed. 'When the judgments of God are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants thereof will learn righteousness.' Now, then, dearest, we have talked for long enough. You must get to bed and have a good rest. "Here is another verse now for this time, 'Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming when all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and come forth.' It is found in John 5:28."

THE EVERLASTING ARMS

I've a safe and sacred refuge
In the midst of all life's care.
I've a helper, tried and precious,
Who will all my sorrow share.
I've a comforter who dries my tears
And soothes my fears and gives to me
A blessed, sweet relief.
I know no fear or trouble
In the whirl of life's alarms,
For I am safely carried
In the Everlasting Arms.
God's love is like a canopy
Above my weary head.
His kindly hand replenishes
My store of daily bread.
His mercy forms a barrier
To every stormy blast,
And wipes away the memory
Of the waters that are past.
Here cradled in His tender love
I'm safe from all alarms.
No harm can pass the portals
Of the Everlasting Arms.
What tho' my friends forsake me
And loved ones wound me sore.

He has prepared a mansion
On the Eternal shore.
There flowers are ever blooming
And I can serve Him still
Where earthborn clouds cannot conceal
The Heavenly Father's will.
When death shall write the FINIS
T life's page I'll fear no harm
For I shall still be carried in
The Everlasting Arms.
This weary, wornout, garment
I shall lay aside at last.
The pain and weakness and the grief
Of life will all be past.
Clothed in my house from Heaven
I shall see my Saviour's face
And know at last the fullness
Of His unchanging grace.
There'll be no sorrow or regrets,
No fears and no alarms
When I'm carried through the portals
In the Everlasting Arms.
From "Stray Petals."

Jesus tonight.”

”Any story in particular, dear? Mother asked.

”No, Mother. You told me last night about how Jesus raised Lazarus. Where did He go then?”

”He stayed around the River Jordan, in the part of the country where John had taught. He knew it was coming near time when He must complete His work and go to His Heavenly Father. He did not go back to Jerusalem for some time, nor back to Galilee, for that was where His enemies would be most likely to look for Him.

”Some of the Pharisees who were more kindly toward Him came to Him and told Him that Herod would like to kill Him and Jesus answered them, ‘You tell that fox that I will continue to cure people today and tomorrow and the third day I shall be made perfect, but I must walk today and tomorrow for it would never do for a prophet to perish outside of Jerusalem.’ Then He added, ‘Oh, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest all who are sent to you, how often would I have gathered your children together as a hen doth gather her chickens under her wings, but you would not have it. Behold your house is left to you desolate. Truly I tell you this, that you will not see me again till you shall shout, ‘Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.’

”About that time there came to Him a poor woman who was so crippled with rheumatism that she was bent over nearly double and had not been able to straighten up for eighteen years. It was a Sabbath day when she came and Jesus was teaching the people. He felt so sorry for her and called her to Him. When she reached His side Jesus touched her. At once she was cured and was able to straighten up. The ruler of the synagogue where Jesus was teaching was horrified, and said, ‘There are six days in the week when sick people can come to be cured. You should not come on the Sabbath day.’

”Jesus was angry with the man’s injustice and He said, ‘You hypocrite, do you not, every one of you, let your ox or your ass go loose on Sunday, and take him out for a drink of water? Should not this poor woman then, who has been bound for eighteen years, be set free on the Sabbath day? Or do you think a woman is of less value than an animal?’ The ruler was ashamed, and the people were glad.”

”What is a hypocrite, Mother?” Linnet asked.

”It is a person who pretends to be very good, but is really not a bit better than other people. Jesus could read men’s hearts and He knew when they were filled with mean and wicked thoughts, hidden under a kindly smile. Jesus had no use for people who pretended to be what they were not. A real sinner who admitted his own guilt, Jesus could reach and forgive, but those who pretended to be good and tried to tell others how to live, while they themselves were evil, could not be helped by anyone.

”One of the people asked Jesus, ‘Are there then, few that will be saved?’ He thought that if Jesus found fault with those who claimed to be good, there must be very few who came up to His standards. Jesus replied, ‘Try hard to enter the narrow gate, for I tell you that many will try to get in and will not be able, for the way is steep and the gate is narrow, and few can find it.’ Once before, Jesus had said it would be easier for a camel to get through the Needle’s Eye, than for a rich man to get into Heaven. The Needle’s Eye was the name of a small gate in the bit gate of the city. You see, the people lived in cities that had high walls all around them, to keep their enemies out. ‘There were gates at the end of the main streets and these were always closed at sunset and locked, So that no one could enter. In the gate, however, there was a small door and a watchman was posted there to see that no enemy got in. If a man were late reaching the city, he would have to get the watchman to let him in. Now, if he had a camel loaded with goods, the camel could not enter till they made it kneel down and took off all its load, then it must creep in and the goods it had carried must be brought in after. So Jesus meant that a rich man would have to unload all his wealth and humble himself and go through the gate on his knees as you might say.”

”Mother, will there be many people that get into Heaven?”

”Very few indeed, Linnet, just as Jesus said. Those who get into the spiritual part of the Kingdom must first accept Jesus’ offer to help them. They must see that they are sinners and that they are condemned to death with Adam, then they must realize that Jesus died to give them life on earth in His Kingdom. That is the first step. When they see that, if they are very grateful to Jesus for all He has done for them and they are drawn to god and love Him and wish to give Him something in return, they have now, something god can accept.

”You see, dear one, God cannot accept a sinner, but if Jesus forgives us for all our sins, then we are no longer sinners. Then we can give our lives to God, for we have a life to give. A dying person cannot give his life for anyone.

”If we see now, what Jesus did for us, and believe in Him, the right to life is given to us now. Then we can give it to God in return for all He has done for us. If we choose to do that, God will give us a little of His power or spirit now. This will be like a seed planted in our mind or heart and if we take care of it, this seed will grow. It is a spirit seed and we cannot see it, but Jesus said we would see its fruit in our minds. That fruit is love, joy, peace, meekness, humility, kindness, patience, and goodness. As this plant grows in our minds, it will kill out all the weeds of hatred, sadness, trouble, pride, conceit, impatience and badness. Then people will see that we have the fruit of God’s spirit growing in our hearts. If we keep on then, and learn all the lessons God wants us to learn—trying every day to be like Jesus and to please God—we will be like lights in the world. Jesus said, ‘They shall see your good works and praise your Father in Heaven.’

”Then, when we have done the work God has given us, and shown people what God’s spirit is like, He will let this old body of flesh go to sleep. We may die from sickness or be killed some way, as God sees is best, but when we die God will give the spirit mind a new spirit body, like the one He gave to Jesus. Then we will go on living in Heaven.

”This is the only way anyone can ever get into Heaven. Jesus said, ‘I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me.’ So we know that we must come to Jesus first and accept the life He bought for us and then give that life to God and live for Him.

”Now, this chance to be of God’s spiritual Kingdom, was to be given for a short time only. It has been offered during the time Jesus is in Heaven waiting till God’s time for Him to be crowned King of the earth. When He comes and sets up His Kingdom, the door to the ‘High Calling’ will be shut. So Jesus said, ‘When once the Master of the house has risen up and closed the door and the people begin to come and knock and try to get in, He will say, I do not know who you are.’

”Jesus told the people who were listening to Him, that they would someday see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets having a place in that Kingdom and themselves shut out. He said also that many would come from all over the world and gain the special place in the Kingdom.” ”What would happen to them, Mother? Would they not be wakened in the Kingdom?”

”Yes, dear, they will be wakened in the Kingdom and will then understand all about God’s plan. They will be sorry that they missed the great prize that God offered to them. If they accept Jesus and obey God’s laws then they will have life on earth, but not as rulers. There is a good show on at the theatre tonight. I may buy you a ticket to it and tell you that you can go. Then it is up to you. If you say, ‘I would rather go to bed and sleep,’ you will miss that show. Then, suppose you wish to go but you do not hurry up and get ready but play around, the show will start and the door will be closed and you cannot get in. So it is with Jesus’ Heavenly Kingdom. Soon the door will be closed and there will be some who would like to get in but they will be too late. When you miss the show that is your punishment for being too slow or too indifferent to get ready to go. So missing the Heavenly Kingdom will be the punishment for those who had a chance to be of God’s True Church and let it slip by them. They will then have to take their place upon the earth and live as human beings. The earth will be glorious and after they get over the disappointment, they may enjoy life and happiness, if they obey the rulers of the Kingdom.

”Jesus was invited to the home of one of the Pharisees that day for dinner. This Pharisee wished to see what He would do if there were a sick person at the house on the Sabbath, So he invited a man with dropsy and then watched to see if Jesus would cure him. The Pharisees were always laying traps for Jesus. Jesus read their hearts and asked them, ”Is

it lawful to heal people on the Sabbath?' They would not answer, So Jesus cured the man anyway, saying as He did so, 'There is not one of you who would not pull his ox out of a pit if he fell into it on the Sabbath.' They knew it was true and could not answer.

"Now Jesus noticed that the guests at the dinner were all trying to get the best seats. They all wanted to sit near the Pharisee, So that everyone present would think they were special friends. Jesus said to them, 'When you are invited to a feast you should not try to take the best seat, for the Master of the feast may have some better friend and have to ask you to move. It is far better to take the lowest seat, and then if the Master is your friend and sees you in such a lowly place he will say, come up here near to me, my friend. Whoever tries to make himself important is apt to be set back, while the one who is humble will be given the best place. When you do give a big dinner though, you would do better not to invite your friends and relatives. They will think they must give a dinner for you in return and that is all the reward you will ever get. Instead, when you give a feast invite the poor and needy, then God will give you a reward in the Kingdom for your kindness.'

"Jesus then told the people a story. He said a certain man gave a feast and invited many of his friends to it. The night of the feast came and everything was ready. No one arrived, So the man who had prepared the feast sent his servants to tell the guests that everything was ready. They all made excuses. One said he wanted to plow his field, another said that he had just got married and did not wish to leave his wife, and So on. The ruler was annoyed. He sent his servants out into the city and told them to gather up all the poor and hungry and sick, and bring them to the feast. When the guests arrived they were ragged and blind and poor, So the ruler gave to each one a white robe to put on over his rags.

"At last there were guests enough to fill all the places and the ruler went down to see them. He saw there a man who had no white robe on. The ruler went to him and asked, 'Friend, how did you come in without the white robe?' The man had no answer, for he had been given a robe and had taken it off. The ruler said to his servants, 'Take this ungrateful man and bind him and cast him out into the street from whence he came.' So they threw this man out and there was great weeping and wailing."

"That was a funny story, Mother? What did it mean?" Linnet asked.

"Jesus has a lesson to teach us by that story, dear," Mother answered.

"The one who gave the feast was God and the feast was a feast of truth. The ones who were first invited were the Jews, but the rulers of that nation would not have the truth God offered them. They were too busy with their own affairs. Jesus wanted them to understand that, because they would not hear the truth of God's Kingdom, God would reject them and send His truth to the Gentile nations. These were considered as being very poor because they had not God's Law or favor. They were blind to God's Word and could not hear His message or walk in His

ways. They would accept the truth and gladly come to the feast God had provided. Because they were not God's children the white robe was to be given. Do you remember what the white robe is, dear?"

"Yes, Mother. It is Jesus' goodness that covers our sins."

"That is right, dear, God gave us that robe when He offered to forgive all the sins of those who accepted Jesus. One man took his robe off and refused to wear it. He pictured those who come to Jesus and accept Him and then get the idea that they are pretty good themselves and do not need Jesus to cover them. Jesus meant that all who try to please God without accepting Jesus and seeing how much they need Him, will be bound with wrong teachings and thrown back into the world again. They will lose their chance to be part of God's Heavenly Kingdom and will be counted a part of the world of sinners. They will be sorry for what they have missed but the truth that they have had will be taken from them and soon they will be in the darkness of those who never knew about Jesus. We must never think we are good ourselves, but always realize that we can only come to God if Jesus covers us.

"Jesus said we must sit down and count the cost of being His disciples. He said we must put Him first. He must be more important than anything else. He said the way was hard and people would hate us as they hated Him. If we were anxious for the love and honor of men we must not try to follow Him, for those who follow Jesus never have an easy path. The reward is great and well worthwhile. We would be better never to start in that pathway than to start and then fail. He said we should lay up our treasure in Heaven, not on earth, and work for God's favor and not man's.

"Jesus told other stories also but we must leave those for another time now, dearest, for the clock says it is time for my girlie to go to bed if she is to be up bright and early for school in the morning."

It was a thoughtful little girl who slipped into Mother's arms for her goodnight kiss.

"Mother, how long will it be before I can give my life to Jesus?" She asked.

"There is no age limit, dearest, but you must count the cost well first. In the meantime try and live as Jesus would have you live. Try each day to please Him more and more. Then when you have really decided to give up the pleasures of earth for Him, we will talk about it again. Here is a verse for you to learn tonight.

"'He that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.' Jesus said that, dear. Now off to bed with you and may the Father shelter and keep you, my darling."

THE LOST COIN

Look closely, dear one, at the coins you wear
For all who in His glory wish to share
Must have their chain complete. Its grand design
Must show each feature of the Plan Divine.
So let us scrub the grime of years away.
Let the light send its penetrating ray
Into each corner of our dwelling place
That we may see our Bridegroom face to face.
Let us examine every silver coin
And bring to mind again the grand design.
Look close and see the truths on them presented
Freed from the blinding creeds by men invented.
Then—with His perfect Plan bound on our brow
Our Bridegroom's sweet approval we shall know.
His righteousness, the Bridal robe, we'll wear
And in His Heavenly glory we shall share.
Oh, let us welcome Him, the King of kings,
Returned to reign with healing in His wings.
From "The Lost Coin"

CHAPTER 19—THE LOST COIN AND OTHER PARABLES

”You told me you would tell me other stories that Jesus told to His disciples, Mother. Will you tell me one tonight?” Linnet asked the night following the last story.

”Yes, dear. Daddy is busy writing letters and we have the room to ourselves, for the other children are going out. You see, dear, being the only little person in the family gives you more of Mother’s time than you would be able to have if there were other wee folks.

”Now for our story. Jesus knew that it was getting near spring, and the end of His work. He had spent the winter traveling through the towns and villages along the Jordan and now He was starting back toward the city, for He knew that when the Passover season came around again, He must return to His Home in Heaven, and He had already said, ‘No prophet could perish outside Jerusalem.’ It was while traveling slowly through the country lanes, and also in the synagogues where he taught, that Jesus told these stories.

”The first one was the story of the lost coin. We are given a few words only of that story and we have to know the customs of the country where Jesus lived, before we can get a clear understanding of it. Of the story we have only this. Jesus said, ‘What woman, having ten coins and losing one does not at once light a candle and sweep the house and search diligently till she finds it. When she has found it she calls her friends and says, ‘Rejoice with me for I have found the piece which I lost.’ To most readers the meaning of this parable is not clear. All who heard it understood. You see, in that country, a string of ten coins was given by the parents of the bridegroom to the intended bride when the marriage was arranged. This chain must be worn on the bride’s head, over her veil, when she went to her bridegroom’s home for the marriage. It was like an engagement ring and a wedding ring combined. All brides wore them on their foreheads. Now if a coin was lost it was proof of carelessness on the bride’s part. She could not easily replace it for the design was unusual. It would be a bad sign to have to go to her husband with one of the coins missing, So she would be very troubled. The chain must have been very carelessly kept for her to break it, for she would not need it till the call came to go to her husband’s home. What woman would not sweep and clean house till she found it. Then she would be So glad she would tell all her friends about it.”

”Jesus’ stories all had a meaning, Mother. What did that one mean?”asked Linnet.

”God was the Father who gave ten truths to the Church when He called her to be His Son’s Bride. These ten truths must be kept till Jesus came to claim His Church and He would know her by them.

”The truths were—First, the true teaching of Creation—that God made Adam perfect and he fell through his sin. This truth, the Church kept but the evolution teaching has been like dirt hiding the truth though the truth was not lost, just hidden under rubbish.

”The second truth would be the doctrine of God’s justice—that God condemned Adam to death for his sin. That truth has been hidden with the dust of the teaching that man cannot die, but his soul must live forever either in Heaven or in Hell.

”The third, was the doctrine of teaching that Jesus came to pay Adam’s debt and set him free. This was also hidden under the teaching of Hell. People taught that all who went to church and supported any form of religion would go to Heaven when they died. So they lost sight of Jesus’ Ransom, and were told that ‘Jesus came to show us how to live and died to show us how to die.’

”Then came the fourth coin of truth—Justification. This was the teaching that our sins could be forgiven by believing in Jesus, and that God would count us pure and invite us to His Kingdom only if we were covered by Christ.

”Then there was the fifth coin—the teaching that we can accept life from Jesus and consecrate it to God’s service. This was called Sanctification, or being set aside for Jesus.

”And the sixth, would be the teaching of the resurrection—that all men must receive life by a resurrection from the dead. Those who had given themselves to God will be raised as spirit beings in Heaven, and the rest of the people will be raised on earth, to learn of God and see if they would serve Him when Satan was not there to tempt them.

”The seventh coin was the truth that God Himself would choose or elect those whom He wished to be of the True Church. This is called Election.

”Then the eighth, was the teaching that (in the New Kingdom, when it is set up) ‘whoever will, may come’ to Jesus and gain everlasting life as a perfect being on earth.

”I wonder if you can tell me what the ninth coin was, Linnet?”

”I was just thinking, Mother. Are not the ten coins and the ten camels the same?”

”That is true, dear. Both were a picture of the same truths. The coin that was lost was the teaching that Jesus will come and set up His Kingdom on the earth and will restore everything Adam lost. He will make the earth like the Garden of Eden, and will give men perfect life, if they will serve Him.

”The tenth coin was like the dark pool of water in the puzzle. Do you

remember it?"

"Yes, Mother. It showed that whoever would not obey Jesus' laws in the New Kingdom, would die and never be wakened again."

"That is right, Linnet. Jesus was giving another picture of the same old truth. But He was also showing that the Church would be careless of the ten silver coins and would lose one completely. All the other truths have been taught more or less down through the years, but the truth of the coming Kingdom was entirely lost. Men forgot completely that there was to be a Kingdom on earth. When Jesus returned for His true Church, she was to miss this coin and search for it and then clean and polish up the other coins. Even as the bridegroom knew his true bride by the coins, So Jesus would know His True Church by the fact that she would have all the ten truths.

"We have them all, have we not, Mother?"

"Thank God we have found them all, dearest, and have them bright and shining, and, like the woman Jesus spoke of, we are telling our friends and rejoicing in the light of Truth.

"Jesus said that the Kingdom was like a man who had two sons, and the younger son came to him and said, 'Father, give me my share of your wealth now. I do not wish to wait for my inheritance.' So the father divided his goods between his boys. The younger son went away and spent all his money in pleasure; soon it was all gone and he was forced to feed pigs to get a living. Then he began to think about his fine home and to be sorry for his foolishness. One day when he was hungry, the poor boy thought, if my father knew, he might give me work as a servant. Then I would have food and clothes and a place to sleep.'

"So he started for home. It was a long journey. When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him and ran to meet him and welcomed him and gave him food and clothes and made a great feast in his honor and invited all his old friends, saying, 'This, my son was dead and is alive again.' Then the older brother was angry to see his brother get such a welcome. He would not go to the feast but sulked and complained. He said, 'You never made a feast for me.' But the father said, 'All I have is yours, but your brother was lost and is found again.'"

"I like that story, Mother. What did it mean?"

"God was the Father. The two sons pictured the two classes of people among the Jews and also among the Christians today. The oldest son pictured the Scribes and Pharisees, (and the religious leaders of today) who had all God's truth. The common people had not this place of honor. They had gone into the world to serve Satan and had spent or lost what little truth they had. Now they were repentant and sorry and had begun to think about God and about the peace and comfort of having His favor. They realized that God's servants had a great blessing in the

shelter of His love, and plenty of truth and the bread of God's Word. They had come back to God as the young son in the story had come back to his father.

"God had given them a real feast of Truth and had covered them with the robe of Jesus' righteousness and invited them into the Heavenly home. The Scribes and Pharisees who thought they should have all God's favor, felt that it was not fair for Jesus to give such blessings to the poor people. They complained that Jesus even ate food with people who had once been sinners and gave gifts of healing to the poor and needy. They would not accept truth at His hand but sulked in the stable like the older son and refused to enjoy the good things God was providing.

"Jesus said that there was more rejoicing in Heaven over one sinner who repented and turned back to God, than there was over those who claimed to have never sinned. The Pharisees, like those people today who claim to have always been faithful to God, had had all God's favor and riches and had not made use of them. God said to them, as the man in the story said to the oldest son, 'You have always lived in my house and all the truths of the Bible were yours for the taking. You could have had this feast of truth at any time, but you did not use the riches I gave you. These poor people have left the Word of God and have gone out into the world and have found its pleasures empty. They are sorry for their mistake and are willing to serve me faithfully for a share of the good things that you might have used but left untouched. They are my children too and you should love them and be glad to see them enjoying the riches of my favor.

"The Jews as a nation were just as jealous and angry when they saw that the truth of God's Word was going out to the Gentile people, and then too, they refused to attend the feast of truth and acted like that oldest son.

"So also, the leaders in the earthly churches today resent the fact that God has offered the truth to those who are not members of the churches, and they will not have an share in the wonderful Truths of God's Word. They had the Bible always and never used these great truths. So God says to them today, 'You have been in my house always and these truths were there for you to use. That you left them in the storehouse and never had a feast with them is not my fault. It is right that I should welcome back those who have strayed away. The feast is here and the guests are invited. Come and share in the good things!' But the churches of today have refused to join in the feast that God has provided. They could have had all the truth of God's Word, and the robe of Christ's righteousness, and the golden ring of God's favor and rejoice to see So many people come to the feast, but they too are jealous and prefer to remain in the field of the world. The father in the story was sorry that his elder son would not share the feast; So God too, is sorry that those who claim to have served Him faithfully will not have these wonderful truths and the joy and peace they bring."

"Did Jesus tell any more stories, Mother?"

”Yes, Linnet. The finest of all His stories were told during the return journey to Jerusalem. The publicans and sinners flocked to hear Him wherever he went. Scribes and Pharisees came too, but not to gain truth from Him, but to mock and test Him and try to find some fault with Him. Jesus said to them, ‘There was a certain rich man who had a steward to look after his wealth. People came to the rich man and told him that the steward was wasting his goods, So he called the steward and asked him about it. The steward was found guilty and the master said, ‘You must give me a report of all the work you have done, for you can no longer be my steward. I will appoint another in your place.’ Then the steward began to think what was best for him to do. He thought, ‘I cannot do common work, and I cannot beg and will not steal. How am I going to live?’ So he thought of a way to make friends with those who owed his master money. He sent for those who had accounts with his master and said to one, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ The man said, ‘One hundred measures of meal.’ ‘I am closing out the accounts So we will call it fifty,’ said the false servant. So he cut down the debts of all who owed his master money. In this way he made friends of them So when he lost his Job they would give him another.”

”What is a steward, Mother?” Linnet asked.

”A steward is a person you employ to look after your business for you,” Mother explained. ”Suppose we were going away to some other place for a few years and did not wish to sell our farm. We could hire some person to take care of it for us. We might pay him in money or in farm produce and he would live here and look after everything just as if the farm was his own. When the harvest was in he would have to send in a report, telling us how much everything cost and how much he received for all the grain and other things he grew and sold. Then he would keep out his own share to pay him for the work and send us the rest. That is the way a steward is supposed to handle things. If we thought that he was not handling our property wisely we could dismiss him and hire someone else.

”In this story, God was the rich man, while the Jewish nation was the unfaithful steward who was wasting his Master’s goods. God had given His Laws to the Jewish nation and had made them His representatives in the world. They had been false to their trust and had turned from Him and made gods of idols. Jesus was (by this parable) telling them that they had been found unworthy and that God was going to take the position of steward away from them and give it to others.

”While a steward is in charge of any business, he can charge whatever he pleases for the goods. Now in the story, the steward had probably been charging too much for the goods. When he realized his position was about to be taken away from him and he would be left without a job, he decided to try and make friends of those with whom he had been dealing, So that he would perhaps get another position. He sent for them and cut down their accounts. His old master said he had showed good business

sense and had been very wise to do that. He probably knew that they could not pay all they owed anyway.”

”But what did Jesus mean, Mother?” Linnet inquired. ”How could the Jews cut down the debts, and did they really do that?”

They could cut down the debts of the people of the world by showing them that God’s law was not the narrow and harsh thing they made it seem. They had added So much to god’s law, by their foolish traditions, such as making it a sin to heal people on the Sabbath, or rub the grain in their hands to separate it So they could eat it, or to eat without washing. Jesus was showing them that if they were wise they would realize that god was going to dismiss them and give the position to others. Then they would make their laws more tolerant and would, in this way, cut down the debts of the people and make friends of them. This would be showing wisdom and then when they had lost god’s favor they might have friends. The steward really pictures the rulers, scribes and Pharisee, rather than the common people.

”The story has a meaning for people today also. God is taking the stewardship of His truth from the religious leaders of the people, and if they are wise they will cut down the penalty of hellfire for sins, and the other things they have added to God’s Word, and So make friends for themselves, among the people of the world. Jesus said that god’s children should use His truth wisely and not add to it, and that they cannot serve both God and money at the same time. They should be faithful to God always and put His truth above everything else.

”One more story Jesus told the people. The Pharisees had been making fun of His teachings and So the next story was especially for them. Jesus said, ‘There was a rich man who dressed in fine clothes and had all sorts of good things to eat. There was also a very poor man who sat outside his gate begging. He was covered with sores and the wild dogs pitied him and licked them. The beggar died and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s bosom, and the rich man died and was buried.’ Then Jesus said something that has been used ever since, to support the false teaching of hell. He said, ‘The rich man, being in hell, lifted up his eyes. He was in torment and he saw Lazarus (the beggar) afar off in Abraham’s bosom and he cried to him and said, ‘Father Abraham, please send Lazarus to dip his finger in water and cool my tongue for I am suffering terribly in this fire.’ But Abraham said, ‘Son, remember how in you lifetime you had good things and Lazarus evil things. Now he is comforted and you are tormented. Beside all this there is a great gulf between us, and those who would come to us cannot: neither can we go to you.’ The rich man said, ‘Then, please send him to my father’s house, So that he can tell them about these things lest they also come to this terrible place.’”

”What a strange story, Mother. You said that people do not go to hell and that it is not a place where people are burned up. Yet Jesus said the rich man went there.”

”Jesus said the rich man went to Gehenna, dearest, and Gehenna was the valley where the Jews burned their rubbish. The Jews had a law that forbade them ever to put any living creature into the valley, no matter how badly it might be hurt. Only dead bodies of animals might be thrown into the valley and fire was kept burning to destroy the rubbish. So that it would not attract and breed flies. Sometimes a dead body, or some rotten meat, was thrown into the valley and did not go into the fire, but the worms destroyed it. This story has often been used to show what a terrible place hell is, but when hell is mentioned in the Bible it always means waiting the time for Jesus to call them, or Gehenna, the rubbish dump.”

”But, Mother, I still cannot understand what Jesus meant? Who was the rich man? Did Jesus mean that rich men would be destroyed as rubbish?”

”No, dear, Jesus was once said to have loved a certain rich man. He loved Lazarus and he had lots of money. Like all Jesus’ stories, nothing meant what it seemed.

”The rich man pictured the Jewish nation. They were God’s chosen people and were rich in His blessing, and they had the law of God that told them what was right and what was wrong to do. This made them rich in God’s sight.

”The poor beggar who was outside the gate, pictured the Gentile nations who, before Jesus came, were cut off from God. They had no way of knowing Him for they had not the Law or the Prophets. They used to often try and gain a little knowledge of God, but the Jews despised them, as they did the Samaritans. They called them dogs, or pigs, and looked down on them, for the Jews were very proud.

”Now we have the rich man and the poor man. The poor man died—that meant he ceased to be a poor man—and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s bosom.

”Who was Abraham, Mother?”

”You mean in this picture? Who was Abraham in the other pictures God made? Do you remember, dear?”

”He always was a picture of God, was he not, Mother?”

”Yes, dearest, and in this story Abraham still pictures God. To be in God’s bosom means to be near to God’s heart and to have His love and care. So Jesus meant that the Gentiles were going to

be given God’s love and favor and the Jews were going to die as a nation. He meant that they would be cast off as rubbish and thrown into Gehenna—the rubbish dump—because they had not obeyed the Son of

God.”

”Why did Jesus say the rich man was in the fire, Mother?”

”That meant the terrible trials that were to come to the Jewish people, after God cast them out. The Gentiles had been poor but they did not suffer as the Jewish people did. When God removed His protection from them, everyone hated them. They had been So proud and haughty and had not tried to make friends with the worldly people as the wise steward did in the other story that Jesus told. Now they found everyone had turned against them. Ever since God gave His favor to the Gentiles the poor Jews have been ill- treated and they have suffered terribly. They have begged for help from Gentiles but the reason the Gentiles could not help them or give them a drink of water—”

”Water is truth, Mother, always is it not?” Linnet interrupted.

”Yes, dear. The truth would have eased their pain and suffering but there was a deep gulf or valley that they could not cross. That valley was the understanding of Jesus. They could not have the truth that has been such a blessing to us unless they could accept Jesus as their Messiah. We could not help them and they could not come to us till they realized that he was the Son of God. That was the gulf that was between the Jews and the Gentiles.”

”Why cannot the Jews accept Jesus, Mother?”

”Paul says it is because ‘Blindness in part has happened unto Israel’ till the full number from the Gentile nations have come to Christ, dearest. God gave the blessings of His favor to the Jews for eighteen hundred years and more, and then He took that favor from them and gave it to the Gentiles. During the years of favor to the Jews, God chose a number of faithful people from that nation and now while we have His favor He is choosing a number of faithful people from the Gentile races.”

”Who are Gentiles, Mother?”

”Everyone who is not a Jew is a Gentile, Linnet. We are all Gentiles and our time of favor is nearly past. As soon as the last member of the True Church has been chosen from the world, God will give His favor back t the Jews and will open their eyes to the Truth. Jesus said that the rich man—the Jewish people—pleaded for God to send them a messenger but God said, ‘If they would not listen to and believe their prophets who told of Jesus’ coming, they would not hear even if one rose from the dead. When Jesus rose from the dead the Jewish people—as a nation—could not accept Him. Some of the people did love Jesus and followed Him though, and to all these He gave a place in His True Church. They were no longer counted as Jews, however, but as the Children of God.

”Now, dearest, we must leave Jesus on the way to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover. I have told you many of the stories Jesus told to

the people on the way back to the city, and it is getting late; So we must leave the rest for another day.

”Here is a little verse that will help you to remember what God did for those Jews who could accept Jesus as their Messiah.

”‘To as many as received Him, He gave the power to become the sons of God.’ { John 1:12}

THE KING COMES IN

Hark! What is this triumphal song?
This crowd that wends its way along
The dusty road and climbs the hill
To where Jerusalem, white and still,
Lies peaceful in the Sabbath calm?
The hushed, deep peace, before a storm.
Why do the loud hosannas ring,
Proclaiming Israel's coming King?
See how with palms they strew the way
And take their mantles off to lay
Upon the ground beneath His feet,
The Christ, with gentle mein and sweet
Who rides upon a humble steed,
An untamed beast who bears his head
With a strange pride, as tho' he knew
With instinct subtle and yet true
How great the honor to his station
To bear the monarch of a nation.
And what a monarch! Kingly, meek,
A nobler form men need not seek;
A face So gentle and unlined
A brow So peaceful, lips So kind.
A princely strength, sensed more than seen,
That gleams from eyes deep and serene.
Hark how the eager voices ring

As growing throngs proclaim Him King.

”Hosanna! Hosanna!

Lift up your eyes and see

The wondrous King of Israel!

For this indeed is He.

Promised our race adown the years,

Foretold by prophets and by seers.

Now lift your voice in praise to god.

He comes to break the oppressor’s rod!

Hail Him, the mighty King of kings

Who comes with healing in His wings.

Come join with us, His praises tell!

Jesus, the King of Israel!”

But lo, within the city gates,

Disturbed, an angry group awaits,

”Who is this man who dares to make

Himself our King? In pride to take

Such a position on Himself?

We hold the power and the wealth

And it behooves us now to see

The end of such buffoonery.”

This group is swiftly swept along

Before a great rejoicing throng

Who pour out from the city street

Their coming King and Lord to greet.

With loud protests they seek to stay
The throng that sweeps them on its way.
And now before the King they stand,
Demand that he restrain the band.
"Hearest thou what these people say?
Come stop this awful blasphemy!"
The eyes serene and deep are lifted.
They penetrate the sham and—gifted
With power Divine—their purpose see
Their selfish greed and wish to be
The self- styled rulers of their race.
He speaks with simple, lordly grace.
"should these be still, the stones would cry.
Jehovah has spoken. Let us by!"
The opposition melts away.
It is the Lord's triumphal day.
But see, He pauses now and sweeps
The city with His glance and weeps,
And cries in grief amid His tears
In words that hush the glad throng's cheers.—
"Jerusalem! Jerusalem!
Who hast god's prophets killed,
And stonest all whom God sends unto thee.
How oft have I yearned over thee and willed
To take thy children neath my wings and be
Thy Lord and Master, but ye would not have it.

Lo now your city and your land I see
Must for your sins be all laid desolate.”
Again the loud hosannas ringing forth
Drown out His grief, proclaim His sovereign worth.
They escort Him to their Holy Temple where
Merchants and cheating money changers are.
With whip of cords He drives the sinners forth,
Cleansing God’s Holy place in righteous wrath.
Then to the throng He gives His messages
Of a Kingdom yet to be and then presages
A coming day of shame and pain and grief
When men should seek the hills to find relief.
The long day o’er His weary steps we see
Seeking the calm and peace of Bethany.
From”The Order of Melchisedec.”

CHAPTER 20—THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

”Mother, dearest, are you nearly finished with your work? I want to hear more about Jesus. It is several days now since you had time to tell me a story,” said Linnet one evening, some days after our last story was told. Mother’s days and evenings had been pretty well taken up. Unexpected company had arrived and Linnet had been forced to go without the usual stories. Now the company had departed and Mother’s evenings were free once more.

”You have been very good, dear,” Mother answered. ”You have not complained and have done what you could to help Mother over a very busy time. Now if you will put the dishes away for me while I brush up the floor I think we can have a nice long evening together. Daddy, too, has had to leave his letters unanswered So he will be busy writing.”

Soon they were seated, as they So often were during the long winter evenings, near the fireside, Linnet on her small stool with her fancy work and Mother in the big rocker with her knitting. The fuzzy little kitten was amusing both himself and Linnet by getting tied up in Mother’s wool.

”Do you remember where we left the Master in our last story, Linnet?” Mother asked.

”Yes, Mother. He was going back to Jerusalem for the Passover, and He had just told the story of the rich man and Lazarus.”

”You have an excellent memory, dearest.” Mother answered; but Linnet laughed and said, ”Not half as good as you think, Mother. I had forgotten and I got my book after supper to find out.”

”Stealing a march on Mother, dearest, eh? Well I had forgotten myself; So I cannot blame you for not being able to remember. Now let me see, I think we had better get the Bible and find out what happened next. Luke is the only one of the disciples who tells us much about the return journey to the city. I think he must have been with Jesus. Here we are at Luke 17.” Mother read part of the chapter to her little girl.

They had reached the 20 {th} verse when Linnet said, ”But, Mother, you told me before about the ten lepers.”

”Yes, dear. We must remember that Luke did not write the Bible story for many years after it happened and it is likely that he placed that event a little too late in his story and that it really took place some time earlier.

”The next part of this chapter fits in here. Let us read it. ‘The Pharisees demanded of Jesus, when the Kingdom of Heaven would come, and Jesus answered, The Kingdom of Heaven cometh not with outward show’—‘with observation’ is the way our Bible puts it. The thought is that there would be no great celebration when the Kingdom was

established. People would not know what was happening. ‘Men will not say, here is the kingdom, or there it is, for the Kingdom of God is within you.’”

”How can it be in us, Mother? I thought it was to be all over the world.”

”You had the right thought. Sometimes it seems as if God had permitted those who translated our bible to make mistakes, So as to hide His meaning, at least from those who were not earnest enough to really search for it. Bring me the small black bible from my dresser. It gives the exact words of Jesus and there we can see His meaning better. Here it is, ‘The royal majesty of God is among you.’ Just as last summer the King of England was in the city—he was not in the people. Jesus was showing that the ‘Royal Majesty’ of the new Kingdom—Jesus Christ Himself—would be among them unknown. Then he says, ‘For as the bright shining (that is, the sun) comes from the east and shines even unto the west; So shall the presence of the Son of Man be.’ You will see that in our Bible this is written as if it was lightening in a storm that is meant. But lightening comes from any place, not just from east to west.”

”Jesus was showing them that His coming would be like the sunrise. This is shown by other Scriptures also. One says, ‘the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in His beams.’ You know how when morning comes the first thing you see is an increasing light everywhere. Then the clouds in the eastern sky get all rosy and beautiful. Then the tops of the mountains are all lit up, and as the sun rises higher the light comes down lower on the mountains till all the valleys are filled with light and the day has come. So Jesus meant that those who were awake and watching would see the increasing light and the color on the clouds. Then those who were living close to Him—on the mountaintops—would see His presence, long before those living in the valleys knew it was morning.

”The light was seen in the great inventions of our day; even on the clouds of trouble, because it was the war that brought us airplanes. It is only since the morning draws near that we have had electric lights, radios, telephones, and things like that. When I was a little girl we used oil lamps. We had no autos and had to drive behind horses. There were no movies. I remember the first movie I ever saw. I was a little girl not much older than you. It was such a funny thing that I never forgot it. I never spoke over a telephone till I was married. Our first radio was not perfected till after the last war.

”Your grandma had to make tallow candles to light their house. They had their own sheep and had to shear them and card the wool and spin it into yarn and they wove their own dresses on handlooms. Now we go to a store and choose some beautiful cloth and sew it up on a sewing machine. Or we can buy dresses all ready to wear in lovely colors and styles that our grandmothers never even thought about.

”You can climb on a bus and go where you wish. If you are delayed at a

little friend's house you just call mother on a telephone. When your sister wanted to get home quickly last summer she took her baby and climbed into an airplane and was home in two hours. It would have taken her three days to get home by boat.

"All these great inventions are part of the light that will shine in the new day. These are blessing coming to people before the Kingdom is fully set up. In some places now it is said that when you lift your telephone and speak to a friend you can see the person to whom you are talking.

"So we can see how the sunlight prior to the New Day is lighting up the world even before people can see the sun."

"Jesus is the Sun, is He not, Mother?"

"Yes, darling, Jesus said, 'I am the light of the world.' People then could not understand what He meant but we can. Now you see here in the Bible how He told the people, 'So shall the Son of Man be in His day (like sunrise).' And we can see how His coming is just like that.

"'But first He had to suffer many things and be rejected of that generation.' Jesus was showing how the people living at that time would refuse to have Him for their king. Then He speaks of His next coming and says, 'As it was in the days of Noah, So shall it be in the days of the Son of Man, for they did eat and drink, they married and were given in marriage until the day Noah entered into the ark, and the flood come and destroyed them all.' Now you read the next verse." And Linnet read how the people lived in Sodom before it was destroyed.

"Jesus was showing the people how no one would know when He came again, or realize He was here setting up His Kingdom, and that the great trouble of our days would take them by surprise, just as it took the people of the world at the flood and in Sodom," Mother explained.

"But we know about Jesus' coming, Mother?"

"Yes, Linnet. Noah knew and So did Lot, for God always shows those who love Him and serve Him, what he is going to do. It is the people of the world, who are giving all their time to the worldly pleasures instead of studying God's Word, who will not know. Jesus says here, 'Two men shall be in one bed and one shall be taken and one left; two women grinding at one mill, one is taken and one left; two men working in the field, one is taken and the other left.'"

"What did Jesus mean there, Mother?" Linnet had become used to things not meaning exactly what they said. She had come to look for the deeper meaning behind the Master's dark sayings.

"He meant that when He returned He would look around to see who was really serving Him and would choose them for His Kingdom. He would choose one and leave another. The one He chose would be led to search

His Word and would try to serve Him. The other would just go on, in the field of the world, or at his work and never realize that Jesus had come. There are very few now who understand what is happening. Jesus meant to show that only those who were really interested would know the meaning of the things that are happening in the world today.”

”I wish I was older So I could understand more, Mother.”

”Even children can understand if they try, as you do, dear. It was at this time that some mothers came to Jesus and brought their little children for His blessing. The disciples were rather indignant and said, ‘You must not trouble the Master, for such little matters. He is too busy.’ Jesus heard and said, ‘Let the little ones come to me and do not stop them, for the Kingdom is composed of such little one.’”

”Mother I would like to read that and mark it in my Bible.” Linnet said, and Mother showed her where to find that sweetest of all verses for God’s children.

”‘Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.’ “ { Luke 18:16}

”I see you put it in different words but it means the same, Mother. It is easier to understand it the way you said it,” Linnet said. Mother smiled and continued.

”Just after that, Jesus cured two blind men and then, as he was walking along the road, a rich man who was the chief of the publicans, and greatly disliked by the Pharisees, heard that he was coming. He wanted So much to see Jesus that he climbed up into a tree over the road when he saw the crowd coming. Jesus waited till He was under the tree and then He said, ‘Hurry up and come down out of the tree Zacchaeus for I must stay at you home today.’”

”No one knows just how Jesus knew many things, except that it was God’s spirit that showed Him. A publican was a man who was employed by the Roman government to collect taxes from the Jews. The Jews felt that they should not have to pay taxes and they hated those who collected them. This publican had longed to see Jesus but had never thought the Master would have any use for him. He was So very glad and welcomed the Master warmly, but the Pharisees were annoyed and said that Jesus should not go to his house for he was a sinner. He felt very badly over their nasty remarks and said to Jesus, ‘Master, I give half of all my income to the poor and if I ever do charge a man too much taxes I give him back four times what I have over- charged him. What more can I do?’

”Jesus smiled at him and said, ‘Salvation has come to this house today Zacchaeus, for you are indeed a true son of Abraham. I have come to seek and save that which is lost.’”

”What was lost, Mother?” Linnet had forgotten.

”Life and happiness, peace and the knowledge of God, dearest,” Mother answered.

”Jesus told the people there a story. He said, ‘A certain nobleman went to a far country to get a Kingdom for himself and to return. He had ten servants and he called them and gave to each a certain sum of money and told them to take over the work for the kingdom till he returned. Some of the people of his country hated him and they sent a message after him saying, ‘We will not have this man for our king.’ The ruler was made king over the country and came back. First he sent for his servants and asked them how they had used the money he had given them. Most of them had used the money wisely and had invested it for him and had gained much more. These, the king made rulers over cities in his kingdom. One of the servants, however, had hidden his lord’s money and made no use of it, and now he returned it with a criticism of the king’s methods. The king was angry with this servant and took the money away from him, dismissing him from his service. Then he ordered those who had rebelled against his rule, to be killed.

”This story was evidently meant to show the people that Jesus was not going to set up His Kingdom at that time, but was going to Heaven for awhile and was leaving the Kingdom work to servants. When He came again the first thing He would do would be to test His servants and reward those who had faithfully used the money and opportunities he gave them.”

”Was the money Truth, Mother? You said once that silver pictured truth.”

”Truth, possessions, or special ability to use the truth to God’s advantage, and opportunities of service, are all pictured by the silver talents. God will judge those who claim to be His servants, by the use they make of their ‘pounds’ and ‘talents.’ He will then punish those who do not obey His laws.

”This story was told while Jesus was walking along the road to Bethany. It was almost Passover time. Jesus said to some of His disciples, ‘go to the village over yonder, and, as you enter, you will see a colt tied. It is the colt of an ass and its mother is nearby. The colt has never been ridden. Loose it and bring it to me. If anyone asks you what you want it for, just say, The Master needs it, and they will let you take it.’

”The disciples obeyed and found everything as Jesus had said. They brought the colt to Jesus. This was on Sunday, the tenth day of the month that the Jews called Nisan. There are few animals harder to ride than an untamed colt. The disciples must have wondered at the strange power of Jesus over this colt for it stood quietly and let them put their coats on it. It made no move when Jesus sat on its back and was as quiet and gentle as it could be. Perhaps some of the disciples remembered the

words of the prophet Zechariah, 'Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion, for behold thy king cometh unto thee, meek and lowly and riding upon an ass, and the colt of an ass.'

"Now when the people saw Jesus riding towards the city they began to sing and shout and some of them ran into the hills and cut down branches from the trees and spread them on the ground in front of Him to make a carpet. Children gathered flowers and scattered them on the pathway and the people began to spread their cloaks in front of Jesus for Him to ride over. Then someone began to sing.

"'Hosanna, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of our God!'

"The people from the city came out to meet Him and welcome Jesus as their King; but the scribes and Pharisees heard the shouting and cheering and came to see what the noise was about. They were horrified to see Jesus riding into the city as the new King. They pushed their way through the crowd and tried to stop Jesus.

"'Cannot you hear what the people are saying?' they asked. 'Make them stop before there is a riot and Pilate hears about it. There will be trouble.'

"Jesus said, 'If these people stopped shouting the very stones would cry out.' When he came near the city, Jesus wept over it, for He knew all the trouble and sorrow that was ahead of the people. He said, 'If you had only known, in this your day, the things that would bring you peace, but now they are hidden from your eyes. Soon your enemies will surround you and dig trenches around you and shut your people in, and they shall utterly destroy you and not leave a stone standing upon another, because you did not realize your opportunity, or recognize the time you were visited.'

"Then Jesus went at the head of the shouting people to the Temple of God. There He found that the merchants, whom He had thrown out before, were again buying and selling animals and things in the Temple porch. Jesus made a whip of cords and once more drove them all out and cleaned the Temple before He taught the people.

"Many people came to Jesus there and brought their sick and blind and Jesus healed them. The scribes and Pharisees held another meeting to see what they could do to stop Jesus teaching the people. They could not touch Him during the day for He was always surrounded by crowds of eager people, who claimed Him as their King. When evening came Jesus and His disciples left the Temple and went to Bethany, where they stayed at the home of Lazarus. In the morning he went again to the city and taught in the Temple. On the way he saw a fig tree and went to get some figs to eat. There were no figs on the tree and Jesus said, 'No man shall ever gather fruit off you again.' When they returned from the city that night the disciples noticed that the fig tree was withered and dead. They showed it to Jesus who said, 'If you have faith enough you can do greater

things than this.”

”Why did Jesus make the tree die just because it had no fruit, Mother?”

”The fig tree was a picture of the Jewish nation, Linnet. Jesus showed by this action that He had come to the Jewish nation and had found them lacking in the fruit of righteousness. Because they had no fruit they were cast off from God’s favor and must die as a nation. Once Jesus said, ‘When you see the fig tree in bud you know that summer is near,’ meaning that when (at the end of this age) we would see the Jewish nation beginning to come to life again, we would know that His Kingdom was about to be set up.

”So today we have this sign that the Kingdom of God is coming and that soon Jesus will begin to rule over the earth, for the Fig tree is growing again and the Jews are returning to their homeland after nearly two thousand years of persecution and trouble. Paul, one of the greatest of Jesus’ disciples told us that ‘If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead.’ { Romans 11:15 }

”What does it mean, Mother?”

”It means that the Jews were cast off from God’s favor to give the rest of the nations a chance to come to Jesus, and learn of Him. Then when their time of favor was over and the Jews were taken back into the favor of God, we would know that the time had come for the Resurrection. That is how we know that Christ’s Kingdom is nearly here,” Mother answered.

”Is that the only way we know, Mother?”

”No indeed, darling. The world is full of signs that tell of the end of this order of things and the beginning of a New Order. Even the worldly people are seeing that a change is coming. Jesus gave us many signs as you will see in our next story, but it is too late tonight and Mother’s little girl must get off to bed. Tomorrow is Sunday and the rest of the family will be sleeping in. Come down to my room when you wake and I will tell you more then, if you wish. Now kiss Mother and go to bed, dear. Your eyes are getting heavy.”

”But my verse, Mother?”

”The one I gave you a minute ago will do for this story, dearest. Let us repeat it together, ‘If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead.’”

The powers of darkness oppose Him.

A victory it seemed they must gain

When they taught the Monarch from Glory
The anguish of sorrow and pain.
When His mission at last was completed
And His perfect life given for men
He passed the torch to His disciples
And took up His glory again.
To the right hand of power promoted
While His followers carried the light
That has troubled the powers of darkness
Revealing Earth's sorrow and blight.
God's chosen have basked in its brightness
And sacrificed life for its sake;
They have laid aside riches and honour
The cross of their Master to take.
From "Stray Petals."

CHAPTER 21—STORIES TOLD IN THE LAST DAYS OF JESUS' LIFE

"Are you awake yet, Mother?" whispered a little voice about seven thirty on Sunday morning. A little figure in flannelette pajamas shivered in the morning twilight that seeped around the drawn blinds. Mother turned back the covers for her little daughter to creep in. Two icy feet touched her and Mother said: "Where are your slippers, dear? What is that you have? The kitten?"

"I couldn't find my slippers and I was afraid I'd wake sister if I kept on hunting. So I came without them. I found 'Cream-puff' in the hall and he looked so cold I brought him to get warm."

"All right dear. He will soon warm up down there, on the covers. How he does purr. It's like a little steam engine." Linnet stole into Mother's arms and with her sunny head on the soft pillow of Mother's shoulder, she said—

"Now for my story, Mother."

"You little rascal, when do I ever get a chance to sleep in? No wonder Daddy chooses to sleep in the den on Saturday night. He likes a rest once in a week."

"But you like telling me stories, Mother. I know you do and it's nicest in the morning 'cause then I am wide awake."

"I'll say you are! But you are right, dear. I am so glad that my little girl loves the stories of the Master and from God's Word that I do enjoy telling them to such an eager listener. Let me see, I think we left Jesus on His way back to the Temple on Wednesday morning, did we not?"

"No, Mother. I think He was going back to Bethany to spend the night with Lazarus and Mary and Martha."

"Perhaps you are right, dear. He spent Tuesday night with them and returned to the Temple Wednesday morning. When He reached the Temple the Chief Priests and the Scribes and Elders of the people came to Him and asked, "What authority have you to do these things and who gave you that authority?"

"They were probably speaking of His driving the merchants out of the Temple again. The merchants would go to the priests about it for they had to have their permission to buy and sell in the Porch of God's Temple.

"Jesus said, 'I will ask you one question and if you answer it I will also answer your question. Where did John the Baptist get his authority? Was his baptism from God or from men?'"

”The priests had not expected such a question and they reasoned among themselves, saying, ‘Now if we say that John had his authority from men, the people will turn on us because they count John as a prophet of God and if we say from God, Jesus will ask, Why did you not believe and obey him?’ So they said, ‘We cannot tell.’ And Jesus said, ‘Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.’”

”That was putting it over them, Mother!” Linnet laughed.

”A slangy expression but very appropriate, dear. American slang does often put things in a clearer form than good English.” Mother smiled tolerantly. One could not expect academic English from modern children.

”Jesus went on then to tell a story to the people and ignored the priests who stood by hoping He would say something they could hold against Him. They had hoped to catch Him alone without the crowds and arrest Him, but the people were there at the Temple, waiting, and the priests knew the common people would defend the Master, for they loved Him.

”Jesus said, ‘A certain man planted a vineyard (that is, a grape garden) and set a hedge, or fence, around it and made a winepress and built a tower. Then he rented it to some gardeners and went away to a distant country. The people who rented the vineyard were supposed to give part of the crop to the owner of the land as rent. When it was time for the grapes to be ripe and the wine made, the owner sent a servant for his share of the wine. But the men who had rented the vineyard did not intend to pay the rent. They caught the servant and beat him and sent him away without the owner’s share of wine. The owner was angry and sent another servant to try to collect the rent, but they threw stones at him and wounded him. He could not even get near the vineyard. The owner of the vineyard tried other men and sent to them to collect his rent but the gardeners ill-treated them all. Then he said, ‘I will send my son. They will surely respect him and treat him well.’” So he sent his son, but the gardeners saw him coming and they said, ‘Here comes the heir to the vineyard. Let us kill him and then the vineyard will be ours.’” So the wicked men killed the son of the owner and threw his body out of the vineyard. Now what will the owner of that vineyard do? He will take soldiers and go to the vineyard and will kill those who killed his son, and will give the garden to others who will pay the rent for it.”

”I think I know what that story meant, Mother. God was the owner of the vineyard and He rented the world to the Jews and they ill-treated all His prophets and then He sent Jesus and they killed Him. God was going to punish them for it, by killing them and taking the world from them.”

”Yes, dear, that was the meaning. Jesus was showing them that He knew they had planned to kill Him and would succeed but that God would punish them for it afterwards. The priests who listened also understood, for the Bible says they saw that He had spoken that parable against them,

and they left Him and went away, but their hatred of Him grew greater and they determined to kill Him, no matter what it cost.

”Then also we can see that the same thing is happening in the world today. The powers of this evil world are determined to destroy all the truth during this age, but they will not succeed. They have killed and ill-treated many of God’s true messengers. Now the Lord is going to punish them for their sins also, and give the world to Jesus and he will be the Ruler in the new age that is coming.

”The scribes and priests then sent some of the Pharisees and servants of King Herod to try and see if they could make Jesus say something they could use against Him. They said, ‘Master, we know that you are true and that you are not afraid of any man for you teach the ways of truth. Now what do you think, should we pay taxes to Caesar or not?’ Jesus understood them. He knew that if He said it was not right, they would report Him to the Governor and He would be arrested, while if He said it was all right to pay taxes they would use it to turn the people against Him, for the people could not see any reason why they should pay. Jesus smiled and said, ‘Show me a penny.’ He looked at it and said, ‘Whose picture and name is this on the coin?’ They answered, ‘It is Caesar’s of course.’ Then Jesus replied, ‘Pay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and give God what belongs to Him.’

”They could not find anything wrong with that answer. Their trap had failed and the people were pleased to see the clever Pharisees lose out. Then the priests sent the Sadducees to Him.”

”Who were they, Mother?”

”They were a religious sect that taught that there was no resurrection. They were nearer the truth than the Pharisees for they taught that the dead were dead, but they did not understand the ransom.

They said that the foolish rules of the Pharisees were unnecessary. They were mostly wealthy people and very powerful. They said to Jesus, ‘Master, in the Laws of Moses it says if a man dies and has no children his brother must marry his widow and raise children for him. Now there was a family in this country and there were seven sons. All married the same woman. Now in the resurrection, whose wife will she be?’

”Jesus answered, ‘If you understood God’s Word and plan you would not ask such a question. In the resurrection, people will not marry or be given in marriage but they will be like the angels.’ Even yet, people are not sure of His meaning. Some think He meant that there will not be different sexes when the earth is perfect. Others think He meant that all marriage bonds are only till death, and when they are raised as perfect men and women they will love each other perfectly and will not marry. We feel sure that all who are found worthy to be of the True Church and are changed to spirit beings will leave all earthly things behind.

”What ever Jesus really meant by these words the Sadducees could find no fault with His answer. Then Jesus said, ‘You have a proof in the Law that the dead must rise, for God, when speaking to Moses from the bush said, ”I am the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.” Yet they are all dead, for in His sight they are counted as if they were still living, for He sees that they shall live again.’

”Then one of the scribes asked, ‘Master, tell us which is the greatest of all the commandments?’ Jesus said, ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is One God: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and soul and mind and with all thy strength. The second is like it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. No commandment is greater than these.’ The scribe answered, ‘You have spoken the truth, Master, to love God with the whole heart and strength and to love our neighbor as we do ourselves is more in god’s sight than any sacrifice.’ Jesus was pleased with the words of the scribe and said, ‘You are not far from the Kingdom of God.’ Jesus knew that this man might easily become a member of the True Church. Jesus then asked, ‘Why do you say that the Christ must be the son of David? David himself spoke of Him as his Lord, for he said, ”Jehovah said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand till I make thine enemies a footstool for thy feet.” Now seeing David called the Christ his Lord, why do you say He must be David’s son?’ No one could answer that question.”

”Do you know why, Mother?” Linnet asked.

”Yes, my darling. All God’s true children know the answer to that question. It was because Jesus was to be born of David’s tribe and was to be one of his family on Jesus’ mother’s side. Mary was a descendant of David. Jesus was not the son of an earthly father, but born by the power of God, and So being a perfect man, He was greater than David. As the Son of God He was to be David’s Lord in the Kingdom. David was saying that God would call Jesus back to Heaven to stay with Him in the highest place till the time for His Kingdom to be set up on earth. Then, in that Kingdom, He will raise David from the dead and Jesus will be David’s Lord and King and all Jesus’ former enemies will be His subjects.

”Jesus said to the people, ‘Watch out for those scribes who love to wear long robes and to be treated with respect and who try to gain the chief places in your churches, yet who will not hesitate to take the goods of poor widows, while they make long prayers and pretend to be good. These will have the condemnation of God.’ From where he was sitting, Jesus saw the people coming into the Temple. There was a box in the Temple into which people could drop money as they passed, to be used for the Temple service and for the pay of the priests. In this way the people used to give what they could to keep up their religious service. Jesus saw them passing—rich and poor—and He saw one woman drop in a penny. Jesus said to the disciples, ‘Did you see what that poor woman put in the box? Well, I tell you she put in more than all the others, for she has given the last she had.’

”When they were leaving the Temple Jesus’ disciples said to Him ‘Master, see what wonderful stones are used in this Temple.’ Jesus replied, ‘I tell you that the time is coming when not one stone will be left on top of another. All will be torn down.’”

”Were they, Mother?”

”Indeed they were, dear. Just forty years after that, the city was taken by the Roman soldiers and the people were killed and the Temple was burned. The pillars were covered with gold, and the fire melted the gold and it ran into the cracks of the stones. The Roman soldiers pried the stones of the Temple apart to get the gold and not one stone was left upon another, just as Jesus said.

”The disciples said, ‘Master, when will these things be and what will be the sign of your coming to set up the Kingdom.’ Then Jesus answered and gave them His great prophecy. It is found in Matthew 24 and in Mark 13 and in Luke 21. This prophecy gives us the signs of which I told you, that show us the end of the world’s troubles is near and that Jesus will soon set up His Kingdom. He said, ‘There will be many people who will come in my name saying that they are the Christ. Do not be fooled by them. There will be wars and rumors of wars and nation shall rise against nation. Do not be troubled by these things. These things must take place but the end of this age will not come yet. These are just the beginning of sorrows.

”‘You who are my followers will be persecuted and killed. The world will hate you even as it has hated me. There will be false teachers who will lead my disciples away from the truth and many who do come to love my Word will be turned away from it. Those who endure patiently whatever God sends them and are faithful to the Word of truth will be saved from the death penalty and will have a place in my Kingdom. The good news of the coming of that Kingdom must be preached in every part of the world before the end comes. When you see the abomination of desolation standing in the Holy Place, let all who are in the city flee to the mountains. Do not even wait to gather up your goods for you will know when ye see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, that the end of the nation has come and it will be destroyed.’”

”What is the abomination of desolation,’ Mother, and why should people run away when they see it?” Linnet asked.

”The sign had two meanings. One was for the Jews, a few years after Jesus died. This sign was given by an idol altar being set up in the Holy Place of the Temple of God by a heathen ruler. When the people who believed Jesus, saw this sign and then saw the armies of Rome surround the city of Jerusalem they knew that Jesus’ words were fulfilled and fled from the city. In this way they were saved from the destruction of the city.”

”What was the sign for us, Mother?”

”It is rather difficult to put that sign clearly and in simple language, dearest; perhaps it is enough to say that even as the Romans then set up idol worship in the Temple of God, So false churches of today have set up a form of idol worship in the, So called, Christian churches. When a person realizes that the Word of God and the message of the coming Kingdom is no longer taught in any church, that is the sign from God for them to leave that church and go out from that organization to worship God only. As Jesus said, we should not wait to take anything (any doctrine or teaching) from the churches but should drop it all and seek to know God’s Word and will only, and to follow Jesus.”

”Is that why we do not attend any church, Mother, but just study God’s Word at home?”

”That is the reason, dear. Jesus said that after His people had gone out into the hills to be near Him and follow Him only, there would be a ‘Great time of trouble’ in the world; So great that unless God, through His chosen people should stop it, no one would live through it. He then assured us that god would stop it and that there would never be such trouble again. He said, if then anyone tells you Jesus is in this house, or there, do not believe it, for His presence would be like sunlight. He will never be seen on earth by men again. He said another sign would be that ‘the sun shall fall from Heaven.’ One of the prophets, speaking of the same sign said, ‘The moon shall be turned into blood.’”

”It will be awfully dark then will it not, Mother? How could the sun be darkened and the moon turned into blood, when they are great worlds?” Linnet asked.

”It is another ‘dark saying,’ dearest. The sun represents the light of Truth as given in the New Testament, and the moon represents the light of the Law, which was never as bright as the Gospel. Jesus meant that the Truth of the New Testament would not be clearly taught in the churches. This sign has partly been fulfilled. The old Law Covenant is now pointed out to be a barbarous thing and is called ‘a thing of blood’ because of the animal sacrifices. Those who have tried to keep it are suffering terrible persecution for their faithfulness.”

”You mean the Jews, Mother?”

”Yes, dear. They are being driven out of every country and killed in many ways. I believe that in this way the moon is being turned into blood today. The sun and moon will both be darkened still more however, for we believe that the time will soon come when it will be against the law to teach the truth of God’s Word, either Old or New Testament, everywhere, just as it is in some countries of Europe today. Then the sign Jesus gave us will be fulfilled and we will know that His Kingdom will be set up quickly. Jesus said the night would come when no man could work; that would be just before He takes over the rule of

earth.”

”What are the stars that will fall, Mother?”

”They are the religious teachers who will be unfaithful to God and will fall from His favor, dear. Then Jesus said, after that people would see, that is, recognize, the sign of the Son of Man, coming in the clouds of Heaven, and that all the nations of the earth would mourn when they saw Him coming.”

”But Mother, you once said no one would ever see Jesus again.”

”That is true, Linnet. The word Jesus used did not mean to see with the eye but to see with the mind. Do you see what I mean?”

”No, Mother?”

”When I said, ‘Do you see what I mean, Linnet,’ what did I mean by ‘seeing?’”

”I guess you meant did I understand, Mother.”

”That was the way Jesus meant it too, dear. He meant that they would then understand that He had come to take over His Kingdom, and that the clouds of trouble were just a sign that His Kingdom had come. Everyone will then understand that a new King has come to take over the rule of the earth. Some of the people on the earth will not be glad to see the Kingdom come, for they will understand that they cannot do what they wish any more. They will realize that they must obey God’s laws and do what is right. Those who love Jesus will be glad, and the Bible says they will say, ”This is our God, we have waited for Him. He will come and save us.””

”Jesus said that when He came again whoever is a faithful and wise servant teaching the truth of His Word to all who would listen, He would make him ruler over all His goods to give His people meat in due season. So God’s servants were shown the truths of God’s Word and one wrote down those great truths for us. Through that wise servant we have found the lost truths of God’s Word and have learned the meaning of the words of Jesus.

”Jesus then told a story. He said, ‘Then (that is, when His Kingdom was coming) the Kingdom would be like ten virgins—pure young girls—who took their lamps and went out to meet their bridegroom. Five would be wise and five would be foolish. The wise would have oil in their lamps and would carry an extra supply of oil with them, in their vessels, but the foolish would just take their lamps, filled with oil. He said the bridegroom would be late and they would all get tired waiting and would go to sleep. Then in the middle of the night they would hear a call”Here comes the Bridegroom!” The wise would fill their lamps again and go to meet Him, but the foolish would find their lamps had gone dry and

would have no extra oil. They would ask the wise ones for some of their oil, but they would have none to spare. So they would say, "You will have to go to the towns and buy some for yourselves for we have only enough to fill our lamps." While the foolish virgins were going to town for oil, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in to the feast with him and the door was shut. Jesus said they would knock and beg to be let in too, but he would say, "Who are you? I do not know you."

"What did that story mean, Mother?"

"Jesus meant that when He came to set up His Kingdom on earth, the true Christians would be informed of His coming. Someone would be teaching that the time had come for Him to return to the earth. Many would hear the message and believe it and would be watching for Him but He would not come when they expected and they would all go to sleep again. Some of them would have the truth of His Word and would also have His spirit in their hearts, but some would see the truth and understand it but would not have His spirit in their hearts.

"In the Bible, a woman pictures a church. Good women or virgins stand for good churches and bad women stand for false churches. So Jesus was warning us that those who had the knowledge of His coming and had not His spirit would be like the foolish virgins. When the message came that Jesus had come to set up His Kingdom, they would find that their lamps had gone out; they would not be able to see that Jesus had arrived. Those who had His spirit in their hearts would understand and go to meet Him. They would fill their lamps and trim them—that means they would study their Bibles carefully by the light of the spirit of God in their hearts, and they would see that Jesus was indeed present as a great spirit being and they would go to meet Him and enjoy the feast of truth with Him.

"The foolish ones would finally get the knowledge and would grow in truth and gain His spirit but they would be too late for the feast of truth. The door to the High Calling would be closed. Jesus would say He did not know them because they had not His spirit. They would have to face the great trouble in the world and could not have the great prize. Now, dear, I think I hear Daddy getting up and we must get dressed and get his breakfast. Here is a little verse for you to learn by which to remember this story. 'Thy Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.'"

Come let us sing the praises of the Lord;

Great is the loving kindness of our God;

Wondrous His mercy to the sons of men.

As a farmer plants his precious grain and then

Awaits the sunshine and the gently rain

And hath great patience through a thousand ills;
When storms beat down the grain and when it hails
When frost or blight or pest their portion take,
Yet on he plods, still hoping it will make
A goodly showing in the harvest time;
So God has waited with a love sublime
To reap the harvest which His wisdom saw
Should yet result from His Eternal Law.

CHAPTER 22—A SUPPER AT BETHANY

Sunday evening had come and the little class, that met weekly to study God's Word in Linnet's home, had met and had departed. Linnet always made one of the little group and of late had taken her turn at reading from the Word of God. Now Mother was free to give her little girl a bit of time before she must go to rest.

"It must be a short story tonight, dearest," Mother said. "Perhaps it would be better if you get all ready and slip off to bed and Mother will come up and read to you or tell you a story until the sandman comes around. What do you think?"

"That would be nice, Mother. You were going to tell me of the last supper Jesus had at the home of His friends in Bethany."

"I am all ready now, Mother!" Linnet called a few minutes later and Mother took her Bible and went to her little daughter's bedside.

"I see the last story we had time for this morning was the one Jesus told His disciples about the wise and foolish virgins."

"Yes, Mother. The wise girls had oil in their lamps and carried vessels filled with oil. So they would be able to fill their lamps. They did not have flashlights then or electric light, did they, Mother?"

"No, dear. Flashlights would hardly fit the picture that Jesus was making would they? Do you remember what the oil pictures, dear?"

"Yes, Mother. The oil always was a picture of God's spirit; was it not?"

"Yes, dear, Jesus told another story to His disciples that evening. Possibly on the way back to Bethany or it may have been just before He left the Temple.

"He said, 'When the Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Kingdom and all His holy angels with Him then shall all the nations of the earth be gathered before Him. He shall then sit on His throne and He will divide the people as a shepherd divides the sheep and the goats. The sheep He shall put on the right hand and the goats on the left hand. Then He will say to those on His right hand, Come and inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the earth; for I was hungry and you fed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was thirsty and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger and you took me in. When I was a prisoner you visited me. Then they will say, When did we see you like that, Lord, and help you? And He will say, Inasmuch as you did it to the least of my brethren you did it to me.

"Then He will say to those on His left hand, Depart from me into everlasting fire prepared for Satan and his angels, for when I was hungry and thirsty and sick and naked and in prison you would not help me.

And they will say, When did we see you in trouble and refuse to help you? And He will say, When you did it not to others you did it not to me. Then He will send the wicked away to everlasting punishment and the good to eternal life.”

”What did Jesus mean by that story, Mother?”

”Well, dear, first we must study the story carefully and remember it was a story to show a great truth. The first verse tells when this picture will be fulfilled. It says—‘When’ the Son of Man shall come in His glory. Now when will that be, dearest?”

”When He sets up His Kingdom, Mother. That means it has not happened yet.” Linnet answered.

”That is right, dear. It does not apply, until the Kingdom is set up and Jesus has come in all His glory. So we see that in this story Jesus was giving a picture of the work of His Kingdom. Then He says He will sit on His throne as King of all the earth and all the nations will be brought before Him. That means when all the dead have been raised, for Sodom and Gomorrah, and Babylon and Ninevah, and many other cities and nations had been destroyed long before Jesus spoke this parable.

”So we see that we have been given a picture of the work of that great Kingdom. Now lots of people have expected that all this would be done in one day but we know that Jesus’ Kingdom is to last for one thousand years. Jesus was showing that the law of His Kingdom would be the law of love. That if people helped others in every way they could, they would gain god’s favor and be set at His right hand, but if they refused to help others they would be placed in a position of disfavor and eventually destroyed.”

”But Mother, I thought everyone was going to be happy and that everyone would be well and have everything they needed in Jesus’ Kingdom.”

”so they will, dear. We must remember a parable is a picture and nothing is clear and plain. Now there are far more people dead than there are living and the Bible speaks of the dead as being in prison. So you see the prisoners who must be visited are those who have died and have just been wakened. The naked are those who have not the Robe of Christ’s righteousness to cover them. How can they get it?”

”By learning of Jesus and believing in Him, Mother.” Linnet answered.

”So in that Kingdom those who teach the people all about God, will be clothing the naked in the story. Then sin s caused by sickness and most who have died are counted as sinners. They are the sick who must be helped by showing them how all their past sins are forgiven and teaching them to live right and to get well and strong and grow to be perfect. The hungry and thirsty are those who want to know of God’s Word.”

”We can give them the truth, can we not, Mother?” Linnet said.

”Yes, darling. So we see now how people can serve Jesus all through the years of His rule. Jesus meant that everyone who tries to help those who are wakened from the grave will have God’s favor and they will become more like Jesus every day. They will be His helpers and will be placed at His right hand, but those who take all the blessings of that Kingdom for themselves and make no effort to help others will not advance and will not be pleasing to God. Such will finally be judged unworthy of life and will be destroyed.”

”That is the ‘Second Death’ is it not, Mother? You told me about it and how it was pictured by the black pool in my puzzle, and it was the teaching the last camel carried.”

”Yes, dear. It is called that because most of the people will already have been dead once and wakened from death. Those who will not help others and obey the great law of love will be counted unworthy of a place in God’s Kingdom and will be destroyed. Their punishment will last forever for they will not be wakened again. The ‘fire’ prepared for Satan and his angels will destroy them and they will not even be remembered.

”When Jesus finished this story He said to the disciples, ‘It is just two days till the Passover when I will be betrayed and crucified;’ but still they could not realize that He was going to die.”

”They should have known, Mother. Jesus told them plainly.” Linnet said.

”They could not understand that the ransom must be paid before people could get the blessings. When Jesus reached Bethany that night He found that one of His friends—Simon the leper—was giving a big dinner in His honor. Lazarus was invited and Mary and Martha were helping wait on the guests. Perhaps Jesus had cured Simon of that terrible disease, as He had cured many other lepers.

”Mary must have heard about the woman who was a sinner and who had anointed Jesus’ feet at the home of another Simon—a Pharisee of Capernaum—about a year before this. Many people had known about that and it would be one of the stories told everywhere about Jesus, for the woman was one of His best friends. We are told that she was the one who was called Mary Magdelene, but this is not certain, for the disciples in telling the story did not mention her name.

”Mary had an alabaster box, which she had kept for years. Alabaster is a very pretty stone, something like marble, or agate; it is often clear with pretty colors in it and was very valuable and used to keep rich and expensive perfume in. It was filled with an ointment specially used for the bodies of those who had died. It was very valuable and Mary kept it as a treasure, perhaps intending to use it for her own loved ones or she

may have been keeping it to use when Jesus died. It was rather an oil than an ointment and very sweet smelling.

”Matthew and Mark both tell us that Mary brought this oil and poured it on Jesus’ head as He sat at the table. John says she poured it on His feet. Which is right we cannot say but it seems more likely that John gives the correct thought for it would be rather difficult to pour it on the Master’s head, if he were lying, as was the custom, upon the couches that were used instead of chairs. It really does not matter anyway. Mary poured her precious perfume upon the Master and the whole house was filled with the fragrance. Judas was annoyed and said, ‘Why could she not have kept this oil and sold it and have given the money to the poor people. Just think how many people could have been helped by the money that perfume would have brought in.’

”That must have made Mary feel very unhappy, but Jesus spoke quickly and said, ‘Leave her alone. She has done a good work. It was for my burial that she kept this, and wherever the gospel of my coming Kingdom is preached, this shall be told for a memorial of her.’

”Now Judas did not care anything about the poor. Judas loved money and was a greedy man. He had been made treasurer of the little band of disciples and when people gave money as they often did—to help with the work and to advance the cause of the Kingdom, it was in Judas’ care and we are told that he used to steal money from the funds. Jesus added then, ‘You will have the poor always and can help them at any time, but I will not be with you for long.’

”Mary knew that Jesus was expecting to go back to heaven to His Father and she wanted to give Him this rich gift before He went. And no story of Jesus’ life is complete without the story of Mary’s love and service.”

”Mother, if Jesus knew that Judas was a bad man and a thief, why did He keep him with them?” Linnet asked.

”Jesus knew that someone among His disciples would sell Him to His enemies. There must have been some good in Judas but the good was destroyed by the evil. Now suppose Jesus had sent him away, someone else would have been tempted to betray the Master. Jesus never let His knowledge of a man’s character prevent Him from showing every kindness to that man. It is often better to keep your bitterest enemy close to you, for then you can watch him and know what he is doing, but I do not think that had anything to do with Jesus’ kindness to Judas. He knew the man was stealing and he could have had him put in prison but Jesus knew that the prophecy said that one who shared His food would sell Him to His enemies. For some time He had known that it was Judas, but it was a good lesson in patience to the disciples to watch Jesus’ unflinching kindness to this unpleasant man.

”Jesus knew that He must die for mankind and that one of His friends must betray Him, so He never made any attempt to change God’s plan

for Him. He could have stayed away from Jerusalem and not have gone there but it was His wish to do exactly what the old prophecies had said He would do. So when He knew the time had come to pay man's debt He went right up to the city and went among the people, knowing that they would catch and kill Him. Jesus was determined to do God's will not matter what it cost Him in suffering or pain.

"Now, dearest, you are getting weary and I must leave you to go to sleep. The Dear Heavenly Father will watch over you. Here is a little verse for you to remember, "the poor you have always with you, but me ye have not always."

THE ORDER OF MELCHISEDEC (THE INITIATION)

An upper room, a table laid with care.
A roasted lamb and unleaven bread are there,
And wine that from the ripened grape is crushed;
A solemn group, their faces sad and hushed.
ONE in their midst has filled them with dismay.
"Ere morning one of you will me betray."
"Lord is it I?" they ask with bated breath.
"Lord we would gladly go with you to death."
He slowly dips a piece of unleavened bread
Into the gravy, turns His noble head
And gives the sop to one of dour mein.
"That which thou doest so. Thy plot is seen"
At this sign of His favor, from the One
He would betray, the dark and sullen one
Springs up in fear and anger to his feet
And hastens forth, nor hears the soft voice speak.
He who has shared my bread shall lift his heel
Against me. It is written. It is well.
Then from the plate He takes unleavened bread
And—blessing it—He bows His kingly head
And softly speak, "This loaf shall represent
My body broken for you. I was sent
For this one cause. So of my body take—
Appropriate the sacrifice I make
Unto yourselves. Thus shall you share with me
My earthly suffering and my glory see."

CHAPTER 23—THE FAREWELL SUPPER

”What story have you for me tonight, Mother? Last night you told me of the supper at Bethany, when Mary poured the perfume on Jesus.” Mother took up some mending. She had a big pile of socks to repair tonight and, as she selected some wool for the task, she answered.

”Yes, dear, and tonight I will tell you of the very last meal Jesus had before he left the earth to go back to God. After the supper in Bethany Judas slipped away to the High Priest. Perhaps He had heard Jesus say that He would take the Passover supper in Jerusalem and would not return to Bethany that night, So he thought that this would be a good chance for His enemies to catch Him.

”Perhaps Judas really thought that Jesus was being very foolish. Judas must have joined Jesus’ little band of followers because of the promise of a New Kingdom on earth. He was a proud and ambitious man and would expect that he would have a fine position in that Kingdom if he worked along with Jesus. Then he had been given some of the Master’s great power and knew what a wonderful thing it was to be able to cure people with a word. He would see in that a great chance to gain lots of money and power over the people. This would make Him more impatient with Jesus than ever. Why did not the Master use His power to gain a good position and lots of money? Rich people would be willing to pay a large sum of money for health. He had seen Jesus escape from His enemies many times, yet the Master would not do any startling thing to show His power. If He would just kill off a few of His enemies they would have greater respect for Him, but instead He just slipped away and kept out of reach of those who wanted to kill Him.

”Worldly people have never been able to understand true Christians. Perhaps Judas thought that if he turned Jesus over to His enemies and collected the big reward the priests had offered to anyone who would tell them where to catch the Master when He was alone So they could kill Him, Jesus would then use His power to free Himself and the priests would realize they could not fight Him and So would make Him their king. Then the Kingdom would come at once and Judas would be given a good place in it and could make better use of the power Jesus had given to all His disciples.

”While the others were resting Judas stole away to the city and had a talk with the priests. ‘How much will you give me if I tell you how to catch Jesus alone?’ the wicked man asked. The priests offered a small sum of money but Judas said that it was not enough. After some bargaining it was raised to thirty pieces of silver, which was a real fortune for a man. Judas could spend that money well. He promised that he would find out where Jesus was going to spend the night of the Passover and would slip away and tell them. Then they could bring an army and catch Him. If the disciples tried to protect Jesus, they would be killed, but they could not do much for they had no swords. So the wicked Judas went back to Bethany. He thought that on one knew what he had done. Jesus knew

all about it, however.

”The next morning was spent quietly in Bethany but Jesus sent two disciples into Jerusalem. He said to them, ‘Go into the city and as you enter the gates you will see a man carrying a pitcher of water. Follow him till you see him go into a house. Then find the owner of the house and say to him, Where is the guest room where Jesus is to eat the Passover with His disciples? He will show you a big upper room all furnished and ready. Prepare everything for us there. I will come later.’

”The disciples went and found everything as Jesus said it would be and they got everything ready.”

”How could they be sure it was the right man, Mother? Was there only one man carrying water?”

”Yes, dear. You see in Palestine the women always did that sort of work. It was considered a woman’s Job and a man would never carry a pitcher of water unless he had no woman to do it for him. It was a very unusual thing to see a man doing a woman’s work. If I told you to go down the street till you saw a man hanging out clothes in the backyard, you would have to walk a long way, for men seldom wash the clothes or hang them out nowadays.

”When the evening came, Jesus and the rest of His disciples went to the city. They went to the house where the disciples had everything arranged. A long, low table was all set with everything needed for the feast. Low benches or couches were there for the Lord and His disciples. There was unleavened bread and wine and a roast lamb with gravy and bitter herbs. They all came in and went to sit down. Jesus noticed that none of them washed their feet. There were no servants to do it for them and each of them felt too important to offer to wash the feet of the rest. So they just sat down as they were. Jesus was sorry to see the spirit of pride among them; So He got up Himself and took a towel and a dish of water and started to wash their feet. They felt ashamed but one offered to do it for Him. When Jesus came to Peter, this big, strong man said, ‘No, Master. You must not wash my feet.’ But Jesus answered, ‘If I do not wash you Peter, you can have no part with Me.’”

”What did Jesus mean, Mother?” Linnet asked.

”Jesus was teaching them a lesson in humility—that no service for another, given in love, is ever lowering. But in addition He meant that unless we are covered by His righteousness and washed by His blood we cannot be members of His Church or have a share in His Heavenly glory.

”Then Peter said, ‘Then, Lord, if that is what this means, wash not only my feet but my head and hands also.’ Peter meant he wanted to be for Jesus, His thoughts and words, and to walk in His footsteps.

”Jesus answered, ‘those who have recently bathed need only to have their

feet washed and they are clean every bit. You are clean, but not all of you.'

"Jesus meant that Judas was not clean. After he had finished washing their feet Jesus said, as He sat down to supper with them, 'You call me Lord and Master, and So I am. Now, if I, who am your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you should be willing to wash one another's feet. What I have done should be an example to you, for the servant is not greater than his lord.' Then Jesus became very sad and troubled. He said, 'I know whom I have chosen but the Scripture must be fulfilled that he who has shared my food shall turn against me. I tell you truly, one of you will betray me to my enemies.'

"The disciples were startled by His words and said, 'Lord, who will do such a terrible thing? Is it I?'

"Jesus did not answer. John, the disciple whom Jesus loved, was sitting next to the Master. Peter signaled to him to ask Jesus who it would be and John leaned back with His head on Jesus' shoulder and asked in a low voice, 'Who is it Lord?' Jesus answered, So low that only John heard, 'It is the one to whom I will give a piece of bread when I have dipped it in the gravy.'

"A few minutes later Jesus dipped a piece of bread in the gravy and passed it to Judas. Now it was a sign of special favor for the one who gave a dinner to pass such a portion to any guest. Judas, who was just waiting his chance to go to the High Priest—for he had found out that Jesus and the disciples were planning to go to the garden of Gethsemane as soon as the Passover Supper was over—must have felt ashamed to have Jesus give him this sign of special favor, for he had not heard Jesus' words to John.

"Now Jesus said, 'What you are going to do had better be done quickly Judas.' Perhaps Judas then realized that Jesus knew all about his plot and may have thought He meant that it was all right for him to do as he had arranged. They were used to Jesus reading their thoughts. Judas was a coward himself and would never dream that Jesus had no intention of protecting Himself, but intended to let the priests bring about His death. Judas told the priests that he could take them to Jesus at a time when there would only be the eleven apostles with Him and they would not be armed. Only Peter had a sword. The priests gave him the thirty pieces of silver they had promised and started to gather an army to take Jesus.

"Back in the upper room Jesus was talking to the disciples in a quiet and earnest voice. He said, 'The time has come for the Son of Man to be glorified and for God to be glorified in Him. Little children, I will not be with you much longer. You will seek for me but you will not be able to find me, for where I am going you cannot follow me just yet. After awhile you will follow me. I want to leave one commandment with you. Love each other as I love you, that will be a sign to all men that you are

really my followers.’

”Peter said, ‘Where are you going that we cannot go too? You must know that we would gladly die with you.’

”Jesus said, ‘O Peter! Would you really be willing to die with me? I tell you truly Peter that before the cock crow tomorrow morning, you will have said three times that you do not even know me.’

”Peter felt hurt. ‘O Master how can you think that about me? Even if I should be killed I would not deny you, Lord. I love you.’

”Jesus knew that Peter really loved Him but He knew that Peter was counting too much on his own strength. He was really very impulsive and weak and Jesus knew that the things that were going to happen that night would destroy Peter’s pride and make him really fine and strong.

”Then Jesus took one of the cakes or loaves of unleavened bread—very like a soda cracker—and broke it into pieces, first asking God’s blessing on it. Then He gave each of His disciples a piece of it saying, ‘This is my body, which is broken for you.’”

”Why did Jesus say that about the bread, Mother?”

”Jesus meant that the bread was a picture of His body which was to be broken in death for the sins of the world. The bread was still just bread—just as it had been before, but in sharing it with the disciples Jesus was showing them that they were to accept His sacrifice as being for them. He also showed that every member of the true Church would also have to give up his life as a sacrifice. Paul says, ‘Ye brethren, though many, are one loaf.’ In taking part of that broken bread the disciples showed that they accepted Jesus’ gift of life and were willing to follow Him to death.

”Then Jesus took the wine and poured it out and gave it to them, after He had asked God’s blessing upon it also. He said, ‘This is my blood of the New Covenant, shed for the forgiveness of sins. Drink ye all of it.’ As they each drank of the wine Jesus said, ‘I tell you truly that I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until I drink it new with you in the Father’s Kingdom.’”

”What did the wine mean, Mother?”

”It pictured Jesus’ blood which was to be poured out, to make possible the New Covenant between God and man. The covenant God made with Israel was sealed with the blood of animals but Jesus’ death brought forgiveness to all who would accept Him. That made it possible for God to give the blessings of life to all men. It had another meaning, however. Each of the disciples, in drinking that wine, was pledging himself to give the life Jesus had bought for him, back to God and to follow Jesus as long as he lived. Jesus said to them, ‘This do in remembrance of Me.’

And Paul has written, 'As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show forth the Lord's death till He come.' So Jesus gave us the simple ceremony of the Lord's Supper in place of the Passover Service. When we hold that ceremony we renew our promise to follow Jesus always, even unto death.

"After that Jesus said to them, 'Do not let your hearts be troubled. No matter what happens keep your faith in me. You trust God, trust me also. In my Father's house there are many mansions and I am going to get a place ready for you So that you may be with me. You know where I am going and how to get there.'

"Peter said, 'Where are you going? How can we know how to get there?'

"Jesus said, 'I have told you that I am the way and the truth and the life. No one can come to God, except by coming to me. If you really know me, you know God. His spirit is in me. In seeing me you have seen God.'"

"But Mother, Jesus was not God."

"No, darling. God was a great Divine Spirit who could not die. He could not leave the universe to look after itself, while He came down to let people see what He was like, So He made Jesus' earthly body as much like Himself as was possible. No human being could ever be exactly like a spirit being. Your doll is supposed to be an image of Shirley Temple, the movie star, but it is made of composition. It looks like Shirley and is as much like her as a doll can be like a person. So Jesus in the body of flesh was as much like God as it was possible to make Him. Jesus only said the things God told Him to say. He was gentle, loving and kind. We cannot see God, but we know just what He is like by knowing all about Jesus. Jesus is not God, but those who had seen and talked to Jesus would have recognized God by Him.

"Jesus said, 'Believe me that I am the image of God and His spirit is in me, or else believe me for the things you have seen me do. If you will only believe in me you will yet be able to do even greater things than I have done; because I go unto my Father.'"

"No one could ever do greater things than Jesus did, Mother, could they?"

"Not while they were here on earth. Jesus meant that the great things He did were just samples of the wonderful things He and His True Church would do in the days when His Kingdom was established. Then, working with Jesus, they will raise all the dead and bring them to the full knowledge of God and to perfect health and happiness on a perfect earth. Those are the greater things that Jesus' followers will do if they only believe in Him and follow Him always.

”Jesus said, ‘I will pray the Father and He will send you another comforter. The world will not be able to receive him but you will know him for he will live with you and will be in your hearts.’”

”What comforter was that, Mother?”

”It was the holy spirit or power of God that would be given to everyone who gave their lives fully to God. This spirit in their hearts would make them happy. It would help them to understand God’s Word and to see what God was doing. They would not worry for they would trust God if they had the spirit of Jesus. You know how you can have either the spirit of love or the spirit of hatred, in your heart. If you have the spirit of love you will be happy, but if you have the spirit of hatred you will be cross and angry.

”Then Jesus said, ‘Soon the world will see me no more forever, but you will see me and because I live, you also will live. If you really love me you will be always trying to obey the commandments I have given you. Then God will love you and we will let you feel our presence with you. The commands I have given you are really God’s commandments, not mine. I am telling you these things now while I am with you. After I have gone the spirit of god will come upon you, and it will help you to remember all the things I have told you. I will leave my peace with you. I do not give it to you in the way the world gives things. Do not be troubled or afraid no matter what happens.’

”Jesus continued, ‘I will not be able to talk much more with you for the prince of this world is coming and he has not part with me. What I am going to do is the commandment of God. Come now, let us go out for awhile.’ As they left the room and walked through the quiet streets, Jesus said, ‘I am like a grape vine and you are the branches of the vine. You can do nothing without my help. If a branch of a vine bears no fruit the gardener cuts it off or prunes it So it will bear fruit. You must live in me and keep close to me if you want to bear any fruit for God.’

”Do you remember what the fruit of god’s spirit is, Linnet?”

”Let me think now, Mother. Do not tell me. I want to remember it by myself. Isn’t it love, and peace and happiness and patience and goodness and kindness, Mother?”

”That covers most of them, dearest. We might add unselfishness and humility, then the list is pretty well complete. Jesus said it would bring glory and praise to God if we showed plenty of fruit, and that He had chosen His disciples in order that they might show forth the glory and praise to God if we showed plenty of fruit, and that He had chosen His disciples in order that they might show forth the glory of god’s spirit in the fruits of righteousness. He said that if we tried to follow Him closely the world would hate us just as it had hated Him. ”Someday we will read all Jesus’ parting message to His people. It was intended for all who

would follow Him during the Gospel Age and the disciples wrote it down for us So that we would be able to read it.

”Jesus said that His disciples would be turned out of the churches for their faithfulness to Him and that God would let trials and trouble come to them to see if they really loved Him. He said He was going to leave them and they would be very sorrowful for awhile but they would see Him again and be glad; and He said that if they were to ask anything of Him, when He came back, He would do it for them.

”They asked Him where He was going and Jesus said, ‘I came from God and I must go back to God again.’

”Then the disciples assured Him that they believed in Him fully but Jesus said, ‘Do you really believe? I tell you that the time has come when they will smite the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered. They will go everyone to his own home and will leave me all alone, but the Father will be with me.’

”Then Jesus prayed to His Father. The prayer of Jesus is very beautiful. Let us read it together.”

So Mother and Linnet read the 17 {th} chapter of John together. Then Mother said, ”By that time they had reached the Garden of Gethsemane. I will tell you about that garden in our next story, Linnet. It is time to go to rest now. I will just give you this little verse by which to remember our story.

”Neither pray I for these alone, but for all them also which shall believe in me through their word.”

”Then that prayer was for us too, Mother?”

”Yes, dearest. Jesus prayed for us. Surely when we think of that it should help us to serve Him. Now goodnight, my pet.”

GETHSEMANE

The grass was soft beneath His tender feet,
The perfume of the flowers fresh and sweet
Stole through the stillness of His tired brain
And gave their balm of healing for His pain.
The olives took Him to their friendly shade
The stones a resting place were made
For Him whom men in ignorance despised
Or in their folly thoughtlessly appraised
As one who was of very little worth—
The Nazarene who was of Heavenly birth.
Gethsemane! How sweet the name appears,
Place of our Saviour's crying and His tears,
Gethsemane! Where angels walk at night
And birds sing praises in the morning light.
Place where the tortured soul finds rest and peace
And all its fears are hushed and bade to cease.
Yes we must pass through dark Gethsemane
In hours of greatest stress and agony
And there—like Him who passed this way before—
Find in its friendly shade a royal store
Of strength and courage for the way we take
And faith no trial or storm can ever shake.
Fear not the shadows of Gethsemane.
Angels are waiting there to comfort thee.
How sweet the anguish and the bitter tears

That bring us close to Him, whose mercy shares

Our bitterest pang, our trials and our grief

And gives to us such tender, sweet relief.

From "Stray Petals."

CHAPTER 24—IN THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE

”Look Mother! Winter is nearly over at last! See what I have found in the garden. It is a lovely yellow buttercup.” Linnet called, running into the house after school one evening in late February.

”A harbinger of spring, indeed, Linnet, but not a buttercup. It is a winter Aconite, and it does look like a big buttercup. I noticed that the snowdrops are in bud also. Spring flowers bloom so nice and early here on the coast. It will not be long now till the tulips and daffodils and crocuses show their heads. Take your coat off now pet and hang it up and come and tell Mother how things have gone for my girlie.” Coat and books put away, Linnet came to the fireside for it was still chilly enough to feel the need of a nice fire.

”May I take a buttercup, or an aconite to school tomorrow, Mother? Teacher asked us to watch for signs that spring is coming and bring them to show the class.”

”Indeed you may, dear, and if that is the only one out yet, you had better put it in water or it will be all wilted by morning. Flowers are tender things and cannot live long without water. The Bible says, ‘Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away; for, lo, the winter is past, and the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear again upon the earth; the time of singing birds has come, and the voice of the turtle dove is heard in the land. The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines of the tender grape give a pleasant smell.’” Mother quoted.

”Why does it say the fig tree puts forth her green figs, Mother? Don’t the leaves come first?” Linnet asked as she put her flowers in a glass of water.

”No, darling. Not on a fig tree. The tiny green figs come first.” A fig tree is a picture of the Jewish nation, is it not, Mother?”

”I see you do not forget your Bible symbols. Yes, dear, and the verses I quoted really picture the coming of the Kingdom. We are now living in the winter time of God’s disfavor but the fig tree is putting forth her tender figs, or in other words, the Jewish nation is beginning to show signs of life, and just like the flower you have found in the garden, it is a sign that the spring of the New Kingdom is not far off. The words, ‘Rise up, my love, and come away,’ are Jesus’ call to His own true Church to leave the earth and join Him in Heaven as soon as the winter is past.”

”Jesus loved a garden too, did He not, Mother? You said last night that our next story was about a garden.”

”Yes, my darling. Jesus loved a garden and He, as the great Logos, planted one long ago. Do you remember where?”

”It was in Eden, Mother. The Bible says, ‘The Lord God planted a

garden eastward in Eden.' I read that in my Bible this morning. I guess the garden Jesus planted must have been lovely. Why does the Bible say God planted it, Mother, yet you say it was Jesus?"

"The power used in all the works of Creation was God's but we are told in the Bible that 'All things were made by Him, (that is, Jesus) and without Him was not anything made that was made.'"

"I remember now, Mother. You told me before that God planned it but Jesus did the work and the angels helped. Where was the garden you were going to tell me about, Mother?"

"It was in Palestine, Linnet. Indeed it is still there and they say there is a tree still growing in the garden that must have been there when Jesus visited the garden. It is called 'The garden of Gethsemane which means in our language, 'The garden of the oil press.' In all large olive orchards there were oil presses where the people could press the oil from the olives. Olive oil was used for many things in those days, even as it is now. It was used for cooking just as we use lard or shortening. There would likely be other kinds of fruit trees as well. The garden was between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives."

"After Jesus left the upper room with His disciples, they walked through the city streets that were all dark and still. There were no electric lights and no one went out at night unless it was really necessary. Jesus knew that He was going to be taken prisoner that night and did not wish His enemies to disturb the good people who had let them use the upper room in their home for the Passover supper. He had taken care to let Judas know that they would go to the garden that night. It was a pleasant place to spend an evening and Jesus often went there with His disciples.

"They were quite near the garden when Jesus sent up to God that wonderful prayer we read last night. It was So peaceful out there under the stars and Jesus always felt So close to God when He could look up and see the wondrous sky. They entered the quiet garden and the disciples seated themselves under the trees but Jesus began to feel very lonely and sad. He knew all that was taking place in the city. He knew that Judas had gone to the Chief Priest and that they were even then raising an army to come and take Him. He knew that He would leave that garden in a short time, a prisoner of His enemies, and before another night came He would be dead.

"Then He began to think that He might have made some mistake and done something that was against the law and will of God and when He died God could not raise Him. It was not that He thought God might not have the power, but God could not change His own laws and those laws said, 'The soul that sinneth it shall die.' If He had sinned in those thirty-three and a half years He had been on the earth, He would have to die for that sin and He could not die for Adam. You see it was only if He had kept the Law and had never sinned, that He could pay for Adam.

”Now He began to wonder, for He was only human, whether He really was, as the Bible said He must be ‘holy, harmless, undefiled by sin and separate from sinner?’ What a terrible thing it would be if He had sinned, perhaps He should not have got angry with those scribes and Pharisees. So Jesus began to get very troubled and sorrowful. No doubt Satan was making use of this last chance to try and get Him troubled So that He would not let the soldiers take Him. Jesus would remember how in the temple services, if the priest failed to carry out the proper order of service, he would never be allowed to get into the Holy Place where God’s presence was manifest, but would die under the veil. He knew that this was a picture of Himself and that if He had sinned He too would die under the veil of death and would never reach heaven to give the offering to God for Adam’s sin.

”Those thoughts troubled the Master So much that He said to the disciples, ‘My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death. Please stay here and watch that my enemies do not come before I am ready. I am going farther into the garden to pray to my Father.’

”Jesus took Peter, James and John a little farther and then He asked them to ‘Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.’ Then He went alone and there, in the garden, under the olive trees, Jesus knelt down and prayed earnestly to His Father up in Heaven. Only a few words of that prayer reached the disciples, ‘O, my Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will but as thou wilt.’”

”What did Jesus mean, Mother?” Linnet asked. Her serious blue eyes fixed on Mother’s face.

”Jesus was asking His Father up in Heaven, if it would be possible for Him to give His life for men without having to face the shame and humiliation of a public trial. He did not mind dying for men but there was no death as terrible as the death of crucifixion. That punishment was only imposed by Roman power on the worst criminals; murderers, bandits, and rebels against Rome were killed in that way because it was So very painful. Jesus knew that the prophecies showed that He must be killed in that manner. He Himself had said, ‘As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, So must the Son of Man be lifted up.’ Moses had made a cross of wood and had crucified a brass serpent on it and made the people look at it and they were saved from the bites of the poisonous snakes. Jesus knew that this was a picture of how He must die, as a terrible criminal, on a cross, and that all who were bitten by the serpent of sin would be saved by looking to Him.

”Jesus dreaded the shame of that death, but more than that, it was the fear that He had failed to keep God’s laws and So would not be wakened, that made Him So sad. He wanted some sign from God that His Father was still pleased with Him; some assurance that He would indeed be wakened from death. At first God did not answer, and after a time Jesus went back to the disciples. He wanted So much to have some word of comfort, but they had all fallen asleep. Jesus wakened them and said,

‘Could you not watch with me for one hour? Watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation.’ Then He said, ‘The spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak.’”

”What did He mean by that, Mother?’ Linnet asked.

‘He meant that He was quite willing to die for us, even though it meant that He must be humiliated and shamed and must suffer great pain, but He was only a man and it was a hard thing to face, now that the time had come. He might have been also offering an excuse for the thoughtlessness of His disciples, who were quite willing to stay awake and watch and pray but were very tired and sleepy.

”Often we are really willing to do things but are not able. Three times Jesus went back and prayed earnestly to His Father in Heaven, for help and for strength; each time He came back and wakened them again, and they tried to stay awake but they did not know as He did, what was going to happen. The last time He prayed Luke tells us that drops of blood came out on His forehead, like perspiration as He pleaded with God for help. Luke also tells us that God then sent His angel to tell Jesus that He was found faithful and to assure Him of God’s love and care over Him. Then Jesus was able to say, ‘Father, if this cup may not pass from me except I drink it, Thy will be done.’ Luke was a doctor and he realized that the blood drops on our Master’s forehead showed that His great strength had failed at last. Jesus had been giving His own strength to people for three years and a half as He healed their sicknesses, now His own heart was giving out from the strain.

”After the angel had come and assured Him of God’s favor he was no longer troubled but went back to His disciples who were again asleep. Jesus said gently, ‘Sleep on now and take your rest.’ He sat there quietly with them. His mind was at rest, for now He knew that He would soon be at Home in Heaven with His Father. Nothing else mattered now that He knew His death would give life to all the people He had loved so long. After awhile He heard the army coming. They had torches and swords and spears, as though they were out to catch a great band of robbers at least. Jesus smiled as He watched them coming.

”When they neared the garden He went back and called His disciples. They rubbed their sleepy eyes and sat up. Jesus then said, ‘the hour has come, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinful men. Rise up and let us be going, for he is here who has come to betray me.’

”The disciples jumped to their feet. They had failed Him when He needed them, but now they were awake and ready to fight for Him. There was no time to fight, however, for the soldiers surrounded them. Judas was leading them and now he came to Jesus and kissed Him. He had said to the soldiers, ‘The one I kiss will be the one you are after; catch Him and do not let Him get away. He has escaped many times when people thought they had Him.’

”Jesus looked at Judas sadly, ‘O Judas, would you betray your Master with a kiss?’ He asked. Then He turned to the soldiers who seemed half afraid to touch Him and who were, no doubt, disgusted at Judas, for all men despise a traitor. Jesus said, ‘Who are you looking for?’

”They answered, ‘We seek Jesus of Nazareth.’

”Jesus said, ‘I am He,’ and it seemed as if some great hand reached out and pushed them all, for they fell backward to the ground. They could not come near Him. Jesus had used a tiny bit of the power that was His. He could have killed them all without a word, had He wished, but He stood there looking at them as they struggled back to their feet again.

”‘Who are you looking for?’ Jesus asked again. They were rather sullen as they said, ‘We have come to take Jesus of Nazareth a prisoner.’ Jesus said, ‘I have told you once that I am the man you are seeking. Let these others go their way in peace and I will come with you.’ Then, as they crowded around Him, Peter drew his sword and cut off the ear of the servant of the High Priest.

”The man cried out and Jesus turned and said to Peter, ‘Put up your sword Peter. They that fight will be killed.’ Then He turned and touched the ear of the man whom Peter had wounded and healed the hurt. The man was astonished to find that his ear was back again, none the worse. Jesus let the men tie his hands and said quietly to them, ‘Why did you come out against me armed with swords and spears? I was with you every day in the Temple and you did not touch me. I can even now ask my Father and He would give me twelve legions of angels to protect me, but if I did, the Scriptures would not be fulfilled that show that this must happen.’

”Then they led Jesus away to the High Priest’s palace. The disciples were frightened when they saw that Jesus was not going to try to save Himself. They all ran away and left Him alone, just as He had said they would do. Peter and John did not go far. Their love for Jesus brought them back and they followed. John had a friend who worked in the palace of the high priest and this man let him in to see what happened. Peter went and sat with the servants to see also.

”The priests tried to find someone who would accuse Jesus of some crime, but they could not get anyone for the people loved Him. At last they found two men who were willing to speak against Him for money. They said, ‘We once heard this man say that He could destroy the Temple of God and build it again in three days.’”

”Had Jesus ever said that, Mother?” Linnet asked.

”Not just that, dear.” Mother answered. ”He had said, ‘If you destroy this temple (meaning His body) I will raise it again in three days.’

”The high priest said, ‘Did you say that?’ Jesus did not answer. Then the high priest said, ‘I command you in the name of the Living God to tell us, are you the Christ, the Son of God?’

”Now the priest was supposed to be in the service of God and such a command must be obeyed, So Jesus said, ‘You have spoken truly, but I tell you that you will, some day, see the Son of Man, sitting on the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven.’

”Then the priest said, ‘What a terrible thing to say. We do not need any witnesses against this man. We have heard with our own ears, His claims; what do you think?’ The other priests and the Pharisees and rulers said, ‘He is guilty and should die.’ Then they crowded around Him and slapped Him in the face and spit at Him.”

”They were nasty men and cowards to hit a man whose hands were tied, Mother.” Linnet said indignantly.

”You are right, dear. They claimed to be good men but no good man would ever treat anyone so. A coward is always a bully too. Jesus could have killed them all but He remembered that God’s Word said, ‘The chastisement of our peace is upon Him and by His stripes we are healed.’ So He stood calmly and made no move either to harm them or to protect Himself.

”Peter was sitting out in the courtyard and could see all that was happening. If he could have fought for Jesus and helped Him, Peter would have been brave enough. As it was, Peter was sore and angry and he was also afraid someone would see him and arrest him too. So when a maid servant from the palace saw him and said, ‘Were you not with this Jesus, also?’ Peter said, ‘I do not know what you are talking about.’

”After awhile another maid came by and she said to those around, ‘This man was with Jesus also.’ Then Peter, afraid they would catch him, said, ‘I tell you I do not know the man.’”

”But Mother, that was a lie.” Linnet said, ”I thought that Peter was a good man.”

”He was, dear. Peter was a good man and strong and brave, but fear makes people do strange things. You know how, when Mother asks you suddenly if you did something, you sometimes say, ‘No!’ without stopping to think. Then if there are others around, you feel ashamed to say, ‘That is not true, Mother. I did do it,’ for you know the others will have a lot to say about it. So you pretend you do not hear, or perhaps if Mother insists on an answer you tell another falsehood to cover the first. You are ashamed and sorry, but you hate to admit you told something wrong. Afterwards you may come to Mother and tell her the truth, but you cannot take back the falsehood.

”That was how Peter felt. They had heard him say he did not know Jesus

and he felt ashamed at being frightened into a falsehood, but he was too proud to admit before those soldiers that he had lied or that he was afraid. Peter was good, but he was also human; So he tried to get out of it. Then after awhile the soldiers who had heard Peter say he did not know Jesus, come to him and said, 'Surely you are one of His followers. Your accent shows that you are a Galilean.' Then Peter really got angry. All he wished was to be left alone. It was bad enough to see them ill-treating Jesus whom he loved, without being annoyed by them. Peter lost his temper and said things he should not have said, swearing that he did not know Jesus. 'And immediately the cock crew.' Some say that it was the signal for the changing of the guard that was always blown just about sunrise and So was called the cock-crowing. Then Peter remembered the Master's words. 'Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny three times, that you know me.'

"Jesus, suffering under the ill-treatment of the soldiers also heard the sound and turned to look upon Peter. Then Peter realized that he had failed his Master and he could stand no more. He turned at once and left the palace grounds hurrying away into the darkness, and strong man though he was, he cried like a child over his failure. He who had said 'Though they kill me, Lord, I will never deny thee,' had already fallen before Satan's temptation.

"There are old stories that tell us that always after Peter got up every morning at sunrise to ask God's forgiveness for his weakness. But I do not think that is true for Peter knew that Jesus forgave him. He never trusted in his own strength again however, but always turned to God for help and strength. Peter proved strong and loyal and we are told that after many years he too was crucified, even as Jesus was but that he asked to have the cross set upside down because he felt he was not worthy of the death that Jesus died."

"I think Peter was a wicked man, Mother, to say he did not know Jesus, just because he was in trouble.' Linnet said.

"We must not judge him, dear. We can never be sure what we ourselves would do under the same conditions. Often when we mean to do something and to be strong and good, that is just when we find we are weak. If we are trusting in Jesus He will help us and give us strength when we need it. Peter felt too sure of himself. The apostle Paul tells us, 'Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.' I think this is a very good verse for this story. Learn it and keep it in mind, dearest. Now it is time to go and get supper. See if you can say that verse over." "Let that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." Linnet quoted.

PAYING THE RANSOM

Adown the street there comes a shouting throng,
The street that lately echoed to the song
Of "Hosanna in the Highest, Christ is King"
Now to the sound of bitter anger rings
And "Crucify Him!" is the strident cry.
Helpless His friends as soldiers guard Him by.
He sees the weeping women by the way
And bids them "Mourn no more for me today,
But for yourselves and for the days to be
Of grief and bitter, hopeless agony."
His back, torn by their whips is seen to bow,
The blood drops trickle from His matchless brow
As silently the heavy cross He bears.
Ah, was there none His load of grief to share?
Out through the city gates they take their way
Under the blazing sun to Calvary.
See how beneath the heavy cross He falls.
The Centurian a passing stranger hails
To lift and bear the part that drags behind;
Then thro' the dusty road their way they wind.
Till meek and willingly He lays Him down,
This mighty King whom Israel disowns.
The Lord of all Creation, at His call
The Heavenly hosts would swoop down one and all
And scatter His tormentors like a storm,

Would sweep the useless chaff; then why in calm,
Sweet resignation does He bow before them,
Permitting them to gain the victory o'er Him?
It was that only thus could men have life;
The stricken earth forever cease its strife.
He gave His life; it could not have been taken.
It was the Father's will that He be broken
To prove His love and His great loyalty
That men and angels both henceforth should see
The reason why God should So highly honor
His Firstborn Son, the beneficent donor
Of life to those beneath the curse of death.
No moan escapes the tender, pitying lips.
The bitter cup of pain He bravely sips
And—hanging there upon the accursed tree
He paid our debt and set the whole world free.
Not yet however can they be released.
The ransom to their credit has been placed
But there remains a further sacrifice;
A bride to choose who—by the Father's grace
May share His suffering and see His face.
A veil of darkness hides the anguished scene.
The well loved Son of God now hangs between
Two convicts. So with sinners in His death
He gave one pardon with His failing breath.

The sun in grief and pity hides its light
And veils the scene in darkness as of night.
Its rays shall never aid in torturing Him,
Who—by the will of God—gave it its form.
”’Tis finished!” Hear the glad, triumphant cry
”Father, receive My life!” A man must die
To pay the debt of one condemned to death.
As Jesus drew that one, last torturing breath
The earth in anger trembled, and the veil
That hid the Holy Place was seen to quail
And split in sunder from the top to hem.
No longer can their temple be to them
A place of refuge. God has turned aside
From Israel. Never more will He abide
With them, till they repent, and, repenting, cry
”This is our God. It was for Him we waited.”
Then only can God’s righteous wrath be sated.
Why does the world still travail in its tears?
Why does death still pursue us thro’ the years?
When Adam’s debt was paid So long ago
Why does our race still suffer pain and woe?
Well may ye ask. God’s plan works out apace
To bring Eternal life to all our race.
The debt was paid, the price with Justice lay
And men shall reap its benefits some day.
The Order of Melchisedec.

CHAPTER 25—JESUS PAYS THE RANSOM

”Now, Mother, the dishes are all finished and Daddy is lying down because his head aches and Buddy is painting a poster and the others have gone out; So won’t you please tell me the rest of the story about Jesus? I want to know what happened after Peter said he did not know Jesus.” Linnet said as she and Mother sat together by the fireside that evening.

”Have you read your lesson over and finished the sums your teacher gave you for homework, Linnet?” Mother asked.

”Yes, Mother. They are all done and I do not want to go to bed yet.”

”Get your fancy work then, dear, and come here. You can sit on the tool where the light is good. I see your picture is coming on nicely.”

”Yes, Mother. It will soon be finished. Now I am all ready for my story.”

”Well dear, it was against the law to question a prisoner in Palestine, during the hours of darkness. The priests who claimed to be such good people had broken their own laws by keeping Jesus up all night to question Him, but they really cared little for the Law. Now with the daylight they called all the members of the city council to a secret meeting. They wished to have everything finished and Jesus killed before the people who loved and believed in Him knew what was happening. The council met in secret that morning and decided that the best thing to do would be to take Jesus before Pilate, the Roman Governor.

”They had decided that, if they could have Him executed as a traitor to the Roman Emperor, it would be the best way to break His influence on the people. Then their hatred made them wish to have Him killed in the most painful and humiliating way possible. The Roman law would not allow them to crucify any person. They did sometimes stone people who broke their laws. After talking things over they bound Jesus and took Him to the palace of the Roman Governor who was called Pilate.

”Judas had been watching and possibly expecting to see Jesus free Himself by a miracle. Now he realized that Jesus was not going to try to get free, nor even to defend Himself. Judas began to think of all the Master’s kindness. He began to realize what a terrible thing he had done and he went back to the priests and said, ‘I have sinned for I have betrayed an innocent man.’ The priests just laughed at him and said, ‘That is your concern.’ Judas threw the money they had given him to lead them to Jesus, on the ground at their feet. He could not help Jesus and he could not bear to live knowing what he had done, So he went out and hanged himself. So all his longing for money brought him was a terrible death. The priests took up the money and they said, ‘It is against

the law for us to use this money because it is the price of a man's life.' So they bought a field, called the potter's field, to use as a graveyard for strangers. They did not realize that when they did that, they were fulfilling another prophecy, for Jeremiah had said, 'They took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of Him that was valued, whom the children of Israel did value, and gave it for the potter's field, as God had appointed.'

"Jesus was taken to the palace of Pilate and stood before the Governor. Pilate said to Him, 'Are you really the king of the Jews?' Jesus said, 'You say I am.' The priests gathered around and accused Jesus of all sorts of things but the Master stood there in silence and said not a word. Pilate tried to get Him to answer their false statements but Jesus did not speak. The Roman Governor liked Jesus and wanted to get Him off. He remembered that there was a custom that he should set free one prisoner at the Passover season. So he thought, 'If I can get them just to agree to let Jesus be the one set free, I can save Him.' So he said, 'Which would you rather I would set free, Barabbas, who is a criminal and well known among you for his wicked deeds, or this man Jesus, who calls Himself your king?'

"Pilate never thought that they would choose to have a real criminal freed and want to crucify a fine, noble man, who had healed the sick and blind and lame and against whom they could not find one sin. He could not understand their stubborn hatred and jealousy. He was surprised when the people said, 'Set Barabbas free and crucify Jesus.'

"Pilate said, 'Why? What evil has He ever done? I cannot find anything against Him that is worthy of such a punishment.'

"The priests said, 'He is stirring up the people with His teachings, all the way from Galilee to here.' Then Pilate thought he saw a way to get Jesus off. He said, 'Is He a Galilean? Then Herod is the man to whom you should take Him.'

"So Pilate sent Jesus to Herod. Now the king had wanted for a long time to see this prophet, for he felt sure that he was John the Baptist and that he had been wakened from the dead and that was why He could do such wonderful things.

"Herod thought that Jesus might do some wonderful thing for him to see. So he questioned Jesus but Jesus did not answer him at all. The priests and elders made all sorts of statements about Jesus. He did not even deny them but stood there quietly listening to them."

"Why did Jesus not say anything, Mother? If it had been me and they said things that were not true about me I would have told them what I thought about them." Linnet said indignantly.

"Jesus could have cleared Himself of all their false charges, but then He would have been let off and would have been more famous than ever; and our Ransom would not have been paid. Jesus knew that He held the

lives of all those wicked men in His hands; that if He did not die, they would soon die and would never wake up again. He knew that just one word from Him and they would all fall dead right there. That would have finished the chances of everyone who had ever lived from Adam down, to be raised from the dead. He knew too, that they were just being used by Satan and He remembered the Scripture which said, 'He was led like a lamb to the slaughter and like a sheep before its shearers is dumb, He opened not His mouth.'

"It is easy to get angry and say lots of things that are better not said, but it is very hard when people tell lies about us to just keep quiet. Neither Herod nor Pilate could understand. When Herod saw he could not get Jesus to do any wonderful miracle for him he told his soldiers to dress him up like a king and take Him back to Pilate. The soldiers thought it would be fun to tease the Master first. They put a robe of the king's on Him and made a crown of thorns and put it on His head and they blindfolded Him and slapped His face and spit on Him. They put a rod into His hands and tried to get Him guessing who hit Him. But still Jesus never spoke. At last they got tired of their cruel game and took Him back to Pilate.

"Pilate called the rulers and priests together and said to them, 'You have brought this man to me as a criminal who is disturbing the people but I cannot find that He has ever done a thing that is wrong. I sent Him to Herod and he does not condemn Him either. I will, therefore, command the soldiers to flog Him and let Him go free. That should surely satisfy you.'"

"What did he mean to do to Jesus, Mother?"

"They used to take men who had broken laws and tie them to a post and take their clothing off to the waist and whip them with big whips. Pilate thought that the priests would be satisfied with such a punishment and that in this way he could save Jesus' life.

You see Pilate liked Jesus from the start and had no wish to hurt Him. He saw that the rulers and priests were jealous of Jesus' power over the people. About that time Pilate's wife sent a messenger to him saying, 'See that you do not harm that good man for I have had a terrible dream about Him and I am afraid that some evil will come to us if you hurt Him.'

"This troubled Pilate more than ever, for people believed that dreams often brought warnings of coming trouble. Pilate tried to get the rulers to let the Master go but they all cried out, 'Crucify Him!' Then Pilate brought Jesus before them and showed Him to them. His back was bleeding from the whips and His face was swollen from the blows of the soldiers. The crown of thorns on His head had scratched and torn His forehead.

"Pilate said, 'Look at the man! I have punished Him enough. Now I will

set Him free.’ The people cried, ‘Crucify Him!’ Pilate said, ‘Shall I then crucify your King?’ And they said, ‘We have no king but Caesar.’ Then Pilate told a servant to bring a bowl of water and he washed his hands in the water and said to the people, ‘I wash my hands of this. I will have no part in the death of this good man. He has done nothing that is worthy of death.’ The priests said, ‘We have a law that says He ought to die because He has claimed to be the Son of God.’ Pilate was troubled and tried again to persuade them to free Jesus, but they cried again and again, ‘Crucify Him! Crucify Him! His blood be upon us and upon our children,’ till Pilate feared there would be a riot, and he gave way and said, ‘Then take Him yourselves and crucify Him for I find no fault in Him.’

”Then they led Jesus away through the streets of the city to crucify Him. There were two thieves who were to be executed that day and they took them along with Jesus. The news of the priests’ action had got out in the city and the people came in crowds. All His friends followed weeping because they could not help Him or do anything to prevent His death. Jesus saw the women weeping by the side of the road as he passed, carrying the heavy cross on which He was to die. He said to them, ‘Do not mourn for me but for yourselves and for the trouble that is to come upon this nation.’

”At last they reached the place where Jesus was to be crucified. This hill looks like a skull and has caves in the face of it that were used as graves to bury dead people in. These caves look like the eye and nose sockets in a skull. There, while friends were hoping and enemies fearing that Jesus would perform some great miracle and escape even yet, from His enemies, the soldiers of the roman Government crucified Jesus and the two thieves.”

”What does it mean to be crucified, Mother?” Linnet asked.

”Mother answered, ”It means to be stretched on a cross of wood and have big nails driven through the palms of the hands and through the soles of the feet. The cross is then lifted up and dropped into a hole already dug for it, leaving the poor victim’s feet about three feet above the ground. The whole weight of the body hangs from the nails. There they must hang and suffer till they die. It is a cruel death and very painful. Over each man’s head a piece of paper was tacked telling what his sin was. Pilate wrote on the paper for Jesus’ cross, ‘Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews.’ This was written in three languages.”

”Why do the pictures of Jesus on the cross always have I.N.R.I. on them, Mother?”

”The letter J, in the Roman language is like our I, Linnet. And the letters really are J.N.R.J., the first letters of the Roman words, Jesus, Nazarenus, Rex, Judeaorum, which means, Jesus of Nazareth King of the Jews. The priests went to Pilate and asked him to change the writing to ‘He said He was King of the Jews.’ They said, ‘He is not our King. You should put

that He called Himself our King.’ Pilate refused to change the writing and said, ‘What I have written, I have written.’

”So wherever the cross of Jesus is seen today, after all these years, it still bears the sign, ‘King of the Jews.’ And the Jews have never had another King. Jesus still remains the only King of Judea. A few years after Jesus’ death Judea was taken by the Romans and destroyed. All the people were driven away into other countries, and it was never the homeland of the Jewish people until after the Great World War, when Great Britain was given the protectorate over Palestine to make it once more a home for those poor people who have suffered for nearly two thousand years, for their sin in crucifying the only King they can ever have—the one God sent them. Now the time is near when the Jews, returned to Palestine and restored to God’s favor, must see and recognize Jesus as their King. When that time comes, all earth’s trouble will be over. Today there is a movement among Jewish people to accept Jesus as their King, So we know that soon the Kingdom will be set up.”

”Where were Jesus’ disciples, Mother, when Jesus was crucified?” Linnet asked.

”They were standing some distance away watching, still hoping that Jesus would save Himself, yet remembering His words. John, however, was right at the foot of the cross with Mary, (Jesus’ mother) and two other Marys. The soldiers had taken the clothes that belonged to the three who were crucified and divided them among themselves. There were four soldiers. When they came to Jesus’ clothing they divided His undergarments but His vesture was a beautiful cloak and was woven all in one piece. They did not wish to tear it, So cast lots for it. In this way another Scripture was fulfilled, ‘They parted my garments among them and cast lots for my vesture.’

”Jesus saw the three women standing close to the cross and weeping. He saw John too and with His loving, thoughtful care, He asked John to take His mother and care for her as if she was his own mother. From then on Mary lived with John as his mother until she died.”

”Mother, why id god let Jesus suffer like that?” Linnet asked.

”It is possible that God did not let His dear Son suffer too much, Linnet. God can make His children unconscious of extreme pain, and I believe when a person has given his life to god, He will not let that one suffer unnecessary physical pain. You remember how very ill your grandma was and how she seemed to be in great pain at times, yet when we asked her about it, in her brighter moments, she said that she had no pain at all but just felt very tired. I have known several other dear children of god who have died of sicknesses that are unusually painful and each one said, ‘I felt no pain.’

”It was necessary that Jesus should die to pay Adam’s debt. It was also necessary that He should take the place of sinners and be completely

separated from God for a time and feel the weight of God's displeasure. It was essential that He should be crucified and humiliated, but it was not necessary for Him to feel all the agonies of the terrible punishment of the flogging and the death on the cross and I feel sure God spared Him from much of that.

"Many of Jesus' enemies, passing by and seeing Him there, dying upon the cross taunted Him and said, 'You saved others now let us see you save yourself,' and one of the thieves who was crucified with him said, 'Yes, if you are really the Christ, let us see you come down off that cross and save yourself and us.'"

"That was mean of them, Mother! What did Jesus say?"

"Jesus did not answer them, Pet. He could easily have come down off the cross and freed them all and punished the wicked people but then we would never have been able to have perfect life. Jesus just ignored their statements. Indeed it is doubtful if He even heard them. He was thinking of other things and He knew that before many years had passed they would be punished by the Heavenly Father for their cruelty and sin. It is said that when Jerusalem was taken by the Romans that over five hundred men were crucified in one day by the roman soldiers. Perhaps the very men who had Jesus crucified, died in the same way.

"Only one of the thieves taunted the Master, however. The other turned and said, 'Do you not fear God, seeing we are in the same condition? Our punishment is a just one, for we are only paying the penalty of our sins but this man has never done anything wrong.' Then this thief turned to Jesus and said, 'Master, when you come into your kingdom, please remember me.'

"And Jesus answered him simply, saying, 'Truly I say unto you this day, you will be with me in paradise.' People have often misunderstood the Master's words. In the Greek language, in which our Bible was first written there are no commas or periods to divide up a sentence. This sentence is one that can have the meaning completely changed by placing the comma in the wrong place. People think it reads, 'I say unto you, this day you will be with me in paradise.'"

"How can we tell which is right, Mother?"

"Because we know that Jesus always spoke the truth and he was not in paradise that day. He died and was buried before sunset in the tomb of Joseph. There He remained till the following Sunday morning, when God wakened Him. He said he must be three days in the heart of the earth. If He had meant that the thief would be in paradise with Him that day, paradise would have meant the grave. On Sunday Jesus said to Mary, 'Do not touch (or delay) me for I have not yet ascended to my Father.' If paradise had meant heaven, then Jesus said He was not there."

”Where is paradise, Mother?” Linnet asked.

”Adam and Eve were in paradise till they sinned, dearest. The word simply means a garden. God is going to make the world into a paradise or garden in the coming Kingdom. The Bible says, ‘They shall say, this world which was a desolate wilderness has become like the garden of Eden.’ Then the thief will be raised and live in paradise. So what Jesus said was, ‘I tell you today, (though I am dying on the cross) that you will be with me in paradise when my Kingdom has come.’

”Shortly after that it began to get dark. It was a strange darkness for it was not caused by clouds or a storm and there was no eclipse. It seemed as if the sun was going out. It got darker and darker. The sun would not add its heat to torture the great being who made it. In a few minutes it was darker than the blackest night. People were frightened and many who had come to see Jesus die, tried to find their way home. There were no stars and the blackness was like that which fell on Egypt when the children of Israel gathered to hold the first Passover supper. You remember how the Passover lamb was slain. In this way the picture of the first Passover was made perfect.

”After awhile there was a great earthquake that shook the ground and many dead bodies were thrown from their graves. The veil of the Temple that separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy was torn as if by an angel’s hand—from top to bottom. This was a sign to the Jews that God had left them to their fate.

”John and the three Marys stayed near to Jesus. The four soldiers also stayed there and one of them said, ‘This man was truly the Son of God and God is showing His anger at what we have done.’ After awhile Jesus asked for a drink of water. One of the soldiers dipped a sponge in some wine and vinegar or gall, that was used to ease the suffering of the victims of crucifixion, but Jesus did not drink it. Suddenly He called out, ‘My God, My God, Why have you forsaken Me?’

”Had God left Jesus then, Mother?”

”Jesus, dear one, was taking the sinner’s place and must know what it meant to have God’s disfavor. Always, till that minute, Jesus had felt God’s presence with Him, but now, for a moment, He must feel that God also had turned away from Him.”

”Some who were near and did not understand, thought He was calling for the prophet Elias to come. But they just did not understand the language He spoke. They said, ‘Let us see if Elias will come and save Him.’ But Jesus said, ‘It is finished! Father into Thy hands I commit my life,’ and Jesus was dead.”

”Now, dearest, that is the story of Jesus’ death. He had offered His life as a ransom three and a half years before. For those years He had been pouring out His life for the people. Now the payment was complete.”

”Mother, it says in the Bible that dead people were raised and went into the city and were seen by many people. Was that true?”

”No dear. The true version simply says that many dead bodies were thrown from their graves. People, changing the Bible into our language, thought it meant that they came to life, and they added the rest (that they went into the city and showed themselves to the people). No one was raised at that time. Jesus many years after told John that the first resurrection would not take place till He returned.

”It is bed time now, and my little girl must go to rest.”

”But, Mother, did they leave Jesus there on the cross after He died?”
Linnet asked as she folded up her work.

”No, dearest. A rich man, a ruler in Jerusalem, who had always believed in Jesus and had tried to save Him, went to Pilate and begged him to give him permission to bury Jesus in his own new tomb. Pilate said, ‘What! He is not already dead?’ And they said He was. The darkness had begun to lift and it was against the Law to leave anyone hanging on the cross over the Sabbath. So the soldiers went to see if Jesus was really dead. They also examined the two thieves and found them still living. They broke their legs, to hasten their death, but they found Jesus already dead. So they did not break His legs, but one soldier took his spear and drove it into Jesus’ side.

”What a cruel thing to do, Mother.”

”Yes, but the Scriptures said, ‘They shall look upon Him whom they pierced.’ There must be no thought among the people that Jesus was not dead when He was buried. That spear thrust would have killed Him. Then too, His blood was there poured out on the earth to redeem the earth also. The earth was cursed for Adam’s sin. Jesus’ blood would lift the curse in time.

”When Pilate knew that there was no doubt that Jesus was really dead he gave Joseph permission to bury the body in his own tomb. So the disciples went with Joseph and took the Master’s body from the cross and buried it. So it was true as the prophet said, ‘He made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death.’

”Tomorrow I will tell you of His resurrection. Now dear, you must get off to bed.”

”Is there no verse to learn as I get ready, Mother?”

”Take this one, dearest. It is short and easy to learn. ‘By His stripes we are healed.’”

Then Mother kissed her little daughter goodnight.

HE IS RISEN

Lo, the stricken earth is resting
In its sorrow and its grief.
From its great remorse and heartbreak
Can it ever know relief?
For the Son of God lies murdered,
Done to death by cruel men,
There in yonder tomb He's lying.
Can the birds e'er sing again,
Or the sun shine forth in beauty
When God's only son lies slain?
Soldiers round their gleaming campfire,
Guard the Tomb the long night thro'
While above, the Heavens, mourning,
Shed their tears of pearly dew.
In a nearby town His followers
Weeping, wailing, mourn their loss.
He is gone, their Lord and Master;
All life's gold has turned to dross.
"See, the golden dawn is breaking,
Brighter grows the eastern sky;
But 'tis not the dawn!" In wonder
And amaze the soldiers cry.
'Tis as tho' the gates of Heaven
By God's hand are opened wide

Granting them to view a moment
The glories of the other side.
Then death's stupor falls upon them,
Stricken in their tracks they fall
As the Glory of the Eternal
Overcomes them one and all.
Swift God's angel flies from Heaven,
Rolls the imprisoning stone away—
"He is risen! Christ is risen!"
Let the joyous anthem ring.
Never more can death fright us,
'Tis the gateway now to life;
Joyously we'll pass its portals,
Bid farewell to toil and strife.

CHAPTER 26—THE RESURRECTION

”Mother, teacher says if I try really hard, I may pass into grade three at Easter.” Linnet’s voice was full of excitement as she dashed into the house the next evening.

”That is nice, dearest. I am glad to know my girlie is doing So well at school,” Mother answered. Then she was almost smothered in eager arms, as Linnet sprang into her lap, sending things flying in all directions.

”Dear, dear!” Mother laughed. ”What is there about the prospect to make you So enthusiastic? Let me get one breath.”

”I will be in Miss Morton’s room, Mother. I just love her. She is So sweet and kind. How long is it till Easter?”

”Let me see, this is February, and Easter is in March this year, So you have not long to wait. You seem to get along quite nicely with the teacher you have now, Linnet.”

”I do, Mother, but she is very cross and hard to please at times, and she often says such mean things. I guess it is because she is getting old and tired and may be she is sick. Miss Morton is young and sweet and pretty.”

”Hang up your things now, Linnet, and come 6to the fire. It is a bit chilly this afternoon,” Mother said, and soon Linnet was sitting on her favorite stool at Mother’s feet. ”Tell me about Easter, Mother. I know it is kept to remember the death and resurrection of Jesus, and I love to hear about it. Specially how He fooled those old meanies who tried to kill Him.”

”I believe you could almost tell that story yourself, Linnet. You have heard it So often. Of course it comes right after our last story, does it not?”

”Yes, Mother, you told me of Jesus’ death last night,” Linnet said. Then Mother continued. ”We must remember though, dear, that Jesus did not ‘fool’ the ‘old meanies’ as you call them. Jesus was really dead, though some people rather seem to suggest that He was not. That is because they do not realize all that the ransom means and they have the thought that Jesus and God are one being and that the people could not kill Him. If Jesus had really been god, it would have been impossible to kill Him, for god is immortal and that means that He cannot ever die. Jesus, however, was mortal and could die. All the angels are mortal as we know, because God says He will destroy those that were wicked.”

”What does ‘mortal’ mean, Mother?”

”It means ‘able to die.’ A being might be able to die and yet go right on

living forever. Adam was mortal but, if he had obeyed god, he would never have died. You are quite well able to get up on the fence and walk it and to fall off and hurt yourself but you will not do it because you would disobey Mother. So all the angels in heaven are mortal, but they do not die because they obey God.”

”Some of the angels were not good, Mother were they?”

”No dear, some disobeyed god and were turned out of heaven and will be killed in God’s due time, if they do not turn back to Him and repent. They were allowed to live in an invisible form, here in the earth (in chains of darkness) hidden to men and have tempted men for many years. Those who were sorry for their sin and tried to do right might be forgiven, but those who used their powers to lead men into disobedience will be destroyed in the ‘fire prepared for the devil and his angels,’ when Jesus’ Kingdom is set up in power. They have served a useful purpose in proving who is truly following Jesus, during this age.

”This is straying from our story though, dear. What I wished to show was that Jesus was really dead and if God had not raised Him from the dead He must have stayed there forever. If Jesus had not really died, our debts would not have been paid for He had to take Adam’s place and pay his penalty; that was, ‘dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return.’”

”God did not let him stay dead though; did He?”

”No darling. God wakened Him and gave Him a beautiful, spirit body, instead of the body of flesh and blood He had before. God’s Word had said, ‘Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell nor suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption.’”

”What does that mean, Mother?”

”Hell, there, means ‘the grave’ and soul means, as it always does in the Bible, ‘life,’ Mother answered. ”If written correctly it would be ‘Thou wilt not leave my life in the grave or let your Holy One see decay.’ Jesus’ body of flesh did not decay as do the dead bodies of others.”

”What happened to it, Mother?” Linnet asked.

”We will come to that in a little while. First, however, let us take the story as it comes. Jesus’ friends wrapped His body in grave clothes, that is, in long linen strips, and covered His head. There was not much time, however, to treat the body with spices. Saturday was the Sabbath and it commenced at sunset and it was against the law to do any work on that day. Jesus had been crucified at about twelve o’clock and the darkness fell soon after that. He died at about three in the afternoon and it would be about six before His body was taken from the cross.

”The tomb of Joseph of Arimathea was very close to the place where Jesus was crucified. No one had ever been buried in it, for Joseph, like

many Jews, had it all prepared for his family while he lived, So they might all be placed there together when they died. So Jesus' body, wrapped round and round with linen strips, was laid on the stone shelf just before dark.

"The disciples rolled a stone, already prepared for a door, to the opening of the tomb and went home to spend the Sabbath quietly. They could not go to the Temple, for touching a dead body was thought to make a person unclean. The priests were rejoicing over their victory. They were a bit troubled, however, for the darkness and the earthquake had frightened them. Once it was over, however, and nothing else happened, they began to think it was just coincidence."

"What's coincidence, Mother?" Linnet asked.

"I never do get away with a big word, do I dear?" Mother laughed. It means a 'strange event that happens by chance, at the same time.' If you and I both took a notion to get up at the same moment, it would be a coincidence."

"And if we bumped into each other it would be an accident, eh Mother?"

"Right, dear." Mother answered and both laughed. "Well, as I said, the priests began to think that the earthquake and darkness had just chanced to come, but they could not understand the temple veil being torn like that. The veil was about sixty feet long and thirty feet wide and was nearly four inches thick. It took a terrible force to tear it in two, and they knew that force was not of earth for it was torn from the top downward.

"As I said, they were rejoicing over their success in getting rid of Jesus, when someone reminded them that Jesus had said that if they killed Him He would rise again in three days. The very fact that they knew that was what Jesus meant when He spoke of the Temple, proved that they had lied in their accusation that Jesus said He could destroy their Temple and build it again in that time. Now they felt sure that Jesus would not rise again, but being so deceitful and wicked themselves, they thought that the disciples might carry His body away and pretend He had risen, So they went to Pilate and told him of what Jesus had said and asked leave to have the tomb guarded by soldiers.

"Pilate was sad and disgusted with them and with the whole affair. His wife had been really upset to find that Jesus had been killed and Pilate did not feel very comfortable. He said, 'Go and look after it then. You have soldiers.'

"Yes,' the priests replied. 'But they might succeed in spite of a guard. Let us use your ring and put a seal on the stone door. Then no one will dare to try to break in.' "

"Why would a seal stop them, Mother, and what kind of a seal was it?" Linnet asked.

”It was a crime to break a seal that had the stamp of Caesar’s Government on it. A strip of linen tape would be stretched right across the door, So any attempt to open the door would break it. This was fastened by a piece of melted wax. Pilate’s ring had a fancy design on it, representing the authority of Rome. This ring was pressed into the warm wax and left its design stamped in the wax. Every official paper, even now, must bear a legal seal, though often the seal is just a red circle of paper pasted on.

”Anyone who broke the seal of Rome was terribly punished. When the door was fixed, So no one could open it without breaking this seal, the priests set a guard of soldiers around the tomb to see no one got near it. The soldiers built a campfire and sat around watching. They must have felt it was all nonsense. Why should anyone want to guard a dead man? All Friday night they sat there or paced up and down. When they got tired, another fresh lot of soldiers came and they guarded it all day Saturday. Then fresh soldiers came on Saturday evening and they stayed all Saturday night. Just about time for the earliest rays of dawn on Sunday morning, the soldiers noticed a strange light in the sky. It looked as if a window in heaven had been opened.

”The men were frightened and crowded together to watch the light. Then there was another great earthquake that shook the earth and they saw a beautiful angel whose face looked like lightning, it was So bright, and his clothes were white and glistened like snow in sunshine. They were afraid of him and trembled as they saw him walk to the tomb and break the seal of Pilate and roll the stone away. The keepers were So frightened that they fainted with fear and lay on the ground unconscious.

”When they came to themselves the tomb was empty, except that the grave clothes were still there, but they were empty too, there was no body in them. The soldiers ran, terrified, to the city and told the priests what had happened. The priests realized now that Jesus had indeed been the Son of God. They were afraid of what the people would do to them if they found out, So they begged the soldiers not to tell anyone. They said, ‘We will pay you well if you will just tell everyone that the disciples came during the night and stole the body away.’

”‘We will take care of that. If this comes to Pilate’s ears, we will explain that we were forced to take these steps to avoid a riot. The people would kill us all if they suspected the truth. This money will make you rich. We will see you do not get into any trouble.’ So the soldiers agreed to tell a falsehood for the money.

”Jesus’ friends did not know about what had happened. It is rather hard to get the events of that wonderful morning straightened out, for everyone was So excited and many years passed before the events of the morning were written down. It seems that Mary Magdelene could not sleep and she went to the tomb very early in the morning, before it was light and just after the angel had rolled the stone away.

”This time Mary did no more than look into the tomb. It was dark but she could not see Jesus’ body and she ran away to call Peter and John. { John 20:1,2} Perhaps it was while she was gone for them that the other women came to the grave. { Luke 24:1- 10 Mark 16:1- 8} There was Mary (Jesus’ mother) and Mary (the mother of James) and Joanna and Salome, and others. They had been busy during the night getting spices and linen strips ready to fix up the body of the Master. Now they were bringing these things to the tomb. When they got near, they began to wonder how they were going to get the immense stone door open, but they found it open already. They stooped to look in and saw two angels, one sitting at the head and one at the foot of where Jesus’ body had been. The angels looked just like young men dressed in white clothes.

”They said, ‘Do not be afraid, you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth. He is not here. He has risen and is going to Galilee. You will see Him there.’ They started back for Jerusalem to tell the disciples and as they went Jesus met them. He spoke to them and the women knelt at His feet, and He told them to go on to tell the disciples. { Matthew 28:9}

”Mary Magdelene had found Peter and John and had told them, ‘They have taken the body of Jesus away from the tomb where we put it, and we do not know where it is.’ Peter and John hurried with her to the tomb and when they got there they stooped and looked in. They did not see any angels, but just the linen clothes that had been wrapped around Jesus’ body, and the cloth that had been around His head lying by itself.

”Peter went right into the tomb and examined the clothes. Perhaps he saw what no one else did, that the clothes were lying just as they had been wrapped around the body but they were empty. He would see that no one could have placed them there, in that manner and that somehow Jesus’ body had just disappeared, leaving the clothes to lie flat, in the same folds. He realized that a miracle had taken place and believed. Peter called John to come and see. He also examined the linen clothes and understood, for he too could see that no one could move Jesus’ body and leave the clothes lying like that. The square that had been wrapped around His head lay as if the head had just dissolved.

”The disciples started for the city to tell the other friends of the Master, that He had risen from the dead. Mary still thought that someone must have moved the body. She remained outside the tomb crying softly. She stooped down and looked in again and then she saw the angels, who had been there all the time, but invisible. They took human form to tell Mary about Jesus. They said to her:

”‘Woman, why are you crying?’

”Mary said, ‘Because they have taken my Lord away and I do not know where they have put Him.’

”Before the angels had time to answer she heard a step behind her and

turned around to see who was coming. There stood a man dressed like a gardener. Mary said, 'If you have taken Him from here please tell me where you have placed Him that I may take Him away.' Who do you think it was, Linnet?"

"I know who it was, Mother. It was Jesus Himself. I would think Mary would know Him."

"Mary would have known Him if He had looked like Himself, dear. Jesus was dressed like a gardener and looked different on purpose. You see He had made the body from the atoms, to speak to Mary, and He had made the clothes too, for you will remember the soldiers took all the clothes He had on and He had left the linen clothes in the tomb. It was not till Jesus said, 'Mary' that she knew His voice and cried, 'My Master!' Then she just threw herself at His feet and held Him as if she just could not bear to ever let Him go. Jesus gently released her hands and said:

"'Do not delay Me, Mary. I have not yet gone back to the Father but I want you to go to my brethren and tell them that I am going back to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'

"Then Jesus disappeared and Mary hurried back to tell the disciples that she had seen Jesus.

"There was great excitement in Jerusalem that day. The news spread all through the town and out to Bethany. People did not know what to think. The soldiers told the story they had been paid to tell and So some thought the news of the resurrection was just a story to make people think Jesus was more than human.

"The disciples gathered in the upper room in Jerusalem. The women told the story of the angels again and again. Mary had to tell about the gardener who proved to be Jesus. Peter and John told of the clothes they had seen in the tomb and the other women told of how they had met Jesus. They were So happy they could not eat.

"Two of the disciples had an errand to a little town some distance away that was called Emmaus. They started off to go there and they were talking about the wonderful things they had heard. They were inclined to think the women had been fooled, for they could not understand why Mary had not known Him, or how the angels had been there one minute and gone the next. They were discussing these things when a stranger caught up to them and walked along near them. After awhile he said to them:

"'What is this that you are speaking about? Why are you So sad?'

"The disciples said, 'Are you a stranger in these parts that you do not know about the things that have happened recently?' "

"I know who it was Mother. It was Jesus." Linnet said.

"Yes it was Jesus but they did not recognize Him. The body He had made to appear to them was So different from the one they had known for years.

"Jesus said to them, 'What things do you mean?'

"'Why, about Jesus of Nazareth,' they replied. 'He was a prophet of god and very great and He did the most wonderful things. Then the priests and rulers of the people arrested Him and brought Him before Pilate on false charges and they crucified Him. We all believed He was the Messiah who was to redeem Israel, and this is the third day since these things happened. This morning some women astonished us by saying they had gone early to the tomb where we laid Him and they said they had seen a vision of angels who assured them that Jesus was not dead. Others went to the grave and said they found the grave empty and proof that He had risen but they did not see any angels.'

"Then Jesus, without letting them guess who He was, said, 'How very foolish you are and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. Can you not see that Christ had to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?' Then Jesus began at the story of Moses and showed them how all the Scriptures foretold that He must die and pay Adam's debt. Can you tell me what pictures He must have showed them, Linnet?"

"Moses was a picture of Jesus was he not, Mother? If He began with Moses He must have told them about the Passover."

"Yes, dear. Moses was born in Egypt that pictured the world, and born of Israelitish parents. He gave Himself to God and tried to save the people when he was forty but they would not have him and he was forced to go away to a distant land to wait God's time to save the people. Jesus might tell them this. Then He would tell them how the Passover lamb had to be killed and its blood sprinkled on the doors So that the angel of God who was to come to punish the people of Egypt would know who were His children and spare them. He would remind them that the Passover lamb was taken into the homes on the tenth of the month and killed on the fourteenth and that, as a result of the plague that came that night, the children of Israel were saved and taken out of Egypt.

"Then He would show them the sacrifices and how the bullock had to be killed and its blood taken into the Most Holy. He would remind them of Moses' words about the greater prophet. Then He would tell them of Isaac's sacrifice and of the prophecies of Isaiah. He would show them the picture of the serpents in the wilderness and the brass serpent that was set up to cure the people. He would quote Isaiah's words, 'He hath no form nor comeliness and when we see Him there is no beauty that we should desire Him. He was despised and rejected of men and we hid as it were our faces from Him. He is despised and we esteemed Him not; a

man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows: yet we did consider Him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him and by His stripes we are healed. He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter but as a sheep before her shearers is dumb So He opened not His mouth... He made His grave with the wicked and with the rich in His death.'

"All those and many other prophecies Jesus reminded them of and still they did not recognize Him. At last they reached Emmaus and the way had never seemed So short. Now they began to understand the things they had never seen before. When they reached the house where they intended to stay, they coaxed Jesus to stay with them for supper. He went in with them and when they sat down to the table to eat, Jesus took the bread and said the same words over it as he had said at the last supper they had together, breaking the bread as he had done then. Then they knew Him and cried out 'Master, Lord, is it really you?' Then He disappeared and they were all alone."

"I guess they were surprised, Mother. What did they do then?" Linnet asked.

"Just what you or I would have done. They never stopped to finish their supper but started back for Jerusalem and I am sure they nearly ran. They forgot all about being tired, they just wanted to tell their friends of the wonderful thing that had happened.

"They rushed into the room where the others were gathered and told them the story. The disciples were already full of the news that Peter had seen Jesus. They had hardly finished their story when Jesus suddenly appeared in their midst. They could not tell how He had got there for the doors and windows were closed. Where did He come from, Linnet?"

"I guess He was there all the time, Mother."

"Yes, He had no doubt come back with the disciples from Emmaus and had come in when they did and heard all they said. He wanted them to realize that he was a spirit being now and could come and go like the wind. You remember what he had said to Nicodemus, 'Ye hear the wind blow but cannot see where it comes from or whence it goes. So is everyone who is born of the spirit.' "

"Were they frightened, Mother?"

"Yes, Linnet, they were. They thought they had seen a spirit but Jesus said, 'Peace be unto you.' Then, seeing how frightened they were he said, 'Why are you troubled? Come and look at me, see my hands and feet that it is indeed myself. Come and touch me for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see I have.' "

”Why did Jesus say that, Mother?” Linnet asked. ”Has a spirit not got flesh or bones?”

”A spirit is, as I explained before, made of different material than us. We have bodies of flesh that were formed from atoms of the earth. Spirits have bodies just as substantial, but of different material and operate on a different wavelength So we cannot see or feel them.

”Jesus then asked them for something to eat and they brought Him some fish and bread and He ate it there to prove that the body He had created to appear to them, was a real one. Then Jesus talked to them for a long time explaining why He had to die as Adam’s ransom and go back to heaven for a time to get His kingdom. He told them how they must go out and preach to all people about the coming Kingdom, and that then He would come again.

”Thomas, one of the disciples was not there at that time and when they told him all about it he thought they were all being fooled. He said, ‘I do not believe it was Jesus you saw at all. Mary here thought He was a gardener and it was just His voice she recognized. You two who walked all the way to Emmaus did not recognize Him and you knew Him like a brother. Someone is fooling you all.’

”‘We are not fooled, Thomas! Jesus is a spirit being now and takes any form He wishes,’ they said. ‘I won’t believe unless I see the holes in His hands and feet; and put my finger in them, and put my hand into the hole in His side. From what you say there were scars in His hands. You may not be wrong, but you will have to show me,’ Thomas said. Then suddenly there was Jesus right with them. All the doors were locked and the windows too. This time the others were not afraid but Thomas just could not believe his eyes. This time Jesus had made a body exactly like the one that was crucified, even to the wounds in the hands and feet and side. He said, ‘Thomas, come here and put your fingers in the nail holes in my hands and feet and put your hand in this wound in my side. Do not be faithless, but believe.’ Then Thomas cried, ‘My Lord and my God.’ Thomas never doubted again.”

”I guess no one would doubt after that, Mother.”

”It would be hard to doubt such a proof, Linnet. Jesus said, ‘blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.’

”Now my little girl, Mother must go and get supper. You can set the table for me and tonight when you go to bed, if you wish, I will tell you about the other times the Master showed Himself to His disciples before He went to heaven.”

”You said you would tell me what became of Jesus’ body, Mother.”

”That is right. I believe I did, dearest. Well it is one of the things that

the Bible tells us nothing about, So we must just use our own wisdom. We know it was laid in the grave, wrapped up in linen clothes and when the disciples came on Sunday morning it just was not there. It was never seen again and So we can only believe that God simply turned it back to dust at once, instead of leaving it to decay. He had promised through His prophets, that His Holy One should not see corruption—that means decay. If the body of Jesus had been kept it would have been more difficult for people to believe that he had risen, So God took the body out of the way. When a body turns to dust there is just a handful of dust and the rest turns into gasses. So, if there were a handful of dust in the linen clothes they would not notice it. We know that Jesus never took back that body.”

”How do we know that, Mother?”

Mother did not answer for a moment; instead she said, ”Go to the bedroom Linnet and bring me my black purse.”

Linnet obeyed and Mother took out a coin. ”Here is a dime Linnet. You may get yourself a treat with it,”she said, and laid the dime on the table.

”Now then you will want a verse for this story I suppose.”

”Yes, Mother, and thanks for the dime.” Linnet said, taking the coin in her hands.

”Pass me the Bible, Linnet.” The child put down the coin and went for the Bible. Mother took the coin and put it back in her purse. Here is a verse for you tonight:

”‘My flesh I give for the life of the world.’ John 6:51.”

”That is a nice verse and easy to learn. Why, where did my dime go, Mother?”

”I put it back in my purse, Linnet.”

”But you gave it to me, Mother. Linnet protested. ”Why did you take it back?”

Mother laughed as she opened her purse and gave the dime to her little daughter again.

”I just wanted to impress something on your mind, dear. You see, if Jesus had taken back the life—His flesh which He gave for the life of the world—our debt would not be paid, would it?”

”No Mother, it would not.” Linnet answered.

”So when Jesus said, ‘the bread which I will give is my flesh which I will give for the life of the world,’ He meant it to stay given. He could not

take it back. He could still have the spirit life which God had promised to give Him for His faithful service.”

”I understand, Mother. And thanks for the dime, I am going to go and get that treat before you take it back again.” Linnet laughed.

Shall Truth’s glowing torch be extinguished?

Must its beauty depart from the earth?

Nay, their passing shall kindle a fire

That will light each dark recess of earth.

The torch is but lifted up higher

That wider its glory may spread

Till its flame shall have conquered the darkness

And wakened the hosts of the dead.

They shall come from the grave and the waters

Shall give up their slain at His word,

For sorrow and sickness and anguish

Must obey the command of the Lord.

The earth shall yield freely her fruitage,

The plague and destroyer shall cease,

All men shall be taught of the Saviour

To follow the bright ways of Peace.

From”Stray Petals.”

CHAPTER 27—THE RANSOM IS GIVEN TO GOD

”All ready for my story, Mother; you promised it,” Linnet announced.
”You cannot take that back like you did the dime.”

Mother laughed heartily. ”I guess I would have a time taking the dime back now, Linnet. I wonder if you remember the verse I gave you.”

”Yes, Mother, I think I will remember it every time I get a dime to spend.
‘My flesh I give for the life of the world.’ “

”I said I would tell you of the other times Jesus appeared to His followers, did I not, dear? After Jesus appeared to them in the upper room and proved to Thomas that he was indeed alive, they did not see Him again for a time. He had told them to go to Galilee and He would see them there. So they left the city. It was wise to leave it, for the priests were threatening to turn their hatred on all Jesus’ followers. So they slipped away quietly and returned to the Sea of Galilee. There the people who had known and loved Jesus were very eager to hear about His death and resurrection.

”The disciples returned to their homes and waited, but nothing happened for a time. It was perhaps two weeks later when Peter, not knowing what to do with himself and weary of just waiting around, decided to go fishing again. He got his boat all ready and said to the other disciples, ‘I am going to go fishing again tonight.’

”It was almost two years since Peter had been fishing. The other disciples were growing weary of idleness also; So eight of them decided to go along. They took Peter’s old boat and went out on the Sea of Galilee. All night they worked and never caught a fish. It was nearly morning when they decided to give it up and started for home. When they came near the shore they saw a man on the shore, with a fire burning and something cooking on the coals. The man called to them: ‘Children, have you any meat?’

”They answered, ‘No!’ Then the stranger said, ‘If you will cast your net on the right side of your boat you will catch some fish.’

”They threw in the net and caught So many fish they could not get the net back into the boat. Peter remembered that the same thing had happened the last time he had gone fishing. Jesus was there and they had to get help to get the fish ashore. They had sold all the fish and had gone with Jesus then.

”‘It is the Master! He told us He would meet us here.’ Peter cried, and caught up his coat and put it on for he had been naked. The night was very hot and they had taken off their clothes. Peter jumped into the water and swam to the shore to get to Jesus quickly. The others brought the boat and the net, for they could not get all the fish into the boat.

”When they reached the shore they found that Jesus had a fire built and some fish already baked for their breakfast, and some bread. ”Bring some of the fish which you have caught,” Jesus said. Then Peter went to help the others and they dragged the nets to land and found that they had one hundred and fifty- three fish, all very large ones.

”Jesus said, ‘Come now and get some breakfast.’ They knew it was Jesus but He seemed So different. After they had all they wished to eat Jesus called Peter to walk a short distance with Him. When they were far enough away that the others could not hear, Jesus said:

”‘Peter, do you love me more than these?’ ‘

”More than the disciples, Mother?’”

”No, dear, more than his boat and the sea and the fishing. Peter said, ‘Yes, Lord. You know that I love you.’ Jesus said, ‘If you really love me, Peter, feed my sheep.’ Then after a few minutes Jesus simply said, ‘Feed my lambs, Peter.’ In a little while Jesus asked for the third time, ‘Peter do you love me.’ Peter was grieved. Do you know why?’”

”No, Mother, but why did Jesus keep on asking him that?’”

”Peter had said three times that He did not know Jesus. Now Peter cried, and there was a break in his voice, ‘Oh, Master, you know all things. You know that I do love you.’ Then Jesus said again, ‘Feed my sheep, Peter. O Peter, I tell you it will not be easy to follow me. When you were young you dressed yourself and went wherever you pleased, but when you are old you will stretch out your arms and others will gird you and carry you where you do not wish to go.’ ‘

”What did Jesus mean by that, Mother?’”

”He was foretelling Peter’s death, dearest. Peter was crucified when he was an old man, because of his faithfulness to Jesus. They walked back to the fire and Peter saw John, who was So dear to Jesus. Peter asked, ‘What will happen to John, Master?’ Jesus said, ‘Never you mind about John. It does not matter to you if I let him remain till I come again, Peter, all you have to think about is your own course. You follow me.’

”Again some time went by and they did not see Jesus. They knew he had said they were to wait in Jerusalem for Him and that the Comforter would be sent to them; So they returned again to Jerusalem and there Jesus came again to them and talked for some time to them. This time Jesus led the disciples out of the city to Bethany and he told them to wait in Jerusalem until the promised blessing should come. They asked Him if He was going to set up His Kingdom then. Jesus answered, ‘It is not for you to know the times which the Father has kept in His own power, but when you have received the gift of the holy spirit you will then receive power and you will go forth and witness for Me in all parts of the earth.’

”They had walked quietly out from the city and now they stood on a hill near Bethany. Then they saw Jesus slowly lifted up off the ground and carried up till a bright cloud received Him and hid Him from their sight. They stood gazing up into Heaven, expecting Jesus to come back. Then they noticed two strangers in bright and shining robes standing near them. They were angels and they said, ‘Why do you stand here looking up into Heaven? This same Jesus whom you have seen go up into Heaven will come again in the same manner as you have seen Him go.’ Then the strangers disappeared and the disciples all returned to their homes.”

”Did they mean the people would see Jesus come back like that, Mother?” Linnet asked.

”No, darling. The angels did not say anyone would see Jesus return, but that he would come in the same way as he went. Now, no one saw Jesus go but the faithful followers who had walked out to Bethany with Him. We are not sure how many were there. We are told that five hundred people saw Him at one time after He was risen, but whether it was at this time or another time we cannot say. It is possible that there were just the one hundred and twenty true disciples, mentioned by Peter in Acts 1:15. These were the ones who had always been near Him.

”No one else saw Jesus, as far as we know, in the whole forty days after He was raised and Jesus said before He died, ”The world seeth me no more, but ye shall see me.’ The people of the world will never see Jesus again for He is not a man of flesh and bones anymore, but a great spirit being. Jesus has now returned (as He went) quietly and only His close followers know anything about His return.

”After Jesus went back to heaven the disciples were often gathered together in the same upper room, talking about Him and the things He had taught them. The room was a big one and they had to meet in secret because of the Jews.”

”But they were all Jews were they not, Mother?” Linnet asked.

”Yes, darling. I really should have said, ‘because of the leaders and rulers of the Jews.’ You see the rulers had decided that it would be best to kill all whom they knew to be Jesus’ followers and so stop the new religion from spreading. So they had to keep very quiet and meet in secret. The disciples had a real convention. They met in the upper room and spent their time in prayer and studying the Scriptures and waiting for the blessing Jesus had promised.

”One day Peter suggested that they should choose someone to take the place of Judas, since it was very plain that God intended to have twelve apostles to take the place of the twelve sons of Jacob and be heads of the new twelve tribes of spiritual Israel. It was also written in Psalms 109, ‘Let his days be few and let another take his office.’ Peter felt that these

words referred to Judas and thought that his position should be given to someone else. So they chose two men and asked God to decide by a lot which one He had chosen. Then they cast lots and the lot fell to Matthias; So they counted him as one of the apostles.”

”How did they choose him, Mother? What does it mean to cast lots?”

”There are many ways, dear, but perhaps the one used was dice, which method is still used. When you play your game of snakes and ladders you shake the dice to see who gets a five and that one starts the game. In olden days they often cast lots by different means to try to find out God’s will in different matters. It was said, ‘The lot is cast into the lap but God disposes.’ In this case they did not find out God’s will.”

”How do we know, Mother?”

”Because God Himself chose the one He wished to take Judas’ place, sometime later,” Mother answered. ”But we will come to that later.

”Ten days passed and they were all gathered together one day; how many were there we are not told, perhaps the one hundred and twenty were present, and suddenly, as they were studying and praying there was a sound like a rushing wind that seemed to fill the whole house where they were sitting. And they saw what looked like little flames of fire that came and settled upon each one of them and then disappeared, as the dove had settled on Jesus at Jordan.

”They felt a strange new power sweep through them and they found that they could talk in other languages. They knew that they had received some of the great power of God’s spirit.”

”Mother, do people ever have that power now?” Linnet enquired, and Mother answered: ”Only twice was that experience sent, dearest. First to the disciples soon after Jesus went back to Heaven and then three and a half years after, to the Gentiles gathered at the home of Cornelius, but I will tell you of that in its right place.

”The appearance of the little flames was a sign that all present could see, to show them that God had indeed given His great power to the followers of Jesus. The gifts they received were to help them to show all the Jews and other people that they really had God’s approval. They were able to speak in any language So they could preach the Good News to peoples of all races. They were able

to cure sick people also, and to remember the words of Jesus and to understand God’s Word and His Plan. This gift was a great help to them in doing the work God had given them. The disciples could give a little of their power to others whom God had chosen but those others could not pass the gift on. So when the disciples died, and those to whom they had given the power also died, the gifts disappeared. Some today claim to have the gift but it is an imitation.”

”There were a great many Jews in Jerusalem from different parts of the world. They were visiting the city and were earnest and godly men. When the news of the strange power that God had given the disciples came to be known in the city these men gathered together to hear the disciples speak and they were amazed to hear them talking in every language, intelligently. They said, ‘How is it that these men can speak all languages yet they have never learned them.’ But the Jews who could not understand the language the Apostles were using, said, ‘They are drunk and just babbling and making funny noises.’

”Then Peter got up and said to them all, ‘These men are not drunk, but this is the fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel who told us that God would some day pour out His power upon His servants and handmaidens. God sent His Son, Jesus, to this nation. He did great and wonderful deeds among us that no man ever did before, yet you—in fulfillment of the Plan of God and working out His purpose—have taken this man and killed Him, but God raised Him from the dead, as David foretold that He would do. David was a prophet and the things he spoke were not about himself, for he is dead and lies in the grave asleep, but he foretold by God’s power what would be done to the Son of God who would come through his family. We are witnesses of Christ’s resurrection. Now you must repent and be baptized, calling on Jesus to forgive you for the great sin you have committed and, if you are truly repentant God will forgive you and give to you also the gift of His spirit.’

”That was the time when Peter used the first of the two keys Jesus had given to him and opened the Word of God to the Jews. Many believed in Jesus that day, and came to God.

”The rulers of the Jews were very angry at the disciples when they heard that they were preaching and winning many followers for Jesus. They became still more angry when Peter and John cured a man who had been lame from his birth, right on the steps of the Temple and then openly accused the rulers of having brought the anger of God on their nation by crucifying God’s own Son. They were arrested and put in prison for the night and the next day they were brought before the council. Peter was utterly fearless now, and spoke very plainly to them telling them that Jesus was God’s Son and that they would never have salvation till they came to God through Him.

”The rulers forbade them to speak any more of Jesus, but Peter and John defied them and said they would obey God first and would do His will.

”It was about this time that a man and woman, wishing to have a great place in the new Church, plotted to fool the disciples and to sell some land and pretend that they had given all the money to the new Church. Both were punished by instant death.” ”Did the disciples kill them for it, Mother?”

”No, dear. God, by His great power caused their death, to show the

people that He would not accept people who came to Him with a lie on their lips.

”Peter and John preached just the same and paid no attention to the rulers. Soon they were arrested again, but a student of God’s Law stood up and warned the rulers that they might find themselves fighting against God if they continued their opposition. So for a time the disciples were able to preach and teach openly and many people believed through their efforts.

”About this time one of the disciples who was named Stephen began to do great works and miracles in Jesus’ name and the rulers who had brought about Jesus’ death became very angry with him because they could not resist his arguments, and they brought false accusations against him, claiming that he had spoken against God. Stephen was brought before them and spoke earnestly to them, finally accusing them of Jesus’ murder. They became so angry that they stoned Stephen to death.

”There was a young man called Saul, who was a student of the Law of God and very earnest in his desire to serve God. Saul really believed that the new religion was an evil thing and he became the very worst enemy of the followers of Jesus. This young man held the clothes of the rulers who stoned Stephen, and then led soldiers to arrest the other Christians everywhere and many were put in prison and punished for teaching about Jesus.

”One day Saul was going to the city of Damascus to arrest the Christians there. He had a lot of soldiers with him and was determined to completely destroy all the followers of Jesus.”

”What a wicked man he must have been, Mother!” Linnet exclaimed. But Mother answered, ”No, Linnet, Saul was not really a bad man. He loved God and thought that Jesus had deceived the people and that those who believed in Him were God’s enemies. While he was causing great distress and suffering to Jesus’ followers, he was still honest and was not working, as the rulers and priests were, for his own ends, but was trying to make everyone serve God. Saul really believed that the followers of Jesus were sinners. That was why God chose him for a great work.

”Saul and his soldiers were near Damascus when suddenly a great light shone round them and a voice from Heaven said, ‘Saul, Saul! Why are you persecuting me?’

”Saul cried, ‘Why who are you, Lord?’ The voice said, ‘I am Jesus of Nazareth whom you are persecuting. It is a hard thing for you to kick against the goad.’

”So bright was the vision that Saul fell from his horse to the road. Trembling with fear he said, ‘What do you wish me to do, Lord?’

”Then Jesus said, ‘Get up and go on to the city and there you will be told

what you must do.’

”When the vision faded Saul found that he was blind. His soldiers had seen the light and heard the sound of the voice but could not see who spoke or make out the words. They had to lead Saul to the city.

”About the same time the Lord spoke in a vision to a man living in the city. He was a kind, old man who was a true follower of Jesus. The Lord said to him, ‘Ananias, go to the street that is called Straight and to the home of Judas and ask for a man called Saul of Tarsus, for he is praying, and he has seen in a vision you coming and restoring his sight.’

”Now Ananias knew all about Saul and, with the rest of the Christians in Damascus, had been dreading his coming. He said, ‘Lord I have heard all about Saul and what terrible things he has done to Thy followers. He is coming here with full authority to arrest all that call on Thy name, and to put them in prison.’

”But the Lord said to him, ‘Go and do as I say for he is a chosen vessel to carry the news of My Kingdom to the Gentiles, and I am going to show him what great things he shall willingly suffer for me.’

”Ananias went to the home where Saul was staying and there he found a broken and contrite man. Saul’s only desire had been to fight for God and what he believed was right, and he was very sorry to find out that he had been opposing the will of God. Ananias saw at once how he felt and was sorry for him. He spoke very kindly to Saul and said, ‘Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you has sent me to you that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.’

”Then he touched Saul’s eyes and it seemed as though hard scales had grown over the eyeballs; they fell off at the touch of Ananias. Saul could see again though his eyes were never very strong after that. He had seen, what no man can see and live—a Divine being—and his sight was almost destroyed. No man can see God and live and the glory of the Lord Jesus had been too great for Saul.

”Now Ananias explained the Scriptures to him and showed him how Jesus was really God’s Son and had come, as promised, to pay the ransom. He showed him how those who were following Jesus were really the ones who were serving God.

”Saul’s name was changed to Paul and he became one of the very finest servants God and Jesus ever had. He suffered much for Jesus and traveled all over Europe teaching and preaching the Word of God. He was taken a prisoner to Rome and there started the Christian church.

”Now, dearest, I have kept my promise and have told you all about the story of Jesus and the wonderful things He did. This story should really have ended when Jesus returned to Heaven to be with God but I told you I would tell of the one who was chosen by God to take the place of

Judas. That one was Paul who had been Saul before Jesus called him.

”Ever sine Jesus returned to heaven,

His followers have carried the light

That has troubled the powers of darkness

Revealing earth’s sorrow and blight.

With joy, truth’s bright torch they have carried

Giving light in earth’s sorrow and gloom,

They have conquered through pain and affliction

And have triumphed o’er death and the tomb.”

”I like that verse, Mother. I wish I could help to carry the light of truth to people and tell them all about the coming Kingdom.”

”Your work at present is to learn all you can, darling. Then, when the Kingdom is established, you will be able to teach all the little children you know who come back from the grave. Jesus said, ‘Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel.’ That means, the Good News of the coming Kingdom. When the people wake up from the sleep of death they will want to hear what you will be able to tell them. Make it your one, great aim to learn all you can about His Word So that when He calls you, you can answer, ‘Here am I Lord, send me.’

”Now, my darling, it is time for rest. May the Dear Lord watch over you and bless and keep you and all the other little children who read these stories and seek to learn of Him, that they may find a place with the sheep on the right hand of the Shepherd, when He reigns in the glory of His Kingdom.”

Mother stooped and took her girlie close in her arms and held her there for a moment. And now we must say goodnight and God bless you all.