VISON ONE

1. He who brought me up sold me to a certain Rhoda at Rome. After many years I made her acquaintance again, and began to love her as a sister. After some time I saw her bathing in the river Tiber, and gave her my hand and helped her out of the river. When I saw her beauty I reflected in my heart and said: “I should be happy if I had a wife of such beauty and character.” This was my only thought, and no other, no, not one. After some time, while I was going to Cumae, and glorifying the creation of God, for its greatness and splendour and might, as I walked along I became sleepy. And a spirit seized me and took me away through a certain pathless district, through which a man could not walk, but the ground was precipitous and broken up by the streams of water. So I crossed that river, and came to the level ground and knelt down and began to pray to the Lord and to confess my sins. Now while I was praying the Heaven was opened, and I saw that woman whom I had desired greeting me out of the Heaven and saying: “Hail, Hermas.” And I looked at her, and said to her: “Lady, what are you doing here?” and she answered me: “I was taken up to accuse you of your sins before the Lord.” I said to her: “Are you now accusing me?” “No,” she said, “but listen to the words which I am going to say to you. ‘God who dwells in Heaven’ and created that which is out of that which is not, and ‘increased and multiplied it’ for the sake of his Holy Church, is angry with you because you sinned against me.” I answered and said to her: “Did I sin against you? In what place or when did I speak an evil word to you? Did I not always look on you as a goddess? Did I not always respect you as a sister? Why do you charge me falsely, Lady, with these wicked and impure things?” She laughed and said to me: “The desire of wickedness came up in your heart. Or do you not think that it is an evil deed for a righteous man if an evil desire come up in his heart? Yes, it is a sin,” said she, “and a great one. For the righteous man has righteous designs. So long then as his designs are righteous his repute stands fast in Heaven, and he finds the Lord ready to assist him in all his doings. But they who have evil designs in their hearts bring upon themselves death and captivity, especially those who obtain this world for themselves, and glory in their wealth, and do not lay hold of the good things which are to come. Their hearts will repent; yet have they no hope, but they have abandoned themselves and their life. But do you pray to God, and ‘He shall heal the sins of yourself’ and of all our house and of all the saints.”

2. After she had spoken these words the Heavens were shut, and I was all shuddering and in grief. And I began to say in myself: “If this sin is recorded against me, how shall I be saved? Or how shall I propitiate God for my completed sins? Or with what words shall I beseech the Lord to be forgiving unto me?” While I was considering and doubting these things in my heart I saw before me a white chair of great size made of snow-white wool; and there came a woman, old and clothed in shining garments with a book in her hand, and she sat down alone and greeted me: “Hail, Hermas!” And I, in my grief and weeping, said: “Hail, Lady!” And she said to me: “Why are you gloomy, Hermas? You who are patient and good-tempered, who are always laughing, why are you so downcast in appearance and not merry?” And I said to her: “Because of a most excellent lady, who says that I sinned against her. And she said: “By no means let this thing happen to
the servant of God; but for all that the thought did enter your heart concerning her. It is such a design as this which brings sin on the servants of God. For it is an evil and mad purpose against a revered spirit and one already approved, if a man desire an evil deed, and especially if it be Hermas the temperate, who abstains from every evil desire and is full of all simplicity and great innocence.

3. “But it is not for this that God is angry with you, but in order that you should convert your family, which has sinned against the Lord, and against you, their parents. But you are indulgent, and do not correct your family, but have allowed them to become corrupt. For this reason the Lord is angry with you, but he will heal all the past evils in your family, for because of their sins and wickednesses have you been corrupted by the things of daily life. But the great mercy of the Lord has had pity on you and on your family, and will make you strong and will establish you in his glory; only do not be slothful, but have courage and strengthen your family. For as the smith, by hammering his work, overcomes the task which he desires, so also the daily righteous word overcomes all wickedness. Do not cease, then, correcting your children, for I know that if they repent with all their heart, they will be inscribed in the books of life with the saints.” After she had ceased these words she said to me: “Would you like to hear me read aloud?” and I said: “I should like it, Lady.” She said to me: “Listen then, and hear the glory of God.” I heard great and wonderful things which I cannot remember; for all the words were frightful, such as a man cannot bear. So I remembered the last words, for they were profitable for us and gentle: “Lo, ‘the God of the powers,’ whom I love, by his mighty power, and by his great wisdom ‘created the world,’ and by his glorious counsel surrounded his creation with beauty, and by his mighty word ‘fixed the Heaven and founded the earth upon the waters,’ and by his own wisdom and forethought created his holy Church, which he also blessed—Lo, he changes the heavens, and the mountains and the hills and the seas, and all things are becoming smooth for his chosen ones, to give them the promise which he made with great glory and joy, if they keep the ordinances of God, which they received with great faith.”

4. So, when she had finished reading, and rose from the chair, there came four young men, and took up the chair and went away towards the East. And she called me and touched my breast and said to me; “Did my reading please you?” and I said to her: “Lady, this last part pleases me, but the first part was hard and difficult.” And she said to me: “This last part is for the righteous, but the first part was for the heathen and the apostates.” While she was speaking with me two men appeared, and took her by the arm and they went away towards the East, whither the chair had gone. But she went away cheerfully, and as she went said to me, “Play the man, Hermas.”

VISION TWO

1. While I was going to Cumae, at about the same time as the year before, as I walked along I remembered the vision of the previous year, and the spirit again seized me and took me away to the same place, where I had been the previous year. So when I came to the place, I knelt down and began to pray to the Lord and ‘to glorify his name,’ because he had thought me worthy, and had made known to me by former sins. But after I rose from prayer I saw before me the ancient lady, whom I had seen the year before, walking and reading out from a little book. And she said to me: “Can you take this message to God’s elect ones?” I said to her: “Lady, I cannot remember so much; but give me the
little book to copy.” “Take it,” she said, “and give it me back.” I took it and went away to a certain place in the country, and copied it all, letter by letter, for I could not distinguish the syllables. So when I had finished the letters of the little book it was suddenly taken out of my hand; but I did not see by whom.

2. But after fifteen days, when I had fasted and prayed greatly to the Lord, the knowledge of the writing was revealed to me. And these things were written: Your seed, Hermas, have set God at naught, and have blasphemed the Lord, and have betrayed their parents in great wickedness, and they are called the betrayers of parents, and their betrayal has not profited them, but they have added to their sins wanton deeds and piled up wickedness, and so their crimes have been made complete. But make these words known to all your children and to your wife, who shall in future be to you as a sister. For she also does not refrain her tongue, with which she sins; but when she has heard these words she will refrain it, and will obtain mercy. After you have made known these words to them, which the Master commanded me to reveal to you, all the sins which they have formerly committed shall be forgiven them, and they shall be forgiven to all the saints who have sinned up to this day, if they repent with their whole heart, and put aside double-mindedness from their heart. For the Master has sworn to his elect by his glory that if there be still sin after this day has been fixed, they shall find no salvation; for repentance for the just has an end; the days of repentance have been fulfilled for all the saints, but for the heathen repentance is open until the last day. You shall say, then, to the leaders of the Church, that they reform their ways in righteousness, to receive in full the promises with great glory. You, therefore, ‘who work righteousness,’ must remain steadfast and be not double-minded, that your passing may be with the holy angels. Blessed are you, as many as endure the great persecution which is coming, and as many as shall not deny their life. For the Lord has sworn by his Son that those who have denied their Christ have been rejected from their life, that is, those who shall now deny him in the days to come. But those who denied him formerly have obtained forgiveness through his great mercy.

3. “But, Hermas, no longer bear a grudge against your children, nor neglect your sister, that they may be cleansed from their former sins. For they will be corrected with righteous correction, if you bear no grudge against them. The bearing of grudges works death. But you, Hermas, had great troubles of your own because of the transgressions of your family, because you did not pay attention to them. But you neglected them and became entangled in their evil deeds. But you are saved by not ‘having broken away from the living God,’ and by your simplicity and great temperance. These things have saved you, if you remain in them, and they save all whose deeds are such, and who walk in innocence and simplicity. These shall overcome all wickedness and remain steadfast to eternal life. ‘Blessed’ are all they ‘who do righteousness’; they shall not perish for ever. But you shall say to Maximus: ‘Behold, persecution is coming, if it seems good to you deny the faith again.’ ‘The Lord is near those that turn to him,’ as it is written in the Book Eldad and Modat, who prophesied to the people in the wilderness.”

4. And a revelation was made to me, brethren, while I slept, by a very beautiful young man who said to me, “Who do you think that the ancient lady was from whom you received the little book?” I said, “The Sibyl.” “You are wrong,” he said, “she is not.” “Who is she, then?” I said. “The Church,” he said. I said to him, “Why then is she old?” “Because,” he said, “she was created the first of all things. For this reason is she old; and
for her sake was the world established.” And afterwards I saw a vision in my house. The ancient lady came and asked me if I had already given the book to the elders. I said that I had not given it. “You have done well,” she said, “for I have words to add. When, therefore, I have finished all the words they shall be made known by you to all the elect. You shall therefore write two little books and send one to Clement and one to Grapte. Clement then shall send it to the cities abroad, for that is his duty; and Grapte shall exhort the widows and orphans; but in this city you shall read it yourself with the elders who are in charge of the church.”

VISION THREE

1. The third vision which I saw, brethren, was as follows: I had fasted for a long time, and prayed the Lord to explain to me the revelation which he had promised to show me through that ancient lady; and in the same night the ancient lady appeared to me and said to me: “Since you are so importunate and zealous to know everything, come into the country, where you are farming, and at the fifth hour I will appear to you, and show you what you must see.” I asked her, saying, “Lady, to what part of the field?” “Where you like,” she said. I chose a beautiful secluded spot; but before I spoke to her and mentioned the place she said to me, “I will be there, where you wish.” I went therefore, brethren, to the country, and I counted the hours, and I came to the spot where I had arranged for her to come, and I saw a couch of ivory placed there, and on the couch there lay a linen pillow, and over it a covering of fine linen was spread out. When I saw these things lying there, and no one in the place I was greatly amazed, and, as it were, trembling seized me and my hair stood on end. And, as it were, panic came because I was alone. When therefore I came to myself, and remembered the glory of God and took courage, I knelt down and confessed my sins again to the Lord, as I had also done before. And she came with six young men, whom I had also seen on the former occasion, and stood by me, and listened to me praying and confessing my sins to the Lord. And she touched me and said: “Hermas! stop asking all these questions about your sins, ask also concerning righteousness, that you may take presently some part of it to your family.” And she raised me up by the hand and took me to the couch and said to the young men: “Go and build.” And after the young men had gone away and we were alone, she said to me: “Sit here.” I said to her: “Lady, let the elders sit first.” She said: “Do what I tell you, and sit down.” Yet when I wished to sit on the right hand she would not let me, but signed to me with her hand to sit on the left. When therefore I thought about this, and was grieved because she did not let me sit on the right hand, she said to me: “Are you sorry, Hermas? The seat on the right is for others, who have already been found well-pleasing to God and have suffered for the Name. But you fall far short of sitting with them. But remain in your simplicity as you are doing, and you shall sit with them, and so shall all who do their deeds and bear what they also bore.”

2. “What,” I said, “did they bear?” “Listen,” she said: “Stripes, imprisonments, great afflictions, crucifixions, wild beasts, for the sake of the Name. Therefore is it given to them to be on the right hand of the Holiness, and to everyone who shall suffer for the Name; but for the rest there is the left side. But both, whether they sit on the right or the left, have the same gifts, and the same promises, only the former sit on the right and have somewhat of glory. And you are desirous of sitting on the right hand with them, but your failings are many. But you shall be cleansed from your failings, and all who are not double-minded shall be cleansed from all sins, up to this day.” When she had
said this she wished to go away, but I fell at her feet and besought her by the Lord, to show me the vision which she had promised. And she again took me by the hand and lifted me up, and made me sit on the couch on the left and she herself sat on the right. And she lifted up a certain glittering rod, and she said to me: “Do you see a great thing?” I said to her: “Lady, I see nothing.” She said to me: “Behold, do you not see before you a great tower being built on the water with shining square stones?” Now the tower was being built four-square by the six young men who had come with her; but tens of thousands of other men were bringing stones, some from the deep sea, and some from the land, and were giving them to the six young men, and these kept taking them and building. The stones which had been dragged from the deep sea, they placed without exception as they were into the building, for they had all been shaped and fitted into the joins with the other stones. And they so fastened one to the other that their joins could not be seen. But the building of the tower appeared as if it had been built of a single stone. Of the other stones, which were being brought from the dry ground, they cast some away, and some they put into the building and others they broke up and cast far from the tower. And many other stones were lying round the tower, and they did not use them for the building, for some of them were rotten, and others had cracks, and others were too short, and others were white and round and did not fit into the building. And I saw other stones being cast far from the tower, and coming on to the road, and not staying on the road, but rolling from the road into the rough ground. And others were falling into the fire, and were being burnt, and others were falling near the water, and could not be rolled into the water, although men wished them to be rolled on and to come into the water.

3. When she had showed me these things she wished to hasten away. I said to her: “Lady, what does it benefit me to have seen these things, if I do not know what they mean?” She answered me and said: “You are a persistent man, wanting to know about the tower.” “Yes,” I said, “Lady, in order that I may report to my brethren, and that they may be made more joyful, and when they hear these things may know the Lord in great glory.” And she said: “Many indeed shall hear, but some of them shall rejoice when they hear, and some shall mourn. But these also, if they hear and repent, even they shall rejoice. Hear then, the parables of the tower, for I will reveal everything to you. And no longer trouble me about revelation, for these revelations are finished, for they have been fulfilled. Yet you will not cease asking for revelations, for you are shameless. The tower which you see being built is myself, the Church, who have appeared to you both now and formerly. Ask, therefore, what you will about the tower, and I will reveal it to you, that you may rejoice with the saints.” I said to her: “Lady, since you have once thought me worthy to reveal everything to me, proceed with the revelation.” And she said to me: “What is permitted to be revealed to you shall be revealed; only let your heart be turned towards God and do not be double-minded as to what you see.” I asked her: “Why has the tower been built on the water, Lady?” “As I told you before, you are seeking diligently,” said she, “and so by seeking you are finding out the truth. Hear, then, why the tower has been built upon the water: because your life was saved and shall be saved through water, and the tower has been founded by the utterance of the almighty and glorious Name, and is maintained by the unseen power of the Master.”

4. I answered and said to her: “Lady, great and wonderful is this thing. But, Lady, who are the six young men who are building?” “These are the holy angels of God, who were first created, to whom the Lord delivered all his creation to make it increase, and to
build it up, and to rule the whole creation. Through them, therefore, the building of the
tower shall be completed.” “But who are the others, who are bringing the stones?”
“They also are holy angels of God, but these six are greater than they. Therefore the
building of the tower shall be completed, and all shall rejoice together around the
tower, and shall glorify God because the building of the tower has been completed.” I
asked her saying: “Lady, I would like to know the end of the stones, and what kind of
force they have.” She answered me and said: “It is not because you are more worthy
than all others that a revelation should be made to you, for there were others before you
and better than you, to whom these visions ought to have been revealed. But in order
that ‘the name of God might be glorified’ they have been, and shall be, revealed to you
because of the double-minded who dispute in their heart whether these things are so or
not. Tell them, that all these things are true, and that there is nothing beyond the truth,
but that all things are strong and certain and well-founded.

5. “Listen then concerning the stones which go into the building. The stones which are
square and white and which fit into their joins are the Apostles and bishops and teach-
ers and deacons who walked according to the majesty of God, and served the elect of
God in holiness and reverence as bishops and teachers and deacons; some of them are
fallen asleep and some are still alive. And they always agreed among themselves, and
had peace among themselves, and listened to one another; for which cause their joins fit
in the building of the tower.” But who are they who have been brought out of the deep
sea, and added on to the building, and agree in their joins with the other stones which
have already been built?” “These are they who have suffered for the name of the Lord.”
“But I should like to know, Lady, who are the other stones which are being brought
from the dry land?” She said: “Those which go into the building without being hewed
are they whom the Lord approved because they walked in the uprightness of the Lord
and preserved his commandments.” “But who are they who are being brought and
place in the building?” “They are young in the faith and faithful; but they are being
exhorted by the angels to good deeds, because wickedness has been found in them.”
“But who are they whom they were rejecting and throwing away?” “These are they
who have sinned and wish to repent; for this reason they have not been cast far away
from the tower, because they will be valuable for the building if they repent. Those,
then, who are going to repent, if they do so, will be strong in the faith if they repent
now, while the tower is being built; but if the building be finished, they no longer have
a place, but will be cast away. But they have only this,—that they lie beside the tower.”

6. “Do you wish to know who are those which are being broken up and cast far from
the tower? These are the sons of wickedness; and their faith was hypocrisy, and no
wickedness departed from them. For this cause they had no salvation, for because of
their wickedness they are not useful for the building. Therefore they were broken up
and cast far away, because of the anger of the Lord, for they had provoked his anger.
But the others of whom you saw many left lying and not going into the building, of
these those which are rotten are they who have known the truth, but are not remaining
in it.” “And who are they which have the cracks?” “These are they who bear malice in
their hearts against one another, and are not ‘at peace among themselves,’ but maintain
the appearance of peace, yet when they depart from one another their wickednesses
remain in their hearts. These are the cracks which the stones have. And those which are
too short are they which have believed, and they live for the greater part in righteous-
ness, but have some measure of wickedness. Therefore they are short and not perfect.”
“But who, Lady, are the white and round ones which do not fit into the building?” She answered and said to me, “How long will you be stupid and foolish, and ask everything and understand nothing? These are they which have faith, but have also the riches of this world. When persecution comes, because of their wealth and because of business they deny their Lord.” And I answered and said to her, “Lady, but then when will they be useful for the building?” “When,” she said, “their wealth, which leads their souls astray, shall be cut off from them, then they will be useful to God. For just as the round stone cannot become square, unless something be cut off and taken away from it, so too they who have riches in this world cannot be useful to the Lord unless their wealth be cut away from them. Understand it first from your own case; when you were rich, you were useless, but now you are useful and helpful for the Life. Be useful to God, for you yourself are taken from the same stones.

7. “But as for the other stones which you saw being cast far from the tower, and falling on to the road, and rolling from the road on to the rough ground; these are they who have believed, but because of their double-mindedness leave their true road. They think that it is possible to find a better road, and err and wander miserably in the rough ground. And they who are falling into the fire and are being burnt, these are they who finally ‘apostatise from the living God’ and it no longer enters into their hearts to repent because of their licentious lusts, and the crimes which they have committed. But do you wish to know who are the others which are falling near the water and cannot be rolled into the water? ‘These are they who have heard the Word’ and wish to be baptised ‘in the name of the Lord.’ Then, when the purity of the Truth comes into their recollection they repent and go again ‘after their evil lusts.’” So she ended the explanation of the tower. I was still unabashed and asked her whether really all these stones which have been cast away, and do not fit into the building of the tower,—whether repentance is open to them, and they have a place in this tower. “Repentance,” she said, “they have, but they cannot fit into this tower. But they will fit into another place much less honourable, and even this only after they have been tormented and fulfilled the days of their sins, and for this reason they will be removed, because they shared in the righteous Word. And then it shall befall them to be removed from their torments, because of the wickedness of the deeds which they committed. But if it come not into their hearts they have no salvation, because of the hardness of their hearts.”

8. When, therefore, I ceased asking her all these things, she said to me: “Would you like to see something else?” I was anxious to see it, and rejoiced greatly at the prospect. She looked at me and smiled and said to me: “Do you see seven women round the tower?” “Yes,” I said; “I see them.” “This tower is being supported by them according to the commandment of the Lord. Hear now their qualities. The first of them who is clasping her hands is called Faith. Through her the chosen of God are saved. The second, who is girded and looks like a man, is called Continence; she is the daughter of Faith. Whosoever then shall follow her becomes blessed in his life, because he will abstain from all evil deeds, believing that if he refrains from every evil lust he will inherit eternal life.” “But who are the others, Lady?” “They are daughters one of the other, and their names are Simplicity, Knowledge, Innocence, Reverence, and Love. When therefore you perform all the deeds of their mother, you can live.” “I would like, Lady,” said I, “to know what are their several powers.” “Listen,” she said, “to the powers which they have. Their powers are supported one by the other, and they follow one another according to their birth. From Faith is born Continence, from Continence Simplicity,
Innocence, from Innocence Reverence, from Reverence Knowledge, from Knowledge Love. Their works therefore are pure and reverent and godly. Whosoever then serves them, and has the strength to lay hold of their works, shall have his dwelling in the tower with the saints of God.” And I began to ask her about the times, if the end were yet. But she cried out with a loud voice saying, “Foolish man, do you not see the tower still being built? Whenever therefore the building of the tower has been finished, the end comes. But it will quickly be built up; ask me nothing more. This reminder and the renewal of your spirits is sufficient for you and for the saints. But the revelation was not for you alone, but for you to explain it to them all, after three days, for you must understand it first. But I charge you first, Hermas, with these words, which I am going to say to you, to speak them all into the ears of the saints, that they may hear them and do them and be cleansed from their wickedness, and you with them.

9. “Listen to me, children; I brought you up in great simplicity and innocence and reverence by the mercy of God, who instilled righteousness into you that you should be justified and sanctified from all wickedness and all crookedness. But you do not wish to cease from your wickedness. Now, therefore, listen to me and ‘be at peace among yourselves’ and regard one another and ‘help one another’ and do not take a superabundant share of the creatures of God for yourselves, but give also a part to those who lack. For some are contracting illness in the flesh by too much eating, and are injuring their flesh, and the flesh of the others who have nothing to eat is being injured by their not having sufficient food and their body is being destroyed. So this lack of sharing is harmful to you who are rich, and do not share with the poor. Consider the judgment which is coming. Let therefore they who have over-abundance seek out those who are hungry, so long as the tower is not yet finished; for when the tower has been finished you will wish to do good, and will have no opportunity. See to it then, you who rejoice in your wealth, that the destitute may not groan, and their groans go up to the Lord, and you with your goods be shut outside the door of the tower. Therefore I speak now to the leaders of the Church and to those ‘who take the chief seats.’ Be not like the sorcerers, for sorcerers carry their charms in boxes, but you carry your charms and poison in your hearts. You are hardened, and will not cleanse your hearts, and mix your wisdom together in a pure heart that you may find mercy by ‘the great King.’ See to it, therefore, children, that these disagreements do not rob you of your life. How will you correct the chosen of the Lord if you yourselves suffer no correction? Correct therefore one another and ‘be at peace among yourselves,’ that I also may stand joyfully before the Father, and give an account of you all to the Lord.”

10. When therefore she ceased speaking with me, the six young men who were building came and took her away to the tower, and four others took up the couch and bore it away also to the tower. I did not see their faces because they were turned away. But as she was going I asked her to give me a revelation concerning the three forms in which she had appeared to me. She answered me and said, “Concerning these things you must ask some one else to reveal them to you.” Now she had appeared to me, brethren, in the first vision in the former year as very old and sitting on a chair. But in the second vision her face was younger, but her body and hair were old and she spoke with me standing; but she was more joyful than the first time. But in the third vision she was quite young and exceeding beautiful and only her hair was old; and she was quite joyful, and sat on a couch. I was very unhappy about this, and wished to understand this revelation, and in a vision of the night I saw the ancient lady saying to me, “Every
request needs humility: fast therefore and you shall receive what you ask from the Lord.” So I fasted one day and in the same night a young man appeared to me and said to me, “Why do you ask constantly for revelations in your prayer? Take care lest by your many requests you injure your flesh. These revelations are sufficient for you. Can you see mightier revelations than you have seen?” I answered and said to him, “Sir, I only ask you that there may be a complete revelation concerning the three forms of the ancient lady.” He answered and said to me, “How long are you foolish? You are made foolish by your double-mindedness and because your heart is not turned to the Lord.” I answered and said again to him, “But from you, sir, we shall know them more accurately.”

11. “Listen,” he said, “concerning the forms which you are asking about. Why did she appear to you in the first vision as old and seated on a chair? Because your spirit is old and already fading away, and has no power through your weakness and double-mindedness. For just as old people, who have no longer any hope of becoming young again, look for nothing except their last sleep, so also you, who have been weakened by the occupations of this life, have given yourself up to worry, and have not ‘cast your cares upon the Lord.’ But your mind was broken, and you grew old in your sorrows.” “Why, then, I should like to know, did she sit in a chair, sir?” “Because every sick person sits in a chair because of his sickness, that the weakness of the body may find support. Here you have the type of the first vision.

12. “But in the second vision you saw her standing, and with a more youthful and more cheerful countenance than the former time, but with the body and hair of old age. Listen,” he said, “also to this parable. When anyone is old, he already despairs of himself by reason of his weakness and poverty, and expects nothing except the last day of his life. Then an inheritance was suddenly left him, and he heard it, and rose up and was very glad and put on his strength; and he no longer lies down but stands up, and his spirit which was already destroyed by his former deeds is renewed, and he no longer sits still, but takes courage. So also did you, when you heard the revelation, which the Lord revealed to you, that he had mercy upon you, and renewed your spirit; and you put aside your weakness, and strength came to you, and you were made mighty in faith, and the Lord saw that you had been made strong and he rejoiced. And for this reason he showed you the building of the tower, and he will show you other things if you ‘remain at peace among yourselves’ with all your heart.

13. “But in the third vision you saw her young and beautiful and joyful and her appearance was beautiful. For just as if some good news come to one who is in grief, he straightway forgets his former sorrow, and thinks of nothing but the news which he has heard, and for the future is strengthened to do good, and his spirit is renewed because of the joy which he has received; so you also have received the renewal of your spirits by seeing these good things. And in that you saw her sitting on a couch, the position is secure, for a couch has four feet and stands securely, for even the world is controlled by four elements. They, therefore, who have repented shall completely recover their youth and be well founded, because they have repented with all their heart. You have the revelation completed; no longer ask anything about the revelation, but if anything be needed it shall be revealed to you.”
VISION FOUR

1. The fourth vision which I saw, brethren, twenty days after the former vision, was a type of the persecution which is to come. I was going into the country by the Via Campana. The place is about ten furlongs from the public road, and is easily reached. As I walked by myself I besought the Lord to complete the revelations and visions which he had shown me by his holy Church, to make me strong and give repentance to his servants who had been offended, ‘to glorify his’ great and glorious ‘name’ because he had thought me worthy to show me his wonders. And while I was glorifying him and giving him thanks an answer came to me as an echo of my voice, “Do not be double-minded, Hermas.” I began to reason in myself, and to say, “In what ways can I be double-minded after being given such a foundation by the Lord, and having seen his glorious deeds?” And I approached a little further, brethren, and behold, I saw dust reaching as it were up to heaven, and I began to say to myself, Are cattle coming and raising dust? and it was about a furlong away from me. When the dust grew greater and greater I supposed that it was some portent. The sun shone out a little, and lo! I saw a great beast like some Leviathan, and fiery locusts were going out of his mouth. The beast was in size about a hundred feet and its head was like a piece of pottery. And I began to weep and to pray the Lord to rescue me from it, and I remembered the word which I had heard, “Do not be double-minded, Hermas.” Thus, brethren, being clothed in the faith of the Lord and remembering the great things which he had taught me, I took courage and faced the beast. And as the beast came on with a rush it was as though it could destroy a city. I came near to it, and the Leviathan for all its size stretched itself out on the ground, and put forth nothing except its tongue, and did not move at all until I had passed it by. And the beast had on its head four colours, black, then the colour of flame and blood, then golden, then white.

2. After I had passed the beast by and had gone about thirty feet further, lo! a maiden met me, ‘adorned as if coming forth from the bridal chamber,’ all in white and with white sandals, veiled to the forehead, and a turban for a head-dress, but her hair was white. I recognised from the former visions that it was the Church, and I rejoiced the more. She greeted me saying, “Hail, O man,” and I greeted her in return, “Hail, Lady.” She answered me and said, “Did nothing meet you?” I said to her, “Yes, Lady, such a beast as could destroy nations, but by the power of the Lord, and by his great mercy, I escaped it.” “You did well to escape it,” she said, “because you cast your care upon God, and opened your heart to the Lord, believing that salvation can be found through nothing save through the great and glorious name. Therefore the Lord sent his angel, whose name is Thegri, who is over the beast, ‘and shut his mouth that he should not hurt you.’ You have escaped great tribulation through your faith, and because you were not double-minded when you saw so great a beast. Go then and tell the Lord’s elect ones of his great deeds, and tell them that this beast is a type of the great persecution which is to come. If then you are prepared beforehand, and repent with all your hearts towards the Lord, you will be able to escape it, if your heart be made pure and blameless, and you serve the Lord blamelessly for the rest of the days of your life. ‘Cast your cares upon the Lord’ and he will put them straight. Believe on the Lord, you who are double-minded, that he can do all things, and turns his wrath away from you, and sends scourges on you who are double-minded. Woe to those who hear these words and disobey; it were better for them not to have been born.”
3. I asked her concerning the four colours which the beast had on its head. She answered and said to me, “Are you again curious about such matters?” Yes,” I said, “Lady, let me know what they are.” “Listen,” she said, “the black is this world, in which you are living; the colour of fire and blood means that this world must be destroyed by blood and fire. The golden part is you, who have fled from this world, for even as gold is ‘tried in the fire’ and becomes valuable, so also you who live among them, are being tried. Those then who remain and pass through the flames shall be purified by them. Even as the gold puts away its dross, so also you will put away all sorrow and tribulation, and will be made pure and become useful for the building of the tower. But the white part is the world to come, in which the elect of God shall dwell, for those who have been chosen by God for eternal life will be without spot and pure. Therefore do not cease to speak to the ears of the saints. You have also the type of the great persecution to come, but if you will it shall be nothing. Remember what was written before.” When she had said this she went away, and I did not see to what place she departed, for there was a cloud, and I turned backwards in fear, thinking that the beast was coming.

VISION FIVE

While I was praying at home and sitting on my bed, there entered a man glorious to look on, in the dress of a shepherd, covered with a white goatskin, with a bag on his shoulders and a staff in his hand. And he greeted me, and I greeted him back. And at once he sat down by me, and said to me, “I have been sent by the most reverend angel to dwell with you the rest of the days of your life.” I thought he was come tempting me, and said to him, “Yes, but who are you? for,” I said, “I know to whom I was handed over.” He said to me, “Do you not recognise me?” “No,” I said. “I,” said he, “am the shepherd to whom you were handed over.” While he was still speaking, his appearance changed, and I recognised him, that it was he to whom I was handed over; and at once I was confounded, and fear seized me, and I was quite overcome with sorrow that I had answered him so basely and foolishly. But he answered me and said, “Be not confounded, but be strong in my commandments which I am going to command you. For I was sent,” said he, “to show you again all the things which you saw before, for they are the main points which are helpful to you. First of all write my commandments and the parables; but the rest you shall write as I shall show you. This is the reason,” said he, “that I command you to write first the commandments and parables, that you may read them out at once, and be able to keep them.” So I wrote the commandments and parables as he commended me. If then you hear and keep them, and walk in them, and do them with a pure heart, you shall receive from the Lord all that he promised you, but if you hear them and do not repent, but continue to add to your sins, you shall receive the contrary from the Lord. All these things the shepherd commanded me to write thus, for he was the angel of repentance.

MANDATE ONE

First of all believe that God is one, ‘who made all things and perfected them, and made all things to be out of that which was not,’ and contains all things, and is himself alone uncontained. Believe then in him, and fear him, and in your fear be continent. Keep these things, and you shall cast away from yourself all wickedness, and shall put on every virtue of righteousness, and shall live to God, if you keep this commandment.
MANDATE TWO

He said to me: “Have simplicity and be innocent and you shall be as the children who do not know the wickedness that destroys the life of men. In the first place, speak evil of no one, and do not listen gladly to him who speaks evil. Otherwise you also by listening share in the sin of him who speaks evil, if you believe in the evil-speaking which you hear. For by believing you yourself also will have somewhat against your brother; thus therefore, you will share the sin of the speaker of evil. Evil-speaking is wicked; it is a restless devil, never making peace, but always living in strife. Refrain from it then, and you shall have well-being at all times with all men. And put on reverence, in which is no evil stumbling-block, but all is smooth and joyful. Do good, and of all your toil which God gives you, give in simplicity to all who need, not doubting to whom you shall give and to whom not: give to all, for to all God wishes gifts to be made of his own bounties. Those then who receive shall render an account to God why they received it and for what. For those who accepted through distress shall not be punished, but those who accepted in hypocrisy shall pay the penalty. He therefore who gives is innocent; for as he received from the Lord the fulfilment of this ministry, he fulfilled it in simplicity, not doubting to whom he should give or not give. Therefore this ministry fulfilled in simplicity was honourable before God. He therefore who serves in simplicity shall live to God. Keep therefore this commandment as I have told you, that your repentance and that of your family may be found to be in simplicity, and that your innocence may be “pure and without stain.”

MANDATE THREE

Again he said to me, “Love truth: and let all truth proceed from your mouth, that the spirit which God has made to dwell in this flesh may be found true by all men, and the Lord who dwells in you shall thus be glorified, for the Lord is true in every word and with him there is no lie. They therefore who lie set the Lord at nought, and become defrauders of the Lord, not restoring to him the deposit which they received. For they received from him a spirit free from lies. If they return this as a lying spirit, they have defiled the commandment of the Lord and have robbed him.” When therefore I heard this I wept much, and when he saw me weeping he said, “Why do you weep?” “Because, sir,” said I, “I do not know if I can be saved.” “Why?” said he. “Because, sir,” said I, “I have never yet in my life spoken a true word, but have ever spoken deceitfully with all men, and gave out that my lie was true among all, and no one ever contradicted me but believed my word. How then, sir,” said I, “can I live after having done this?” “Your thought,” said he, “is good and true; for you ought to have walked in truth as God’s servant, and an evil conscience ought not to dwell with the spirit of truth, nor ought grief to come on a spirit which is holy and true.” “Never, sir,” said I, “have I accurately understood such words.” “Now then,” said he, “you do understand them. Keep them that your former lies in your business may themselves become trustworthy now that these have been found true. For it is possible for those also to become trustworthy. If you keep these things and from henceforth keep the whole truth, you can obtain life for yourself; and whoever shall hear this commandment, and abstain from the sin of lying shall live to God.”
MANDATE FOUR

1. “I Command you,” he said, “to keep purity and let not any thought come into your heart about another man’s wife, or about fornication or any such wicked things; for by doing this you do great sin. But if you always remember your own wife you will never sin. For if this desire enter your heart you will sin, and if you do other such-like wicked things you commit sin. For this desire is a great sin for the servant of God. And if any man commit this wicked deed he works death for himself. See to it then, abstain from this desire, for where holiness lives, lawlessness ought not to enter the heart of a righteous man.” I said to him, “Sir, allow me to ask you a few questions.” “Say on,” said he. “Sir,” said I, “if a man have a wife faithful in the Lord, and she is found out in some adultery, does the husband sin if he lives with her?” “So long as he is ignorant,” said he, “he does not sin, but if the husband knows her sin, and the wife does not repent, but remains in her fornication, and the husband go on living with her, he becomes a partaker of her sin, and shares in her adultery.” “What then,” said I, “sir, shall the husband do if the wife remain in this disposition?” “Let him put her away,” he said, “and let the husband remain by himself. But if he put his wife away and marry another he also commits adultery himself.” “If then,” said I, “sir, after the wife be put away she repent, and wish to return to her own husband, shall she not be received?” “Yes,” said he, “if the husband do not receive her he sins and covers himself with great sin; but it is necessary to receive the sinner who repents, but not often, for the servants of God have but one repentance. Therefore, for the sake of repentance the husband ought not to marry. This is the course of action for wife and husband. Not only,” said he, “is it adultery if a man defile his flesh, but whosoever acts as do the heathen is also guilty of adultery, so that if anyone continue in such practices, and repent not, depart from him and do not live with him, otherwise you are also a sharer in his sin. For this reason it was enjoined on you to live by yourselves, whether husband or wife, for in such cases repentance is possible. I, therefore,” said he, “am not giving an opportunity to laxity that this business be thus concluded, but in order that he who has sinned sin no more, and for his former sin there is one who can give healing, for he it is who has the power over all.”

2. And I asked him again, saying: “If the Lord has thought me worthy for you always to live with me, suffer yet a few words of mine, since I have no understanding and my heart has been hardened by my former deeds; give me understanding, for I am very foolish and have absolutely no understanding.” He answered me and said, “I am set over repentance, and I give understanding to all those who repent. Or do you not think,” said he, “that this very repentance is itself understanding? To repent,” said he, “is great understanding. For the sinner understands that he ‘has done wickedly before the Lord,’ and the deed which he wrought comes into his heart, and he repents and no longer does wickedly, but does good abundantly, and humbles his soul and punishes it because he sinned. You see, therefore, that repentance is great understanding.” “For this reason then, sir,” said I, “I enquire accurately from you as to all things. First, because I am a sinner, that I may know what I must do to live, because my sins are many and manifold.” “You shall live,” he said, “if you keep my commandments and walk in them, and whosoever shall hear and keep these commandments shall live to God.”

3. “I will yet, sir,” said I, “continue to ask.” “Say on,” said he. “I have heard, sir,” said I, “from some teachers that there is no second repentance beyond the one given when we went down into the water and received remission of our former sins.” He said to me,
“You have heard correctly, for that is so. For he who has received remission of sin ought never to sin again, but to live in purity. But since you ask accurately concerning all things, I will explain this also to you without giving an excuse to those who in the future shall believe or to those who have already believed on the Lord. For those who have already believed or shall believe in the future, have no repentance of sins, but have remission of their former sin. For those, then, who were called before these days, did the Lord appoint repentance, for the Lord knows the heart, and knowing all things beforehand he knew the weakness of man and the subtlety of the devil, that he will do some evil to the servants of God, and will do them mischief. The Lord, therefore, being merciful, had mercy on his creation, and established this repentance, and to me was the control of this repentance given. But I tell you,” said he, “after that great and holy calling, if a man be tempted by the devil and sin, he has one repentance, but if he sin and repent repeatedly it is unprofitable for such a man, for scarcely shall he live.” I said to him, “I attained life when I heard these things thus accurately from you, for I know that if I do not again add to my sins I shall be saved.” “You shall be saved,” said he, “and all who do these things.”

4. I asked him again, saying, “Sir, since you for once endure me explain this also to me.” “Say on,” said he. “If, sir,” said I, “a wife, or on the other hand a husband, die, and the survivor marry, does the one who marries commit sin?” “He does not sin,” said he, “but if he remain single, he gains for himself more exceeding honour and great glory with the Lord, but even if he marry he does not sin. Preserve therefore purity and holiness, and you shall live to God. Keep from henceforth, from the day on which you were handed over to me, these things which I tell you and shall tell you, and I will dwell in your house. And for your former transgression there shall be remission if you keep my commandments, and all men shall obtain a remission, if they keep these commandments of mine and walk in this purity.”

MANDATE FIVE

1. “Be,” said he, “long-suffering and prudent and you shall have power over all evil deeds and shalt do all righteousness. For if you are courageous the Holy Spirit which dwells in you will be pure, not obscured by another evil spirit, but will dwell at large and rejoice and be glad with the body in which it dwells, and will serve God in great cheerfulness, having well-being in itself. But if any ill temper enter, at once the Holy Spirit, which is delicate, is oppressed, finding the place impure, and seeks to depart out of the place, for it is choked by the evil spirit, having no room to serve the Lord as it will, but is contaminated by the bitterness, For the Lord dwells in long-suffering and the devil dwells in ill temper. If therefore, both spirits dwell in the same place it is unprofitable and evil for that man in whom they dwell. For if you take a little wormwood, and pour into it a jar of honey, is not the whole honey spoilt? And a great quantity of honey is ruined by a very little wormwood, and it spoils the sweetness of the honey, and it has no longer the same favour with the master, because it has been mixed and he has lost its use. But if no wormwood be put into the honey, the honey is found to be sweet, and becomes valuable to the master. You see that long suffering is very sweet, surpassing honey, and is valuable to the Lord and he dwells in it. But ill temper is bitter and useless. If, therefore, ill temper be mixed with courage, the courage is defiled, and its intercession is no longer valuable before God.” “I would like, sir,” said I, “to know the working of ill temper, that I may be preserved from it.” “Indeed,” said he, “if you do
not keep from it, both you and your house, you have destroyed all your hope. But keep from it, for I am with you. And all shall refrain from it, who repent with all their heart; for I will be with them, and will preserve them, for all have been made righteous by the most revered angel.

2. “Hear, then,” said he, “the working of ill temper, and how evil it is and how it destroys the servants of God by its working, and how it leads them astray from righteousness. But it does not lead astray those who are filled with faith, nor can it work evil to them, because my power is with them, but it leads astray those who are vain and are double-minded. And when it sees such men in tranquillity, it forces its way into the heart of that man, and the man or woman is made bitter out of nothing, because of daily business or of food or some trifle, or about some friend, or about giving or receiving, or about some such foolish matters. For all these things are foolish and vain and meaningless, and unprofitable to the servants of God. But long-suffering is great and mighty and has steadfast power and prospers in great breadth, is joyful, glad, without care, ‘glorifying the Lord at every time,’ has nothing bitter in itself, but remains ever meek and gentle. Therefore this long-suffering dwells with those who have faith in perfectness. But ill temper is first foolish, frivolous, and silly; then from silliness comes bitterness, from bitterness wrath, from wrath rage, and from rage fury; then fury, being compounded of such great evils, becomes great and inexpiable sin. For when these spirits dwell in one vessel, where also the Holy Spirit dwells, there is no room in that vessel, but it is overcrowded. Therefore the delicate spirit which is unaccustomed to dwell with and evil spirit, or with hardness, departs from such a man, and seeks to dwell with gentleness and quietness. Then, when it departs from that man where it was dwelling, that man becomes empty of the righteous spirit, and for the future is filled with the evil spirits, and is disorderly in all his actions, being dragged here and there by the evil spirits, and is wholly blinded from goodness of thought. Thus, then, it happens with all who are ill tempered. Abstain then from ill temper, that most evil spirit, but put on long suffering and withstand ill temper, and be found with the holiness which is beloved of the Lord. See then that you forget not this commandment, for if you master this commandment you will also be able to keep the other commandments which I am going to give you. Be strong in them and strengthen yourself, and let all strengthen themselves who wish to walk in them.

MANDATE SIX

1. “I commanded you,” said he, “in the first commandment to keep faith and fear and continence.” “Yes, sir,” said I. “But now I wish,” said he, “to explain also their qualities that you may understand what is the quality of each and its working, for their working is of two sorts. They relate, then, to the righteous and to the unrighteous: do you therefore believe the righteous, but do not believe the unrighteous. For that which is righteous has a straight path, but that which is unrighteous a crooked path. But do you walk in the straight path, but leave the crooked path alone. For the crooked path has no road, but rough ground and many stumbling-blocks, and is steep and thorny. It is therefore harmful to those who walk in it. But those who go in the straight path walk smoothly and without stumbling, for it is neither rough nor thorny. You see, then, that it is better to walk in this path.” “It pleases me, sir,” said I, “to walk in this path.” “You shall do so,” said he, “and whoever ‘turns to the Lord with all his heart’ shall walk in it.
2. “Hear now,” said he, concerning faith. There are two angels with man, one of righteousness and one of wickedness.” “How then, sir,” said I, “shall I know their workings, because both angels dwell with me?” “Listen,” said he, “and understand them. The angel of righteousness is delicate and modest and meek and gentle. When, then, he comes into your heart he at once speaks with you of righteousness, of purity, of reverence, of self-control, of every righteous deed, and of all glorious virtue. When all these things come into your heart, know that the angel of righteousness is with you. These things, then, are the deeds of the angel of righteousness. Therefore believe him and his works. Now see also the works of the angel of wickedness. First of all, he is ill tempered, and bitter, and foolish, and his deeds are evil, casting down the servants of God. Whenever therefore he comes into your heart, know him from his works.” “I do not understand, sir,” said I, “how to perceive him.” “Listen,” said he. “When ill temper or bitterness come upon you, know that he is in you. Next the desire of many deeds and the luxury of much eating and drinking, and many feasts, and various and unnecessary foods, and the desire of women, and covetousness and haughtiness, and pride, and whatsoever things are akin and like to these,—when, therefore, these things come into your heart, know that the angel of wickedness is with you. When, therefore, you know his deeds, keep from him, and do not trust him, because his deeds are evil and unprofitable for the servants of God. You have, therefore, the workings of both the angels. Understand them and believe the angel of righteousness, but keep from the angel of wickedness because his teaching is evil in every act. For though a man be faithful, if the thought of that angel rise in his heart, it must be that that man or woman commit some sin. But again, though a man or woman be very evil, if there rise in his heart the deeds of the angel of righteousness, it must needs be that he do some good act. You see, therefore,” said he, “that it is good to follow the angel of righteousness, but to keep away from the angel of wickedness. This commandment makes plain the things of the faith, that you may believe the works of the angel of righteousness, and by doing them live to God. But believe that the works of the angel of wickedness are bad: by not doing them, therefore, you shall live to God.”

MANDATE SEVEN

“Fear,” said he, “‘the Lord and keep his commandments.’ By keeping, therefore, the commandments of God you shall be strong in every act, and your conduct shall be beyond compare. For by fearing the Lord you shall do all things well, and this is the fear with which you must fear and be saved. But the devil do not fear, for by fearing the Lord you have power over the devil because there is no might in him. But where there is no might, neither is there fear. But where there is glorious might, there is also fear. For everyone who has might gains fear. But he who has not might is despised by all. But fear the works of the devil, because they are evil. If therefore, you fear the Lord you shall not do them, but depart from them. There are therefore two sorts of fear. For if you wish to do that which is evil, fear the Lord and you shall not do it. But, on the other hand, if you wish to do that which is good, fear the Lord, and you shall do it. So that the fear of the Lord is mighty and great and glorious. Therefore fear the Lord and you shall live in him. And whosoever shall fear him and keep his commandments, shall live to God.” “Wherefore, sir,” said I, “did you say of those who keep his commandments, ‘they shall live to God’?” “Because,” said he, “the whole creation fears the Lord, but it does not keep his commandments. Those, therefore who fear him and observe his
commandments—it is they who have life with God. But as for those who do not observe his commandments, neither have they life in him.

**MANDATE EIGHT**

“I told you,” said he, “that the creatures of God are two-fold, and temperance is also two-fold. For from some things we must refrain and from some things not.” “Let me know, sir,” said I, “from what we must refrain and from not.” “Listen,” said he. “Refrain from evil, and do not do it, but do not refrain from good, but do it. For if you refrain from doing good, you do great sin; but if you refrain from doing evil, you do great righteousness. Refrain therefore from all evil, and do good.” “What, sir,” said I, “are the wickednesses from which we must refrain?” “Listen,” said he. “From adultery and fornication, from the lawlessness of drunkenness, from evil luxury, from much eating, and extravagance of wealth, and boastfulness and haughtiness and pride, and from lying and evil speaking and hypocrisy, malice and all blasphemy. These deeds are the wickedest of all in the life of men. The servant of God must therefore refrain from these deeds. For he who does not refrain from these cannot live to God. Hear therefore what follows on these things.” “But, sir,” said I, “are there still other evil deeds?” “Yes,” said he, “there are many from which the servant of God must refrain. Theft, lying, robbery, false witness, covetousness, evil desire, deceit, vain-glory, pride, and whatever is like to these. Do you not think that these are wicked?” “Yes, very wicked,” said I, “for the servants of God.” “From all these he who is serving God must refrain. Refrain, therefore from all these, that you may live to God and be enrolled with those who refrain from them. These then are the things from which you must refrain. But now hear the things from which you must not refrain but do them,” said he. “Do not refrain from that which is good, but do it.” “And explain to me, sir,” said I, “the power of the things which are good, that I may walk in them and serve them, that by doing them I may be saved.” “Listen, then,” said he, “to the deeds of goodness, which you must do and not refrain from them. First of all, faith, fear of God, love and harmony, words of righteousness, truth, patience; than these there is nothing better in the life of man. If any man keep these things and do not refrain from them, he becomes blessed in his life. Next hear the things which follow: To minister to widows, to look after orphans and the destitute, to redeem from distress the servants of God, to be hospitable, for in hospitality may be found the practice of good, to resist none, to be gentle, to be poorer than all men, to reverence the aged, to practise justice, to preserve brotherhood, to submit to insult, to be brave, to bear no malice, to comfort those who are oppressed in spirit, not to cast aside those who are offended in the faith, but to convert them and give them courage, to reprove sinners, not to oppress poor debtors, and whatever is like to these things. Do you not think,” said he, “that these things are good?” “Yes, sir,” said I, “for what is better than these things?” “Walk, then,” said he, “in them, and do not refrain from them, and you shall live to God. Keep therefore this commandment. If you do good, and do not refrain from it, you shall live to God, and all who act so shall live to God. And again, if you do not do that which is wicked, and refrain from it, you shall live to God, and all shall live to God who keep these commandments and walk in them.”

**MANDATE NINE**

And he said to me: “Remove from yourself double-mindedness, and be not at all double-minded about asking anything from God, saying in yourself, How can I ask
anything from the Lord and receive it after having sinned so greatly against him? Do not have these thoughts but ‘turn to the Lord with all your heart,’ and ask from him without doubting, and you shall know his great mercifulness, that he will not desert you, but will fulfil the petition of your soul. For God is not as men who bear malice, but is himself without malice, and has mercy on that which he made. Therefore purify your heart from all the vanities of this world, and from the words which were spoken to you beforehand, and ask from the Lord, and you shall receive all things, and shall not fail to obtain any of your petitions, if you ask from the Lord without doubting. But if you doubt in your heart, you shall receive none of your petitions. For those who have doubts towards God, these are the double-minded, and they shall not in any wise obtain any of their petitions. But they who are perfect in faith ask for all things, ‘trusting the Lord,’ and they receive them, because they ask without doubting, and are double-minded in nothing. For every double-minded man, unless he repent, shall with difficulty be saved. Therefore purify your heart from double-mindedness, but put on faith, because it is mighty, and believe God, that you shall obtain all your requests which you make. And if ever you make any petition from the Lord, and receive it but slowly, do not be double-minded because you have not received the request of your soul speedily, for in every case it is because of some temptation or some transgression, of which you are ignorant, that you receive your request slowly. Do not therefore cease from making the request of your soul, and you shall receive it. But if you grow weary, and are double-minded in your request, blame yourself and not him who gives to you. Consider this double-mindedness; for it is wicked and foolish, and uproots many from the faith, yes, even those who are very faithful and strong. For this double-mindedness is the daughter of the devil, and commits much wickedness against the servants of God. Despise therefore double-mindedness and master it in every act, putting on the faith which is strong and powerful. For faith promises all things, perfects all things. But the double-mindedness which has no faith in itself fails in all deeds which it undertakes. You see, then,” said he, “that faith is from above, from the Lord, and has great power; but double-mindedness is an earthly spirit, from the devil, and has no power. Do you, therefore, serve the faith which has power, and refrain from the double-mindedness which has no power, and you shall live to God, and all who have this mind shall live to God.

**MANDATE TEN**

1. “Put away,” said he, “grief from yourself, for this also is a sister of double-mindedness and bitterness.” “How, sir,” I said, “is she their sister, for it seems to me that bitterness is one thing and double-mindedness is another, and grief another?” “You are foolish, O man,” he said, “and do not understand that grief is more evil than all the spirits, and is most terrible to the servants of God, and corrupts man beyond all the spirits, and wears out the Holy Spirit—and again saves us.” “Yes, sir,” said I, “I am a foolish man, and do not understand these parables, for how it can wear out and again save, I do not understand.” “Listen,” he said, “those who have never inquired concerning the truth, nor made search concerning the Godhead, but only have faith, and are mixed up with business and riches, and heathen friendships, and many other occupations of this world,—such as are intent on these, do not understand the parables of the Godhead; for they are darkened by these deeds, and are corrupted and become sterile. Just as good vineyards when they meet with neglect, are made barren by the thorns and various weeds, so men, who have believed, and fall into these many occupations, which have
been mentioned above, are deceived in their understanding, and understand nothing completely about righteousness. But even when they listen concerning the Godhead and truth their mind is taken up with their business, and they understand nothing properly. But they who have the fear of God, and inquire concerning the Godhead and truth, and have their heart towards the Lord, perceive quickly and understand all that is said to them, because they have the fear of the Lord in themselves; for where the Lord dwells, there also is great understanding. ‘Cleave therefore to the Lord,’ and you shall understand and perceive all things.

2. “Hear, now,” said he, “foolish man, how grief wears out the Holy Spirit, and again brings salvation. When the double-minded undertakes any work, and fails in it because of his double-mindedness, this grief enters into the man, and grieves the Holy Spirit and wears it out. Then again, when for any matter ill temper cleave to a man, and he become exceedingly bitter, again grief enters into the heart of the ill tempered man, and he is grieved at the act which he did, and repents because he did wickedly. Therefore this grief seems to bring salvation, because he repented of having done wickedly. Therefore both deeds grieve the Spirit; double-mindedness, because he did not obtain his purpose, and ill temper grieves the Spirit, because he acted wickedly. Both, therefore, are grievous to the Holy Spirit, double-mindedness and ill temper. Put therefore away from yourself grief, and do not oppress the Holy Spirit which dwells in you, lest in beseech God, and it depart from you. For the Spirit of God which is given to this flesh endures neither grief nor oppression.

3. “Put on, therefore, joyfulness, which always has favour with God and is acceptable to him, and flourish in it; for every joyful man does good deeds, and has good thoughts, and despises grief. But the mournful man always does wickedly. First of all he does wickedly because he grieves the Holy Spirit, which is given to man in joyfulness, and secondly he grieves the Holy Spirit by doing wickedly, not praying nor confessing to the Lord. For the intercession of the mournful man has nowhere power to ascend to the altar of God.” “Why,” said I, “does not the intercession of the mournful man ascend to the altar?” “Because,” said he, “grief sits in his heart. Therefore, the grief which is mixed with his intercession does not permit the intercession to ascend in purity to the altar. For just as vinegar mixed with wine has not the same agreeableness, so also grief mixed with the Holy Spirit, has not the same power of intercession. Therefore purify yourself from this wicked grief, and you shall live to God, and all shall live to God who cast away from themselves grief, and put on all joyfulness.”

MANDATE ELEVEN

He showed me men sitting on a bench, and another man sitting on a chair, and he said to me: “Do you see the men sitting on the bench?” “Yes, sir,” said I; “I see them.” “They,” said he, “are faithful, and he who is sitting on the chair is a false prophet, who is corrupting the understanding of the servants of God. He corrupts the understanding of the double-minded, not of the faithful. Therefore these double-minded men come to him as to a wizard, and ask him concerning their future; and that false prophet, having no power of the Divine Spirit in himself, speaks with them according to their requests, and according to the desires of their wickedness, and fills their souls, as they themselves wish. For he is empty and makes empty answers to empty men; for whatever question is put he answers according to the emptiness of the man. But he also speaks some true
words, for the devil fills him with his spirit, to see if he can break any of the righteous. Therefore, as many as are strong in the faith of the Lord, and have put on the truth, do not cleave to such spirits, but refrain from them. But as many as are double-minded, and constantly repent, practise soothsaying, like the heathen, and bring greater shame upon themselves by their idolatry. For he who asks a false prophet concerning any act is an idolater, and empty of the truth and foolish. For every spirit which is given from God is not asked questions, but has the power of the Godhead and speaks all things of itself, because it is from above, from the power of the Divine spirit. But the spirit which is questioned and speaks according to the lusts of man is earthly and light, and has no power, and it does not speak at all unless it be questioned.” “How, then,” said I, “sir, shall a man know which of them is a true prophet and which a false prophet?” “Listen,” said he, “concerning both the prophets, and as I shall tell you, so you shall judge the true prophet and the false prophet. Test the man who has the Divine Spirit by his life. In the first place, he who has the spirit which is from above, is meek and gentle, and lowly-minded, and refrains from all wickedness and evil desire of this world, and makes himself poorer than all men, and gives no answers to anyone when he is consulted, nor does he speak by himself (for the Holy Spirit does not speak when a man wishes to speak), but he speaks at that time when God wishes him to speak. Therefore, when the man who has the Divine Spirit comes into a meeting of righteous men who have the faith of the Divine Spirit, and intercession is made to God from the assembly of those men, then the angel of the prophetic spirit rests on him and fills the man, and the man, being filled with the Holy Spirit, speaks to the congregation as the Lord wills. Thus, then, the Spirit of the Godhead will be plain. Such, then, is the power of the Lord concerning the Spirit of the Godhead. Listen, now,” said he, “concerning the spirit which is earthly, and empty, and has no power, but is foolish. In the first place, that man who seems to have a spirit exalts himself and wishes to have the first place, and he is intently impudent and shameless and talkative, and lives in great luxury and in many other deceits, and accepts rewards for his prophecy, and if he does not receive them he does not prophesy. Is it then possible for a Divine Spirit to accept rewards and prophecy? It is not possible for a prophet of God to do this, but the spirit of such prophets is of the earth. Next, on no account does he come near to an assembly of righteous men, but shuns them. But he cleaves to the double-minded and empty, and prophesies to them in a corner, and deceives them by empty speech about everything according to their lusts, for he is also answering the empty. For an empty vessel which is put with others that are empty is not broken, but they match one another. But when he comes into a meeting full of righteous men, who have a spirit of the Godhead, and intercession is made by them, that man is made empty, and the earthly spirit flees from him in fear, and that man is made dumb and is altogether broken up, being able to say nothing. For if you stack wine or oil in a cellar, and put among them an empty jar, and again wish to unstack the cellar, the jar which you put in empty you will find still empty. So also the prophets who are empty, when they come to the spirits of just men, are found out to be such as when they came. You have the life of both the prophets. Test, then, from his life and deeds, the man who says that he is inspired. But believe yourself in the Spirit which comes from God and has power, but have no faith in the spirit which is from the earth and empty, because there is no power in it, for it comes from the devil. Hear, then, the parable which I will tell you. Take a stone and throw it up to Heaven and see if you can touch it; or take a syringe and squirt it towards the sky, and see if you can make a hole in the Heavens.” “How, sir,” said I, “can these things be? For both these things which you have spoken of are impossible.” “Even,” said he, “as these are impossible, so also
are the earthly spirits without power and feeble. Take now the power which comes from above. The hail is a very little grain, and when it falls on man’s head, how it hurts! Or, again, take a drop which falls on the ground from the roof, and makes a hole in stone. You see, then, that the smallest things which come from above and fall on the earth have great power; so also the Divine Spirit which comes from above is powerful. Have faith, then, in this Spirit, but refrain from the other.”

MANDATE TWELVE

1. He said to me, “Put away from yourself every evil desire, but put on the desire which is good and holy; for by putting on this desire you will hate the wicked desire, and will curb it as you will. For the wicked desire is cruel and hard to tame, for it is fearful, and destroys men greatly in its cruelty, but especially if a servant of God fall into it, and be not prudent, he is terribly destroyed by it. But it destroys such as have not the good desire as a covering, but are mixed with this world; these then it delivers to death.”

“What, sir,” said I, “are the deeds of the wicked desire, which deliver men to death? Let me know that I may refrain from them.” “Listen,” said he, “by what deeds the evil desire brings to death the servants of God.

2. “Before all is desire for the wife or husband of another, and of extravagance of wealth, and much needless food and drink, and many other foolish luxuries. For all luxury is foolish and vain for the servants of God. These desires then are wicked, and bring the servants of God to death, for this desire is the wicked daughter of the devil. It is necessary therefore, to refrain from the wicked desires, that by refraining you may live to God. But as many as are overcome by them, and do not resist them, shall perish finally, for these desires are deadly. But put on the desire of righteousness, and resist them, being armed with the fear of the Lord. For the fear of God dwells in the desire which is good. If the evil desire see you armed with the fear of God, and resisting it, it will flee far from you and will no longer be seen by you, for fear of your weapons. Do you, therefore, conquer it, and come in triumph over it to the desire of righteousness, and giving up to it the victory which you have gained, serve it as it wishes. If you serve the good desire, and submit to it, you will be able to overcome the wicked desire, and subdue it as you wish.”

3. “I would like, sir,” said I, “to know in what way I must serve the good desire.” “Listen,” said he, “work righteousness’ and virtue, and fear of the Lord, faith and meekness, and whatever good things are like to these. For by working these you will be a well-pleasing servant of God, and shall live to him, and whoever shall serve the good desire, shall live to God.” So he finished the twelve commandments, and said to me: “You have these commandments; walk in them, and exhort those who hear that their repentance may be pure for the rest of the days of their life. Fulfil carefully this ministry which I give you, and work much in it, for you will find favour with those who are about to repent, and they will obey your words, for I will be with you, and will force them to be persuaded by you.” I said to him, “Sir, these commandments are great and beautiful and glorious, and ‘able to make glad the heart of man’ if he be able to keep them. But I do not know if these commandments can be kept by man, because they are very hard.” He answered and said to me, “If you set it before yourself that they can be kept you will easily keep them, and they will not be difficult; but if it already comes into your heart that they cannot be kept by man, you will not keep them. But now I say to you, if you
do not keep them, but neglect them, you shall not have salvation, nor your children, nor your house, because you have already judged for yourself that these commandments cannot be kept by man.”

4. And he spoke these things to me very angrily, so that I was confounded, and greatly afraid of him, for his appearance was changed so that a man could not endure his wrath. But when he saw me quite disturbed and confused he began to speak to me more gently and cheerfully, and said: “Foolish one without understanding and double-minded, do you not understand the glory of God, how great and mighty and wonderful it is, because ‘he created the world’ for man’s sake, and subdued all his creation to man, and gave him all power, to master all things under heaven? If, then,” said he, “man is the lord of all creatures of God, and masters them, is it not possible to master these commandments also? The man,” said he, “who has the Lord in his heart, is able to master all things and all these commandments. But those who have the Lord on their lips, but their heart is hardened, and they are far from the Lord, for them these commandments are hard, and difficult to walk in. Do you, therefore, who are empty and light in the faith, put the Lord into your heart, and you shall know that nothing is easier or sweeter or more gentle than these commandments. Be converted, you who walk in the commandments of the devil, which are difficult and bitter and cruel and foul, and do not fear the devil, for there is no power in him against you. For I, the angel of repentance who masters him, will be with you. The devil can only cause fear, but fear of him has no force. Therefore do not fear him and he will fly from you.”

5. I said to him “Sir, listen to a few words from me.” “Say what you will,” he said. “Sir,” said I, “man desires to keep the commandments of God, and there is none that does not pray to the Lord, that he may be made strong in his commandments, and submit to them. But the devil is hard, and oppresses them.” “He cannot,” said he, “oppress the servants of the Lord who hope in him with all their heart. The devil can wrestle with them, but he cannot throw them down. If then you ‘resist him’ he will be conquered and ‘fly from you’ in shame. But as many,” said he, “as are empty fear the devil as though he had power. When a man fills very many pots with good wine, and among those pots a few are half empty, he comes to the pots, and does not consider those which are full, for he knows that they are full, but he looks at those which are half empty, fearing that they have gone sour, for empty pots quickly go sour, and the flavour of the wine is spoilt. So also the devil comes to all the servants of God, tempting them; as many therefore as are full of faith withstand him powerfully, and he departs from them, having no room by which to enter. Then, therefore, he comes to those who are half empty and finding room he enters into them, and does what he will in them, and they become his servants.

6. “But I, the angel of repentance, say to you, Do not fear the devil. For I was sent,” said he, “to be with you who repent with all your heart, and to strengthen you in the faith. Believe, therefore, in God, though you have renounced your life through your sins, and have added to your sins, and have made your life heavy, that if you ‘turn to the Lord with all your heart, and do righteousness’ for the rest of the days of your life, and serve him in uprightness, according to his will, he will heal your former sins, and you shall have power to master the works of the devil. But do not fear the threat of the devil at all, for he is powerless as the sinews of a dead man. Listen, therefore, to me, and fear him who has all power, ‘to save and to destroy,’ and keep these commandments, and
you shall live to God.” I said to him: “Sir, now I have received power in all the ordinances of the Lord, because you are with me, and I know that you will break down all the power of the devil, and we shall master him, and have power against all his deeds. And I hope, sir, that I shall now be able to keep these commandments which you have commanded, the Lord giving me strength.” “You shall keep them,” said he, “if your heart be pure towards the Lord, and all who ever purify their hearts from the vain desires of this world shall keep them, and shall live to God.”

PARABLE ONE

He said to me, “You know that you, as the servants of God, are living in a strange country, for your city is far from this city. If then you know your city, in which you are going to dwell, why do you here prepare lands and costly establishments and buildings and vain dwellings? He therefore, who prepares these things for this city, is not able to return to his own city. O foolish and double-hearted and wretched man, do you not understand that all these things are foreign to you, and are under the power of another? For the Lord of this city will say: ‘I do not wish you to dwell in my city, but go out from this city, because you do not use my law.’ If then you have fields and dwellings, and many other possessions, when you are cast out by him, what will you do with your land and house, and all the other things which you have prepared for yourself? For the lord of this country justly says to you, ‘Either use my law or go out from my country.’ What then are you going to do, seeing that you have a law in your own city? Will you because of your fields and other possessions altogether deny your law, and walk in the law of this city? Take heed that it be not unprofitable to deny your law, for if you wish to return back to your city, you will not be received, because you have denied the law of your city, and you will be excluded from it. Take heed, then, make no further preparations for yourself beyond a sufficient competence for yourself, as though you were living in a foreign country, and be ready in order that, whenever the master of this city wishes to expel you for resisting his law, you may go out from his city, and depart to your own city, and joyfully follow your own law suffering no harm. Take heed, then, you who serve the Lord and have him in your heart. Do the deeds of God, ‘remembering his commandments,’ and believe him that he will perform them if his commandments be observed. Therefore instead of lands, purchase afflicted souls, as each is able, ‘and look after widows and orphans,’ and do not despise them, and spend your wealth and all your establishments for such fields and houses as you have received from God. For, for this reason did the Master make you rich, that you should fulfil these ministries for him. It is far better to purchase such lands and houses, as you will find in your own city, when you go to it. This wealth is beautiful and joyful, and has neither grief nor fear, but has joy. Follow therefore not after the wealth of the heathen, for it is unprofitable to you, who are the servants of God. Follow your own wealth, in which you can rejoice, and do not counterfeit nor touch that which is another’s, nor desire it, for it is wicked to desire that which is another’s, but do your own work and you shall be saved.”

PARABLE TWO

While I was walking in the country I noticed an elm and a vine, and was considering them and their fruits, when the shepherd appeared to me and said: “What are you
considering in yourself about the elm and vine?” “I am considering, sir,” said I, “that they are very well suited to one another.” “These two trees,” said he “are put as a type for the servants of God.” “I should like,” said I, “to know the type of the trees of which you speak.” “You see,” said he, “the vine and the elm.” “Yes, sir,” said I, “I see them.” “This vine,” said he, “bears fruit, but the elm is a sterile tree. But this vine, if it do not grow upon the elm, cannot bear much fruit, because it is spread on the ground, and the fruit which it bears, it bears rotten, when it is not hanging on the elm. When, therefore, the vine is attached to the elm, it bears fruit from itself and from the elm. You see then that the elm gives much fruit, not less than the vine, but rather more.” “How, sir,” said I, “does it bear more?” “Because,” said he, “the vine, when it hangs on the elm, gives much beautiful fruit, but when it is lying on the ground, it bears but little fruit and rotten. This parable, therefore, applies to the servants of God, to the poor and the rich.” “How, sir?” said I, “Let me know.” “Listen,” said he. “The rich man has much wealth, but he is poor as touching the Lord, being busied about his riches, and his intercession and confession towards the Lord is very small, and that which he has is weak and small, and has no other power. But when the rich man rests upon the poor, and gives him what he needs, he believes that what he does to the poor man can find a reward with God, because the poor is rich in intercession and confession, and his intercession has great power with God. The rich man, therefore, helps the poor in all things without doubting. But the poor man, being helped by the rich, makes intercession to God, giving him thanks, for him who gave to him, and the rich man is still zealous for the poor man, that he fail not in his life, for he knows that the intercession of the poor is acceptable and rich toward the Lord. Therefore the two together complete the work, for the poor works in the intercession in which he is rich, which he received from the Lord: this he pays to the Lord who helps him. And the rich man likewise provides the poor, without hesitating, with the wealth which he received from the Lord; and this work is great and acceptable with God, because he has understanding in his wealth, and has wrought for the poor man from the gifts of the Lord, and fulfilled his ministry rightly. Among men, therefore, the elm appears as if it bore no fruit, and they do not know nor understand that if there is drought the elm which has water nourishes the vine, and the vine, having water continuously, gives double fruit, both for itself and for the elm. So also the poor, interceding with the Lord for the rich, complement their wealth, and again, the rich helping the poor with their necessities complement their prayers. Both, therefore, share in the righteous work. Therefore he who does these things shall not be deserted by God, but shall be inscribed in the books of the living. Blessed are they who are wealthy and understand that their riches are from the Lord, for he who understands this will also be able to do some good service.

PARABLE THREE

He showed me many trees, without leaves, which appeared to me to be as if dry, for they were all alike. And he said to me: “Do you see these trees?” “Yes, sir,” said I, “and I see that they are all alike and dry.” And he answered me and said: “These trees which you see are they who dwell in this world.” “Why, then,” said I, “sir, are they as it were dry and all alike?” “Because,” said he, “in this world, neither righteous nor sinners are apparent, but are all alike. For this world is winter for the righteous and they are not apparent, though they are living with sinners. For just as in the winter the trees which have shed their leaves are alike, and it is not apparent which are dry and which are alive, so in this world neither the righteous nor the sinners are apparent, but all are alike.”
PARABLE FOUR

He showed me again many trees, some budding and some withered, and said to me, "Do you see," said he, "these trees." "I see them, sir," said I, "some budding and some withered." "These trees," said he, "which are budding are the righteous, who are destined to live in the world to come; for the world to come is summer for the righteous, but winter for the sinners. When therefore the mercy of the Lord shall shine, then the servants of God shall be made plain and all men shall be made apparent. For, just as in the summer the fruit of each individual tree is made plain, and they are recognised for what they are, so also the fruit of the righteous will be plain, and they will all be known, by blossoming in that world. But the heathen and the sinners—the withered trees which you saw—will be found to be such, dried and fruitless in that world, and they shall be burnt up like wood and shall be made manifest, because their conduct was wicked in their lives. For the sinners shall be burnt, because they sinned and did not repent, and the heathen shall be burnt, because they did not know their Creator. Be therefore fruitful, that your fruit may be known in that summer. But abstain from much business, and you will do no sin. For those who do much business also sin much, being engrossed in their business, and serving their Lord in nothing. How then," said he, "can such a one pray for anything from the Lord and receive it, when he does not serve the Lord?" They who serve him,—they shall receive their requests. But they who do not serve the Lord,—they shall receive nothing. But if anyone be occupied with but one business, he can serve the Lord also. For his understanding is not corrupted away from the Lord, but he will serve him with a pure mind. If, therefore, you do this, you can bear fruit for the world to come. And whoever does this shall bear fruit."

PARABLE FIVE

1. While I was fasting, and sitting on a certain mountain, and thanking the Lord for all that he had done with me, I saw the shepherd sitting by me, and saying: "Why have you come here so early?" "Because, sir," said I, "I have a station." "What," said he, "is a station." "I am fasting, sir," said I. "But," said he, "what is this fast, which you are fasting?" "I am fasting, sir," said I, "as I have been accustomed." "You do not know," said he, "how to fast to the Lord, and this useless fast which you are fasting to him is not a fast?" "Why, sir," said I, "do you say this?" "I tell you," said he, "that this fast which you think to fast is nothing, but I will teach you what is a fast, acceptable and complete to the Lord. Listen," he said: "God does not wish such a vain fast. For if you thus fast to God you do nothing for righteousness. But fast to God in this way: do nothing evil in your life, but serve the Lord with a pure heart; ‘keep his commandments’ and walk in his ordinances, and let no evil desire arise in your heart, but believe in God, that if you do these things and fear him, and refrain from every wicked act, you shall live to God; and if you do this you will fulfil a great fast and one acceptable to God.

2. "Listen to the Parable which I am going to tell you concerning Fasting. A certain man had a field, and many servants, and on part of the field he planted a vineyard. And he chose out a certain servant, who was faithful, in good esteem and honour with him, and he called him and said to him: “Take this vineyard which I have planted, and fence it until I come, and do nothing more to the vineyard. And follow this order of mine and you shall have your freedom from me. And the master of the servant went abroad. Now when he had gone the servant took and fenced the vineyard, and when he had finished
the fencing of the vineyard he saw that the vineyard was full of weeds. Therefore he reasoned in himself, saying: I have finished this order of the Lord; I will next dig this vineyard, and it will be better when it is dug, and having no weeds will yield more fruit, not being choked by the weeds. He took and dug the vineyard, and pulled out all the weeds which were in the vineyard. And that vineyard became very beautiful and fertile with no weeds to choke it. After a time the master of the servant and the field came, and entered into the vineyard, and seeing the vineyard beautifully fenced, and moreover dug, and all the weeds pulled up and vines fertile, he was greatly pleased at the acts of the servant. So he called his beloved son, whom he had as heir, and his friends whom he had as counsellors, and told them what he had ordered his servant, and what he had found accomplished. And they congratulated the servant on the character which the master gave him. And he said to them: I promised this servant his freedom if he kept the orders which I gave him. Now he has kept my orders, and has added good work in the vineyard, and greatly pleased me. So in reward for this work which he has done I wish to make him joint heir with my son, because, when he had a good thought he did not put it on one side, but carried it out. The son of the master agreed with this plan, that the servant should be joint heir with the son. After a few days he made a feast and sent to him much food from the feast. But the servant took the food which was sent to him by the master, kept what was sufficient for himself, and distributed the rest to his fellow-servants. And his fellow-servants were glad when they received the food, and began to pray for him, that he might find greater favour with his master, because he had treated them thus. His master heard all these events, and again rejoiced greatly at his conduct. The master again assembled his friends and his son and reported to them what he had done with the food which he had received, and they were still more pleased that the servant should be made joint heir with his son.”

3. I said: “Sir, I do not know these parables and I cannot understand them if you do not explain them to me.” “I will explain everything to you,” he said, “and everything that I talk with you. I will show you his commandments and if you do anything good, beyond the commandment of God, you will gain for yourself greater glory, and shall be more honourable with God than you were destined to be. If then, you keep the commandments of God, and add these services also, you shall rejoice, if you keep them according to my commandment.” I said to him: “Sir, I will keep whatever you command me, for I know that you are with me.” “I will be with you,” said he, “because you have such zeal for doing good, and I will be with all, said he, who have this zeal. This fast,” said he, “if the commandments of the Lord are kept, is very good. You shall therefore keep this fast, which you are going to observe in this way: First of all, keep from every evil word, and from every evil desire and purify your heart from all the vanities of this world. If you keep these things, this fast shall be perfect for you. And you shall do thus: After completing what has been written, in that day on which you fast you shall taste nothing except bread and water, and you shall reckon the price of the expense for that day which you are going to keep, of the foods which you would have eaten, and you shall give it to a widow or an orphan or to some one destitute, and you shall thus be humble-minded that through your humility he who receives it may fill his soul and pray to the Lord for you. If then you thus fulfil the fast as I commanded you, your ‘sacrifice shall be acceptable to God,’ and this fast shall be written down to your credit, and the service which is thus done is good and joyful and acceptable to the Lord. You shall therefore keep these things thus with your children and all your house, and if you keep them you
shall be blessed, and all who hear them and keep them shall be blessed and shall obtain from the Lord whatever they ask.”

4. I besought him much to explain to me the parable of the field and the master and the vineyard and the servant who fenced the vineyard, and the fences, and the weeds which were pulled up from the vineyard, and the son, and the friends the counsellors. For I understood that all these things are a parable. He answered and said to me: “You are very importunate with asking. You ought not;” he said, “to ask at all, for if it be necessary for it to be explained to you it will be explained.” I said to him: “Sir, whatever you show me and do not explain I shall have seen in vain, and not understand what it is. So likewise if you speak parables to me and do not interpret them to me, I shall have heard something from you in vain.” He answered and said to me again: “Whoever,” said he, “is God’s servant, and has his Lord in his heart, seeks understanding from him and receives it, and he interprets every parable, and the sayings of the Lord which were spoken through parables are made known to him. But as many as are weak and idle in prayer, those hesitate to ask from the Lord. But the Lord is very merciful and gives unceasingly to all who ask from him. But you, since you have been given power by the Holy Angel, and received from him such intercession and are not idle, wherefore do you not seek understanding from the Lord and receive it from him?” I said to him: “Sir, when I have you with me I needs must ask you and enquire of you, for you show me all things and talk with me, but if I had seen or heard them without you, I should have asked the Lord that it might be explained to me.”

5. “I told you,” said he, “just now, that you are obstinate and importunate in asking for the explanations of the parable. But since you are so persistent I will explain to you the parable of the field and all the other consequences of it, that you may make them known to everyone. Listen, now,” he said, “and understand it. ‘The field is this world,’ and the Lord of the field is ‘He who created everything’ and perfected it and gave it strength. And the servant is the Son of God, and the vines are this people which he planted. And the fences are the holy Angels of the Lord who support his people. And the weeds which are pulled up out of the vineyard are iniquities of the servants of God. And the food which he sent to him from the supper is the commandments which he gave to his people through his Son, and the friends and counsellors are the holy Angels who were first created. And the absence of the Master is the time which remains before his coming.” I said to him: “Sir, all is great and wonderful and all is glorious. How then,” said I, “could I understand it? Nor is there any other man, however understanding he may be, who can understand it. Moreover, sir,” said I, “explain to me what I am going to ask you.” “Say,” said he, “what you wish.” “Why,” said I, “sir, is the Son of God in the parable given the form of a servant?”

6. “Listen,” said he: “The Son of God is not given the form of a servant, but is given great power and lordship.” “How, sir?” said I, “I do not understand.” “Because God planted the vineyard,” said he, “that is, created the people, and gave it over to his Son. And the Son appointed the angels over them to keep them. And he himself cleansed their sins, labouring much and undergoing much toil. For no vineyard can be dug without toil or labour. When, therefore, he had cleansed the sins of the people, he showed them the ways of life, and gave them the law which he ‘received from his Father.’ But listen why the Lord took his Son and the glorious angels as counsellors concerning the heritage of the servant. The Holy Spirit which pre-exists, which created
all creation, did God make to dwell in the flesh which he willed. Therefore this flesh, in which the Holy Spirit dwelled, served the Spirit well, walking in holiness and purity, and did not in any way defile the spirit. When, therefore, it had lived nobly and purely, and had laboured with the Spirit, and worked with it in every deed, behaving with the power and bravery, he chose it as companion with the Holy Spirit; for the conduct of this flesh pleased him, because it was not defiled while it was bearing the Holy Spirit on earth. Therefore he took the Son and the glorious angels as counsellors, that this flesh also, having served the Spirit blamelessly, should have some place of sojourn, and not seem to have lost the reward of its service. For all flesh in which the Holy Spirit has dwelt shall receive a reward if it be found undefiled and spotless. You have the explanation of this parable also.”

7. “I am glad, sir,” said I, “to hear this explanation.” Listen, now,” he said. “Guard this flesh of yours, pure and undefiled, that the spirit which dwells in it may bear it witness, and your flesh may be justified. See to it, lest the idea enter your heart that this flesh of yours is mortal, and you abuse it in some defilement. For if you defile your flesh you defile also the Holy Spirit, and if you defile the flesh you shall not live.” “But, if, sir,” said I, “there was any previous ignorance before these words were heard, how can the man who defiled his flesh be saved?” “For the former ignorances,” said he, “it is possible for God alone to give healing, for ‘he has all power,’ if, for the future, you defile neither the flesh nor the spirit; for both are in communion, and neither can be defiled without the other. Keep, therefore, both pure, and you shall live to God.”

PARABLE SIX

1. While I was seated in my house, and was glorifying the Lord for all that I had seen, and enquiring about the commandments because they were beautiful and joyful and glorious, and ‘able to save the soul’ of man, I said in myself: I shall be blessed if I ‘walk in these commandments,’ and whoever shall walk in them shall be blessed. While I said this in myself I suddenly saw him seated by me, and saying this: “Why are you double-minded concerning the commandments which I commanded you? They are beautiful. Be not double-minded at all, but put on the faith of the Lord, and you shall walk in them, for I will strengthen you in them. These commandments are helpful to those who are going to repent, for if they do not walk in them their repentance is in vain. Do you, therefore, who repent, put away the wickednesses of this world which lead you astray, but if you put on all the virtue of righteousness, you shall be able to keep these commandments, and no longer add to your sins. Therefore walk in these commandments of mine, and you shall live to God. All these things have been spoken to you by me. And after he spoke these things to me, he said to me: “Let us go into the country, and I will show you the shepherds of the sheep.” “Let us go, sir,” said I. And we came into a plain, and he showed me a young shepherd, clothed with a suit of garments of yellow colour. And he was feeding very many sheep, and these sheep were well fed and very frisky, and were glad as they skipped here and there. And the shepherd himself was very joyful over his flock, and the face of the shepherd was very joyful, and he ran about among the sheep.

2. And he said to me: “Do you see this shepherd?” “Yes, sir,” said I, “I see him.” “This,” said he, “is the angel of luxury and deceit. He wears out the souls of the servants of God, and perverts them from the truth, deceiving them with evil desires in which they
perish. For they forget the commandments of the Living God, and walk in deceit and vain luxury, and are destroyed by this angel, some to death, and some to corruption.” I said to him: “Sir, I do not know what is ‘to death,’ and what is ‘to corruption.’” “Listen,” he said, “the sheep which you see joyful and skipping, these are those which have been torn away from God completely, and have given themselves up to the lusts of this world. For these, then, there is no repentance of life, because they added to their sins and blasphemed against the name of God. Such men incur death. But the sheep which you see not skipping, but feeding in one place, these are they who have given themselves up to luxury and deceit, but have uttered no blasphemy against the Lord. These then have been corrupted from the truth; in them there is hope of repentance, in which they can live. Corruption, then, has hope of some renewing, but death has eternal destruction.” Again I went on a little, and he showed me a great shepherd, as it were savage in appearance, clothed in a white goat-skin, and he had a bag on his shoulders, with a great staff, very hard and with knots, and a great whip. And he looked very bitter so that I was afraid of him, such a look had he. This shepherd then was receiving the sheep from the young shepherd; that is to say, those who were frisky and well-fed but not skipping, and put them in a certain place precipitous and thorny and full of thistles, so that the sheep could not disentangle themselves from the thorns and thistles, but were caught in the thorns and thistles. These then were being pastured all entangled in the thorns and thistles, and they were very wretched, being beaten by him, and he was driving them about here and there, and gave them no rest, and those sheep had no happy time at all.

3. When therefore I saw them thus beaten and miserable I grieved for them that they were being so tormented, and had no rest at all. I said to the shepherd who was speaking with me: “Sir, who is this shepherd who is so pitiless and bitter, and has no compassion at all on these sheep?” “This,” said he, “is the angel of punishment. He is one of the righteous angels, but is set over punishment. Therefore he receives those who have wandered away from God, and walked in the lusts and deceits of this world, and punishes them, as they deserve, with various terrible punishments.” “I should like, sir,” said I, “to know these different punishments, of what kind they are.” “Hear,” said he, “the different tortures and punishments. The tortures befall them in this life, for some are punished with loss, others with deprivations, others with divers illnesses, others with all unsettlement, and others are insulted by the unworthy, and suffer many other things. For many have been unsettled in their counsels and try many things, and nothing goes well for them at all. And they say that they do not prosper in their undertaking, and it does not enter into their hearts that they have done wicked deeds, but they blame the Lord. When, therefore, they have been afflicted with every affliction, then they are handed over to me, for good instruction, and are made strong in the faith of the Lord, and they serve the Lord the rest of the days of their life ‘with a pure heart.’ And if they repent, then it enters into their hearts, that the deeds which they did were evil, and then they glorify God saying that he is ‘a righteous judge,’ and that they suffered righteously, ‘each according to his deeds,’ and for the future they serve the Lord with a pure heart, and they prosper in all their deeds, ‘receiving from the Lord all things, whatever they ask’; and then they glorify the Lord that they were handed over to me, and they no longer suffer any of the evils.”

4. I said to him: “Sir, tell me this also.” “What more,” said he, “do you ask?” “Whether, Sir,” said I, “those who live in luxury and are deceived are punished for the same time
as they live in luxury and deceit?” And he said to me: “Yes, they are punished the same time.” “Sir,” said I, “they are punished a very short time, for those who live in such luxury and forget God, ought to be punished sevenfold.” He said to me: “You are foolish and do not understand the power of punishment.” “No,” said I, “Sir, for if I had understood it, I should not have asked you to tell me.” “Listen,” said he, “to the power of both. The time of luxury and deceit is one hour, but the hour of punishment has the power of thirty days. If, therefore, any man live in luxury and deceit for one day, and be punished one day, the day of punishment has the power of a whole year, for a man is punished as many years as he has lived days in luxury. You see, therefore,” said he, “that the time of luxury and deceit is very short, but the time of punishment is long.”

5. “Sir,” said I, “I still do not at all understand about the time of deceit and luxury and torture; explain it to me more clearly.” He answered and said to me: “Your foolishness is lasting, and you do not wish to purify your heart and to serve God. See to it,” said he, “lest the time be fulfilled, and you be found still foolish. Listen, then,” said he, “that you may understand it as you wish. He who lives in luxury and deceit for a single day, and does what he likes, is clothed with great foolishness, and does not understand the deed which he is doing. For he forgets to-morrow what he did yesterday. For luxury and deceit have no memory, because of the foolishness which they have put on. But when punishment and torture cleave to a man for a single day, he is punished and tortured for a year, for punishment and torture have long memories. Therefore, being tortured and punished for a whole year, he then remembers his luxury and deceit, and knows that he is suffering evil because of them. Therefore, all men who live in luxury and deceit are thus tortured, because though they have life, they have given themselves over to death.” “What sort of luxuries, Sir,” said I, “are harmful?” “Every act which a man does with pleasure,” said he, “is luxury, for even the ill-tempered man, by giving satisfaction to his own temper, lives luxuriously. And the adulterer and drunkard and evil-speaker and liar, and the covetous and the robber, and he who does such things as these gives satisfaction to his own disease; therefore he lives in luxury from his own acts. All these luxuries are harmful to the servants of God. Those, therefore, who are punished and tortured suffer, because of these deceits. But there are also luxuries which bring men salvation, for many who do good luxuriate and are carried away with their own pleasure. This luxury therefore is profitable to the servants of God, and brings life to such a man. But the harmful luxuries spoken of already bring them torture and punishment. But if they continue in them and do not repent, they procure death for themselves.

PARABLE SEVEN

After a few days I saw him in the same plain, where I had also seen the shepherds, and he said to me: “What more are you seeking?” “I have come here, Sir,” said I, “in order that you may command the shepherd of punishment to depart from my house, because he afflicts me too much.” “You must be afflicted,” said he, “For thus,” said he, “the glorious angel enjoined concerning you. For he wishes you to be tried.” “Yes, Sir,” said I, “but what have I done so wicked, that I should be handed over to this angel?” “Listen,” said he, “your sins are many, but not so great as that you should be handed over to this angel; but your family has done great iniquity and sin, and the glorious angel has become enraged at their deeds, and for this reason he commanded you to be afflicted for some time, that they also may repent and purify themselves from every lust of this
world. When, therefore, they repent, and have been purified, then the angel of punishment will depart from you.” I said to him: “Sir, even if they have done such things that the glorious angel is enraged, what have I done?” “They cannot,” said he, “be punished in any other way, than if you, the head of the house, be afflicted. For when you are afflicted, they also will necessarily be afflicted, but while you prosper, they cannot suffer any affliction.” “But see, Sir,” said I, “they have repented with all their heart.” “I know,” said he, “myself also, that they have repented with all their heart; do you then think that the sins of those who repent are immediately forgiven? By no means; but he who repents must torture his own soul, and be humble in all his deeds and be afflicted with many divers afflictions. And if he endure the afflictions which come upon him he who ‘created all things’ and gave them power will have compassion in all ways upon him, and will give him some measure of healing; and this in every case when he sees that the heart of the penitent is clean from every evil deed. But it is good for you and your house, to suffer affliction now. But why do I say much to you? you must be afflicted even as that angel of the Lord, who handed you over to me, ordained. And give the Lord thanks for this, because he deemed you worthy to show you the affliction beforehand, that in your foreknowledge you may endure it with strength.” I said to him: “Sir, do you be with me, and I shall be able to endure every affliction.” “Yes,” said he, “I will be with you, and I will also ask the angel of punishment to afflict you more lightly. But you shall be afflicted a little time and you shall be restored again to your house. Only continue humble and serving the Lord with a pure heart, both your children and your household, and walk in my commandments which I give you, and your repentance shall be able to be strong and pure. And if you keep these commandments with your family all affliction shall depart from you. Yes,” said he, “and affliction shall depart from all who walk in these my commandments.”

PARABLE EIGHT

1. He showed me a great willow, covering plains and mountains, and under the cover of the willow-tree all had come who were called by the name of the Lord. And there stood an angel of the Lord, glorious and very tall, by the side of the willow, with a great pruning-hook, and he kept cutting branches from the willow, and gave them to the people who were in the shade of the willow, and he gave them little rods about a cubit long. After they had all received the little sticks the angel put down the pruning-hook, and that tree remained as sound as when I first saw it. And I wondered in myself saying: How is the tree sound, when so many branches have been cut off? The shepherd said to me: “Do not wonder that this tree has remained sound, though so many branches have been cut off; but if you see everything it will be made clear to you what it is.” The angel who had given the sticks to the people asked them back, and as they had received so also they were called to him, and each of them gave back the sticks. And the angel of the Lord took them and looked at them. From some he received the sticks dried and, as it were, moth-eaten. The angel commanded those who had given up such sticks, to stand apart. And others gave up dry sticks, but they were not moth-eaten, and these he commanded to stand apart. And others gave up sticks half dry, and these stood apart. And others gave up their sticks half dry and with cracks, and these stood apart. And others gave up their sticks, green and having cracks, and these stood apart. And others gave up their sticks half dry and half green, and these stood apart. And others brought two-thirds of the stick green, and one-third dry, and these stood apart. And other gave up two-thirds dry, and one-third green, and these stood apart. And others gave up their
sticks almost wholly green, but a little of their sticks was dry, just the tip, and they had cracks in them, and these stood apart. And of others there was very little green and the rest of the sticks was dry, and these stood apart. And others came, bearing their sticks green, as they had received them from the angel, and the greater part of the multitude gave up such sticks, and the angel rejoiced greatly over these, and these stood apart. And others gave up their sticks green and with buds, and these stood apart, and over these also the angel rejoiced greatly. And others gave up their sticks green and with buds, and the buds had, as it were, some fruit. And those men whose sticks were found thus were joyful, and the angel rejoiced and the shepherd was very joyful over them.

2. And the angel of the Lord commanded crowns to be brought, and the crowns were brought, made, as it were, of palm leaves, and he crowned the men who had given up their sticks with the buds and some fruit, and sent them away into the tower. And he sent also the others into the tower who gave up their sticks green and with buds, but the buds without fruit, and he gave them seals. And all who went into the tower had the same clothing, white as snow. And he sent away those who had given up their sticks green, as they had received them, and gave them clothing and seals. After the angel had finished this he said to the shepherd: “I am going away, but you shall send these within the walls, according as any is worth to dwell there. But consider their sticks carefully and thus let them go, but look carefully. See to it that none pass you,” he said, “but if anyone pass you, I will test them at the altar.” When he had said this to the shepherd he departed. And after the angel had departed the shepherd said to me: “Let us take the sticks of all of them, and plant them to see if some of them will be able to live.” I said to him: “Sir, how can these dry things live?” He answered me, and said: “This tree is a willow, and is a species tenacious of life. If then, the sticks be planted and receive a little moisture, many of them will live; but next we must try them, and water them. If any of them can live I shall rejoice with them, and if they do not live I shall not be proved careless.” And the shepherd commanded me to call each of them as they stood. They came, rank by rank, and gave up their sticks to the shepherd. And the shepherd took the sticks and planted them in ranks, and after planting them, poured much water round them, so that the sticks could not be seen for the water. And after he had watered the sticks he said to me: “Let us go and come back after a few days, and visit all the sticks, for he who created this tree wishes all to live who received branches from this tree. And I too have hope for these sticks which have received moisture and been watered, that the greater part of them will live.”

3. “I said to him: “Sir, tell me what this tree is. For I am perplexed about it, that although so many branches have been cut off, the tree is healthy, and nothing seems to have been cut from it; I am perplexed at this.” “Listen,” said he, “this great tree, which covers plains and mountains and all the earth, is God’s law which was given to all the world. And this law is God’s son preached to the ends of the earth. And those who are under its shade are nations which have heard the preaching and have believed in it. And the great and glorious angel is Michael, who has power over this people and governs them; for this is he who put the law into the hearts of those who believe. Therefore he looks after those to whom he gave it to see if they have kept it. But you see the sticks of each one, for the sticks are the law. Therefore, you see that many sticks have been made useless, and you will understand, that they are all the men who have not observed the law; and you will see the dwelling of each one of them.” I said to him: “Sir, why did he send some into the tower, and left some to you?” “All those who have transgressed

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against the law, which they received from him, he left to my authority for repentance. But as many as were already well-pleased with the law, and have observed it, he keeps them under his own authority.” “Who then, Sir,” said I, “are they who were crowned and went into the tower?” “All those, said he, “who wrestled with the devil and conquered him, have been crowned. These are they who suffered for the law. And the others who also gave up their sticks green and having buds, but without fruit, are they who were persecuted for the law, but did not suffer, and did not deny their law. And those who gave them up green, as they received them, are holy and righteous and have walked far with a pure heart, and have kept the commandments of the Lord. And the rest you will know, when I look at these sticks which have been planted and watered.”

4. And after a few days he came to the place, and the shepherd sat in the place of the angel, and I stood by him, and he said to me; “Gird yourself with a towel, and serve me.” And I girded myself with a clean towel made of sackcloth. And when he saw me girded and ready to serve him he said: “Call the men whose sticks have been planted, according to the order in which each gave his stick.” And I went into the plain and called all of them, and they all stood in their stations. And he said to them: “Let each pull out his own stick and bring it to me.” And they first gave them up who had had them dry and cut, and they were found to be still dry and cut, and he commanded them to stand apart. Then they gave them up who had them dry, but not cut, and some of them gave up their sticks green and some dry and cut as it were by moth. Those then who gave them up green he commanded to stand apart, and those who had given them up dry and cut he commanded to stand with the first ones. Then those gave them up who had them half dry and cracked, and many of them gave them up green and without cracks, and some green and with buds, and with fruit on the buds, as those had had who had gone crowned into the tower. But some gave them up dry and moth-eaten, and some dry but not eaten, and some remained half dry and with cracks. And he commanded each of them to stand apart, some in their own station and some apart.

5. Next those gave up their sticks who had had them green but with cracks, and these all gave them up green and stood in their own station. And the shepherd rejoiced over these that all were changed and had lost their cracks. And those also gave them up who had had them half green and half dry. The sticks of some of them were found quite green, of some half dry, of some dry and moth-eaten, but of some green and with buds. All these were sent each to his own station. Next those gave them up who had two-thirds green and one-third dry; many of them gave them up green, but many half dry, and others dry and moth-eaten; these all stood in their own station. Next they gave them up who had had two-thirds dry and one-third green. Many of them gave them up half-dry, and some dry and moth-eaten and others half-dry and with cracks, and a few green. These all stood in their own station. And those gave up their sticks who had had them green, but a very little dry and with cracks. Of these some gave them up green, and some green and with buds. These also went away to their own station. Next, those gave them up who had had a very little green, but the rest dry. Of these the sticks were found for the greatest part green and with buds, and fruit on the buds, and others quite green. Over these sticks the shepherd rejoiced greatly because they were found thus. And these went away each to his own station.

6. After the shepherd had looked at the sticks of them all, he said to me: “I told you that this tree is tenacious of life. Do you see,” said he, “how many have repented and been
saved?” “Yes, Sir,” said I, “I see it.” “See then,” said he, “the mercifulness of the Lord, that it is great and glorious, and he has given his spirit to those who are worthy of repentance.” “Why then, Sir,” said I, “did not all repent?” “He gave repentance to those,” said he, “whose heart he saw would be pure, and would serve him with all their heart. But in whom he saw guile and wickedness, that they would repent with hypocrisy, to them he gave no repentance, lest they should again defile his name.” I said to him: “Sir, now therefore, explain to me those who gave up their sticks, what is the character of each and their dwelling, that when those hear who have believed and have received the seal, and have broken it, and have not kept it whole, they may recognize their own deeds, and repent, and receive a seal from you and glorify the Lord, that he had mercy on them, and sent you to renew their spirits.” “Listen,” said he, “those whose sticks are dry and were found moth-eaten are the apostates and the betrayers of the Church, and the blasphemers of the Lord in their sins; and moreover they were ashamed of ‘the name of the Lord which was called over them.’ These then have finally perished to God. And you see that not even one of them repented, although they heard the words which you spoke to them, which I commanded you; from such life is departed. And they who gave up their sticks dry and not moth-eaten, these are also near them; for they were hypocrites, and introduced strange doctrines and corrupted the servants of God, and especially those who have sinned, not suffering them to repent, but persuading them with their foolish doctrines. These, then, have hope of repentance. And you see that many of them have repented since I told them my commandments; and they shall still repent. But as many as shall not repent have lost their lives. But as many of them as repented became good and their dwelling was within the first walls, and some of them even up into the tower. You see then,” said he, “that repentance of sins brings life, but not to repent brings death.”

7. And as many as gave them up half dry and had cracks in them; listen also, concerning them:—They, whose sticks were half dry are double-minded, for they are neither alive nor dead. And those who had them half dry and with cracks, these are double-minded and evil speakers, and are never ‘at peace among themselves,’ but are always making schisms; but repentance,” said he, “waits also for these. You see,” said he, “that some of them have repented, and there remains,” said he, “still hope of repentance in them. And as many of them,” said he, “as have repented, shall have their dwellings in the tower, and as many of them have repented more slowly, shall dwell on the walls. But as many as do not repent, but remain in their deeds, shall die the death. And they who gave up their sticks green and with cracks, these were ever faithful and good, but had some jealousy among themselves over the first place and some question of reputation. But all these are foolish, who quarrel among themselves about the first place. But these also, when they heard my commandments, because they were good, purified themselves and quickly repented; so their dwelling was in the tower. But if any of them turn again to schism he shall be cast out from the tower, and shall lose his life. Life is for all those who keep the commandments of the Lord. And in the commandments there is nothing about the first place or any question of reputation, but about man’s long-suffering and humility. Among such, then, is the life of the Lord, but among the schismatic and law-breakers there is death.

8. “But those who gave up their sticks half-green and half-dry these are those who are concerned with business and do not cleave to the saints; for this reason half of them is alive, and half is dead. Many, then, of them, when they heard my commandments
repented. As many, as repented, have their dwelling in the tower; but some of them were apostate to the end. These then have no repentance, for because of their business they blasphemed the Lord and denied him. So they lost their life because of the wickedness which they wrought. And many of them were double-minded. These have still repentance if they repent quickly, and their dwelling shall be in the tower, but if they repent more slowly they shall dwell on the walls. But if they do not repent they also have lost their life. And those who gave up their sticks two-thirds green, and one-third dry, these are they who have denied with manifold denials. Many of them therefore repented and went to live in the tower. But many of them were apostates from God to the end; these lost their life finally. And some of them were double-minded, and were schismatic, these then have repentance, if they repent quickly, and do not remain in their pleasures; but if they continue in their deeds, these also procure death for themselves.

9. And those who gave up their sticks two-thirds dry, and one-third green, these are they who were faithful, but became rich and in honour among the heathen; then they put on great haughtiness and became high-minded, and abandoned the truth, and did not cleave to the righteous, but lived together with the heathen, and this way pleased them better. But they were not apostates from God, but remained in the faith, without doing the works of the faith. Many, then, of them repented, and their dwelling was in the tower. But others lived to the end with the heathen, and were corrupted by the vainglory of the heathen, and were apostates from God, and did the deeds of the heathen. These were reckoned with the heathen. And others of them were double-minded, not hoping to be saved, because of the deeds which they had done. And others were double-minded, and made schisms among themselves. For these, then, who became double-minded because of their deeds there is still repentance, but their repentance must be speedy that their dwelling may be within the tower. But for those who do not repent, but remain in their pleasures, death is near.

10. But those who gave up their sticks green, but the tips were dry and had cracks, these were always good and faithful and glorious before God, but they sinned a little because of small lusts, and had small quarrels with one another. But when they heard my word the greater part repented quickly, and their dwelling was in the tower. But some of them were double-minded, and some in their double-mindedness made a greater schism. For these then there is still hope of repentance, because they were always good, and not easily shall any of them die. But those who gave up their sticks dry, but with a little green, these are they who had belief only but did the deeds of wickedness; but they were never apostates from God, and they bore the name gladly, and they gladly received into their houses the servants of God. When they heard, then, of this repentance, they repented without doubting, and are accomplishing all virtue and righteousness. But some of them are also afraid, knowing the deeds which they had done. All these, then, shall have their dwelling in the tower.”

11. And after he had finished the explanations of all the sticks he said to me: “Go and tell all men to repent and live to God, for the Lord sent me in his mercy to give repentance to all, although some are not worthy because of their deeds. But the Lord, being long-suffering, wishes those who were called through his Son to be saved.” I said to him: “Sir, I hope that all who hear them will repent. For I am persuaded that each one who recognizes his own deeds and fears God will repent.” “And he answered me and
said: “As many,” said he, “as repent with all their hearts, and purify themselves from the wickedness which have been mentioned before, and no longer add anything to their sins, shall receive healing from the Lord for their former sins, if they are not double-minded as to these commandments, and they shall live to God. But as many,” said he, “as add to their sins, and live in the lusts of this world shall condemn themselves to death. But do you walk in my commandments and you shall live to God, and as many as walk in them and do rightly, shall live to God.” When he had showed me these things and had told me everything, he said to me: “And the rest I will show you after a few days.”

PARABLE NINE

1. After I had written the commandments and parables of the shepherd, the angel of repentance, he came to me and said to me: “I wish to show you what the Holy Spirit which spoke with you in the form of the Church showed you, for that Spirit is the Son of God. For since you were too weak in the flesh, it was not shown you by an angel. But when you were strengthened by the spirit, and made strong in your strength, so that you could also see an angel, then the building of the tower was shown to you by the Church. You saw all things well and holly as if from a virgin. But now you see them from an angel, yet through the same Spirit. But you must learn everything more accurately from me. For, for this reason too, I was given by the glorious angel, to live in your house, that you might see all things with power and fear nothing, as you did formerly. And he took me away to Arcadia, to a breast-shaped mountain, and set me on top of the mountain, and showed me a great plain and round the plain twelve mountains, and each mountain had a different appearance. The first was black as pitch, the second was bare without herbs, and the third was full of thorns and thistles. And the fourth had half-dried herbage; the tops of the herbs were green, but the parts by the roots were dry. And some of the herbs, when the sun had burnt them, were becoming dry. And the fifth mountain had green herbs and was steep. And the sixth mountain was altogether full of cracks, some small and some great. And the cracks had herbage, but the herbage was not very flourishing, but rather as if it were fading. And the seventh mountain had vigorous herbage, and the whole mountain was flourishing, and all kinds of cattle and birds were feeding on that mountain. And the more the cattle and birds were feeding, the more the herbage of that mountain flourished. And the eighth mountain was full of springs, and every kind of creature of the Lord was given to drink from the springs of that mountain. But the ninth mountain had no water at all, and was quite desert. But it had in it wild beasts and deadly reptiles destroying men. And the tenth mountain had great trees and was full of shady places, and under the shade of the trees sheep were lying resting and ruminating. And the eleventh mountain was full of trees and those trees had fruit, and were each adorned with different fruits, so that whoever saw them desired to eat of their fruits. And the twelfth mountain was all white, and its appearance was joyful, and the mountain was in itself very beautiful.

2. In the middle of the plain he showed me a great white rock, which had risen out of the plain, and the rock was higher than the hills, four-square, so that it could hold the whole world. And that rock was old, and had a door hewn out of it. But it seemed to me that the cutting of the door was recent. And the door glistened so in the sun, that I marvelled at the brightness of the door. And round the door there stood twelve maidens; the four who stood at the corner, seemed to me to be the more glorious, and they stood
at the four parts of the door, each with two other maidens on each side. And they were clothed in linen mantles, and were beautifully girded, and had their right shoulders outside, as if they were going to carry a load. Thus they were ready, for they were very joyful and eager. After I had seen these things I wondered myself, for I was seeing great and glorious things. And again I was perplexed at the maidens, that though they were so delicate, they stood bravely as though they would carry the whole heaven. And the shepherd said to me: “Why do you reason in yourself and are perplexed, and give yourself sorrow? For what things you cannot comprehend,—be prudent, do not attempt them, but ask the Lord that you may receive understanding and comprehend them. What is behind you you cannot see, but see what is before you. Let go what you cannot see, and do not trouble yourself. But what you see, master that, and do not be curious about the rest, and I will explain everything to you, whatever I show you. Look then at the rest.

3. I saw six men who came, tall and glorious, and alike in appearance, and they summoned a multitude of men, and they too who came were tall men and beautiful and strong, and the six men commanded them to build a certain tower above the rock. And there was a great throng of those men who had come to build the tower, running here and there round the tower. And the maidens stood round the tower, and told the men to make speed with building the tower. And the maidens held out their hands as if they were going to take something from the men. And the six men commanded stones to come up from a certain deep place, and to go into the building of the tower. And there came up ten square stones, beautiful and not hewn. And the six men called the maidens and commanded them to take all the stones which were to come for the building of the tower, and to go through the gate, and give them to the men who were going to build the tower. And the maidens put the ten stones, which first came out of the deep place, on one another, and they carried them together like a single stone.

4. And just as they had stood together round the gate, so the maidens who seemed to be strong were carrying, and they were stooping under the corners of the stone. But the others were stooping by the sides of the stone, and so they were carrying all the stones. And they brought them through the gate as they had been commanded, and gave them to the men in the tower, and they took the stones and went on building. Now, the building of the tower was raised on the great rock, and above the gate. So those ten stones were fitted in, and they filled the whole rock. And they were the foundation of the building of the tower, and the rock and the gate were supporting the whole tower. And after the ten stones, twenty other stones came up out of the deep place, and these were fitted into the building of the tower and were carried by the maidens like the former stones. And after these there came up thirty-five, and these likewise were fitted into the tower. And after these there came up forty other stones, and all these were placed into the building of the tower; so there became four tiers in the foundations of the tower. And they ceased to come up from the deep place, and the builders also stopped for a little. And again the six men commanded the mass of the multitude to bring stones for the building of the tower from the mountains. Therefore there were brought from all the mountains stones of different colours, hewn out by the men, and they were given to the maidens, and the maidens carried them through the gate and gave them over for the building of the tower. And when the various stones were put into the building they became all alike white and changed their various colours. But some stones were given by the men for the building, which did not become bright but
proved to remain as they were when they were put in. For they had not been given by the maidens, and had not been brought in through the door. Therefore these stones were unseemly in the building of the tower. And when the six men saw the unseemly stones in the building they commanded them to be taken away and to be brought down to their own place, whence they had been take. And they said to the men who were bringing the stones in: “You must on no account put stones into the building, but put them by the side of the tower, that the maidens may bring them in through the gate, and give them over for the building. For if,” said they, “they are not brought in by the hands of these maidens through the gate they cannot change their colours; do not then,” said they, “labour in vain.”

5. And on that day the building was finished, but the tower was not completed, for it was going to be built on to, and there was a pause in the building. And the six men commanded all the builders to retire a little and rest, but they commanded the maidens not to go away from the tower. And it seemed to me that the maidens had given up looking after the tower. But after they had all gone away and were resting I said to the shepherd: “Why, Sir,” said I, “was the building of the tower not completed?” “The tower,” he said, “cannot yet be completed unless its lord come and test this building, in order that if some stones prove to be rotten, he may change them, for the tower is being built according to his will.” “I should like, Sir,” said I, “to know what is this building of the tower, and concerning the rock, and the gate, and the mountains and the maidens, and the stones which came up from the deep place, and were not hewn, but went as they were into the building. And why ten stones were first laid for the foundation, then twenty, then thirty-five, then forty, and concerning the stones which went into the building, and were taken away again and put back in their own place. Give my soul rest concerning all these things, Sir, and let me know them.” “If,” said he, “you are not found to be vainly zealous, you shall know all things. For after a few days we will come here, and you shall see the rest of what happens to this tower, and you will know all the parables accurately.” And after a few days we came to the place where we had sat, and he said to me: “Let us go to the tower, for the master of the tower is coming to examine it.” And we came to the tower, and there was nobody by it at all, except only the maidens. And the shepherd asked the maidens if the Lord of the tower had come. And they said that he was about to come, to examine the building.

6. And lo, after a little time I saw an array of many men coming, and in the middle there was a man so tall, that he overtopped the tower. And the six men, who had been in charge of the building, were walking with him on the right hand and on the left, and all who had worked at the building were with him, and there were many other glorious beings around him. And the maidens who kept the tower ran to him and kissed him, and began to walk near him round the tower. And that man examined the building carefully, so that he felt each stone, and he held a staff in his hand and hit each individual stone used in the building. And when he struck, some of them became as black as pitch, and some rotten, and some with cracks, and some short, and some neither white nor black, and some rough and not fitting in with the other stones, and some with many stains. These were the varieties of the rotten stones which were found in the building. Therefore he commanded all these to be taken away from the tower, and to be put beside the tower, and other stones to be brought and laid in their place. And the builders asked him from which mountains he wished stones to be brought and laid in their place, and he commanded them not to be brought from the mountains, but he commanded
them to be brought from a certain plain near at hand. And the plain was quarried, and splendid square stones were found, but some were also round. And all the stones that were found in that plain were brought and carried through the door by the maidens. And the square stones were hewn and put into the place of those which had been taken out, but the round stones were not put into the building, because they were hard to hew, and it took a long time; but they were put beside the tower, as if they were going to be hewn and put into the building; for they were very splendid.

7. When the glorious man, the Lord of all the tower, had finished these things, he called the shepherd and gave over to him all the stones which were lying by the tower which had been taken out of the building, and said to him: “Clean these stones carefully, and put into the building of the tower those which can fit in with the rest, and throw far away from the tower those which do not fit.” With these commands to the shepherd he went away from the tower, with all those with whom he had come. But the maidens stood round the tower guarding it. I said to the shepherd: “How can these stones come again into the building of the tower after they have been rejected?” He answered and said to me: “Do you see these stones?” said he. “Yes, Sir, I see them,” said I. “I will hew,” said he, “the greater part of these stones, and put them into the building, and they will fit in with the rest of the stones.” “How, Sir,” said I, “can they fill the same room after they have been hewn?” He answered and said to me: “Those which turn out to be a little will be put into the middle of the building, and such as are bigger will be put outside and will hold them together.” When he had said this he said to me: “Let us go, and after two days let us come and cleanse these stones and put them into the building, for everything round the tower must be cleansed lest the Master come suddenly and find it dirty round the tower and he will be angry, and these stones will not go into the building of the tower, and I shall seem to be careless before the Master.” And after two days we came to the tower, and he said to me: “Let us look at all the stones, and let us see which are able to come into the building.” I said to him: “Sir, let us look.”

8. And when we began we first looked at the black stones, and these were found to be the same as when they were put out of the building. And the shepherd commanded them to be removed from the tower and sent away. Then he looked at those which were rotten and he took and hewed many of them and commanded the maidens to take them and put them into the building, and the maidens took them and put them into the building in the middle of the tower. And the rest he commanded to be put with the black ones, for these also were found to be black. Then he began to look at those which had cracks, and of these he hewed many, and commanded them to be brought back by the maidens into the building. But they were put on the outside because they were found to be stronger. But the rest could not be hewn because of the number of the cracks. For this cause, therefore, they were thrown away from the building of the tower. Then he began to look at those which were short, and many among them were found black, and some with great cracks, and he commanded these also to be put with the rejected. But the majority of them he cleaned and hewed and commanded to be put into the building. And the maidens took them, and fitted them into the middle of the building of the tower, for they were too weak. Then he began to look at those which were half white, and half black, and many of them were found to be black, and these also he commanded to be put away with the rejected. But the rest were all taken up by the maidens, for they were white and were fitted by the maidens themselves into the building. And they were put on the outside because they were found to be sound, so
that they could support those that were put in the middle, for in no way were they too short. Then he began to look at those which were hard and difficult, and a few of them were rejected, because they could not be hewn, for they proved to be very hard. But the rest of them were hewn, and were taken by the maidens and fitted into the middle of the building of the tower; for they were too weak. Then he began to look at those which had stains, and of these a very few were turned black, and were rejected with the rest, but most of them were found to be bright and sound, and these were fitted by the maidens into the building, but they were put on the outside because of their strength.

9. Next he came to look at the white and round stones, and said to me: “What do we do with these stones?” “How should I know, Sir?” said I. “Then do you not notice anything about them?” “I, Sir,” said I, “have not this art, I am neither a stone-cutter, nor can I understand.” “Do you not see,” said he, “that they are very round, and if I wish to make them square, a great deal must be cut away from them? Yet some of them must of necessity be put into the building.” “If then, Sir,” said I, “it is necessary, why do you worry yourself, and not choose for the building those which you wish and fit them into it?” He chose out from them the largest and bright ones and hewed them, and the maidens took and fitted them into the outside of the building. And the rest which remained over were taken up and put back into the plain from which they had been brought. But they were not rejected, “Because,” said he, “there remains still a little to be built of the tower, and the master of the tower wishes that all these stones should be fitted into the building because they are very bright. And there were called twelve women, very beautiful to look at, clothed in black, girded, and their shoulders bare, and their hair loose. And these women looked to me to be cruel. And the shepherd commanded them to take the stones which were rejected from the building, and take them back to the mountains, from which also they had been brought. And they were glad and took them up, and took away all the stones, and put them whence they had been taken. And after all the stones had been taken up, and there no longer remained a stone round the tower, the shepherd said to me: “Let us go round the tower and see if there is any defect in it.” And I went round it with him. And when the shepherd saw that the tower was beautifully built, he was very joyful; for the tower was so built that when I saw it, I envied its building, for it was so built, as if it were all one stone, without a single joint in it, and the stone appeared as if it had been hewn out of a rock, for it seemed to me to be a single stone.

10. And I also walked with him and was glad when I saw such good things. And the shepherd said to me: “Go and bring lime and a light clay, that I may fill up the marks of the stones which have been taken up, and put into the building. For all the ground round the tower must be level.” And I did as he commanded and brought them to him. “Serve me,” said he, “and the work will soon be completed.” So he filled up the marks of the stones which had gone into the building, and commanded all round the tower to be swept, and be made clean. And the maidens took brooms and swept, and they took away all the dirt from the tower and sprinkled water, and the place of the tower became joyful and very beautiful. The shepherd said to me: “Everything,” said he, “has been made clean. If the lord come to visit the tower, he has nothing with which to blame us.” When he had said this he wished to go away. But I took him by his wallet, and began to adjure him by the Lord to explain to me what he had shown me. He said to me: “I am busy for a little and then I will explain everything to you. Wait for me here till I come.” I said to him: “Sir, what shall I do here alone?” “You are not alone,” he said, “for these
maidens are here with you.” “Give me then,” said I, “into their charge.” The shepherd called them and said to them: “I entrust him to you till I come,” and he went away. And I was alone with the maidens, and they were merry and gracious towards me, especially the four more glorious of them.

11. The maidens said to me: “To-day the shepherd is not coming here.” “What then,” said I, “shall I do?” “Wait for him,” said they, “until the evening, and if he come he will speak with you; and if he come not you shall remain here with us until he come.” I said to them: “I will wait for him till evening, but if he come not I will go away home and return in the morning.” But they answered and said to me: “You were given to our charge; you cannot go away from us.” “Where shall I stay then?” said I. “You shall sleep with us,” said they, “as a brother and not as a husband, for you are our brother and for the future we are going to live with you, for we love you greatly.” But I was ashamed to stay with them. And she who seemed to be the first of them began to kiss and embrace me, and the others seeing her embracing me began to kiss me themselves, and to lead me round the tower, and to play with me. I, too, had, as it were, become young again, and began to play with them myself, for some were dancing, others were gavotting, others were singing, and I walked in silence with them round the tower, and was merry with them. But when evening came I wished to go home but they did not let me go, but kept me, and I stayed the night with them and slept by the tower. For the maidens spread their linen tunics on the ground, and they made me lie down in the midst of them, and they did nothing else but pray, and I also prayed with them unceasingly and not less than they, and the maidens rejoiced when I was praying thus, and I stayed there until the morrow until the second hour with the maidens. Then the shepherd came and said to the maidens: “Have you done him any despite?” “Ask him,” said they. I said to him: “Sir, I rejoiced at remaining with them.” “On what,” said he, “did you sup?” “I supped, Sir,” said I, “on the words of the Lord the whole night.” “Did they receive you well?” said he, “Yes, Sir,” said I. “Now,” said he, “what do you wish to hear first?” “Even as, Sir,” said I, “you showed me from the beginning; I ask you, Sir, to declare things to me even as I ask them of you.” “Even as you desire,” said he, “so I will interpret to you, and hide from you nothing at all.”

12. “First of all, Sir,” said I, “tell me this: What is the rock and the door?” “This rock and the door,” said he, “is the Son of God.” “How is it,” said I, “Sir, that the rock is old, but the gate is new?” “Listen,” said he, “and understand, foolish man. The Son of God is older than all his creation, so that he was the counsellor of his Creation to the Father, therefore the rock is also old.” “But why is the gate new, Sir?” said I. “Because,” said he, “He was manifested in the last days of the end of the world, for this reason the gate is new, that those who are to be saved may enter through it into the kingdom of God.” Do you see,” said he, “the stones which entered through the gate, were put into the building of the tower, but those which did not enter through it were put back again into their own place?” “I see, Sir,” said I. “So,” said he, “no man ‘shall enter into the Kingdom of God,’ except he take his holy name. For if you wish to enter into a city, and that city has been walled round, and has one gate, can you enter into that city except through the gate which it has?” “No, Sir,” said I, “for how is it possible otherwise?” “If then you are not able to enter into the city except through the gate which it has, so,” said he, “a man ‘cannot’ otherwise ‘enter into the kingdom of God,’ except through the name of his Son, who was beloved by him. Do you see,” said he, “the crowd which is building the tower?” “Yes, Sir,” said I, “I see it.” “They,” said he, “are all glorious angels; by these
then the Lord has been walled round. But the gate is the Son of God, this is the only entrance to the Lord. No man can enter in to him otherwise, than through his Son. So you see,” said he, “the six men, and the glorious and great man in their midst, who is walking round the tower and rejected the stones from the building?” “Yes, Sir,” said I, “I see him.” “The glorious man,” said he, “is the Son of God, and those six are glorious angels supporting him on the right hand and on the left. None of these glorious angels,” said he, “can enter into God’s presence without him. Whoever receives not his name ‘shall not enter into the kingdom of God.’”

13. “But,” said I, “what is the tower?” “This tower,” said he, “is the Church.” “And what are these maidens?” “They,” said he, “are holy spirits. And a man cannot be found in the kingdom of God in any other way, except they clothe him with their clothing. For if you receive the name alone but do not receive the clothing from them, you will benefit nothing, for these maidens are the powers of the Son of God. If you bear the name, but do not bear his power you will be bearing his name in vain. And the stones,” said he, “which you saw rejected, these are they who bore the name, but were not clothed with the raiment of the maidens.” “What,” said I, “is their raiment, Sir?” “Their names themselves,” said he, “are their raiment. Whoever bears the name of the Son of God must also bear their names; for even the Son himself bears the names of these maidens. All the stones,” said he, “which you saw enter into the building of the tower, given by their hands and remaining in the building, had put on the power of these maidens. For this reason you see that the tower has become one solid stone with the rock. So also those who believe on the Lord through his Son, and put on these spirits will become ‘one spirit and one body,’ and the colour of their raiment will be one. And the dwelling of such as bear the names of the maidens is in the tower.” “Why, Sir,” said I, “were the rejected stones rejected? For they came in through the gate and were put into the building of the tower by the hands of the maidens.” “Since,” said he, “you care for everything, and enquire accurately, listen concerning the rejected stones. ‘These,’” said he, “all bore the name of the Son of God, and they also received the power of these maidens. By receiving these spirits, then, they were strengthened and were with the servants of God, and they had ‘one spirit and one body,’ and one raiment, for they ‘had the same mind’ and ‘wrought righteousness.’ After some time, then, they were made disobedient by the women whom you saw clothed in black raiment, who had their shoulders bare, and their hair loose, and were beautiful. When they saw them they desired them, and put on their power, and put off the clothing and power of the maidens. They were therefore rejected from the house of God and were handed over to those women. But those who were not deceived by the beauty of these women remained in the house of God. You have here,” said he, “the explanation of those who were rejected.”

14. “How will it then be, Sir,” said I, “if these men, such as they are, repent and put away the lusts of these women, and return to the maidens and walk in their power and in their deeds? Will they not enter into the house of God?” “They will enter,” said he, “if they put away the works of these women, and take back the power of the maidens and walk in their deeds. For this cause also there was a pause in the building, in order that, if they repent, they may go away into the building of the tower. But if they do not repent then others will enter and they will be finally rejected.” I thanked the Lord for all these things, that he had mercy on all who call upon his name, and sent the angel of repentance to us who have sinned against him, and renewed our spirit, even when we were already corrupted, and restored our life, when we had no hope of living. “Now, Sir,”
said I, “explain to me why the tower was not built on the ground but on the rock and on the gate.” “Are you still,” said he, “silly and foolish?” “I need, Sir,” said I, “to ask everything from you, because I am wholly without power of understanding anything. For all things great and glorious are also difficult for men to understand.” “Listen,” said he, “the name of the Son of God is great and incomprehensible, and supports the whole world. If then the whole creation is supported by the Son of God, what do you think of those who are called by him, and bear the name of the Son of God, and walk in his commandments? Do you see then whom he supports? Those who bear his name with their whole heart. He then was their foundation and he supports them joyfully, because they are not ashamed to bear his name.”

15. “Explain to me, Sir,” said I, “the names of the maidens, and of the women who are clothed in black raiment.” “Listen,” said he, “to the names of the stronger maidens who stand at the corners. The first is Faith, the second is Temperance, the third is Power, the fourth is Long-suffering, and the others who stand between them have these names:—Simplicity, Guilelessness, Holiness, Joyfulness, Truth, Understanding, Concord, Love. He who bears these names and the name of the Son of God, ‘shall be able to enter into the Kingdom of God’. Hear, also,” said he, “the names of the women who have black raiment. Of these also four are more powerful. The first is Unbelief, the second Impurity, the third Disobedience, and the fourth Deceit; and those who follow them are called Grief, Wickedness, Licentiousness, Bitterness, Lying, Foolishness, Evil-speaking, Hate. The servant of God who bears these names shall see the Kingdom of God, but shall not enter into it.” “But, Sir,” said I, “what are the stones which were fitted into the building of the tower?” “The first,” said he, “the ten which were placed in the foundation, are the first generation; and the twenty five are the second generation of righteous men; and the thirty-five are the prophets of God and his servants, and the forty are prophets and teachers of the preaching of the Son of God”. “Why, then Sir,” said I, “did the maidens give these stones also for the building of the tower, and brought them through the gate?” “Because,” said he, “these first bore these spirits, and they did not depart from one another at all; neither the spirits from the men nor the men from the spirits, but the spirits remained with them until they fell asleep. And if they had not had these spirits with them they would not have been useful for the building of this tower.”

16. “Explain to me, Sir,” said I, “still more.” “What,” said he, “are you asking further?” “Why Sir,” said I, “did the stones come up from the deep and were put into the building of the tower, after they had borne these spirits?” “They had need,” said he, “to come up through the water that they might be made alive, for ‘they could not’ otherwise ‘enter into the kingdom of God’ unless they put away the mortality of their former life. So these also who had fallen asleep received the seal of the Son of God and “entered into the kingdom of God.’ For before,” said he, “a man bears the name of the Son of God, he is dead. But when he receives the seal he puts away mortality and receives life. The seal, then, is the water. They go down then into the water dead, and come up alive. This seal, then, was preached to them also, and they made use of it ‘to enter into the kingdom of God.’” “Why, Sir,” said I, “did the forty stones also come up with them from the deep, although they had received the seal already?” “Because,” said he, “these apostles and teachers, who preached the name of the Son of God, having fallen asleep in the power and faith of the Son of God, preached also to those who had fallen asleep before them, and themselves gave to them the seal of the preaching. They went down therefore with them into the water and came up again, but the latter went down alive
and came up alive, while the former, who had fallen asleep before, went down but came up alive. Through them, therefore, they were made alive, and received the knowledge of the name of the Son of God. For this cause they also came up with them and were joined into the building of the tower, and were used together with them for the building without being hewn. For they had fallen asleep in righteousness and in great purity, only they had not received this seal. You have then the explanation of these things also.” “Yes, Sir,” said I, “I have.”

17. “Now therefore, Sir, explain to me about the mountains. Why is their appearance different from one another and various?” “Listen,” said he, “these twelve mountains are the tribes which inhabit the whole world. The Son of God, then, was preached to them by the Apostles.” “But tell me, Sir,” said I, “why the appearance of the mountains differs one from another and is various.” “Listen,” said he, “these twelve tribes which inhabit the whole world are twelve nations, but they are various in understanding and mind. Just as, then, you saw that the mountains are various, so also are there varieties in the mind and understanding of the nations. And I will explain to you the action of each one.” “First of all, Sir,” said I, “explain this to me, why though these mountains were so various, when the stones from them were put into the building they became bright with a single colour, like the stones which had come up from the deep.” “Because,” said he, “all the nations which dwell under heaven, when they heard and believed were called after the name of the Son of God. So then when they received the seal they had one understanding and one mind, and their faith became one, and their love one, and they bore the spirits of the maidens together with the name. For this cause the building of the tower became bright with one colour like the sun. But after they entered in together and became one body, some of them defiled themselves and were cast out from the family of the righteous, and became again what they had been before, or rather even worse.”

18. “How, Sir,” said I, “did they become worse, after they had attained to the knowledge of God?” “He who does not know God,” said he, “and does wickedly, incurs some punishment for his wickedness, but he who has knowledge of God, is bound no more to do wickedly, but to do good. If then he who is bound to do good do wickedly, does he not seem to do more wickedly than he who does not know God? For this reason, those who have no knowledge of God and do wickedly, are condemned to death, but those who have knowledge of God and have seen his great deeds, and do wickedly, shall be punished doubly, and shall die for ever. Thus therefore the Church of God shall be cleansed. But just as you saw that the stones were taken from the tower, and handed over to the evil spirits and cast out from it (and there shall be one body of those who are purified, just as also the tower became as if it were made of a single stone, after it was purified), so the Church of God also shall be, after it has been purified, and the wicked and hypocrites and blasphemers and double-minded, and doers of various wickedness, have been rejected from it. After these have been rejected the Church of God shall be one body, one mind, one spirit, one faith, one love, and then the Son of God shall rejoice and be glad in them, when he has received his people in purity.” “All this, Sir,” said I, “is great and wonderful. Yet, sir,” said I, “explain to me the power and the action of each one of the mountains, that every soul that has believed on the Lord, may hear and glorify His great and wonderful and glorious name.” “Listen,” said he, “to the variety of the mountains and the twelve nations.
19. “From the first mountain, the black one, are such believers as these: apostates and blasphemers against the Lord, and betrayers of the servants of God. For these there is no repentance, but there is death, and for this cause they also are black, for their race is lawless. And from the second mountain, the bare one, are such believers as these: hypocrites and teachers of wickedness. These then also are like unto the first, having no ‘fruit of righteousness,’ for just as their mountain is unfruitful, so also such men have the name, but are devoid of faith, and there is no fruit of truth in them. For these then repentance is ready if they repent quickly. But if they delay their death will be with the former ones.” “Why, Sir,” said I, “is there repentance for these but not for the first, for their deeds are almost the same?” “For this reason,” said he, “there is repentance for these, because they did not deceive their Lord and were not betrayers of the servants of God; but because of the lust of gain, they played the hypocrite, and each taught according to the lusts of sinful men. But they will be punished in some way, yet repentance is open to them because they did not become blasphemers or traitors.

20. “And from the third mountain, which has thorns and thistles, are such believers as these. Of them are those who are rich and are mixed up with many affairs of business, for the thistles are the rich, and the thorns are those who are mixed up with various affairs of business. These then who are engaged in many and various businesses do not cleave to the servants of God, but are choked by their work and go astray. And the rich cleave with difficulty to the servants of God, fearing that they will be asked for something by them. Such then ‘will enter with difficulty the kingdom of God.’ For just as it is difficult to walk with naked feet among thistles, so it is also ‘difficult’ for such men ‘to enter into the Kingdom of God.’ But for all these there is repentance, but it must be speedy, that they may now retrace their days and the omissions of former years, and do some good. If then they repent and do some good they will live to God, but if they remain in their deeds they will be delivered to those women, and they will put them to death.

21. “And from the fourth mountain which has many herbs, with the top of the herbs green but the parts by the roots dry, and some dried up by the sun, are such believers as these: the double-minded, and those who have the Lord on their lips but do not have him in their hearts. For this cause their foundations are dry and have no power, and only their words are alive but their deeds are dead. Such are neither alive nor dead. Therefore they are like the double-minded, the double-minded are neither green nor dry, for they are neither alive nor dead. For just as these herbs, when they saw the sun, were dried up, so also the double-minded when they hear of affliction, become idolaters through their cowardice, and they are ashamed of the name of their Lord. Such men therefore are neither alive nor dead; but these also will be able to live if they repent quickly, but if they do not repent they have already been given over to the women who take away their life.

22. “And from the fifth mountain, which has green herbage and is rough, are such believers as these: believers, but slow to learn and presumptuous, and pleasing themselves, wishing to know everything, and yet they know nothing at all. Because of this presumption of theirs understanding has departed from them, and senseless folly has entered into them, and they praise themselves for having understanding and they wish to be teachers in spite of their folly. For this high-mindedness therefore many have been made worthless by exalting themselves, for presumption and vain confidence is a great
demon. Many therefore of these were rejected, but some repented and believed, and submitted themselves to those who have understanding, recognising their own folly. And for the rest of such men repentance is waiting, for they were not wicked, but rather foolish and without understanding. If therefore these repent they will live to God, but if they do not repent they will dwell with the women who devise evil against them.

23. “And those of the sixth mountain which has cracks, great and small, and withered plants in the cracks, are such believers as these. Those who have the small cracks are those who have quarrels with one another, and are withered in the faith from their evil speaking. But many of these repented, and the rest shall also repent when they hear my commandments, for their evil-speaking was small and they will quickly repent. But those who have great cracks are those who are persistent in their evil-speaking, and are become malicious in their rage against one another. These then were cast away from the tower and were rejected from its building. Such men then will live with difficulty. If God and our Lord who rules over all and has power over all his creation bear no malice against those who confess their sins, but is merciful, shall man who is mortal and full of sin bear malice against man, as though he were ‘able to destroy or to save him.’? And I, the angel of repentance, say to you, do all you, who have this heresy, put it aside and repent, and the Lord will heal your former sins, if you cleanse yourselves from this demon. But if not you shall be delivered to him to death.

24. “And from the seventh mountain, on which were green and joyful herbs, and the whole mountain was fair and every kind of cattle and the birds of heaven were feeding on the herbs on this mountain, and the herbs on which they were feeding became yet more luxuriant, are such believers as these. They were ever simple and guileless and blessed and had nothing against one another, but ever rejoiced in the servants of God and were clothed in the holy spirit of these maidens, and were ever merciful to every man, and helped every man from the fruit of their labours without upbraiding or doubting. The Lord, therefore, seeing their simplicity and all their innocence, filled them with the labours of their hand, and was gracious to them in all their doings. And I, the angel of repentance, say to you who are such:—Remain such as you are, and your seed shall not be blotted out for ever, for the Lord has proved you and written you in among our number, and all your seed shall dwell with the Son of God, for of his spirit have you received.

25. “And from the eighth mountain, where there were many springs and all the creation of the Lord was given to drink from the springs, are such believers as these: Apostles and teachers who preached to all the world, and taught reverently and purely the word of the Lord, and kept nothing back for evil desire, but always walked in righteousness and truth, even as they had received the Holy Spirit. The passing of such is with the angels.

26. “And from the ninth mountain, which was desert, and had in it creeping things and wild beasts which devour men, are such believers as these: Those with spots are ministers who ministered amiss, and devoured the living of widows and orphans, and made gain for themselves from the ministry which they had received to administer. If then they remain in the same covetousness they are dead and they have no hope of life. But if they turn and fulfill their ministry in holiness they shall be able to live. And those with scabs, these are they who have denied and have not turned to their Lord, but have
become barren and deserted; by not cleaving to the servants of God, but keeping alone, they are destroying their own souls. For just as a vine left alone within a fence and neglected is spoilt and is wasted by weeds, and in time becomes wild and is no longer useful to its master, so also such men as these have renounced themselves and have become wild and valueless to their Lord. To these then there is repentance, if they be not found to have denied from their hearts. But if one be found to have denied from his heart I do not know whether he can live. And I do not speak this for these days, in order that one may deny and receive repentance, for it is impossible for him to be saved who shall now deny his Lord. But there seems to be repentance waiting for those who have denied in time past. If then any be about to repent, let him make haste before the tower be finished, otherwise he will be destroyed by the women unto death. And the stunted ones, these are deceitful and evil-speaking men, and the wild beasts which you saw on the mountains are these. For just as the wild beasts destroy man by their poison and kill him, so also the words of such men destroy man and kill him. These then are stunted in their faith through their conduct which they have in themselves, but some repented and were saved. And the rest who are such can be saved if they repent; but if they repent not they will be put to death by those women whose quality they have.

27. “And from the tenth mountain, where were trees sheltering some sheep, are such believers as these: Bishops and hospitable men who at all times received the servants of God into their houses gladly and without hypocrisy; and the bishops ever ceaselessly sheltered the destitute and the widows by their ministration, and ever behaved with holiness. These then shall all be always sheltered by the Lord. They then who have done these things are glorious with God, and their place is already with the angels, if they continue serving the Lord unto the end.

28. “And from the eleventh mountain, where were trees full of fruit, each adorned with different fruit, are such believers as these: they who have suffered for the name of the Son of God, who also suffered readily with all their heart and ‘gave up their lives.’” “Why then, Sir,” said I, “have all the trees fruit, but the fruit of some of them is more beautiful?” “Listen,” said he, “as many as ever suffered for the name are glorious before God, and the sins of all these have been taken away because they suffered for the name of the Son of God. But listen why their fruits are different and some better than others. As many,” said he, “as were brought under authority and were questioned and did not deny, but suffered readily, these are especially glorious before the Lord; the fruit of these is excellent. But as many as were fearful, were in doubt, and considered in their hearts whether they should deny or confess, and suffered, the fruits of these are inferior because this thought entered into their hearts, for this is an evil thought, that a servant should deny his own Lord. See to it, then, you who have these thoughts, lest this thought remain in your hearts and you die to God. But you who are suffering for the name, ought to glorify God, that God deemed you worthy to bear this name and that all your sins should be healed. So then count yourselves blessed; but think that you have done a great deed, if any of you suffer for God’s sake. The Lord is giving you life, and you do not consider it; for your sins have weighed you down, and except you had suffered for the name of the Lord you would have died to God because of your sins. I say this to you who are hesitating as to denial or confession. Confess that you have a Lord, lest you deny him and be delivered into prison. If the heathen punish their servants, if one deny his lord, what think you will the Lord, who has power over all, do to you? Put away these thoughts from your heart that you may live for ever to God.
29. “And from the twelfth mountain, the white one, are such believers as these: They are as innocent babes, and no evil enters into their heart, nor have they known what wickedness is, but have ever remained in innocence. .. Such then shall live without doubt in the kingdom of God, because by no act did they defile the commandments of God, but remained in innocence all the days of their lives in the same mind. All of you, then, as many as shall continue,” said he, “and shall be as babes, with no wickedness, shall be more glorious then all those who have been mentioned before, for all babes are glorious before God, and are in the first place by him. Blessed then are you who put away evil from yourselves, and put on guiltlessness, for you shall be the first of all to live to God.” But after he had finished the parable of the mountains I said to him: “Sir, now explain to me about the stones which were taken out of the plain, and put into the building instead of the stones which were taken away from the tower, and the round stones which were put into the building, and those which are still round.”

30. “Listen also, “ he said, “ concerning all these. The stones that are taken from the plain and put into the building of the tower instead of those which are rejected, are the roots of the white mountain. Since then all the believers from the white mountain were found guiltless, the lord of the tower commanded these to be brought from the roots of this mountain for the building of the tower. For he knew that if these stones go into the building of the tower they will remain bright and none of them will become black. But if he had added them from the other mountains he would have been obliged to visit the tower again, and to purge it, for all these have been found white, both past and future believers, for they are of the same race. Blessed is this race, because it is innocent. Listen now concerning the round and bright stones. They also are all from this white mountain. Listen then why they have been found round. Their riches have hidden them a little from the truth and darkened them, but they have never departed from God, nor has any evil word proceeded from their mouth, but all equity and virtue of truth. When therefore the Lord saw their minds, that they are able to favour the truth and to remain good, he commanded their wealth to be cut down, yet not to be wholly taken away from them, that they may be able to do some good with that which was left them, and they shall live to God because they are of a good kind. Therefore they were cut down a little, and placed in the building of this tower.

31. “But the others which still remained round and were not fitted into the building, because they had not yet received the seal, were put back in their place, for they were found very round. But this world and the vanities of their riches must be cut away from them, and then they will be meet for the kingdom of God. For they needs must ‘enter into the kingdom of God’; for the Lord blessed this innocent kind. Therefore not one of this kind shall perish, for though one of them be tempted by the most wicked devil, and do some wrong, he will quickly return to his Lord. I, the angel of repentance, judge you all happy who are innocent as babes, for your part is good and honourable with God. But I say to you all, as many as have received the seal, keep simplicity and bear no malice, and do not remain in your guilt, or in remembrance of the bitterness of offences. Be of one spirit and put away these evil schisms, and take them away from yourselves that the lord of the sheep may rejoice over them. But he will rejoice if all be found whole; but if he find some of them fallen away, it will be woe to the shepherds. But if the shepherds themselves be found fallen away, what shall they answer to the Master of the flock? That they have fallen away because of the sheep? They will not be believed, for it is incredible that a shepherd should be harmed by the sheep, and they will rather be
punished for their lie. And I am the shepherd, and am very exceedingly bound to give account for you.

32. “Therefore, amend yourselves while the tower is still being built. The Lord dwells among men who love peace, for of a truth peace is dear to him, but he is far away from the contentious and those who are destroyed by malice. Give back then to him your spirit whole as you received it. For if you give to the dyer a new garment whole, and wish to receive it back from him whole, but the dyer gives it you back torn, will you accept it? Will you not at once grow hot and pursue him with abuse, saying ‘I gave you a whole garment, why have you torn it and given it me back useless? And because of the tear which you have made in it it cannot be used.’ Will you not say all these things to the dyer about the rent which he has made in your garment? If then you are grieved with your garment, and complain that you did not received it back whole, what do you think the Lord will do to you, who gave you the spirit whole, and you have returned it altogether useless, so that it can be of no use to its Lord, for its use began to be useless when it had been corrupted by you. Will not therefore the Lord of that spirit punish you with death, because of this deed of yours?” “Certainly,” said I, “He will punish all those whom he finds keeping the memory of offences.” “Do not then,” said he, “trample on his mercy, but rather honour him that he is so patient to your offences and is not as you are. Repent therefore with the repentance that avails you.

33. “All these things which have been written above I, the shepherd, the angel of repentance, have declared and spoken to the servants of God. If then you shall believe and shall listen to my words and shall walk in them, and shall correct your ways, you shall be able to live. But if you shall remain in malice and in the memory of offences, none of such kind shall live to God. All these things that I must tell have been told to you.” The shepherd himself said to me, “Have you asked me about everything?” And I said: “Yes, Sir.” “Why then did you not ask me about the marks of the stones which were placed in the building, why we filled up the marks?” And I said: “I forgot, Sir.” “Listen now,” said he, “about them. These are those who heard my commandments, and repented with all their hearts. And when the Lord saw that their repentance was good and pure, and that they could remain in it, he commanded their former sins to be blotted out. For these marks were their sins, and they were made level that they should not appear.”

PARABLE TEN

1. After I had written this book the angel who had handed me over to the shepherd came to the house in which I was, and sat on the couch, and the shepherd stood on his right hand. Then he called me and said to me: “I have handed you over,” said he, “and your house to this shepherd, that you may be protected by him,” “Yes Sir,” said I. “If then,” said he, “you wish to be protected from all vexation and all cruelty, and to have success in every good work and word, and every virtue of righteousness, walk in his commandments, which he gave you, and you will be able to overcome all wickedness. For, if you keep his commandments, all the lusts and delight of this world will be subject to you, but success in every good undertaking will follow you. Take his perfection and moderation upon you, and say to all that he is in great honour and dignity with the Lord, and that he is set in great power and powerful in his office. To him alone throughout all the world is given the power of repentance. Does he not seem to you to be powerful? But you despise his perfection and the modesty which he has towards you.”
2. I said to him: “Ask him himself, Sir, whether since he has been in my house I have done anything against his command, to offend against him?” “I know myself,” said he, “that you have done nothing and will do nothing against his command, and therefore I am speaking thus with you, that you may persevere; for he has given me a good account of you. But you shall tell these words to others, that they also who have repented, or shall repent, may have the same mind as you, and that he may give a good account to me of them, and I to the Lord.” “I myself, Sir, “ said I, “show the ‘mighty acts’ of the Lord to all men, but I hope that all who have sinned before, if they hear this, will willingly repent, and recover life.” “Remain then,” said he, “in this ministry and carry it out. But whoever perform his commandments shall have life, and such a one has great honour with the Lord. But whoever do not keep his commands, are flying from their own life and against him, and they do not keep his commandments, but are delivering themselves to death, and each one of them is guilty of his own blood. But you I bid to keep these commandments, and you shall have healing for your sins.

3. “But I sent these maidens to you to dwell with you, for I saw that they were courteous to you. You have them therefore to help you, in order to keep his commandments the better, for it is not possible that these commandments be kept without these maidens. I see moreover that they are with you willingly; but I will enjoin on them not to depart at all from your house. Only do you make your house pure, for in a pure house they will willingly dwell, for they are pure and chaste and industrious and all have favour with the Lord. If then they find your house pure they will remain with you. But if ever so little corruption come to it they will at once depart from your home, for these maidens love no sort of impurity.” I said to him: “I hope, Sir, that I shall please them so that they may ever willingly dwell in my house. And just as he, to whom you handed me over, finds no fault in me, so they also shall find no fault in me.” He said to the shepherd: “I know that the servant of God wishes to live, and will keep these commandments, and will provide for the maidens in purity.” When he had said this he handed me over again to the shepherd, and called the maidens and said to them: “Since I see that you willingly dwell in his house I commend him and his house to you, that you depart not at all from his house.” But they heard these words willingly.

4. Then he said to me: “Behave manfully in this ministry, show to every man the ‘mighty acts’ of the Lord, and you shall have favour in this ministry. Whoever therefore shall walk in these commandments shall live, and shall be happy in his life; but whoever shall neglect them shall not live, and shall be unhappy in his life. Say to all men who are able to do right, that they cease not; the exercise of good deeds is profitable to them. But I say that every man ought to be taken out from distress, for he who is destitute and suffers distress in his daily life is in great anguish and necessity. Whoever therefore rescues the soul of such a man from necessity gains great joy for himself. For he who is vexed by such distress is tortured with such anguish as he suffers who is in chains. For many bring death on themselves by reason of such calamities when they cannot bear them. Whoever therefore knows the distress of such a man, and does not rescue him, incurs great sin and becomes guilty of his blood. Therefore do good deeds, all you who have learnt of the Lord, lest the building of the tower be finished while you delay to do them. For the work of the building has been broken off for your sake. Unless therefore you hasten to do right the tower will be finished and you will be shut out.” Now after he had spoken this he rose from the couch, and took the shepherd and the maidens and
departed, but said to me that he would send back the shepherd and the maidens to my house.