JACOB

A LAD OF NAZARETH

By

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There stood a little figure in the sun

To My Pastor

J. E. W.

whose kindly interest and approval inspired the continuance of the story and whose library supplied necessary information of the Holy Land, I gratefully dedicate this volume

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PROEM

GALILEE, sweet Galilee! with thy blue lake and dazzling hills, thy snow-capped mountains and sheltered vales, thy broad Esdraelon and thy far-famed Jordan, to thee the heart of the great world turns.

Blessed are thy cities, O Galilee! blessed and beautiful for situation! Has it not been said of thee, and shall it not be said of thee in the ages to come, that thou art "The Garden of Palestine"?

Thy mountain forests; thy many hills set with the fig and vine and all manner of fruits; thy olive yards and cypress groves, pomegranates and stately palms; thy rich gardens and broad wheat fields, thy generous pastures that feed the cattle on a thousand hills; thy water springs and fountain heads, all testify to thy fair fame. Thou art a goodly land and fair to look upon; a land flowing with milk and honey.

Not least among thy cities lieth Nazareth, set in the midst of thy glistening hills like an emerald-hearted rose with petals of chalcedony.

O Galilee! not for thy beauty nor thy bounty wilt thou be best known to the nations of the earth in the days to come, but for this: that thou gavest shelter, and thy love, to JESUS OF NAZARETH.

Part I

FROM BETHLEHEM TO NAZARETH

"A little child shall lead them."

JACOB, A LAD OF NAZARETH

CHAPTER I

A LITTLE CITY

NAZARETH! A city set on a hill, with higher hills all about it, reaching like protecting arms; at its feet, southward, a green bay of the great plain Esdraelon, let in through an opening of the hills.

How its limestone wall glistens in the bright spring sunshine! See the great gates where the people go in and out! See the little, flat-roofed, limestone houses, gleaming white among the gardens of fruit trees, the pomegranates making a vivid dash of color against the prevailing green and white, while here and there groves of cypress and palm rise high above the trees of the gardens. Verily, in this little city every man sitteth under his own vine and fig tree.

The only conspicuous building in the city

is the synagogue, flat-roofed like the dwellings, but higher and larger and having double doors at the entrance. And not far from the synagogue is the marketplace,—a large, open square which is also the merrymaking place of the people of the city.

Because it is spring and the month Sebat (the last of January and the first of February), all the hillsides, and the green plains in the valley, are aflame with scarlet anemones and poppies.

Phineas and his little sister Ednah—children of Lois and Jotham of Nazareth—are climbing the steep path that leads to the city gate. The little one's hands are full of the bright blossoms. Both children are clad in loose white frocks, and are bareheaded and barefooted. The boy balances a stone water jar on his head, and holds in one hand a bunch of sweet herbs.

"Six times have I been to the spring to-day," said the boy, with a sigh. "The jar is heavy, and the path steep."

Little Ednah lifted a face sweet with sympathy, and reached her arms for the jar. "Ednah carry," she said.

Phineas laughed. "Better the jar could carry you"; and he made a feint of putting her into the jar, at which she shouted, and ran up the path, scattering scarlet blossoms as she went.

Little Ednah's face was like a bright flower, her voice was as blithe as a bird's, and her laughter like the bubbling rills that ran down the hillsides. Her golden-brown hair was tossed about her shoulders like tangled sunshine. Phineas forgot his weariness as he watched her, and sent an answering shout up the path. He nearly slipped on the loose stones scattered so thickly all the way, but saved himself, and the jar which he balanced on his head, and picked his way more carefully as he hastened to join his sister.

Ednah did not pause until she had reached the "resting stone," as they called the bit of rock that cropped out of the hillside not far

from the gate. She piled her blossoms upon it and clambered up beside them, laughing and shouting down at Phineas plodding over the stones.

He came up panting, and set the jar down beside the stone, throwing himself on the green grass and regarding the spring far below.

"When I build a city," said Phineas, "I will have the springs on the top of the hill, and I will lay pipes through all the city for the water to run in, and the pipes shall go to every house."

"Birdies drink," said Ednah, "and lambs, and—"

"Oh, we would have the springs down below just the same, so all the creatures could drink before they climbed the hill, and for thirsty pilgrims, too."

Phineas did not speak for some moments after that. He was thinking of the many travelers who had rested under the cypress tree beside the spring, and refreshed

themselves with the sweet waters; of the many camels and donkeys that brought the pilgrims, of the flocks of sheep and goats, and the oxen, weary from turning the plowshare in the fields down in the valley.

"Look, sister!" said Phineas at length, raising himself. "Do you see where the cactus hedges are higher and thicker than all the others? So broad are Uncle Abda's fields. His gardens are the finest and his wheat and barley fields the largest in the valley."

Ednah nodded, absently; she was listening to the birds. The air was vibrant with their songs, every garden and grove and hedgerow was aflutter with wings, and Ednah now and then caught sight of brilliant bits of plumage as she looked and listened.

"The almond grove is in blossom," continued Phineas, busy with his own thoughts. "To-morrow I am to go down with Uncle Abda."

"Take me!" cried Ednah with a sudden

interest, leaning farther over the rock and sending her gaze down to the plain where the twilight shadows were fast chasing away the sunshine.

"Ah! the pink blossoms entice thee," laughed Phineas. "It is too far for thy tender feet, but I will bring thee the blossoms."

A great trumpet blast sent the children to their feet. They turned their faces toward the city. "I see Father Jahaza!" cried Ednah, clapping her hands.

It was one of the delights of Ednah's life to be the first to spy the priest on the synagogue roof, when at sunset he gave the signal for the laborers to leave their work.

The sunbeams had climbed from the valley to the hilltop, and shone brightly on Father Jahaza and his silver trumpet, and on the cliffs beyond; and where the cliffs were steep and smooth they shone like burnished gold.

The children turned again valley-ward, to watch the long line of laborers toiling up the

rocky path. They carried their clumsy farming tools in their hands, and rested the primitive plows on their shoulders. There were women, too, with water jars on their heads. They had been helping in the fields, or had carried water to the men, and they often took the children with them.

"I cannot see Uncle Abda," said Phineas, looking over the heads of the procession. "He will have to spend the night in the khan if he does not hasten. If the khan had a roof like those at Jerusalem, it would not so much matter. But the night air is too chill for a coverlet only. Come, we must not linger, or we may have to keep him company."

"I see him! I see him!" shouted Ednah, catching a glimpse of the familiar figure with its yellow robe and striped red and white scarf wound about the head and shoulders.

The children scrambled down from the resting stone and hastened through the gate before the people thronged it. Through the shadowed archway, across the open space

beyond, into the dim, crooked, narrow street the children took their way. The buildings were close upon the street, without so much as space for a step. The walls were windowless, and broken only by a narrow and almost invisible entrance. Besides all this, the streets were not clean.

But the children were not thinking of the contrast between the beautiful country outside, and the dim and dingy city; they were thinking of the evening meal and the happy family gathering, after it. They soon crossed the city and came to more scattered dwellings, where were the home gardens and little groves with the sweet air from the hills blowing through them.

The children were passing a little cottage that was distinguished from the others by a tiny porch which had vines growing about it, and a small addition at the farther end, from which seemed to come the sound of a hammer.

Ednah stood still and listened. Phineas

regarded the house attentively. "It must be a carpenter who lives here," he said. "Every morning when I go to the hills with the flock I hear this same sound."

The children waited for Uncle Abda to catch up with them, that they might ask who lived in the little cottage.

"It is Joseph, the carpenter," said Uncle Abda.

"Is he a good man? Is he kind?" questioned Phineas. A carpenter's shop held untold charms for the lad.

"All Nazareth speaks of him as a 'just' man," was the answer. "Grave, perhaps, but no doubt a kind man. His wife, Mary, is young and beautiful, and greatly beloved."

A tall, broad-shouldered man of middle age came to the doorway, stroked his long beard, pulled off his leather apron, and walked toward the porch. Phineas was rather doubtful about venturing any advances, and he looked back wistfully once or twice as they continued their homeward way.

Aunt Anna, Abda's wife, met them at the door with a basin of water, that they might remove the dust from their feet before entering the house. Uncle Abda left his sandals at the door and followed the children. Ednah was ready first, and while waiting for the others she studied the curious writing on the door posts and marveled, as she had marveled often before, that Phineas could read it. And what seemed more wonderful still, he had told her that she also would be able to read it, some day.

On the door posts of all the houses of the Jews were to be found these writings, according to the commandment of Moses given him of God:

"And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be upon thine heart: and ye shall teach them unto your children. . . . And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house, and upon thy gates."

"The latter rains were so abundant we

shall reap a rich harvest this season," said Abda, as he crossed the threshold and seated himself beside a dark-browed, haggard-looking man who reclined on the bench that was built around three sides of the room. This man was Jotham, the father of Phineas and Ednah, and brother to Abda. His face grew yet darker at Abda's words; he leaned more heavily on the cushions that supported him, and answered only with a heavy sigh.

Phineas leaned against one of the stone pillars that supported the heavy roof, and regarded his father and uncle. How emaciated and feeble was the one, with the bitterness that rankled in his heart stamped on his face; the other, so strong and buoyant and hopeful.

"Poor father!" said Phineas to himself. "I will take the best care I can of his little patch of land and his little flock, and I will help Uncle Abda every moment I can spare. Uncle Abda is so kind to make us welcome here."

Abda arose from the bench and seated himself on the mat spread upon the floor, and the others followed. Lois, the wife of Jotham, took a basin of water and a napkin and carried it to each one that he might wash his hands before eating, after the custom of the Jews. Anna, the wife of Abda, followed with a little table that she placed in the center of the circle on the mat, and then brought a tray with the food.

There were hot cakes, baked in the little stove of stones outside the door, oranges, the first of the season, nuts and figs, and a little jar of honey.

Phineas was proud of the oranges, for they had been gathered from his father's trees.

Uncle Abda asked the blessing and Phineas repeated his own special prayer that he had been taught to say before meat.

"Mother," said Phineas, after a good many hot cakes had disappeared, "I saw Joseph the carpenter to-night. He lives in the house with the rose vines over the door."

"Ah! I knew Mary, his wife, when she was a maid. I rejoice that she is to be my neighbor," said Lois.

"There is a lad about the age of Phineas," said Abda. "They had been living in Egypt when they came back here several years ago."

"I did not know," said Lois, "that they had ever left Nazareth."

"They went to Bethlehem to be taxed at the time of the great taxing, and we heard no more of them until they came up from Egypt," said Anna.

"Bethlehem!" cried Ednah, catching eagerly at the word. "Oh, tell the story of the Star!"

So, after thanks were given, the little table was placed against the wall, the few dishes piled on the floor beside the tall water jar, with the bunch of herbs in its mouth to keep the water cool and clean, and all gathered outside the door while Lois told the story of the Star,—the Star of Bethlehem. And the stars of Nazareth looked down as if they, too, were listening.

After the story, from the little group about the door and from the homes of all the Jews in Nazareth arose voices of praise and thanksgiving to the Giver of all Good. And then there was silence in the little city.

CHAPTER II

THE CHILD IN THE SUN

JESUS was fair like Mary, his mother, with a fairness no sun or wind could roughen. Like her, too, he was gentle and loving. His first lessons had been learned at her knee; then other lessons had been learned in the little shop where Joseph plied his hammer and saw, and something of Joseph's gravity rested upon his face, veiling faintly the sunny countenance.

Many steps his willing feet saved his mother, many a time he accompanied Joseph on his way to his day's work, carrying a basket of tools or a bundle of boards. To and fro he might often be seen going, from the yard to the shop, with burden of wood, or nails, or tools. Many journeys his feet made to the spring at the foot of the hill, and the little garden beyond the house owed its thrifty condition to his care.

Now Jesus attended the school at the synagogue, the only school in Nazareth. The Hazan, who was a sort of janitor, was the teacher.

Jesus greatly loved his lessons and was always eager to go to the synagogue, but better than all else he loved the solitude of the mountains. Clad in his loose white linen tunic, with unshod feet, uncovered head, and his shepherd's staff in his hand, he roamed the hills like a child of light, and lived a charmed life of his own, playing with the lambs of the flock he tended, weaving garlands of flowers, watching the great panorama of nature unfolding about him, and the ever changing clouds high above; listening, mayhap, to the voices of unseen companions, while the breeze bared his fair brow to the sky and the sunshine revealed new depths in his dark eyes.

Phineas and Ednah climbed the hill that pastured their father's little flock. The glow of the blossoms all about, the brightness of

the sky, and the sweetness of the air made them happy, and they laughed and sang as they climbed, for pure gladness of heart.

"Look, brother!" cried Ednah, abruptly halting, and pointing to the hilltop.

There stood a little figure in the sun, or so it appeared, the sun being behind it and the light radiating all about. It seemed to belong to the sky more than to the green earth beneath its feet. Might not the next breeze waft it from their astonished gaze? Might not that low-drifting, transparent cloud be waiting to receive it out of their sight?

But the sun-bright little figure did not vanish into the sun or the cloud; it came toward them. And the two children waited under a friendly olive tree, regarding the vision at first with awe, then wonder, and lastly with childish curiosity.

As the lad drew near, the children were reassured by his gentle mien and his bright and loving countenance. They could see

now that he had a wreath of the scarlet anemones on his head, and carried in his arms a little lamb that looked up trustingly into his face while he regarded it tenderly, glancing from it to Phineas and Ednah, with a glad recognition in his eyes.

Phineas did not return the glance in kind. He rose, holding his sister by the hand, and with a somewhat haughty air awaited the lad's nearer approach.

"Peace be to thee!" said the little stranger, simply, but in a voice so sweet, and with so loving a look, that Ednah took a step toward him and stretched out her free hand.

Phineas drew her back. "Verily," he thought, "this lad is a Samaritan." What Jew would have aught to do with a Samaritan? Moreover, he took offense at the stranger's friendliness.

"Who art thou?" he demanded.

"Jesus, of Nazareth," was the gentle reply.

"*I* am a Jew," said Phineas, proudly, "the son of a Pharisee."

"I too am a Jew," said the other, smiling and holding out his hand in friendly salute. "Dost see the house of Joseph the carpenter yonder, through the fig trees of the garden? There I dwell."

Little Ednah had pulled her hand from her brother's, and looking up into the stranger's face as trustingly as the lamb he clasped in his arms she lisped, "I love you."

"And I love thee, little one," the lad answered, bending over the lamb to smile down upon her.

One of the blood-red blossoms in the garland on the lad's head fell from its place and rested on his foot. Little Ednah knelt down and gathered the blossom in her chubby brown hands, kissing the spot where it had fallen.

Seeing this, Jesus took the wreath from his head and gave it to her. She did not pluck it in pieces, but held it reverently, not even putting it on her own head.

Phineas, now reassured that the newcomer

was a Jew, became friendly, and the three sat down on the grass knoll under the olive tree, whose gnarled and twisted branches gave a grateful shade. Now and then the silvery green leaves lifted up and rustled, as if showering blessings on the young heads beneath.

"I lately came from Cana of Galilee," said Phineas. "My father's health is broken. He was at Jerusalem at the uprising of our people, and being taken with the rest, he barely escaped with his life. The governor gave him his life, but took away his living,—his cattle and his lands, his house and all it contained. He says it was lost in a good cause, though he thinks the Jews were not wise to rebel at that time. He says the Messiah must first come, and the time to strike will be when *he* says strike!"

"Tell the story of the Star!" begged Ednah, her face beginning to glow.

Jesus held the lamb closer in his arms, and leaned his face nearer, while Phineas began:

"It was the time of the great taxing. Every Jew was called to his own country to be taxed. One morning, early, some shepherds from the hills came to Bethlehem, which is just across the valley southeast of Jerusalem, asking for the Christ, who, they said, was to be found wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.

"There was a great cave that sheltered cattle, and that the people lodged in when the inn was full. They took the shepherds to the cave, and there found a little babe, as they had said.

" 'It is the Christ!' they cried; and they fell on their knees and worshiped the babe.

"When the shepherds came out, all the people in the inn crowded about to question them. And they told of a great light that burst upon them in the night, and of an angel that appeared and talked with them. And the angel said, 'Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people: for unto you is born this

day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

" 'And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.'

"And then there was a great multitude of angels with the angel that was speaking, and they all cried out, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.'

"The people in the inn had seen a great light in the sky in the night, and they greatly wondered at the shepherds' story. Many went to the cave that day, and the next, and many days after. Some believed the shepherds; but more did not believe, and laughed."

"What thinkest thou?" asked Jesus, softly stroking the lamb's head and looking into its face.

"When the Messiah cometh he will be born in Bethlehem, for the Rabbis searched the Sacred Rolls and found the prophecy; but he will be royally born, for he is to be of

the house and lineage of David," said Phineas proudly. "He will do wonders and miracles and amaze the world, and he will ascend to his throne as King of the Jews, and he will restore the Jews to power."

"That," said Ednah, who had been listening with parted lips and rapt countenance, "is the *angel* story; now tell the *Star*."

"The 'angel story' comes first, so I tell it first," said Phineas. "After the shepherds' visit, some Magi came from the far east to Jerusalem. Of all the pilgrims that came to Jerusalem none were ever seen like these wise men. Their rich robes, their big white camels with silver bells that tinkled as they walked, the awnings of silk, and buckles and fringes of gold, as well as the strangeness of their costumes, caused every one to look after them. But when they began to inquire for 'one who is born King of the Jews,' the people were astonished beyond means.

"No one could tell; no one knew aught of any king of the Jews other than Herod.

" 'We saw his Star,' they said, 'and are come to worship him.'

"Then the people sent the wise men to Herod. And Herod called together the learned masters, the priests and scribes, and asked them where it was told that Christ should be born. Then it was they searched the books of the prophets and found that it was to be at Bethlehem.

"Then King Herod sent the wise men to Bethlehem, and commanded them to bring him word if they found the child they were seeking.

"They followed the Star until they came to the cave that the shepherds had visited. They worshiped the little babe there, even as the shepherds had, and gave it costly gifts, and went away praising God and greatly rejoicing.

"But they did not return to King Herod, and he was so afraid of this child, regarding whom the prophets of old had prophesied, and whom the Magi had discovered, that he

destroyed all the little children. And people made haste to get away from the city, and hid themselves, and no one ever saw more of the babe."

Little Ednah drew a long, quivering breath, and there was a long silence under the olive. A swift, skimming the hills, darted so close that the children started up.

"But thou," began Phineas, abruptly, "thou hast not said; is Nazareth the place of thy nativity?"

"Nay," answered Jesus, "I was born in Bethlehem."

"In Bethlehem of Judea?" cried Phineas. "Tell me the number of years."

"Twelve."

"The same as mine," said Phineas. He regarded Jesus thoughtfully for a moment. "Then thou wast in Bethlehem at the time the shepherds and the Magi sought the Christ there."

"Even so." Jesus gently smoothed little Ednah's sunny locks with his hand.

"Then thy people also fled to preserve thy life. Where did they make their home?"

"In Egypt. The day wanes," said Jesus, rising and turning his face to the west, now flaming with the heavenly colors of the sunset; "let us go hence."

CHAPTER III

A JEW BOY'S FREEDOM DAY

THE first thing a Jew boy does when he awakes in the morning is to turn his thoughts to God, and repeat a prayer.

In Phineas's time the Jews had so many prayers and laws that they had come to think if they were careful of the outward observance it did not matter what other things they did, or what wicked feelings and thoughts they harbored.

They had, besides the laws of Moses, many rules the Rabbis had made which were as binding as the former. These rules multiplied so fast that a devout Jew was kept busy attending to them. He could hardly speak or move without having to remember some one of them.

So Jesus in the house of Joseph the carpenter, and Phineas in his uncle's home, began their day with words like these:

"My God, the soul which thou hast given me is clean. Thou hast created it. While this soul lives I will thank thee, O Eternal One, my God, and the God of my fathers. Lord of all worlds, King of all souls, all praise be to thee!"

The bath is then taken, according to prescribed rules, and more prayers repeated.

Phineas awoke one bright morning in the month Abib (the last of March and the first of April) when all Galilee is like a great garden, and the air is full of the melody of running brooks and songs of birds, and he said his prayer with a very glad heart. Then he put on the *tallith*, which every Jew boy wears from infancy and never puts on without this prayer:

"Blessed art thou, King of the Universe, who hast sanctified us with thy commandments!"

The *tallith* is a little white scarf striped with red, purple, and blue, having on each corner a blue tassel of exactly eight threads.

It must be made all of wool, and by no one but a Jew. The *tallith* was worn according to the commandment of Moses, that all Jews might "remember all the commandments of the Lord to do them."

Oftener than usual Phineas kissed his *tallith* this morning, for he was glad of heart. Was it not a grand thing to be a Jew, and the son of a Pharisee? Had he not learned by heart all the Scriptures and the Law his mother had taught him? Had he not been to the synagogue since he was ten years old and studied the Sc'hma with the Hazan?

But more than all this, was not this day the Sabbath of his freedom? There would be a priest at the synagogue to make him a Son of the Law. No longer would he be a child, but a young man. He would be free to come and go as he pleased, and he would be responsible for his soul's welfare. He would no longer repeat the Sc'hma morning and evening at home but at the synagogue, and he would study no more with the Hazan

but with the Rabbis, or masters, at Jerusalem. He would choose a trade now, too, and begin to earn his own living.

No wonder his heart beat high, and his hands were not quite steady as he took the white robe his mother had woven in preparation for this day. Fine, and white as fuller could whiten it, he put it on with a prayer, and fastened it with a cord of gold. Outside this he threw a scarf, which was a larger *tallith* worn by devout Jews that they might press it to their lips while at prayer in the synagogue.

A Jewish woman has little to do on the Sabbath, for work is forbidden, and preparation must be made on the day before, which is Friday, the Jews' Sabbath being Saturday. So the whole household was soon ready to go to the synagogue.

Women must take the back streets on a Sabbath. Phineas, who had always been with them, was other-minded to-day. While they were fastening their sandals at the

threshold he looked this way and that, then said, a little roughly, because he was half ashamed, "Mother, go thou thy way, thou and the little one. I will meet thee at the gate."

And the mother, Lois, drew her veil closer, and went her way, with Ednah clinging to her hand and looking wistfully after her brother. The paved streets of the city were rough and narrow, crooked and dark, but the back ways were poorer still.

Phineas walked proudly beside his Uncle Abda, but did not speak much; for a Jew must not converse on the way to the synagogue of a Sabbath, but must give his thoughts to God.

"Blessed be the name of our father Ezra," prayed Phineas, "who read the Law to our people in exile when they had forgotten their own language, and were like to forget God; and hired interpreters to repeat it in Syro-Chaldaic, and also put the people in mind to build synagogues that those living far from

the Temple might have places of worship."

At the gate he waited, and saw his mother and Ednah, his Aunt Anna with her two little sons, and with them his new playmate, Jesus, and Mary and Joseph.

Phineas frowned as he watched them nearing the gate. Why did Jesus and Joseph take the back streets? Certainly they were not devout Jews.

But there were other reasons why Phineas frowned. The first cloud had fallen on his day. He remembered that Jesus had far outstripped him in his lessons, and was far advanced in the Talmud when *he* began the Commandments.

Inside the gate the men, and the women and children, separated, the latter going into the women's court, which is separated from the men's by a lattice.

They were early. Phineas seated himself on one of the mats that covered the floor. The floor was paved with slabs of the same limestone as was used in the building. He

watched the people coming in with slow Sabbath steps—the Pharisees with uplifted faces and haughty bearing, the Gentiles with bowed heads and humble mien, and the rich Sadducees with embroidered robes and gold fringes—the bold Sadducees, who believe nothing but the Law and the prophets, rejecting all the sayings of the Rabbis; the fiery Zealot, the terror of the Romans; the despised and hated publican; the haggard Nazarite, with his dingy robe and his long, matted hair which will go uncombed and uncut while his vow lasts. He, too, is despised, because he rejects the Books of Moses.

There were always strangers at Nazareth, for it was the crossroads of several highways that led to all parts of the country, and the gatherings at the synagogue were motley.

Phineas, seeing several Samaritans seat themselves near him, rose and looked for a seat nearer the raised platform just beyond the center of the room, where the reader and speakers stood during service.

As he did so, he became aware of Jesus at his right hand. He touched him on the shoulder, glancing back toward the Samaritans. "Come forward," he said; "we shall be polluted." And he drew his white robe about him and waited for Jesus to follow. But he did not.

Phineas remembered that Jesus had lived in Egypt. Was it possible he did not know that, of all people, the Samaritan Jews were most hated and despised by the Jews? He leaned forward and said slowly, "The Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. They are unclean."

Still Jesus did not move from his place, only regarded the Samaritans attentively; while Phineas, not a little disturbed, chose a location better suited to his mind. Here he watched the Rabbis and elders take the cushioned seats—the "chief seats"—before the shrine, facing the people. His heart swelled as he thought proudly of the time when he should take his place among them.

He glanced toward the lattice, and thought what an honor he would be to his family, what an honor he would be to the Jews.

Two rows of stone pillars supported the roof of the synagogue, and against one of these pillars leaned a youth who seemed to Phineas to be mocking.

"The vile publican's son, the taxgatherer's son!" he muttered. But the service was beginning, and he turned his attention toward the shrine. The Hazan closed the doors, and all the people rose and stood for some moments in silent prayer, their faces toward the shrine, which looks to Jerusalem.

While the people are still standing—they stand during all the prayers—the reader, who is some one chosen for the day, takes his place on the platform and recites a prayer of adoration, and the people to this and to all the prayers respond, "Amen."

Any one who had been made a Son of the Law might be chosen to read; and Phineas would like to be chosen to stand there and

read the lesson for the day. He watched attentively while the Hazan brought the Sacred Rolls from the shrine, removed the gold-embroidered cover of silk and the inner cover of linen, found the lesson, and placed the roll in the reader's hands.

The Hazan—minister, besides being sexton—was required to aid in the leading of the prayers and the chanting, when needed. This he did to-day, leading the prayers to assist the reader, and chanting to swell the chorus on this special occasion.

Phineas listened to the various readings from the Scripture with increasing heart beats, for every verse brought nearer that, to him, momentous part of the service—his consecration. The last six Psalms, which are the concluding of the reading, never seemed so short, and the prayer that finished this introductory part of the order of worship, which was a very long prayer, seemed but a moment in duration.

The two lads were now led forward, and

a Rabbi and a priest who had come from Jerusalem bound the *tephillin*, or "phylacteries," on the forehead and arm of each, with appropriate prayers, and then they were pronounced Sons of the Law.

Every morning during prayers they would be required to wear the phylacteries. They were to be put on at the door of the synagogue. Some very self-righteous Pharisees put them on in the streets, to be seen of men.

The priests showed the lads the four compartments in the little parchment boxes, and unfolded the slips of parchment in each, having verses of Scripture inscribed on them. With great reverence they regarded the letter stamped on two sides of the little box, which stood for the name of the Almighty.

The second box, which was for the arm, was not divided. The same verses were written on one slip of parchment, in four columns.

After the lads had examined the boxes they were closed and bound in place by long

leather thongs, one on the forehead between the eyes, and the other on the left arm. The thongs were wound seven times round the arm and three times round the middle finger.

The two white-robed figures returned to their places; Phineas's face glowed with zeal and pride, but the face of Jesus glowed as with an inward light shining through, and his head was a little bowed, like one in a revery.

As he took his seat, Phineas glanced over the congregation. All the strict Jews wore white, and he sighed at the parti-colored garments with a sprinkling of white. His sigh was deeper for that his uncle's family were not among the white-robed. He scarcely heard the reading and the prayer that marked the beginning of the regular service, but roused himself to take part in the responsive service, or Kadish, and was careful to bow his head with the rest at every response.

After two prayers, Phineas roused himself again to join in repeating the verses that every Jew said morning and evening every day,

either at home or at the synagogue, and the Eighteen Benedictions which were repeated three times every day by faithful Jews. They were repeated softly by the people, and then aloud by the reader, all bending the knee and bowing their faces to the earth at the beginning and close of the first and sixteenth verses.

The first three benedictions were prayers of praise, the last three of thanksgiving, and the others, prayers for the nation and for individuals.

Even after this Phineas had not time to dream, for there were more responses and then a short sermon especially for the youth of the congregation.

Two women, the mothers of the two lads, had been watching behind the lattice through the whole service. With every thread of Phineas's white garment had been woven proud hopes, joy, and prayers. With the white garment of Mary's son, what thoughts and feelings were interwoven?

The priest had pronounced the benediction and the people began to file out, halting in the outer court for their sandals. Jesus and Phineas were such a contrast to each other that many turned and looked after them as they passed out side by side, and more than one said, "He is not like the Jews, yet he is a Jew," meaning Jesus. And many that looked would turn again some day in the far future, and think, if they did not speak, the same words.

"Knowest thou not," said Phineas, when they were in the street, "that we Jews abhor the Samaritans?"

"Aye, I know," answered Jesus.

"Knowest thou not that they are defiled, having intermixed with heathen nations, and that the Judean Jews refused to unite with them?"

"Aye," was the answer.

"Knowest thou not that they regard the house at Gerizim as holier than the Temple?"

"Aye."

Phineas walked on in silence after this, greatly perplexed. Now and then he cast a glance at his companion, as if seeking in his face an explanation of his seeming indifference. But the quiet, untroubled countenance, with the glow of a steady inner light shining through, baffled him.

"A Jew, yet not a Jew," he said.

CHAPTER IV

JESUS'S BROTHERS

LITTLE Ednah was returning from an errand to the town when she saw ahead of her a well-known figure, with a basket on its arm. "It is Jesus," she said, and hastened her steps, but did not overtake him.

They were nearing the carpenter's house, and through the vines of the porch Ednah caught a glimpse of a blue robe, then saw Mary come down to the gate to meet her son. She saw the loving looks they exchanged as the mother put her arms about his shoulders and kissed his forehead.

Ednah stopped at the gate, and looked in with a happy, dimpled face. "I spinned to-day, like mother," she lisped, quite bubbling over with delight at the remembrance.

"Well done, little one!" said Mary, putting an arm about Ednah, while she kissed the

dimples; then, taking the tiny hand in hers, the three went on to the porch.

"This was my lesson to-day," said Ednah to Jesus, when they were seated, Ednah happily on Mary's knee.

She searched in her frock and drew forth a crumpled bit of parchment. Mary smoothed it out and read:

" 'A good life is better than high birth.' "

"Even so," Jesus replied.

"Would Phineas like it?" asked Ednah.

"Tell him," said Jesus.

"Yesterday he was angry," faltered Ednah, offering another bit, more crumpled than the first. "A proud man is no better than an idolater," was written on this. Mary smiled. Ednah slipped to her feet, suddenly remembering the errand, and eager to show her new lesson to her brother. She was a gentle little soul, craving love from every one, and would share everything of her life with her brother.

Phineas had just returned from the field

and was about to go for the flock. Ednah ran to him with her bit of parchment. He glanced at it, tossed it down to her, and walked away without a word.

Ednah, with a grieved face, ran by the house and out into the garden, hiding herself under a pink-blossomed juniper bush. "He is not like Jesus," she said. "Love *is* better than pride. I will be like Jesus."

Phineas, meanwhile, had called his cousins, and the three crossed the city and climbed the hill beyond it, calling the sheep as they climbed.

Omri chatted of the morrow; Thursday would be market day. Tuesdays and Thursdays both were market days, and brought many strangers to the town. "Look, look!" cried Omri. "There comes Jesus! Is it a lamb in his arms?"

The three descended the hill until they came to the ancient olive tree, their favorite resting place, and there waited for the lad to come up.

"Why, it is a little child!" said Omri, as Jesus drew nearer.

"Is he hurt?" asked Phineas.

"Oh, no," said Regem; "he is only tired. Jesus often takes the little ones with him. They all love him, and he takes them in his arms when they are weary."

"There will be pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem, in the marketplace to-morrow," said Phineas, when Jesus had joined the group. "Uncle Abda has honey and figs and olives to send to the merchants. If he would but go to the Passover!"

"He is always too busy," said Omri.

"He is no Jew!" cried Phineas, sharply. It was his favorite expression of disapproval.

"He is an upright man," said Jesus.

"He is not just!" said Phineas, with no little bitterness. "He should send me. I am now a Son of the Law. But he will not consent. I am free, but I am subject still to my uncle. Joseph," he added, "is a just man; he will do justly by you."

"I go to the Passover," answered Jesus.

"You will see the masters," said Phineas, "the Rabbis, and lawyers, perhaps the great Hillel and Shammai."

"And the Temple gold, and the king's ivory palace, and David's tower," said Omri.

"And Bethlehem, where the shepherds and the wise men found the babe," said Regem.

"I shall go some day," said Phineas. "When my father recovers his health I shall be a scribe, and I shall go to Jerusalem and become a Rabbi. What will you do?" turning to Jesus.

"I must be about my Father's business," was the quiet answer.

"Oh! a carpenter!" There was a peculiar inflection in Phineas's voice. To think of a youth with no higher ambition than to become a carpenter!

The Jewish law obliged every youth to learn a trade and to work at it. Some were carpenters, some farmers, some millers, masons, surveyors, scribes. So while Phineas

aimed to become a learned Rabbi, he knew he must choose some means of earning a livelihood, and he chose to be a scribe. The scribes copied the Scriptures and the Law from the original Hebrew, for there were no printing houses and no books in those days. Parchment rolls were precious and expensive, having to be done by hand.

The scribes had written so many comments on the Scriptures that many of the original commands were forgotten, and the words of the scribes learned instead. The scribes also read the Scriptures and expounded them in the Temple and at the synagogues.

Besides the comments, there were a great many sayings of the Rabbis, chief priests, and elders that never had been written, but were learned by word of mouth, which was no light task. All this the Rabbis taught in the colleges at Jerusalem.

Omri was a little mystified that Jesus did not express a desire to become a Rabbi; for he had heard the Hazan tell his Uncle Jotham

how fast he learned, and how wonderfully he understood.

On their way home that night they were surrounded by a dozen Gentile lads, who clamored for Jesus to join them the next day in their sports on the public playgrounds.

As soon as they had secured his assent, they quickly dispersed. Phineas threw his head high in haughty disapproval, and after a silence the younger lads dared not break, he turned to Jesus.

"It is not meet for a Jew to mingle with the Gentiles! That thou knowest!"

"They are my brethren," said Jesus.

Phineas looked at him in astonishment, and knew not what to say.

Suddenly there was a great uproar in the street ahead of them. The dogs and the children, that are lying and playing about in every corner of the cities of Palestine, were not wanting here, and they rushed to the scene of the disturbance. The shopkeepers ran out and looked up the street. A solemn

donkey with loaded panniers, that had been decorously pacing the street, grew excited, and oranges and lemons, raisins, figs, and dates were tumbled out and rolled all ways, to the delight of the children and the distraction of the man servant in charge of the goods.

Phineas and his companions made their way through the crowd of children, dogs, and idlers, while the flock of sheep scattered this way and that in helpless confusion. In the middle of the street were two burly, rough lads, fighting. Their faces were red with anger and struggling, their eyes like coals of fire. They rolled about on the pavement, and into the gutter. Each was muttering curses, and attempting to hold his enemy down.

As they sprang to their feet for a fresh attack, Jesus placed a hand on a shoulder of each, and spoke to them in a low voice.

Omri cried out, fearing the fierce fellows, in their blind anger, would turn on any one

who dared interfere. But to the surprise of all the onlookers the clenched hands raised for merciless blows dropped; the fire in their eyes burned down; they looked at each other in a half-bullying, half-shamefaced manner, then turned and went their ways, ignoring the crowd about them.

Phineas overtook one of them. "What said he to thee?" he asked.

"Peace," answered the fellow.

"Only that?" cried Phineas. "I certainly thought he must have threatened to have thee imprisoned."

"It was not *what* he said," blurted out the bully, and hastened his steps to rid himself of his questioner.

Phineas set about gathering his flock, and soon the little group was on its homeward way again. "What meanest thou by interfering with those good-for-naughts?" he asked of Jesus. "The hill people should keep in their caves and not be allowed to come into the city if they cannot behave themselves

decently. But what is that to thee? If they fight, let them fight."

"They are my brethren," said Jesus.

That night, after the little table had been set aside and the family gathered in the porch, Phineas began to relate the evening's adventures.

"He is strange," said Phineas. "I know not what he says. 'His brethren!' What means he?"

"We are all the children of one Father," said Aunt Anna.

Phineas reflected a moment. "But they are not fit for a Jew to pass on the street."

"Let him alone," said Uncle Abda. "He will do no harm. Both the hill people and the Gentiles are a riotous set. If he can do them any good, it were well."

"He is no Jew," said Phineas, sullenly. "He honors not the Jews."

"It is strange a lad has so much authority," said Lois.

"He loves everybody, he is so kind," said

little Ednah, who had been an interested listener.

"He looks at them so sorrowfully, if they do not well," said Omri.

"He is so happy when they are kind," said Regem.

"But he need not join in their sports," cried Phineas.

"He always plays fair, and is never angry when he is beaten, and he settles all the disputes, and Hazar the fruit-seller calls him 'The Peacemaker,' " said Regem.

"He must be half Gentile," said Phineas. "He has not the spirit of a Jew."

"He has the blood of kings in his veins," interposed Abda.

"How so?" cried Phineas, greatly amazed.

"Both Mary and Joseph are of the house and lineage of David," said Abda.

Phineas was astounded. That his humble neighbor was the descendant of a king, and of the great king David, was almost unbelievable.

"You may read the genealogy in the book of records, at Bethlehem," said Abda.

Then Phineas grew angry. Jesus was of royal descent, and he was going down to Jerusalem to the Passover, he, who cared nothing for worldly position, and did not honor his people. Why had not all this fallen to *his* lot?

Little Ednah listened with a joyful heart, and in the dark her eyes shone like twin stars. It seemed so fitting to her that this lad was descended from a royal family. There was no other lad like him.

But more than all that, it was such a beautiful thing that Jesus should be of the same lineage, of the same city and the same age, as the Babe she had so often been told about.

That night Ednah's last thought was, "He is of the house and lineage of David"; and Phineas's, "They are my brethren."

CHAPTER V

WHO IS HE?

RABBI NATHAN was very busy at the time of the Passover. All the city of Jerusalem was very busy during this time, and crowded to overflowing with pilgrim Jews—Jews who had piously come to keep the Passover there, and Jews and others who had come to sell everything that there was any sale for at the preparation of the great feast. Every house was filled with kinsmen, every lodging place taken, every thoroughfare crowded with people and cattle. The khan outside the city gates was packed, and the booths set up beyond the khan reached far from the gates, and beyond these were the tents.

Around this multitude a little figure in white, with a quiet manner and an observant air, came and went, mostly unnoticed. Now and then one turned to look after him, his

attention arrested by the bright look and modest demeanor of the stranger lad, the only one in all the city of eager, shrewd, hurrying people who seemed to be at peace with himself.

Rabbi Nathan occasionally caught a glimpse of this little figure, and looked after him inquiringly. "Where have I seen that face?" he would muse, and then pass on to attend to his duties.

At the Temple the confusion and traffic were even greater. It grieved Rabbi Nathan's heart to see the gates of the Temple, and even the outer court, made such a place of merchandise. It grieved him to think that his people were so greedy for gain that they permitted all this. He thought of the priests who worked for their own selfish aims instead of for the welfare of the people. He knew they were lacking in reverence, and not faithful to their duties in the Temple.

"What will the Messiah find when he comes?" mused Rabbi Nathan, who believed

the time was at hand. "He will find the Temple polluted, the people worshiping Mammon instead of Jehovah. We shall never be delivered from the hands of the Romans if we forget God," he had said many times to the elders and the priests, but they only laughed at him. He thought of the dishonesty of the Jews in their dealings, of their cruelty to the unfortunate, their oppressions of the poor, and he feared new calamities would fall upon the people. He recalled in the Psalms the many warnings to the people to be kind and just to all God's children, and he prayed, as he had so often prayed before to the great Jehovah, to send a Saviour quickly.

Rabbi Nathan was standing in the inner court, the men's court, and as he raised his head his eyes rested upon a little figure in white standing beside one of the great marble pillars. The lad was looking at him attentively, but moved away as the man raised his head, and disappeared among the white

columns. The Rabbi went into one of the chambers of the court where preparatory services were to be held by the masters. The din of the traffic in the outer court made it difficult to hear the speakers. Several went out and tried to secure a little quiet, but it was of no avail. At last Rabbi Nathan rose, and in an eloquent and stirring address adjured them not to permit the present state of things longer to exist.

"Why is the heel of the Roman on our necks this day?" he cried. "Is it because the great Jehovah is not able to deliver us? 'Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear; But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you!' "

The din did not lessen outside, but in the council chamber it was very still; and silently, one by one, the Rabbis rose from their places and passed out, each seemingly communing with his own heart. As Rabbi

Nathan watched them filing out, he spied among them again the slender little figure in white, also, like the others, seeming to hold communion with himself.

"Who is the lad?" he asked of one who stood near, but the man did not know.

Later in the day he found him watching the priests making ready for the sacrifices, and after that he came upon the little lad in an alcove by himself, lost in meditation.

"Who art thou?" asked Rabbi Nathan, gently.

The lad raised his eyes and looked at the good Rabbi.

"Jesus, of Nazareth," he answered him.

"I have found him out," he said to his wife Athaliah, when he had once more returned to his home. All the ceremonies at the Temple had not banished the little white figure from his mind. "He is the son of Mary, the daughter of thy Cousin Anna, of Nazareth."

"I remember," said Althaliah; "she was

married to one Joseph, a carpenter. Mary I have not seen since she was a little maid. She was sweet and bright, and wise for her years; wonderfully like her mother."

"And his name is Jesus," Rabbi Nathan continued. "I remember now I saw him in the school at Nazareth. He is the age of my brother Jotham's son, Phineas. I knew I had seen his face somewhere."

The third day after the Passover all the people went down into the Kedron valley to see the sheaf of the first fruits cut.

There were no gardens in Jerusalem, except on the housetops, but the steep slopes all about the city were covered with them. All the wayside down to the valley, the valley itself, and the hillslopes on the farther side were covered with garden walls and terraces running over with luxuriant greenery and glowing with the rainbow tints of the blossoms.

Out of the Golden Gate, down the long, steep flight of steps, the people thronged, and the quiet valley was filled with joyous voices

singing psalms and shouting praises. The groves echoed their shouts and the barley fields waved brightly in the sunshine.

Just at sunset three priests from the Temple came down with baskets and sickles, and cut the sheaf of barley, returning with great rejoicing to the Temple.

Rabbi Nathan and his wife Athaliah followed slowly, watching the people surging back to the city.

"We must gather some flowers for the dear mother," said Athaliah. "And we must not forget the lilies of Siloam; mother thinks them fairer than any others."

So they gathered a great basket full of lilies and roses, and all the beautiful blossoms that grew about the valley. As they rested at the pool of Siloam before gathering the choicest lilies there, they saw a little white figure standing on an eminence above the pool. He had a sheaf of the scarlet lilies on his arm, and was watching the people hurrying through the gate.

"See, yonder!" said Rabbi Nathan. "That is the lad I told thee of—Jesus, of Nazareth. He is a very quiet lad. At Nazareth the Hazan told me he was wonderfully quick with his lessons, and none of the lads could keep pace with him. And he perplexed the good Hazan with hard questions. He has great understanding for a lad of his age. Yesterday, and the day of the Passover, I found him in the Temple, meditating alone. He has eyes that thrill me when he looks into mine. It seems as if he read the thoughts of my heart."

Athaliah looked long at the quiet face so clearly outlined against the bright sky, while the Rabbi muttered, "A strange lad, a quiet, studious lad. Mayhap he will make a great Rabbi. Or perhaps he will become a prophet. We have not had a prophet since the days of Malachi."

"Have they kinspeople here?" asked Athaliah. "Joseph and Mary?"

"They abide with friends in Bethany, on

the farther side of Olivet—Lazarus, and his two sisters, Mary and Martha."

"I know them well," said Athaliah. "Their mother belonged in Bethlehem, my childhood's home. We will visit them. I would see Mary, the mother of Jesus, and I would see more of this lad."

Bethany, on the farther side of the Mount of Olives, was less than an hour's journey. A few days later Rabbi Nathan and Athaliah came down the steps of the Golden Gate on the east side of the Temple, crossed the little bridge over the Kedron, and followed the camel path up the hill past Gethsemane, leaving the traveled road to take the shorter footpath leading down the other side. On the west side, facing Jerusalem, were many gardens and vineyards, and the dovecotes of the priests, not openly owned by them, however, but a source of no inconsiderable income. On the east side the hill was bare, with only prickly pear and other cacti for vegetation.

The hill sloped down to a beautiful dell

where fig, almond, and olive trees abounded, and several roads wound through here. At the east end of this dell nestled Bethany, its little, whitewashed, flat-roofed houses nearly hidden by the trees and shrubbery and garden walls.

Here the travelers found Mary and Martha, and Mary the mother of Jesus, but the lad and Joseph and Lazarus were at Jerusalem.

After a happy day spent in this quiet retreat, which was hidden from the city by a spur of the hill, Rabbi Nathan and Athaliah made their way over the mount again and climbed the steps to the Golden Gate.

A peculiar undertone of sound seemed to come from all about the city; and as they stood within the gates and listened, Athaliah said, "The sound of the grinding is low; the women are weary."

At their own gates the sound grew louder. The women servants were grinding the grain of the early harvest, which is reaped directly after the sheaf of the first fruits is presented

as a heave offering, then made into cakes and presented as a meat offering in the Temple.

Later in the evening Rabbi Nathan passed through the busy streets on his way to see a brother Rabbi, and at the street corners were the women grinding the grain at the mills. All his life he had seen them; they were as familiar as any sight in Jerusalem. But to-night he looked at them with a new interest, the words of Athaliah still sounding in his ears, "The women are weary."

The grain was ground between the upper and nether millstones, being poured in a hole at the top, and two women, one on either side, seized by turn the handles on the upper stone, and the grain was ground between the two stones and ran out on to a cloth spread beneath.

It was hard work, and only the poorest people would grind at the mills, and only the *women* of the poor people. Everywhere the women were grinding, and everywhere sellers were crying their new barley cakes

made from the meal the women had ground.

The streets were lined with shops which were nothing but recesses under the buildings, open next the street. These were gay with lights and well-displayed wares, and crowded with customers and sight-seers.

In some of the streets all the shops were of a kind. There was the grocers' street, the potters' street, the shoemakers' street, the fruiterers' street, and so on; while in any convenient corner were set up the cafés, which were only inclosures furnished with a little table, a few rush chairs, a tiny lamp for making coffee, coffee cups, and long pipes—and sometimes a board for the patrons to play *damek* on. Here and there a more ambitious café furnished a singer or story-teller for an added attraction.

Slowly Rabbi Nathan passed by all this, taking note of many things, thinking how out of this abundance the poor and the beggars might be fed, and there still be enough for all, when he became aware of a little

figure in white standing beside a millstone watching the two women grind.

Rabbi Nathan stopped in the shadow of an archway that he might observe the boy, and trusting he might come that way.

Both women looked worn; but the face of one was distorted by pain, and frequently she ceased grinding, and rubbed her right arm, while the other woman frowned impatiently because the work was delayed.

The face of the little figure watching grew sympathetic, and soon he leaned over and said something to the woman with the distorted face. She looked up at him incredulously, hesitated, and muttered, "It is too hard for thee!" Then, as he insisted, she arose and he took her place.

Rabbi Nathan drew near, the sound of the grinding covering his steps. He saw the drops of perspiration stand out on the lad's brow, and the slender hands tremble.

"Son," said Rabbi Nathan sharply, "come with me."

The lad looked up and said, "The grain is not ground." And he kept on with the grinding, while Rabbi Nathan, much wondering what manner of Jew this Jesus of Nazareth might be, went his way.

"He is studious, loves learning, and has a tender heart," he said. "But he is too humble for a Jew. The lowliest Jew in the city would not be found grinding at the mills." But ever after that night, when Rabbi Nathan's way took him through the gay thoroughfares thronged with pleasure seekers, he seemed to see a little white figure at the deserted street corner, where were only two women wearily grinding. And whenever he found suffering or unhappiness, oppression or injustice, there the face of the little lad of Nazareth seemed to look up at him.

CHAPTER VI

THE FIRST FRUITS

ONE of the priests serving at the Temple was ill and sent for Rabbi Nathan to take his place. At an early hour of the evening he went to the Temple. As he entered the "Fire Chamber," where were gathered those who were to serve the next day, he became conscious—almost before he saw him—of the presence of the little lad who seemed to haunt his steps. Rabbi Nathan noted how attentively he watched the solemn and elaborate preparations for the night, the locking of the gates, and the hiding of the keys under a slab of the marble floor.

When everything had been put in readiness for the sacrifices next morning, and the twenty-four delegates who represented the nation at the sacrifices and who witnessed the giving of the keys to the priest who was to guard them, and the priests, Rabbis, and

doctors who presided over the choosing of the priests for the next day's service, had left the guardian of the keys stretched on the marble slab, which would be his bed for the night, Rabbi Nathan lost sight of the little lad.

A great silence settled upon the Temple now, and the seven brightly burning lamps and the watchmen guarded the sacred place. But out of the silence seemed to come the sound of grinding, and a face, tender in its sympathy, grew out of the dark. It bent over a millstone, and great drops of perspiration stood on the white brow, and a voice, sad and low, seemed to say in Rabbi Nathan's ear, "The sound of the grinding is low; my people are weary."

The good Rabbi started up. There were the seven lamps burning and the watchmen watching; it was a dream. While he stared about him, there came a sound of softly rustling garments and the sound of many footsteps, then low voices and the flare of

torches. It was the procession that just before dawn went all about the Temple to see that all was safe and ready for the day's service. Rabbi Nathan rose and joined them.

In and out among the marble pillars the procession passed, and a little figure in white hovered near them, now in the light of the flaring torches, now in the shadow of a marble column.

Suddenly the captain of the watch halted, and the great keys shook in his hands.

"Look!" he cried in a hoarse whisper. "It is a spirit!"

Every one looked. They saw nothing but the flitting shadows, and they pretended to make light of the captain's fright, but in truth each one thought on his sins and muttered prayers. Only Rabbi Nathan knew that the "spirit" the captain saw was the little lad of Nazareth.

Now the great gates are opened, and three blasts of a trumpet call the people to make ready for the morning sacrifice. The silence

of night is done and the busy day begun. The singers and musicians take their places near the great altar and the priests who are to blow the trumpets at sunrise.

When the watcher on the Temple roof caught the first glimpse of light on far-off Hebron, the mighty blasts of the trumpets aroused the whole city, and the smoke of the sacrifice mounted heavenward. The deserted roofs of the city became alive with worshipers; the face of every Israelite turned Templeward, and every knee bowed, while one grand symphony of prayer and praise rose from the united voices of a hundred thousand men who feared Jehovah and called upon his name.

After the sacrifice, and the psalms of the day, the service is closed with the ancient benediction: "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace."

As these solemn words fell from the lips of the priest, Rabbi Nathan beheld the lad Jesus standing with uplifted face. The glory of the early morning shone upon it, and strangely moved the good Rabbi. He was more than ever convinced that the lad was to be a prophet.

Laden with free-will offerings, the people began to throng the gates, and Rabbi Nathan went about his duties and saw no more of the little lad.

Rabbi Nathan and Athaliah had planned, the day they went to Bethany, to go up to Nazareth in the same caravan with Mary and Joseph. The little party started from Rabbi Nathan's house and joined the multitude at the gate.

The confusion, after the week of feasting, is even greater than at the beginning. Thousands of people, with their families and goods, form into parties to join the various caravans bound for different parts of the country.

As the start is made in the early morning so that they may travel in the cool of the day, this assorting is done by torchlight, and it is amazing that out of this confusion of camels, donkeys, and people any order is possible.

Torches are darting and diving over the heads of the people; voices shouting good-bys, calling for companions, frantically demanding their belongings, and angry drivers cursing, create a bedlam of sound; and the men, women, and children on foot are dodging this way and that to keep from being trodden down by the camels and donkeys, or crushed between the great loads on their backs.

But at last the great mass of confusion of sight and sound begins to move from the gate, and forms into what seems an endless procession, moving down the hillside in the weird torchlight.

It was not until this amazing procession had crossed the valley and several caravans had taken different routes, that Rabbi Nathan was able to look about him. Then he

discovered that Joseph and his family were not with them. After patient search, Mary and Joseph were found, but Jesus was not with them. Messengers were sent in all directions, and then, not finding him, they returned in haste and with great anxiety to Jerusalem. They feared he had become bewildered and gone with another caravan.

After three days' search, when well-nigh despairing, at Rabbi Nathan's suggestion they sought him in the Temple. There they found him absorbed in conversation with the doctors and eagerly asking them questions. They asked him questions, too, and stared amazed at his answers. All this Rabbi Nathan saw as he stood looking at the lad, and greatly wondering what this might mean; then he went out to the court where the others waited, and brought them in.

A sharp cry of mingled surprise and joy turned all eyes upon Mary, who stood at the railing before the platform where the doctors and Rabbis were assembled.

"Son," Mary cried, with outstretched arms, "why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing."

The lad turned from the company, and gently answered, as he stepped down beside his mother, "How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

They who had been searching for Jesus, and they who had been conversing with him, turned to one another with questioning glances. What meant he? But no one was able to answer.

While the caravan made its slow way through the valleys and over the mountains, up in Nazareth were anxious ones awaiting the return of the pilgrims, for there were many dangers. Every day Phineas and Ednah watched by the resting stone, eager to welcome their playmate, eager to greet their uncle, the good Rabbi Nathan, and his wife Athaliah.

The first arrivals told the story of Jesus

in the Temple, and soon the story had spread over the city, even to the rough hill country where the cave dwellers lived. When the little party arrived the gate was thronged with curious people who believed the lad Jesus was to become a prophet. They were disappointed to find him the same quiet, industrious lad as before. Even Phineas and Ednah forgot their shyness after a time, finding him not a whit changed.

"It was only that he is always asking questions," concluded Phineas. "The Hazan always marveled at him, and no wonder the Rabbis were astonished." It was not the custom for Jew lads to question, but to listen and remember.

Something, no one knew just what, was expected of Jesus after his return from Jerusalem; but as nothing new took place, Jesus going about his daily tasks with Joseph and the lads, they gave up thinking he might be a great Rabbi, or perhaps a prophet, and at last they nearly forgot the story the pilgrims

brought. But Mary and Ednah did not forget.

Of Jesus it was said in those days—"He increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." And so he lived his peaceful life in his happy home in beautiful Nazareth, while all about in Galilee and in Judea the people were in perpetual ferment, scheming rebellion, and being mercilessly crushed at every attempt. And ever they looked for a mighty leader who should deliver them from their oppression.

Part II

JESUS THE CARPENTER

"Because he first loved us."

CHAPTER VII

IN THE MARKETPLACE

"OH, Jacob, see the camels! What a great caravan comes to-night! It reaches quite across the valley. There must be many merchantmen on the way to Sephoris and Tiberius."

Jacob and his cousin Julia were at the spring at the foot of the hill outside the gates of Nazareth, filling their water jars. They set down the jars, and, shading their eyes with their hands, looked down the steep path into the valley.

"Uncle Nathan will surely be in the caravan," said Jacob, and his dark brow cleared a little at the thought; for he greatly revered and loved the good Rabbi, and never wearied of his stories of the early history of the Jews and his descriptions of Jerusalem and the Temple. Then his face darkened again, for his brother Phineas had said he could not go to the Passover this year.

Phineas had not become a scribe as he had planned. His father had not recovered his health, but had grown more helpless and bitter each year. He died when his youngest child, Jacob, was four years old. So the burden of supporting the family fell upon Phineas. He continued to work for his Uncle Abda, who was a large-hearted man and kept the unfortunate family in his own home until Phineas was able to make a home for his mother and the children.

Now he had a wife and two little ones of his own. Ednah was still with him. The taxgatherer's eldest son had desired her for his wife, but Phineas had refused to give his consent, for he hated the taxgatherer's son. A Jewish maiden may not marry without her brother's consent, if the father be dead. Ednah loved the taxgatherer's son; so she had not wedded.

Julia, the youngest of Abda's household, looked curiously at her playmate's lowering countenance. "I care for naught," said

Jacob, sullenly, "if I may not go to the Passover. Phineas tells me he did not go until he was fourteen; but do I not know that it was his wish to go when he became a Son of the Law? I am twelve; I shall be free next Sabbath. I should go back to Jerusalem with Uncle Nathan."

Jacob pushed back the thick, dark locks from his forehead, and looked down the path so many pilgrims had traveled. Both children were dark with the characteristic Jewish features; but Julia was tall and lithe, with a merry face and sprightly manner, while Jacob was more squarely built, with a grave, almost morose cast of countenance, and a haughty bearing. Julia's gaze followed her companion's.

"How fast the people talk, and how they wave their arms!" said Julia.

"Something has happened. Can you see a tall man with a long gray beard, mounted on a donkey with blue and gold saddle cloth?" questioned Jacob, eagerly.

"I can see only the camels with great loads of goods, and a company of people," said Julia, craning her neck to get a better view.

"Let us hasten and fill our jars, and climb up to the resting stone," said Jacob, seizing his jar and holding it under the stream of water that gushed out of the rock. "We can see more plainly higher up, and we shall be nearer the gate."

So they took their jars to the resting stone, where Phineas and Ednah used to linger to watch the pilgrims climb the hill. Looking toward the gate, they saw it thronged with the people of the city, come out to welcome kinspeople or friends among the pilgrims, or simply idlers who make the gate and the marketplace their favorite resort for seeing the sights and gathering news. But to-night the gossips have forgotten to whisper, and all are loudly wondering what it is that so excites the travelers.

As the procession draws nearer, the children

hasten inside the gates to escape the crowd, for in a few moments all will be confusion. The khan will swarm with people; booths and tents will be raised, for to-morrow is market day, and there will be sharp bargaining at the city gates as well as in the marketplace.

Those who are to spend the night in the city pour in at the gate, and from them Jacob and Julia catch bits of talk as they cross the little court inside the gate, and make their way into the dim streets.

"He preaches repentance," said one.

"He baptizes with water," said another.

"He wears a coat of camel's hair," said a third.

"He dwells in the wilderness, and his food is locusts and honey," said the first speaker.

"All the world has gone down to the Jordan to be baptized of him," declared one. "He calls all the nations of the earth to repent of their sins."

"All the heathen Gentiles," muttered Jacob under his breath. His eyes glowed, and he

said to himself, "This strange man must be a Jew. He will make Jews of all the world. Perhaps he is a great prophet, perhaps — but no, the Messiah would not be a rough man living in the wilderness."

Still the people hurried by. "He says one greater than he will come after him, that is mightier than he."

Jacob stepped out from the shadow of the gate and accosted the man who had last spoken. "Sir, who is the man all the people are talking about?"

"His name is John," answered the stranger, as he passed by, not slackening his pace.

"From whence is this John?" inquired Jacob of another.

"From the wilderness; that is all we know," was the answer.

Then Jacob took his jar and called Julia, who was patiently waiting. She was dreaming of the gay scenes of the morrow.

Jacob was more deeply disappointed now, than at first, that his uncle had not arrived

with the caravan. "Uncle Nathan," he said to Julia, "could tell us all about this strange man. Perhaps he has seen him."

Ednah was standing in the door of the cottage, wondering, a little anxiously, what had kept the children so long at the spring.

"Oh!" cried Julia in a voice of dismay. "I promised to gather some herbs for the jars, and I have forgotten."

"And I was to fetch some dried grass for the oven," said Jacob. "I think Phineas might build a rick for it nearer the house."

Julia left Jacob at his gate and ran on to her own home, just beyond. Each told of the strange things they had heard, and after the evening meal the two families gathered in Abda's porch and talked it over. "What think you, Uncle Abda?" asked Phineas.

"Oh, it is some enthusiast," he said easily, but little disturbed by the broken bits of information the children had gathered.

"We shall hear more to-morrow, in the marketplace," said Phineas.

Jacob looked solemnly from one to another, and wondered that this strange news did not rouse them. His eyes glowed, and his mind was in a tumult. He was glad that he was so soon to become a Son of the Law, for he was to be a scribe, and then he would have access to all the sacred rolls, and he would learn many things. He would study the prophets, and find for himself what they said about the Messiah. He wished there were more of the Scriptures in the synagogue at Nazareth. His eagerness grew into a fever of impatience as he thought he must wait until he went to Jerusalem before he could read more.

The next morning the children, Jacob and Julia, were early at the city gates, to see the gates opened. There were two hundred and forty towns and villages, and fifteen fortresses, in fruitful Galilee; all prosperous and populous. And from all directions the merchants, farmers, traders, and dealers of all sorts passed by Nazareth on their way

to Jerusalem; and here they halted on a market day. And when the gates were opened they poured into the marketplace,—camels, donkeys, calves, sheep, fruit sellers, fish sellers, dry-goods dealers, jewelers; the men busy setting up booths and stands, or spreading mats to display their wares, and crying them in voices harsh and shrill, while the children rolled about underfoot everywhere, but seldom coming to harm, and joining their voices to the general confusion.

After the people in their gay costumes, and the traders with their goods, had ceased pouring through the gate, Jacob and Julia took a look outside. The fortunate dealers who had secured places at the gateway had their booths or stands raised, and their wares displayed, already beginning a good trade, while their less favored fellow-traders were on their way to the marketplace.

There were many camels—uncouth, rough, and gray—groaning now and then, and showing their teeth; restless under their heavy

loads of olives, figs, grapes, pomegranates, and wheat, and great crates of dates. There were donkeys with panniers of vegetables, fish merchants from Gennesaret, dove sellers from Magdala, also dry-goods dealers, for there were eighty woolen clothmakers here, and more in Arbela, near by.

There were women with linen of their own weaving, made of flax of their own raising; pottery dealers from Hananiah, more women with jars of "honey of wine"—grapejuice.

Turning their steps from the gate to the marketplace, where the scene was repeated, they found Lois and Ednah, Jacob's mother and sister, and Anna, Julia's mother, and Phineas's wife Hester, with two little ones. All were in holiday attire. Over their linen gowns were fastened flowing garments of various colors, and their white veils had been exchanged for headdresses as gay as their robes, while bracelets, armlets, earrings, and necklaces gleamed from among the folds of their brave attire.

Hester carried a basket of embroideries of her own handiwork, to sell to the traders bound to Judea. Lois had a roll of linen, fine, and white as the fuller could bleach it.

While they sought purchasers, the others lingered at the booths, or watched the picturesque groups of people constantly moving about.

"Those people are from the plain," said Ednah. It was easy to distinguish the people of Esdraelon, they were so much darker than the Nazarenes. They had very bright eyes and very white teeth, and for gorgeousness of attire eclipsed their neighbors.

Julia was much taken with the maids and matrons of Esdraelon. Of all the maids in Galilee, not one might be found more fond of jewels and fine raiment than Julia, the daughter of Abda.

It was one of the trials of Jacob's life that Julia was so vain. Why was it she had no more serious thoughts in her mind than tricking herself out like a bird of gay feathers?

How she would like to wear a red veil and long-pointed sleeves like those women passing by!

Next, she was dazzled by a rich sheikh, in purple jacket, scarlet boots, thin white cloak, and yellow headdress, mounted on a gray horse with a scarlet saddle. Julia reveled in color. Oh, for a gown of that glorious purple! Then a Roman centurion came that way, splendid in his military costume.

Jacob was moving about the marketplace with his usual solemn and haughty air. He never forgot his dignity, even on a holiday. Here was a great gathering of people from his own city, and many cities around. What an opportunity to show the world what a pious Jew he was! He fingered the *tallith*, and muttered the Law under his breath as he went, and was too taken up with his meditations to stop at the booths, though he saw a good deal in passing by.

At last Jacob beheld an unwelcome sight, that set the blood tingling in his veins and

kindled the slumbering fires in his eyes. It was the youngest son of the money changer, the taxgatherer, leaning over the counter and mocking at him. He did not deign to glance that way, but he plainly saw the embroidered cloak, and yellow silk turban, the insolent face and indolent figure, and heard the derisive laugh of Lucas, the detested publican.

The angry blood surged to Jacob's face, and the hand that had been caressing the *tallith* clenched, while the publican leaned back against the luxurious scarlet cushions on the bench behind the counter, and watched the haughty figure lose itself in the throng.

"Hypocrite!" muttered the publican under his breath, with such energy that one hearing him might have surmised that his insolence covered quite as much bitterness as did Jacob's hauteur.

In the heat of this anger Jacob came upon the Roman centurion raising his hand in military salute to Julia, who looked half

pleased and half frightened. He scowled darkly at the Roman and said harshly to Julia, "Come with me."

He meant to take her to her mother, but his progress was arrested by another exasperating sight. Hester, his brother's wife, was bargaining with a young man arrayed in a rich white mantle, gold embroidered and fastened to his head by a gold cord, beneath which was a yellow silk tunic girdled with a wide blue sash. He had a fine face and a gentle manner, which weighed not a whit with Jacob, who released Julia to stride across the pavement and lay a warning hand on Hester's arm. He was now in a raging fury, and Hester was frightened as she looked up and saw him beside her.

"Stay, woman!" he cried. "What aileth thee? Will you bring a curse upon our people by dealing with a Samaritan?"

"He would give me my price, the others refused," answered Hester tremulously, knowing well that it was a great offense for a

Jew to have aught to do with one of these despised people.

"Thy price! Is that all thou carest for?" he cried wrathfully. "Where is thy pride? Is not that dearer than gold? Alas! that a woman of the Jews takes no heed than to so dishonor her people in the public streets."

"For a lad, thou art wonderfully masterful," said Lois, coming to Hester's aid; and Jacob, for fear of more angry words falling from his lips, turned away, and as he did so his eyes fell upon Julia standing at a jeweler's counter and admiring the showy trinkets he held up before her eyes. "They are all alike," he muttered, "caring only for the vanities of the world." And then he added, "All but Ednah."

Even as the words passed his lips, Ednah joined Julia, and with an arm about her she lifted the brooches and bracelets, one after another, and seemed to be discussing them with her.

Jacob fled from the marketplace. He could

endure no more. He sought the hills for solitude, and to get away from the hateful sights. There Ednah found him a long time after, brooding over his grievances. The breeze on the mountain could not cool his brow for the heat of the anger that seethed within him. The more he pondered, the deeper the fires burned in his eyes, and the more passionate waxed his wrath. Unheeded, the little water spring sang to him from its blossomy banks; unheeded, the blossoms smiled up into his face. Not all the grandeur of snow-crowned Lebanon, towering beyond the hills, nor the sweetness of the lily of the valley, could comfort him.

CHAPTER VIII

STILLING THE TEMPEST

EDNAH sat down beside her brother and put her arms about him. This brother was very dear to her, but he was of so bitter and passionate and haughty a spirit that she often feared for him. She could comfort him when he turned from every one else, but to-day she, too, had fallen from grace.

"Tell me all thy griefs," said Ednah, softly.

"Was it not enough that all the others' heads were turned by the vanity of the marketplace," be began abruptly, "but that thou must needs get the glitter in thine eyes?"

"Oh, my brother, I but shared in Julia's pleasure that I might guide her in the choosing of her baubles," said Ednah, smiling into his angry eyes.

Jacob's face relaxed a little.

"The centurion but apologized for jostling Julia in the crowd," continued Ednah. "We

certainly have cause to be thankful when a Roman offers courtesy, instead of insult, to one of our people."

Jacob's blood began to cool, but he spoke not a word.

"The Samaritan, I am sure, is a good man, and fair in his dealings. I saw his face, and it was the face of a man of rank, and also of one with justice and kindness of heart."

"If that were true, still, he is a Samaritan," said Jacob.

"It is not just to visit the sins of the ancestors upon the children," said Ednah. "He is blameless of the offense of his fathers."

"The iniquity of the fathers shall be visited upon the children unto the third and fourth generation; the Decalogue says it," answered Jacob.

"Because of that, their burdens are heavy enough without a needless adding to them. Not a Jew would give mother or Hester their price to-day, but the Samaritan agreed immediately."

"Women are perverse," said Jacob. "Thou knowest the Law."

"I know it is not just," said Ednah, and then she began to sing softly, for on this point she and Jacob never agreed. And he, knowing that she, all the time, had the publican's son in her mind, and knowing how submissively and cheerfully she bore her cross, standing by her family like a true Jewish maiden, had not the heart further to reproach her.

Ednah looked across the green, flower-spangled pastures where the flocks were feeding. It was such a glad day up there on the hilltops! The only shadow seemed that on Jacob's face. Below, the little groves and gardens smiled in the sunshine, and the leaves of silvery sheen and emerald green clapped their hands softly, while the birds flitted in and out, and made sweeter music than the harpers in the marketplace.

Ednah wondered how Jacob could keep all the gladness out of his heart in such a

beautiful world as this, and she half inaudibly went on with her chanting of the one hundred and fourth Psalm, which she had learned verse by verse at her mother's knee when a child.

" 'My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord,' " chanted Ednah, repeating this verse over and over after singing all the others, then beginning at the first again; while Jacob slowly rose and began to descend the hill, not speaking.

Ednah called the flock and took them to the spring. There, too, she had left the water jars on her way to the pasture. All down the hillsides and over the fields the blossoms nodded to her, and she ran this way and that and filled her arms with them. "I will give them to Julia to deck herself with," she said; "they are fairer than rubies. See, brother, here are phlox as pink as her cheeks when thou chidest her; rock roses, yellow and white; golden cistuses, marigolds, geraniums, red tulips and pink convolvulus, orchids, asphodel, garlic, mignonette, salvia,

pimpernel, and cyclamen—a nosegay fit for a queen."

At the spring, while Jacob watered the flock and filled the jars, Ednah fashioned a garland of the flowers and threw it over her shoulders. Then each took one of the jars and began to climb the hill to the city gate, and Ednah took up her song again.

" 'My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord.'

" 'Thou art clothed with honor and majesty.'

" 'Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment,' she chanted, spreading her hands in the sunshine that seemed to flood the world; 'who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain.' " She lifted her face to the cloudless blue arch above her, yes, like a beautiful blue curtain all shining in the light.

" 'They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which thou hast founded for them.'

" 'He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills.'

" 'They give drink to every beast of the field.'

" 'By them shall the fowls of the heaven have their habitation, which sing among the branches.' "

Here Ednah lifted her water jar from off her head, for they were almost at the village, and she would listen to the wren and the blackcap piping from the hedge, and watch the gay butterflies hovering over the wayside flowers.

" 'He watereth the hills from his chambers: the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works,' " continued the maid, once more resuming her walk and her song.

" 'He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man.'

" 'And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, . . . and bread which strengtheneth man's heart.'

" 'O Lord, how manifold are thy works!

in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.'

" 'My meditation of him shall—' "

"Peace! Peace! Hold thy peace!" interrupted Jacob, turning about. He was a step or so in advance of Ednah.

The song ceased. Directly they came to the tents of the travelers, then to the gate now deserted for the marketplace, and the sounds of festivity that closed the day of traffic came out to them. Jacob turned again to Ednah. "Thou wouldst be with the others; go."

"Nay; I would abide with thee," smiled Ednah.

As they came out of the dim street to the open, they met Jesus, the carpenter. "Peace be unto thee," he said, giving Jacob an attentive glance as he passed by.

The storm in the lad's heart was stilled. The help that he had not found on the hills or in the valley had come to him with the words of the carpenter. How, he could not tell; but so it was.

"God is able to redeem his people," said Jacob in a confident voice. "Not all the Jews dwell at Nazareth." By which he meant that, though the Jews were lax at Nazareth, there were plenty of the faithful at Jerusalem.

CHAPTER IX

A JEW BOY'S VOW

THAT night, just at dusk, a venerable pilgrim halted before the door of Abda. It was Rabbi Nathan, his brother.

With joy Abda hastened to bring fresh garments, and water to wash the dust of the desert from his feet, while Anna prepared refreshment for him the while they inquired for his welfare, and the welfare of Athaliah, and asked if there was any news from Jerusalem.

"All the city has gone after one John, who dwells in the desert and calls himself a prophet," said Rabbi Nathan. "The officers would arrest him, but they fear the multitude. He makes more converts in a day than the Jewish proselyter in a century."

"Then the Jews do not believe in him?" said Abda.

"They think him an impostor. Any one,

they say, might go into the desert and pretend to be a prophet."

"Yes, but they would not preach repentance if they wished to be popular," said some one from the porch.

It was Jacob, who had been notified by Julia of Rabbi Nathan's arrival. Nothing further had been learned that day in the marketplace, and Jacob listened eagerly to the Rabbi's words.

"It is likely he is one of those reckless Zealots. They have no care for the favor of the people, neither for their life. This man's zeal, no doubt, has set his brain on fire and he imagines himself a prophet," said Rabbi Nathan.

Jacob was disappointed and not satisfied. He had hoped his uncle would show more interest. What if John were a true prophet! What if he had been sent to proclaim the Messiah! What if, at last, this great event so long looked for by the Jews was at hand—was to come to pass now, in his day!

Long after the household was asleep Jacob lay with wide-open eyes, and brain teeming with visions of great possibilities. He might live to see Jerusalem restored to his people and the hateful despot, the Roman, routed and deposed.

While Jacob was dreaming dreams and seeing visions, Rabbi Nathan, weary as he was with his long journey, must needs go to the synagogue and repeat the prayers of the evening service for himself and the house of his brother Abda. Going out softly he put on his sandals, fastened a tiny lamp to each, wrapped his long mantle about him, tied his *keffizeh*, which was a kerchief bound to the head by a cord, the corner next the forehead being turned back, and went noiselessly down the dark street, unlighted save by the tiny, twinkling lamps at his feet.

Rabbi Nathan was especially desirous of praying for his brother Abda. Many of the Jews had been contaminated by dwelling among the godless Gentiles, the Galileans;

had grown lax in their devotions, and had even intermarried with Gentiles.

He at once saw that Abda was not as true a Jew as he should be, and he feared for him and his household. As he made his way through the narrow, crooked, roughly paved streets, the little lights on his feet twinkled cheerfully, and he chanted under his breath:

" 'Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.'

" 'Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness.'

" 'In thy light shall we see light.'

" 'At evening time it shall be light,' " and other similar verses, until he reached the synagogue.

On his way back he thought of Jacob, for the dark, proud face of the lad had impressed him. "He is an ambitious lad," he mused; "he never will be content to plod along here in his uncle's fields. The Hazan tells me he is a studious lad, and bound to be a Pharisee, and a Rabbi. He is full of fire and zeal;



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Going out softly he put on his sandals

it is not good for him to dwell in this rebellious country where they defy Cæsar. It is policy for a Jew to serve his master well, and to-day we are under Rome. When the Messiah comes, it will be time to rebel. I must speak with Abda, and Lois. The lad needs a steady hand, a steady hand. Who knows? He may be elected to become a leader in Israel."

Jacob, on his way to school the next morning, thought about his Uncle Abda much as had Rabbi Nathan the previous night. If the Messiah were to come, what would be the fate of the unfaithful Jews?

Now Jacob did not know of a better man than his Uncle Abda, but he was not a very good Jew. To be sure, neither he nor his family ever ate with unwashed hands, or omitted grace before and after meat, or broke any law of the Sabbath; but in many things they were lax. Jacob was not at all sure that they repeated the Eighteen Benedictions three times every day, and Uncle Abda was always too busy to go to Jerusalem at the

time of the Passover. The women were too fond of pretty headdresses and necklaces, and did not trouble themselves about going to the synagogue except on the Sabbath and feast days. If they spent more time in the synagogue on market days, they might not be so much given to frivolity.

Arriving at the door, Jacob saw by the heap of shoes beside it that he was late, and he heard voices murmuring. They were repeating the Psalm for the day.

The pupils sat on mats on the floor and were arranged according to their ages. There was a raised seat for the master, and that was all the furniture there was in the schoolroom.

The younger children were given some simple verses from the Scriptures, carefully written out, and the next grade had tablets of wood on which they wrote their lesson with chalk, while the most advanced had parchment rolls from which they read their lesson.

Jacob's class were having severe review

lessons now, for they were to become Sons of the Law next Sabbath. While the younger children were repeating their lessons in a half-inaudible, sing-song cadence, Jacob and his classmates were reciting verses and proverbs and wise sayings without number. The taxgatherer's son was in Jacob's class.

" 'Get close to the seller of perfumes, if you want to be fragrant,' " muttered a lad, putting the words on his tablet in great Hebrew characters.

" 'There are four who never have the face of God lifted upon them," spelled out another, " 'the scoffer, the liar, the hypocrite, and the slanderer.' "

Jacob's attention wandered just here, and he heard the lesson below him more plainly than the master's question. The master, vexed at Jacob's carelessness at such an important time, passed the question to the next in order. It was Lucas, the publican.

Jacob desired to excel in his class, and his only rival was the despised publican. Jacob

was a thorough scholar, but slow; the publican was quick. He, too, had caught at the child's lesson in the class below, but he did not forget to listen at the same time to the master. He was thinking how well that verse fitted Jacob at the same time Jacob was thinking how well it fitted him, but he did not lose a word of his own lesson, while Jacob did.

The master was to give a medal to the youth who stood first in his lessons, and when the long examination was ended, the medal was presented—very reluctantly by the master, who had wished to give it to Jacob—to Lucas, the taxgatherer's son.

Jacob's humiliation was complete. He was furious. With a few harsh words to the Hazan and a scowl of hatred at his rival, he hastened out. That day he forgot to compose his features, or to finger his *tallith*, or to mutter prayers as he passed through the streets. Some donkeys with loaded panniers came down the narrow street, quite filling it,

but Jacob did not heed the drivers' cries of warning, and would have been thrown down under the animals' feet if a hand had not been stretched out to pull him into a recess in the wall, just as the nearest load grazed him.

"Dreamer," laughed his cousin Julia, "thou hadst best have thy lessons at home with the maids, if thou canst not take better heed in the street."

"An eye for an eye," muttered Jacob, too absorbed by his angry thoughts to realize his danger. "It will be my turn some day. Then I will have my revenge on this publican."

"What aileth thee now, firebrand?" said Julia. "Hath Lucas made eyes at thee to-day?"

"He weareth the medal that should be mine," said Jacob, bitterly.

"Why, surely the Hazan—" but Jacob was gone, and Julia, perplexed and indignant with the Hazan, went her way, wondering how it could have happened. The master

had no liking for the publican, that she knew.

Jacob had hastened out of the synagogue ahead of all the others; Lucas followed more slowly with his classmates. He was greatly astonished that the Hazan had given him the medal; he had not expected such an act of justice from a Jew. But having won it, and having received it, he was jubilant. He had outstripped the haughty Jew, Jacob, and been set above him before the school. He would also wear the medal to-morrow at the Sabbath-day services in the synagogue, which would be crowded with people.

"How will it please that cruel Phineas," chuckled Lucas, "who has made my brother's life wretched? But she will be glad—the beautiful Ednah—that so much honor has come to the taxgatherer's house. It is a cruel law that a maid may not marry without her brother's consent. I am a Jew, but I would not be as hard as that."

Lucas looked in at the bazaars, bought some

figs of a fruit seller, and went on, musing. "I like not the laws of the Rabbis. What is the world coming to if every Rabbi makes new laws, a Rabbi's word standing forever? Indeed, I believe they have half forgotten the Scripture, so many of the Rabbis' laws have been built around it. Ah, well, but I have the medal! How that Jew boy Jacob will gnash his teeth!"

"Much good may it do him!" Jacob was muttering. "Medal or no medal, he is only Lucas the publican, and Lucas the publican he will be to the end of his days; while I, I shall go to college at Jerusalem, and become a Rabbi, and have a seat in the Sanhedrim. Phineas has said it; and Uncle Nathan will help me. I wish it were now, *now!* I ought to go now.

"And when I have power," added Jacob after a silence, "I shall not forget Lucas the publican."

All day in the fields at work with his brother and his Uncle Abda, the thought of the medal

rankled in his mind, and when the trumpet call released him from work he turned his steps slowly homeward. It was humiliation to tell them that he had lost the medal, but bitter humiliation to confess who was the winner.

It was Friday; the preparation for the Sabbath was made on Friday, and the Sabbath began at sunset. As he neared the house, he saw Ednah lighting the lamps on the wall that would burn all night in honor of the Sabbath. Lois, his mother, was taking out the meat and the cakes from the stove of stones, and carrying them to the house in readiness for the Sabbath, for no fire might be built on that holy day, and no work not absolutely necessary could be done.

To Jacob's delight, he found Uncle Nathan at the house. He was to dine with them. But immediately followed a thought of dismay—he would have to be told! How heavy that medal weighed on his heart!

He looked at his uncle so steadily that

the Rabbi's eyes were drawn to his. "If I may but be a teacher some day, like Uncle Nathan," he mused.

The good Rabbi smiled under his beard at the intensity of the lad's gaze, divining what was in his mind. "A good lad, a likely lad, but he needs a steady hand," he said to himself.

Jacob slipped out after the evening meal, and made his way alone to the synagogue. He walked up the aisle between the stone pillars, the Sabbath lights flickering on either side, and knelt before the shrine. There Rabbi Nathan found him when he came in a little later. "It is a prayer of consecration," he thought.

Jacob rose to his feet and saw Rabbi Nathan regarding him. "I have vowed a vow," said the lad. Rabbi Nathan was disturbed; he did not like the expression of Jacob's eyes.

"Tell me thy vow," the Rabbi said.

"Nay, I have made it to God," answered

Jacob, but his voice was hard. Rabbi Nathan followed him closely, and when they were in the street he said, gently, "Son, tell me the wish of thine heart."

"It is this," said Jacob with great earnestness, "that I might go to Jerusalem to the Passover."

In silence they passed through the street. The Rabbi made no reply to Jacob's petition.

When he had entered the house, Jacob went to the red-painted chest at the side of the room,—the only furniture besides the bench and the little table,—opened it, and looked at the beautiful white wool garment his sister Ednah had woven for his freedom day; then he lay down to sleep, faithfully repeating his prayers, and last of all his vow:

" 'An eye for an eye!' O God of heaven and earth, curse me this Lucas, the publican!"

CHAPTER X

THE DESIRE OF HIS HEART

"MAKE me a great Rabbi, O God, and curse Lucas the publican!" were the words that first came from Jacob's lips the next morning.

It should have been a glad day, a solemnly glad day, this greatest day of Jacob's life, but he had brought to it too much bitterness and hatred. There were two monster clouds in his sky that threatened to cause a total eclipse: the one was the thought of his postponed visit to Jerusalem, and the other the thought of Lucas the publican with the medal.

At the gate of the synagogue Jacob waited with his Uncle Nathan for the women to join them. They soon appeared, and Jacob was further vexed at the sound of the tinkling of the bells on Julia's anklets as she neared the gate. He gave one glance at the veiled figure, knowing that it was decked with an

unbecoming number of ornaments. Only matrons should wear many ornaments.

In the mapping out of his life, Jacob had arranged some day to marry Julia, his cousin and playmate. First, he loved her better than any of the maids, despite her frivolity and vanity, and second, she was as beautiful as a queen; third, her father had great possessions.

It troubled him that Julia cared for nothing but adorning herself and being admired; but once his wife, and settled at Jerusalem away from her easy-going people, he believed he could make a model Jewess of her.

As they passed in, a hideous beggar by the gate drew their attention. The women kept on, but Jacob tossed a piece of money, and the beggar muttered half inaudible thanks, looking after the haughty Jew boy with a scowl. But another lad immediately withdrew his attention; it was Lucas, the publican. He laughed, and threw a metal button into the beggar's hand.

"Old hypocrite!" the beggar muttered. "He is one of the richest men in Nazareth to-day, no doubt," and he cast the button at Lucas with a wrathful imprecation.

Lucas looked back and saw Jesus, the carpenter, press a piece of money into the beggar's hand and say a few words to him, but so low they were inaudible. The wretched creature looked up with tears coursing down his shrunken cheeks, and he cried aloud, "The God of our father Abraham bless thee!"

The taxgatherer's son had a new look on his face as he passed in at the gate. He turned again, took a step toward Jesus, hesitated, then went his way.

Rabbi Nathan also had observed the little scene, and for the first time in his life came the thought that there might be something greater than being a Jew and a Rabbi.

Jacob, with surprise, saw the great Rabbi enter the synagogue with his head bowed upon his breast in an attitude of humility, instead of pacing the aisle with uplifted face

and stately head, looking, as Jacob thought, as grand as a king.

Jacob loved to think of the Temple when he was in the synagogue. The platform was the altar, the shrine the Holy of Holies. There was the ever-burning lamp before it, and the great branched lamp, as at the Temple. Every detail of the service he listened to to-day as he never had before, and was prouder than ever before that he was a Jew.

He tried to preserve a stolid countenance when he and his companions were called to the platform, but his heartbeats came in great throbs, his eyes gleamed like coals of fire, he held his head never so high, and his bearing was never so proud. To the women watching through the lattice he seemed the handsomest lad and the truest Jew in Nazareth.

"The true son of a Pharisee," thought Rabbi Nathan, as his eyes followed him, "but so fiery and passionate I fear they will

make a Zealot of him if he remains here in Nazareth."

The sight of Lucas with the medal only set Jacob's head higher. He would ignore both the fellow and the medal. What was a medal on a publican!

After the consecration exercises the regular service began. In listening to the reading of the Song of Moses at the passage of the Red Sea, Jacob forgot his enemy; the blood leaped in his veins at the triumphant cry. Surely the mighty Jehovah was able to accomplish all things! He would redeem his people. Rome should fall, and the Jew should ascend the throne.

When the prayer was read, a prayer of praise that the Jews believe is heard in heaven, Jacob listened with joy and trembling, but when the second prayer was repeated his heart cried out in almost an agony of beseeching, "Save us, Eternal God! Blessed be thou, O Eternal, who of old didst redeem Israel!"

The most fervent "Amen!" that had ever passed his lips responded; his voice was but one of hundreds.

After that grand Amen, followed responses that were of themselves an inspiration. The Hallelujah that closed the reading rose from the synagogue like a great shout, a triumphant shout, that made the Roman governor and his retinue turn themselves uneasily from their feasting and exclaim about the foolish Jews gone mad over their worship. But in their hearts they cursed them for a dangerous people, and would have been far better pleased if they had not been so devoted.

After the Hallelujah, that seemed a prophecy and shout of victory, Rabbi Nathan was invited to take the desk. He slowly made his way to the platform and turned his face toward the assembled people. Slowly, he opened the Scripture and read: " 'He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation.' " Then followed the sermon.

Jacob listened while the Rabbi discoursed of the seven garments of the Holy One mentioned in Scripture. It was a wonderful sermon, and Jacob thought he would never desire greater honor than some day to be able to deliver a sermon like that.

"When the Holy One created the world," said Rabbi Nathan, "he clothed himself with glory and honor,—'Thou art clothed with honor and majesty.' When he showed himself at the Red Sea, he clothed himself in majesty,—'The Lord reigneth, he is clothed with majesty.' When he gave the Law, he clothed himself with might,—'The Lord is clothed with strength wherewith he hath girded himself.' As often as he forgave Israel its sins, he clothed himself in white,—'His raiment was white as snow.' When he punishes the nations of the world he puts on garments of vengeance,—'He put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak.'

"He will put on the sixth robe when the

Messiah is revealed. Then he will clothe himself in righteousness,—'He put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head.'

"He will put on the seventh robe when he punishes Edom. Then will he clothe himself in red,—'Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel?'

"But the robes with which he will clothe the Messiah will shine from one end of the earth to the other. And the sons of Israel will rejoice in his light, and will say, Blessed be the hour when the Messiah was born, blessed the eyes that were counted worthy to see him. For the opening of his lips is blessing and peace. His speech is rest to the soul, the thoughts of his heart confidence and joy, the speech of his lips pardon and forgiveness, his prayer like sweet-smelling savor of a sacrifice, his supplications holiness and purity.'

"O how blessed is Israel, for whom a lot is reserved,—'How great is thy goodness,

which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee!' "

The remainder of the service passed unheeded; Jacob's heart was on fire with the wonderful words he had heard. Oh, for that garment of salvation! All his life should be given to God; the Messiah should find him ready.

As he knelt, a great peace stole into his heart; it was as if one had blessed him. Long he knelt, fearing to disturb this sweet peace. Not until a great rustling sound told him the people were departing, did he rise to his feet, and then he saw standing beside him, Jesus.

"When will it be?" questioned Jacob, as he and Rabbi Nathan walked homeward.

"The time is at hand, even at our door," answered the Rabbi. "All the prophecies and signs point to the present time."

Jacob thrilled. It was really to be in his day! Then he sighed with impatience, for

he would be at Jerusalem watching with the doctors and the priests.

"Son," said Rabbi Nathan as they stood in the porch before entering the house, "the desire of thine heart is granted thee; thou mayst return with me to my home."

CHAPTER XI

FROM NAZARETH TO JERUSALEM

JULIA ran across the field that lay between her house and Jacob's, laughing and singing as she ran, snatching at the blossoms in her path and twisting them in her braids, or tossing them up in the air. It was early, and when she pushed open the door and skipped in unceremoniously there was instant commotion,—bleating, cackling, barking, and the patter of scurrying feet.

The house of Phineas, like most of the houses of Nazareth, had but one room, and half of this was occupied by the sheep, fowls, and dogs. A raised floor separated the family from the creatures.

Julia laughed loudly, and clapped her hands at sight of the startled sheep and hens, not halting in her headlong speed until she had reached the family apartment.

"Jacob! Jacob!" she cried. "I am going

to Jerusalem with you and Aunt Lois and Cousin Ednah. If you will have me," she added, looking up at one and another with so bright a face that it would have been a hard heart indeed that could refuse her.

"Uncle Nathan says I may go, and I could hardly wait till morning to tell the news. Come, let us take the flock to the hills. We will be back before the cakes are baked." Julia skipped through the disturbed flock again, throwing the door wide open and laughing merrily to see how they scrambled out, shouldering each other in their haste. The sheep had had their morning meal, and would drink at the spring below the town.

"Phineas will need to build a shed before another season," said Jacob; "the house is crowded." When the last sheep had skipped over the threshold he joined Julia, who was impatiently calling, outside.

"Here, heedless one," said Lois from the door, "take the jars and bring back some fresh water. Do not forget the herbs."

Julia ran back for the jars, Jacob relieving her of one when she had rejoined him.

"What think you?" began Julia as soon as they were well on their way. "We are going through Samaria."

Many Jews went by the highway on the east of the Jordan, because they hated the Samaritans, and because they feared robbers.

"Uncle Nathan would not go through Samaria at first, for fear of Barabbas, who has come again with a lot of men, and nearly every caravan is robbed. But the centurion who built the beautiful synagogue at Capernaum is traveling this way with a squadron of horsemen, and he has promised his protection. I am so glad; we shall get there so much more quickly. And the centurion is going to fight that bold robber when he returns to Jerusalem."

Julia paused to take breath, and Jacob observed, "How thy tongue wags this morning!"

Julia only laughed at this, and said saucily,

"I have to do the talking for two." Jacob was slow of speech, and mostly silent.

Spying some women washing linen by the spring, Julia ran down and began to tell them about her good fortune. One woman rubbed the linen between the stones, while the other poured on the water as fast as it was needed.

"I went to Jerusalem once when I was a maid," said the woman pouring the water. "There are finer shops there than here, and grand castles, and palaces, and splendid mansions where the rich Sadducees live. And the Temple! There is nothing else in the world like the Temple."

Julia had listened with parted lips to the woman's discourse, but at mention of the Temple, Jacob's eyes began to glow. The woman would have enlarged her story if a crowd of camels, donkeys, and men had not come up just then, and hastened the children's departure.

The caravan in which Rabbi Nathan and his party were to travel started in the night

to avoid the heat of the day. They were a gay company. The Jew's heart rejoiced when his steps were turned toward Jerusalem. The singers chanted, and the musicians played, and happy voices called one to another. The torches held in the hands of the pilgrims dipped and flared, and made a long serpentine track of light as they made their way down the mountain.

Besides the people traveling on foot, there were people mounted on camels, mules, and horses, and camels and mules loaded with merchandise and traveling boxes; while at the front and rear were the Roman militia.

Julia was much interested in watching the caravan. Everything loomed up to such an unnatural size in the indistinct and fitful light—the camels were monsters, and the men giants, and every hill was a mountain, while the mountains themselves reached unto heaven.

In the morning they had crossed Esdraelon and Engannim—the Gardens of Fountains—

and entered Samaria. Julia thought the Holy City itself could hardly be more splendid than the city of Samaria, now called Sebastieh, with its temple, public buildings, triumphal arches, baths, and theaters, and its great wall with its beautiful gates. It was now a Roman city, but the Samaritan Jews were as proud of their city as were the Judean Jews of theirs.

Jacob looked on this city with no favor. He remembered that the Samaritans had built a temple on Mount Gerizim and claimed that it was more holy than the Temple at Jerusalem. And to this day, so long after their temple had been destroyed by the Jews, they declared that Mount Gerizim was more holy than Mount Moriah.

"This," said a voice at Jacob's side, "this Mount Gerizim is Ararat, where Noah's ark rested. I can show you where Noah builded his altar, and the seven steps where he offered seven sacrifices. The little ones showed me the place when I was here last year."

Jacob turned and found himself face to face with Lucas the publican.

"They know where Abraham bound Isaac, and where the ram was caught in the thicket," continued Lucas, as Jacob did not deign to speak. "There's a big, flat stone at the top, where Jacob rested his head and dreamed such a wonderful dream. Up there, too, Joshua built his first altar after the conquest of the land and set up twelve stones, one for each tribe of Israel."

Jacob drew Julia aside, and Lucas, finding he persisted in being unfriendly, passed on.

"Is it true," asked Julia "that Mount Gerizim is Ararat?"

"It is not true, at all," said Jacob. "So they say that Moses hid the tabernacle and everything in it on that same mount; and they say that there the Messiah will first appear, and bring the hidden things to light again; but every true Jew knows it is not so. They look to Gerizim when they pray, too, as the true Jew looks to Jerusalem. They

are no Jews; they are a mixed race. They never can be pure Jews, for the blood of the heathen flows in their veins. They think by keeping the laws of Moses strictly to make themselves better Jews than the Judeans."

Jacob turned away in disgust, and Julia sought Ednah and Lois, and told them what Lucas had said. "No man knows," said Ednah, "whether the story of Moses be true; neither Jacob nor Lucas, nor any other Jew. And for the Messiah, no man knows where his first appearing will be."

The caravan halted at Jacob's Well. There was a little alcove under the trees near the well, and Ednah and Julia rested there, glad of the cool shade, and looked out upon the beautiful scene before them. The bare, brown hills, steep and high, lifted their heads to the sky, and between them and the city Shechem spread the green valley with its water spring, singing on its way. The city itself was almost hidden in its gardens and orchards; and the great plain that stretched far on either side

was rich with cornfields, olive trees, and vineyards; and beyond the plain, the hills again.

"Here," said Ednah, "our father Jacob lived. He bought this piece of ground and digged this well. No one knows the depth of it. It was years in building. Here Joseph was buried. Here Joshua gathered the tribes to read to them the Law, the blessings on Mount Gerizim and the curses on Mount Ebal. And here the judges and kings reigned. Out on that great plain the hosts of Israel gathered. Ah," Ednah sighed, "now Samaria is the only peaceful country; Galilee and Judea are in perpetual revolt. How many hundreds of lives are sacrificed, and all in vain! The heel of the tyrant is too heavy. Not till the Messiah comes will we be freed."

They were soon on their way again. Rabbi Nathan and his party took a little footpath over the hills through the fields of flowers; and groves of almond, walnut, pomegranate,

pear, and plum trees were vibrating with the songs of birds.

"It is like Nazareth, only more beautiful," said Julia. "I am sure I hear finches singing, and that—that is a blackbird! And the cactus hedges about the gardens look so like our own. And how the waters sing all about us! I wish there were fountains and brooks at Nazareth."

"Our many great cisterns are better than fountains," said Jacob.

Julia laughed. She was not in the least proud like Jacob. "I like fountains and singing brooks better," she said. "The people are happier here, too; they do not fight."

"No; they make friends with the Romans, to get favors. A craven people; no Jews are they. At Jerusalem they will not endure the Romans' desecration of the city; they rebel, and so there is always commotion. They must suffer, for they are not strong enough to conquer; but they never will submit. But the Samaritans, they love the ways of

the Roman. Oh, yes, how they love them! They love to see the Roman palaces and theaters and ensign in their cities. Judea hated Herod because he became a Roman, but Samaria called him her 'good king.'

"I will tell you a story," Jacob went on. "The Samaritans are cursed above all Jews. It is a tradition that a special curse was put upon the Samaritans by Ezra, Zerubbabel, and Joshua. All the congregation of Israelites was called together in the Temple, and three hundred trumpets, three hundred books of the Law, and three hundred scholars of the Law repeated all the curses of the Law against the Samaritans. It is better," concluded Jacob, "to be a heathen than a Samaritan."

Julia sighed. "I like the looks of the people, and I would there were houses at Nazareth like those in Shechem. They were high, three rows of windows in some, and little balconies. I like windows. But the streets were no better than ours."

Jacob looked at Julia and thought perhaps

it had been better to have left her at Nazareth. By the time of their return she might despise her humble home.

"The mountains of Galilee are more than all the fine shows in Samaria," he said. Julia looked off at the line of round-topped hills, all nearly of a height, the flat valley, and the broad meadows. But she was bent on teasing Jacob. "It looks prosperous," she observed.

They were soon in the land of Judah, and on the following morning the long caravan, with its flocks of sheep and goats, camels and mules, its many pilgrims with their staffs in their hands, many men of many nations, besides the women and children, and first and last the Roman escort, wound slowly around the steep ridge that hid the city of cities, the Mecca of the Jews, Jerusalem. Slowly the ridge is gained, and weary footsteps grow eager, and hearts beat fast. No oppression can crush out the Jew's love for his own people and his own city.

To many of the company this was their first view of Jerusalem. As fast as they came in sight of the city they fell upon their knees in adoration, and in supplication to the God of their father Abraham to restore to them their loved city.

Jacob was one of the first to reach the summit. When the fair vision of the white city burst upon his view, glittering in the sunlight like burnished gold, with its towers and domes and great wall, he gave a cry and bowed himself to the earth.

It was more than all his dreams. When he rose to his feet again he shouted, "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion . . . the city of the great King. . . . As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God: God will establish it for ever. . . . God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved. God shall help her, and that right early!"

Rabbi Nathan laid a hand upon the excited

lad's arm. He himself was not unmoved, and to the Jews who had come up with him the lad's shout seemed like a prophecy. With the glittering city before them like a vision descended from heaven, and the towering mountains set about it, it was easy to believe there was a future for the Jews. They all gazed upon the city with awestruck faces, and prostrated themselves before it.

"If God is in the midst of her, so too is Rome at the present time," said some one standing near Rabbi Nathan. Jacob turned and beheld a rich Jew who had joined the caravan. His sharp, bright eyes regarded Jacob shrewdly. His long beard and his costly garments had attracted Jacob's notice early in the journey. "Rich and powerful Jews like this prince," he thought, "would help mightily in restoring the kingdom." He opened his lips to address the prince, when, just behind him, he saw two Romans in military costumes, holding their horses' bridles and regarding him with a cynical incredulity.

"A firebrand from Galilee, if I mistake not," said one, with a laugh.

Rabbi Nathan led Jacob away, feeling more strongly than ever that he needed a restraining hand, and shrinking a little from the thought of handling such inflammable material.

All this time Ednah had been standing close beside her mother and Rabbi Nathan, looking and listening with awe and wonder and an ecstasy of joy she did not understand. But more than Jerusalem with all its glory, was to her the thought of the little city Bethlehem beyond the walls and towers; Bethlehem, with its cave.

Ednah, looking to the right, saw what Jacob did not, and what no one but herself appeared to notice; a little group, a family group. It was Joseph the carpenter, with his wife Mary, and Jesus. Jesus was standing quietly a little apart, looking earnestly—sadly, Ednah thought—in the direction whence all eyes were turned.

"He mourns for Jerusalem; he cannot be glad," thought Ednah; and crossing over to the place where he stood she asked, anxiously, "Thinkest thou that the time of the Messiah is at hand?"

"Yea," was the answer.

Rabbi Nathan was hurrying Jacob down the hill, and Lois called to Ednah and Julia, the latter asking, as she came up, breathless from running, "And is that the Temple nearest us, that shines so white and so bright?"

"What else could it be?" was Lois's answer.

Julia held fast to Rabbi Nathan's hand as they made their way down the hill, thinking of the many wonderful stories she had been told about the Temple. Many a time she had looked from the Nazareth hills to far-off Lebanon, and listened to Jacob as he talked of good King Hiram of Tyre, who sent the cedars of Lebanon to King Solomon to help build the Temple, and the thousands of men

the two kings sent to hew them. She was always sorry, when she listened to the story, that King David had to keep so busy fighting the enemies of his people that he could not build the Temple in his day.

Not the least wonderful of the stories Julia had been told was that of the stones of which the Temple was builded. She drew a deep breath. "Can it be true, Uncle Nathan," she asked, "that every stone was made ready to fit in its place before it was taken to the Mount?"

"It is true," said Rabbi Nathan. " 'There was neither hammer nor ax nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was in building.' "

"And Jacob says that thousands and thousands of men worked on it a week of years," said Julia.

Ednah smiled. "There is nothing Jacob so loves to talk of as the Temple."

There was a clattering of horses' hoofs coming down the hill, and two of the Roman

officers dashed by, with ringing spurs and dazzling shields.

A silence fell on the little party. For a moment they forgot their pride in their city, their Temple—theirs, with Roman soldiers in the fortress of David, and the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, in the palace of kings.

Ednah sighed. "If our people had but kept the commandments of Jehovah, and not given themselves to idols, the Temple would not have been thrice destroyed, nor to-day be in the hands of the enemy."

"And there is fear that the Temple will be taken from us some day," said Lois, raising her eyes to the glittering white vision. Then, after a long look, she drew her veil close and spoke no more.

"Oh, if it were not for the promise of the Messiah," said Ednah, "we should despair."

"And this is Olivet," said Julia. "We are almost there, then."

The road now wound around the Mount,

beautiful with its terraced gardens, while across the valley Jerusalem again burst upon the vision of the pilgrims. Its steep sides made the narrow valley look like a deep trench, and the city itself seemed a great fortress.

"See, Julia!" cried Jacob. "That great white tower is David's tower. Think of it! King David built it. And see the grand old castle beyond the Temple! It is the castle King Melchizedek built; Melchizedek, the first king of Jerusalem, and the friend of our father Abraham. Think of it!"

Julia gazed with awestruck eyes, but Ednah and Lois thought on the Roman ensign flashing in the sunlight.

CHAPTER XII

BECAUSE I LOVE THEE

JACOB kept the figure of Lucas the publican well in his vision. He was not so absorbed in Jerusalem that he forgot Lucas. Indeed, he had been out of Jacob's mind scarcely an hour since he discovered him in the caravan. Was his visit to the Holy City to be marred by his presence? Was Lucas to follow him like a mocking shadow, everywhere he went?

Lucas was mounted now; Jacob caught a glimpse of the gold-embroidered saddle cloth, and he pushed forward. The road down the Mount to the Kedron valley was steep, and on one side precipitous in places. Jacob drew nearer. The sky darkened, and in an instant they were in the midst of a tempest such as was frequent at that time of the year. Jacob was beside the horse with the gold-embroidered saddle cloth. It were nothing

strange if the horse took sudden fright at one of those blinding flashes of lightning and crashing peals of thunder, and dashed out of the narrow path over the side of the precipice.

Jacob raised his staff, but before it could descend his arm was arrested. He turned about, too angry at the interference to take alarm at being discovered. It was Jesus who stayed his hand.

Jacob tried to wrest his arm from the firm grasp. "Why preventest thou me?" he demanded sullenly, in a guarded undertone.

"Because I love thee."

Jacob's arm fell. The look and the words melted him. But he did not understand. If he loved him, why did he not aid him in taking his revenge on the publican, instead of thwarting him? Perhaps he feared he would get into trouble; perhaps some one had been watching.

Jacob had but an instant to think about this riddle, for Lucas had turned in time to

see the motion he made, and he understood it. In a fury he threw himself from his horse, and dashed at Jacob with a menacing face.

The hand that stayed Jacob's wrath now stretched out to the infuriated publican. "Peace; go thy way," said Jesus.

The lad cried out, "Leave me to deal with him, the hypocrite! The dog of a Jew!"

"See thou hurt him not," said Jesus, looking into the lad's face with such a look of solicitude that Lucas thought, as he beheld it, "How he loves him!"

"Thou art not just," said Lucas. "Why preventest thou me?"

"Because I love thee."

Lucas was struck dumb with astonishment. Was that look of loving solicitude for *him?*

Jacob, with a scornful smile, turned away. What, then, was this publican, this hated enemy, to hold an equal place with him in this man's heart? Truly, to Jesus all men were brethren.

When Jacob looked back, Lucas was walking toward his horse slowly, with bowed head, and Jesus was dispersing the crowd that had gathered. The tempest was past, the sun was shining, and all the green world about them was aglisten with millions of raindrops. The two women, Ednah and Lois, delayed to peer under the broad leaves of a wayside fig tree for fruit. They found three figs on the trunk of the tree and gave one to Julia, the other two to some children near by.

"They are not like the figs of Nazareth," said Julia, with a wry face.

"They are wild figs," said Lois; "they have been on the tree all winter. Too often, at this time, there is nothing but leaves."

Jacob now joined them. "This valley, Uncle Nathan told me, was once King Solomon's gardens."

"Look, Jacob, look!" cried Julia. "The gate! See the gate!"

High above them towered the massive

carved stonework, with its great arch and its towers, and Jacob, looking up, seemed to grow taller and broader at the sight.

" 'Thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise,' " said Ednah.

"This is the kind of gate Sampson tore off its hinges and carried to the hilltop," said Jacob, eying the stout doors with their great bolts and bars.

"And there is a chamber over the gate like that one where David went and wept for his son Absalom," said Ednah.

The tents and booths that were scattered over Olivet, and all the way up to Jerusalem, grew more frequent now; and the way was thronged with people, pilgrims come to keep the Passover.

The caravan was broken up; some had remained on the other side of Kedron, others were to lodge in tents, and others to visit friends in the city. The khans were already filled to overflowing. The tents, booths, and awnings, cattle and people, camels, donkeys,

and dogs, traders and travelers, and wares of every description made a confusion of sight and sound compared with which a market day at Nazareth was a calm. The shrill and hoarse voices of the dealers rose above the braying, bleating, and barking as they gesticulated and cried their wares.

The shade under the vaulted gateway was very grateful after the long journey in the scorching heat, and Lois and Ednah and the children were glad to rest a few moments in a safe corner, while Rabbi Nathan went to the Roman guard and showed their passports, and paid for the entrance of the mules that had brought them on their journey.

They bought some water of one of the rough looking fellows who were running about rattling their brass cups, and shouting, "May God compassionate me!" their short, grimy frocks, bare legs, and long beards giving them a very uninviting appearance, and the patched goatskin bottles lashed to their backs did not look tempting. Others of the

same stamp shouted still more lustily, "Honey of wine!" but Ednah begged that they buy of the discouraged looking peasant women who sat by the wall, and called, in voices lost in the din, "Honey of wine!"

Ednah had been looking at the gray gowns, and striped yellow and white veils twisted about the head and shoulders of these women, thinking that they looked more like home than anything she had seen since starting on her journey. Then she observed the tired faces.

The women looked very glad when Rabbi Nathan went over to them. "The peace of the God of Abraham be with you," they said to him.

There were other women in this market-place before the great Damascus gate; dark-skinned women in long blue and white gowns, with bright-colored kerchiefs on their heads, carrying large baskets of cucumbers and onions, lentils, and all manner of early vegetables.

Rabbi Nathan told them they were from Bethany and Siloam. Troops of donkeys from a greater distance, Bethlehem perhaps, the Rabbi said, were led by boys in white tunics fastened by broad red leather belts. Bethlehem women, too, in gowns of blue or striped crimson and yellow, with long white linen veils, carried baskets of fruit on their heads,—figs and dates and oranges. Later they would have grapes, apricots, pomegranates, and prickly pears.

There were golden heaps of oranges and lemons, and also of roses, which were bought by weight to be used for conserves and attar of roses.

"There are never such great gatherings at any time as at the time of the Passover," said Rabbi Nathan. "Little daughter, look there, and see the doves."

Ednah and Julia looked in the direction the Rabbi indicated, and saw a very noisy fellow pacing up and down before a heap of cages full of doves, ducks, and pigeons.

"Poor things!" said Ednah, looking at the pretty heads of the doves thrust through the bars. "It is cruel that they must be imprisoned and then taken out only to die. They will all be sold for offerings at the Temple, will they not?"

"How many, many innocent things must die for our sins," said Lois,—"the doves and the pigeons and the lambs."

They were now refreshed, and took their way through the city, past the gay bazaars, which were nothing but small stalls raised a little above the street. Here were the dry-goods merchants, pottery and hardware dealers, tailors, shoemakers, tinsmiths, dealers in fine linen, embroideries, and jewelry. Here, too, were the growers with their supplies of rice and coffee, spices and loaf sugar, dried fruits and nuts.

The tired donkeys stumbled along over the smooth round stones of the pavement, and still on they went, under the shadowed archways made by the chambers of the houses

built over the streets, which afforded a welcome protection from the scorching sun that beat upon Jerusalem six months of the year. There were no sidewalks, and shops and dwellings were built on a line with the street, which was narrow and crooked.

They left the streets of shops and entered one where were dwellings. They halted at one more pretentious than the rest. It was two storied, and had a latticed window built out of its wall of stone, which greatly pleased Julia. And to think that she was going to visit in a house that had windows and apartments!

Rabbi Nathan knocked at the gate, in which was a little wicket gate opened by the porter, who was kindly saluted by the Rabbi and bowed himself to the pavement, evincing much joy at his master's return.

Remembering that the gates are built in the side of the house, and the houses built around an open space called a court, it will be plain that one entering the gate must pass

under the house through a passageway into the court, and in the court are the stairs that lead to the upper floors.

Into such a court entered the little party. The court was set with shrubbery and vines, some of the shrubbery in blossom, and the vines clambering over the walls and up to the latticed verandas that ran around three sides of the court.

In the center of the court rose a patriarchal palm, the pride of Rabbi Nathan's heart. "The palm in the court of the king's palace cannot compare with this," he said. "It is the last object in Jerusalem the sun shines on at night."

Ednah looked up and up and up, to the crown of feathery leaves that glistened in the fast vanishing sunlight.

On either side the palm were tiny fountains that sent up a veil of mist, cooling the air and spraying some rare ferns. And around the court, under the veranda, were the leewans, their arched openings hung with

blue and white striped curtains that floated softly in the still, cool air of the court, and invited to rest and refreshment.

Athaliah, the wife of Rabbi Nathan, came to greet them and bid them welcome. She was a noble Jewish matron with a most kindly countenance, and Julia's heart went out to her immediately, while Jacob's pride was much strengthened at the sight of such a queenly aunt.

Athaliah led Ednah and her mother and Julia up the stairs to the veranda, and into a chamber opening from it, and with her own hands brought the basin of water for them, and set a little table of refreshments. Julia was silent from awe and delight. The house with its carved pillars and arches, its terraces and its many chambers, its blue and white tiled floors, its striped draperies, its great oaken rafters, its stools and tables and cushioned divans, was to her as grand as a palace.

In her eyes, Athaliah was no less grand than the house. So tall and queenly, in her

white robes, with rings and anklets and necklace of gleaming gold! About her head was wound a striped scarf of silk tissue, and her fingers sparkled with jewels.

They rested until the cool of the day, and after the evening meal went up to the house-top, where was a beautiful garden, and several little summer chambers covered with vines. At the end of the roof was a tower with open arches on each side, and in this tower they sat or reclined while they talked of their journey and of the Passover, and chanted their evening hymns. The moonlight flooded the garden and the tower; below them lay the city, hidden in shadows, and far beyond, the mountains rose darkly against the sky, while the stars looked down calmly, even as they looked on Nazareth.

That night, in her little blue and white chamber, Julia lay down to rest with this last thought, "Oh, if I might be a great lady and have as many rings as Aunt Athaliah!" while Jacob, in his chamber, kissed his *tallith* again

and again, murmuring, "Jerusalem! At last, Jerusalem!" And Lucas the publican, in the best chamber of the finest inn at Jerusalem, saw, amidst all the confusion of costumes and faces, one face bend over him with loving solicitude, and heard above the babel of sounds a voice, a voice inexpressibly tender, saying, "Because I love thee."

CHAPTER XIII

THE PASSOVER

EARLY in the morning Julia left her little curtained couch, and stealing across the blue and white tiled floor she ascended the veranda stairs to the roof of the house.

It was not yet sunrise, and it was so still and dim she could hardly believe this was the same city she had entered amid such confusion and traffic the previous day.

While she looked, the purple shadows in the east began to glow with flame as if an angel had touched them with a coal from the altars of heaven. The morning star, with slow palpitations, melted into this glory and was forgotten in the glowing splendor.

Julia stood like one in a trance, watching the morning sky brighten again, and just as all the glory seemed to concentrate and deepen about one spot, she was startled almost into

terror by the sudden peal of a thousand silver trumpets, blown by the priests from the walls of the Temple, and seeming to shake the very foundations of the city.

Instantly the housetops all over the city were occupied by groups of people. Jacob came out from a little chamber on the roof, and Ednah and the whole household, family and servants, joined those already there. Thousands of worshipers, with their faces toward the Temple, awaited the second peal of the trumpets, the signal for kneeling and joining in a morning hymn of praise.

As the murmur of the voices rose and swelled into a mighty anthem, a pillar of black smoke ascended from the midst of the Temple, and beyond it a blue, misty wreath arose and wove itself, like a silver cord, in and out the black mass. This was the smoke of the incense. The smoke of the burnt offering spread out over the court like a canopy, while fresh volumes of it mounted higher and higher and dissolved into the

heaven, now clear and blue with the new light of day. And the prayers of the people mingled with the incense and arose to the gates of the morning, which the Jews believed opened into heaven, while the sun in his majesty shone forth from the east even unto the west, and it was day.

"Tell me, Rabbi," said Ednah when the devotions were ended, "why must the pretty doves and the little lambs suffer for me?"

Jacob frowned. "Peace, sister; to learn and not to question is our duty. That it is to be done is sufficient to know. Do not you begin to pry into God's mysteries, after the manner of Jesus when a lad."

Rabbi Nathan looked attentively into Jacob's face for an instant, and then drew Ednah to his side, kindly.

"It is a sign," he said. "The burnt offering is the symbol of our sins brought before God, that he may take them away. They are black and thick and heavy, and only the great Jehovah, the Almighty, can

make them small as the dust of the earth, and disperse them.

"All that is pure and innocent in us turns to God, and is purified by fire; the evil is like the chaff which the wind driveth away. The incense is a sign; it is a sweet savor acceptable unto God; it is the adoration and prayers of his people, the giving of their hearts to him.

"The Roman may plant his eagle on the heights, and establish his warriors in the fortress; he may set his foot on the necks of the people he has conquered. But over the Roman God still reigns, and he is mighty to help and to save."

"We have the Temple," said Jacob. "They never will dare take that from us, and Hannas the high priest is chief at the palace."

Rabbi Nathan placed his hand on Jacob's shoulder.

"There is a rumor that the new procurator will take the office from Hannas and give it to Ishmael."

Jacob started up. "They will not suffer it! Rabbi Nathan, the Jews never will suffer it!" His face flushed darkly, and his body trembled so that the Rabbi marveled. "Only a lad, but full of fire," he mused. "He will be ready when the hour arrives; but mine is the task to teach him prudence. Yes, prudence is the first lesson I must teach him."

Straightway the good Rabbi began to talk in a low, serious voice to Jacob, and Ednah and Julia wandered about the roof garden, looking with great interest at the plants and vines and the little summerhouses or chambers built on the roof. They even ventured to lean over the railing and look down into the street that now began to resound with the footsteps of travelers on their way to the Temple or to the marketplace at the gate.

Athaliah, seeing them so pleased with the garden, said, "We almost live up here in the summer. We will breakfast here this morning."

That was very fine, Julia thought, to sit at meat in a lovely garden up in the air.

It being broad daylight now, they could see the gardens and domes and chambers on the roofs of many other houses, and here and there giant palms and other trees towering above the roofs. And all about the city was the great wall, and beyond the wall the circle of mountains.

" 'As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people,' " murmured Ednah. Then, as she looked toward the fortress and David's tower, and thought that they were Roman strongholds, she added, " 'The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my . . . high tower; whom shall I fear?' "

This being the thirteenth day of the month, which month is Abib, it was the preparation for the Passover. It was a very busy day. As Julia followed her aunt about the house, who was very careful to see that all was properly done, she thought of the first

Passover in that long-ago time when the Jews were slaves in Egypt.

At sunset all the house, every dish and utensil in it, had been purified, and Rabbi Nathan repeated the purification prayer, and then silently went over the house to see if any leaven remained, and a little later, between sunset and star-time, he brought the water for the making of the unleavened bread. It was not lawful for any but the head of the household to bring this water. After the bread was baked, and a loaf set aside for the Temple, the preparations were completed, until morning. Then everything fermented was carried out of the house; all the prayers had been said; all was in readiness for the Passover.

Many times had Julia witnessed these preparations in her home at Nazareth, and they had not much impressed her; but it was a very different thing here in her uncle's house, with the walls of Jerusalem about her and the Temple before her eyes.

In the afternoon the women gathered on the housetop to watch the endless procession winding through the streets on its way to the Temple with the lambs for the offering. Jacob went with Rabbi Nathan to the Temple, being now a Son of the Law, free to go where he willed.

The din at the gates bewildered Jacob. "Thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise."

But what was this? Dove sellers, dealers of all sorts of wares that could by any possibility be used at the Passover, and money changers, all clamored about the gates and even in the outer court, eager for a good day's patronage. Rabbi Nathan had passed in and was busy about his duties. Something of the pride in Jacob's heart died as he looked and listened. He wondered greatly how Jews could permit such sacrilege.

But once inside, Jacob forgot his mortification in beholding the splendor of the Temple. The magnificence of the inner gates

and the walls, the elaborate carvings and rich tapestries, the gleam of marble and gold all about, dazzled him; it was more than his grandest imaginations.

At sunset the Temple became the scene of the greatest confusion; the lambs for the burnt offering were sacrificed, and it must all be done after sunset and before the stars came out. The scene was indescribable. Jacob and Rabbi Nathan made their way out, as soon as they received their portion of their Passover lamb, and slowly threaded the great mass of people, as eager to depart as they had been to come, for the lamb must be roasted and eaten before twelve o'clock that night.

The air was heavy with the odor of burning wood and roasting flesh; thousands of fires flared up in the darkness; from housetops, from courts of dwellings, from street corners and market places, anywhere and everywhere were the little stone ovens piled or set up, and the Passover lamb made ready.

Rabbi Nathan had invited some of his kinspeople to share his Passover lamb, and Julia was quite awed at sight of the company that arranged itself on the couches about the space where the table was to be set for the feast.

When they were assembled the table was brought, and the unleavened bread, bitter herbs, and a dish of mixed fruits and vinegar were placed on it, and partaken of with prayer and much ceremony. Then came the proud moment for Jacob. The son of the house, or the youngest boy present, was required to tell the meaning of the feast. The questions were framed by rule, and the answers also; and the whole story of the Israelites' flight from Egypt was told in this way.

Julia marveled greatly, and all through the chanting that followed kept her eyes fixed upon Jacob; surely he was wise enough now to be a Rabbi.

As for Jacob, all this was after his own

heart. Here in Jerusalem he found what he missed and longed for at Nazareth.

The chanting of the hymns was like the voices of the hosts of heaven, and the thought of all Jerusalem raising its voice to the great Jehovah was sublime.

At midnight Rabbi Nathan and Jacob returned to the Temple, where a multitude of people were pouring in, attired in gay holiday dress and bearing thank offerings.

Jacob spent the rest of the night in the Temple that he might witness the entire Temple service. As he went out at the Gate Beautiful in the early morning, he chanted under his breath, " 'The glory has not yet departed from Jerusalem.' "

And yet—and yet, there was much he disapproved. All this must be changed, should be changed, when he became a Rabbi. Rabbi Nathan was too easy. They were all too easy; they had fallen into ruts. Also, some of the younger priests were irreverent. Jacob was greatly shocked at this. He had

heard two jesting, and others estimating the profits from the sale of the doves in the inner courts. Later, when he learned that the priests owned many of the doves, though it was not openly known, he began to understand something of the meaning of the traffic at the Temple gates.

"All this shall be changed when I am a Rabbi," muttered Jacob. "What is to save Jerusalem if the Law is broken?"

Part III

THE MASTER

"Never man spake like this man."

CHAPTER XIV

BY JORDAN'S BANKS

JACOB stood in the tower on the roof garden, looking down at the gilded domes, the frowning tower of David, and the Temple.

"The glory is not yet departed from Jerusalem," he repeated again and again, but the blast of trumpets from the Temple was followed by a reveille from the Roman garrison, Antonia, and set Jacob's blood tingling in his veins. How long was this to be? "O Messiah, come quickly," he prayed.

The morning sun flooded the city with light; the Temple became a vision of gold; flocks of pigeons bathed their white wings in the glorious light; the farmyard in the court below became noisy with voices and flutterings; footsteps began to echo in the streets; bazaars were thrown open. It was

day again. Still Jacob stood looking out from the tower chamber.

Julia's laugh aroused him; he was in no mood for her chatter, and he made his escape into the street. The bazaars were already filled with people—laborers plying their trades in their shops, too busy to heed the passers-by: potters, shoemakers, women pounding flax and grinding corn; grocers, jewelers, silk merchants, fruiterers, and grain dealers displaying their wares to catch the eyes of the passer-by.

Jacob stopped at a fruiterer's and bought some fig cakes and olives, and stood at one side eating them, watching the while the endless throng of travelers. There were many priests with their great turbans and rolls of the Law; Pharisees with their phylacteries and fringes, muttering prayers at the street corners; Essenes in white, and a sprinkling of Roman officials in gay uniforms.

Leaving this busy scene, Jacob crossed the little valley that separated the upper and

lower city, and keeping on by the dwellings of the gold-beaters and priests, ascended Mount Zion where were the palaces and the three famous castles built by Herod the Great. The castles were of white marble, surmounted by battlements and turrets, and towered high above the massive city walls. So finely were the blocks of marble joined that the fortresses looked like monuments cut out of solid rock.

In the shadow of these white palaces rose Herod's splendid palace, with its great wall and towers, its fountains, groves and gardens, artificial pools and rivers, and shady walks all about, which were free to the public.

The Jews deigned not to frequent this palace ground, for everywhere were statues, and in the eyes of a Jew all statues were idols.

A heathen palace in Jerusalem was bad enough, but a theater and amphitheater were beyond endurance.

Jacob's feelings were not lessened by all this. Every way he turned, the stamp of

the Roman was set. He stood in the shadow of the palace wall and muttered curses.

"Softly, softly," said a voice in his ear, and Rabbi Nathan stood before him. He had been uneasy about the lad and had followed him. "This is the same Herod that rebuilt the Temple and enriched it."

"Yes, to keep us quiet that he might enjoy his heathen pleasures unmolested. His touch has left a curse on the Temple. It is not the Temple of our fathers," said Jacob, bitterly.

"Who has been poisoning thy mind?" asked the Rabbi.

"Who? Mine own eyes have beheld the blasting sight and the desecration of Jerusalem. When the Temple—yea, and the priests of the Temple—are defiled, the judgment day cannot be far away."

"Count your words," said the Rabbi severely.

"I have heard with mine own ears the jesting of the priests over their duties; I have

also seen a Pharisee cheating his neighbor. The less heart, the more observance do I find. They seem to be forgetting that the outward show is but the perfecting of the life itself."

"Much I marvel at thee, and thee a lad," said the Rabbi, looking fixedly at Jacob.

"Because the rottenness at the heart of Jerusalem has spread to the rind, where all eyes may see it, you marvel at my knowledge," answered Jacob.

"So much bitterness in the heart of a lad!" mused the Rabbi. "Surely some one has been talking with him. Fire has been set to the flax, and the smoke of it threatens to burst into flame. There are many Zealots in Jerusalem. Jacob has been about much. I must look after him more closely. It is well I followed him this morning."

As they descended Mount Zion they met a party of pilgrims who had just come into the city, and they were talking excitedly of John, who baptized at the Jordan, calling men to repent of their sins.

"We will go down to the Jordan and see this John the Baptist," said Rabbi Nathan.

The following morning they set out, with others, for the Jordan. People were coming from all directions, and at the gate was a great gathering. Many were mounted on camels, donkeys, or horses; men, women, and children were afoot, with their baskets of food and their pilgrim's staffs. There were priests, Rabbis, Pharisees, and Sadducees among them.

The faces of the common people were eager. Those of the Rabbis were thoughtful, of the priests and the Pharisees and Sadducees, crafty; they were going to see whether this John was sowing sedition among the Jews. They liked not to have the people running after this stranger.

They were having a lively discussion about John of the wilderness. Some believed him to be one of the prophets risen from the dead, but more thought him a deceiver; some said he must be a madman.

As they took their way across the valley they were joined by large companies of travelers, many of whom declared their belief that John was a prophet sent by God.

The night was spent in Jericho, and Jacob wondered if the enemies of the Jews would fall as had the walls of this city when Joshua and the people of Israel marched around it. There were no traces of its destruction now, however; it was again in the hands of the enemy.

In the morning the great army of people took their way across the plain toward the Jordan. They soon came to the river, and following its banks southward toward the desert, beheld the great multitude gathered to listen to the prophet.

They reached the place, and made their way as best they could toward the elevation where the speaker stood. At the first sight of the man, Jacob's heart stood still. This was no deceiver. The holy enthusiasm that

glowed in the man's face and rang in his voice proclaimed his message "sent of God."

" 'Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth!' Our Redeemer, the Lord of Hosts is his name, the Holy One of Israel."

Jacob listened, thrilled as he never had been even when listening to the wisest of the masters.

There was great emotion in the vast throng, and hundreds crowded about the shore to be baptized.

"Art thou Elias?" asked Jacob.

"I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord," was the answer.

Upon reaching the shore and seeing the long fringes of the Pharisees and the rich robes of the Sadducees, he cried out to them, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"

And then, as if to warn them if they came at all to come with a sincere heart, he added,

"Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance."

The Pharisees and Sadducees, the judges and lawyers, the Rabbis and scribes present, drew back and looked with dark faces upon the bold prophet. They had gathered in little groups by themselves, and had been listening critically to the prophet's eloquent exhortations.

Jacob's blood was on fire in a moment. Should this wild man of the desert be suffered to insult the very elect, and before all this people?

He pushed his way through the crowd, the people quickly making room for him at sight of his threatening face.

Jacob suddenly halted and stood as if transfixed; Rabbi Nathan was about to be baptized.

"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost."

Hundreds of eager people crowded to the shore to be baptized, while the self-righteous Pharisees and Sadducees, the chief priests and rulers, with the masters, turned their backs upon John and the Jordan, and with dark looks made their way back to their homes.

Jacob was among them. He would listen no longer to a man who heaped such indignity upon the flower of Judea. Was this what it was to come to? All those years of careful keeping of the Law, all the years of study, to be called at last one of a generation of vipers? Though the man had the face of an angel, and spoke with a tongue of fire, he would not believe him.

No one dared ask Rabbi Nathan any question when he returned. Jacob observed him closely, for he had the greatest reverence for his good and wise uncle, but excepting that he was more absorbed in thought, and more silent then usual, he saw no change in him.

At last he ventured to ask, "What thinkest thou of this John?"

"He is the prophet of whom the old prophets prophesied. He is the herald of the Messiah."

"But the Messiah is to come to the Jews, and this man condemns the Jews."

"Even so; the Messiah is to come to the Jews, but the ax is to be laid at the root of the trees, and every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is to be hewn down and cast into the fire. Both Jew and Gentile are called to repentance."

"The Messiah cometh to show honor to the Jew in the eyes of the world, not to humble him. This John boldly accuses us, and makes us despised of the people. The Romans, who have laughed at our faith in the promised Messiah, will mock at us now."

"There is no help but in repentance," answered Rabbi Nathan. "This John cries out to all alike, and he will not cease while any unrepentant remain aloof. Who will say there is no sin among us?"

Jacob turned away. If Judah was not to be restored to her former glory until her people repented and purified their lives, alas for Jerusalem! Who could move the proud hearts of the Jews?

If Rabbi Nathan needed repentance, who did not? If the good Rabbi found sin in his heart, how much more sin must there be in his, Jacob's, heart!

It was the first time Jacob had ever thought of himself as a sinner. It was a very painful transition from thinking himself one of the most righteous of Pharisees, to think of himself as a sinner. He had learned of a good many wrong things that others indulged in. The priests in the Temple did not perform their tasks with due reverence, and the Temple was more a place of traffic than a place of worship; the masters, he knew, invented rules to evade the Law, and made the word of God of no effect. Many of the Pharisees, he also knew, made an outward show of a good life, but their hidden life was far from upright.

The rich Sadducees were given to worldly pleasures, and in the marketplaces false weight was imposed; the poor were oppressed by the rich; the orphans and widows were not protected.

How greatly, then, was the Messiah's coming delayed, if these must first repent and put away their evil doings!

But he, Jacob, had not been guilty of any of these things,—and neither had Rabbi Nathan. What had they to repent of?

Upon his return he devoted much time to the study of the prophets, and one day Rabbi Nathan found him with a scroll upon his knees, staring at it in a strange, dazed way.

At sight of his uncle he sprang up.

"Listen!" he cried, and following the lines with his finger he read:

" 'To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord. I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of

he-goats. . . . Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me. . . . I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. Wash you, make you clean. . . . Cease to do evil; learn to do well!' "

Jacob looked up, and Rabbi Nathan never forgot the look of terrified bewilderment in his eyes. "What does it mean?" he asked in a voice that trembled with emotion.

Rabbi Nathan spread his hand over the parchment. "God Almighty knoweth," he said. "It is plain that the old order changeth, and a new cometh, but the manner of it is not shown."

"The whole Temple service is condemned," said Jacob. "The entire plan of salvation is come to naught." He could scarcely collect his thoughts; his world was chaos. In his glorious dream of the Messiah, the Temple service was to be perfected and the heathen

tyrants driven from Jerusalem, and all their hateful works rased to the ground. And now —

"What shall we do?" asked Jacob.

"Be faithful until the hour arrives. The days of the prophecy are fulfilled; the time is ripe."

Jacob's people had returned to Nazareth. It was decided that he should remain in Jerusalem.

That same day Jacob wrote to his mother, Lois: "I have learned many wonderful things respecting the coming of the Messiah. The prophets say not only that he is to be a king and the Redeemer of Israel, and rule all nations, but they also say that he is to be a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; that he is to be humble and lowly and rejected of men. It is a great mystery, but I believe that the Christ is coming in some disguise; that he will not be recognized; that he will, after persecutions, reveal himself and take

unto him his kingdom. I no more look for a royal advent. The Messiah will not come to us clothed in purple and fine linen.

"And to-day have I chanced upon the greatest wonder of all; the prophets say that the Temple sacrifices are an abomination to God, and are not accepted. I cannot understand it; it is all a mystery. The hope of my life is broken. I see nothing but chaos before me. I look for—I know not what.

"As for this John all the world has gone after, he is a bold fanatic. He has no more respect for our honored Jews than for the vilest Gentile. He has openly condemned us. I would not hear him, but Uncle Nathan was baptized, confessing himself a sinner. That, too, I cannot understand, for he is the most perfect man I have ever known. I believe he thinks John the Baptist is a true prophet of the Messiah. But the true prophet will aid, and not cry down, the Jews."

CHAPTER XV

THE FRIEND OF MY YOUTH

JACOB had been sent to Capernaum by his uncle, Rabbi Nathan, with a message for the priests at the synagogue. He made his home with his Uncle Gershom, who dwelt not far from the synagogue.

Jacob disliked Capernaum. For one thing, the father of Lucas, his enemy, had moved to this place. For another thing, the people were rude and boisterous, and worshiped Mammon with all their hearts. To get money seemed the end and aim of their existence, and they had precious little respect to waste on long-robed Rabbis with broad phylacteries and elaborate fringes—much less on a pretentious youth like Jacob.

Now it was more unpleasant than usual; all the city was in commotion over the fame of John the Baptist. One evening, when the people were out looking for the new moon,

each one being eager first to discover it, Dumah and Ethan, sons of Gershom several years younger than Jacob, came home in great haste.

"The Messiah has come!" they cried in the same breath. "The Messiah has come! He has been baptized of John at the Jordan."

Jacob looked incredulous. "What idle report is this?" he said.

"Nay; but the men saw it with their own eyes. John baptized him, and proclaimed him as the Messiah whom he foretold," said Dumah.

"Yes, and there was a sign from heaven. John had told them what the sign was to be, and the sign came."

"And what was the sign?" asked Gershom.

"We do not know; the men could not tell. They were far off, for the multitude, but there were strange sounds; and the people were afraid."

"What think you, Cousin Jacob?" asked Ethan. The two lads thought that a youth

who wore long robes, dwelt at Jerusalem, and studied in the colleges must be very wise.

"I believe this John to be an enthusiast," said Jacob. "He is carried away by his own zeal, and fancies himself a prophet."

"Yea, and he carries all the people with him," said Gershom.

"For that, the priests and Rabbis are jealous of him, and they are seeking for somewhat to accuse him of, that he may be arrested and silenced."

"Aha! the people are diverted from the Temple, and the treasuries are low," said Gershom.

"Besides that, he speaks evil of them, and upbraids them before the people as sinners."

"But for all that, this bold man John may be a true prophet, and this man he has baptized, the Messiah," said Gershom.

"When the Messiah cometh, he will come to the Jews, and his coming will be attended by miracles and signs. When this Messiah

of John's performs a miracle, I will believe," was Jacob's reply.

Just then there was a great shout; the new moon had appeared. Swift feet hastened to the synagogue, and the people who stood at the doors of their homes repeated, with bowed heads, the prayer of the new moon:

"Blessed be the Lord our God! who, through thy Word didst create the heavens, and their whole host, by the breath of thy mouth. He appointed them a law and a time that they should not go back from their places. Joyfully and gladly they fulfill the will of their Creator, whose working and whose works are truth. He spoke to the moon and commanded her that she should renew herself in glory and splendor, for those whom he has carried from their mother's breast, for they, too, will be one day renewed, like her, and glorify their Creator after the honor of his kingdom. Blessed be thou, Lord, who renewest the moons."

Before this prayer was finished, the trumpet

of the new moon sounded from the synagogue. Each household now set about preparing the feast for the morrow, for it would be a holiday, and no work would be done. There was singing and rejoicing, and special services at the synagogue, and guests invited to the homes of the people; also games for the young people in the public square.

It was on the evening of the feast of the new moon that the family gathered in the porch, all weary with the day's merrymaking, and the lads Dumah and Ethan begged Jacob for a story.

"I will tell you the story Uncle Nathan used to tell to us at Nazareth," said Jacob. "It is the story of the Moon.

"The Eternal sent forth his creating voice, saying, 'Let two lights shine in the firmament, as kings of the earth and dividers of the revolving year.'

"He spake, and it was done. The Sun rose as the first light. A crown of all hues encircled his head; the earth rejoiced, the

plants sent up their odors to him, and the flowers put on their best array.

"The other light looked on with envy, as it saw it could not outvie the Glorious One in splendor. 'What need is there,' it asked, murmuring to itself, 'of two kings on one throne?'

"Forthwith its brightness faded, chased away by its inward chagrin. It flew from it high through the air, and became the Host of Stars.

"The Moon stood pale as the dead, ashamed before all the heavenly ones, and wept, 'Have pity on me, Father of all creatures, have pity!'

"Then the angel of God stood before the Sad One, and told her the decree of the Highest. 'Because thou hast envied the light of the Sun, unhappy one, henceforth thou wilt shine only by his light, and when yonder earth comes between thee and him, thou wilt stand darkened, in part, or entirely as now. Yet, Child of Error, weep not. The Merciful

One has forgiven thy sin, and turned it to good for thee. Go," said he. "Speak comfortingly to the Sorrowful One; she will at least be a queen in her brightness. The tears of her sorrow will be a balm to quicken all living things, and renew the strength which the beams of the Sun have made faint.'

"The Moon went away comforted, and lo, there streamed round her that brightness in which she still shines: she set forth on that peaceful path in which she still moves, as Queen of the Night, and leader of the stars. Lamenting her sin, and pitying the tears of men, she seeks whom she may revive, and looks for any she can cheer."

The story was done; the new moon dipped below the horizon; the melody of the evening hymn rose like sweet incense on the quiet evening air.

Jacob went from Capernaum to Nazareth to visit his people. One morning he went to the north part of the town to see the new

cistern that was building. It was being hollowed out of the solid rock, and a pile of broken rocks he found a convenient resting place while he watched the work.

While he sat there, he saw a youth mounting the steep way that led to the cistern. As he drew near, he recognized Lucas the publican. Jacob had a sudden suspicion that Lucas had purposely followed him from Capernaum. Hardly had the thought taken form in his mind, when Lucas made a spring at him and, throwing his arms about him, thus making him helpless, dragged him—Jacob thought, toward the cistern. It was all in an instant, the act and the thought, then there was a crash and a sound as of heavy stones falling.

"You escaped by the skin of your teeth," said Lucas, releasing Jacob, who, instead of finding himself crashing down into the cistern, stood on the brink of it, and the pile of stones he had been leaning against was scattered all about.



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Lucas made a spring at him

Jacob was at a loss for words. The publican hated him, and he had saved his life. "What meanest thou?" he asked.

"Thou art *his* friend," said Lucas, shortly; "he loves thee," and turning about, he sauntered away to the opposite side of the cistern and began conversing with the men at work there; and no one observing him would have seen any sign of the fierce battle that had raged in his heart while he stood before his most hated enemy.

Jacob was so amazed by this unheard-of action that he stood immovable, looking after the publican. Would *he* have saved the publican if he had stood in his place, for Jesus's sake?

Vividly before his mind's eye came the day of the journey from Nazareth to Jerusalem, and the scene during the tempest, and the face of Jesus as he spoke to one and then the other of the furious lads. Had he ever thought before what those words meant? Lucas had shown him. He then fought his

battle. His long-nurtured hope of some day doing his enemy an injury must be given up, because *he* loved this vile publican. However preposterous the idea, he said it. Jacob had heard him.

When Jacob went away from the cistern he left there the great black thought he had carried in his heart so long, that evil spirit, revenge. To him it seemed a tremendous sacrifice. It was the first real sacrifice he had made for his friend's sake—the first real sacrifice of his life.

On his way to the house of Abda he passed the threshing floor of Phalec, the grain dealer, who had the largest threshing floor in Nazareth. The earth was beaten as hard and smooth as stone, and his oxen were the largest and strongest that could be found. They were treading out the corn as Jacob went by, and he stopped to watch them.

Phalec himself had come down to see the threshing. He was a shrewd man, and looked well after his interests. He saluted

Jacob, and began making observations about the harvest. While they stood conversing, two women came that way, walking in haste and talking fast and earnestly. They were Phalec's wife and sister.

"We have come to tell thee a wonderful thing," said one of the women. "There has been a miracle!"

She stopped to take breath, and the other woman spoke. "In Cana of Galilee. Some strangers came from the marriage, and they told it at the gate. We had been to the pool for water, and we heard it."

"The water was turned to wine," said the first woman. "The wine gave out, and the water in the jars was turned to wine."

"A foolish imagination," said Phalec.

"It is true," said the woman; "the men saw the water poured into the jars, and it came out wine. He that did the miracle said to them, 'Fill the waterpots with water.'"

"And who is this magician?" asked Jacob.

"That we do not know. The men could

not tell. They asked one another, but no one knew, and they came away in haste, but some say he is the Messiah, the same whom John baptized at the Jordan."

"It is all a fabrication," said Jacob, turning away.

The women looked distressed. "It was truly a miracle. They saw it with their own eyes," they repeated.

"Be at peace," said Phalec. "If it be the Messiah we shall hear more of this; and if it is not, it is no matter."

Not many days after this report was spread about—Jacob was again at Capernaum—Dumah and Ethan came home in great haste, crying out that the Messiah was at the synagogue.

"He went by the marketplace," said Ethan, "and the men who were at the marriage in Cana saw him pass by. All the city is running to the synagogue."

Upon this, Ethan and Dumah departed with the same speed they had arrived, and

Jacob and Gershom and his wife followed the lads.

Jacob was troubled in his mind. Was it at all likely that the Messiah would be traveling about the Jordan and Capernaum? He did not believe it, yet he was troubled in his mind.

At the synagogue was a great concourse of eager, curious, excited people. The little party almost despaired of getting near enough to hear or see. Jacob worked his way slowly, wondering much what manner of man this would be. He at last made out the figure standing on the platform. It was clothed in a blue robe. He drew nearer; the figure on the platform raised its hand, and a great silence fell upon the multitude.

The voice of the speaker was not bold and challenging like John's, but clear and low and earnest, and of a marvelous tenderness. Jacob started when the tones of that voice came to him over the heads of the people. He contrived to get a little nearer, so that

he could see the face. His heart seemed to stop its beating. *He looked upon Jesus of Nazareth!*

Next day Jacob bade good-by to his Uncle Gershom's family and went to Nazareth. He had intended to return to Jerusalem from Capernaum, but now he must go back to Phineas and Ednah and tell them what had come to pass.

Ednah was in the garden beyond the house, gathering grapes and pomegranates. She ran out quickly with outstretched arms and a face so radiant that Jacob thought she had never looked so beautiful.

"Believest thou?" she cried eagerly.

"Thou hast heard, then; and thou, I perceive, believest," said Jacob, saluting her in his kindest manner, for he dearly loved this devoted sister Ednah.

"Aye, I believe. I always knew, oh, I always knew he was more than an ordinary lad! There was none other like him."

"You forget; the Messiah was to be born

in Bethlehem, and of the house and lineage of David. He was to be sent of God."

"And was not Jesus born in Bethlehem, and is he not of the house and lineage of David? And since the baptism at the Jordan, Uncle Nathan has been to Bethlehem and looked in the Book of the Genealogy and found that the child Jesus was he whom the shepherds and the wise men sought and worshiped."

Jacob was overcome. "My neighbor and my friend," he said half to himself. "My neighbor and my friend all the years of my life,—and I never knew." Then, thinking of the ordinary life Jesus had lived, exactly like himself and the others, he muttered, "How can it be?" And yet—and yet there had been a wondrous difference between the lives of the lads and youths of Nazareth, and that of Jesus. The more he thought, the more bewildered he became. He hastened to Jerusalem to talk it over with Rabbi Nathan.

Jacob returned to his studies, but he could not arouse the old enthusiasm. His mind continually reverted to the strange experiences in Capernaum, and the miracle. He waited to hear reports of more miracles from the pilgrims from Galilee, but none came. He heard from Ednah that the family of Joseph had moved to Capernaum, and after that that Joseph was dead, and Jesus was a teacher.

Of Jesus's teaching he could learn little, except that he did not teach like the Rabbis, and his words were strange. Most of the people laughed at him because they knew him and his family, and he claimed to be sent of God to teach them; to save them from their sins, he said. His teaching was in itself a miracle to Jacob. How could he teach, who had never attended any school but that at the synagogue in Nazareth?

During this time Jacob was called to Nazareth by the death of his brother Phineas. While he was there, a letter from his Uncle

Nathan told him that Jesus had come down to the Passover and that, entering the Temple and seeing the traffic there, he had driven out the sellers, saying that they had made the house of God a place of merchandise. The priests were wrathful, feeling reproached before the people, and the people applauded this bold action; the Temple ought to have been cleansed long ago. To save their reputation, the priests were making strict rules regarding the Temple; but they hated Jesus for his interference.

Jacob was all impatience to return to Jerusalem, but was detained for a time. While here the brother of Lucas again begged the hand of his sister Ednah in marriage, but Jacob was even more immovable than Phineas, and Ednah was too true a Jew maiden to defy the law. Lucas muttered terrible imprecations, and wished with all his might that Jacob was not the friend of Jesus.

Jacob had feared that he must give up his life in Jerusalem, and support his mother

and sister, but it was arranged that the three uncles should provide for them, while Phineas's wife and two children went to her people.

When Jacob finally turned his steps toward Jerusalem, Jesus was traveling through Judea, teaching and healing, performing many miracles, and the fame of him spread through all the country. In vain Jacob sought to devote himself to his studies; the words of the prophets haunted him, the words condemning the Temple sacrifices and observances. He would seek Jesus and learn from him what a Jew should do to be acceptable to God, and to prepare for the coming of the King.

Rabbi Nathan sent him away with his blessing. Following from town to town, Jacob learned that Jesus had returned to Capernaum, and thither he turned his steps.

All the country was lamenting John the Baptist, who had been cast into prison, and he feared Jesus would share the same fate. He gave thanks that he was not now in Jerusalem. He comforted himself with the

thought that the Messiah was Immanuel, "God with us," and if Jesus were really the Messiah he had all power, and nothing could harm him.

CHAPTER XVI

FOLLOW ME

THE blue waters of Galilee sparkled in the morning sunlight; the little waves, white fringed, ran up the sands, and broke over the feet of two sturdy fisher lads who were pushing their clumsy boat off the shore.

As soon as the boat floated, they sprang in and began to arrange the fishing tackle, glancing up and down the beach as they worked.

It was a picturesque sight they looked upon; groups of fishermen in earnest discussion, busy the while in preparing for the day's trip; fishermen and fishermen's wives and daughters mending their nets; tiny boats spreading their wings and flitting seaward; loaded boats just coming in, floating heavily shoreward; dealers waiting to bargain with their owners as soon as they should land.

Beyond the beach rose the city, its white-washed stone dwellings showing through the trees, and beyond the city the rounded hills, covered with green grasses in spring, but now brown and bare. And northward, beyond the hills, the twin peaks of Hattin stood out clearly against the bright sky.

The two fisher lads, however, did not look beyond the busy scenes on the beach. "Jason," cried one, "there are James and John still at work on the nets; they will lose the morning."

"Never fear, Libna," replied the other; "they will go out later and return sooner, and take a larger catch than any of us."

"It's all on account of their father. Zebedee stitches good luck into the nets," said Libna.

"He mends well, and they are good fishermen," was the answer. "Here we go!"

Jason pulled the anchor into the boat, and the clumsy craft began to creep over the rippled surface of the lake, while the boys fitted the oars in the rowlocks.

"Look, Libna!" cried Jason. "Who comes up the beach? He is not a fisherman, nor a trader. He is watching Peter and Andrew just off the point, fishing. I saw them cast their nets as I passed by."

"There's a great school of fish headed that way now," cried the boy excitedly, forgetting the stranger on the beach in his interest in the fortunes of his neighbors.

"Hist! He salutes them," said Jason, with his hand on his brother's arm.

Clearly through the morning air came the words:

"Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."

The lads looked into each other's faces wonderingly. "Fishers of men! What means he?" each questioned.

"Ah! the fish!" sighed Libna. "See, they have left the boat and are coming to shore."

He meant the men, not the fish, and Jason, with a sudden stroke of his oar, sent the boat

sliding along shore in the direction of the group now walking slowly over the white, shell-strewn beach.

"We will float down and see whether he takes them to Gennesaret or turns to the city (Capernaum)," he said.

"He has stopped again. He is talking to Zebedee and his sons. See, brother, see!" Libna stood up and listened. "He is calling them also."

They did not hear the words, but they saw James and John leave their father and join the little group.

"Who can he be that commands men after that manner?" said Jason.

"I know not, but his voice is kind and his countenance is kind. If he commands, it is in love."

"Let us go to Zebedee's boat and ask him who this strange man is."

The boys were soon beside the other boat, inquiring about the man the others had followed.

"It is he whom John baptized at the Jordan," was the old man's answer.

"What! Not he of whom John said that he was the Lamb of God come to save the world!" cried Libna, breathlessly.

"The very same," replied the old man, and his face glowed.

"But I have heard the Messiah was to be sent to the Jews. How is it he, if it be he, calls fishermen?"

"I know not," answered Zebedee, and his long thorn needle went on weaving in and out the meshes of the broken net, silently, and the boys returned to their boat, greatly wondering.

They floated idly for a time, watching the group that made its way along the beach.

"He calls no more," said Jason; "only those four. Strange."

They watched the group take its way toward Capernaum, and then they plied their oars busily and sped to their day's task. But Libna was in a dreamy mood and could

not put his mind on the fish, because of a compassionate face that looked up from the water, or down from the sky, or wherever he turned his eyes, and of a voice, loving and tender, that called, "Follow me! Follow me!"

Jason seemed to be in a deep study, but abated not a whit of his usual skill in catching and landing his fish.

"Thou art idling!" he broke out, after waiting in vain for his brother to wake from his trance.

"What think'st thou, brother?" asked Libna, wistfully.

"Think? I think all the fishes this side the sea will fatten to-day for another man's net, for all thou wilt hinder," was Jason's answer.

"Let us go to the city. He may be speaking to the people in the marketplace or at the synagogue," said Libna.

"We will go," said Jason, dropping his net into the bottom of the boat. "We will inquire in the city whither he went."

No one could answer their inquiries, and to the marketplace they took their way, and in the motley throng gathered there,—buyers and sellers, and idle on-lookers,—the lads dodged about, apparently alive with curiosity to see all that was to be seen, but in reality listening in all directions if haply they might catch a bit of information regarding the Master whom they had seen on the beach.

Libna was intently eying a pile of vegetables; near by was a pilgrim Jew, talking with a priest.

"Samaria has accepted him," the Jew was saying. "They demand no miracles. His words have converted them. The day that I passed through, a woman came running into the city, saying, 'Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?'

"With one accord the whole city followed the woman, I with the rest. Upon questioning the woman, she told me, 'The man said unto me, "I am Messiah."'

"At Jacob's Well we found the man, and a number of his friends with him. The people besought him to tarry with them, and he and his friends consented. Much I wished that I, too, might tarry and hear the words he should speak to them, but I could not."

"Think you his claim is true?" asked the priest.

"Verily, he has wisdom more than man's," was the answer.

Libna deserted the pile of vegetables,—to the great relief of the owner, who had been eying the fisher lad as intently as Libna had eyed his wares.

Making his way to Jason as quickly as he was able, he found him talking with two men of the city. Upon seeing Libna, he took him by the arm and led him away. There was a new expression in Jason's face, like one newly awakened. Libna looked at his great, rough brother, and wondered what he had learned. When they had left the market-place and were in the street, Libna repeated

the story the Jew had told the priest, and while he talked the expression in Jason's face strengthened.

"He is surely the Christ," said Jason, solemnly. "He is the great healer and teacher who has been doing such wonders in Judea. Never was a man known like this man. He heals all manner of diseases, and he exhorts the people to repent of their sins. But a few days since, on his way to this city, he stopped at Cana, and a nobleman of this city learned of it, and went to him, beseechng him to heal his son whose life was despaired of—yea, he was at the point of death. And he healed him, the lad being here and the man at Cana."

They were now on the beach, and two lads somewhat younger than they passed them. They were dressed in brown and white striped tunics, each with a gold-fringed scarf thrown over his shoulder. They had sandals on their feet and turbans on their heads.

They also had haughty faces, and held their heads high as they passed, one saying something in a low voice to the other, with a glance toward Jason and Libna, the other laughing a little, and eying them rudely.

The fisher lads in their scant gray frocks, barefooted and bareheaded, flushed angrily under their tan, and quickly catching up handsful of the shells that whitened the beach, cast them with boisterous shouts at the Jew boys.

The latter did not so much as turn their heads to see who assaulted them.

"I am glad," said Jason, "that John was not afraid to tell the Jews what he thought of them. Was n't it 'hypocrites,' he called them? It is a good name; in their synagogues they preach about the sinfulness of a haughty spirit, and say that the God of the Jews abhors a proud heart, and they all cry 'Amen'; then they put on their sandals and go into the streets and despise us just as before."

"They say many things, and do none of them," said Libna.

The boys went to their boat, dressed the fish, and piled it into baskets. Their attention was suddenly called to a disabled boat that was being towed in. They would be gone but a moment. All the people on the beach were hastening in the same direction.

Two Jew boys sitting in the shadow of an old boat overturned on the beach saw the fisher lads join the crowd that was fast collecting to view the wreck.

"Come, Dumah," said one, "let us go down and upset their fish; it will repay them for their spite."

"A penny for thy wit, Ethan," cried Dumah, and rising, they strolled leisurely toward the boat containing the fish baskets. They looked about them; there was no one to see, so they hastily overturned the baskets, scattering the fish all about.

"Show your betters a little respect, next time!" muttered Dumah.

When Jason and Libna returned to their boat and saw what havoc had been made of their day's labor, they were greatly astonished.

"What enemy hath done this?" cried Libna, in distress.

"When I learn his name, I will tell it thee," said Jason. He was in a rage, and he beat his feet into the sand at every step, as he walked about the boat.

"We must gather them up as best we can," he said, and immediately fell to work.

They had nearly refilled the baskets when Jason paused and looked intently at something that stuck to a fish's fin. He pulled it off, looked at it again, and then looked at Libna, who had not observed him. He hesitated a moment, then put what he had found in his frock.

CHAPTER XVII

FOLLOWING AFAR OFF

THE next day being the Sabbath, Jason and Libna went to the synagogue, thinking they might hear the Great Rabbi, as this wonderful healer and teacher was called. Not caring for the tedious service, they delayed until it was time for the sermon. They were late; the people were pouring out of the synagogue with astonished and excited faces. "The lad is in his right mind," said one, "and the evil spirit called him who commanded it the 'Holy One of God'!"

"Who is it? And what has he done?" asked Jason.

"It is the son of Zebah—he that was possessed of the evil spirit. He has been healed."

"He speaks with authority, and not like the Rabbis," said another, "who only repeat

what they have learned from the Law and the Talmud."

"And who is he?" asked Libna.

"See for thyself. He comes this way with his disciples."

Jason and Libna turned, and with great astonishment saw the man who a few months before had taught in the city, and been scorned and laughed at because he claimed to have a divine mission. Now the whole city, having heard of his fame in Judea, had turned out to hear him. Before, they could not believe because he dwelt among them, and they knew his people; he had been only a carpenter. How could he at once leave his bench and be a Rabbi and a prophet?

The lads hastened home and told their mother, who was a poor widow and dwelt near the shore with the fisher folk, that Jesus of Nazareth was the great Rabbi whose fame had so spread abroad, and who had now come back to the people who had so despised him.

The poor woman fell on her knees and

prayed God to send the good Rabbi to her door to comfort her in her poverty and desolation.

"Better than that, mother," said Libna, "we will go into the streets when the sun is set and follow the people. Wherever he is, there will be sure to be a crowd to see and hear him."

At sunset they went out, and found people from all directions were converging toward one point. Old and young, rich and poor, high and low, sick people on mattresses or in hammocks carried by friends, the halt, the maimed, the lame, the dumb, the blind, were on their way to Peter's house, where Jesus now made his home.

"Verily," said the mother of Libna and Jason, "this is the Messiah."

"If he comes down on the Jews as John did, I am with him," said Jason, chuckling a little to think of the consternation and mortification of Dumah and Ethan if the Jews should be condemned before the multitude.

"It would cost him dear," said Libna, and then there was silence a moment, for Jesus appeared at the door of the house, and the next instant the silence was followed by a chorus of supplications.

Jesus stepped out among them, and with a word, a touch, a look, one miserable creature after another who crept to him or was brought to him, went away leaping, shouting, singing, or praying. They even pressed about him to touch the hem of his garment, and these, too, were healed.

The poor widow fell on her knees, overcome by the scene. But she did not attempt to go to Jesus, for she had no request to make. She was not ill or crippled; she was afflicted by death and poverty.

There was another who did not go to the Great Healer, though he did have a request. He was not yet ready to make it. It did begin to look as if Jesus of Nazareth might be the Jews' Messiah, and about to claim his kingdom. Jacob, the Jew, wished to be

quite sure of this before he became a follower. But as he stood among this people and witnessed the cures, he could hardly restrain himself from running to Jesus and falling at his feet.

Jacob's prudence held him. It was too serious a matter to be guided by impulse. He would resign his life at the Temple and the college, and follow Jesus, if he were certain he was on his way to his throne, but otherwise the risk was too great, and danger imminent. If the Jews refused him, short work would be made of Jesus and his followers.

The next day there was a still greater number of people before Peter's door, but Jesus was not there. Knowing his love for the hills, Peter and his brother sought him, and, finding him, told him of the waiting people, and some of the people who had followed the disciples besought him to remain with them. But he answered them, "I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent."

They did not understand that the healing of their souls was more precious than the healing of their bodies, but they followed him from town to town, as he went about Galilee healing and teaching, the same scenes everywhere repeated, the multitude always increasing. Jacob followed and loitered, waiting to see what the next step would be. At last a leper was cleansed, and the excitement increased. Though Jesus admonished the cleansed man to tell no one of his cure, but go to Jerusalem and show himself to the priest, the man heeded not, for joy and wonder, but told his story all the way through the country.

A man cured of leprosy must go to the priest and pass a tedious examination, and receive a certificate from the priest to prove that he was clean, and this might be done only at Jerusalem.

Jesus desired to work quietly, not to rouse the opposition of the Jewish leaders, whom he knew full well to be jealous of him because

he was not one with them, but preached independently, without regard to the Talmud or the traditions of the Rabbis. The Masters of Israel knew that this Jesus was turning the hearts of the people away from them, and they watched attentively to accuse him of using unlawful authority.

Excitement ran to such a height that Jesus again returned to Capernaum, but he was met by a great concourse of people. They were all clamoring, not to hear the word of God, but to be healed of bodily diseases. And with the multitude came the Rabbis, from all the country round; they had come to look out for their interests.

Some of the Rabbis were friendly. Jesus had not upbraided them as John had done, and for his wisdom they gave him the title of Rabbi, and invited him to their houses, hoping to learn the secret of his wisdom and popularity.

In a great excitement Jason and Libna hastened home from Peter's house, where the multitude had followed Jesus.

"He forgives sins also!" cried Libna to his mother, who was spinning by the door. "To-day they let a sick man down through the roof at Peter's house, and Jesus said to him, 'Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.'"

Jacob's returning steps were slow; he was troubled and anxious. Jesus should have sent the men he healed to the priest, with a sin-offering to be presented to God. No mortal could forgive sins except the priests, and they only in the name of Jehovah. What blasphemy was this, for Jesus to forgive sins!

Jacob had seen the dark looks of the scribes and lawyers, and ominous shakings of the head, and he feared for his friend. Blasphemy was punishable by death by stoning, and then the body hung on a tree.

This would be a turning point in Jesus's ministry. From this time he would be persecuted, if he escaped death. It was a terrible moment for Jacob; he had hoped great things.

But after all, perhaps this daring was auspicious. It might be because Jesus knew his power and his sure kingdom that he was so fearless.

Suddenly the multitude stood still in the street, and Jacob, raising his eyes, saw that Jesus had spoken to the taxgatherer, Matthew, who was sitting at the receipt of custom, and busy at his work. "Follow me," said Jesus quietly to the man, and the man, with a searching look into Jesus's face, arose and called to his assistants. Jesus passed on, and the multitude followed.

They had not gone far when Matthew overtook them and urged Jesus to dine with him at his house. Jesus turned about and followed the man. The multitude were amazed, the scribes and Pharisees muttered among themselves, and one asked Jesus, "Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?"

That was the very thought in Jacob's mind. Why, of all men, should Jesus choose

a publican to be his disciple? And why did he do what no Jew would do, eat with publicans and sinners?

Jesus looked at Matthew and his friends whom he had invited to the feast, and then at the throng of people following, and he made answer, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that be sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

The answer pacified Jacob. He knew of old the kind heart of Jesus. He remembered Lucas, and that Jesus loved him. But the more he thought on these things, the more he feared for Jesus. The Jews would not tolerate such liberality and impartiality. A publican was unclean, and a Jew who associated with one was defiled.

Jacob waited; he was more undecided than ever; the prospect was very uncertain. He waited to see what steps the Pharisees would take against Jesus. Nothing was done; the people were too enthusiastic over his cures—

they would rise like one man if harm threatened the Great Healer.

So Jacob followed, still afar off. Sometimes in the synagogue, sometimes in the streets, oftener in the hills or by the sea, he listened to the Master's words, and his soul burned within him, though he dared not offer his service.

About this time Ednah and Julia came to Capernaum. Jacob's reports had excited them. They, too, must see and hear Jesus. Ednah came with a heart full of love for the Master, and Julia with an amount of curiosity unendurable at Nazareth.

"Where is he?" they asked as soon as they had arrived.

"He has gone to the mountains, because of the multitude," said the wife of Gershom, who sat alone in the house. "And there, too, you will find Jacob and the lads; the whole city has gone to seek him."

CHAPTER XVIII

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

IN the plain between the Horns of Hattin was a great assembly. These people had followed Jesus from Capernaum, and all the way along the shore of Galilee. There Jacob found them. The Master, they told him, had chosen twelve from among his disciples, and led them up into the mountain. The people were waiting for Jesus and his disciples to return.

It was again the month Abib, the season of verdure and flowers. All the plain and the hillsides were spangled with rainbow-tinted faces smiling up from the new spring grass; overhead arched the cloudless blue, against which majestic Hermon seemed to rest, and below, the blue waters of Galilee, white with the wings of busy ships, rippled in the sunlight. Beyond the lake the barren,

basaltic cliffs gleamed dark and bright, grand in their desolation.

A shout went up from the people, and then a great silence fell upon them; Jesus had come down the mountain and seated himself on a rocky elevation that easily overlooked the multitude. He stretched out his hand to them, and there was a great silence; the Master was about to speak.

Libna and Jason and their mother were there, and Jason, catching a glimpse of the proud Jew lads, Dumah and Ethan, stole through the crowd, and, after fixing his eyes upon them for some moments, stepped up to them and pointing boldly at Ethan's gold-embroidered scarf, he said, "I can match that," and taking from his frock a bit of fringe, he fitted it to a gap in the scarf fringe. Regarding Ethan with a significant look, he replaced the bit of fringe in his frock and vanished.

Ethan and Dumah drew nearer, looking into each other's eyes. "He knows we did

it," said Dumah. "He had a wicked look. I fear him. Those fisher lads are reckless fellows."

"A pretty time to think of that!" said Ethan, sharply.

Jason stole back to his brother just as Jesus began to speak. He said nothing to Libna; he would take his revenge in his own way, and his brother should be free of blame.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit," said the Master.

"The poor in what?" questioned the mother of the fisher lads.

"Spirit," said Libna.

"Spirit," repeated the mother. "Well, I am poor in everything, so that must mean me."

"Hush!" said Jason.

"For theirs is the kingdom—" Jacob's heart leapt to his throat. The promise to share his kingdom! Who were the poor in spirit? And all about, heads were turned this way and that, each asking in his heart, "Who are the poor in spirit?"

"For theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Jacob's heart sank like lead. That was not the kingdom he thirsted to hear about.

"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted."

Only Jesus himself knew how many sad hearts caught at those words. Hitherto there had been no such thing as comfort for the mourners. They did not at all understand how it could be, and they never had heard of mourning for one's sins. They did not understand, but he had said it, and he spoke no idle words.

"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth."

Ah! that was the promise Jacob had waited for, but—the "*meek*." Could it be he had heard aright? It was the proud and righteous Jew who was some day to inherit the earth in place of the Roman tyrant, not the lowly Gentiles. And they were not meek either, but a bold and boisterous people. Who were the meek? Perhaps his disciples. Was Jesus

intending to exalt them when he came into his kingdom? Verily, he had best hasten to make himself one of them.

"Blessed are they that hunger and thirst—"

The poor widow stretched out her arms. "O thou, who knowest all things, knowest how oft I and my sons do hunger and thirst for meat and drink."

"That hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

"Righteousness!" Now the widow of Galilee had never experienced that sort of hunger. To be filled with bread seemed more desirable by far. But Jacob the Jew boy straightened up at the sound of that word. That blessing, at least, was for the Jews, for no one thirsted so intensely for righteousness as they.

"Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy."

Jason's was not the only face that frowned at hearing that blessing. Mercy they neither asked nor gave. That they needed it daily for their soul's salvation they did not dream.

The poor, and the sick, and the outcast roused a little, and wondered vaguely if that blessing had aught to do with the bettering of their hopeless lot. In that country the lot of the poor and the sick was pitiful; they were left to live or die as best they might. The law of Moses provided for them, but the Talmud, which had been built around the Law, said the sick and the poor should "be accounted as dead."

There was a stir in the crowd; a group of Pharisees and Rabbis were making their way nearer to the Mount.

What was Jesus saying now? "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."

The pure in heart! The pure in heart! Was there one in that great multitude could claim the reward of that blessing? Was there one who had no unclean or evil thoughts in his heart? Even the righteous Jacob shrank from that question. The righteousness he possessed was the kind that is put

on like a garment, to give one a good appearance in the eyes of the world. That was the sort of righteousness the Jews thirsted after.

Julia, with her arm about her cousin, thought, "If that means any one, it must mean Ednah"; and Ednah, with uplifted eyes, prayed, "Lord, make my heart pure."

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."

That certainly did not mean the frowning Rabbis and priests, who were there for a very different purpose from peacemaking. It certainly could not be claimed by Jacob, who treasured feelings not akin to peacemaking toward his old enemy, Lucas. Not the two Jew lads or the two fisher lads; they had no intention of making peace with each other—quite the contrary. But to be the children of God was what all Jews desired, and believed themselves to be. Who were the peacemakers who were to be blessed equally with them?

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Who were these but the Jews? Were they not righteous, and were they not persecuted to the death by their conquerors?

The Jew boys gave nods of satisfaction to each other, while Jason and Libna dropped back a little farther in the crowd.

"He is not like John," said Libna.

"No, he is not," answered Jason; "I've heard enough." To hear the self-righteous Jews blessed was more than he could endure.

"Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake."

Those words were like a trumpet call to Jacob. He had waited long for that; an assurance for those who should follow him. Just to be sure of the recompense was what he needed to decide him. He began to work his way toward the mountain.

"Rejoice, and be exceeding glad"—aye, Jacob was exceeding glad; he had all faith in the Master's words—"for great is your reward—in heaven." There was a sudden confusion in Jacob's mind, his limbs lost their strength. Why this far-off promise? Why not the promise he had given the meek? Why was it that the meek only were promised the inheritance of the earth?

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am come not to destroy, but to fulfill," Jesus was saying when Jacob's confusion had a little subsided. The Pharisees, Rabbis, and priests exchanged glances.

"Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

The Rabbis shrank back again under their robes. Had not they, and the Rabbis before them, taught the people and bound the people

by the traditions of their own making, and oftentimes in opposition to the Law? Who was he that dared accuse them? He had told the woman of Samaria "all things that ever she did." Could he also see every thought and deed of their lives?

"For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

There was an immediate uprising among the Jews, and loud murmuring. Ednah held her breath at these daring words; Julia was frightened and vexed. She knew that from this time the Jews would be the enemies of Jesus.

One of the Jews touched Jacob on the arm. "Hearest thou?" he asked, sneeringly. "Another John."

"Look you," said a Jew standing at his right, "how this Jesus has been against us from the first; now he has openly betrayed himself. Did he not despise the traditions

of the elders and instruct the people with laws of his own making? Has he not professed to forgive sins? And for that alone he merits death. Has he had broken the laws of Moses and healed on the Sabbath? Does he not allow his disciples to neglect the fasts, and to eat with unwashed hands, and sit at the tables of publicans and sinners? His very disciples whom he had chosen are Gentiles, and a publican."

"He is condemned," said Jacob to himself, and angry and distressed, he fell back farther and farther in the great multitude. Jesus never would be accepted by the Jews for their Messiah and king. Why—why did he make enemies of the Jews?

The rulers of the Jews would have taken Jesus there, but they looked over that great sea of attentive, upturned faces, and they dared not. They must abide their time. This dangerous man would teach the people to despise the Jews and refuse their authority. He had to-day chosen men to go about the

country to spread his traitorous teachings. Something must be done—and soon.

They did not depart, however; they listened to hear what more Jesus would say to the people. Jacob, too, stayed his retreat before he was out of hearing.

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," Jesus continued, apparently unmindful of the wrath of the doctors or the disappointment of his friends; "but I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also."

Now what words were these? Whoever had heard anything of this kind? Lucas and the fisher lads, who had been smiling broadly and muttering words of approval, now looked bewildered. Jew and Gentile, peasant and priest, learned Rabbi and humble fisherman, were alike astonished at this doctrine.

"Ye have heard that it hath been said,

Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which . . . persecute you."

One by one, here and there all through that great multitude, would-be followers of Jesus stole out and went their ways. "It is too hard for us," they said. "Who can love his enemy?"

The poor widow, the mother of Jason and Libna, gave rapt attention to every word that came from Jesus's lips. It was marvelous, the sayings of this strange Rabbi. Never man spake like this man!

"Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?"

Many eyes turned to the swallows dipping and skimming over the mountainside. Surely the God who watched over his creatures of the air would not forget his children.

"And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow," continued Jesus, spreading his hands toward the variegated hillslopes, "they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

"Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

The poor widow caught at these last words. That, then, was what she must do to place herself under the care of this God of the Jews. Truly he was very unlike the Jews, who cruelly oppressed the poor. But how was she to get into the kingdom of God, and who could live the righteousness that Jesus had commanded in the Father's name? Was there no other way?

Julia, too, listened eagerly to the words about raiment, but she was disappointed. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Ah! would that indeed bring her all the jewels and splendid raiment she desired? But when she pondered on the way to secure these things, she despaired, and like those deserters in the camp, she murmured within her heart, "It is too hard."

At last the long sermon was ended. It was the longest sermon that the people had ever listened to, and it was the most wonderful. Jesus came down from the mountain, and though not a few had deserted him never to follow him more, though the angry Jews separated themselves from the people and went their ways, still there was a great multitude that followed him to the shore, and people with divers diseases that prayed him to heal them.

The young men and the lads went their

ways thoughtfully, pondering on the words of Jesus or conversing with each other. Lucas walked alone. The sons of Gershom were with Jacob, and the fisher lads just behind them looked at them curiously, as if it was their first sight of them. The two thoughts uppermost in the minds of the six were the same.

"Jacob, did you hear him say, 'First cast out the beam out of thine own eye?'" asked Ethan.

"Aye!" answered Jacob.

"And 'love your enemies'?" asked Dumah.

"Aye!"

"What he says is, that all men are sinners. and that we had best think on our own sins rather than another man's."

"Aye," answered Jacob again. It was such a new thought.

"And if there is any one we hate, we must do him good."

There was no answer to this.

"Believest thou?" asked Ethan.

"I must think the matter over," said Jacob, evasively.

"And if any fellows play us a mean trick, we are to return them a good deed," said Jason to his brother. "I like it not. Shall any hypocrite of a Jew, that chances to pass by, overturn my fish for sport, and lose me my day's work, and send me to bed hungry, and I return him kindness? Not I."

But for all Jason's harsh words, Libna saw that his brother was much disturbed. "There was a promise," he said, "if we cast the beam out of our own eye, that we should see how to pull the mote out of another's eye."

"And are our sins as beams and our neighbors' as motes?" Jason laughed. He did not see this plainly; indeed, he saw just the reverse. There might, of course, be some little things remiss with him, motes in his eye, but the crying evils, the beams, he was sure were in other lads' eyes.

But the Master had said it, and the saying troubled him, for the Master was wise with

a wisdom no other man had ever possessed.

The next morning Jason said to Libna, "We will give fair weight to-day."

"Yes," agreed Libna readily, "and the small fish and the flat fish we will throw overboard."

"Nay; but we will give them to the beggars," said Jason.

"We did play those fisher lads a mean trick," said Dumah that same morning, to his brother. "I told father about it, and he said the fish was all their living."

When the fisher lads returned, Gershom, the father of Ethan and Dumah, stood on the shore, and made them the best offer they had ever had for their fish.

When the bargain was concluded, Jason gave a scrap of fringe to Gershom.

"For Ethan," he said.

Part IV

OUR REDEEMER AND SAVIOUR

"Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth."

CHAPTER XIX

THE MESSIAH

JACOB returned to Jerusalem and was more than ever devoted to his studies. He took the roll of the prophets to the Rabbis, and asked them what was the meaning of the passage he had found that condemned the observances and sacrifices and declared them an abomination to the Lord.

"It means," they said, "that to the degree the Temple is not kept holy, to the degree that the priests are unfaithful, to that degree our prayers are not heard, our sacrifices not accepted."

Jacob was satisfied. He tried to forget Jesus of Nazareth, and passed by on the other side if he heard people in the streets talking of him. This, he persuaded himself, was indifference.

He wondered if Jesus would dare come down

to the Passover which was near at hand. He must know that it was not safe. When he learned that he did come he was filled with anxiety for his safety. He heard of his being brought before the authorities for desecration of the Sabbath; he had healed a man of paralysis at Bethesda. He had excited the indignation of the Jews by calling God his father, but they had let him go.

He had made his own defense when brought before the authorities, saying that it was lawful to do good on the Sabbath, and if it were permitted to rescue a sheep that had fallen into a pit on the Sabbath, certainly it was good to rescue a sick man from his disease.

The officers were not used to such strange argument, and not knowing how to convict him, let him go. They could invent no accusation that would appeal to the people. The common people followed him about, and believed that he was the Messiah, and would reign over them ere long as their king.

It was a load from Jacob's mind when he heard of Jesus's release. But he knew it was but for a time. Pharisee, Sadducee, and priest, who had been bitter enemies, now conferred together how they might put Jesus to death.

Jacob heard of it. Jesus was his friend; he loved him, and though he had given up all thought of becoming his disciple, not believing he was the Jewish Messiah, he would have no harm come to him, and for fear he could not rest.

He made a secret journey to Bethlehem. He went by the back streets, and by the way of the straight gate, one of the little gates in the wall that led by covered ways outside the city. Only now and then a solitary traveler might be found in these narrow ways. The gates were kept always locked, and opened only to those who knocked, being immediately closed after them.

At Bethlehem he went to the aged recorder, and himself looked at the page in the Book

of Generations where the names of Joseph and Mary and Jesus were written, and he listened to the story of the shepherds from the old man's lips. He went to the cave where they had found Jesus, and there he prayed to Jehovah that it might be given him to know whether this Jesus was the Messiah, and would one day become the king of the Jews. Then he returned to Jerusalem, climbing up the steep path, and knocked at the little gate in a niche of the wall.

Jacob had hastened his steps, for the gate would not be opened to any one after sunset. He walked the dim passageway absently, thinking of the many prophecies concerning the Messiah. They seemed to be fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth.

He became aware of another presence in the passage, and looking up, met the sorrowful eyes of Jesus bent upon him.

The look stirred Jacob's soul, but he was dumb; he was not sure, and he was afraid. Why, even now the chief priests threatened

to forbid him to speak in the synagogues, and spies were sent to watch him wherever he journeyed. His kingdom, if it were to come, was certainly far off.

So he passed Jesus with only the common salute of the people, "Peace be unto you," but when the Master answered with the same words, it was as if he blessed him.

At the Temple, Rabbi Nathan met Jacob and he told him what he had done. The Rabbi was thoughtful.

"I was in the synagogue," he said, "when Jesus made his claim. 'Verily, verily,' were his words, 'he that . . . believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.' He claimed that the works which he did were proof that God had sent him.

"He said also that the Scriptures testified of him. He declared that Moses wrote of him, and that if they believed Moses, they would believe him."

After a silence, Jacob asked, "But how can he come into his kingdom when all the Jewish rulers hate him and conspire against him?"

"I know not," said Rabbi Nathan. "Jehovah is mighty. If it is to be, it will be. All is a mystery."

Jacob was greatly impressed by this interview with his uncle. He believed in him more than in any other of the Rabbis, because he knew so well the purity and integrity of his life. He knew that he was just and merciful, and sought not worldly honors. He knew of his numberless kind deeds to the poor, sick, and afflicted, and even the sinner feared not to appeal to Rabbi Nathan. To his servants he was a kind master and greatly beloved; to his friends an ever ready listener and counselor. All the blessings uttered on the Mount at the Horns of Hattin, he thought might be claimed by his Uncle Nathan. Also, he had spent many years studying the Law, and he was familiar with the teaching of both Hillel and Schammai. That Rabbi

Nathan seriously considered the possibility of Jesus of Nazareth being the Jewish Messiah was sufficient for Jacob too. He believed that to the good and wise Rabbi it was given to know the truth.

It was not long before a report was brought that Jesus and his disciples had again violated the Sabbath. They had plucked ears of corn and eaten them as they walked through the cornfields. The vigilant spies, seeking opportunity to accuse Jesus, maintained that plucking ears of corn was equivalent to reaping, and rubbing them in the hands equivalent to threshing, so two of the laws were broken.

This prophet was continually defying the laws of the Jews, and the common people rejoiced over it, for so many binding obligations were a heavy burden. The greater part of their lives was spent in repeating prayers, performing ceremonies, and attending fasts, feasts, and services at the synagogues and the Temple.

Jacob was greatly relieved when he heard that the Prophet of Nazareth was again in his own country. Though the watchful spies lurked in every city where Jesus was known to teach, still, he was safer than in Jerusalem.

As soon as Ednah heard that Jesus was returned to Capernaum, she made ready to go to her kinsman's, and Julia begged so hard to accompany her that she was fain to permit her.

As soon as she was arrived she heard the people talking about the miraculous cure of the centurion's son; the same who built the beautiful synagogue in Capernaum. But Jesus himself was not there; he had gone southward, and thither Ednah and Julia journeyed with a large company of people who sought him.

As they came in sight of the whitewashed tombs (the "whited sepulchers," such as are found outside every Jewish village and city), they saw two processions of people, one

going up to the village, one coming down. They heard mourning and wailing, and knew the procession from the village was come to bury its dead. The procession going up to the village must be the followers of the Master, and his disciples.

They saw the companies meet, and both halted. One whom the travelers overtook told them that he who had died was the only son of a widow of Nain, the village they were nearing.

As they drew near, they saw the bier lowered from the shoulders of the men who bore it. It was an open frame, such as is still used in Palestine.

"Weep not!" Ednah heard Jesus say to the poor woman. Then moving to the side of the bier he spoke again: "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise."

The young man immediately sat up and began to speak, and Jesus led him to his mother.

The people were greatly affrighted; some

fell on their faces, some prayed aloud; but more glorified God, and cried out that Jesus was a great prophet, whom God had sent to them.

The next letter that Jacob received from his sister sent him in haste to Rabbi Nathan. "Behold," he said, spreading the parchment before him, "he raises the dead also."

Gravely Rabbi Nathan read the story of the widow's son. Long he sat pondering. "Shunem, just on the other side of the hill from Nain, is the place where Elisha raised the Shunemmite's son. And down in the valley of Jezreel, Elijah dwelt, and it was he who raised the son of the widow of Sarepta," he said at length.

"What thinkest thou?" asked Jacob, half afraid to hear the answer.

"He is the Messiah," said Rabbi Nathan solemnly, folding his hands over the letter and raising his eyes to heaven in silent thanksgiving.

Jacob stole out of the Temple, and hastening to his chamber, shut himself in. He was so afraid. He was afraid to believe the Master, the Prophet of Nazareth, was the Messiah, because he could not bring himself to give up everything and follow him, as he commanded. If he had united with the Jewish rulers all would have been plain, but now he had set them at naught, and aroused their jealousy and hatred.

Jacob loved honor, and he loved luxurious living; all that he would have to renounce. Yet, if Jesus were truly the Messiah he would one day, by a mighty move, claim his kingdom, and take possession of the throne, and all the earth would do him homage. But—between that time and this— Jacob could not face the thought. In the prophecies he had learned that the Messiah was to suffer all things before he became king.

Jacob was young, life was pleasant. He received respect and favor as the nephew of the wise and beloved Rabbi Nathan, and as

the nephew of a rich Jew he had influence among the youth of Jerusalem. Could he give up all this?

He would wait—he would wait.

From that time Jacob was convinced that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, but he dared not acknowledge him openly. He sought out Nicodemus, the rich and influential Jewish ruler, who, Rabbi Nathan had told him, was secretly interested in Jesus and confessed to having visited him by night. He had spoken strange words to him. He had said that he had come to save the world, and that all who believed on him would be saved.

"I am greatly troubled," Nicodemus had said, "for he condemneth the Jews, and what is it that cometh to pass? Will he cast out the priests and the rulers and appoint his own followers in their place?"

So they talked; both fearing, both believing, both waiting.

CHAPTER XX

FEEDING THE SHEEP

WHILE many, like Jacob, waited, thousands followed, and the great work of healing the sick, casting out evil spirits, cleansing the lepers, and raising the dead went on; and the strange teaching. More and more the Jews hated the Prophet of Nazareth, and even schemed to destroy him; and more and more the multitude followed him with ever increasing enthusiasm.

Finding that the people would pay no attention to any accusation brought against Jesus, because of his miracles, they tried arousing their superstitious fears by declaring that the Nazarene was possessed of an evil spirit.

Failing in this also, they set another trap. They pretended friendliness, and invited Jesus to their houses, that they might lead him to talk, and so catch him in his words,

and convict him of some grievous sin against the Law.

Rabbi Nathan was in Capernaum, and seeing Jesus enter the house of a Pharisee, he followed, it being a custom to leave houses open, free to strangers who came and went as they willed, conversing with the guests and even the host, if they chose. Of course, only Jews were supposed to take this liberty. The presence of a Gentile was defilement.

Rabbi Nathan took a seat on the bench against the wall, next the door. He suspected some treachery, for he knew this Pharisee was an enemy to Jesus.

As soon as Jesus took his place at the table, dark looks of anger were exchanged between the guests; Jesus had omitted the ceremony of washing his hands before coming to the table.

Also, every Pharisee took a bath on coming from the marketplace, to purify himself from the defilement of the touch of the people. Jesus had not only come from the people

but had just cast out an evil spirit, and was doubly defiled. It was plain that he defied them, openly defied them before the world. But for all his boldness, they were not prepared for the scathing words in which he—reading their thoughts—addressed them.

"Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness.

"Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel!

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cumin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith.

"Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and the greetings in the markets.

"Woe unto you, for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them."

Though angry beyond measure, this was what they wished, that Jesus might talk on, and condemn himself.

"Master, thus saying thou reproachest us also." It was one of the lawyers who spoke.

Without an instant's hesitation the answer came: "Woe unto you also, ye lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.

"Take heed, and beware of covetousness," he went on, "for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." He followed this warning with a parable.

"The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: and he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?'

"And he said, 'This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

" 'And I will say to my soul, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry." '

"But God said unto him, 'Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?'

"So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

Rabbi Nathan returned to Jerusalem, and carried these words to Jacob. Jacob was startled; he had believed that heaven was open to receive all Jews, and when he heard them condemned by Jesus he had not supposed himself or any honest Jew included in the condemnation. Jesus had said that it was necessary to believe on him to be saved, and he did believe on him. But now it seemed that besides living an upright life and believing on him, there was something to do.

Jacob had been more interested in securing the honors and pleasures of the world than

the future joys of heaven. It now, for the first time, occurred to his mind that it might be a more important matter to provide for his eternal welfare.

"Of one thing I am certain," said Jacob; "the Master feareth no man. He will say the words he has come to say, and do the works he has come to do."

The Jews, having now openly declared their hostility and evil intentions, sought every means to entrap Jesus, and to make way with him without exciting the people.

Capernaum was no longer a safe place for Jesus. They heard of him at Gadara, on the farther side of Galilee. They were afraid of him there, having heard the slander that Jesus cast out devils by Beelzebub. When they saw two men healed who had been possessed, and saw the swine that the evil spirits entered and drove into the sea, the people came out of the city and begged him to leave them.

Jacob heard from Ednah how Jesus had

visited Nazareth, and been rejected because he declared himself the Messiah. And the rulers had attempted to take his life, but he saved himself from them.

Jacob and Rabbi Nathan gave thanks that Jesus was not at Jerusalem, there was such an excitement in the city. The governor, Pilate, had undertaken to build conduits to supply the city with water, and had appropriated a sum of money from the Temple treasury to aid in the work.

To the Jews this was sacrilege; roused to indignation by the priests and Rabbis, the people had appealed to Pilate, when he came up to the Feast of Tabernacles to see that order was preserved, and with great clamoring demanded that the building of the conduits cease. And Pilate, wearied with their cries, sent soldiers among them, disguised, who beat them down with their cudgels. The tower near Siloam was already in building, and it fell, and crushed eighteen men. The Jews believed it was a judgment of God on these

men for doing this work under such circumstances.

Rabbi Nathan so feared that Jesus would come down to the Passover, that, aged man as he was, he made another journey to Capernaum that he might warn him. Before he reached the city he overtook a band of apostles who had been sent out to teach and to heal, in the cities and villages, and who were now returning.

Rabbi Nathan followed these men; and many more, who were on their way to Jerusalem, and had turned aside to see the Great Prophet, joined them.

They followed to the seashore, but on arriving there found that Jesus had taken ship with the apostles, and departed to the other side. Some had seen the boat and the direction it had taken, and they hastened by land. It was six miles by the lake, farther by land.

When the boat touched the shore a great multitude awaited it. Jesus had sought rest,

and would hear the reports of the apostles' work; but this could not be now. There were the eager people, with all the sick they could bring, waiting for him. He healed them, and then began to teach them.

Rabbi Nathan had followed in a boat and remained all day with the multitude, listening to the words of Jesus. The people had come in such haste they had forgotten to take bread, and they had been so absorbed in listening to Jesus that they had not been conscious of any bodily needs. Now the day was far spent; the disciples came to Jesus and asked him to send the people into the city to buy food. Nothing could be had in that desolate place.

"Give ye them to eat," he said to the astonished disciples.

"There is no food here," said one, "except five loaves, and two small fishes that this little lad hath."

"Make them sit down," said Jesus, and the people were divided into companies of

fifty and a hundred, and seated on the grassy slopes, their many-colored garments showing as gay as the flowers about them. There were five thousand people, besides women and children.

The disciples waited, wondering. Jesus took the basket and blessed it, and gave it to the disciples, and the disciples divided it among the people. As many times as they returned there was more in the little basket, and the whole multitude was fed.

More than that, they gathered up of the fragments, after all had eaten, twelve baskets full.

"He is the Messiah," said the people one to another. "The Rabbis themselves told us that when the Messiah came he would feed us, as Moses did the children of Israel in the wilderness." What a time it would be now for him to exercise his power and conquer the Roman!

Rabbi Nathan waited to see what Jesus would do. Had the time indeed come, when he would claim his kingdom?

Jesus hastily sent his disciples away, dismissed the people, and disappeared among the hills.

There was nothing for Rabbi Nathan to do but return. So he and his companions went down to their boat and set sail for the opposite shore. The wind arose and beat them back, and they made little headway. The waves ran high, and all feared for their lives.

In the gray dawn of the early morning they discovered another boat not far from them, and while they were trying to make it out, they saw the form of a man walking on the sea.

"It is a spirit!" said the men in great fear.

The figure moved toward that other boat and entered it, and the boat vanished into the gray mist. The storm of wind ceased, and the rest of the journey was made speedily.

On reaching the shore they found the boat they had seen in the mist, and the people there said that the Master and his disciples had landed some time ago. They were

talking in hushed voices, and pointing over the lake. They knew that Jesus had sent his disciples away the previous night, and that there was no boat on the shore. They had inquired of the disciples how it was that Jesus was with them, and they had answered, "He came to us, walking on the waves. We thought it was a spirit. He said to us, 'It is I; be not afraid.' Then we knew him."

"Even the wind and the sea obey him," murmured Rabbi Nathan; and walking on, he thus took counsel with himself:

"What need have I to warn the Master, who knoweth all things, and hath all power?" And he straightway returned to Jerusalem. All the way the words, "It is I; be not afraid," rang in his ears. He had calmed the waves of Galilee. Was he not as able to calm the waves of hate and jealousy rising high in the hearts of the Jewish rulers, who feared that Jesus would remove them from their places of honor, and supplant them, reigning supreme over the Jews?

"I will no more fear the powers of darkness," concluded Rabbi Nathan, "for a greater is here.

" 'Praise ye the Lord,' " chanted the glad Rabbi, as he journeyed homeward. " 'Praise ye the Lord from the heavens: praise him in the heights.

" 'Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts.

" 'Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light.

" 'Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens.

" 'Let them praise the name of the Lord: for he commanded, and they were created.

" 'He hath also stablished them for ever and ever: he hath made a decree which shall not pass.

" 'Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps:

" 'Fire, and hail; snow, and vapor; stormy wind fulfilling his word:

" 'Mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars:

" 'Beasts, and all cattle; creeping things, and flying fowl:

" 'Kings of the earth and all people; princes, and all judges of the earth:

" 'Both young men and maidens; old men, and children:

" 'Let them praise the name of the Lord.' "

CHAPTER XXI

PHARISEE AND PUBLICAN

THERE were many people in the cities and villages of Galilee who had been followers of John, and now that John was beheaded they followed the Prophet of Nazareth, who had spoken words of praise of John, and testified that he was a true prophet, and "a bright and shining light."

But Antipas, fearing that Jesus was John returned to earth, and thus doubly dangerous, plotted to get rid of him. So Galilee grew daily more and more unsafe for the Master.

Jacob and Rabbi Nathan stood in Solomon's Porch, between the two great brass pillars Jachin and Boaz, and looked down into the valley Kedron, watching a slowly advancing caravan. It was the time of the Feast of Tabernacles.

"Where," said Jacob, "will the Master

dwell henceforth? Neither Jerusalem nor Capernaum is safe, nor Nazareth."

At this same hour a secret conference was being held in an inner chamber of the Temple. Priest and Rabbi, Sadducee and Pharisee, were there, the elders of Israel.

"He will come to the feast; we will send officers to take him," they said.

"Let us go out to the city gate and see who enters," said Jacob to Rabbi Nathan.

At the gate they saw several of Jesus's disciples, and secretly inquired of them if the Master had come to the feast. They shook their heads, and passed on.

It was morning, and Jacob and Rabbi Nathan took their way beyond the gates and followed a footpath through the vineyards on the steep hillside, resting near a wine-press.

The press was open on the four sides, and there was a tower built over it for the watchmen. The vat was full of grapes, and the men were treading them, their clothes and

their bodies as red as blood. The air was filled with the rich odor of the fresh fruit.

"He is not come to the feast," said Rabbi Nathan to Jacob, as they rested under a great sycamore tree, and watched the wine-press. "He will not come now until the time of the Passover in the spring."

"What will you do?" asked Jacob—meaning, "Now that you believe he is Messiah, what course shall you take?"

"I inquired of him when I was in Capernaum," said Rabbi Nathan, slowly. "I saw him facing all danger, fearlessly, surrounded by enemies, working ceaselessly to heal men of the diseases of their bodies and souls. I heard him say, 'He that is not with me is against me,' and I could not longer restrain myself. 'He is spending himself for our sakes,' I said to myself. 'Shall we not spend ourselves for him?'

"I tried many times to get near, but could not. At last I was invited to Peter's house,

and there I fell on my knees and asked the Master what I should do."

Jacob feared; to what had his uncle pledged himself?

"What said he to thee?"

" 'Go thy way!' "

"What meant he?"

"To keep on with my duties until the time comes to confess him before men."

"When will that time be?"

"When his enemies rise up against him."

Rabbi Nathan spoke quietly, but his manner did not deceive Jacob. He knew that his uncle had counted well the cost of this step before he had taken it.

The day of the feast arrived; Rabbi Nathan, with Jacob beside him, sat in the Temple porch where the elders taught, when suddenly Jesus made his appearance among them, and began to teach the people who immediately gathered about him.

His words revealed such wisdom, and such familiarity with the Scriptures, that one and

another exclaimed, "Whence hath this man knowledge, being a Galilean, and never having studied in Jerusalem? Verily, he must be taught of God!"

The people began to ask, "Is not this he whom the Jews seek to kill? Why do they not seize him now? Have they also become persuaded that he is the Christ?"

Others answered derisively, "How can this man be Christ? He is a Nazarene. We know him, and his people are here with us."

Both Rabbi Nathan and Jacob hastened to say, "He is of the city of David. It is written in the Book of the Genealogies of Bethlehem." But little heed was given to their words, except by one or two who looked at them sharply, saying nothing.

The last day of the feast arrived, a glorious autumn day. The great procession of pilgrims, with music and Hosannas, marched around the city seven times, in commemoration of the fall of Jericho when the Israelites marched about that city.

Others followed the priests and Levites to Siloah to see them fill the golden bowl with water from the spring, and carry it with rejoicings to the Temple.

Jesus, standing in the porch amid the people, saw the triumphal procession climbing the hill, the golden bowl held aloft by one of the priests. "'If any man thirst, let him come unto me,' and I will give him living waters. 'He that believeth on me shall never thirst.'"

Many believed on Jesus for that saying, and Jacob fell at his feet, confessing, "Master, I believe that thou art the Christ. What wilt thou that I do for thee?"

The words were hardly out of his mouth when several Rabbis seized him and pushed him into the inner court. "Thou art beside thyself," said one. "See how this Prophet turns the heads of our young men!"

They jested over Jacob's impulsiveness, but he protested that he was in earnest, that it was a deliberate act. They only laughed the more, and went out, leaving him there.

Jacob quickly followed. The people had dispersed. The chief priests (Sadducees) and Pharisees waited for the return of the officers. When they presented themselves empty handed the priests were exceedingly angry. "Why have ye not brought him?" they demanded.

"Never man spake like this man," they answered.

"Are ye also deceived?" they cried, wrathfully. "Who are the people that believe in him? The rabble, the heathen, the Galileans! You do not find the rulers, the learned in the Law, accepting his teaching. No one knowing the Law could believe on him."

There came a voice from the elders. "Doth our law judge any man before it hear him and know what he doeth?"

"Art thou also of Galilee?" they mocked. "Search, and see that out of Galilee ariseth no prophet."

The next day Jacob was again at the Temple, hoping to meet Jesus. He found a great

gathering; he could not reach the porch. He knew by that sign that Jesus was there. He heard the name Abraham spoken, then one of the Rabbis said, "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?"

Every voice was hushed to hear the answer.

"Before Abraham was, I am."

The very words of Jehovah to the Israelites in Egypt!

All the enemies in the great assembly seized the stones lying at hand (left from the work on the Temple, which never had been finished) and sought to stone Jesus.

Jacob, in great terror, struggled forward, with intent with his own body to shield Jesus from the fury of the multitude, but he had disappeared, and in the confusion no one could tell whither he went.

The scene at the Temple did not weaken Jacob's decision to become a follower of the Prophet of Nazareth, but it led him to consider whether he had not best keep quiet until the crisis arrived. The Master was

able to protect himself, and he could do no good by getting himself stoned or arrested. When the Messiah openly declared himself the King of the Jews, and claimed his kingdom, then he too would take his stand on Jesus's side.

After this, too, it was reported that any one confessing belief in the Messiahship of Jesus should be put out of the synagogues. This report was confirmed by the excommunicating of a beggar who had been born blind, and to whom Jesus had given his sight.

Finding that Jesus lingered in Judea, Rabbi Nathan sent Jacob to Nazareth with a commission that would detain him until the time of the Passover.

Jacob was greatly astonished at the change that had come over Julia. Instead of the vain and boisterous maid with the covetous spirit, he found a glad-hearted, modest woman.

"It is the Master," she answered when Jacob questioned her. "I could not forget

his words. I tried, but I could not. 'What shall it profit a man,' he said, 'if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Seek ye first the kingdom of God,' he said. When I saw the lilies in the field, they whispered these words to me, and the birds of the air sang them to me.

"We asked the Master, Ednah and I, how we should seek the kingdom of God, and he said, 'Keep my words.'

" 'Shall we follow thee?' we asked him. He said, 'Go thy way. Do that thy hand findeth to do, and confess me before men.'

"Few in Nazareth believe he is Messiah. We have gained a few souls. We are happy. Will he come to his kingdom soon?"

"When he wills," answered Jacob. "I believe it will be soon."

Ednah and Julia begged to accompany Jacob to Jerusalem, but he feared a tumult if Jesus were at the Passover. And if he claimed his kingdom then, there would be he knew not what.

Jacob took the longer and safer road home, the highway on the east side of the Jordan. On the second day, being in the region of Perea, he came upon a multitude of people. A hush fell upon them as he drew near. He heard the familiar voice of the Master saying:

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!

"Behold, your house is left unto you desolate; for I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

The inexpressible sadness and tenderness of that voice moved Jacob, and the hushed multitude with its sea of upturned faces added to the impressiveness of the voice. Neither Rabbi Nathan nor his friends were there to hold him back. He made his way through the throng, and kneeling before

Jesus, he said, "Master, I will serve thee with my life."

Now Jacob felt that he was making a tremendous sacrifice, and that he, a Jew, the son of a Pharisee and nephew of a learned Rabbi, was greatly honoring the Master by this open confession and consecration.

Tenderly Jesus looked upon him; put his hands upon his head and blessed him. So he many times had blessed little children brought to him.

Under that touch a new feeling awoke in Jacob's heart. It was humility. He forgot his sacrifice; he forgot that he was conferring an honor upon the Master. He thought instead what a great favor was conferred upon him. The great Rabbi, the Prophet of Nazareth, the Messiah, had accepted him!

No word was spoken to him, and he dared ask no question. He stepped back, making room for the people, who, seeing his action, pressed forward that they might also declare themselves Jesus's followers. As he did so

his eyes fell upon his old enemy, Lucas, who was steadfastly regarding him.

Jacob was struck with the expression of the publican's face. The mocking spirit had left it, and instead there was a subdued look as of conquered passion; and in place of the indolent, insolent air that had used so to exasperate him, he had become alert and attentive.

Lucas smiled in a friendly manner as Jacob's eyes met his, and moved toward him; but Jacob turned away. It was too abrupt; he dared not trust himself. He had not considered Lucas when he made up his mind to forsake all and follow the Master.

A rush of memory brought to his mind the words he had heard on the Mount, "Love your enemies," and that other, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." He went away sadly, but only to return and drink in eagerly, day after day, the words of Jesus.

Many parables the Master spake to the

people. There was one that remained uppermost in Jacob's mind. It was the parable of the Pharisee and the publican.

"Two men went up into the Temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

"The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are. . . .

"And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God, be merciful to me a sinner.

"I tell you," said Jesus, "this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

Jacob was confounded. He turned about, expecting to meet the attentive gaze of Lucas fixed upon him, but Lucas had lost himself in the crowd. Making his way out, he met a company of women with their children,

and he turned back vexed, for he knew they were taking them to the Master that he might bless them. (It was a custom for parents to take children to the Temple and synagogues for the Rabbis to bless.) The Master was weary and the day was far spent. Why should they trouble him?

The disciples reproved them and sent them away, but Jesus called to them, saying, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.

"Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein."

As Jacob stood there and watched the innocent faces with their unquestioning faith, and earnest eyes, he learned the meaning of the parable of the Pharisee and publican; he understood who were the meek who should inherit the earth. He saw that his being a proud Jew would not find him favor with the Master, but that the less of a Jew he was

the more pleasing he would be in his sight. The words of Jesus, "All men are brethren," came to his mind.

This new light in Jacob's mind brought pain and conflict. It was a choice between the world and the Master. How many times he thought he had fought that out!

The following day, Jesus and his disciples left the beautiful upland pastures of Perea, bright in their spring verdure, and entered the district of Jericho.

This plain was the richest spot in Palestine. Fruits were finer, maize yielded a double harvest, and wheat ripened a month earlier than in Galilee. The balsam plant, precious for its costly perfume and its healing qualities, flourished here, and many flowers not found elsewhere.

From this fertile plain rose Jericho, with its gardens and groves and its many mansions. And thither a great multitude followed Jesus. Many were on their way to the Passover. Many believed that now the

Messiah would be made a king. Had not all the world gone after him?

It was a joyful company, for their feet were turned to Jerusalem, and no small number were those whom Jesus had restored to health.

Jacob, as he looked and listened, remembered that Caiaphas had condemned the Master to death, saying it was better for one man to perish than that the whole country be led astray.

While Jacob mused, some one touched him. "Here dwells Zaccheus, the hated head of the customhouse officers," said Lucas. There was a large trade from both sides the Jordan.

Jesus's disciples had now gathered about him, and seemed to be earnestly talking with him. As they drew nearer they heard him say, "There is no man that hath left house, or wife, or brethren, or parents, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this time, and in the world to come eternal life."

Two beggars by the wayside made such a commotion with their cries, that nothing more was heard. The people, as they passed by, endeavored to still the clamoring voices, but in vain. They were crying for Jesus of Nazareth. And when he came to them, he restored their sight, and they followed with the others, shouting, and singing praises.

There were many priests in Jericho, and Jacob fervently hoped Jesus would do nothing to offend them. But before they had entered the city his hope died. A little man had run before the crowd of people, and climbed a wide-branching sycamore tree,—one of the evergreen fig trees,—and when Jesus passed by he looked up, and seeing the man there he said to him, "Zaccheus, make haste, and come down, for to-day I must abide at thy house."

Jacob looked on in dismay, while the little man hastened down joyfully. There arose an ominous murmur from the people who were near enough to hear the words, which were

passed from mouth to mouth until the murmuring swelled like a threatening tide. What Jew would set foot in the house of such a despised publican, this chief of publicans, well known for his extortion and dishonesty?

" 'Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart,' " said Lucas.

"Who taught thee that?" demanded Jacob.

"The Master," answered Lucas calmly; "and verily he is no respecter of persons."

"Yea, he looketh on the heart," said Jacob humbly, and Lucas, with a quick glance at him, held out his hand, and Jacob clasped it in his. And from that day the two lads loved each other with a love as deep as their hatred had been.

"He feareth no man," said Jacob, "for he knoweth he hath power to deliver himself from his enemies; yet I am shaken with anxiety."

At Bethany Jesus left the multitude. He made his home with Mary and Martha, and

Lazarus their brother, he whom Jesus raised from the dead when at Jerusalem.

As the long caravan neared the city, Jacob and Lucas heard some saying that the high priests talked of putting Lazarus to death also, for many believed on Jesus because of him.

Jacob went immediately to Rabbi Nathan. It was the eve of the Sabbath, and all the people were required to observe a three hours' rest before the Sabbath, which began at six, and it was a very welcome rest to the tired pilgrims, weary with the long journey over the steep, rough highway. But Jacob could not rest until he had told his uncle all he had heard and seen. After he had told him about Zaccheus, he related the parable of the Pharisee and publican.

"Verily, the greatest sin is pride," said the Rabbi, "for, see, it is easier to convert the ignorant and sinful publican, and the heathen, than the self-righteous Jew."

CHAPTER XXII

THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS

EARLY on the morning of the first day of the week, Sunday, the Jews' Sabbath being Saturday, Jerusalem was startled by the sound of shouting and singing as of a triumphal army. From the tower chamber Jacob looked across the valley toward Bethany. There he saw a great procession winding down from the Mount of Olives, and in the midst was one riding on an ass, while those that went before spread their garments in the way, and strewed palm branches while they sang.

So, Jacob remembered, it had been prophesied that the Messiah should come to his kingdom. He had waited for this sign.

Not like a warrior mounted on a battle steed, not like the kings of earth with chariots and horsemen, but as the Prince of Peace, came Jesus.

What were the spoils of his victory that he was bringing with him? Captives? Much gold and precious stuffs?

The captives that followed him were those who had been freed from fetters, not bound—freed from fetters of disease and sin. And they came not with wailings but with glad Hallelujahs.

Jacob hastened down from the tower to the Golden Gate, quickly making the descent into the valley and joining the procession. This great company were people who had heard that Jesus was at Bethany and had gone thither. Now many others in the city, pilgrims, hearing that Jesus was on his way there, hastened out of the gate to meet him, cutting palm twigs as they went, and still others, seeing these, followed. The great Prophet from their own country, Galilee, was about to claim his kingdom, they believed.

"Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest!" the multitude sang until the mighty chorus filled the air.

How had the people learned that this Nazarene was the descendant of David? The Pharisees in the throng tried to quiet them by threatenings, but they were too thoroughly aroused. At last they appealed to the Master himself, saying, "Master, rebuke thy disciples."

"If these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out," Jesus answered.

So the procession went on, and as it poured into the city, which was gay with decorations of flags and banners, in readiness for the feast, the people leaned from every window and roof and asked, "Who is this that cometh like a king?"

And the jubilant Galileans made haste to answer:

"This is Jesus, the Prophet of Nazareth."

After seeing Jesus take possession of the Temple in the name of Jehovah, and leaving

him healing those that were brought to him, Jacob hastened to the house of Rabbi Nathan, who was now too feeble to go to the Temple, and told him all that had been done.

Rabbi Nathan was reclining on a couch in the tower chamber; he had seen the triumphal procession and heard the Hosannas; he knew the King had come to his own. He beheld his Lord riding in honor. He had prayed to see this day. His age-dimmed eyes burned not with the fires that glowed in Jacob's, but the peace that passeth all knowledge was in his heart, and he prayed aloud, Jacob mingling his praises with the good Rabbi's.

Returning to the Temple, Jacob found all in confusion. The cattle dealers came out of the court with their cattle, dove sellers hastened down the steps with their cages of doves, and the money changers followed, gesticulating wrathfully.

"By what authority doeth he these things?" they said. "The Temple is in charge of the priests."

"What hath he done?" asked Jacob, knowing that it could be none other than Jesus who had given offense.

"He hath sent all the traders out of the Temple," said one who stood by, evidently approving the act. "He said that this house was the house of prayer, and they had made it a den of robbers."

When Jacob entered, he found Jesus quietly teaching the people, who listened, entranced by his wonderful words.

Day by day Jacob listened to the Master's voice speaking words of warning, consolation, and instruction, outwitting the wily Jews who sought to ensnare him, plainly reading the thoughts of their hearts.

Jacob listened with fear and rejoicing, and stealthily watched the Jews, who he knew would not dare seize Jesus openly, for fear of the multitude who believed on him. Lucas, who was here and there and everywhere, reported to Jacob that one of the schemes was to accuse the Master to Pilate, of claiming

to be king. If they could do this, the Roman power would be secured. They dreaded these Messiahs of the Jews who were ever rising up and exciting the people to insurrection.

"He is able to deliver himself even from the hand of the Roman," said Jacob.

It was the night of the feast; the Passover had been eaten, the hurry and confusion were over, the Temple cleared of all but the regular watchmen, the thronged streets deserted save for a sleeping pilgrim here and there in a convenient corner, able to secure no other lodging.

Both Rabbi Nathan and Jacob were sleeping in the summer chambers on the roof. Rabbi Nathan was restless, and frequently called to Jacob, "How goes the night?" and Jacob as often answered him, "All is well."

About midnight the good Rabbi's restlessness had so increased that Jacob proposed to go down to Bethany and see with his own

eyes that all was well. He, too, could not sleep for thinking of the Master.

The gates were not closed the night of the feast, and Jacob went out into the silent streets of the sleeping city; out beyond the Golden Gate into the calm light of the Passover moon, down into the shadowed valley, fragrant with the breath of unfolding leafbuds and embroidered with a network of silver light falling through the interlaced boughs of the trees. On one side of the valley rose the Temple, white and grand like a vision of the night, and the indistinct forms of the castles and the great tower loomed like gigantic undefined fears. Looking down the valley, could be seen the hills where the mansions of the Sadducees rose, nothing now but shadowy pageants; the Sadducees, which say there is no resurrection. One might almost believe them, to-night, so deathly is the silence. But had not every morning since the world began given the lie to their lips? Yea, every morning is a resurrection.

Jacob looked across the valley to Olivet, softly outlined in the silvery light. A spell seemed upon the earth, and perfect peace reigned. To Jacob's fancy the silvered summit of the mount seemed smiling up out of the quiet to the leaning sky, and the fields on its slopes were bathed in light.

Hark! What was that? Certainly footsteps! And that? The gleam of a torch!

For an instant Jacob's heart stood still and his strength seemed to go from him. Had the hour come, the dreaded hour when the Master would exercise his power over his enemies and be crowned king?

He pressed forward through the shadows, and soon discovered a rabble, with a band of soldiers at their head, with lanterns and torches and staves in their hands. They moved up the side of the Mount, and Jacob, stealing as near as he thought safe, made out a detachment of the Temple watch, a few priests and elders, and servants from the palace of the high priest.

Jacob watched breathlessly to see them take the road to Bethany; but no, they took neither the camel path, nor the shorter foot-path, nor the lower way through the valley of Olivet. They turned a little aside, and approached the garden on the hillside, called Gethsemane.

As Jacob followed, keeping in the shadows, a fearful whisper came to his ear. "They will kill him!"

It was Lucas; he, too, had been suspicious of the crafty Jews, and going out into the streets to see if any evil thing were abroad, had come upon the soldiers marching from the castle Antonia, the Roman fortress, and had followed them.

"They cannot kill him," said Jacob. "He is able to strike them dead or to turn them to stone before his eyes."

At the gate, Jesus came out to meet the soldiers, and his disciples followed, looking bewildered and affrighted.

"Whom seek ye?" asked Jesus.

"Jesus, the Nazarene," answered the leader.

"I am he," said Jesus.

The crowd fell back in great fear, and such a confusion and dread came upon Jacob that for some moments he was insensible to what was taking place about him. Lucas seized his arm in a vise-like grip. "They have taken him," he said with a groan, "and he does not resist."

"They will feel his power when he wills," said Jacob, his strength coming again. "His disciples will defend him, too. What are those with him doing? I cannot see; there is something between me and the light."

"Stand over here. They look frightened and uncertain. One of them dashes at a man with his sword."

"And what now?" questioned Jacob, hurriedly.

"He—has restored the man, and seems to reprove the disciples."

"He needs them not, and he will save them from violence," said Jacob, confidently. "Did

he not say all power was given him in heaven and on earth? What are they doing now? I see nothing."

"They have bound him, and the disciples have fled. They come this way, and he talks to the rabble."

The grip on Jacob's arm loosened, and the voice at his ear ceased. Left in total darkness, not daring to move to the left or to the right, not knowing whether he stood in a sheltered spot or in the path of the company coming nearer and nearer, longing to rush into the rabble, and take his stand beside the Master, he prayed, "Lord, that I might receive my sight!"

Lucas, dropping his mantle at Jacob's feet, stole through the trees like a white apparition, and when opposite Jesus he joined the rabble and gradually made his way to Jesus's side. "Master," he implored, "what wilt thou that we do for thee?"

Jealous eyes were not wanting; rough hands seized Lucas almost before the words passed

his lips, and he was thrown back into the crowd. "He is one of them!" they shouted, and they clutched at him again and again as he struggled from under their hands, tearing his white tunic into shreds.

Jacob still stood alone in the darkness. Every moment was an eternity. The voices drew nearer and nearer and passed by, growing more and more faint in the distance.

A great despair seized him. The darkness and helplessness overcame him. "They have taken away the Master," he cried out to the silence about him, "and I know not what they will do with him. And I, I cannot so much as lift a hand to aid him." He leaned his arms against the tree beside him, and bowed his head on them. "O God in heaven, help me!" he prayed.

After a time he raised his head and listened. "He should be back by this," he said. "Have they taken Lucas, too? Then indeed am I undone."

The suspense became so unbearable that

he began to grope about to find the path, thinking to make his way back to the city. After wandering about for some time, his foot touched something that was not grass, and, stooping, he raised from the ground a cloak. "Lucas's abba," he said, examining it with his hands. He remembered that something dropped at his feet when Lucas left him. He had come back to the place he started from.

Weary from his broken night's rest, his fears and despair, and the terrible suspense, he sank down upon the ground, and burying his face in the mantle of his friend he waited for the morning, when some one might chance to find him there. And the merciful angel of sleep visited him in that terrible hour, even as it had the disciples earlier in the night.

"Sleeper, sorry am I to disturb thee," said a voice near Jacob, "but I am in great need of that abba under thy head."

Jacob sprang up, crying out joyfully, "It is Lucas!" and unnerved by this sudden

relief, added to all the excitement of the night, he fell upon Lucas's neck and wept. "I surely thought they had killed thee," he said.

"I am in rags," said Lucas. "The rabble were near the death of me, but here I am. Come, we had best make haste to the city; and this chill air strikes to one's marrow."

"Then thou must lead me, for I am struck with blindness," said Jacob.

It was a sad walk down that beaten path which the Master had trod so oft; the path he was never to tread again. The wan moon shone with a weird light that deepened the shadows and peopled them with evil fancies. Now and then Lucas started, Jacob knew by the tightened pressure on his arm.

"A few days ago," he mused, "the Master rode over this path as a victor; to-night he is dragged over it as a criminal. Enemies on every hand lie in wait to spring upon him, and false witnesses will not be wanting to rise up against him. Alas! while I thought

the night so peaceful, those wicked ones were creeping about like the vipers he likened them to, and the air was thick with their whisperings and plottings."

At the house of Rabbi Nathan Jacob urged Lucas to leave him. "They will take him before the magistrates and they will send him to Pilate," he said. "Go to the palace and bring me word."

CHAPTER XXIII

REJECTED OF MEN

SLOWLY Lucas departed on his sad mission. What would they do with the Master? He had committed no offense punishable with death, according to the laws of Moses, but they might attempt to stir up Antipas against him. If they could prove that he was a dangerous person inciting the people to rebellion, their desire would be accomplished.

Lucas waited by the gate of the high priest's palace. He had not long to wait; the Jews were in great haste to take Jesus to Pilate before morning, fearing interference from the people. The Galileans in the city would rush to rescue him. When the doors opened and the self-appointed tribunal came out, Jesus was in the midst, bound.

Lucas recognized John and Peter, two of

the disciples, in the company, and signaling to them he asked what had been done.

"There has been a mock trial," they said. "He has confessed before them that he is the Son of God. They are taking him to the Sanhedrim to have the indictment endorsed; then he will be delivered to the procurator, Pilate."

Before the judgment hall of Pilate's palace was an elevated platform, called the Pavement, where criminal trials were held. This was a Roman custom. Here they led Jesus, and an extra guard was sent from the fortress, for the people were awake now, and gathering fast.

Pilate, after the trial, declared that he found no fault in Jesus, and thought a man who claimed a kingdom not of this world a harmless sort of king.

The chief priests and elders sprang up one after another, making accusations. He had stirred up the whole nation to rebel against Cæsar, and persuaded them to become his

followers, promising them favor in his kingdom. He had influenced them not to pay their tax, and defied the Roman powers.

Pilate, knowing their jealousy and that what they feared was losing their own positions among the Jews, and standing not a little in awe of this Nazarene of whom he had heard so much, sought to rid himself of the difficulty by sending Jesus to Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee, as Jesus was a Galilean. And Antipas being now at Mount Zion in the Herodian palace, it was an easy matter.

So Lucas followed to Mount Zion, and after another weary waiting the company of soldiers and Jewish rulers, with Jesus in the midst, again came out. Lucas knew not what to think; the Master had on a white robe, the royal robe of the Jews.

"It is a mockery," said one who stood by. "Antipas will have naught to do with him, and sends him back to Pilate."

Would this weary farce never end? Lucas followed back to Pilate's palace.

It was sunset when Lucas turned his steps to the house of Rabbi Nathan. He was haggard, and swayed unsteadily as he climbed the steps to the upper rooms. With his hands pressed against his temples, he paused at the door of Jacob's room. How could he tell the lad the terrible doings of the day—the saddest day that ever had been or ever would be in the history of the world!

He pushed aside the curtains and looked in; and then he saw that he had no need to tell Jacob. He was tossing in a fever and muttering excitedly. Rabbi Nathan and Athaliah were there. Lucas stumbled unsteadily across the floor and knelt by Jacob's couch.

That terrible hour had come and gone, and Jacob had not known. The dear Master had been beaten, mocked, and spit upon; crowned with a crown of cruel thorns, and bearing the cross for his crucifixion, he had walked through the streets of Jerusalem for the last time—the last time!

Blessed darkness that hid this sight from

Jacob's eyes, and shut him from the sound of the hideous voices howling, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" and shouting in derision, "The king of the Jews? The king of the Jews? We will have none of him. His blood be on us and on our children. Crucify him!" Of the agony on the cross, and the Saviour dying of a broken heart, Jacob was all unconscious; the terrible darkness and the earthquake that had brought such fear upon the people, were naught to him. The veil of the Temple was rent in twain, and Jehovah had forever departed from the Holy of Holies, but that disturbed not Jacob; he could not hear if one told him.

"How long has he been like this?" asked Lucas.

"Since the word came that the Master was condemned to be crucified," said Athaliah. "He cried out like one struck with death, and fell to the floor. When we took him up he was raving. We fear for his life."



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He pushed aside the curtains and looked in

Lucas said no more. He covered his face with his hands and remained there beside Jacob's couch; his body trembled violently, and frequently he groaned like one in unbearable pain.

Athaliah, looking upon the two lads, broke into wailing. Rabbi Nathan was the only composed person in the house. "God is mightier than man," he said. "He has permitted it."

He said not a word of his own sorrow at the death of the beloved Messiah, or of his bitter disappointment after the long waiting to see the redemption of Israel.

On the third day after the crucifixion, early in the morning, Jacob started up, and cried out in his natural voice:

"Did he not tell us many times that his kingdom was not of this world? Did he not tell us plainly that he must suffer all things and be rejected of the Jews and crucified, and we did not understand? And did he not say that on the third day he would rise again?

Oh, make haste, and go to his burial place. Even now he may be walking the earth!"

Lucas, who had refused to leave his place beside Jacob's couch night or day, now started up joyfully.

"Go," said Jacob, "see if that which he said is come to pass. Where was he buried?"

And Lucas answered, "Joseph of Arimathea dared not speak a word to save him, but he was so affected by his death that he boldly asked for the body and buried it in his own tomb. And Nicodemus, that other timid one, followed with Joseph to the burial, taking myrrh and aloes for the embalming."

"And the disciples, were none of them at the cross?"

"One, John; and the women. And the Jews, for fear of his words that he would rise again, asked for a guard and that the sepulcher might be sealed. So they rolled a great stone against the door and sealed it, and sent soldiers to watch."

"Go quickly," said Jacob.

Lucas returned joyfully some hours later. "He is risen; he has been seen of the women and two of the disciples! There was an earthquake, and an angel came and rolled the stone from the door of the sepulcher; and the soldiers fled!"

To Lucas's amazement, Jacob stood up and began to wrap his mantle about him. "Take me to his disciples," he said. "He will come to them. He will restore my sight that I may behold him once more. My Master! O my Master!"

Lucas dared not refuse Jacob's request, though fearing he was not able to leave the house.

Jacob thought to find the disciples rejoicing, but instead, they were plunged in gloom. They were in doubt about the story of the women and the disciples. They had gone to the sepulcher and had not seen him. It was midday now, and nothing more had been heard of him. They talked of disbanding, and going to their homes; two, even then,

had started for Emmaus, which was about eight miles from Jerusalem.

Jacob implored the rest to wait a little longer. So they waited, and talked of the Master until nearly sunset. They would not begin their journey until morning.

As Jacob and Lucas were about departing, the two who had left at noon came in with glowing faces. The doors being carefully closed after them for fear of spies, they told a strange story of meeting the Master on the way, and how they did not know him until they sat at meat and he blessed the bread. Then he vanished out of their sight.

Jacob and Lucas could not go now, but sat down with the rest at the table ready for the evening meal.

Suddenly in their midst, through the closed doors, appeared Jesus.

The disciples were affrighted and cried out, thinking it was a spirit. But Jesus showed them the prints of the nails in his hands and feet, and sat down and ate with

them, and explained to them many sayings of the Scriptures. He told them that they were now to witness for him, and then he blessed them and vanished.

What a change had come over the little company! From deepest despair they had risen to rejoicing and confident faith. They looked into each other's faces, which glowed with a holy light. Jesus was still their Messiah; he was with them, and had commissioned them to work for him.

On one face a shadow lingered. "I alone may not see him," said Jacob, as he and Lucas returned to Rabbi Nathan's house. "He who has healed so many blind eyes takes no heed of me."

"I remember," said Lucas slowly, "he said he loved thee."

They walked the remainder of the way in silence. To Rabbi Nathan they told all that had taken place, and he uttered fervent praises to God, his face glowing even as the faces of the disciples.

"Why, think you, does he not restore my sight?" asked Jacob.

"Of one thing I am sure," said the Rabbi. "It is his mercy." After a moment he added, "Thou hast declared thyself ready to suffer all things for his sake, and at the first trial thou murmurest."

Jacob went out from his uncle's presence, and shut himself in his own room to fight the battle alone.

"Master, thou knowest," he prayed. "If it be thy will that I thus serve, thy will be mine."

CHAPTER XXIV

WITNESS FOR HIM!

A WEEK from the day of Jesus's resurrection he appeared again to the disciples where they were assembled. One came and told Jacob and Lucas, "He hath appeared unto us again, and Thomas, who had not seen him and would not believe until he had seen him, was with us. And Thomas, beholding him, cried out, 'My Lord and my God!' And he told us many things. Now that he has come again, will he not establish his kingdom on earth? We go to Galilee, where he has promised to meet us on the Mount."

Jacob and Lucas went to Galilee with the disciples. And they sent word to the Master's followers that he would meet them on the Mount. And while they waited, one came to them and said that Jesus had

appeared to certain of the disciples who were fishing on the Lake.

That day there assembled on the Mount over five hundred of those that believed on him. Lois and Ednah and Julia were there, and all of Abda's household. Gershom from Capernaum, with his two sons, and the poor widow with her fisher lads.

While they waited, singing Hosannas, Jesus appeared among them.

"Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ!" the people cried as with one voice, falling on their knees.

Jacob essayed to go forward and throw himself at Jesus's feet, but it was as if he had lost the power of motion; he could not move hand or foot. However, he set his face in the direction whence the voice came, and he said in his heart, "Thy will, Lord, be done."

A ringing cry startled the people, a cry of joy. "My Master! My Master! I see him!"

It was Jacob.

After a long, loving look, which Jacob never forgot, Jesus turned his gaze upon the amazed people.

"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

And many more precious words Jesus spake unto them, but most precious of all were his last words before he vanished from their sight: "Lo, I am with you alway."

Jacob remained in Galilee until Jesus's ascension, and when the disciples came to him and told him that they should not see Jesus any more he was comforted, for he remembered His words, "I am with you alway." Though they could not see him, he was with them.

And Jacob, with the race prejudice and the haughty pride all melted out of his heart, took his sister Ednah and gave her to Lucas's

brother, saying, "In the name of the Master I give her to thee. In his sight there is no Jew nor Gentile, but all men are brethren. He looketh not on the outward appearance, but on the heart."

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