

Forbidden Gospels and Epistles, v9

Archbishop Wake

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THE
SUPPRESSED
GOSPELS AND EPISTLES
OF THE ORIGINAL
NEW TESTAMENT
OF
JESUS THE CHRIST

AND OTHER PORTIONS OF THE ANCIENT HOLY SCRIPTURES.
NOW EXTANT, ATTRIBUTED TO
HIS APOSTLES, AND THEIR DISCIPLES,
AND VENERATED BY THE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIAN CHURCHES DURING
THE FIRST FOUR CENTURIES,
BUT SINCE, AFTER VIOLENT DISPUTATIONS
FORBIDDEN BY THE
BISHOPS OF THE NICENE COUNCIL,
IN THE REIGN OF THE EMPEROR CONSTANTINE

AND OMITTED FROM THE CATHOLICS AND PROTESTANT
EDITIONS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, BY ITS COMPILERS

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL TONGUES, WITH HISTORICAL
REFERENCES TO THEIR AUTHENTICITY,

BY
ARCHBISHOP WAKE
AND OTHER
LEARNED DIVINES

THE FIRST PART OF THE BOOK OF HERMAS CALLED HIS VISION.

VISION I.

1 Against filthy and proud thoughts;
20 also the neglect of Hermas in chastising his children.

HE who had bred me up sold a certain young maid at Rome; whom when I saw many years after, I remembered her, and began to love her as a sister. It happened some time afterwards, that I saw her washing in the river. Tyber; and I reached out my hand unto her, and brought her out of the river,

2 And when I saw her I thought with myself, saying, How happy should I be if I had such a wife, both for beauty and manners. This I thought with myself; nor did I think any thing more. But not long after, as I was walking, and musing on these thoughts, I began to honour this creature of God, thinking with myself; how noble and beautiful she was.

3 And when I had walked a little, I fell asleep; and the spirit caught me away, and carried me through a certain place towards the right hand, through which no man could pass. It was a place among rocks, very steep, and unpassable for water.

4 When I was past this place, I came into a plain; and there falling down upon my knees, I began to pray unto the Lord, and to confess my sins.

5 And as I was praying, the heaven was opened, and I saw the woman which I had coveted, saluting me from heaven, and saying, Hermas, hail! and I looking upon her, answered, Lady, what dost thou do here? She answered me, I am taken up hither to accuse thee of sin before the Lord.

6 Lady, said I, wilt thou convince me? No, said she: but hear the words which I am about to speak unto thee. God who dwelleth in heaven, and hath made all things out of nothing, and hath multiplied them for his holy church's sake, is angry with thee because thou hast sinned against me.

7 And I answering said unto her, Lady, if I have sinned against thee, tell me where, or in what place, or when did I ever speak an unseemly or dishonest word unto thee?

8 Have I not always esteemed thee as a lady? Have I not always revered thee as a sister? Why then dost thou imagine these wicked things against me?

9 Then she, smiling upon me, said: the desire of naughtiness has risen up in thy heart. Does it not seem to thee to be an ill thing for a righteous man to have an evil desire rise up in his heart.

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10 It is indeed a sin, and that a very great sin, to such a one; for a righteous man thinketh that which is righteous. And whilst he does so, and walketh uprightly, he shall have the Lord in heaven favourable unto him in all his business.

11 But as for those who think wickedly in their hearts, they take to themselves death and captivity; and especially those who love this present world, and glory in their riches, and regard not the good things that are to come; their souls wander up and down and know not where to fix.

12 Now this is the case of such as are double-minded, who trust not in the Lord, and despise and neglect their own life.

13 But do thou pray unto the Lord, and he will heal thy sins, and the sins of thy whole house, and of all his saints.

14 As soon as she had spoken these words the heaven were shut, and I remained utterly swallowed up with sadness and fear: and said within myself, if this be laid against me for sin, how can I be saved.

15 Or how should I ever be able to entreat the Lord for my many and great sins? With what words shall I beseech him to be merciful unto me?

16 As I was thinking over these things, and meditating in myself upon them, behold a chair was set over against me of the whitest wool, as bright as snow.

17 And there came an old woman in a bright garment, having a book in her hand, and sat alone, and saluted me, saying, Hermas, hail! and I being full of sorrow and weeping, answered, Hail Lady!

18 And she said unto me, Why art thou sad, Hermas, who wert wont to be patient, and modest, and always cheerful? I answered, and said to her, Lady, a reproach has been laid to my charge by an excellent woman, who tells me that I have sinned against her.

19 She replied, Far be any such thing from the servant of God. But it may be the desire of her has risen up in thy heart? For indeed such a thought maketh the servants of God guilty of sin.

20 Nor ought such a detestable thought to be in the servant of God: nor should he who is approved by the Spirit desire that which is evil; but especially Hermas, who contains himself from all wicked lusts, and is full of all simplicity, and of great innocence.

21 Nevertheless the Lord is not so much angry with thee for thine own sake, as upon the account of thy house, which has committed wickedness against the Lord, and against their parents.

22 And for that out of thy fondness towards thy sons, thou hast not admonished thy house, but hast permitted them to live wickedly; for this cause the Lord is angry with thee: but he will heal all the evils that are done in thy house. For through their sins and iniquities, thou art wholly consumed in secular affairs.

23 But now the mercy of God hath taken compassion upon thee, and upon thine house, and hath greatly comforted thee. Only as for thee, do not wander, but be of an even mind, and comfort thy house.

24 As the workman bringing forth his work, offers it to whomsoever he pleaseth; so shalt thou by teaching every day what is just, cut off a great sin. Wherefore cease not to admonish thy sons, for the Lord knows that they will repent with all their heart, and they shall be written in the book of life.

25 And when she had said this, she added unto me; Wilt thou hear me read? I answered her, Lady, I will.

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26 Hear then, said she; and opening the book she read, gloriously, greatly. and wonderfully, such things as I could not keep in my memory. For they were terrible words, such as no man could bear.

27 How it be I committed her last words to my remembrance; for they were but few, and of great use to us:

28 Behold the mighty Lord, who by his invisible power, and with his excellent wisdom made the world, and by his glorious counsel beautified his creature, and with the word of his strength fixed the heaven, and founded the earth upon the waters; and by his powerful virtue established the Holy Church, which he hath blessed.

29 Behold he will remove the heavens, and the mountains, the hills, and the seas; and all things shall be made plain for his elect; that he may render unto them the promise which he has promised, with much honour and joy; if so be that they shall keep the commandments of God, which they have received with great faith.

30 And when she had made an end of reading, she rose out of the chair; and behold four young men came, and carried the chair to the east.

31 And she called me unto her, and touched my breast, and said unto me, Did my reading please thee? I answered, Lady, these last things please me; but what went before was severe and hard.

32 She said unto me, these last things are for the righteous, but the foregoing for the revolters and heathen.

33 And as she was talking with me, two men appeared, and took her upon their shoulders, and went to the east where the chair was.

34 And she went cheerfully away; and as she was going, said unto me, Hermas, be of good cheer.

VISION II.

Again, of his neglect in correcting his talkative wife;
and of his lewd sons.

AS I was on the way to Cuma, about the same time that I went the year before, I began to call to mind the vision I formerly had. And again the spirit carried me away, and brought me into the same place, in which I had been the year before.

2 And when I was come into the place, I fell down upon my knees, and began to pray unto the Lord, and to glorify his name, that he had esteemed me worthy, and had manifested unto me my former sins.

3 And when I arose from prayer, behold I saw over against me the old woman whom I had seen the last year, walking and reading in a certain book.

4 And she said unto me, Canst thou tell these things to the elect of God? I answered and said unto her, Lady, I cannot retain so many things in my memory, but give me the book, and I will write them down.

5 Take it, says she, and see that thou restore it again to me.

6 As soon as I had received it, I went aside into a certain place of the field, and transcribe every letter, for I found no syllables.

7 And as soon as I had finished what was written in the book, the book was suddenly caught out of my hand, but

by whom I saw not.

8 After fifteen days, when I had fasted, and entreated the Lord with all earnestness, the knowledge of the writing was revealed unto me. Now the writing was this:

9 Thy seed, O Hermas! hath sinned against the Lord, and have betrayed their parents, through their great wickedness. And they have been called the betrayers of their parents, and have gone on in their treachery.

10 And now have they added lewdness to their other sins, and the pollutions of their naughtiness: thus have they filled up the measure of their iniquities. But do thou upbraid thy sons with all these words; and thy wife, who shall be as thy sister; and let her learn to refrain her tongue, with which she calumniates.

11 And when she shall hear these things, she will refrain herself, and shall obtain mercy.

12 And they also shall be instructed, when thou shalt have reproached them with these words, which the Lord has commanded to be revealed unto them.

13 Then shall their sins be forgiven, which they have heretofore committed, and the sins of all the saints who have sinned even unto this day; if they shall repent with all their hearts, and remove all doubts out of their hearts.

14 For the Lord hath sworn by his glory concerning his elect, having determined this very time, that if any one shall even now sin, he shall not be saved.

15 For the repentance of the righteous has its end; the days of repentance are fulfilled to all the saints; but to the heathen, there is repentance even unto the last day.

16 Thou shalt therefore say to those who are over the church, that they order their ways in righteousness; so that they may fully receive the promise with much glory.

17 Stand fast therefore ye that work righteousness and continue to do it, that your departure may be with the holy angels.

18 Happy are ye, as many as shall endure the great trial that is at hand, and whosoever shall not deny his life.

19 For the Lord hath sworn by his Son, that whoso, denieth his Son and HIM, being afraid of his life, he will also deny him in the world that is to come.

20 But those who shall never deny him, he will of his exceeding great mercy be favourable unto them.

21 But thou, O Hermas! remember not the evils which thy sons have done, neither neglect thy sister, but take care that they amend of their former sins.

22 For they will be instructed by this doctrine, if thou shalt not be mindful of what they have done wickedly.

23 For the remembrance of evils worketh death, but the forgetting of them eternal life.

24 But thou, O Hermas! hast undergone a great many worldly troubles for the offences of thy house, because thou hast neglected them, as things that did not belong unto thee; and thou art wholly taken up with thy great business.

25 Nevertheless, for this cause shalt thou be saved, that thou hast not departed from the living God, and thy simplicity and singular continency shall preserve thee, if thou shalt continue in them.

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26 Yes, they shall save all such as do such things, and walk in innocence and simplicity.

27 They who are of this kind shall prevail against all impiety, and continue until life eternal.

28 Happy are all they that do righteousness, they shall not be consumed for ever.

29 But thou wilt say, Behold there is a great trial coming. If it seem good to thee, deny him again.

30 The Lord is nigh to them that turn to him, as it is written in the book of Heldam and Modal, who prophesied to the people of Israel in the wilderness.

31 Moreover, brethren, it was revealed to me, as I was sleeping, by a very goodly young man, saying unto me, What thinkest thou of that old woman from whom thou receivedst the book; who is she? I answered, a Sybil.

32 Thou art mistaken said he, she is not. I replied, Who is she then, sir? He answered me, It is the church of God.

33 And I said unto him, Why then does she appear old? She is therefore, said he, an old woman, because she was the first of all the creation, and the world was made for her.

34 After this I saw a vision at home in my own house, and the old woman, whom I had seen before, came to me and asked me whether I had yet delivered her book to the elders of the church? And I answered, that I had not yet.

35 She replied, Thou hast well done, for I have certain words more to tell thee. But when I shall have finished all the words, they shall be clearly understood by the elect.

36 And thou shalt write two books, and send one to Clement and one to Grapte. For Clement shall send it to the foreign cities, because it is permitted to him so to do: but Grapte shall admonish the widows and orphans.

37 But thou shalt read in this city with the elders of the church.

VISION III.

Of the building of the church triumphant,
and of the several sorts of reprobates.

THE vision which I saw, brethren, was this.

2 When I had often fasted and prayed unto the Lord, that he would manifest unto me the revelation, which he had promised by the old woman to show unto me; the same night she appeared unto me, and said unto me,

3 Because thou dost thus afflict thyself, and art so desirous to know all things, come into the field, where thou wilt, and about the sixth hour, I will appear unto thee, and show thee what thou must see.

4 I asked her, saying; Lady, into what part of the field? She answered, wherever thou wilt, only choose a good and a private place. And before I began to speak and tell her the place, she said unto me; I will come where thou wilt.

5 I was therefore, brethren in the field and I observed the hours, and came into the place where I had appointed her to come.

6 And I beheld a bench placed; it was a linen pillow, and over it spread a covering of fine linen.

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7 When I saw these things ordered in this manner, and that there was nobody in the place, I began to be astonished, and my hair stood on end, and a kind of horror seized me; for I was alone.

8 But being come to myself, and calling to mind the glory of God, and taking courage, I fell down upon my knees and began again to confess my sins as before.

9 And whilst I was doing this, the old woman came thither with the six young men whom I had seen before, and stood behind me as I was praying, and heard me praying and confessing my sins unto the Lord.

10 And touching me, she said; Leave off praying now only for thy sins; pray also for righteousness, that thou mayest receive a part of it in thy house.

11 And she lifted me up from the place, and took me by the hand, and brought me to the seat; and said to the young men, go, and build.

12 As soon as they were departed, and we were alone, she said unto me; sit here. I answered her; Lady, let those who are elder sit first. She replied, Sit down as I bid you.

13 And when I would have sat on the right side, she suffered me not, but made a sign to me with her hand, that I should sit on the left.

14 As I was therefore musing, and full of sorrow, that she would not suffer me to sit on the right side, she said unto me, Hermas, why art thou sad?

15 The place which is on the right hand is theirs who have already attained unto God, and have suffered for his name—sake. But there is yet a great deal remaining unto thee, before thou canst sit with them.

16 But continue as thou doest, in thy sincerity, and thou shalt sit with them; as all others shall, who do their works, and shall bear what they have borne.

17 I said to her; Lady, I would know what it is that they have suffered? Hear then, said she: wild beasts, scourgings, imprisonments, and crosses for his name—sake.

18 For this cause the right hand of holiness belongs to them, and to all others as many as shall suffer for the name of God; but the left belongs to the rest.

19 Howbeit the gifts and the promises belong to both, to them on the right, and to those on the left hand; only that sitting on the right hand they have some glory above the others.

20 But thou art desirous to sit on the right hand with them, and yet thy defects are many. But thou shalt be purged from thy defects, as also all who doubt not shall be cleansed from all the sins which they have committed unto this day.

21 And when she had said this she would have departed.

22 Wherefore, falling down before her feet, I began to entreat her, for the Lord's sake, that she would show me the vision which she had promised.

23 Then she again took me by the hand, and lifted me up, and made me sit upon the seat at the left side; and holding up a certain bright wand, said unto me, Seest thou that great thing? I replied, Lady, I see nothing.

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24 She answered, Dost thou not see over against thee a great tower, which is built upon the water with bright square stones?

25 For the tower was built upon a square by these six young men that came with her.

26 But many thousand of other men brought stones; some drew them out of the deep, others carried them from the ground, and gave them to the six young men; and they took them and built.

27 As for those stones which were drawn out of the deep, they put them all into the building; for they were polished, and their squares exactly answered one another, and so one was joined in such wise to the other, that there was no space to be seen where they joined, insomuch that the whole tower appeared to be built as it were of one stone.

28 But as for the other stones that were taken off from the ground, some of them they rejected, others they fitted into the building.

29 As for those which were rejected, some they cut out, and cast them at a distance from the tower; but many others of them lay round about the tower, which they made no use of in the building.

30 For some of these were rough, others had clefts in them, others were white and round, not proper for the building of the tower.

31 But I saw the other stones cast afar off from the tower, and falling into the high-way, and yet not continuing in the way, but were rolled from the way into a desert place.

32 Others I saw falling into the fire and burning; others fell near the water, yet could not roll themselves into it, though very desirous to fall into the water.

33 And when she had showed me these things she would have departed; but I said to her, Lady, what doth it profit me to see these things, and not understand what they mean?

34 She answered and said unto me; You are very cunning, in that you are desirous to know those things which relate to the tower. Yea, said I, lady, that I may declare them unto the brethren, and they may rejoice, and hearing these things may glorify God with great glory.

35 Then she said, Many indeed shall hear them, and when they shall have heard them, some shall rejoice, and others weep. And yet even these, if they shall repent, shall rejoice too.

36 Hear therefore what I shall say concerning the parable of the tower, and after this be no longer importunate with me about the revelation.

37 For these revelations have an end, seeing they are fulfilled. But thou dost not leave off to desire revelations, for thou art very urgent.

38 As for the tower which thou seest built, it is myself, namely, the church, which have appeared to thee both now and heretofore. Wherefore ask what thou wilt concerning the tower, and I will reveal it unto thee, that thou mayest rejoice with the saints.

39 I said unto her, Lady, because thou hast thought me once worthy to receive from thee the revelation of all these things, declare them unto me.

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40 She answered me, Whatsoever is fit to be revealed unto thee shall be revealed: only yet thy heart be with the Lord, and doubt not, whatsoever thou shalt see.

41 I asked her, Lady, why is the tower built upon the water? She replied, I said before to thee that thou wert very wise to inquire diligently concerning the building, therefore thou shalt find the truth.

42 Hear therefore why the tower is built upon the water: because your life is and shall be saved by water. For it is founded by the word of the almighty and honourable name, and is supported by the invisible power and virtue of God.

43 And I answering, said unto her, These things are very admirable; but, lady, who are those six young men that build?

44 They are, said she, the angels of God, who were first appointed, and to whom the Lord has delivered all his creatures, to frame and build them up, and to rule over them. For by these the building of the tower shall be finished.

45 And who are the rest who bring them stones?

46 They also are the holy angels of the Lord; but the others are more excellent than these. Wherefore when the whole building of the tower shall be finished, they shall all feast together beside the tower, and shall glorify God, because the structure of the tower is finished.

47 I asked her, saying, I would know the condition of the stones, and what the meaning of them is?

48 She answering, said unto me, Art thou better than all others that this should be revealed unto thee? For others are both before thee and better than thou art, to whom these visions should be made manifest.

49 Nevertheless, that the name of God may be glorified, it has been shown and shall be revealed unto thee, for the sake of those who are doubtful, and think in their hearts whether these things are so or not.

50 Tell them that all these things are true, and that there is nothing in them that is not true but all are firm and truly established.

51 Hear now then concerning the stones that are in the building.

52 The square and white stones which agree exactly in their joints, are the apostles, and bishops, and doctors, and ministers, who through the mercy of God have come in, and governed, and taught and ministered holily and modestly to the elect of God, both they that have fallen asleep, and which yet remain; and have always agreed with them, and have had peace within themselves, and have heard each other.

53 For which cause their joints exactly meet together in the building of the tower.

54 They which are drawn out of the deep and put into the building, and whose joints agree with the other stones which are already built, are those which are already fallen asleep, and have suffered for the sake of the Lord's name.

55 And what are the other stones, lady, that are brought from the earth? I would know what are they.

56 She answered, They which lie upon the ground and are not polished, are those which God has approved, because they have walked in I the law of the Lord, and directed their ways in his commandments.

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57 They which are brought and put in the building of the tower, are the young in faith and the faithful. And these are admonished by the angels to do well because iniquity is not found in them.

58 But who are those whom they rejected, and laid beside the tower?

59 They are such as have sinned and are willing to repent; for which cause they are not cast far from the tower, because they will be useful for the building, if they shall repent.

60 They therefore that are yet to repent, if they repent they shall become strong in the faith; that is, if they repent now, whilst the tower is building. For if the building shall be finished there will then be no place for them to be put in, but they shall be rejected; for he only has this privilege who shall now be put into the tower.

61 But would you know who they are that were cut out, and cast afar off from the tower? Lady said I, I desire it.

62 They are the children of iniquity, who believed only in hypocrisy, and departed not from their evil ways; for this cause they shall not be saved, because they are not of any use in the building by reason of their sins.

63 Wherefore they are cut out, and cast afar off, because of the anger of the Lord, and because they have provoked him to anger against them.

64 As for the great number of other stones which thou hast seen placed about the tower, but now put into the building; those which are rugged, are they who have known the truth, but have not continued in it, nor been joined to the saints, and therefore are unprofitable.

65 Those that have clefts in them, are they that keep up discord in their hearts against each other, and live not in peace; that are friendly when present with their brethren, but as soon as they are departed from one another, their wickedness still continues in their hearts: these are the clefts which are seen in those stones.

66 Those that are maimed and short, are they who have believed indeed, but still are in great measure full of wickedness; for this cause they are maimed and not whole.

67 But what are the white and round stones, lady, and which are not proper for the building of the tower?

68 She answering said unto me: How long wilt thou continue foolish and without understanding, asking everything and discerning nothing?

69 They are such as have faith indeed, but have withal the riches of this present world. When therefore any troubles arise, for the sake of their riches and traffic, they deny the Lord.

70 I answering, said unto her, When therefore will they be profitable to the Lord? When their riches shall be cut away, says she, in which they take delight, then they will be profitable unto the Lord for his building.

71 For as a round stone, unless it be cut away and is cast somewhat of its bulk, cannot be made square, so they who are rich in this world; unless their riches be pared off; cannot be made profitable unto the Lord.

72 Learn this from thy own experience: when thou wert rich, thou wast unprofitable; but now thou art profitable, and fit for the life which thou hast undertaken; for thou also once was one of those stones.

73 As for the rest of the stones which thou sawest cast afar off from the tower, and running in the way, and tumbled out of the way into desert places; they are such as have believed indeed, but through their doubting have forsaken the true way, thinking that they could find a better. But they wander and are miserable, going into

desolate ways.

74 Then for those stones which fell into the fire and were burnt, they are those who have for ever departed from the living God; nor doth it ever come into their hearts to repent, by reason of the affection which they bear to their lusts and wickedness which they commit.

75 And what are the rest which fell by the water, and could not roll into the water?

76 They are such as have heard the word, and were willing to be baptised in the name of the Lord; but considering the great holiness which the truth requires, have withdrawn themselves, and walked again after wicked lusts.

77 Thus she finished the explanation of the tower.

78 But I being still urgent, asked her, Is there repentance allowed to all those stones which are thus cast away, and were not suitable to the building of the tower; and shall they find place in this tower?

79 They may repent, said she, yet they cannot come into this tower; but, they shall be placed in a much lower rank, and then only after they shall have been afflicted and fulfilled the days of their sins.

80 And for this cause they shall be removed, because they have received the word of righteousness: and then they shall be translated from their afflictions, if they shall have a true sense in their hearts of what they have done amiss.

81 But if they shall not have this sense in their hearts, they shall not be saved by reason of the hardness of their hearts.

82 When therefore I had done asking her concerning all these things, she said unto me, Wilt thou see something else? And being desirous of seeing it, I became very cheerful of countenances.

83 She therefore looking back upon me, and smiling a little, said unto me, Seest thou seven women about the tower? Lady, said I, I see them.

84 This tower, replied she, is supported by them, according to the command of the Lord: hear therefore the effects of them.

85 The first of them, which holds fast with her hand, is called Faith; The next, which is girt up, and looks manly, is named Abstinence: she is the daughter of Faith.

86 Whosoever therefore shall follow her shall be happy in all his life, because he shall abstain from all evil works, believing that if he shall contain himself from all concupiscence, he shall be the heir of eternal life. And what, lady, said I, are the other five?

87 They are, replied she, the daughters of one another. The first of them is called Simplicity; the next Innocence; the third Modesty; then Discipline; and the last of all is Charity. When therefore thou shalt have fulfilled the works of their mother, thou shalt be able to do all things.

88 Lady, said I, I would know what particular virtue every one of these has.

89 Hear then, replied she; they have equal virtues, and their virtues are knit together, and follow one another as they were born.

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90 From Faith proceeds Abstinence; from Abstinence, Simplicity; from Simplicity, Innocence; from Innocence, Modesty; from Modesty, Discipline and Charity. Therefore the works of these are holy, and chaste, and right.

91 Whoever therefore shall serve these, and hold fast to their works, he shall have his dwelling in the tower with the saints of God.

92 Then I asked her concerning the times, whether tke end were now at hand?

93 But she cried out with a loud voice, saying, O foolish man! Dost thou not see the tower yet a building? When therefore the tower shall be finished, and built, it shall have an end; and indeed it shall soon be accomplished.

94 But do not ask me any more questions. What has been said may suffice thee and all the saints for the refreshment of your spirits. For these things have not been revealed to thee only, but that thou mayest make them manifest unto all.

95 For therefore, O Hermas, after three days thou must under- stand these words which I begin to speak unto thee, that thou mayest speak them in the ears of the saints; that when thou shall have heard and done them, they may be cleansed from their iniquities, and thou together with them.

96 Hear me therefore, O my sons! I have bred you up in much simplicity, and innocency, and modesty, for the love of God, which has dropped down upon you in righteousness, that you should be sanctified and justified from all sin and wickedness; but ye will not cease from your evil doings.

97 Now therefore hearken unto me, and have peace one with another, and visit one another, and receive one another, and do not enjoy the creatures of God alone.

98 Give freely to them that are in need. For some by too free feeding contract an infirmity in their flesh, and do injury to their bodies; whilst the flesh of others, who have not food, withers away, because they want sufficient nourishment, and the bodies are consumed.

99 Wherefore this intemperance is hurtful to you, who have, and do not contribute to them that want. Prepare for the judgment that is about to come upon you.

100 Ye that are the more eminent, search out them that are hungry, whilst the tower is yet unfinished. For when the tower shall be finished, ye shall be willing to do good, and shall not find any place in it.

101 Beware, therefore, ye that glory in your riches, lest perhaps they groan who are in want, and their sighing come up unto God, and ye be shut out with your goods without the gate of the tower.

102 Behold I now warn you who are set over the church, and love the highest seats, be not ye like unto those that work mischief.

103 And they indeed carry about their poison in boxes, but ye contain your poison and infection in your hearts, and will not purge them, and mix your sense with a pure heart, that ye might find mercy with the Great King.

104 Take heed, my children, that your dissensions deprive you not of your lives. How will ye instruct the elect of God, when ye yourselves want correction? Wherefore admonish one another, and be at peace among yourselves, that I, standing before your Father, may give an account of you unto the Lord.

105 And when she had made an end of talking with me, the six young men that built, came and carried her to the tower; and four others took up the seat on which she sat, and they also went away again to the tower. I saw not the

faces of these, for their backs were towards me.

106 As she was going away, I asked her, that she would reveal to me what concerned the three forms, in which she had appeared unto me.

107 But she answering said unto me, concerning these things thou must ask some other, that they may be revealed unto thee.

108 Now, brethren, in the first vision the last year, she appeared unto me exceedingly old, and sitting in a chair.

109 In another vision, she had indeed a youthful face, but her flesh and hair were old; but she talked with me standing, and was more cheerful than the first time.

110 In the third vision, she was in all respects much younger, and comely to the eye; only she had the hair of an aged person: yet she looked cheerful, and sat upon a seat.

111 I was therefore very sad concerning these things, until I might understand the vision.

112 Wherefore I saw the same old woman in a vision of the night saying unto me, All prayer needeth humiliation. Fast, therefore, and thou shalt learn from the Lord that which thou dost ask. I fasted therefore one day.

113 The same night a young man appeared to me and said, Why dost thou thus often desire Revelations in thy prayers? Take heed that by asking many things, thou hurt not the body. Let these Revelations suffice thee.

114 Canst thou see more notable Revelations than those which thou hast already received?

115 I answered and said unto him, Sir, I only ask this one thing upon the account of the three figures of the old woman that appeared to me, that the Revelation may be complete.

116 He answered me, You are not without understanding, but your doubts make you so; for as much as you have not your heart with the Lord.

117 I replied and said, But we shall learn these things more carefully from you.

118 Hear then, says he, concerning the figures about which you inquire.

119 To begin; in the first vision she appeared to thee in the shape of an old woman sitting in, a chair, because your old spirit was decayed, and without strength, by reason of your infirmities, and the doubtfulness of your heart.

120 For as they who are old have no hope of renewing them— selves, nor expect any thing but their departure; so you being weakened through your worldly affairs gave yourself up to sloth, and cast not away your solicitude from yourself upon the Lord: and your sense was confused, and you grew old in your sadness.

121 But, sir, I would know why she sat upon a chair?

122 He answered, because every one that is weak sitteth upon a chair by reason of his infirmity, that his weakness may be upheld. Behold therefore the figure of the first vision.

123 In the second vision you saw her standing, and having a youthful face, and more cheerful than her former; but her flesh and her hair were ancient. Hear, said he, this parable also.

Forbidden Gospels and Epistles, v9

124 When any one grows old, he despairs of himself by reason of his infirmity and poverty, and expects nothing but the last day of his life.

125 But on a sudden an inheritance is left to him, and he hears of it, and rises: and being become cheerful, he puts on new strength. And now he no longer sits down, but stands, and is delivered from his former sorrow; and sits not, but acts manfully.

126 So you, having heard the Revelation which God revealed unto you, because God had compassion upon you, and renewed your spirit, both laid aside your infirmities, and strength came to you, and you grew strong in the faith; and God, seeing your strength, rejoiced.

127 For this cause he showed you the building of the tower, and will show other things unto you, if you shall have peace with all your heart among each other.

128 But in the third vision you saw her yet younger, fair and cheerful, and of a serene countenance.

129 For, as if some good news comes to him that is sad, he straightway forgets his sadness, and regards nothing else but the good news which he has heard; and for the rest he is comforted, and his spirit is renewed through the joy which he has received even so you have been refreshed in your spirit by seeing these good things.

130 And for that you saw her sitting upon a bench, it denotes a strong position; because a bench has four feet, and stands strongly. And even the world itself is upheld by the four elements.

131 They therefore that repent perfectly, shall be young; and they that turn from their sins with their whole heart, shall be established.

132 And now you have the Revelation fully, ask no more to have any thing farther revealed unto you.

133 But if any thing is to be revealed, it shall be made manifest unto you.

VISION IV.

Of the trial, and tribulation that is about to come upon men.

I SAW a vision brethren, twenty days after the former vision; a representation of the tribulation that is at hand. I was walking in the field way.

2 Now from the public way to the place whither I went is about ten furlongs; it is a way very little frequented:

3 And as I was walking alone, I entreated the Lord that he would confirm the Revelations which he had shown unto me by his Holy Church.

4 And would grant repentance to all his servants who had been offended, that his great and honourable name might be glorified, and because he thought me worthy to whom he might show his wonders, and, that I might honour him, and give thanks unto him.

5 And behold somewhat like a voice answered me; Doubt not, Hermas. Wherefore I began to think, and say within myself, why should I doubt, seeing I am thus settled by the Lord, and have seen such glorious things?

Forbidden Gospels and Epistles, v9

6 I had gone but a little farther, brethren, when behold I saw a dust rise up to heaven. I began to say within myself, is there a drove of cattle coming, that rises such a dust?

7 It was about a furlong off from me. And behold I saw the dust rise more and more, insomuch that I began to suspect that there was somewhat extraordinary in it.

8 And the sun shone a little; and behold I saw a great beast, as it were a whale; and fiery locusts came out of his mouth. The height of the beast was about a hundred feet, and he had a head like a large earthen vessel.

9 I began to weep, and to pray unto the Lord that he would deliver me from it. Then I called to mind the word which I had heard; Doubt not, Hermas.

10 Wherefore, brethren, putting on a divine faith, and remembering who it was that had taught me great things, I delivered myself bodily unto the beast.

11 Now the beast came on in such a manner, as if it could at once have devoured a city.

12 I came near unto it, and the beast extended its whole bulk upon the ground, and put forth nothing but its tongue, nor once moved itself till I had quite passed by it.

13 Now the beast had upon its head four colours; first black, then a red and bloody colour, then a golden, and then a white.

14 After that I had passed by it, and was gone forward about thirty feet, behold there met me a certain virgin, well adorned as if she had been just come out of her bride-chamber; all in white, having on white shoes, and a veil down her face, and covered with shining hair.

15 Now I knew by my former visions that it was the church, and thereupon grew the more cheerful. She saluted me, saying, Hail, O Man! I returned the salutation, saying, Lady, Hail!

16 She answering said unto me, Did nothing meet you, O man! I replied, Lady, there met me such a beast, as seemed able to devour a whole people; but by the power of God, and through his singular mercy, I escaped it.

17 Thou didst escape it well, said she, because thou didst cast thy whole care upon God, and opened thy heart unto him, believing that thou couldst be safe by no other than by his great and honourable name.

18 For this cause the Lord sent his angel, who is over the beast, whose name is Hegrin, and stopped his mouth, that he should not devour thee, Thou hast escaped a great trial through thy faith, and because thou didst not doubt for such a terrible beast.

19 Go, therefore, and relate to the elect of God the great things that he hath done for thee. And thou shalt say unto them, that this beast is the figure of the trial that is about to come.

20 If, therefore, ye shall have prepared yourselves, ye may escape it, if your hearts be pure and without spot; and if ye shall serve God all the rest of your days without complaint.

21 Cast all your care upon the Lord, and he will direct them. Believe in God, ye doubtful, because he can do all things; he can both turn away his wrath from you, and send you help and security.

22 Woe to the doubtful, to those who shall hear these words, and shall despise them: it had been better for them that they had not been born.

23 Then I asked her concerning the four colours which the beast had upon its head. But she answered me saying; Again thou art curious in that thou asketh concerning these things. But I said to her, Lady, chew me what they are?

24 Hear, said she; The black which thou sawest denotes the world in which you dwell. The fiery and bloody colour signifies that this age must be destroyed by fire and blood.

25 The golden part are ye, who have escaped out of it; for as gold is tried by the fire, and is made profitable, so are ye also in like manner tried who dwell among the men of this world.

26 They therefore, that shall endure to the end, and be proved by them, shall be purged. And as gold, by this trial, is cleansed and loses its dross, so shall ye also cast away all sorrow and trouble, and be made pure for the building of the tower.

27 But the white colour denotes the time of the world which is to come, in which the elect of God shall dwell: because the elect of God shall be pure and without spot until life eternal.

28 Wherefore do not thou cease to speak these thing in the ears of the saints. Here ye have the figure of the great tribulation that is about to come; which, if you please, shall be nothing to you.

29 When she had spoken thus much, she departed; but I saw not whither she went. But suddenly I heard a noise, and I turned back, being afraid, for I thought that the beast was coming toward me.

THE SECOND PART OF THE BOOK OF HERMAS, CALLED HIS COMMANDS.

Introduction.

WHEN I had prayed at home, and was sat down upon the bed, a certain man came in to me with a reverend look, in the habit of a Shepherd, clothed with a white cloak, having his bag upon his back, and his staff in his hand, and saluted me.

2 I returned his salutation, and immediately he sat down by me, and said unto me, I am sent by that venerable messenger, that I should dwell with thee all the remaining days of thy life.

3 But I thought that he was come to try me, and said unto him, Who are you? For I know to whom I am committed. He said unto me, Do you not know me? I answered no. I am, said he, that shepherd to whose care you are delivered.

4 Whilst he was yet speaking, his shape was changed; and when I knew that it was he to whom I was committed, I was ashamed, and a sudden fear came upon me, and I was utterly overcome with sadness, because I had spoken so foolishly unto him.

5 But he said unto me, Be not ashamed, but receive strength in thy mind, through the commands which I am about to deliver unto thee. For, said he, I am sent to show unto thee all those things again, which thou hast seen before, but especially such of them as may be of most use unto thee.

6 And first of all write my Commands and Similitudes, the rest thou shall so write as I shall show unto thee. But I therefore bid thee first of all write my Commands and Similitudes, that by often reading of them thou mayest the

more easily keep them in memory.

7 Whereupon I wrote his Commands and Similitudes, as he bade me.

8 Which things if when you have heard, ye shall observe to do them, and shall walk according to them, and exercise yourselves in them with a pure mind, ye shall receive from the Lord those things which he has promised unto you.

9 But if having heard them ye shall not repent, but shall still go on to add to your sins, ye shall be punished by him.

10 All these things that Shepherd, the angel of repentance, commanded me to write.

COMMAND I.

Of believing in one God.

FIRST of all believe that there is one God who created and brought all things out of nothing into existence.

2 He comprehends all things, and is only INFINITE, not to be comprehended by any.

3 Who can neither be defined by any words, nor conceived by the mind.

4 Therefore believe in him, and fear him; and fearing him abstain from all evil.

5 Keep these things, and cast all lust and iniquity far from thee, and put on righteousness, and thou shalt live to God, if thou shalt keep his commandment.

COMMAND II.

That we must avoid detraction, and do our
alms–deeds with simplicity.

HE said unto me, Be innocent and without disguise; so shalt thou be like an infant who knows no malice which destroys the life of man.

2 Especially see that thou speak evil of none, nor willingly hear any one speak evil of others.

3 For if thou observest not this, thou also who hearest shall be partaker of the sin of him that speaketh evil, by believing the slander, and thou also shalt have sin, because thou believedst him that spoke evil of thy brother.

4 Detraction is a pernicious thing; an inconstant, evil spirit; that never continues in peace, but is always in discord. Wherefore refrain thyself from it, and keep peace ever more with thy brother.

5 Put on an holy constancy, in which there are no sins, but all is full of joy; and do good of thy labours.

6 Give without distinction to all that are in want, not doubting to whom thou givest.

7 But give to all, for God will have us give to all, of all his own gifts. They therefore that receive shall give an account to God, both wherefore they received and for what end.

Forbidden Gospels and Epistles, v9

8 And they that receive without real need, shall give an account for it; but he that gives shall be innocent.

9 For he has fulfilled his duty as he received it from God; not making any choice to whom he should give, and to whom not. And this service he did with simplicity and to the glory of God.

10 Keep therefore this command according as I have delivered it into thee: that thy repentance may be found to be sincere, and that good may come to thy house; and have a pure heart.

COMMAND III.

Of avoiding lying, and the repentance of Hermas
for his dissimulation.

MOREOVER he said unto me love truth; and let all the speech be true which proceeds out of thy mouth.

2 That the spirit which the Lord hath given to dwell in thy flesh may be found true towards all men; and the Lord be glorified, who hath given such a spirit unto thee: because God is true in all his words, and in him there is no lie.

3 They therefore that lie, deny the Lord, and become robbers of the Lord, not rendering to God what they received from him.

4 For they received the spirit free from lying: If therefore they make that a liar, they defile what was committed to them by the Lord, and become deceivers.

5 When I heard this, I wept bitterly; and when he saw me weeping, he said unto me, Why weepest thou? And I said, Because, sir, I doubt whether I can be saved.

6 He asked me, Wherefore? I replied, Because, sir, I never spake a true word in my life; but always lived in dissimulation, and affirmed a lie for truth to all men; and no man contradicted me, but all gave credit to my words. How then can I live, seeing I have done in this manner?

7 And he said unto me, Thou thinkest well and truly; for thou oughtest, as the servant of God, to have walked in the truth, and not have joined an evil conscience with the spirit of truth, nor have grieved the holy and true Spirit of God.

8 And I replied unto him, Sir, I never before hearkened so diligently to these things. He answered, Now thou hearest them Take care from henceforth, that even those things which thou hast formerly spoken falsely for the sake of thy business, may, by thy present truth receive pardon.

9 For even those things may be forgiven, if for the time to come thou shalt speak the truth; and by so doing thou mayest attain unto life.

10 And whosoever shall hearken unto this command, and do it, and shall depart from all lying, he shall live unto God.

COMMAND IV.

Of putting away one's wife for adultery.

FURTHERMORE, said he, I command thee, that thou keep thyself chaste; and that thou suffer not any thought of any other marriage, or of fornication, to enter into thy heart; for such a thought produces great sin.

Forbidden Gospels and Epistles, v9

2 But be thou at all times mindful of the Lord, and thou shalt never sin. For if such an evil thought should arise in thy heart, then thou shalt be guilty of a great sin; and they who do such things, follow the way of death.

3 Look therefore to thyself, and keep thyself from such a thought; for where chastity remains in the heart of a righteous man, there an evil thought ought never to arise.

4 And I said unto him, Sir, suffer me to speak a little to you. He bade me say on. And I answered, Sir, if a man that is faithful in the Lord shall have a wife, and shall catch her in adultery; doth a man sin that continues to live still with her?

5 And he said unto me, As long as he is ignorant of her sin, he commits no fault in living with her; but if a man shall know his wife to, have offended, and she shall not repent of her sin, but go on still in her fornication, and a man shall continue nevertheless to live with her, he shall become guilty of her sin, and partake with her in her adultery.

6 And I said unto him, What therefore is to be done, if the woman continues on in her sin? He answered, Let her husband put her away, and let him continue by himself; but if he shall put away his wife and marry another, he also doth commit adultery.

7 And I said, What, if the woman that is so put away, should repent, and be willing to return to her husband, shall she not be received by him? He said unto me, Yes; and if her husband shall not receive her, he will sin, and commit a great offence against himself; for he ought to receive the offender, if she repents: only not often.

8 For, to the servants of God, there is but one repentance; and for this cause a man that putteth away his wife ought not to take another, because she may repent.

9 This act is alike both in the man and in the woman. Now they commit adultery, not only who pollute their flesh, but who also make an image. If there— fore a woman perseveres in any thing of this kind, and repents not, depart from her; and live not with her, otherwise thou also shalt be partaker of her sin.

10 But it is therefore commanded that both the man and the woman should remain unmarried, because such persons may repent.

11 Nor do I in this administer any occasion for the doing of these things; but rather that whoso has offended, should not offend any more.

12 But for their former sins, God who has the power of healing will give a remedy; for he has the power of all things.

13 I asked him again, and said, Seeing the Lord hath thought me worthy that thou shouldest dwell with me continually, speak a few words unto me, because I understand nothing, and my heart is hardened through my former conversation; and open my understanding because I am very dull, and apprehend nothing at all.

14 And he answering said unto me, I am the minister of repentance, and give understanding to all that repent. Does it not seem to thee to be a very wise thing to repent? Because he that does so gets great understanding.

15 For he is sensible that he hath sinned and done wickedly in the sight of the Lord, and he remembers within himself that he has offended, and repents and does no more wickedly, but does that which is good, and humbles his soul and afflicts it, because he has offended. You see therefore that repentance is great wisdom.

Forbidden Gospels and Epistles, v9

16 And I said unto him, For this cause, sir, I inquire diligently into all things, because I am a sinner, that I may know what I must do that I may live; because my sins are many.

17 And he said unto me, Thou shalt live if thou shalt keep these my commandments. And whosoever shall hear and do these commands shall live unto God.

18 And I said unto him, I have even now heard from certain teachers, that there is no other repentance beside that of baptism, when we go down into the water, and receive the forgiveness of our sins; and that after that, we must sin no more, but live in purity.

19 And he said unto me, Thou hast been rightly informed. Never—the—less seeing now thou inquirest diligently into all things, I will manifest this also unto thee; yet not so as to give any occasion of sinning, either to those who shall hereafter believe, or to those who have already believed in the Lord.

20 For neither they who have newly believed, or shall hereafter believe, have any repentance of sins, but forgiveness of them.

21 But as to those who have been called to the faith, and since that are fallen into any gross sin, the Lord hath appointed repentance, because God knoweth the thoughts of all men's hearts, and their infirmities, and the manifold wickedness of the devil, who is always contriving something against the servants of God, and maliciously lays snares for them.

22 Therefore our merciful Lord had compassion towards his creature, and appointed that repentance, and gave unto me the power of it. And therefore I say unto thee, if any one after that great and holy calling shall be tempted by the devil and sin, he has one repentance. But if he shall often sin and repent, it shall not profit such a one; for he shall hardly live unto God.

23 And I said, Sir, I am restored again to life since I have thus diligently hearkened to these commands. For I perceive that if I shall not hereafter add any more of my sins, I shall be saved.

24 And he said, Thou shalt be saved: and so shall all others, as many as shall observe these commandments.

25 And again I said unto him, Sir, seeing thou hearest me patiently, show me yet one thing more. Tell me, saith he, what it is.

26 And I said, If a husband or a wife die, and the party which survives marry again, does he sin in so doing? He that marries says he, sins not: howbeit, if he shall remain single, he shall thereby gain to himself great honour before the Lord.

27 Keep therefore thy chastity and modesty, and thou shalt live unto God. Observe from henceforth those things which I speak with thee, and command thee to observe, from the time that I have been delivered unto thee, and dwell in thy house.

28 So shall thy former sins be forgiven, if thou shalt keep these my commandments. And in like manner shall all others be forgiven, who shall observe these my commandments.

COMMAND V.

Of the sadness of the heart, and of patience.

Forbidden Gospels and Epistles, v9

Be patient, says he, and long– suffering; so shalt thou have dominion over all wicked works, and shall fulfil all righteousness.

2 For if thou shalt be patient, the Holy Spirit which dwelleth in thee shall be pure, and not be darkened by any evil spirit; but being full of joy shall be enlarged, and feast in the body in which it dwells, and serve the Lord with joy, and in great peace.

3 But if any anger shall overtake thee, presently the Holy Spirit which is in thee will be straightened and seek to depart from thee.

4 For he is choked by the evil spirit, and has not the liberty of serving the Lord as he would; for he is grieved by anger. When, therefore, both these spirits dwell together, it is destructive to a man.

5 As if one should take a little wormwood, and put it into a vessel of honey, the whole honey would be spoiled; and a great quantity of honey is corrupted by a very little wormwood, and loses the sweetness of honey, and is no longer acceptable to its Lord because the whole honey is made bitter, and loses its use.

6 But if no wormwood be put into the honey, it is sweet and profitable to its Lord. Thus is forbearance sweeter than honey, and profitable to the Lord who dwelleth in it.

7 But anger is unprofitable. If therefore anger shall be mixed with forbearance, the soul is distressed, and its prayer is not profitable with God.

8 And I said unto him, Sir, I would know the sinfulness of anger, that I may keep myself from it. And he said unto me, Thou shalt know it; and if thou shalt not keep thyself from it, thou shalt lose thy hope with all thy house. Wherefore depart from it.

9 For I the messenger of righteousness am with thee, and all that depart from it: as many as shall repent with all their hearts, shall live unto God; and I will be with them, and will keep them all.

10 For all such as have repented have been justified by the most holy messenger, who is a minister of salvation.

11 And now, says he, hear the wickedness of anger; how evil and hurtful is it, and how it overthrows the servants of God; for it cannot hurt those that are full of faith because the power of God is with them; but it over– throws the doubtful, and those that are destitute of faith.

12 For as often as it sees such men, it casts itself into their hearts; and so a man or woman is in bitterness for nothing: for the things of life, or for sustenance, or for a vain word, if any should chance to fall in; or by reason of any friend, or for a debt, or for any other superfluous things of the like nature.

13 For these things are foolish, and superfluous, and vain to the servants of God. But equanimity is strong, and forcible; and of great power, and sitteth in great enlargement; is cheerful, rejoicing in peace; and glorifying God at all times I with meekness.

14 And this long–suffering dwells with those that are full of faith. But anger is foolish, and light, and empty. Now bitterness is bred through folly; by bitterness, anger; by anger, fury; and this fury arising from so many evil principles, worketh a great and incurable sin.

15 For when all these things, are in the same man in which the Holy Spirit dwells, the vessel cannot contain them, but runs over: and because the Spirit being tender cannot tarry with the evil one; it departs and dwells with him that is meek.

Forbidden Gospels and Epistles, v9

16 When, therefore, it is departed from the man in whom it dwelt, that man becomes destitute of the Holy Spirit, and is afterwards filled with wicked spirits, and is blinded with evil thoughts. Thus doth it happen to all angry men.

17 Wherefore depart then from anger, and put on equanimity, and resist: wrath; so then shalt be found with modesty and chastity by God. Take good heed, therefore, that thou neglect not this commandment.

18. For if thou shalt obey this command, then thou shalt also be able to observe the other commandments which I shall command thee.

19 Wherefore strengthen thyself now in these commands, that thou mayest live unto God. And whosoever shall observe these commandments shall live unto God.

COMMAND VI.

That every man has two angels and of the suggestions of both.

I COMMANDED thee, said he, in my first commandments, that thou shouldst keep faith and fear, and repentance. Yes, sir, said I.

2 He continued. But now I will shew thee the virtues of these commands, that thou mayest know their effects; how they are prescribed alike to the just and unjust.

3 Do thou therefore believe the righteous, but give no credit to the unrighteous. For righteousness keepeth the right way, but unrighteousness the wicked way.

4 Do thou therefore keep the right way, and leave that which is evil. For the evil way has not a good end, but hath many stumbling-blocks; it is rugged and full of thorns, and leads to destruction; and it is hurtful to all such as walk in it.

5 But they who go in the right way walk with evenness, and without offence; because it is not rough nor thorny.

6 Thou seest therefore how it is best to walk in this way. Thou shalt therefore go, says he, and all others, as many as believe in God with all their heart, shall go through it.

7 And now, says he, I understand first of all what belongs to faith. There are two angels with man; one of righteousness, the other of iniquity.

8 And I said unto him, Sir, how shall I know that there are two such angels with man? Hear, says he, and understand.

9 The angel of righteousness, is mild and modest, and gentle, and quiet. When, therefore, he gets into thy heart, immediately he talks with thee of righteousness, of modesty, of chastity, of bountifulness, of forgiveness, of charity, and piety.

10 When all these things come into thy heart, know then that the angel of righteousness is with thee. Wherefore hearken to this angel and to his works.

11 Learn also the works of the angel of iniquity. He is first of all bitter, and angry, and foolish; and his works are pernicious, and overthrow the servants of God. When therefore these things come into thine heart; thou shalt

know by his works, that this is the angel of iniquity.

12 And I said unto him, Sir, how shall I understand these things? Hear, says he, and understand; When anger overtakes thee, or bitterness, know that he is in thee:

13 As also, when the desire of many things, and of the best meats, and of drunkenness; when the love of what belongs to others, pride, and much speaking, and ambition; and the like things, come upon thee.

14 When therefore these things arise in thine heart, know that the angel of iniquity is with thee. Seeing therefore thou knowest his works, depart from them all, and give no credit to him: because his works are evil, and become not the servants of God.

15 Here therefore thou hast the works of both these angels. Understand now and believe the angel of righteousness, because his instruction is good.

16 For let a man be never so happy; yet if the thoughts of the other angel arise in his heart, that man or woman must needs sin.

17 But let man or woman be never so wicked, if the works of the angel of righteousness come into their hearts, that man or woman must needs do some good.

18 Thou seest therefore how it is good to follow the angel of righteousness. If therefore thou shall follow him, and submit to his works, thou shalt live unto God. And as many as shall submit to his work shall live also unto God.

COMMAND VII.

That we must fear God but not the Devil.

FEAR God, says he, and keep his commandments. For if thou keepest his commandments thou shalt be powerful in every work, and all thy works shall be excellent. For by fearing God, thou shalt do everything well.

2 This is that fear with which thou must be affected that thou mayest be saved. But fear not the Devil: for if thou fearest the Lord, thou shalt have dominion over him; because there is no power in him.

3 Now if there be no power in him, then neither is he to be feared: for every one that has power, is to be feared. But he that has no power is despised by every one.

4 Fear the works of the Devil, because they are evil. For by fearing the Lord, thou wilt fear and do not the works of the Devil, but keep thyself from them.

5 There is therefore a twofold fear; if thou wilt not do evil, fear the Lord and thou shalt not do it. But if thou wilt do good, the fear of the Lord is strong, and great and glorious.

6 Wherefore, fear God and thou shalt live: and whosoever shall fear him, and keep his commandments, their life is with the Lord. But they who keep them not, neither is there life in them.

COMMAND VIII.

That we must flee from evil, and do good works.

Forbidden Gospels and Epistles, v9

I HAVE told thee, said he, that there are two kinds of creatures of the Lord, and that there is a two-fold abstinence. From some things therefore thou must abstain, and from others not.

2 I answered, Declare to me, sir, from what I must abstain, and from what not. Hearken, said he, Keep thyself from evil, and do it not; yet abstain not from good, but do it. For if thou shalt abstain from what is good, and not do it, thou shalt sin. Abstain therefore from all evil, and thou shalt know all righteousness.

3 I said, What evil things are they from which I must abstain? Hearken, said he; from adultery, from drunkenness, from riots, from excess of eating, from daintiness and dishonesty, from pride, from fraud, from lying, from detraction, from hypocrisy, from remembrance of injuries, and from all evil speaking.

4 For these are the works of iniquity, from which the servant of God must abstain. For he that cannot keep himself from these things, cannot live unto God.

5 But hear, said he, what follows of these kind of things: for indeed many more there are from which the servant of God must abstain. From theft, and cheating; from false witness, from covetousness, from boasting, and all other things of the like nature.

6 Do these things seem to thee to be evil or not? Indeed they are very evil to the servants of God, Wherefore the servant of God must abstain from all these works.

7 Keep thyself therefore from them, that thou mayest live unto God, and be written among those that abstain from them. And thus have I shown thee what things thou must avoid: now learn from what thou must not abstain.

8 Abstain not from any good works, but do them. Hear, said he, what the virtue of those good works is which thou must do, that thou mayest be saved. The first of all is faith; the fear of the Lord; charity; concord; equity; truth; patience; chastity.

9 There is nothing better than these things in the life of men; who shall keep and do these things in their life. Hear next what follow these.

10 To minister to the widows; not to despise the fatherless and poor; to redeem the servants of God from necessity; to be hospitable (for in hospitality there is sometimes great fruit); not to be contentious, but be quiet.

11 To be humble above all men; to reverence the aged; to labour to be righteous; to respect the brotherhood; to bear affronts; to be long-suffering; not to cast away those that have fallen from the faith, but to convert them, and make them be of good cheer: to admonish sinners; not to oppress those that are our debtors; and all other things of a like kind.

12 Do these things seem to thee to be good or not? And I said, What can be better than these words? Live then, said he, in these commandments, and do not depart from them. For if thou shalt keep all these commandments, thou shalt live unto God. And all they that shall keep these commandments shall live unto God.

COMMAND IX.

That we must ask of God daily;
and without doubting.

AGAIN he said unto me; remove from thee all doubting; and question nothing at all when thou askest any thing of the Lord; saying within thyself, how shall I be able to ask any thing of the Lord and receive it, seeing I have so greatly sinned against him?

Forbidden Gospels and Epistles, v9

2 Do not think thus, but turn unto the Lord with all thy heart, and ask of him without doubting, and thou shalt know the mercy of the Lord; bow that he will not forsake thee, but will fulfil the request of thy soul.

3 For God is not as men, mindful of the injuries he has received; but he forgets injuries, and has compassion upon his creature.

4 Wherefore purify thy heart from all the vices of this present world; and observe the commands I have before delivered unto thee from God; and thou shalt receive whatsoever good things thou shalt ask, and nothing shall be wanting unto thee of all thy petitions; if thou shalt ask of the Lord without doubting.

5 But they that are not such, shall obtain none of those things which they ask. For they that are full of faith, ask all things with confidence, and receive from the Lord, because they ask without doubting. But he that doubts, shall hardly live unto God, except he repent.

6 Wherefore purify thy heart from doubting, and put on faith, and trust in God, and thou shalt receive all that thou shalt ask. But if thou shouldst chance to ask something, and not immediately receive it, yet do not therefore doubt, because thou hast not presently received the petition of thy soul.

7 For it may be thou shalt not presently receive it for thy trial, or else for some sin which thou knowest not. But do not thou leave off to ask, and then thou shalt receive. Else if thou shalt cease to ask, thou must complain of thyself, and not of God, that he has not given unto thee what thou didst desire.

8 Consider therefore this doubting how cruel and pernicious it is; and how it utterly roots out many from the faith, who were very faithful and firm. For this doubting is the daughter of the Devil, and deals very wickedly with the servants of God.

9 Despise it therefore, and thou shalt rule over it on every occasion. Put on a firm and powerful faith: for faith promises all things and perfects all things. But doubting will not believe that it shall obtain any thing by all that it can do.

10. Thou seest therefore, says he, how faith cometh from above from God; and hath great power. But doubting is an earthly spirit, and proceedeth from the Devil, and has no strength.

11 Do thou therefore keep the virtue of faith, and depart from doubting, in which is no virtue, and thou shalt live unto God. And all shall live unto God, as many as do these things.

COMMAND X.

Of the sadness of the heart; and that we must take, heed not to grieve the spirit of God that is in us.

PUT all sadness far from thee; for it is the sister of doubting and of anger. How, sir, said I is it the sister of these? For sadness, and anger, and doubting, seem to me to be very different from one another.

2 And he answered: Art thou without sense that thou dost not understand it? For sadness is the most mischievous of all spirits, and the worst to the servants of God: It destroys the spirits of all men, and torments the Holy Spirit, and it saves again.

3 Sir, said I, I am very foolish, and understand not these things. I cannot apprehend how it can torment, and yet save. Hear, said he, and understand. They who never sought out the truth, nor inquired concerning the majesty of

God, but only believed, are involved in the affairs of the heathen.

4 And there is another lying prophet that destroys the minds of the servants of God; that is of those that are doubtful, not of those that fully trust in the Lord. Now those doubtful persons come to him, as to a divine spirit, and inquire of him what shall befall them.

5 And this lying prophet, having no power in him of the Divine Spirit, answers them according to their demands, and fills their souls with promises according as they desire. Howbeit that prophet is vain, and answers vain things to those who are themselves vain.

6 And whatsoever is asked of him by vain men, he answers them vainly; nevertheless he speaketh some things truly. For the Devil fills him with his spirit, that he may overthrow some of the righteous.

7 Whosoever therefore are strong in the faith of the Lord, and have put on the truth; they are not joined to such spirits, but depart from them. But they that are doubtful, and often repenting, like the heathens, consult them, and heap up to themselves great sin, serving idols.

8 As many therefore as are such, inquire of them upon every occasion; worship idols, and are foolish; and void of the truth. For every spirit that is given from God needs not to be asked: but having the power of divinity speaks all things of itself, because he comes from above; from the power of God.

10 But he, that being asked speaks according to men's desires and concerning many other affairs of this present world, understands not the tidings which relate unto God. For these spirits are darkened through such affairs, and corrupted, and broken.

11 As good vines if they are neglected, are oppressed with weeds and thorns, and at last killed by them; so are the men who believe such spirits.

12 They fall into many actions and businesses, and are void of sense, and when they think of things pertaining unto God, they understand nothing at all; but at any time they chance to hear any thing concerning the Lord, their thoughts are upon their business.

13 But they that have the fear of the Lord, and search out the truth concerning God, having all their thoughts towards the Lord; apprehend whatsoever is said to them, and forthwith understand it, because they have the fear of the Lord in them.

14 For where the spirit of the Lord dwells, there is also much understanding added. Wherefore join thyself to the Lord, and thou shalt understand all things.

15 Learn now, O unwise man! how sadness troubleth the Holy Spirit, and how it saves. When a man that is doubtful is engaged in any affair, and does not accomplish it by reason of his doubting; this sadness enters into him, and grieves the Holy Spirit, and makes him sad.

16 Again anger, when it over. takes any man for any business he is greatly moved; and then again sadness entereth into the heart of him, who was moved with anger, and he is troubled for what he hath done, and repenteth, because he hath done amiss.

17 This sadness therefore seemeth to bring salvation, because he repenteth of his evil deed. But both the other things, namely, doubting and sadness, such as before was mentioned, vex the spirit: doubting, because his work did not succeed; and sadness, because he angered the Holy Spirit.

Forbidden Gospels and Epistles, v9

18 Remove therefore sadness from thyself, and afflict not the Holy Spirit which dwelleth in thee, lest he entreat God, and depart from thee. For the spirit of the Lord which is given to dwell in the flesh, endureth no such sadness.

19 Wherefore clothe thyself with cheerfulness, which has always favour with the Lord, and thou shalt rejoice in it. For every cheerful man does well; and relishes those things that are good, and despises sadness.

20 But the sad man does always wickedly. First, he doth wickedly, because he grieveth the Holy Spirit, which is given to man being of a cheerful nature. And again he does ill, because he prays with sadness unto the Lord, and maketh not first a thankful acknowledgment unto him of former mercies, and obtains not of God what he asks.

21 For the prayer of a sad man has not always efficacy to come up to the altar of God. And I said unto him, Sir, why has not the prayer of a sad man virtue to come up to the altar of God? Because, said he, that sadness remaineth in his heart.

22 When therefore a man's prayer shall be accompanied with sadness, it will not suffer his requests to ascend pure to the altar of God. For as wine when it is mingled with vinegar, has not the sweetness it had before; so sadness being mixed with the Holy Spirit, suffers not a man's prayer to be the same as it would be otherwise.

23 Wherefore cleanse thyself from sadness, which is evil, and thou shalt live unto God. And all others shall live unto God, as many as shall lay aside sadness, and put on cheerfulness.

COMMAND XI.

That the spirits and prophets are to be tried by their works; and of a twofold, spirit.

HE showed me certain men sitting upon benches, and one sitting in a chair: and he said unto me; Seest thou those who sit upon the benches? Sir, said I, I see them. He answered, They are the faithful; and he who sits in the chair is an earthly spirit.

2 For he cometh not into the assembly of the faithful, but avoids it. But he joins himself to the doubtful and empty; and prophesies to them in corners and hidden places; and pleases them by speaking according to all the desires of their hearts.

3 For he placing himself among empty vessels, is not broken, but the one fitteth the other. But when he cometh into the company of just men, who are full of the spirit of God, and they pray unto the Lord; that man is emptied, because that earthly spirit flies from him, and he is dumb, and cannot speak anything.

4 As if in a store-house you shall stop up wine or oil, and among those vessels place an empty jar; and when afterwards you come to open it, you shall find it empty as you stopped it up; so those empty prophets when they come among the spirits of the just, are found to be such as they came.

5 I said, How then shall a man be able to discern them? Consider what I am going to say concerning both kinds of men; and as I speak unto thee so shalt thou prove the prophet of God, and the false prophet.

6 And first try the man who hath the spirit of God, because the spirit which is from above is humble, and quiet, and departs from all wickedness; and from the vain desires of the present world; and makes himself more humble than all men; and answers to none when he is asked; nor to every one singly: for the Spirit of God doth not speak to a man when he will, but when God pleases.

Forbidden Gospels and Epistles, v9

7 When therefore a man who hath the Spirit of God hath come into the church of the righteous, who have the faith of God, and they pray unto the Lord; then the holy angel of God fills that man with the blessed Spirit, and he speaks in the congregation as he is moved of God.

8 Thus therefore is the spirit, of God known, because whosoever speaketh by the Spirit of God, speaketh as the Lord will.

9 Hear now concerning the earthly spirit, which is empty and foolish, and without virtue. And first of all the man who is supposed to have the Spirit, (whereas he hath it not in reality), exalteth himself, and desires to have the first seat, and is wicked, and full of words.

10 And spends his time in pleasure, and in all manner of voluptuousness, and receives the reward of his divination; which if he receives not, he does not divine.

11 Should the Spirit of God receive reward, and devine? It doth not become a prophet of God so to do.

12 Thus you see the life of each of these kind of prophets. Wherefore prove that man by his life and works, who says that he hath the Holy Spirit. And believe the Spirit which comes from God, and has power as such. But believe not the earthly and empty spirit, which is from the devil, in whom there is no faith nor virtue.

13 Hear now the similitude which I am about to speak unto thee. Take a stone, and throw it up towards heaven; or take a spout of water, and mount it up thitherward; and see if thou canst reach unto heaven.

14 Sir; said I, how can this be done? For neither of those things which you have mentioned, are possible to be done. And he answered, Therefore as these things cannot be done, so is the earthy spirit without virtue, and without effect.

15 Understand yet farther the power which cometh from above, in this similitude. The grains of hail that drop down are exceedingly small; and yet when they fall upon the head of a man, how do they cause pain to it.

16 And again, consider, the droppings of a house; how the little drops falling upon the earth, work a hollow in the stones.

17 So in like manner the least things which come from above, and fall upon the earth, have great force. Wherefore join thyself to this spirit, which has the power; and depart from the other which is empty.

COMMAND XII.

Of a two fold desire: that the commands of God,
are not impossible: and that the devil is not
to be feared by them that believe.

AGAIN he said unto me; remove from thee all evil desires, and put on good and holy desires. For having put on a good desire, thou shalt hate that which is evil, and bridle it as thou wilt. But an evil desire is dreadful, and hard to be tamed.

2 It is very horrible and wild; and by its wildness consumes men. And especially if a servant of God shall chance to fall into it, except he be very wise, he is ruined by it. For it destroys those who have not the garment of a good desire and are engaged in the affairs of this present world; and delivers them unto death.

Forbidden Gospels and Epistles, v9

3 Sir, said I, what are the works of an evil desire, which bring men unto death? Shew them to me that I may depart from them. Hear, said he, by what works an evil desire bringeth the servants of God unto death.

4 First of all, it is an evil desire to covet another man's wife, or for a woman to covet another's husband; as also to desire the dainties of riches; and multitude of superfluous meats; and drunkenness; and many delights.

5 For in much delicacy there is folly; and many pleasures are needless to the servants of God. Such lusting therefore is evil and pernicious, which brings to death the servants of God. For all such lusting is from the devil.

6 Whosoever therefore shall depart from all evil desires, shall live unto God; but they that are subject unto them shall die forever. For this evil lusting is deadly. Do thou therefore put on the desire of righteousness, and being armed with the fear of the Lord resist all wicked lusting.

7 For this fear dwelleth in good desires; and, when evil coveting shall see thee armed with the fear of the Lord, and resisting it; it will fly far from thee, and not appear before thee, but be afraid of thy armour.

8 And thou shall have the victory, and be crowned for it; and shall attain to that desire which is good; and shall give the victory which thou hast obtained unto God, and shall serve him in doing what thou thyself wouldest do.

9 For if thou shalt serve good desires, and be subject to them; then thou shalt be able to get the dominion over thy wicked lustings; and they will be subject to thee, as thou wilt.

10 And I said, Sir, I would know how to serve that desire which is good? Hearken, said he, Fear God, and put thy trust in him, and love truth, and righteousness, and do that which is good.

10 If thou shalt do these things, thou shall be an approved servant of God, and serve him; and all others who shall in like manner serve a good desire, shall live unto God.

12 And when he had fulfilled these twelve commands, he said unto me, Thou hast now these commands, walk in them; and exhort those that hear them, to repent, and that they keep their repentance pure all the remaining days of their life.

13 And fulfil diligently this ministry which I commit to thee, and thou shalt receive great advantage by it, and find favour with all such as shall repent and believe thy words. For I am with thee, and will force them to believe.

14 And I said unto him, Sir, these commands are great and excellent, and able to cheer the heart of that man that shall be able to keep them. But, Sir, I cannot tell, whether they can be observed by any man?

15 He answered, Thou shalt easily keep these commands, and they shall not be hard: howbeit, if thou shalt suffer it once to enter into thine heart that they cannot be kept by any one, thou shalt not fulfil them.

16 But now I say unto thee, if thou shalt not observe these commands, and shall neglect them, thou shalt not be saved, nor thy children, nor thy house: because thou hast judged that these commands cannot be kept by man.

17 These things he spake very angrily unto me, insomuch that he greatly affrighted me, for he changed his countenance so that a man could not bear his anger.

18 And when he saw me altogether troubled and confounded, he began to speak more moderately and cheerfully, saying, O foolish, and without understanding!

Forbidden Gospels and Epistles, v9

19 Unconstant, not knowing the majesty of God how great and wonderful he is; who created the world for man, and hath made every creature subject unto him; and given him all power, that he should be able to fulfil all these commands.

20 He is able, said he, to fulfil all these commands, who has the Lord in his heart; but they who have the Lord only in their mouths, their hearts are hardened, and they are far from the Lord: to such persons these commands are hard and difficult.

21 Therefore, ye that are empty and light in the faith, put the Lord your God in your hearts; and ye shall perceive how that nothing is more easy than these commands, nor more pleasant, nor more gentle and holy.

22 And turn yourselves to the Lord your God, and forsake the devil and his pleasures, because they are evil, and bitter, and impure. And fear not the devil, because he has no power over you.

23 For I am with you, the messenger of repentance, who have the dominion over him. The devil doth indeed affright men but his terror is vain. Wherefore fear him not, and he will flee from you.

24 And I said unto him; Sir, hear me speak a few words unto you. He answered, Say on: A man indeed desires to keep the commandments of God, and there is no one but what prays unto God, that he may be able to keep his commandments;

25 But the devil is hard, and by his power rules over the servants of God. And he said; He cannot rule over the servants of God, who trust in him with all their hearts.

26 The devil may strive, but he cannot overcome them.

27 For if ye resist him, he will flee away with confusion from you. But they that are not full in the faith, fear the devil, as if he had some great power. For the devil tries the servants of God and if he finds them empty, he destroys them.

28 For as man, when he fills up vessels with good wine, and among them puts a few vessels half full, and comes to try and taste of the vessels, doth not try those that are full, because he knows that they are good, but tastes those that are half full, lest they should grow sour; (for vessels half full soon grow sour, and lose the taste of wine:) so the devil comes to the servants of God to try them.

29 They that are full of faith resist him stoutly, and he departs from them, because he finds no place where to enter into them then he goes to those that are not full of faith, and because he has a place of entrance he goes into them, and does what he will with them, and they become his servants.

30 But I, the messenger of repentance, say unto you, fear not the devil, for I am sent unto you, that I may be with you, as many as shall repent with your whole heart, and that I may confirm you in the faith.

31 Believe therefore, ye who by reason of your transgressions have forgot God. and your own salvation; and adding to your sins have made your life very heavy.

32 That if ye shall turn to the Lord with your whole hearts, and shall serve him according to his will; he will heal you of your former sins, and ye shall have dominion over all the works of the devil.

33 Be not then afraid in the least of his threatenings, for they are without force, as the nerves of a dead man. But hearken unto me, and fear the Lord Almighty, who is able to save and to destroy you; and keep his commands, that ye may live unto God.

34 And I said unto him; Sir, I am now confirmed in all the commands of the Lord whilst you are with me, and I know that you will break all the powers of the devil.

35 And we also shall overcome him, if we shall be able, through the help of the Lord, to keep these commands which you have delivered.

36 Thou shalt keep them, said he, if thou shalt purify thy heart towards the Lord. And all they also shall keep them who shall cleanse their hearts from the vain desires of the present world, and shall live unto God.

THE THIRD PART OF THE BOOK OF HERMAS, CALLED HIS SIMILITUDES.

SIMILITUDE I.

That seeing we have no abiding city in this world,
we ought to look after that which is to come.

AND he said unto me; Ye know that ye who are the servants of the Lord, live here as in a pilgrimage; for your city is far off from this city.

2 If, therefore, ye know your city in which ye are to dwell, why do ye here buy estates, and provide yourselves with delicacies, and stately buildings, and superfluous houses? For he that provides himself these things in this city, does not think of returning into his own city.

3 O foolish, and doubtful, and wretched man; who understandest not that all these things belong to other men, and are under the power of another. For the Lord of this city saith unto thee; Either obey my laws, or depart out of my city.

4 What therefore shalt thou do who art subject to a law in thine own city? Canst thou for thy estate, or for any of those things which thou hast provided, deny thy law? But if thou shalt deny it, and wilt afterwards return into thy own city, thou shalt not be received, but shall be excluded thence.

5 See therefore, that like a man in another country, thou procure no more to thyself than what is necessary, and sufficient for thee; and be ready, that when the God or Lord of this city shall drive thee out of it thou mayest oppose his law, and go into thine own city; where thou mayest with all cheerfulness live according to thine own law with no wrong.

6 Take heed therefore ye that serve God, and have him in your hearts: work ye the works of God, being mindful both of his commands and of his promises, which he has promised; and be assured that he will make them good unto you; if ye shall keep his commandments.

7 Instead therefore of the possessions that ye would otherwise purchase, redeem those that are in want from their necessities, as every one is able; justify the widows; judge the cause of the fatherless; and spend your riches and your wealth in such works as these.

8 For this end has God enriched you, that ye might fulfil these kind of services. It is much better to do this, than to buy lands or houses; because all such things shall perish with this present time.

9 But what ye shall do for the name of the Lord, ye shall find in your city, and shall have joy without sadness or

fear. Wherefore covet not the riches of the heathen; for they are destructive to the servants of God.

10 But trade with your own riches which you possess, by which ye may attain unto everlasting joy.

11 And do not commit adultery, nor touch any other man's wife, nor desire her; but covet that which is thy own business, and thou shalt be saved.

SIMILITUDE II.

As the vine is supported by the elm,
so is the rich man helped by the prayers of the poor.

AS I was walking into the field, and considered the elm and the vine, and thought with myself of their fruits, an angel appeared unto me, and said unto me; What is it that thou thinkest upon thus long within thyself?

2 And I said unto him, Sir, I think of this vine and this elm because their fruits are fair. And he said unto me; These two trees are set for a pattern to the servants of God.

3 And I said unto him, Sir, I would know in what the pattern of these trees which thou mentionest, does consist. Hearken, saith he; seest thou this vine and this elm? Sir, said I, I see them.

4 This vine, saith he, is fruitful, but the elm is a tree without fruit. Nevertheless this vine unless it were set by this elm, and supported by it, would not bear much fruit; but lying along upon the ground, would bear but ill fruit, because it did not hang upon the elm; whereas, being supported upon the elm, it bears fruit both for itself and for that.

5 See, therefore, how the elm gives no less, but rather more fruit, than the vine. How, Sir, said I, does it bear more fruit than the vine? Because, said he, the vine being supported upon the elm gives both much and good fruit; whereas, if it lay along upon the ground, it would bear but little, and that very ill too.

6 This similitude, therefore, is set forth to the servants of God; and it represents the rich and poor man. I answered, Sir, make this manifest unto me. Hear, said he; the rich man has wealth: howbeit towards the Lord he is poor; for he is taken up about his riches, and prays but little to the Lord; and the prayers which he makes are lazy and without force.

7 When therefore, the rich man reaches out to the poor those things which he wants, the poor man prays unto the Lord for the rich; and God grants unto the rich man all good things, because the poor man is rich in prayer; and his requests have great power with the Lord.

8 Then the rich man ministers all thing to the poor, because he perceives that he is heard by the Lord; and he the more willingly and without doubting, affords him what he wants, and takes care that nothing be lacking to him.

9 And the poor man gives thanks unto the Lord for the rich; because they both do their work from the Lord.

10 With men, therefore, the elm is not thought to give any fruit; and they know not, neither understand that its company being added to the vine, the vine bears a double increase, both for itself and for the elm.

11 Even so the poor praying unto the Lord for the rich, are heard by him; and their riches are increased, because they minister to the poor of their wealth. They are, therefore, both made partakers of each other's good works.

12 Whosoever, therefore, shall do these things, he shall not be forsaken by the Lord, but shall be written in the book of life.

13 Happy are they who are rich, and perceive themselves to be increased: for he that is sensible of this, will be able to minister somewhat to others.

SIMILITUDE III.

As the greet trees in the winter cannot be distinguished from the dry; so neither can the righteous from the wicked in this present world.

AGAIN he showed me many trees whose leaves were shed, and which seemed to me to be withered, for they were all alike. And he said unto me, Seest thou these trees? I said, Sir, I see that they look like dry trees.

2 He answering, said unto me; These trees are like unto the men who live in the present world. I replied: Sir, why are they like unto dried trees? Because, said he, neither the righteous, nor unrighteous, are known from one another; but all are alike in this present world.

3 For this world is as the winter to the righteous men, because they are not known, but dwell among sinners.

4 As in the winter all the trees having lost their leaves, are like dry trees; nor can it be discerned which are dry and which are green: so in this present world neither the righteous, nor wicked are discerned from each other; but they are all alike.

SIMILITUDE IV.

As in the summer the living trees are distinguished from the dry by their fruit and green leaves; so in the world to come the righteous shall be distinguished from the unrighteous by their happiness.

AGAIN he showed me many other trees, of which some had leaves, and others appeared dry and withered. And he said unto me, Seest thou these trees I answered, Sir, I see them; some are dry, and others full of leaves.

2 These trees, saith he, which are green, are the righteous, who shall possess the world to come. For the world to come, is the summer to the righteous; but to sinners it is the winter.

3 When, therefore, the mercy of the Lord shall shine forth, then they who serve God shall be made manifest, and plain unto all. For as in the summer the fruit of every tree is shown and made manifest. so also the works of the righteous shall be declared and made manifest, and they shall all be restored in that world merry and joyful.

4 For the other kind of men, namely the wicked, like the trees which thou rawest dry, shall, as such, be found dry and without fruit in that other world; and like dry wood shall be burnt; and it shall be made manifest that they have done evil all the time of their life;

5 And they shall be burnt because they have sinned and have not repented of their sins. And also all the other nations shall be burnt, because they have not acknowledged God their Creator.

6 Do then, therefore, bring forth good fruit, that in the summer thy fruit may be known; and keep thyself from much business, and thou shalt not offend. For they who are involved in much business, sin much; because they are taken up with their affairs, and serve not God.

7 And how can a man that does not serve God, ask anything of God, and receive it? But they who serve him, ask and receive what they desire.

8 But if a man has only one thing to follow, he may serve God, because his mind is not taken off from God, but he serves him with a pure mind.

9 If, therefore, thou shalt do this, thou mayest have fruit in the world to come; and as many as shall do in like manner, shall bring forth fruit.

SIMILITUDE V.

Of a true fast, and the rewards of it:
also of the cleanliness of the body.

AS I was fasting, and sitting down in a certain mountain, and giving thanks unto God for all the things that he had done unto me; behold, I saw the Shepherd, who was wont to converse with me, sitting by me, and saying unto me: What has brought thee hither thus early in the morning? I answered, Sir, to-day I keep a station.

2 He answered, What is a station; I replied, it is a fast. He said, What is that fast? I answered, I fast as I have been wont to do. Ye know not, said he, what it is to fast unto God; nor is this a fast which ye keep, profiting nothing with God.

3 Sir, said I, what makes you speak thus? He replied, I speak it, because it is not the true fast which you think that you keep; but I will show you what that is which is a complete fast, and acceptable unto God.

4 Hearken, said he, The Lord does not desire such a needless fast; for by fasting in this manner, thou advancest nothing in righteousness.

5 But the true fast is this: Do nothing wickedly in thy life, but serve God with a pure mind; and keep his commandments, and walk according to his precepts, nor suffer any wicked desire to enter into the mind.

6 But trust in the Lord, that if thou dost these things, any fearest him, and abstaineth from every evil work, thou shall live unto God.

7 If thou shalt do this, thou shall perfect a great fast, and an acceptable one unto the Lord.

8 Hearken unto the similitude which I am about to propose unto thee, as to this matter.

9 A certain man having a farm, and many servans, planted a vineyard in a certain part of his estate for his posterity:

10 And taking a journey into a far country, chose one of his servants which he thought the most faithful and approved, and delivered the vineyard into his care; commanding him that he should stake up the vines. Which if he did, and fulfilled his command, he promised to give him his liberty. Nor did he command him to do any thing more; and so went into a far country.

11 And after that servant had taken that charge upon him, he did whatsoever his lord commanded him. And when he had staked the vineyard, and found it to be full of weeds, he began to think within himself, saying:

12 I have done what my lord commanded me, I will now dig this vineyard, and when it is digged, it will be more beautiful; and the weeds being pulled up, it will bring forth more fruit and not be choked by the weeds.

13 So setting about this work he digged it, and plucked up all the weeds that were in it; and so the vineyard became very beautiful and prosperous, not being choked with weeds.

14 After some time the lord of the vineyard comes and goes into the vineyard, and when he saw that it was handsomely staked and digged, and the weeds plucked up that were in it, and the vines flourishing, he rejoiced greatly at the care of his servant.

15 And calling his son whom he loved, and who was to be his heir, and his friends with whom he was wont to consult; he tells them what he had commanded his servant to do, and what his servant had done more; and they immediately congratulated that servant, that he had received so full a testimony from his lord.

16 Then he said to them, I indeed promised this servant his liberty, if he observed the command which I gave him; and he observed it, and besides has done a good work to my vineyard, which has exceedingly pleased me.

17 Wherefore, for this work which he hath done, I will make him my heir together with my son; because that when he saw what was good, he neglected it not, but did it.

18 This design of the lord both his son and his friends approved, namely, that his servant should be heir together with his son.

19 Not long after this the master of the family calling together, his friends, sent from his supper several kinds of food to that servant.

20 Which when he had received, he took so much of them as was sufficient for himself, and divided the rest among his fellow-servants.

21 Which when they had received, they rejoiced; and wished that he might find yet greater favour with his lord, for what he had done to them.

22 When his lord heard all these things, he was again filled with great joy: and calling again his friends and his son together, he related to them what his servant had done with the meats which he had sent unto him.

23 They therefore so much the more assented to the master of the household; and he ought to make that servant his heir together with his son.

24 I said unto him, sir, I know not these similitudes, neither can I understand them, unless you expound them unto me. I will, says he, expound, all things unto thee whatsoever I have talked with thee, or shown unto thee.

25 Keep the commandments of the Lord and thou shalt be approved, and shall be written in the number of those that keep his commandments. But if besides those things which the Lord hath commanded, thou shalt add some good thing; thou shalt purchase to thyself a greater dignity, and be in more favour with the Lord than thou shouldst otherwise have been.

26 If therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord, and shalt add to them these stations, thou shalt rejoice; but especially if thou shalt keep them according to my commands.

Forbidden Gospels and Epistles, v9

27 I said unto him, sir, whatsoever thou shalt command me, I will observe; for I know that thou wilt be with me. I will, said he, be with thee who hast taken up such a resolution; and I will be with all those who purpose in like manner.

28 This fast, saith he, whilst thou dost also observe the commandments of the Lord, is exceeding good; therefore thus shalt thou keep it.

29 First of all, take heed to thyself, and keep thyself from every wicked act, and from every filthy word, and from every hurtful desire; and purify thy mind from all the vanity of this present world. If thou shalt observe these things, this fast shall be right.

30 Thus therefore do. Having performed what is before written, that day on which thou fastest thou shalt taste nothing at all but bread and water; and computing the quantity of food which thou art wont to eat upon other days, thou shalt lay aside the expense which thou shouldst have made that day, and give it unto the widow, the fatherless, and the poor.

31 And thus thou shalt perfect the humiliation of thy soul; that he who receives of it may satisfy his soul, and his prayer come up to the Lord God for thee.

32 If therefore thou shalt thus accomplish thy fast, as I command thee, thy sacrifice shall be acceptable unto the Lord, and thy fast shall be written in his book.

33 This station, thus performed, is good and pleasing and acceptable unto the Lord. These things if thou shalt observe with thy children and with all thy house, thou shalt be happy.

34 And whosoever, when they hear these things, shall do them, they also shall be happy; and whatsoever they shall ask of the Lord they shall receive it.

35 And I prayed him that he would expound unto me the similitude of the farm, and the Lord, and of the vineyard, and of the servant that had staked the vineyard; and of the weeds that were plucked out of the vineyard; and of his son and his friends which he took into counsel with him; for I understand that that was a similitude.

36 He said unto me, Thou art very bold in asking; for thou oughtest not to ask any thing; because if it be fitting to show it unto thee, it shall be showed unto thee.

37 I answered him; Sir, whatsoever thou shalt show me, without explaining it unto me, I shall in vain see it, if I do not understand what it is. And if thou shalt propose any similitudes, and not expound them, I shall in vain hear them.

38 He answered me again, saying: Whosoever is the servant of God, and has the Lord in his heart, he desires understanding of him, and receives it; and he explains every similitude, and understands the words of the Lord which need an inquiry.

39 But they that are lazy and slow to pray, doubt to seek from the Lord: although the Lord be of such an extraordinary goodness, that without ceasing he giveth all things to them that ask of him.

40 Thou therefore who art strengthened by that venerable messenger, and hast received such a powerful gift of prayer; seeing thou art not slothful, why dost thou not now ask understanding of the Lord, and receive it?

41 I said unto him; seeing I have thee present, it is necessary that I should seek it of thee, and ask thee; for thou shewest all things unto me, and speakest to me when thou art present.

42 But if I should see or hear these things when thou wert not present, I would then ask the Lord that he would chew them unto me.

43 And he replied, I said a little before that thou wert subtle and bold, in that thou asketh the meaning of these similitudes.

44 But because thou still persistest, I will unfold to thee this parable which then desirest, that thou mayest make it known unto all men.

45 Hear, therefore, said he, and understand. The farm before mentioned denotes the whole earth. The Lord of the farm is he, who created and finished all things; and gave virtue unto them.

46 His son is the Holy Spirit; the servant is the Son of God: the vineyard is the people whom he saves. The stakes are the messengers which are set over them by the Lord, to support his people. The weeds that are plucked up out of the vineyard, are the sins which the servants of God had committed.

47 The food which he sent him from his supper, are the commands which he gave to his people by his Son. The friends whom he called to counsel with him, are the holy angels whom he first created. The absence of the master of the house— hold, is the time that remains unto his coming.

48 I said unto him, Sir, all these things are very excellent, and wonderful, and good. But, continued I, could I or any other man besides, though never so wise, have understood these things?

49 Wherefore now, sir, tell me, what I ask. He replied, ask me what thou wilt. Why, said I, is the Son of God in this parable, put in the place of a servant.

50 Hearken, he said: the Son of God is not put in the condition of a servant, but in great power and authority. I said unto him, how, sir? I understand it not.

51 Because, said he, the Son set his messengers over those whom the Father delivered unto him, to keep every one of them; but he himself laboured very much, and suffered much, that he might blot out their offences.

52 For no vineyard can be digged without much labour and pains. Wherefore having blotted out the sins of his people, he showed to them the paths of life, giving them the law which he had received of the Father.

53 You see, said he, that he is the Lord of his people, having received all power from his Father. But why the lord did take his son into counsel, about dividing the inheritance, and the good angels, hear now.

54 That Holy Spirit, which was created first of all, he placed in the body in which God should dwell; namely, in a chosen body, as it seemed good to him. This body therefore into which the Holy Spirit was brought, served that Spirit, walking rightly and purely in modesty; nor ever defiled that Spirit.

55 Seeing therefore the body at all times obeyed the Holy Spirit, and laboured rightly and chastely with him, nor faltered at anytime; that body being wearied conversed indeed servilely, but being mightily approved to God with the Holy Spirit, was accepted by him.

56 For such a stout course pleased God, because he was not defiled in the earth, keeping the Holy Spirit. He called therefore to counsel his Son, and the good angels, that there might be some place of standing given to this body which had served the Holy Spirit without blame; lest it should seem to have lost the reward of its service.

57 For every pure body shall receive its reward; that is found without spot, in which the Holy Spirit has been appointed to dwell. And thus you have now the exposition of this parable also.

58 Sir, said I, I now understand your meaning, since I have heard this exposition. Hearken farther, said he: keep this thy body clean and pure, that the Spirit which shall dwell in it may bear witness unto it, and be judged to have been with thee.

59 Also take heed that it be not instilled into thy mind that this body perishes, and thou abuse it to any lust. For if thou shalt defile thy body, thou shalt also at the same time defile the Holy Spirit; and if thou shalt defile the Holy Spirit, thou shalt not live.

60 And I said, What if through ignorance this should have been already committed, before a man heard these words; How can he attain into salvation, who has thus defiled his body?

61 He replied, As for men's former actions which through ignorance they have committed, God only can afford a remedy unto them; for all the power belongeth unto him.

62 But now guard thyself; and seeing God is almighty and merciful, he will grant a remedy to what thou hast formerly done amiss, if for the time, to come thou shalt not defile thy body and spirit:

63 For they are companions together, and the one cannot be defiled but the other will be so too. Keep therefore both of them pure, and thou shalt live unto God.

SIMILITUDE VI.

Of two sorts of voluptuous men, and of
their death and defection; and of the
continuance of their pains.

AS I was sitting at home, and praising God for all the things which I had seen; and was thinking concerning the commands, that they were exceedingly good, and great, and honest, and pleasant, and such as were able to bring a man to salvation; I said thus within myself, I shall be happy if I walk according to these commands; and whosoever shall walk in them shall live unto God.

2 Whilst I was speaking on this wise within myself, I saw him whom I had before been wont to see, sitting by me; and he spake thus unto me:

3 What doubttest thou concerning my commands which I have delivered unto thee? They are good, doubt not, but trust in the Lord, and thou shalt walk in them; for I will give thee strength to fulfil them.

4 These commands are profitable to those who shall repent of the sins which they have formerly committed; if for the time to come they shall not continue in them.

5 Whosoever therefore ye be that repent, cast away from you the naughtiness of the present world; and put on all virtue, and righteousness, and so shall ye be able to keep these commands; and not sin from henceforth any more.

6 For if ye shall keep yourselves from sin for the time to come, ye shall cut off a great deal of your former sins. Walk in my commands, and ye shall live unto God: These things have I spoken unto you.

7 And when he, had said this, he added; let us go into the field, and I will show thee shepherds of sheep. I replied,

sir, let us go.

8 And we came into a certain field, and there he showed me a young shepherd, finely arrayed, with his garments of a purple colour. And he fed large flocks; and his sheep were full of pleasure, and in much delight and cheerfulness; and they skipping, ran here and there.

9 And the shepherd took very great satisfaction in his flock; and the countenance of that shepherd was cheerful, running up and down among his flock.

10 Then the angel said unto me, Seest then this shepherd? I answered, sir, I see him. He said unto me, this is the messenger of delight and pleasure. He therefore corrupts the minds of the servants of God, and turns them from the truth, delighting them with many pleasures, and they perish.

11 For they forget the commands of the living God, and live in luxury and in vain pleasures, and are corrupted by the evil angel, some of them even unto death; and others to a falling away.

12 I replied; I understand not what you mean, by saying unto death, and to a falling away. Hear, says he; all those sheep which thou sawest exceeding joyful, are such as have for ever departed from God, and given selves up to the lusts of this present time.

13 To these therefore there is no return, by repentance, unto life; because, to their other sins they have added this, that they have blasphemed the name of the lord: These kind of men are ordained unto death.

14 But those sheep which thou sawest not leaping, but feeding in one place; are such as have indeed given themselves up to pleasure and delights; but have not spoken anything wickedly against the Lord.

15 These therefore are only fallen off from the truth, and so have yet hope laid up for them in repentance. For such a falling off hath some hope still left of a renewal; but they that are dead, are utterly gone for ever.

16 Again we went a little farther forward, and he showed me a great shepherd, who had as it were a rustic figure; clad with a white goat's skin, having his bag upon his shoulder, and in his hand a stick full of knots, and very hard, and a whip in his other hand; and his countenance was stern and sour, enough to affright a man; such was his look.

17 He took from that young shepherd such sheep as lived in pleasures, but did not skip up and down; and drove them into a certain steep craggy place full of thorns and briars, insomuch that they could not get themselves free from them:

18 But being entangled in them, fed upon thorns and briars, and were grievously tormented with his whipping. For he still drove them on, and afforded them not any place, or time, to stand still.

19 When therefore I saw them so cruelly whipped and afflicted, I was grieved for them; because they were greatly tormented, nor had they any rest afforded them.

20 And I said unto the shepherd that was with me: Sir, who is this cruel and implacable shepherd, who is moved with no compassion towards these sheep? He answered, This shepherd is indeed one of the holy angels, but is appointed for the punishment of sinners.

21 To him therefore are delivered those who have erred from God, and served the lusts and pleasures of this world. For this cause he punishes them every one according to their deserts, with cruel and various kinds of pains.

22 Sir, said I, I would know what kind of pains they are which every one undergoes? Hearken, said he; The several pains and torments are those which men every day undergo in their present lives. For some suffer losses; others poverty; others divers sicknesses. Some are unsettled; others suffer injuries from those that are unworthy; others fall under many other trials and inconveniences.

23 For many with an unsettled design at many things, and it profiteth them not; and they say that they have not success in their undertakings.

24 They do not call to their mind what they have done amiss, and they complain of the Lord. When therefore they shall have undergone all kind of vexation and inconvenience; then they are delivered over to me for good instruction, and are confirmed in the Faith of the Lord, and serve the Lord all the rest of their days with a pure mind.

25 And when they begin to repent of their sins, then they call to mind their works which they have done amiss, and give honour to God, saying, that he is a just Judge, and they have deservedly suffered all things according to their deeds.

26 Then for what remains of their lives, they serve God with a pure mind; and have success in all their undertakings, and receive from the Lord whatever they desire.

27 And then they give thanks unto the Lord that they were delivered unto me; nor do they suffer any more cruelty.

28 I said unto him; Sir, I entreat you still to show me now one thing. What, said he, dost thou ask? I said unto him; Are they who depart from the fear of God, tormented for the same time that they enjoyed their false delight and pleasures? He answered me; they are tormented for the same time.

29 And I said unto him; They are then tormented but little; whereas they who enjoy their pleasures so as to forget God, ought to endure seven times as much punishment.

30 He answered me; Thou art foolish, neither understandest thou the efficacy of this punishment. I said unto him; Sir, if I understood it, I would not desire you to tell me.

31 Hearken, said he, and learn what the force of both is, both of the pleasure and of the punishment. An hour of pleasure is terminated within its own space: but one hour of punishment has the efficacy of thirty days. a Whosoever therefore enjoys his false pleasure for one day, and is one day, tormented; that one day of punishment is equivalent to a whole year's space.

32 Thus look how many days any one pursues his pleasures, so many years is he punished for it. You see therefore how that the time of worldly enjoyments is but short; but that of pain and torments, a great deal more.

33 I replied; Sir, forasmuch as I do not understand at all these times of pleasure and pain; I entreat you that you would explain yourself more clearly concerning them. He answered me, saying; Thy foolishness still sticks unto thee.

34. Shouldst thou not rather purify thy mind, and serve God? Take heed, lest when thy time is fulfilled, thou be found still unwise. Hear then, as thou desirest, that thou mayest the more easily understand.

35 He that gives himself up one day to his pleasures and delights, and does whatsoever his soul desires, is full of great folly, nor understands what he does, but the day following forgets what he did the day before.

Forbidden Gospels and Epistles, v9

36 For delight and worldly pleasure are not kept in memory, by reason of the folly that is rooted in them. But when pain and torment befall a man a day, he is in effect troubled the whole year after; because his punishment continues firm in his memory.

37 Wherefore he remembers it with sorrow the whole year; and then calls to mind his vain pleasure and delight, and perceives that for the sake of that he was punished.

38 Whosoever therefore have delivered themselves over to such pleasures, are thus punished; because that when they had life, they rendered themselves liable to death.

39 I said unto him; Sir, what pleasures are hurtful? He answered; That is pleasure to every man which he doth willingly.

40 For the angry man, gratifying his passion, perceives pleasure in it; and so the adulterer, and drunkard; the slanderer and liar; the covetous man and the defrauder; and whosoever commits anything like unto these, he followeth his evil disposition, because he receives a satisfaction in the doing of it.

41 All these pleasures and delights are hurtful to the servants of God. For these therefore they are tormented and suffer punishment.

42 There are also pleasures that bring salvation unto men. For many, when they do what is good, find pleasure in it, and are attracted by the delights of it.

43 Now this pleasure is profitable to the servants of God, and brings life to such men; but those hurtful pleasures, which were before mentioned, bring torments and punishment.

44 And whosoever shall continue in them, and shall not repent of what they have done, shall bring death upon themselves.

SIMILITUDE VII.

That they who repent, must bring forth,
fruits worthy of repent once.

AFTER a few days I saw the same person that before talked with me, in the same field, in which I had seen those shepherds, And he said unto me; What seekest thou? Sir, said I, I came to entreat you that You would command the shepherd, who is the minister of punishment, to depart out of my house, because he greatly afflicts me.

3 And he answered, It is necessary for thee to endure inconveniencies and vexations; for so that good angel hath commanded concerning thee, because he would try thee.

4 Sir, said I; What so great offence have I committed, that I should be delivered to this messenger? Hearken, said he: Thou art indeed guilty of many sins, yet not so many that thou shouldst be delivered to this messenger.

5 But thy house hath committed many sins and offences, and therefore that good messenger being grieved at their doings commanded that for some time thou shouldst suffer affliction; that they may both repent of what they have done, and may wash themselves from all the lusts of this present world.

6 When therefore they shall have repented, and be purified, then that messenger which is appointed over thy punishment, shall depart from thee.

7 I said unto him; Sir, if they have behaved themselves so as to anger that good angel, yet what have I done? He answered: They cannot otherwise be afflicted, unless thou, who art the head of the family, suffer.

8 For whatsoever thou shalt suffer, they must needs feel it but as long as thou shalt stand well established, they cannot experience any vexation.

9 I replied; But, sir, behold they also now repent with all their hearts. I know, says he, that they repent with all their hearts; but dost thou therefore think that their offences who repent, are immediately blotted out.

10 No, they are not presently; but he that repents must afflict his soul and show himself humble in all his affairs, and undergo many and divers vexations.

11 And when he shall have suffered all things that were appointed for him; then perhaps HE that made him, and formed all things besides, will be moved with compassion towards him, and afford him some remedy; and especially if HE shall perceive his heart who repents, to be free from every evil work.

12 But at present it is expedient for thee, and for thy house, to be grieved; and it is needful that thou shoudest endure much vexation, as the angel of the Lord who committed thee unto me, has commanded.

13 Rather give thanks unto the Lord, that knowing what was to come he thought thee worthy, to whom he should foretel that trouble was coming upon thee, who art able to bear it.

14 I said unto him; Sir, but be thou also with me, and I shall easily undergo any trouble. I will, said he, be with thee; and I will entreat the messenger who is set over thy punishment, that he would moderate his afflictions towards thee.

15 And moreover thou shalt suffer adversity but for a little time; and then thou shalt again be restored to thy former state; only continue on in the humility of thy mind.

16 Obey the Lord with a pure heart; thou, and thy house, and thy children; and. walk in the commands which I have delivered unto thee; and then thy repentance may be firm and pure.

17 And if thou shalt keep these things with thy house, thy inconveniencies shall depart from thee.

18 And all vexation shall in like manner depart from those, whosoever shall walk according to these commands.

SIMILITUDE VIII.

That there are many kinds of elect, and of
repenting sinners: and how all of theca shall
receive a reward proportionable to the measure
of their repentance and good works.

AGAIN he showed me a willow which covered the fields and the mountains, under whose shadow came all such as were called by the name of the Lord.

2 And by that willow stood an. angel of the Lord very excellent and lofty, and did cut down bows from the willow with a great hook; and reached out to the people that were under the shadow of the willow, little rods, as it were about a foot long.

Forbidden Gospels and Epistles, v9

3 And when all of them had taken them, he laid aside his hook, and the tree continued entire, as I had before seen it; at which I wondered, and mused within myself.

4 Then that shepherd said unto me; Forbear to wonder that the tree continues whole, not-with- standing so many boughs have been cut off from it: but stay a little, for now it shall be shown thee, what that angel means, who gave those rods to the people.

5 So he again demanded the rods of them; and in the same order that every one had received them, was he called to him, and restored his rod; which when he had received, he examined them.

6 From some he received them dry and rotten, and as it were touched with the moth; those he commanded to be separated from the rest, and placed by themselves. Others gave in their rods dry indeed, but not touched with the moth: these also he ordered to be set by themselves.

7 Others gave in their rods half dry; these also were set apart, Others gave in their rods half dry and cleft; these too were set by themselves. Others brought in their rods half dry and half green, and these were in like manner placed by themselves.

8 Others delivered up their rods two parts green, and the third dry; and they too were set apart. Others brought their rods two parts dry, and the third green; and were also placed by themselves.

9 Others delivered up their rods less dry (for there was but a very little, to wit, their tops dry), but they had clefts, and these were set in like manner by themselves. In the rods of others there was but a little green, and the rest dry; and these were set aside by themselves.

10 Others came, and brought their rods green as they had received them, and the greatest part of the people brought their rods thus; and the messenger greatly rejoiced at these, and they also were put apart by themselves.

11 Others brought in their rods not only green, but full of branches; and these were set aside, being also received by the angel with great joy. Others brought their rods green with branches, and those also some fruit upon them.

12 They who had such rods, were very cheerful; and the angel himself took great joy at them; nor was the shepherd that stood with me, less pleased with them.

13 Then the angel of the Lord commanded crowns to be brought, and the crowns were brought made of palms; and the angel crowned those men in whose rods he found the young branches with fruit, and commanded them to go into the tower.

14 He also sent those into the tower, in whose hands he found branches without fruit, giving a seal unto them. For they had the same garment, that is, one white as snow; with which he bade them go into the tower And so he did to those who returned their rods green as they had received them; giving them a white garment, and so sent them away to go into the tower.

15 Having done this, he said to the shepherd that was with me, I go my way; but do thou send these within the walls, every one into the place in which he has deserved to dwell; examining first their rods, but examine them diligently that no one deceive thee; and if any one shall escape thee, I will try them upon the altar. Having said this to the shepherd, he departed.

16 After he was gone, the shepherd said unto me; Let us take the rods from them, and plant them; if perchance they may grow green again. I said unto him; Sir, how can those dry rods ever grow green again?

Forbidden Gospels and Epistles, v9

17 He answered me; That tree. is a willow, and always loves to live. If therefore these rods shall be planted, and receive a little moisture, many of them will recover themselves.

18 Wherefore I will try, and will pour water upon them, and if any of them can live, I will rejoice with them; but if not, at least by this means I shall be found not to have neglected my part.

19 Then he commanded me to call them; and they all came unto him, every one in the rank in which he stood, and gave him their rods; which having received he planted every one of them in their several orders.

20 And after he had planted them all, he poured much water upon them, insomuch that they were covered with water, and did not appear above it. Then when he had watered them, he said unto me; Let us depart, and after a little time we will return and visit them.

21 For he who created this tree, would have all those live that received rods from it. And I hope now that these rods are thus watered, many of them receiving in the moisture, will recover:

22 I said unto him, Sir, tell me what this tree denotes? For I am greatly astonished, that after so many branches have been cut off, it seems still to be whole: nor does there any thing the less of it appear to remain, which greatly amazes me.

23 He answered, Hearken. This great tree which covers the plains and the mountains, and all the earth, is the law of God, published throughout the whole world.

24 Now this law is the Son of God, who is preached to all the ends of the earth. The people that stand under its shadow, are those which have heard his preaching, and believed.

25 The great and venerable angel which you saw, was Michael who had the power over his people, and governs them. For he has planted the law in the hearts of those who have believed: and therefore he visits them to whom he has given the law, to see if they have kept it.

26 And he examines every one's rod; and of those, many that are weakened: for those rods are the law of the Lord. Then he discerns all those who have not kept the law, knowing the place of every one of them.

27 I said unto him, Sir, why did he send away some to the tower, and left others here to you? He replied, those who have transgressed the law, which they received from him, are left in my power, that they may repent of their sins: but they who fulfilled this law and kept it, are under his power.

28 But who then, said I, are those, who went into the tower crowned? He replied, all such as having striven with the devil, have overcome him, are crowned: and they are those, who have suffered hard things, that they might keep the law.

29 But they who gave up their rods green, and with young branches, but without fruit, have indeed endured trouble for the same law, but have not suffered death; neither have they denied their holy law.

30 They who delivered up their rods green as they received them, are those who were modest and just, and have lived with a very pure mind, and kept the commandments of God.

31 The rest thou shalt know, when I shall have considered those rods which I have planted and watered.

32 After a few days we returned, and in the same place stood that glorious angel, and I stood by him. Then he said unto me; Gird thyself with a towel, and serve me.

33 And I girded myself with a clean towel, which was made of coarse cloth. And when he saw me girded, and ready to minister unto him, he said, Call those men whose rods have been planted, every one in his order as he gave them.

34 And he brought me into the field, and I called them all, and they all stood ready in their several ranks. Then he said unto them; let every one pluck up his rod, and bring it unto me. And first they delivered theirs, whose rods had been dry and rotten.

35 And those whose rods still continued so, he commanded to stand apart. Then they came whose rods had been dry but not rotten. Some of these delivered. in their rods green; others dry and rotten, as if they had been touched by the moth.

36 Those who gave them up green, he commanded to stand apart: but those whose rods were dry and rotten, he caused to stand with the first sort. Then came they whose rods had been half dry, and cleft: many of these gave up their rods green, and uncleft.

37 Others delivered them up green with branches, like unto theirs who went crowned into the tower. Others delivered them up dry, but not rotten; and some gave them up as they were before, all dry, and cleft.

38 Every one of these he ordered to stand apart; some by themselves, others in their respective ranks.

32 Then came they whose rods had been green, but cleft. These delivered their rods altogether green, and stood in their own order. And the shepherd rejoiced at these, because they were all changed, and free from their clefts.

40 Then they gave in their rods, who had them half green and half dry. Of these some were found wholly green, others half dry: others green, with young shoots. And all these were sent away, every one to his proper rank.

41 Then they gave up their rods, who had them before two parts green, and the third dry. Many of those gave in their rods green; many half dry; the rest dry but not rotten. So these were sent away, each to his proper place.

42 Then came they who before had their rods two parts dry and the third green; many of these delivered up their rods half dry, others dry and rotten; others half dry and cleft: but few green. And all these were set every one in his own rank.

43 Then they reached in their rods, in which there was before but a little green, and the rest dry. Their rods were for the most part found green, having little boughs, with fruit upon them; and the rest altogether green.

44 And the shepherd upon sight of these rejoiced exceedingly, because he had found them thus; and they also went to their proper orders.

45 Now after he had examined all their rods, he said unto me, I told thee that this tree loved life thou seest how many have repented, and attained unto salvation. Sir, said I, I see it.

46 That thou mightest know saith he, that the goodness and mercy of the Lord is great, and to be had in honour; who gave his spirit to them that were found worthy of repentance.

47 I answered, Sir, why then did not all of them repent? He replied, Those whose minds the Lords foresaw would be pure, and that they would serve him with all their hearts, to them he gave repentance.

48 But for those whose deceit and wickedness he beheld, and perceived that they would not truly return unto him; to them he denied any return unto re- pentance, lest they should again blaspheme his law with wicked words.

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49 I said unto him; Now, Sir, make known unto me, what is the place of every one of those, who have given up their rods, and what their portion; that when they may have not kept their seal entire, but have wasted the seal which they received, shall hear and believe these things, and may acknowledge their evil deeds and repent;

50 And receiving again their seal from you, may give glory to God, that he was moved with compassion towards them, and sent you to renew their spirits.

51 Hearken, said he; they whose rods have been found and rotten, and as it were touch with the moth; are the deserters and the betrayers of the church;

52 Who with the rest of their crimes, have also blasphemed the Lord, and denied his name when he had called upon them. Therefore all these are dead unto God and thou seest that none of them have repented, although they have heard my commands which thou hast delivered unto them. From these men therefore life is far distant.

53 They also who have delivered up their rods dry, but not rotten, have not been far from them. For they have been counterfeits, and brought in evil doctrines, and have perverted the servants of God, especially those who had sinned; not suffering them to return unto repentance, but keeping them back by their false doctrines.

54 These therefore have hope; and thou seest that many of them have repented, since the time that thou hast laid my commands before them; and many more will yet repent. But they, that shall not repent; shall lose both repentance and life.

55 But they that have repented, their place is begun to be within the first walls, and some of them are even gone into the tower. Thou seest therefore, said he, that in the repentance of sinners there is life; but for those who repent not, death is prepared.

56 Hear now concerning those who gave in their rods half dry and full of clefts. Those whose rods were only half dry, are the doubtful; for they are neither living nor dead.

57 But they who delivered in their rods, not only half dry but also full of clefts, are both doubtful and evil speakers; who detract from those that are absent, and have never peace among themselves, and who envy one another.

58 Howbeit, to those also repentance is offered; for thou seest that some of these have repented.

59 Now all those of this kind who have quickly repented, shall have a place in the tower; and they who have been more slow in their repentance, shall dwell with— in the walls: but they that shall not repent, and shall continue on in their wicked doings, shall die the death.

60 As for those who had their rods green, but yet cleft; they are such as were always faithful and good, but they had some envy and strife among themselves concerning dignity and pre-eminence.

61 Now all such as are vain, and without understanding, contend with one another about these things.

62 Nevertheless, seeing they are otherwise good, if when they shall hear these commands they shall amend themselves, and shall at my persuasion suddenly repent; they shall at last dwell in the tower, like those who have truly and worthily repented.

63 But if any one shall again return to his dissension; he shall be shut out from the tower, and shall lose his life. For the life of those who keep the commandments of the Lord, consists in doing what they are commanded; not in principality, or in any other dignity.

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64 For by forbearance and humility of mind, men shall attain unto life; but by seditions and contempt of the law, they shall purchase death unto themselves.

65 They who in their rods had half dry and half green, are those who are engaged in many affairs of the world, and are not joined to the saints. For which cause half of them liveth, and half is dead.

66 Wherefore many of these since the time that they have heard my commands, have repented, and begun to dwell in the tower. But some of them have wholly fallen away; to these there is no more place for repentance.

67 For by reason of their present interests, they have blasphemed and denied God: and for this wickedness they have lost life. And of these many are still in doubt, yet these may return; and if they shall quickly repent, they shall have a place in the tower; but if they shall be more slow, they shall dwell within the walls; but if they shall not repent, they shall die.

68 As for those who had two parts of their rods green, and the third dry; they have by manifold ways denied the Lord. Of these many have repented, and found a place in the tower: and many have altogether departed from God. These have utterly lost life.

69 And some being in a doubtful state, have raise up dissensions: these may yet return, if they shall suddenly repent and not continue in their lusts; but if they shall continue in their evil— doing they shall die.

70 They who gave in their rods two parts dry, and the other been, are those who have indeed been faithful, but withal rich and full of good things; and there— upon have desired to be famous among the heathen which are without, and have thereby fallen into great pride, and begun to aim at high matters, and to forsake the truth.

71 Nor were they joined to the saints, but lived with the heathen; and this life seemed the more pleasant to them. Howbeit they have not departed from God, but continued in the faith; only they have not wrought the works of faith.

72 Many therefore of these have repented; and begun to dwell in the tower. Yet others still living among the heathen. people, and being lifted up with their vanities, have utterly fallen away from God, and followed the works and wickedness of the heathen. These kind of men therefore are reckoned among strangers to the Gospel.

73 Others of these began to be doubtful in their minds; despairing by reason of their wicked doings ever to attain unto salvation Others being thus made doubtful, did moreover stir up dissensions.

74 To these therefore, and to those who by reason of their doings are become doubtful, there is still hope of return; but they must repent quickly, that their place may be in the tower. But they that repent not, and continue still in their pleasures, are nigh unto death.

75 As for those who gave in their rods green, excepting their tops, which only were dry, and had clefts; these were always good, and faithful, and upright before God: nevertheless they sinned a little, by reason of their empty pleasures and trifling thoughts which they had within themselves.

76 Wherefore many of them when they heard my words, repented forthwith, and began to dwell in the tower. Nevertheless some grew doubtful, and others to their doubtful minds added dissensions. To these therefore there is still hope of return, because they were always good; but they shall not hardly be moved.

77 As for those, lastly, who gave in their rods dry, their tops only excepted, which alone were green; they are such as have believed indeed in God, but have lived in wickedness; yet without departing from God: having always willingly borne the name of the Lord, and readily received into their houses the servants of God.

78 Wherefore hearing these things they returned, and without delay repented, and lived in all righteousness. And some of them suffered death: others readily underwent many trials, being mindful of their evil doings.

79 If And when he had ended his explications of all the rods, he said unto me, Go, and say unto all men that they repent, and they shall live unto God; because the Lord being moved with great clemency hath sent me to preach repentance unto all:

80 Even unto those who by reason of their evil doings, deserve not to attain unto salvation. But the Lord will by patient, and keep the invitation that was made by his Son.

81 I said unto him, sir, I hope that all when they shall hear these things, will repent. For I trust that everyone acknowledging his crimes, and taking up the fear of the Lord, will return unto repentance.

82 He said unto me, Whosoever shall repent with all their hearts, and cleanse themselves from all the evils that I have before mentioned, and not add anything more to their sins, shall receive from the Lord cure of their former iniquities, if they do not make any doubt of these commands, and shall live unto God.

83 But they that shall continue to add to their transgressions, and still converse with the lusts of the present world, shall condemn themselves unto death. But do thou walk in these commands, and whosoever shall Walk in these, and exerbise them rightly, shall live unto God.

84 And having showed me all these things, he said; I will show thee the rest in a few days.

SIMILITUDE IX.

The greatest mysteries of the militant and triumphant Church which is to be built.

AFTER I had Written the Commands and similitudes of the Shepherd, the Angel of Repentance came unto me, and said to me, I will show thee all those things which the Spirit spake with thee under the figure of the church. For that Spirit is the Son of God.

2 And because thou wert weak in body, it was not declared unto thee by the angel, until thou wert strengthened by the Spirit, and increased in force, that thou mightest also see the angel:

3 For then indeed the building of the tower was very well and gloriously shown unto thee by the church; nevertheless thou sawest all things shown unto thee as it were by a virgin.

4 But now thou art enlightened by the angel, and yet by the same Spirit. But thou must consider all things diligently; for therefore am I sent into thy house by that venerable messenger, that when thou shalt have seen all things powerfully, thou mayest not be afraid as before.

5 And he led me to the height of a mountain in Arcadia, and we sat upon its top. And he showed me a great plain, and about it twelve mountains in different figures.

6 The first was black as soot. The second was smooth, without herbs. The third was full of thorns and thistles. The fourth had herbs half dried; of which the upper part was green, but that next the root was dry; and somb of the herbs, when the sun grew hot, were dry.

7 The fifth mountain was very rugged; but yet had green herbs. The sixth mountain was full of clefts, some lesser,

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and some greater; and in these clefts grew grass, not flourishing, but which seemed to be withering.

8 The seventh mountain had delightful pasture, and was wholly fruitful; and all kinds of cattle, and of the birds of heaven; fed upon it; and the more they fed on it, the more and better did the grass grow.

9 The eighth mountain was full of fountains, and from those fountains were watered all kinds of the creatures of Cod. The ninth mountain had no water at all, but was wholly destitute of it; and nourished deadly serpents, very destructive to men.

10 The tenth mountain was full of tall trees, and altogether shady; and under the shade of them lay cattle resting and chewing the cud.

11 The eleventh mountain was full of the thickest trees, and those trees seemed to be loaded with several sorts of fruits; that whosoever saw them could not choose but desire to eat of their fruit.

12 The twelfth mountain was altogether white, and of a most pleasant aspect, and itself gave a most excellent beauty to itself.

13 In the middle of the plain he showed me a huge white rock, which rose out of the plain, and the rock was higher than those mountains, and was square; so that it seemed capable of support—ing the whole world.

14 It looked to me to be old, yet it had in it a new gate, which seemed to have been newly hewn out of it. Now that gate was bright beyond the sun itself; insomuch, that I greatly wondered at its light.

15 About the gate stood twelve virgins; of which four that stood at the corners of the gate, seemed to me to be the chiefest, although the rest were also of worth: and they stood in the four parts of the gate.

16 It added also to the grace of those virgins, that they stood in pairs, clothed with linen garments, and decently girded, their right arms being at liberty, as if they were about to lift up some burthen; for so they were adorned, and were exceeding cheerful and ready.

17 When I saw this, I wondered with myself to see such great and noble things. And again I admired upon the account of those virgins, that they were so handsome and delicate; and stood with such firmness and constancy, as if they would carry the whole heaven.

18 And as I was thinking thus within myself, the shepherd said unto me; What thickest thou within thyself? Why art thou disquieted, and fillest thyself with care?

19 Do not seem to consider, as if thou wert wise, what thou doest not understand, but pray unto the Lord, that thou mayest have ability to understand it. What is to come thou canst not understand, but thou seest that which is before thee.

20 Be not therefore disquieted at those things which thou canst not see; but get the understanding of those which thou seest.

21 Forbear to be curious; and I will show thee all things that I ought to declare unto thee: but first consider what yet remains.

22 And when he had said this unto me I looked up, and behold I saw six tall and venerable men coming; their countenances were all alike, and they called a certain multitude of men; and they who came at their call were also tall and stout.

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23 And those six commanded them to build a certain tower over that gate. And immediately there began to be a great noise of those men running here and there about the gate, who were come together to build the tower.

24 But those virgins which stood about the gate perceived that the building of the tower was to be hastened by them. And they stretched out their hands, as if they were to receive somewhat from them to do.

25 Then those six men commanded, that they should lift up stones out of a certain deep place, and prepare them for the building of the tower. And there were lifted up ten white stones, square, and not cut round.

26 Then those six men called the ten virgins to them, and com-manded them to carry all the stones that were to be put into the building, and having carried them through the gate to deliver them to those that were about to build the tower.

27 Immediately the virgins began all of them together to lift up those stones, that were before taken out of the deep.

28 And they who also stood about the gate did carry stones in such a manner, that those stones which seemed to be the strongest were laid at the corners, and the rest were put into the sides;

29 And thus they carried all the stones, and bringing them through the gate delivered them to the builders, as they had been commanded: who receiving them at their hands, built with them.

30 But this building was made upon that great rock, and over the gate; and by these the whole tower was supported. But the building of the ten stones filled the whole gate, which began to be made for the foundation of that tower.

31 After those ten stones did five and twenty others rise up out of the deep; and these were placed in the building of the same tower; being lifted up by those virgins, as the others had been before.

32 After these did five and thirty others rise up; and these were also in like manner fitted into the same work. Then forty other stones were brought up, and all these were added unto the building of that tower.

33 So there began to be four ranks in the foundation of that tower; and the stones ceased to rise out of the deep; and they also which built rested a little.

34 Again, those six men commanded the multitude, that they should bring stones out of those twelve mountains to the building of the same tower.

35 So they cut out of all the mountains stones of divers colours, and brought them and gave them to the virgins; which when they had received they carried them, and delivered them into the building of the tower.

36 In which when they were built they became white, and different from what they were before; for they were all alike, and did change their former colours. And some were reached up by the men themselves, which when they came into the building, continued such as they were put in.

37 These neither became white, nor different from what they were before; because they were not carried by the virgins through the gate. Wherefore these stones were disagreeable in the building; which, when these six men perceived they commanded them to be removed, and put again in the place from which they were brought.

38 And they said to those who brought these stones; Do not ye reach up to us any stones for this building, but lay them down by the tower, that these virgins may carry them and reach them to us.

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39 For unless they shall be carried by these virgins through this gate, they cannot change their colours: therefore do not labour in vain.

40 So the building that day was done; howbeit the tower was not finished, for it was afterwards to be built; therefore now also there was some delay made of it.

41 And these six men commanded those that built to depart, and as it were to rest for some time; but they ordered those virgins that they should not depart from the tower; so now they seemed to me to be left for the guarding of it.

42 When all were departed, I said unto the shepherd; Sir, why is not the building of the tower finished? Because it cannot, said he, be finished until its Lord comes, and approves of the building; that if he shall find any stones in it that are not good they may be changed; for this tower is built according to his will.

43 Sir, said I, I would know what the building of this tower signifies; as also I would be informed concerning this rock, and this gate;

44 And concerning the mountains, and the virgins, and the stones that did rise out of the deep, and were not cut, but put into the building just as they came forth; and why the ten stones were first laid in the foundation; then the twenty-five, then thirty-five; then forty?

45 Also concerning those stones that were put into the building, and again taken out, and carried back into their places? Fulfil, I pray, the desire of my soul as to all these things, and manifest all unto me.

46 And he said unto me; If thou shalt not be dull, thou shall know all, and shall see all the other things that are about to happen in this, tower: and shall understand diligently all these similitudes.

47 And after a few days we came into the same place where we had sat before; and he said unto me, Let us go unto the tower; for the Lord of it will come and examine it.

48 So we came thither, and found none but those virgins there. And he asked them whether the Lord of that tower was come thither? And they replied, that he would be there presently to examine the building.

49 After a very little while I saw a great multitude of men coming, and in the middle of them a man so tall, that he surpassed the tower in height.

50 About him were those six, who before commanded in the building, and all the rest of those who had built that tower, and many others of great dignity: and the virgins that kept the tower ran to meet him, and kissed him, and began to walk near unto him.

51 But he examined the building with so much care, that he handled every stone; and struck every one with a rod which he held in his hand:

52 Of which some being so struck turned black as soot; others were rough; some looked as if they had cracks in them; others seemed maimed; some neither black nor white; some looked sharp, and agreed not with the other stones, and others were full of spots.

53 These were the several kinds of those stones which were not found proper in the building; all which the Lord commanded to be taken out of the tower, and laid near it, and other stones to be brought and put in their places.

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54 And they that built, asked him from which of the mountains he would have stones brought to put in the place of those that were laid aside. But he forbad them to bring any from the mountains, and commanded that they should take them out of a certain field that was near.

55 So they digged in the field, and found many bright square stones, and some also that were round. Howbeit, all that were found in that field were taken away, and carried through the gate by those virgins; and those of them that were square were fitted and put into the places of those that were pulled out.

56 But the round ones were not put into the building, because they were hard, and it would have required too much time to cut them but they were placed about the tower, as if they should hereafter be cut square, and put into the building; for they were very white.

57 When he who was chief in dignity, and lord of the whole tower saw this, he called to him the shepherd that was with me, and gave him the stones that were rejected and laid about the tower, and said unto him; cleanse these stones with all care, and fit them into the building of the tower, that they may agree with the rest; but those that will not suit with the rest, cast away afar off from the tower.

58 When he had thus commanded him, he departed, with all those that came with him to the tower but those virgins still stood about the tower to keep it.

59 And I said unto that shepherd; How can these stones, seeing they have been rejected, return into the building of this tower? He replied; I will cut off the greatest part from these stones, and will add them to the building, and they will agree with the rest.

60 And I said, Sir, how will they be able to fill the same place, when they shall be so much cut away? He answered; They that shall be found too little shall be put into the middle of the building, and the greater shall be placed without, and keep them in.

61 When he had said thus unto me, he added; Let us go, and after three days we will return, and I will put these stones, being cleansed, into the tower.

62 For all these that are about the tower must be cleansed, lest the master of the house chance to come upon the sudden, and find those which are about the tower unclean; and be so exasperated that these stones should never be put into the building of this tower, and I shall be looked upon to have been unmindful of my master's commands.

63 When therefore we came after three days to the tower, he said unto me; Let us examine all these stones, and let us see which of them may go into the building. I answered, Sir, let us see.

64 And first of all we began to consider those which had been black; for they were found just such as they were when they were pulled out of the tower: wherefore he commanded them to be removed from the tower and put by themselves.

65 Then he examined those which had been rough; and commanded many of those to be cut round, and to be fitted by the virgins into the building of the tower; so they took them, and fitted them into the middle of the building and he commanded the rest to be laid by with the black ones, for they also were become black.

66 Next he considered those which were full of cracks, and many of those also he ordered to be pared away, and so to be added to the rest of the building, by the came virgins.

67 These were placed without because they were found entire; but the residue through the multitude of their cracks could not be reformed, and therefore were cast away from the building of the tower.

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68 Then he considered those that had been maimed; many of these had cracks, and were become black; others had large clefts; these he commanded to be placed with those that were reected;

69 But the rest being cleansed and reformed, he commanded to be put into the building. These therefore those virgins took up, and fitted into the middle of the building, because they were but weak.

70 After these he examined those which were found half white and half black, and many of those which were now black; these also he ordered to be laid among those that were cast away.

71 The rest were found altogether white; those were taken up by the virgins, and fitted into the same tower: and they were put in the outside, because they were found entire; that so they might keep in those that were placed in the middle, for nothing was cut off from them.

72 Next he looked upon those which had been hard and sharp; but few of these were made use of, because they could not be cut, for they were found very hard: but the rest were formed, and fitted by the virgins into the middle of the building, because they were more weak.

73 Then he considered those which had spots; of these a few were found black, and they were carried to their fellows. The rest were white and entire; and they were fitted by the virgins into the building, and placed in the outside, by reason of their strength.

74 After this he came to consider those stones which were white and round: and he said unto me, What shall we do with these stones? I answered, Sir, I cannot tell.

75 He replied, Canst thou think of nothing then for these? I answered, Sir, I understand not this art; neither am I a stone– cutter, nor can I tell anything.

76 And he said, seest thou not that they are very round? Now to make them square, I must cut off a great deal from them; howbeit, it is necessary that some of these should go into the building of the tower.

77 I answered; If it be necessary, why do you perplex yourself, and not rather choose, if you have any choice among them, and fit them into the building.

78 Upon this he chose out the largest and brightest, and squared them; which, when he had done the virgins took them up, and fitted them into the building.

79 And the rest that remained were carried back into the same field from which they were taken; howbeit, they were not cast away; because, said he, there is yet a little wanting to this tower, which is to be built; and perhaps the Lord will have these stones fitted into this building, because they are exceeding white.

80 Then there were called twelve very stately women, clothed with a black garment, girded, and their shoulders free, and their hair loose. These seemed to me to be country women.

81 And the shepherd commanded them to take up those stones which were cast out of the building, and carry them back to the mountains out of which they were taken.

82 And they took them all up joyfully, and carried them back to their places from whence they had been taken.

83 When not one stone remained about the tower, he said unto me, Let us go about this tower, and see whether anything be wanting to it.

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84 We began therefore to go round about it; and when he saw that it was handsomely built, he began to be very glad; for it was so beautifully framed, that any one that had seen it must have been in love with the building.

85 For it seemed to be all but one stone, nor did a joint any where appear; but it looked as if it had all been cut out of one rock.

86 And when I diligently considered what a tower it was, I was extremely pleased: and he said unto me, Bring hither some lime and little shells, that I may fill up the spaces of those stones that were taken out of the building, and put in again; for all things about the tower must be made even.

87 And I did as he commanded me, and brought them unto him and he said unto me, Be ready to help me, and this work will quickly be finished.

88 He therefore filled up the spaces of those stones, and commanded the place about the tower to be cleansed.

89 Then those virgins took besoms, and cleansed all the place around, and took away all the rubbish, and threw water on; which being done, the palace became delightful, and the tower beautiful.

90 Then he said unto me, All is now clean if the Lord should come to finish the tower, he will find nothing whereby to complain of us.

91 When he had said this he would have departed. But I laid hold on his bag, and began to entreat him for the Lord's sake, that he would explain to me all things that he had shown me.

92 He said unto me, I have at present a little business; but I will suddenly explain all things unto thee. Tarry here for me till I come.

93 I said unto him, Sir, what shall I do here alone? He answered, Thou art not alone, seeing all these virgins are with thee.

94 I said, Sir, deliver me then unto them. Then he called them and said unto them, I commend this man unto you until I shall come;

95 So I remained with those virgins: now they were cheerful and courteous unto me; especially the four, which seemed to be the chieftest among them.

96 Then those virgins said unto me, that shepherd will not return hither to-day. I said unto them, What then shall I do? They answered, Tarry for him till the evening, if perhaps he may come and speak with thee; but if not, yet thou shalt continue with us till he does come.

97 I said unto them, I will tarry for him till evening; but if he comes not by that time, I will go home, and return hither again the next morning.

98 They answered me, As thou art delivered unto us, thou mayest not depart from us. I said, Where shall I tarry?

99 They replied, Thou shalt sleep with us as a brother, not as a husband; for thou art our brother, and we are ready from henceforth to dwell with thee; for thou art very dear to us.

100 Howbeit I was ashamed to continue with them. But she that seemed to be the chieftest amongst them, embraced me, and began to kiss me. And the rest when they saw that I was kissed by her, began also to kiss me as a brother; and led me about the tower, and played with me.

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101 Some of them also sung psalms, others made up the chorus with them. But I walked about the tower with them, rejoicing silently, and seeming to myself to be grown young again.

102 When the evening came on, I would forthwith have gone home, but they withheld me, and suffered me not to depart. Wherefore I continued with them that night near the same tower.

103 So they spread their linen garments upon the ground; and placed me in the middle, nor did they anything else, only they prayed.

104 I also prayed with them without ceasing, nor less than they. Who, when they saw me pray in that manner, rejoiced greatly: and I continued there with their till the next day.

105 And when we had worshipped God, then the shepherd came and said unto them: You have done no injury to this man? They answered, Ask him. I said unto him, Sir, I have received a great deal of satisfaction in that I have remained with them.

106 And he said unto me, How didst thou sup? I answered, Sir, I feasted the whole night upon the words of the Lord. They received thee well then, said he? I said, Sir, very well.

107 He answered, Wilt thou now learn what thou didst desire? I replied, Sir, I will: and first I pray thee that thou shouldest show me all things in the order that I asked them.

108 He answered, I will do all as thou wouldst have me, nor will I hide any thing from thee.

109 First of all, Sir, said I, tell me, what this rock and this gate denote? Hearken, said he; this rock, and this gate, are the Son of God. I replied, Sir, how can that be; seeing the rock is old, but the gate new?

110 Hear, said he, O foolish man! and understand. The Son of God is indeed more ancient than any creature; insomuch that he was in council with his Father at the creation oft all things.

111 But the gate is therefore new, because he appeared in the last days in the fullness of time; that they who shall attain unto salvation, may by it enter into the kingdom of God.

112 You have seen, said he, those stones which were carried through the gate, how they were placed in the building of the tower; but that those which were not carried through the gate, were sent away into their own places? 113 I answered, sir, I saw it. Thus, said he, no man shall enter into the kingdom of God, but he who shall take upon him the name of the Son of God.

114 For if you would enter into any city, and that city should be encompassed with a wall, and had only one gate, could you enter into that city except by that gate?

115 I answered, Sir, how could I do otherwise? As therefore, said he, there would be no other way of entering into that city but by its gate, so neither can any one enter into the kingdom of God, but only by the name of his Son, who is most dear unto him.

116 And he said unto me, Didst thou see the multitude of those that built that tower? Sir, said I, I saw it. He answered, All those are the angels, venerable in their dignity,

117 With those is the Lord encompassed as with a wall: but the gate is the Son of God, who is the only way of coming unto God. For no man shall go to God, but by his Son.

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118 Thou sawest also, said he, the six men, and in the middle of them that venerable great man, who walked about the tower, and rejected the stones out of the tower?

119 Sir, said I, I saw them. He answered, that tall man was the Son of God; and those six were his angels of most eminent dignity, which stand about him on the right hand and on the left.

120 Of these excellent angels none comes in unto God without him. He added, Whosoever there. fore shall not take upon him his name, he shall nor enter into the kingdom of God.

121 Then I said, What is this tower? This, said he, is the church. And what, Sir, are these virgins? He said unto me, These are the holy spirits, for no man can enter into the kingdom of God, except these clothe him with their garment,

122 For it will avail thee nothing to take up the name of the Son of God, unless thou shalt also receive their garment from them. For these virgins are the powers of the Son of God. So shall a man in vain bear his name, unless he shall be also endued with his powers.

123 And he said unto me, sawest thou those stones that were cast away? They bore indeed the name, but put not on their garment. I said, Sir, what is their garment? Their very names, said he, are their garment.

124 Therefore whosoever beareth the name of the Son of God, ought to bear their names also; for the Son of God also himself beareth their names.

125 As for those stones, continued he, which being delivered by their hands, thou sawest remain in the building, they were clothed with their power; for which cause thou seest the whole tower of the same colour with the rock, and made as it were of one stone.

126 So also those who have believed in God by his Son, have put on his spirit. Behold there shall be one spirit, and one body, and one colour of their garments; and all they shall attain this, who shall bear the names of these virgins.

127 And I said, Sir, why then were those stones cast away which were rejected, seeing they also were carried through the gate, and delivered by the hands of these virgins into the building of this tower?

128 Seeing, said he thou takest care to inquire diligently into all things, hear also concerning those stones which were rejected. All these received the name of the Son of God, and with that the power of these virgins.

129 Having therefore received these spirits, they were perfected, and brought into the number of the servants of God; and they began to be one body, and to have one garment, for they were endued with the same righteousness, which they alike exercised.

130 But after that they beheld those women which thou sawest clothed with a black garment, with their shoulders at liberty and their hair loose; they fixed their desires upon them, being tempted with their beauty; and were clothed with their power, and cast off the clothing of the virgins:

131 Therefore were they cast off from the house of God, and delivered to those women. But they that were not corrupted with their beauty, remained in the house of God. This, said he, is the signification of those stones which were rejected.

132 And I said, sir, what if any of these men shall repent, and cast away their desire of those women, and be converted, and return to these virgins, and put on again their virtue; shall they not enter into the house of God?

133 They shall enter, said he, if they shall lay aside all the works of those women, and shall resume the power of these virgins, and shall walk in their works.

134 And for this cause there is a stop in the building, that if they shall repent, they may be added to the building of this tower; but if they shall not repent, that others may be built in their places, and so they may be utterly cast away.

135 For all these things I gave thanks unto the Lord, that being moved with mercy towards all those upon whom his name is carried, he sent to us the angel of repentance to preside over us who have sinned against him; and that he has refreshed our spirits which were almost gone, and who had no hope of salvation, but are now refreshed to the renewal of life.

136 Then I said, Show me now sir, why this tower is not built upon the ground, but upon a rock, and upon the gate? He replied, Thou art foolish, and without understanding, therefore thou asketh this.

137 And I said, sir, I must needs ask all things of you because I understand nothing at all. For all your answers are great and excellent; and which a man can hardly understand.

138 Hear, said he: The name of the Son of God is great and without bounds, and the whole world is supported by it. If therefore, said I, every creature of God be sustained by his Son, why should he not support those also who have been invited by him, and who carry his name, and walk in his commandments?

139 Seest thou not, said he, that he doth support them, who with all their heart, bear his name? He therefore is their foundation, and gladly supports those who do not deny his name, but willingly bear it.

140 And I said: Sir, tell me the names of these virgins; and of those women that were clothed with the black garment.

141 Hear, said he, the names of those virgins which are the more powerful, and stand at the corners of the gate. These are their names:

142 The first is called Faith; the second Continnence; the third Power; the fourth Patience; the rest which stand beneath these are, Simplicity, Innocence, Chastity, Cheerfulness, Truth, Understanding, Concord, Charity.

143 Whosoever therefore bear these names, and the name of the Son of God, shall enter into the kingdom of God.

144 Hear now, said he, the names of those women, which were clothed with the black garment. Of these, four are the principal: the first is Perfidiousness; the second, Incontinence; the third, Infidelity; the fourth, Pleasure.

145 And the rest which follow are called thus, Sadness, Malice, Lust, Anger, Lying, Foolishness, Pride, and Hatred. The servant of God, which carries these spirits, shall see indeed the kingdom of God, but he shall not enter into it.

146 But, sir, what are those stones which were taken out of the deep and fitted into the building? The ten, said he, which were placed at the foundation, are the first age; the following five-and- twenty, are the second, of righteous men.

147 The next thirty-five, are the prophets and ministers of the Lord. And the forty, are the Apostles and doctors of the preaching of the Son of God.

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148 And I said, sir, why did the virgins put even those stones into the building after they were carried through the gate? And he said, Because these first carried those spirits, and they departed not one from the other, neither the men from the spirits, nor the spirits from the men:

149 But the spirits were joined to those men even to the day of their death; who if they had not had these spirits with them, they could not have been useful to the building of this tower.

150 And I said, sir, show me this farther. He answered, What dost then ask? Why did these stones come out of the deep, and were placed into the building of this tower, seeing that they long ago carried those holy spirits?

151 It was necessary, said he, for them to ascend by water, that they might be at rest. For they could not otherwise enter into the kingdom of God, but by laying aside the mortality of their former life.

152 They therefore being dead, were nevertheless sealed with the seal of the Son of God, and so entered into the kingdom of God.

153 For before a man receives the name of the Son of God, he is ordained unto death; but when he receives that seal, he is freed from death, and assigned unto life.

154 Now that seal is the water of baptism, into which men go down under the obligation unto death, but come up appointed unto life.

155 Wherefore to those also was this seal preached, and they made use of it, that they might enter into the kingdom of God.

156 And I said, Why then, sir, did these forty stones also ascend with them out of the deep, having already received that seal?

157 He answered, Because these Apostles and teachers, who preached the name of the Son of God, dying after they had received his faith and power, preached to them who were dead before: and they gave this seal to them.

158 They went down therefore into the water with them, and again came up. But these went down whilst they were alive, and came up again alive: whereas those who were before dead, went down dead, but came up alive;

159 Through these therefore they received life, and knew the Son of God: for which cause they came up with them, and were fit to come into the building of the tower; and were not cut, but put in entire; because they died in righteousness, and in great purity; only this seal was wanting to them.

160 Thus you have the explication of these things.

161 I answered: Sir, tell me now what concerns those mountains; why are they so different, some of one form, and some of another?

162 Hear, said he; These twelve mountains which thou seest, are twelve nations, which make up the whole world. Wherefore the Son of God is preached to them, by those whom he sent unto them.

163 But why, said I, are they different, and every one of a figure? He replied, Hearken. Those twelve nations which possess the whole world, are twelve people.

164 And as thou hast beheld these mountains different, so are they. I will therefore open to thee the meaning and actions of every mountain.

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165 But first, sir, said I, show me this; Seeing these moutains are so different, how have they agreed in the building of this tower; and been brought to one colour; and are no less bright than those that came out of the deep?

166 Because, replied he, all the nations which are under heaven, have heard and believed in the same one name of the Son of God by whom they are called.

167 Wherefore having received his seal, they have all been made partakers of the same understand- ing and knowledge; and their faith and charity have been the same; and they have carried the spirits of these virgins together with his name.

168 And therefore the building of this tower appeared to be of the same colour, and did shine like the brightness of the sun.

169 But after that they had thus agreed in one mind, there began to be one body of them all; howbeit some of them polluted themselves, and were cast off from those of the righteous, and again returned to their former state, and became even worse than they were before.

170 How, air, said I, were they worse who knew the Lord? He answered: If he who knows not the Lord liveth wickedly, the punishment of his wickedness attends him;

171 But he who has known the Lord, ought to abstain altogether from all wickedness, and more and more to be the servant of righteousness.

172 And does not he then seem to thee to sin more who ought to follow goodness, if he shall prefer the part of sin; than he who offends without knowing the power of God?

173 Wherefore these are indeed ordained unto death; but they who have known the Lord, and have seen his wonderful works, if they shall live wickedly, they shall be doubly punished, and shall die for ever.

174 As therefore thou hast seen that after the stones were cast out of the tower, which had been rejected, they were delivered to wicked and cruel spirits; and thou beheldest the tower so cleansed, as if it had all been made of one stone:

175 So the church of God, when it shall be purified: (the wicked and counterfeits, the mischievous and doubtful, and all that have behaved themselves wickedly in it, and committed divers kinds of sin, being cast out) shall become one body, and there shall be one under- standing, one opinion, one faith, and the same charity.

176 And then shall the Son of God rejoice among them, and shall receive his people with a pure will.

177 And I said; Sir, all these things are great and honourable; but now show unto me the effect and force of every mountain: that every soul which trusteth in the Lord, when it shall hear these things may honour his great, and wonderful, and holy name.

178 Hear, said he, the variety of these mountains, that is, of the twelve nations.

179 They who have believed of the first mountain, which is black, are those who have revolted from the faith, and spoken wicked things against the Lord; and betrayed the servants of God.

180 These are condemned to death; there is no repentance for them: and therefore they are black, because their kind is wicked.

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181 Of the second mountain which was smooth, are the hypocrites, who have believed, and the teachers of naughtiness: and these are next to the foregoing, which have not in them the fruit of righteousness.

182 For as their mountain is barren and without fruit so also such kind of men have indeed the name of Christians, but are empty of faith; nor is there any fruit of the truth in them.

183 Nevertheless there is room left to them of repentance, if they shall speedily pursue it; but if they shall delay, they also shall be partakers of death with the foregoing kind.

184 I said, air, why is there room left to those for repentance, and not to the foregoing kind, seeing their sins are well nigh the same?

185 There is therefore, said he, to these a return unto life by repentance, because they have not blasphemed against their Lord, nor betrayed the servants of God: but by their desire of gain have deceived men, leading them according to the lusts of sinners; wherefore they shall suffer for this thing.

186 Howbeit there is still left them room for repentance, because they have not spoken any thing wickedly against the Lord.

187 They who are of the third mountain which had thorns and brambles, are those who believed, but were some of them rich; others taken up with many affairs: the brambles are their riches; the thorns, those affairs in which they were engaged.

188 Now they who are entangled in much business, and in diversity of affairs, join not themselves to the servants of God, but wander, being called away by those affairs with which they are choked.

189 And so they which are rich, with difficulty yield themselves to the conversation of the servants of God; fearing lest any thing should be asked of them. These therefore shall hardly enter the kingdom of God.

190 For as men walk with difficulty bare-foot over thorns, even so these kind of men shall scarcely enter into the kingdom of God.

191 Nevertheless there is afforded to all these a return unto repentance, if they shall quickly return to it; because in their former days they having neglected to work, in the time that is to come they may do some good.

192 If therefore having repented they shall do the works of righteousness, they shall live; but if they shall continue in their evil courses, they shall be delivered to those women who will take away their lives.

193 As for the fourth mountain, which had many herbs, the upper part of which is green, but the roots dry, and some of which being touched with the heat of the sun, are withered;

194 It denotes the doubtful, who have believed, and some others who carry the Lord on their tongues, but have him not in their hearts: therefore their grass is dry, and without root; because they live only in words, but their works are dead.

195 These therefore are neither dead nor living, and withal are doubtful. For the doubtful are neither green nor dry; that is neither dead nor alive.

196 For as the herbs dry away at the sight of the sun, so the doubtful, as soon as they hear of persecution, and fear inconveniencies, return to their idols, and again serve them, and are ashamed to bear the name of their Lord.

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197 This kind of men then is neither dead nor alive; nevertheless these also may live, if they shall presently repent; but if not, they shall be delivered to those women, who shall take away their lives.

198 As concerning the fifth mountain that is craggy, and yet has green grass; they are of this kind who have believed, and are faithful indeed, but believe with difficulty, and are bold and self-conceited; and would be thought to know all things, but really know nothing.

199 Wherefore, by reason of this confidence, knowledge is departed from them; and a rash presumption is entered into them.

200 But they carry themselves high, and as prudent men; and though they are fools, yet would seem to be teachers.

201 Now by reason of this folly many of them whilst they magnify themselves, are become vain and empty. For boldness and vain confidence is a very evil spirit.

202 Wherefore many of these are cast away; but others acknowledging their error, have repented, and submitted themselves to those who are knowing.

203 And to all the rest of this kind, there is repentance allowed; forasmuch as they were not so much wicked as foolish, and void of understanding.

204 If these therefore shall repent, they shall live unto God; but if not, they shall dwell with those women, who shall exercise their wickedness upon them.

205 For what concerns the sixth mountain having greater and lesser clefts, they are such as have believed; but those in which were lesser clefts are they who have had controversies among themselves; and by reason of their quarrels languish in the faith:

206 Nevertheless many of these have repented, and so will the rest when they shall hear my commands; for their controversies are but small, and they will easily return unto repentance.

207 But those who have the greater clefts, will be as stiff stones, mindful of grudges and offences, and full of anger among themselves. These therefore are cast from the tower, and refused to be put into its building; for this kind of men shall hardly live.

208 Our God and Lord, who ruleth over all things, and has power over all his creatures, will not remember our offences, but is easily appeased by those who confess their sins: but man being languid, mortal, infirm, and full of sins, perseveres in his anger against man; as if it were in his power to save or destroy him.

209 But I, as the angel who am set over your repentance, admonish you, that whosoever among you has any such purpose he should lay it aside, and return unto repentance; and the Lord will heal your former sins, if you shall purge yourself from this evil spirit; but if you shall not do it, ye shall be delivered to him unto death.

210 As for the seventh mountain in which the grass was green and flourishing, and the whole mountain faithful; and all kind of cattle fed upon the grass of it, and the more the grass was eaten, so much the more it flourished;

211 They are such as believed, and were always good and upright; and without any differences among themselves, but still rejoiced in the servants of God, having put on the spirit of these virgins; and been always forward to show mercy to all men, readily giving to all men of their labours without upbraiding, and without deliberation.

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212 Wherefore the Lord seeing their simplicity and innocence, has increased them in the works of their hands, and given them grace in all their works.

213 But I, who am the angel appointed over your repentance, exhort you, that as many as are of this kind would continue in the same purpose, that your seed may not be rooted out for ever.

214 For the Lord hath tried you, and written you into our number; and all your seed shall dwell with the Son of God; for ye are all of his spirit.

215 As concerning the eighth mountain in which were a great many springs, by which every kind of all the creatures of God was watered; they are such as have believed the Apostles which the Lord sent into all the world to preach;

216 And some of them being teachers have preached and taught purely and sincerely, and have not in the least yielded to any evil, desires, but have constantly walked in righteousness and truth.

217 These therefore have their conversations among the angels.

218 Again; as for what concerns the ninth mountain which is a desert, and full of serpents; they are such as have believed, but had many stains:

219 These are such ministers as discharge their ministry amiss; ravishing away the goods of the widows and fatherless; and serve themselves, not others, out of those things which they have received.

220 These, if they continue in this covetousness, have delivered themselves unto death, nor shall there be any hope of life for them. But if they shall be converted, and shall discharge their ministry sincerely, they may live.

221 As for those which were found rough, they are such as have denied the name of the Lord, and not returned again to the Lord, but have become savage and wild; not applying themselves to the servants of God; but being separated from them, have for a little carelessness lost their lives.

222 For as a vine that is forsaken in a hedge, and never dressed, perishes and is choked by the weeds, and in time becomes wild, and ceases to be useful to its lord; so this kind of men despairing of themselves, and being soured, have begun to be unprofitable to their Lord.

223 Howbeit, to these there is, after all, repentance allowed, if they shall not be found from their hearts to have denied Christ; but if any of these shall be found to have denied him from his heart, I cannot tell whether such a one can attain unto life.

224 I say therefore that if any one hath denied, he should in these days return unto repentance; for it cannot be that anyone who now denies the Lord, can afterwards attain unto salvation nevertheless repentance is promised unto them who have formerly denied.

225 But he who will repent must hasten on his repentance, before the building of this tower is finished; otherwise, he shall be delivered by those women unto death.

226 But they that are maimed, are the deceitful; and those who mix with one another, are the serpents that you saw mingled in that mountain.

227 For as the poison of serpents is deadly unto men, so the words of such persons infect and destroy men. They are therefore maimed in their faith, by reason of that kind of life which they lead.

Forbidden Gospels and Epistles, v9

228 Howbeit some of them, having repented, have been saved; and so shall others of the same kind be also saved, if they shall repent; but if not, they shall die by those women who power and force posses,

229 For what concerns the tenth mountain, in which were the trees covering the cattle, they are such as have believed; and some of them have been bishops, that is, governors of the churches.

230 Others, are such stones as have not feignedly, but with a cheerful mind entertained the servants of God.

231 Then, such as have been set over inferior ministries, and have protected the poor and the widows; and have always kept a chaste conversation: therefore they also are protected by the Lord.

232 Whosoever shall do on this wise, are honoured with the Lord; and their place is among the angels, if they shall continue to obey the Lord even unto the end.

233 As to the eleventh mountain in which were trees loaded with several sorts of fruit; they are such as have believed, and suffered death, for the name of the Lord; and have endured with a heavy mind, and have given up their lives with all their hearts.

234 And I said, Why then, sir, have all these fruit indeed, but yet some fairer than others?

235 Hearken, said he: Whosoever have suffered for the name of the Lord are esteemed honourable by the Lord; and all their offences are blotted out, because they have suffered death for the name of the Son of God.

236 Hear now, why their fruits are different, and some of them excel others. They who were brought before magistrates, and being asked, denied not the Lord, but suffered with a ready mind; these are more honourable with the Lord. The fruits therefore that are the most fair are these.

237 But they who were fearful and doubtful, and have deliberated with themselves whether they should confess or deny Christ, and yet have suffered; their fruits are smaller, because that this thought came into their hearts.

238 For it is a wicked and evil thought for a servant to deliberate whether he should deny his master: Take heed therefore ye who have such thoughts, that this mind Pontinrie not in you, and ye die unto God.

239 But ye who suffer death for his name sake, ought to honour the Lord, that he has esteemed you worthy to bear his name; and that you should be delivered from all your sins.

240 And why therefore do you not rather esteem yourselves happy? Ye think verily that if any one among you suffer, he performs a great work! Yet the Lord giveth you life, and ye understand it not. For your offences did oppress you; and if you had not suffered for his name sake, ye would now be dead unto the Lord.

241 Wherefore I speak this unto you who deliberate whether ye should confess or deny him. Confess that ye have the Lord for your God, lest at any time denying him, ye be delivered up into bonds.

242 For if all nations punish their servants which deny their masters; what think you that the Lord will do unto you, who has the power of all things?

243 Remove therefore out of your hearts these doubts, that ye may live for ever unto God.

244 As for the twelfth mountain, which was white, they are such as have believed like sincere children, into whose thoughts there never came any malice, nor have they ever known what sin was, but have always continued in their integrity.

Forbidden Gospels and Epistles, v9

245 Wherefore this kind of men shall without all doubt inherit the kingdom of God; because they have never in any thing defiled the commandments of God, but have continued with sincerity in the same condition all the days of their lives.

246 Whosoever therefore, said he, shall continue as children without malice; shall be more honourable than all those of whom I have yet spoken: for all such children are honoured by the Lord, and esteemed the first of all.

247 Happy therefore are ye who shall remove all malice from you, and put on innocence; be. cause ye shall first see the Lord. 248 And after he had thus ended his explication of all the mountains, I said unto him, Sir, show me now also what concerns the stones that were brought out of the plain, and put into the tower in the room of those that were rejected.

249 As also concerning those round stones which were added into the building of the tower; and also of those who still continued round.

250 Hear now, says he, concerning those stones which were brought out of the plain into the building of the tower, and placed in the room of those that were rejected: they are the roots of that white mountain.

251 Wherefore because those who have believed of that mountain, were very innocent; the lord of this tower commanded that they which were of the roots of this mountain should be placed into the building.

252 For he knew that if they were put into, this building they would continue bright; nor would any of them any more be made black.

253 But if he had added after this manner, from the rest of the mountains, he would almost have needed again to visit the tower, and to cleanse it.

254 Now all these white stones are the young men who have believed, or shall believe; for they are all of the same kind. Happy is this kind, because it is innocent.

255 Hear now also concerning those round and bright stones; all these are of this white mountain. But they are therefore found round, because their riches have a little darkened them from the truth, and dazzled their eyes.

256 Howbeit they have never departed from the Lord, nor has any wicked word proceeded out of their mouths; but all righteousness, and virtue, and truth.

257 When therefore the Lord saw their minds, and that they might adorn the truth; he commanded that they should continue good, and that their riches should be pared away:

258 For he would not have them taken wholly away, to the end they might do some good with that which was left, and live unto God; because they also are of a good kind.

259 Therefore was there little cut off from them, and so they were put into the building of this tower.

260 As for the rest which continued still round, and were not found fit for the building of this tower, because they have not yet received the seal; they were carried back to their place, be. cause they were found very round.

261 But this present world must be cut away from them, and the vanities of their riches; and then they will be fit for the kingdom of God. For they must enter into the kingdom of God, because God has blessed this innocent kind.

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262 Of this kind therefore none shall fall away: for though any of them being tempted by the devil should offend, he shall soon return to his Lord God.

263 I the angel of repentance esteem you happy, whosoever are innocent as little children, because your portion is good and honourable with the Lord.

264 And I say unto all you who have received this seal; keep simplicity, and remember not the offences which are committed against you, nor continue in malice, or in bitterness, through the memory of offences.

265 But become one spirit, and provide remedies for these evil rents, and remove them from you; that the lord of the sheep may rejoice at it; for he will rejoice, if he shall find all whole.

266 But if any of these sheep shall be found scattered away, Woe shall be to the shepherds; and if the shepherds themselves shall be scattered; what will they answer to the lord of the sheep—fold? Will they say that they were troubled by the sheep? But they shall not be believed.

267 For it is an incredible thing that the shepherd should suffer by his flock; and he shall be the more punished for his life.

268 Now I am the shepherd; and especially must give an account of you.

269 Wherefore take care of yourselves whilst the tower is, yet building. The Lord dwells in those that love peace, for peace is beloved; but he is far off from the contentious, and those who are full of malice.

270 Wherefore restore unto him the Spirit entire, as ye received it. For if thou shalt give unto a fuller a garment new and whole, thou wilt expect to receive it whole again; if therefore the fuller shall restore it unto thee torn, wouldst thou receive it?

271 Wouldst thou not presently be angry, and reproach him, saying; I gave my garment to thee whole, why halt thou rent it, and made it useless to me? Now it is of no use to me, by reason of the rent which thou hast made in it. Wouldst thou not say all this to a fuller, for the rent which he made in thy garment?

272 If therefore thou wouldst be concerned for thy garment, and complain that thou hadst not received it whole; what thinkest thou that the Lord will do, who gave his Spirit to thee entire, and thou hast rendered him altogether unprofitable, so that he can be of no use unto his Lord? For being corrupted by thee, he is no longer profitable to him.

273 Will not therefore the Lord do the same concerning his Spirit, by reason of thy deed? Undoubtedly, said I, he will do the same to all those whom he shall find to continue in the remembrance of injuries.

274 Tread not then under foot he said, his mercy; but rather honour him, because he is so patient with respect to your offences, and not like one of you; but repent, for it will be profitable for you.

275 All these things which are above written, I the shepherd and angel of repentance, have shown and spoken to the servants of God.

276 If therefore ye shall believe and hearken to these words, and shall walk in them and correct your ways, ye shall live. But if ye shall, continue in malice, and in the remembrance of injuries, no such sinners shall live unto God.

277 All these things which were to be spoken by me, I have thus delivered unto you. Then the shepherd said unto me, Hast thou asked all things of me? I answered, sir, I have.

278 Why then, said he, hast thou not asked concerning the spaces of these stones that were put in the building, that I may explain that also unto thee? I answered, sir, I forgot it. Hear, then, said he, concerning these also.

279 They are those who have now heard these commands, and have repented with all their hearts;

280 And when the Lord saw that their repentance was good and pure, and that they could continue in it, he commanded their former sins to be blotted out. For these spaces were their sins, and they are therefore made even that they might not appear.

SIMILITUDE X.

Of Repentance and alms—deeds.

AFTER I had written this book, the angel which had delivered me to that shepherd, came into the house where I was and sat upon the bed, and that shepherd stood at his right hand.

2 Then he called me and said unto me; I delivered thee and thy house to this shepherd, that thou mightest be protected by him. I said, Yes, Lord.

3 If therefore, said he, thou wilt be protected from all vexations and from all cruelty, and have success in every good word and work, and have all virtue and righteousness; walk in those commands which he has given thee, and thou shalt have dominion over all sin.

4 For if thou keepest those commands, all the lust and pleasure of this present world shall be subject to thee; and success shall follow thee in every good undertaking.

5 Take therefore his gravity and modesty towards thee, and say unto all, that he is in great honour and renown with God, and is a prince of great authority, and powerful in his office.

6 To him only is the power of repentance committed throughout the whole world. Does he not seem to thee to be of great authority?

7 But ye despise his goodness, and the modesty which he shows towards you.

8 I said unto him; Sir, ask him since the time that he came into my house whether I have done any thing disorderly, or have offended him in any thing?

9 I know, said he, that thou hast done nothing disorderly, neither wilt thou hereafter do any such thing, and therefore I speak these things with thee that then mayest persevere; for he has given me a good account concerning thee.

10 But thou shalt speak these things to others, that they who either have repented, or shall repent, may be like-minded with thee, and he may give me as good an account of them also; and that I may do the same unto the Lord.

11 I answered; Sir, I declare to all men the wonderful works of God; and I hope that all who love them, and have before sinned, when they shall hear these things, will repent, and recover life.

Forbidden Gospels and Epistles, v9

12 Continue therefore, said he, in this ministry, and fulfil it. And whosoever shall do according to the commands of this shepherd, he shall live; and shall have great honour both here and with the Lord.

13 But they that shall not keep his commands, flee from their life, and are adversaries to it. And they that follow not his com- mands, shall deliver themselves unto death; and shall be every one guilty of his own blood.

14 But I say unto thee, keep these commandments, and thou shalt find a cure for all thy sins.

15 Moreover, I have sent these virgins to dwell with thee; for I have seen that they are very kind to thee. Thou shalt there- fore have them for thy helpers, that thou mayest the better keep the commands which he hath given thee; for these commands cannot be kept without these virgins.

16 And as I see how they are willing to be with thee, I will also command them that they shall not all depart from thy house.

17 Only do thou purify thy house; for they will readily dwell in a clean house. For they are clean and chaste, and industrious; and all of them have grace with the Lord.

18 If therefore thou shalt have thy house pure, they will abide with thee. But, if it shall be never so little polluted, they will immediately depart from thy house; for these virgins cannot endure any manner of pollution.

19 I said unto him; Sir, I hope that I shall so please them, that they shall always delight to dwell in my house. And as be to whom you have committed me, makes no complaint of me; so neither shall they complain.

20 Then he said to that shepherd: I see that the servant of God will live and keep these commandments, and place these virgins in a pure habitation.

21 When he had said this, he delivered me again to that shepherd, and called the virgins, and said unto them; Forasmuch as I see that ye will readily dwell in this man's house, I commend him and his family to you, that ye may not at all depart from his house. And they willingly heard these words.

22 Then he said unto me, Go on manfully in thy ministry; declare to all men the great things of God, and thou shalt find grace in this ministry.

23 And whosoever shall walk in these commands, shall live, and be happy in his life. But he that shall neglect them, shall not live, and shall be unhappy in his life.

24 Say unto all that whosoever can do well, cease not to exercise themselves in good works, for it is profitable unto them. For I would that all men should be delivered from the inconveniences they lie under.

25 For he that wants, and suffers inconveniences in his daily life, is in great torment and necessity. Whosoever therefore delivers such a soul from necessity, gets great joy unto himself.

26 For he that is grieved with such inconveniencies is equally tormented, as if he were in chains. And many upon the account of such calamities, being not able to bear them, have chosen even to destroy themselves.

27 He therefore that knows the calamity of such a man, and does not free him from it, commits a great sin, and is guilty of his blood.

28 Wherefore exercise your. selves in good works, as many as have received ability from the Lord; lest whilst ye delay to do them, the building of the tower be finished; because for your sakes the building is stopped.

29 Except therefore ye shall make haste to do well, the tower shall be finished, and ye shall be shut out of it.

30 And after he had thus spoken with me, he rose up from the bed and departed, taking the shepherd and virgins with him.

31 Howbeit he said unto me, that he would send back the shepherd and virgins unto my house. Amen.

REFERENCES TO THE BOOK OF HERMAS, THE SHEPHERD.

[This book, divided into three parts, called his VISIONS, COMMANDS, and SIMILITUDES, is thus entitled, because it was composed by Hermas, brother to Pius, bishop of Rome; and because the Angel, who bears the principal part in it, is represented in the form and habit of a shepherd. Ireneus quotes it under the very name of Scripture. Origen thought it a most useful writing, and that it was divinely inspired; Eusebius says that, though it was not esteemed canonical, it was read publicly in the churches, which is corroborated by Jerome; and Athanasius cites it, calls it a most useful work, and observes, that though it was not strictly canonical, the Fathers appointed it to be read for direction and confirmation in faith and piety. Jerome, notwithstanding this, and that he applauded it in his catalogue of writers, in his comments upon it afterwards, terms it apocryphal and foolish. Turtullian praised it when a Catholic, and abused it when a Montanist. Although Gelasius ranks it among the apocryphal books, it is found attached to some of the most ancient MSS. of the New Testament; and Archbishop Wake, believing it the genuine work of an apostolical Father, preserves it to the English reader by the foregoing translation, in which he has rendered the three parts of it not only more exact, but in greater purity than they had before appeared. The archbishop procured Dr. Grabe to entirely collate the old Latin version with an ancient MS. in the Lambeth library; and the learned prelate himself still further improved the whole from a multitude of fragments of the original Greek never before used for that purpose.]