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So full was I with the strength of all these matters that when we came into Peter's house, and the mother of his wife was lying there sick of a fever, I had only to take her by the hand; that was encouragement sufficient for her to rise from her bed. When she stood, so did I feel how her fever had left and she was much heartened by this ministrations and cooked for us and we were well fed.

In that evening, friends of Simon and Andrew and James and John came to the house with a few of those who were diseased or who thought themselves possessed of devils and I felt ready for many missions.

Cures came quickly that night and brought me happiness for I had no more than to put my hand upon someone, or kiss them on the cheek, and out came many small devils. And by each of these who came out so was the person before me able to say farewell to divers diseases. And the devils, much frightened, did not even have to speak as they issued--which

is just as well, for they make a terrible sound when aroused enough to protest.

Then, in the morning, did Peter say to me, "All men now seek for thee and I fear excess, and would caution thee against the curious. They seek to witness miracles. And they will form thy throng, and bring great attention to you. But will that give power to change men's souls?"

Feeling much impressed with such wisdom, I asked after his thoughts, and he told me how after many years of laboring as a fisherman, he had been waiting for a sign from the Lord; thereby, on seeing me, had he known that I was a prophet.

His speech gave me cause to think of John the Baptist in the dungeon of Herod Antipas. And on my next breath did I know pain like a knife, and it was within my chest. For if the Lord had given me great power, thereby was I also open to sudden catastrophe, and I encouraged Peter and Andrew and James and John to leave with me so that we might go to other synagogues in Galilee and cast out devils there, as if fewer the devils surrounding us, safer was my cousin, John. And myself. Besides, it would be better to do the deed and leave others behind with wonder than to remain in one circle until

wonder had been converted to dissension. And I knew I was thinking with the wisdom of Peter.

In the courtyard of another synagogue in another town, a leper came to me and knelt and asked, "Canst thou make me clean?" When I was silent, he said, "Until I am clean, I cannot enter the synagogue. Yet, if I cannot enter, how may I become clean?"

I did not know. To cure a leper was a miracle of higher order. But so did I also know compassion, and it was because of the pain in his eyes. And I whispered to the Lord, "Grant me such power on this day."

As I looked at the leper. I could remember the rod of Moses, and how God had said to Moses: "Cast it on the ground." And when he did so, the rod became a serpent, and Moses fled before it. But the Lord also said: "Put forth thy hand and take it by the tail," and when Moses caught the serpent by the tail, it had become again a rod in his hand. And the Lord said: "Put down thy hand unto thy bosom," and Moses did as he was told, and when he took his hand out, behold, it was as leprous as snow, but then God said, "Put thy hand in thy bosom again," and Moses did, and plucked it

out, and behold, it was like his other flesh.

Now did I hear God say to me, "Do it, and it shall be done," and I realized that my Father was offering powers once given to Moses.

So, when I put forth my hand and touched the leper, I said no more than, "Be thou clean."

And leprosy departed from him and he was cleansed. And too great a miracle was this, so I told him: "Say nothing to any man. Go thy way and be a testimony unto the commandments."

But he went out and in the hour began to blaze abroad on this cure of his leprosy. Whereupon he caused such excitement in the multitude that I knew it was time to go back to the desert there would be inundation with lepers. Nor did I need the Lord to tell me that there were grave obstacles to curing all.

For to me did it seem true that the diseases of man were ranked and much like the angels in hierarchy of powers. So to cure the highest disease, which is but another way of saying the lowest, or the worst, was to ask the Holy Spirit to descend by ten more dimensions into the pit. And I was

feeling weakness already from curing my first leper. Therefore might God be diminished as well since it was by the aid of the Holy Ghost that I brought forth my cures. And what was the Holy Ghost but the bond between my Father and myself?

Thinking such, I fled to the desert and told my followers that I would meet them in Capernaum.

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For a night and for another night I was with snakes and scorpions and did my best to live near to them and be without fear. In which practice I was not wholly successful, even if I did recall how John the Baptist could pick up a scorpion and converse with it, nor did it sting.

My return to Capernaum had good omen. The first man to speak to me was a centurion with handsome armor upon his chest, and on his helmet was an eagle. This Roman stood before me, a proud man; who could say how many were dead by his sword? Yet was he polite to me, saying, "Lord, my good servant is sick of a palsy and grievously demented."

And without pause I replied: "Let me come and heal him."

In increase of my respect did the centurion now answer, "Lord, I am not worthy that thou should come under my roof, but if you speak the word, my servant shall be healed. I am a man who has authority to command a soldier to go, and he

will go. And to another, I tell him 'Come,' and he does come. So, my sick servant will do what needs to be done should ye give me the power to tell him to rise."

And this centurion had tears in his eyes upon which I marveled, and turned to my followers and said, "Have I found greater faith in anyone so early? No, not in all of Galilee." And I said to the centurion, "Go! Your servant will be healed."

And thereby was it done. As others came to tell me. And by this I knew that if all was well, so could I send some of God's power over to others.

Also was I pleased with the warmth of those who welcomed me in the market and on the streets of Capernaum. Many passed to give greeting, and Simon Peter told me that Capernaum, though but a small city, was of great attraction for men who did not know women but only other men. So also was I told that such men would cover their lips with the juice of red berries, and in the taverns, they would speak of how the bravest of the Greeks were Spartans who lived entirely as men in the arms of each other.

To which others would dispute as follows: "So did these

Spartans also live with the sword. Whereas you live only with such coloring as women seek for their lips?"

Nonetheless, did I feel affection for these sodomites of Capernaum. They were tender in spirit and gave welcome, and we would congregate beneath a tree inasmuch as they were not welcome in the temple.

There, each day I preached of the incarceration of John the Baptist in the dungeon of Machaerus. And he was with me in spirit at all times, and thereby did I speak with the clarity that comes when one's thoughts are full and no word must seek for the next. And more gathered each day at the synagogue until there was no bench to receive them, not even in the vestibule nor outside the door. And one day was brought a man with palsy wholly paralyzed and he was borne toward me by four other men who could not even find approach because of the press of those listening. In their desperation did these four then take a ladder and climb upon the roof where they even broke a hole between two rafters so they could lower the bed of the man with palsy down to where I spoke.

And if I saw much exhibition of faith in me by this act,

so did I also know that his bearers had so much concern for their man that he must be worthy. Without pause, did I say: "Thy sins be forgiven thee." And this by dint of the cures I had already accomplished; those who had undergone much torment and now came to me were accepting the weight of their sin. A man paralyzed by palsy had become equal in his suffering to the evil he had disseminated. In this case, he did not believe he had sanction to move a limb. So I forgave him without hesitation; his repentance was in his arms and legs, and they were stricken.

Yet among the scribes of the synagogue there was much affront. I heard one say, "Why doth this man Jesus speak blasphemies? Who can forgive sins? God only, no other."

So did I understand that I had been in error to speak without caution. Yet already was it growing difficult to be patient among the pious. Even more noxious were the most pious; the odor of their sanctity was like unto the death of shellfish when they die by the shore of that sea which once had been of nourishment to them.

Whereupon I said, and still was I without caution: "Why seek to reason these things? Know that the Son of Man hath

power to forgive sins. So I say unto this man with palsy: 'Take up your bed, and go to your house.'" And the man arose, and neither was he a large man, but his bed he took up and carried it forth from the synagogue before them all; if he staggered, it was only by a little. So were they much amazed.

And on leaving the temple that day, a multitude from Capernaum chose to follow me and again I did my best to teach them in the shade beneath a tree.

Each day did I come to understand by a little more why Jehovah had chosen me. I could see how God, my Father, in the breadth of His dimension would be sore tried for patience with any of us considering how we consumed His charity by repeating our sins and much repeating them. Thereby, did He have need of me to understand men's errors, even as I had known great emptiness when I fasted and so could now comprehend those waste-places in the temple of our bodies where no pride can stir over one's good deeds, and the soul is like a void before the memory of its sins.

Now, I could not say that the Lord spoke to me on every day for there were many occasions when I was alone and

without Him. Yet when I roused myself from sleep, often was it as if He had been there to impart much.

And always I would know when the Lord was speaking through me for then my tongue was with felicity and my mind was with prowess I did not find at other times. And my utterances were of peril to me. For many were the words my heart would not have dared to utter if unsupported by the Lord.

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Soon I began to contemplate my need for disciples who would follow me every day of the year, and would work at daily tasks of which I had much ignorance, and, by those means, would have much to say to people of many kinds. So, when I saw Levi sitting at the customs house, I said: "Follow me." And said it for no more than that he had a good and cunning face, and I had need of cunning. And there was light in his eye.

Levi came with us. Nor did I concern myself that he was a tax collector. Thereby would I soon learn that few men in Galilee and Judea were as unpopular as those who worked in customs houses collecting taxes for Romans. Yet had I but one measure for a sinner: what gleamed in his eye? For even a man who would cheat others or would work for Romans could reveal more of God to me than I could find in those who were sinless but downcast.

Moreover did I have need of twelve men, in order that

there be one for each of the tribes of Israel, twelve men who could return my look and allow me to see what was in their souls. For in that manner could I always be able to forgive them. Nor did this mean that I saw such men as free of much warping in their soul. Yet I could also recognize, as if God had given me the power to journey to the bottom of the sea, that by their soul were they ready to walk down every road with me. Or, so I thought.

There was one for whom I could not declare such, and this was Judas, and he was handsome with his dark beard. I wished him to be among my twelve even if I could not see what was in his heart but then his eyes were too full of fire. Indeed, I was as if blinded by the smoke and fumes of his spirit. Notwithstanding, I welcomed him. For he claimed to love the poor, saying that he had been long close to the rich, and long enough to despise them, especially his father who was of wealth.

By such different means did I choose twelve men who should be with me, and I had hope that I could gird them with the power to cast out devils, and send them forth to preach. Yet for that must they come nearer to me. If I had reliance

on Simon Peter, I could not as yet be as certain of James, the son of Zebedee, and John, the brother of James, and Andrew and Philip and Bartholomew and Matthew, who was another publican, and Thomas, and another named James, and Thaddeus, and Simon the Canaanite and Judas Iscariot and Levi, of whom I have spoken.

In choosing these disciples, had I encouraged much dissatisfaction among the Pharisees. When I would sit at meat in the house of Levi, so with the rest of my twelve did many publicans and sinners sit also with us, and many tax collectors now followed us. Being full of shame before other Jews, and heavy in their hearts that they worked for the Romans, so did they have much need of me.

But when the scribes and Pharisees saw me eating with them, they spoke to my other disciples, saying: "How is it that he eats and drinks with those dregs?" I was not eager to widen what separation was there between myself and these Pharisees of Capernaum, yet did I say: "They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick need much. I am here not to call the righteous to repentance, but the sinners."

I debated how to tell these righteous Pharisees that sinners, having encountered the Evil Spirit, may even come to know repugnance of appetite. Whereas the pious fester in the weariness of their wars against Satan.

So I was happy in the house of Levi even while speaking to many sinners. Some, indeed, were of disreputable pursuits, and others were poor and unwashed, (for Levi was loyal to old friends) yet by coming to know such people, I began to ponder upon a grave question. And that was the absence of my Father's presence in many who were rich. They did not use their wealth for others, whereas here, at the table of Levi, among these poor sinners who were his friends, did I see how there was much petty injury each could do upon another yet also much of simple pity would they feel for poor friends beside them. So, the faces of the poor at Levi's table shone for me with a dignity not unlike the grain of unpolished wood that has known much exposure to the goodness and wrath of sun and rain.

Such argument would not suffice for scribes and Pharisees; they would say to me, "The disciples of John the Baptist did fast. Why do your disciples fast not?" And

so pious were their voices that at night I would brood over those Jews who spoke for my religion and drove away sinners. And I could only reply: "New wine must be put into new wine-skins. For if poured into old while still fermenting, so will it burst the old skin."

However, there were many questions for me. If sinners were those who no longer observed the law, then why was I with men who would rather eat and drink than pray? Yet those who were always present in the synagogue and said that they were children of Abraham seemed to believe that no more was needed. And I would say to myself that a feast would come when all the pious would be cast out, and the poor and the sinful would be invited to the banquet. And with that would I drink my wine even noting that wine, to which I was not accustomed, (for the drinking of wine in my family had been only for solemn ceremony) was now become for me a custom at every meal, and these publicans drank wine so often they were rarely solemn.

Still did I trust the warmth of spirit between us. The wedding of my Father with his people might soon come, and so in these times who could fast? There was so much to do in

preparing the way for the Lord, so much ministry yet to be accomplished. To fast would bring gloom down among us and we would be like all those pious who accomplish little more than to increase their fear of God, and thereby praise Him even more with their words, while being so full of fear of other men that they can never praise Him with their deeds. Such bravery did they not have.

Those were the thoughts I would have with the wine. There was so little time. One had to sup with sinners.

Yet did I also know that the pious would look upon me as eating with the unclean and so would believe I was unclean myself; so would my mother see it, and my brothers.

I knew they were in error. With the gifts given to me by my Father could I now bring salvation to sinners, and for that did I need men who could go without fear among sinners. Yet did my head whirl with the vertigo of the wine for so many were the obstacles I could foresee. And what of every pagan who would seek baptism and cast out allegiance to his pagan gods? Would his own family cast him out in turn?

This difference was made worse on the day that my publicans walked through corn fields on the Sabbath and

plucked ears of corn. Whereupon the Pharisses said, "To pluck corn on this day is not lawful." And when I gave answer, my voice was in a race with my cautions, so that my speech was almost not uttered, yet did it gain a victory after all, saying: "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath."

Then, on the next Sabbath, when I entered into the synagogue, a man was there with a withered hand; many Pharisees now watched to see if I would seek to heal him. For they were ready to accuse me.

Yet was I helpless not to help this man so soon as he spoke. He said to me, "I was a stone mason before my fingers were smashed. So I plead with you, Yeshua, to give me back a good hand so that I will not have to beg, and in shame, for my family's food." Who could gainsay him?

Nor could I serve my Father if I did not act upon what was in my thoughts; should these thoughts be in error, so would my Father rebuke me; now did no rebuke come. Therefore, on this Sabbath in Capernaum I said to the man with the withered hand: "Stand forth."

And I asked of the congregation, "Is it lawful to do

good on the Sabbath? Is it lawful to save life?"

No one could answer. They had not the courage to say "Cure him." Now, the hardness of their hearts (wherein no heart is so hard as the cautious heart) did infuriate me. I spoke to the man, saying: "Stretch forth thine hand," and when he did, so did I not even have to touch it; at once could I see how his hand was restored to him as whole as the other. Yet did I also feel a great anguish. For now did I understand, even as many Pharisees in much displeasure left the synagogue, that a time might come when I must go to war with some of my own people. Would they then be lost forever to what had been prepared for me to teach?

And indeed, later that night, one of my disciples made claim to have heard how that day two Pharisees in the synagogue took counsel with officers of Herod Antipas living in Capernaum. Among them had been discussion of how this Yeshua of Nazareth might be stilled. And on hearing such words, I knew that I must flee from Capernaum and go to those shores of the Sea of Galilee which are empty. For Yeshua of Nazareth would not seem like a god to the officers of Herod, no, more like a poor Jew.

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Yet I was far from alone. My disciples accompanied me to these wilder shores, and with them, came many from Galilee. So did the word commenced by John the Baptist pass through the hills and valleys of Israel, even into the mountains; already were there men and women in this multitude who came from Idumea and even beyond the Jordan, a great number. And as they gathered about me, I was not ready to speak for fear of being encompassed by their need; indeed, my disciples were now obliged to comport themselves as soldiers, and become my guard. Yet still did I feel the consternation of many people and much agony to reach me and to touch me, until so many were about that I was deprived of the power to cure. And, truth, I had bruises enough to think of my own sores when day was done.

Thereby did I tell my disciples to find me a small ship and it could wait in a cove of the Sea of Galilee where I would be near to shore, but apart, and I would preach from

the prow, yet return to land long enough to lay hands on a few.

And while waiting, I went up onto a mountain, but many followed. I came down by another path to a town near Capernaum and entered a house where I was welcome. Still did a multitude surround the house and there were scribes from Jerusalem among them.

Before long did I hear that one of these scribes had said to another, "By Beelzebub, the prince of the devils, doth he cast out other devils." And I knew great danger was there. Even as I was gaining knowledge of how to cure, so was a plague of ill spirit swelling in readiness to oppose me. And it would thrive in the hearts of the righteous; they would see my efforts as Devil's labor: For how could a poor man like myself command miracles? Already were many saying that I was ready to deny the Ten Commandments and much of the law surrounding the tablets. Indeed, good Pharisees did look to make a world where people were law-abiding. So I must speak to these two scribes from Jerusalem who had come to look upon me, and indeed they appeared to be of wisdom when I looked into their eyes.

So, I said: "You call me Satan. Yet if I am a demon who destroys other demons, am I not destroying myself? If Satan can cast out Satan, then he is a house divided. But a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand, nor a house divided. How then can Satan rise up against himself?"

Feeling the force of such argument, anger rose in me, and most unexpected, for it brought stronger words to my throat, and I said: "I would warn you. All sins can be forgiven, except for he who shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost. Such a man is in danger of eternal damnation." And these scribes went away without reply for they heard my speech as a threat. But then they did not wish to believe that I was at war with all demons and their leader, the Devil who commanded demons.

It was a day of many ills. To this same house now came my mother, and my half-brothers, James and John, and standing outside they called for me. But the multitude was all about, and I could neither see them nor hear them. Then one man called forth: "Behold, thy mother and thy brethren are without and seek for thee," but I had heard that my brothers and my mother Mary had been in fearful argument with my

followers, and had said that by performing cures on the Sabbath and consorting with sinners, so must I now be mad and even full of my own devils. Thereby I knew that my mother had come with my brothers to lead me home. So when the man called forth again and said, "Behold, thy mother and thy brethren seek for thee," I was as if in fever. For I uttered these words: "Who is my mother or my brethren?" And looked around the room as if I had need of every man and woman in it, and said, "Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother and my sister and my mother." And to sweep her away from my thoughts did I now think of how Mary when young had filled me with fear of Romans and of wealthy Jews who were of more consequence than ourselves. Whereas I had need in this hour of much confidence and no fear.

Later did I hear that my mother wept when my words were repeated to her, and then did I wish to gather such words back. For I owed much to her even if our ways together had never been smooth. Of course did I also know that she had lived in much anxiousness over my birth yet did this too anger me for the secret gave her no joy and much fear of downfall.

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In the evening, sorrowing over these harsh words concerning my mother, I felt much need for the sea and said to my disciples, "Let us pass over to the other side."

Now, they had been feasting in all houses that bid us welcome and I had noticed that the rich in these towns near Capernaum were ready to welcome my disciples. So they ate much and drank much and with few cares. But I had need of peace. I was weary.

In these weeks they had brought unto me many taken with diseases and many possessed with devils; those who were lunatic had been brought and those with palsy; with all I had worked to heal. And in each moment when the Holy Spirit passed from my heart to my hand, thereby did one touch make them well.

Yet, in each instant, did I have memory again of the leap that I did not take on the invitation of the Devil. Now, therefore, did I leap with the spirit of healing onto

the body of whoever was before me. And yet my cowardice did also accompany me with each cure. For it is cowardly to fear death as I had feared it with the Devil, and now I must make amends by recalling that moment each time. That was just. I would not feel unseemly pride because of my cures. Yet was I also obliged to wonder whether in looking to save my body I had been joined at that moment to the Devil and thereby, no matter my loyalty to the Lord, still would a small part of me be ready to serve Satan.

A new unhappiness of spirit commenced. And if it increased as more people came toward us, still did I heal many. Not all, but the better part of all. Yet were there a few I could not cure. For these had darkness in their eye like the darkest angels of Satan. So I knew I had need again of the sea, or of a lake so large that it might be like the sea.

Therefore did I tell my closest followers to send away these multitudes. And when most were gone, it was evening, and we went quickly to a ship; still were there some who followed in smaller ships. And all would come close to disaster when a great wind arose on the Sea of Galilee.

The waves beat upon our vessel; they near covered it. If it were tumult for others, I knew naught of their fear for I was sleeping like one newborn: Peace was given to me by the rocking of the water. Yet when they brought me awake, it was to say, "Many boats will founder. And soon. Master, dost thou not care if we perish?"

So, I said unto the sea, "Bridle thy wind. Be still." And there was calm. But in truth, I do not know if I can take a miracle unto myself for in the midst of this storm, still did I sense on awakening how a calm was coming and so knew before others that the end of the storm was near. Nonetheless did I take the pleasure of saying: "Why so fearful? Have you no faith?"

And I could hear them, one to another: "What manner of man is this? Even the seas obey him."

Now, the wharf where we landed was in the country of the Gadarenes near the shores of Decapolis, a pagan city in the land of the gentiles, and I felt much excitement yet also knew uneasiness for this was neither our land nor friendly, and we had come to a beach behind which were cliffs with many tombs.

Out of one of these tombs now descended a giant of a man with a torch. And his spirit was so unclean that the fire of the torch was fierce from his breath. Quickly did he come toward me. No man among my followers, not even Peter, was ready to resist this man and bind him, for as all could see, he was a son of the nephilim and they are the fallen ones. His ancestors had been angels who had come to earth and lusted after women and thereby made children who were giants and brought much violence upon us. So were they also pagans. Of such was this giant.

Yet even as I said, "Peace," he stopped.

Nonetheless, he said, "No man can bind me. Chains I break asunder. No man can command me."

"Then where comes your fear?"

"I am afraid of all things," he replied. "By day I live in the darkness of the tombs, and I weep. I tear at myself with sharp stones. I cut my flesh. But of you have I heard. So, I worship you. I know of you."

"What have you heard?" I asked.

"That your eyes have a great light," he said, "and your name is Jesus. And more have I heard from those who dare to

speak to me." And by the trembling of his lips did I also know that he was ready to call out the name of my Father, and this was a warning unto me that I not abuse his fear and that I seek for no power over him even as he desired me to exercise such power and free him of his demons.

All the while did he keep speaking, and indeed it was of his devils. "Many speak in terror of who I am. For I am he who contains more devils than any other can support in his heart. So, I adjure thee: Torment me not, Jesus! This is fair warning."

I was not without fear of my own; this man had more strength even than Peter whose strength was kin to a bull. Moreover did this fellow live in great filthiness of person. His hair met his beard and these locks were like fards of the great rope that is used to hold large ships to their mooring.

Now he said: "I have fear of myself. I live in the tombs of those who are damned."

"What is thy name?"

He answered, saying: "My name is Legion. We are many, and the sum of this many are in me."

In truth, I knew that he was with many devils, yet was I

still ready to speak directly, as if the hand of the Lord was upon my back urging me forward: "The devils who devoured King Herod are now in you," I said. "Release yourselves, unclean spirits! Release yourself from Legion." And I growled like a beast, even as Essenes do to enforce any commandment they receive from the Lord. And as I growled, so did a great herd of wild swine come rushing out of the tombs, and a turmoil of devils now issued from the throat of Legion, and they were screaming as they were put out. In their tongues did I hear, or so did it seem: "Give us entrance! Entrance into the swine of Gadarene." And that they saw as their safety for a demon must inhabit a body whether human or beast. But so then did I trick these demons. I gave leave, yet did I also know that not even swine could bear such a foul invasion. Whereupon these unclean spirits having poured forth out of Legion, rushed with a great noise into the herd of swine, and they in revulsion (for they could not abide the entrance of so many devils) ran violently down a gorge into the sea. These swine were in numbers two thousand, and all drowned in the sea, all these swine of Gadarene. And the demons with them.

Others soon came to look at this man who had been possessed by so many devils. But now they found Legion clothed and bathed and returned to his right spirit. Yet were the elders of the town of Gadarene afraid, and they entreated me to depart from their coast.

As I returned to my ship, Legion began to beg of me that he come along. And I was near-tempted, for he would have made a mighty apostle. Yet their number was already twelve--no more could I increase such a sum, no more than I could add another tribe to the twelve of Israel. Moreover, was he a pagan. Yet also did I wonder whether this was betrayal of the Lord's ministry to send such a man away; therefore, could I feel no pride in my heart at saying to him, "Go to thy friends and tell them what happened today." And, in truth, so did I still abhor the man, for I had heard the uproar of much horror in those demons as they passed into the swine, and perished.

After he departed, Legion spoke well of me among the gentiles in the town of Decapolis, and I also heard of those who did marvel at his words inasmuch as in former days all had been terrified of him.

Now, on my return, were many people again gathered in Capernaum and I had to preach to them from my boat.

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On shore, one of the rulers of the synagogue, and his name was Jairus, came forward and fell at my feet; no one of the elders of the synagogue had heretofore offered more than a place to teach (and this most grudgingly). Yet here was Jairus. And he besought me greatly, saying "My little daughter lies near death. I pray thee, come and lay hands on her that she shall be healed and shall live."

In that way did I learn how faith was not unlike loss of faith, inasmuch as both stole in silently around the corners of the heart. I understood that if the rulers of the synagogue had not shown me approval, so did it not mean that I had failed to enter into their hearts. And feeling much strengthened by this, I went with Jairus to his house, and without hesitation, and many people made a throng around us. Still, at that moment, did I know that someone had done something ill to me, for I felt all virtue leave. And I turned about and said, "Who touched my clothes?"

One disciple said: "Thou seeest the multitude and ask 'Who touched me?'" But then a woman spoke in fear and with much trembling and fell down before me even as she said, "I have had an issue of blood for twelve years and have suffered many bad things with physicians. I have spent all that I have saved and have only grown worse. But I have heard of you, and was among those who were about you. From behind, did I reach through to touch your garment. For I thought: 'If I reach his cloth, I shall be whole.' And it was so. The fountain of my blood ceased to pour forth."

By her face could I see that she spoke the truth, and I felt gentle toward her pain. Such constant issue of blood left her ritually impure and so she could not go to the synagogue, no more than the leper. Thereby was it not hard to forgive her for stealing up behind me.

I told her, "Daughter, go in peace and you will be healed tomorrow of this plague." And even as I spoke, came servants of the house of Jairus, and said to him, "Thy daughter is dead."

Nor did I know what to say, for now I could fear that the ailing woman had seized all virtue I had been garnering

to save the child.

Yet in that instant was my Father there to speak through me, and I felt even more of His strength than I had known before and saw how such power could be drawn from the bowels of the earth and the light of the sky, inasmuch as my own sight was now luminous to me. So I turned to the ruler of the synagogue and said, "Jairus, be not afraid. Only believe." At that moment, I had hope the daughter was not dead but rather rested in that long shadow of sleep which comes to those who are near to death. For out of such state could I save her. But I did not know if I could bring her forth from those who are truly dead.

Whereupon I recited to myself the words of the prophet Isaiah, as indeed I would on each other attempt I would make to raise those who were departed. I said to myself: "Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: For thy dew is as the dew of herbs."

Then, suffering no man to follow me save Peter and James, and John the brother of James, we came to the house of Jairus and saw a great tumult within where many wept and much wailing arose. And I entered and said: "Why make this ado?

The damsel is not dead but sleeps."

I said this to calm their voices. To raise the dead was a matter for silence; tumult can drive the departed further away. Therefore did I ask all mourners to go out from the house and I told the high servants of this ruler of the synagogue to return with Jairus and his wife, and by their side did I go in to where their daughter was lying. And I held her hand, and recited those words I remembered well from the scroll of the Second Kings, saying: "When Elisha was come into the house, behold, the child was dead, and prayed unto the Lord. And he lay upon the child and put his mouth upon the child's mouth and his eyes upon the child's eyes and his hands over the boy's hands, and he stretched himself upon the child and the flesh of the child was now warm, and the child sneezed seven times and opened his eyes."

"And this," I said to the father and mother, "having been spoken, need not be done again." For I knew that if I lay upon the child and she failed to stir, incalculable would be the harm. But, feeling the power of the Lord in my hand, I said only, "Damsel, unto thee I say arise." And straightaway she arose and she walked, a young girl of twelve

years. And her parents were astonished and ready to praise me but I told them to give her to eat, and give with much love.

The child, however, looked to me as one in misery, and not happy by more than half that she had returned to the living. Although, for truth, even at this moment, I did not know if she had been dead. But I did understand that much unhappiness between husband and wife had laid a pall upon the girl. Indeed it was apparent that she had lived in a house of many unclean feelings; no air was sweet in these rooms, and those miseries which feed upon themselves were in each place present; so were the scents full of all that is stale. And before I left, I also told them to fast and to pray and to leave a flower in a small jar by the child's bed each morning.

And if it had all seemed simple when I told the young girl to rise, now was there a weight on me; I realized much had been drained from my limbs by the woman who touched my garment and had been drained again by arousing this child who may not have wished to live. So was I returned to my own gloom. For now I must wonder if I had done such deeds for

glory and had drawn upon God when it would have been better to save His efforts for other matters. Indeed, I felt a desire to return to Nazareth, and be back again among my own people, wherein I could apologize to my mother for that hour when I had wounded her love.

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So I came back again to my own country and my disciples followed, and in Nazareth did I spend two days with Mary. And I do not know if matters were much eased for how could she forgive "Who is my mother?"

On the Sabbath I began to teach in the synagogue, but at once did I hear clear sounds of discontent, people saying, "From whence has this man come? What wisdom is this?" And when I told them of my works, of the leper and of the storm, I felt a loss of modesty (and such loss was equal to uncleanliness for me). Yet it was for naught. I was not believed. It was as if word had reached everywhere in Galilee but for Nazareth. And I could hear them say, "Is this not the carpenter, who is the son of Mary?" They were offended, and I wondered if any blow to pride is greater than to be obliged to honor a person who has been for years no more than equal to oneself, whereas now he is greater. So I knew that whatever word had reached Nazareth concerning what

I had done had brought forth jeers from my own townspeople. And I was wroth that they would offer me no love. "A prophet is without honor in his own country and among his own kin and in his own house," I said. "Nor can a doctor cure anyone who knows him." But then I had already spoken here of my deeds, and with such vain emphasis that in Nazareth could I do no mighty work. I laid my hands upon a few who were not sore ill and could barely heal them.

Still, there came the next Sabbath and again I awoke with the strength of my Father and was able to cure a woman who had lived in a spirit of infirmity over eighteen years. She had been bound in her limbs to such degree that she could not lift up from her seat. Yet when I saw her, I had only to say, "Woman, thou art loose from thy infirmity."

Whereupon I laid my hands on her and immediately was she made straight and her voice was as sweet as the innocence of birds who talk to each other in the morning. Yet I was scolded before evening by the ruler of this small temple for healing on the Sabbath day--once more had I done just so!--and he was a rich man, much pleased with himself, and said: "There are six days on which men are to work and in such days

can they be healed, but not on the Sabbath."

To which I answered, "Do you not loose your ox from the stall on the Sabbath and lead him to water? Yet this woman, stricken over eighteen years, cannot be loosed from her bonds on that day when we celebrate the works of the Lord?"

However this rich man was a Pharisee ready for debate, and he replied: "Some of us do not loose our oxen on the Sabbath. Faith is a narrow road." Which offended me. I should have said: "Hypocrite! You, too, lead your oxen to water on the Sabbath in order that they not suffer for thereby do they decrease in value." But I was prudent this once and said merely: "Narrow is the way which leads unto life, and few there be that find it. Whereas broad is the way that leads to destruction."

To which he nodded, as if he would come closer than myself to the sweetmeat of the question: "The broad highway of simple faith can be without peril," he said, "but only on fair days. For when it rains, this breadth is as treacherous as a trackless mire. Seek ye, Yeshua, for the narrow road that mounts between the rocks, and do not look for cures on the Sabbath. That is the broad highway."

And he laid his hand upon my shoulder as if he were fatherly and I was of simple faith; in the touch of his fingers was the confidence of those who are wealthy. His hand said to my flesh: "Respect my words. Much position rests beneath."

I was shamed by him. My powers now left me. In my own synagogue I was without strength.

So was I beginning to understand that the task set for me by the Lord was immense, and I could not carry all of His word alone. Many would oppose me and I would need an army of apostles to stand forth. If each of my twelve could find his own twelve, and each of these new apostles could bring to us another twelve, then soon would I have an army to carry the word of the Lord. Thereby I knew that I would have to send out my apostles without me; they must learn to make cures and return with others.

Yet large armies comes discord and confusion. So did I now see that faith might be simple for some, yet was it a labyrinth to the Son of Man who now must wonder whether each turning brought him closer to the light or nearer to darkness.

Yet did I sleep well on the thought of sending out my apostles.

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So soon as I left Nazareth, good spirits returned to me concerning all that we could do, and indeed the time was come to send my messengers forth. Nor did I think it unlikely that they could perform such acts as mine. Word of my cures was now disseminated among many; so the power of my apostles would be multiplied; is not the commencement of every cure belief in the physician?

I told them to go with no possession on their journey but a staff; they were to be without bread or money, and would have but one coat. And I said: "Wherever you enter into a house, there abide till ye depart from that place. And when you eat with your host, do not seek the place of honor for if a man of importance should enter, then would your host have to tell you, 'It is better to move down.' So is it wise to place yourself modestly in order that when a man who is seen to be of less value than yourself should appear, then can your host tell you to move up.

"Yet whosoever shall not receive you nor hear you, depart from them, and for a testimony, shake off the dust from your feet. Yet, go your way with ease because I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions and over all who would look to hurt you."

Yet did I also know that to bestow upon my apostles what the Lord had given to me was possible only if I never rested in my labors, and never felt sorrow for myself: the destruction of each man was to be found in pity for oneself. And this was twice true for the Son of the Lord. So would it also be twice-true for my disciples.

Therefore to them did I say many other things as well. There was much to learn in short time, and much that I said was harsh. For I was coming to understand that to repent of one's sins generates much turmoil; the soul goes to and fro; thereby, a gentle word is not always to be chosen when giving alert to others on how to save themselves.

So I also told them that if there would be much they did not understand, yet would it be enough to say the same to others. "What ye hear," I told them, "is the wisdom on High, and that preach ye upon the housetops. And fear not them who

can kill the body but are not able to kill the soul. Rather fear God who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. For God knows all. Not one sparrow shall fall to the ground without your Father's knowledge. So are the very hairs of your head all numbered. Fear not, therefore. You have more value than many sparrows."

What I told them next would not come without effort to my tongue and was prideful. Nonetheless were these the words of the Lord, and they were in my mouth, and I said, "Whosoever shall confess unto me, him will I confess also to my Father which is in heaven, but whosoever shall deny me, him will I also deny before my Father." Then did some of my apostles draw back for well did they know that they had denied me in separate ways and some had not been ready to declare to all they met that they were of my cohort.

So did the words that came next partake even more of God's wrath. I looked into the eyes of each of the twelve, and said: "I am come not to send peace but a sword." And if such was at variance with all I had said before, if I had cured many and calmed a storm at sea and raised a young girl from the dead, so had I come to bring peace on earth. Yet,

had I also been given visions of battles, and many battles, before peace could come. And my body was sore with the pain that I had made no fine peace with Mary when last in Nazareth. Yet still did I speak, and knew it was not only by way of the Lord's anger, but from my voice as well. For my own family had left me divided in purpose. And I said: "I have come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and a man's foes shall be they in his own household. He that would love father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, for he that does not take his cross and follow after me is also not worthy of me. He who would find his life shall lose it; he that loses his life for my sake shall find it."

And now could I see my apostles weeping. No thought offers compassion for oneself more than the belief that one is losing one's life for a friend; in such an instant, can one feel noble, and it is natural then to mourn for oneself. So at that moment did I seek to teach them of that value which was in the laws of love (for which is no gospel enough) and I said: "Love your friends like your own soul. Guard them like the pupil of your eye. Be glad only when you can

look at them with love and know that no crime is more grave than to sadden your brother's spirit."

With this did they sigh in assent for the truth of what I said and for the difficulty of such a law, and therefore did I now add: "On your travels, seek to know yourselves in order that you be known. For if you do not come to know yourselves, then will you live in poverty." And to make certain they did not think that I spoke of the God Mammon, so did I add, "If you do not know yourselves, you are the poverty. Therefore, seek for such knowledge and learn to surpass me. For with that will the Father love you most."

On these words did I sent them out to rpeach; to myself I said: "Those who seek must not stop until they find. For then will they marvel, and when they marvel, so will they rule, and by ruling, will find rest."

Nor did I understand all of that for myself. High in the hills above Capernaum, I now chose to live alone in a hut abandoned by shepherds. And I sought to rest. And I prayed for many days concerning those fears that I still held.

Also can I say that each fear was terrible. Each came upon me in the middle of the night when my limbs were heavy

and my heart sought to flee. Yet no road appeared and there was darkness in my dream.

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Concerning these fears, the first was the worst, for it was not a dream. Before my disciples left did they know already and tell me that John the Baptist was dead. He had been slain in his dungeon at Machaerus and King Herod Antipas had commanded the deed. Yet in all the time that I had heard of John's imprisonment I had not failed to believe that God would set him free. If there had been anything like doubt in me, it had come only because John while in prison had sent two of his disciples to me and they had asked, "Are you the one who is to come? Or do we look for another?" And my disciples argued much about the question for they were distrustful of John's disciples and said John was jealous of me. Whereas I knew that if John was not certain, it was due to what he would have heard of my consorting with sinners. And I was sad that John no longer knew (even as the walls of a dungeon weigh upon thought and bend certainty) who I was, nor could he have understood how my power to work miracles

was as a sign that the Kingdom of Heaven was near and I must be its messenger.

Still he must wonder if I was the one to come after him, or must he search for someone else? And how could he do that from his dungeon?

Or had he been disappointed on meeting me? Could he not see me as the one to follow? So I said to his disciples: "Blessed is any man who shall not be offended in me," and to my own disciples I defended John: "Among them who are born of women," I told them, "there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist," and when they did not understand for they heard this as a diminishment of myself, so did I add: "Yet he that is least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than John." Nor did they understand this either, for they could not be certain who I was.

And in all this had I been unready to understand John's peril in the dungeon at Machaerus. So did a second fear come to me following his death: Since many said that John was now risen from the dead, and was bringing forth mighty works and miracles, soon would others say that John and Jesus were one. And I knew clear fright as in falling and it was not far in

magnitude from the awe of hearing God's voice. For Herod Antipas was not only mighty but of ugly conscience like his father; if he had slain John the Baptist once, so could he murder him twice.

Now these were the circumstances of John's death as related to me by my disciples before they set out on their travels, for indeed was there much that they had heard, and from many: First had Herod imprisoned John in punishment for saying to him, "It is not lawful for thee to have thy dead brother's wife." And it was true. The Lady Herodias, once wife to his brother, Philip, was now espoused to Herod Antipas; thereby did the Lady Herodias form a great animus against John, and would gladly have had him killed at once. Indeed, was Herod Antipas obliged to send forth his guard and bind John in prison. And this was done for her sake. Rare is the monarch who is not weak before the righteous wrath of a wife who knows she is not righteous.

Yet, Herodias could not bring her new husband, Herod Antipas, to order execution for the Baptist. By this much did the king still fear him.

On the birthday of Herod Antipas, a feast was, however,

given to him in the fortress of Machaerus. And in front of his lords and high captains, Salome, the daughter of Herodias, (from her marriage to Philip, the brother of Herod Antipas) now danced, and Salome made such ardent movements to please Herod Antipas that she was placed in a seat of honor beside him. And he said: "Ask of me what thou wilt. I will give it." Then Salome teased him upon the solemnity of such words, saying as how they had been spoken but to the air. Why were they not inscribed on parchment?

Whereupon Herod Antipas took a vow: "Whatsoever thou shalt ask, I will give it thee, even unto the half of my kingdom. That is my oath."

Thereby was my cousin's death made certain. When a king offers an oath, it is like unto the keel of a ship that he builds for his soul; the oath strengthens him. Whereas to break an oath is to be damned by the bloody acts of one's followers and the filth of one's own deeds.

Salome went forth to her mother, asking: "What shall I request?" and Queen Herodias said, "Nothing less than the head of John the Baptist."

Whereupon Salome returned unto Herod Antipas and made

her demand. Now, for his oath's sake, could the king not reject her. Immediately did he send for an executioner and declare that the head of John be brought to him on a bowl of silver; on receiving it, did Herod Antipas give this head and platter to Salome. And she is said to have danced with the head before all.

Hearing of such matters, I did not sleep while alone in my cave but looked for solace in the thought that God was often near to me while Herod Antipas was in his palace and far away.

Yet, in darkness, in those days after I was told of John's death, I wept. His way had been hard, and he had prepared a path for me. Of John, who knew naught of wine, still did they say that he had a devil; now of me must they say, "Behold, a man bibulous and gluttonous, a friend of publicans and sinners." My apostles would have many enemies.

And I knew, even as I dared to look upon it, that I had much terror of the Romans. For with all else, who was I but a poor Jew? So I blessed the centurion who had come to me, and had had faith in me. Thereby had he lightened my burden

and made smaller, if by an iota, my fear of all centurions and their legions and their masters.

Yet I could not deny that Herod Antipas also had his fear and it was of an uprising of the Jews; so could I be seen as the leader of such an uprising. Thereby was my ministry imperilled by John's death, and I was linked with him.

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And in my grief and in my fear, in that time when I sought to calm my thoughts upon the death of John the Baptist, there came a day when many of my apostles returned and had much to tell me of what they had done and what they had taught. With much woe did they speak of their travels and of attempts to cure others. With few had they succeeded. And I, wishing to learn more concerning such failure, could determine little. For so many were surrounding us that we did not have peace to sit together. And indeed was there a father and son among us and the father was distraught and said to me: "Withal does my son have a dumb spirit? Wheresoever I take him he foams from his mouth and with much gnashing of teeth, and thy disciples could not cast out his demon. He has been with it even as a child, and it seeks to destroy him for he falls into the fire and into the waters, and all seeks to destroy him."

Indeed did the boy fall to the ground at this point and

foamed from his mouth.

I said to the father: "Canst thou believe? All things are possible to him who believes."

The father was in tears. Then he cried out, "Lord, I believe. Help thou mine unbelief."

And by this I was moved more than by anything he could have said, for from it did I learn that even in faith which would be absolute are there portions without faith. Yet with honesty of reply, can much be remedied. And so I rebuked the spirit that was in the boy and charged him to come forth and enter no more. And the foul spirit made many sounds of such ferocity that I could see the boy's body being racked sore by the convulsions. Then did it come out of him and the boy lay as if dead until I lifted him and gave him back unto his father.

Later, when we were among ourselves, so did my disciples ask me, "Why could we not cast him out?"

And I hardly knew what to tell them, and murmured no more than "by prayer and fasting." Which I did not believe. It was by the father's honesty that I was given my means to cure, yet by what means could I tell my disciples how to

search for a cure?

To have peace for council among ourselves, we soon departed by ship. Matthew knew many ship owners and thereby was owed many favors; as a publican he counted their taxes. Still, when people saw us departing so did they follow on foot around the Sea of Galilee. And even as we landed on an empty shore adjoining the desert, a group came toward us, and there many among them, even hundreds.

I was moved with compassion and ready to teach, and I could feel the spirit of John the Baptist within me; what he had commenced, I must strive to finish. And I told myself once more that I had all things great to protect me, being not a prophet but the Son of God. Moreover was the need of these people as quick in their hearts as sheep without a shepherd. So I sought to teach that day but do not know that much was learned for when seed is cast in handfuls and by haste, one cannot say where it falls nor how much will take root. I know only that when the day was spent, my disciples said, "Send them away now that they may go back into the villages and buy bread. For they have nothing to eat, and here is but a desert."

But I was feeling exaltation that so many people had walked over so many sharp stones to join us; I wished to have nothing of the spirit of nay-saying. (In concord could I feel the Lord's hand at my elbow.) So, I said merely: "Give them to eat."

My disciples said unto me: "It is you who must provide. Did you not say to us on the last Sabbath: 'Take no thought of: "What shall we eat?" or "What shall we drink?" For your heavenly Father will know that ye have need of all these things. Take therefore no thought for the morrow.'" "

And I said: "How many loaves are among you?"

Upon looking, they told me of five barley loaves and two dried fish.

Whereupon I told my disciples to seat all our followers in companies upon the ground. And I took the five loaves and divided them exceedingly small so that there were a hundred pieces of bread from each loaf, and each piece of fish gave up more than twice two hundred small morsels. And with the five hundred of the bread and the five hundred of the fish, and each morsel not so large as the tip of a thumb, so did I pray over them before passing all of such to each of the

followers, doing it myself for all five hundred, laying one flake of fish and one bit of bread upon their tongues. Yet when each person tasted these fragments, so did each morsel expand within my thoughts, and this was shared with each of my followers.

And so completely that few among these hundreds of followers did not believe that there had been given a fish whole and a loaf of bread entire to himself, a triumph of the Holy Ghost rather than an enlargement of matter. Which for the Lord is also but a small deed, since the heavens and the earth did He make out of nothing.

Later, I can say that this story was multiplied by Mark and much multiplied by those who would say more than Mark such as Matthew and Luke. No angel appeared in the sky, nor aught of the manna that God gave to Moses and his people. But then such was the power of the blessing that the Lord had given into my hands that all, as I say, were satisfied and we shared in the fellowship of a banquet even as once a year when I was an apprentice, artisans who had worked with wood and stone in Nazareth would gather, and there were many of us, and we would eat in a green field with much joy and wine.

So was this feast in the desert equal, even if Mark gave me not less than five thousand loaves and hundreds of fish and burdened my disciples with twelve baskets of fragments to bear home. Whereas we were five hundred, not five thousand.

But then, exaggeration is the currency of the Devil, and no man is free of Satan, not even the son of God (and certainly not Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John). So I knew that my followers would exaggerate my feat. Yet I also knew better than all that by His will, did my Father prefer each miracle to be appropriate to the need thereof. For, even as waste exists in all forms, so in the working of miracles can also be extravagance.

Yet, again, I was wrong. For not always were my miracles modest. A little later, to separate myself from the people, I debarked with my disciples and we rowed to Bethsaida on the other side of this Sea of Galilee.

And when we landed, so I told my disciples to sleep on the ship while I was alone on the land. And this was from my own need. The strength to be more than a prophet came not only out of the Lord but from knowledge gained in one's work day to day; so did I have need of hours to meditate. Whereas

my disciples would have chattered like a throng of children and none would have found benefit. If I would have them ready to work miracles, so were they still like children.

I went up therefore into a mountain apart to pray and would have laid me to sleep, but as evening came, the ship was tossed with waves, and much wind. And as I saw them rowing about, I could discern that my disciples were ill at ease and without rest and so I came down from the mountain and commenced to swim to the boat, yet feeling in me much which would lift my spirit. And thereby was I up and above and beyond the waters, and lo, I was walking upon them and full of the buoyance of my Father. Indeed could I even hear His laughter at my pleasure in so walking upon this water, and more of His laughter upon my supposition that in miracles should there be no extravagance. For even as is said in Job, so had the Lord in creating the world trod upon and trampled upon the back of the sea, wherein are the high places and the great waves, and by such force, I, now walking upon water (if with a gentle step) had inkling of the power of the Creation. For when He spoke to Job out of the whirlwind, so had he told him, "Here shall the proud waves be stayed," and He had

"entered into the springs of the sea" and He had "walked in the search of the depth," and much had I read of that in the Book of Job when young, but knew it now as if the waves beneath my feet had prepared my path. And He was laughing and in joy at my admiration of Him. And so did I know of the extent of His domain inasmuch as before the day was born and the water and the earth, so was He. And He had brought my seed from the east and had gathered me from the west, and so could He control the waters of chaos. And I knew joy to have this vision of the Kingdom of Heaven for in truth I had been filled of late with too many cups of wine. And with such beatitude did I now take long strides and was so at one with the presence of my Father, the creator, (even as I walked on water) that I did not wish such joy to end. I would have walked and quickly by the boat of my disciples wherein all were rowing with great fear of the storm, yet I could not. For they were in great fear of me. Unable to perceive of much in the dark, so did they think I was a ghost. But then, separated from me by afternoon and night, for certain, they could not expect to see me in such a manner and walking upon the water. And I heard many voices crying out in fear and

thereby he could utter glorious sentiments worthy of the Lord and stirring to the heart, yet naught that was good could come of his words. So, thinking this did I feel that I had come further away from Satan than before, and I was heartened.

Now, Peter and I came back to the ship, and my disciples worshipped me in a way that they had not before, and said, "Of a truth, is it that thou art the Son of the Highest?"

Now they had said this many times and on each occasion I could hear in their voice a small part that spoke the truth, and indeed some were coming to believe that I was not less than what they asked; yet was there another portion in their voice: by that they did not yet believe in me even if through many a day had they come nearer. So I understood that my good Peter might wish to be loyal but could fail me. Before the presence of great joy, it is the nature of the heart to harden itself when it cannot share such wonder.

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After this night at sea, we landed in the land of Genesseret and once more did multitudes come to us, and even those who were sick on their beds were carried out to me; wherever we entered a village, so were the afflicted laid upon the street. Many besought me, and would declare that if I had not time to cure each person, might some touch the border of my garment? And, truth, many who touched me were improved.

By midday, I was weary, by evening, low; my garment was imbued with the entreaties of many. And when I went to the synagogue, so did I find Pharisees there and some from Jerusalem with scribes among them; it was not long before they wished to speak of their concerns.

For in that day after our debarking, had they seen my disciples eat bread with defiled hands. Some of the publicans had not washed. Was this not only a sin against the law, but a revulsion? The publicans, sitting in each

village square, had been collecting tax for the Romans, and handled coins from early morning until they were done, whereupon they were gambling at night with such of those coins as had been appropriated to themselves. Filthy were their hands with money. Whereas the Pharisees, when they come home from the market, will not eat except that they wash. And I, having known much piety in my youth, could see with the eyes of the Pharisees.

Yet did I also understand that one cannot give an honored place to the pious. For, no matter how much is done in the way of observance and custom, still are the pious never satisfied. Even if one would obey the law, one cannot; the laws of observance are always written by those more pious than oneself; each time, then, must one's heart bow down before the woe that the law, if by a tittle, has been broken. One has failed God again. Weary as I might have been on this night, therefore, did I stand before the Pharisees in the synagogue and speak to them like a physician, saying: "Hearken unto me, and understand: there is nothing that can enter into a man and defile him. It is the things which come out of a man. Those who have ears to hear, let them hear."

Much low and unhappy murmur was the response of these Pharisees. Within the synagogue, in the presence of the altar had I spoken of matters that were unclean, yea, even of the uncleanness of man himself who, as he lives, must pollute. So my words proved offensive to the altar.

But I was speaking to my twelve and my followers, and I did not cease: "What enters from without does not pass into a man's heart but into his belly, and goeth out again into the drain, purging all meats." And I spoke with such purpose that I knew they heard me whisper as to myself, "That dirt which is on the hands of a man is as nothing." Then I said aloud, "But that which cometh out of the man can defile the man. For from within the heart of a man can issue evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, yea, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, blasphemy, pride, even to the evil eye--" And I had no breath to go on, such was my indignation. "All such evil things issue from within and defile the man."

And I was surprised by my anger which had come upon me in a host of fury sufficient to seize my breath, and my anger was against those who scolded others for not washing, yet

hardly knew how great was the sum of their own evil within. How then could they not be terrified of evil that came to them from without? Of even the dust of the road and the mud of the fields were they afraid. For as they would see it, and only in this manner could they see, it took no more than one mote of non-observance to unbalance the scales within. Whereupon, they would have sinned.

I left the synagogue. Before the night was done I had even cured one who was deaf and had an impediment in his speech, and by no more than putting my fingers into his ears, whereupon he spit, and I touched his tongue, casing him to look up to heaven and sigh, and I said to him, "Be opened." His ears were opened and the string of his tongue was loosed and he spoke. And I smiled. For now the Pharisees would have to say, "He obeyeth not the law of washing, but he maketh the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak."

On another occasion when multitudes had followed me to another waste of the desert where I hoped to retire for the day, again there was nothing to eat. Yet if I sent these people back to their homes, they would faint in the heat. This time did we have seven loaves, and again I broke them

into little pieces and gave them to my disciples, who passed them on, rank on rank, file on file, and all were satisfied.

But I remembered the hour when the children of Israel wept in the wilderness and said to Moses, "Who shall give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish which we did have in Egypt, the cucumbers and the melons and the leeks, the onions and the garlic. But now our soul is dried away." And no one had been pleased with the manna that God sent down. The people had gathered it and ground it in mills and beat it in a mortar and baked it in ovens and made cakes of it; but still did it taste of oil and coriander seed. And when dew fell upon the camp in the dawn, so did more manna fall with it. People wept at the taste. Every man was lamenting at the door of his tent, and the anger of the Lord was kindled, but so was Moses also displeased. And he said to the Lord, "Wherefore have I not found favor in thy sight that Thou layest the burden of all this people upon me? Have I begotten them? It is too heavy for me."

And Moses asked the Lord to let him die in his wretchedness.

So the Lord said, "Ye and your people shall eat until

this food comes out of your nostrils and is loathesome to you."

And I knew of Moses' exhaustion. For is not such fatigue of the spirit like unto a twisting of the limbs wherein new pain enters into the old? I knew that the Pharisees, on hearing of how I had fed a second multitude, would speak only of how I consorted with sinners. But then, they were without miracles. Still there were some of them, sensing the weariness of my spirit, who were ready to ask on my return to Capernaum whether I could I show them a sign from heaven. I told them that I had given many signs, nor did they see them, for their hearts were hardened. And I set out on the road to another place.

When I entered Bethsaida, a blind man was brought to me; I took him by the hand and led him out of the town so that no one should witness the cure.

And when I had spit on his eyes, and put my unwashed hands upon him, I asked what he saw.

And he looked up and said, "I see men as trees walking."
To which I replied, "That is because men, like trees, bear the fruit of good and evil, and are divided by it."

And then I put my hands again upon his eyes and he was restored and he saw every man clearly. And once again I said as I sent him away to his house, "Neither go into the town nor tell it to any." And this was because my heart was laden with these depletions of myself and, so was I coming to fear, the fatigue of God in supporting me. Which thought I did not say aloud. Nor did I dare.

Yet with it all, did I also have the belief on most days that my Father was there and strong. For when I was disconsolate, knowing wretchedness like Moses, and was ready to cease all effort, so would come surcease of despair and I would remember walking on the water.

Yet were there also nights when I would awaken and not know who I was. And once, passing through the towns of Caesarea Philippi, I asked my disciples: "Whom do others say that I am?"

And some answered that I was seen to be John the Baptist. Others said Elijah. Still others said: "They do not know, but say you are one of the prophets of ancient days."

And I said, and my heart was pounding: "But whom do ye

say that I am?"

And Peter answered, looking at me in much modesty; it may be that he too was thinking of the hour upon the water. And he said, "Can one say that thou art the Christ?"

And since I was an ordinary man in all ways but one, so was I made more certain by Peter's words. And I loved Peter for the strength that his conviction gave to me; it was as if now I knew with more certainty than before that I was indeed the Christ. But then, if I was the Son of God, it was of that part of God who had chosen Man for one of His names: I was the Son of Man, and so perhaps I needed another such man to recognize who I might be.

In that instant would I also learn the deepest truth of exaltation. For now I understood that to receive what is best, one must also share the darkness of spirit that lies near to all that is radiant. So I told my apostles of a dream that was coming to me night upon night, and it was a dream I had not yet imparted to others; still on every night would I dream that the Son of Man must go to Jerusalem and there be denied by the chief priests and the scribes and be killed; then, in a dream following upon the first, so, after three days, would the Son of Man rise again. As I told them

of the first dream and of the second, my disciples began to dissent, saying, "Nay, ye shall live forever. And we with you."

Then I knew why darkness lies so close to exaltation. For I comprehended that if they loved me, it was for my power to work miracles and not because I might teach them to love others. If they preached like me, it was to increase their power; they did not preach in pity for others. And I rebuked them, saying: "You savor not the things that be of God but the things that be of men." Then I also said, and I had need to say it:

"If I be killed and after three days, rise again"--and I did not know if I spoke the truth or was merely relating what was the shadow of a dream, still I repeated--"whosoever shall come after me, even if he lose his life for my sake, shall save it. Whereas he who looks to save his life, shall lose it. For what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world but lose his own soul?"

And I looked into each of their eyes, as if to see their soul exposed at just that moment when the miracle of faith is there or is not; in none of their eyes did I see more than

that burden upon the spirit which speaks of self-sustenance. I had been ready to push them into faith but now I realized that I too was acting from no depth of pity for others; only out of that other force which itself searches for power. And I sighed at the intricacy of the heart. This much can I say: they sighed after me, as if all of us knew how close we had come to what was truth yet how far away did we remain.

And in another day, and soon after, feeling a desire to be close to Peter and to James and to John (being those with whom I had commenced my ministry) I led us up into a high mountain apart from the rest, and we were there by ourselves. Yet, not alone. A cloud followed. So had such a cloud been there in the hour when Moses raised up his tabernacle on Mount Sinai, and a cloud came to cover the altar; in the evening on that tabernacle had been a flame. The tabernacle of Moses on the Mount was now covered by the cloud during the day and stood forth in the light of the fire at night.

And if the children of Israel had journeyed through the desert for forty years, so at each place where the cloud came to rest had they pitched their tents. And they had only moved by the commandment of the cloud to move and take up

their journey again.

And here were we, at rest beneath another cloud. Even as I pondered on such matters, Peter came to me and said, "Master, let us make three tabernacles: One for thee, one for Moses, one for Elijah."

And when he had built them and the cloud above us did not move, so was the day dark; still did I notice that my raiment was shining.

In that moment did I see Elijah standing near to me and next to Moses, and it was a vision; they were talking to me, but it was in the language of tongues, and I understood not a word. Yet did another voice come out of the cloud, and my Father said, "This is My beloved son; hear him."

And I said to my three apostles, "What have you seen?"

And Peter answered, "I have heard, but I have not seen; he who sees God will surely die."

And at that moment, a flame rose from the first tabernacle, and Peter knew again that I was the Son of Man. And again he said: "Thou art the Christ."

Then did I speak to Peter of how I must go into Jerusalem before all was done. And I told him of how I might

suffer and be killed, but would be raised within three days: such did I see in my dream.

But Peter began to rebuke me. "Put it far from thee, Lord. Let not this be unto me."

He could not accept my dream. And this after I had given him such honor as to confide it. I knew a rage as sudden in its coming as lightning by its flash. Did he not understand how much I had offered? And it was a share in the Kingdom of Heaven. I said unto Peter, "Thou art an offense unto me. Thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men. Get thee behind me, Satan." For in that moment did I also think that if Satan could disguise himself as an angel of light, why could he not be with me also as Peter in whom I laid much trust?

When I saw tears in his eyes, I added, "Take up your cross and follow." I felt most far away from myself as if I were divine, and therefore strange to the feelings of those who might be nearest to me; they were mortal. Yet all of us were still as transfixed from staring into the flame that rose from the tabernacle; even now did it not subside.

It was then I felt a great urge to instruct my

disciples. And most certainly was Peter the first. Even as the flame rose from the tabernacle did I speak to them.

Yet it was no more than a sermon that was the essence of other sermons. For if time was gathering close for me, then must all I would say be much compressed:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit," I told them, "for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: For they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

Even as I meditated upon each saying, so was what I now said apart from all that they knew; of such matters could they know little even after being so long with me. Yet did I also know the beauty of the soul that He had granted to me. For by such a soul, I now believed, could we all share in every breath that knows the welcome given by love. And by such love would we gain the power to forgive others and this so that God be able to forgive us on the last day. Nor did I concern myself with whether the murderer had the right to forgive his own kind, nor the concubine her host. Such was

God's domain. Whereas I was in great need to speak to them of all that one knows at once. Yet did I see that because this knowledge had come upon me quickly, so was there danger of losing it.

Still, I said it, even if I had cause to wonder if the time had come to speak this much. Nonetheless would it be my speech and my sword against the Pharisees of Jerusalem.

"Blessed in spirit are the poor," I said, "for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven." Never did I utter words that were of more truth to me.

"Blessed are the merciful," I said, "for they shall obtain mercy.

"Blessed are the pure in heart. They shall see God."

And even as I said this, so again did the power of God rise in me, and I saw something of the years to come.

"Rejoice," I said, "and be exceeding glad. For great is your reward in heaven. And so did they also persecute the prophets which were before you." For that moment did I fear my dream no longer. For by my death would we enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

Then did I feel such certainty that my apostles might

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yet be equal to the martyred prophets of ancient days that I was able to believe my words would not be lost. So I believed. And might it be that the Kingdom was near?

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Yet not for long could I keep such belief. On the walk down from the mountain Peter and James and John were in dispute on a mean matter, and I asked: "Are you seeking who should be greatest among you?"

They gave assent. When we returned to Capernaum, I said to all twelve: "If any man desire to be first, know that he shall be last."

But Judas said: "Before any can speak of who is first, let there be even one who is able to do what you have done. When we went out as apostles, so did we see those who fell on the ground, but we could not cast out their devils."

I was that full of rage at how they were naming their place rather than looking to cure others that I answered with an no more than an invocation, and might they feel confusion on hearing it and be silent. So I said: "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."

Yet much did they like this saying. Was it that the

largest passion I might find among men was the desire for others to forgive their debt? Now was it clear that what they lacked most was forgiveness for the trespass of others.

And so I was twice in fury. To give them measure of how harsh were the holy demands of the Lord, I said: "If thy hand offend thee, cut it off. It is better to enter into the other life maimed than to have two hands to take into hell." And when I saw fear in their eyes, I spoke further: "If thy foot offend thee," I said, "cut it off. And if thy eye offend thee, pluck it out. It is better to enter the kingdom of God and see no more than half with the eye that is left than have both eyes cast into the flames of hellfire. There, the worm that eats at your flesh does not die."

I could see by their faces how deep were these words for them, but this did not ease my heart. Each night had I been hearing a voice in my sleep, and it was my own, and there to tell me that I must leave these lands where people waited to touch my garment, and must go down instead into the countries of the proud, into the south of Judea wherein was Jerusalem, and there I must enter into the halls of the Great Temple.

And if in preparation, I had been hoping to form an army

of men who needed no swords because their souls were pure, I had gathered instead but a few constant followers. And they argued among themselves over who should sit to the right of me and who to the left, and who was to be first after I was gone. So many miracles, so little gain.

And, indeed, I knew none of my disciples but for the moment when I could know each man well by looking again into his eyes. Yet did their eyes change, and by the hour, and evil licked like fire at the edges of their loyalty.

I had summoned them as if we were an army, and had tried to grant them power over unclean spirits; for certain had they accomplished little. And so might it be that the children of Israel would not reach the Kingdom of Heaven but be cast into the fire.

Now, I wondered if the harsh spirit and great wrath of my Father came from knowing that the enemies of the Jews were with evil and loyal to Satan, yet such enemies grew in strength. Thereby, to prepare His people, must my Father prove harsh so that we be ready?

That night, in my dream, God spoke to me and said: "You shall enter Jerusalem, and there will be betrayal, and thou

shall die. Yet will I raise thee on the third day, and it is then that the world will know whom they have lost."

And when this dream would return to me, so would I also hear one angel saying: "For God so loved the world that he gave His only-begotten Son. And whosoever believeth in him shall not perish but shall have everlasting life. For God did not send His son to condemn the world, but that through him the world might be saved."

If the angel spoke truth and I was like a light sent into the world by God, so could I see that men might love darkness more than light. Then I would wake and know confusion upon whether I would save the world or was already by the world condemned. Yet, each day did I come closer to the belief I must enter Jerusalem, even if my days on entering the city would be more numbered than the fingers of one hand. And I knew that I must find courage to take up my steps in such a direction.

Later, in those days when we were on the road to Jerusalem, would I repeat to myself: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten son and whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but will have everlasting

life." And indeed it would quell my fear against those hours when death weighed upon each step I took.

And I thought of Herod Antipas and of Herod his father who had wished to kill me at birth. What a bloody works was man. Yet were there also times when I thought to myself, "The Son of Man is come to save that which was lost," and for a moment would I know hope. Might it be that as we approached, the Kingdom of God would appear? So did I dream also of that.

By either case, however, did I know that I must lead my followers to Jerusalem and suffer all that might await me there. And indeed, could there be a time of year more with peril than now as Passover approached? Jews from all of Judea and Galilee would be walking down many roads and all would lead to Jerusalem. There had been great riots in other years against the Romans for how could we Jews forget? The feast of Passover commemorated those days when we fled Egypt and with Moses wandered out into the wilderness, and found a new land.

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Even as I girded myself for the days in Jerusalem, so did I tarry in Galilee. My twelve men, some by need of one sort, some by another, were unable to choose the hour. And, indeed, even on the day when all were ready to leave, was one further delay. For Matthew had disappeared. And many among us knew that he was drunk and consorting in alleys with those he had left behind when first he came to join us. Other apostles were displeased and said: "We remain eleven of twelve; let us depart."

I said: "If a man have a hundred sheep and one of them be gone astray, does he not leave the ninety and nine and go into the mountains and seek for the one who has gone? For if he find such a sheep, then can he rejoice more than over the ninety and nine."

We were full of discord. I could hear the good voice of Peter saying, "Lord, when I was a boy and sent to live in the land of my uncle, so was I also a shepherd. And it was our

practice among such hills and rocks to let the rebellious sheep flee in order that we might guard the others."

"No," said I, "the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost." Yet must I say that in this moment I heard God sigh. For could it be a thousand years that the children of Israel had been His? And in such time so much had been lost. So now I waited for Matthew. The sheep that strayed had much of the Devil; to bring back such a creature was to mortify Satan.

That day, Matthew returned at evening and was distraught; I knew his fear. A man who drinks too much wine and needs it for each of his days is close to the fears in other men; Matthew could feel how much wrath was waiting for us, yea, even unto the Temple of Jerusalem, and there perhaps most.

That night I did much preaching, as if to soothe the unrest in my own heart and I continued to speak even as light left the eyes of my apostles. They had heard my words before. Still, if they would weary of me, so would I speak to others and always there were new ones among us. And I chose to instruct by parables inasmuch as I had come to learn

that the creature, man, whom the Lord had created in His image, possessed much of the pride of the Lord, and so learned best when not suffering beneath the yoke of a preacher but instead could ponder a riddle. Thereby could one feel virtuous when calculating it out.

"Behold," I said, "the sower went forth to sow and some of his seed fell by the wayside and fowls came and wild birds and devoured them up. And some of his seed fell upon stony places which had not much earth in which to rest. Their roots were shallow and they withered away. And some of the seed fell among thorns. Yet others fell into good ground and brought forth fruit, some thirty-fold, some even a hundred. Those who have ears to hear among you, let them now hear."

I knew that the Devil would listen to each of my words, and use them against the Lord. How then could I suppose that the Devil had not gained entrance already to the Great Temple? So could I see Satan's influence swelling in the hearts of high priests who would seek to be holy, and indeed, even as I spoke, so might a dark angel be preparing the ears of the priests in Jerusalem. And might it be that these priests were now full of that corruption of the spirit which

is worse even than corruption of the flesh?

Again I did not feel ready to enter into Jerusalem. So I searched for a parable to cheer my own spirit and soon was I saying that the Kingdom of Heaven was like unto a man who sowed good seed in his field; yet while he slept, so did his enemy come and sow weeds among the wheat; these weeds appeared with the fruit. All who listened to me could comprehend a parable such as this and one even spoke out to say: "Should the servants of the householder go then and separate away such weeds?"

And I answered, "Nay. For ye will also root up the wheat. Let weeds and good grain grow side by side until our harvest. In that time ye can gather together the weeds and bind them in bundles to burn them, even as ye bring the wheat into my barn."

So was I obliged to ponder in what great degree good and evil did grow together and did my Father's angels separate good from evil at the end? Yet had my journeys also taught me how cunning were men and more cunning were priests, so that now I had a vision of a temple at the gate of heaven and it was like a customs' house. Through such

gates passed many an evil person. Had even a few been given the keys after listening to my parables?

"Who has ears to hear, let him hear," I had said, but were not the faithful small in number? There was another multitude, larger by far, who would partake of what I said but use it for themselves, not others; how much were these days suffused by a meanness of spirit that pervaded throughout.

Over and over I was learning that to my fellow men it mattered less whether they were tall or short of stature, lean or wide of body, of noble features or ugly of cast, even strong of limbs or weak: All were the same by one regard--they were prominent in their lack of compassion. Greed was their guide to search out and find their path.

So, in a given hour, when Peter said unto me, "Behold, we have forsaken all and followed thee; what shall we have in recompense?" it was a blow to me and considerable. Yet had Peter given me less disappointment than others. So I replied by relating one more parable, and it was for his ears.

A man hired his laborers for one denari a day and sent them one morning into his vineyard. But as the hours passed,

so did he hire in the third hour and more in the sixth and even in the ninth hour of the day, finding more men and women who were idle, he said, "Why stand ye here?" And they replied, "Because no man hath hired us." And he said unto them, "Go ye also into the vineyard."

And at the end of the day, it was time to reward all who had worked and he told his steward, "Call the laborers and pay them their hire beginning from the last unto the first." So that each man, those from the first hour and those of the ninth, all received their one denari. Since the first had supposed that the last would receive less, they whispered against the good man of the house. But he told them, "Didst thou not agree with me for one denari? Take what is thine and go. I will give unto this last man even as unto thee. So will the last be first and the first last, for hark ye, many may be called but few will be chosen." I was uplifted as upon a cloud by the strength of my voice and spoke with such force that the Lord whispered: "Enough! There is no wisdom in your speech but only the seed of much discontent. When you are without Me, the Devil is your near companion." And I felt a point of pain between my eyes as if the Lord

held a thorn to my brow, for I no longer knew what I saw nor to whose voice I listened. And I understood that to be the Son of God was not equal to being a Prince of Heaven but was my own apprenticeship into how to speak without greed or guilt or anger or the desire to bewilder others with the confidence of my light; it was meet upon me to speak only with wisdom.

Still, it was relief that we were ready at last to set out for Jerusalem, and it was a good morning.

Now, a man knelt before my feet and asked, "Good master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? I have observed all the commandments from my youth."

His eyes showed much desire to please, and full measure of concern for others so that even in the midst of much turmoil around us at leaving, I said, "Sell whatsoever you have, and give to the poor and then will you have treasure in heaven."

But the young man was not happy; he had many possessions and was loathe to lose them. I said to him: "He who has found the world and become wealthy should renounce the world." And when this left him even more aggrieved, I

also told him: "You say that the follow the law and the Prophets? Yet there it says, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' You must look to what is about you. Many of your brothers and sisters who are also sons and daughters of Abraham are living in filth and dying of hunger. Your house is full yet how much goes for them?"

He went away.

I said to my disciples, "How hard it becomes for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of heaven!" And when some of my disciples by a gleam of displeasure showed the darkness in their hearts, I said: "Children, how painful it is for those that trust in riches."

And when they asked why, I told them: "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God." They were astonished, saying among themselves, "Who then can be saved?" And one of them whose face was hidden by others, now muttered, "God enriches those whom He trusts. Why else is there high regard for riches?" And still others said, "If not the rich, why, who can be saved?"

And I looked upon them and said, "The Egyptians believe

such. They honor rich men. But do ye listen to me or are my words like the rain that is dried by the fever of the sun? I tell ye that no man can be saved if he would count his money. So look not for riches." At which point, Peter was ready to remind me: "Lo, we have left all and followed thee."

Then was I obliged to tell myself that my disciples were but men and lived among small passions. Thereby were my disciples no better, yet no worse, than others. If I could uplift their hearts, then other men and women might increase in goodness. Yet did dark thoughts follow upon this. For if most were of mean and ordinary dimension yet still belonged to God, how could my Father be wholly superior to His creation? And despite all effort not to dwell on such sacrilege, so did I now wonder whether my Father was merely larger than us, and of vastly greater force. At such moment, in such a depth, did I even despair for Him.

This had been the darkest of my thoughts before we set out. Then came our first steps. We were going to Jerusalem and all of us were afraid. And this fear was also full of happiness that we were not the slaves of our fear. And our legs knew their own joy in moving.

Then, and only then, did we truly step out. And by such quick march did belief soon germinate that after two days, and so soon as we were near to Jerusalem, and could see the city from afar, so would the Kingdom of God appear. The Lord would be among us.

And indeed, Judas was saying already: "You will walk in Jerusalem openly, will you not? So that we may witness your works at the Temple?"

And I could see by his impatience, that he was ceasing to believe in me; now he said: "There will be an open feast in the market. Will ye be there with us from the first?" and I replied, "The world does not hate you, but me it is ready to punish. I am the one who testifies that the works of the world are evil. Go, if you wish, unto this feast, but I may choose not to go."

Judas replied: "Where is the value of a man if he does a thing in secret when he seeks to be known to all?"

And I could hear murmuring as Judas related to others what I had said, and he made much afterward of telling me how some declared of me, "He is a good man," but others said, "Nay, he doth deceive the people." And then I knew that I

must teach openly. And indeed, Judas said: "Many await thee." But then was I also beginning to understand that in Judas there was great hatred yet such could be the equal of love in many fearful matters, and in those times when bold action is of more value than prayers to protect the weak.

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So much did this conversation with Judas disturb me, that on the road to Jerusalem I found myself in fever. As I walked, so did my limbs ache, and at night no rest was without pain. So was it also on the second morning, even as our road passed through desert, then by fruit groves. And I did all possible not to complain, but brooded upon my weakness in giving assent to Judas and promising to attend the feast.

On this second evening, however, even as we were still a full day's march from Jerusalem, so did we pass through Jericho where a man named Zacchaeus, who was chief among the publicans of Jericho, and rich, made an effort to see me. Many were in the throng, however, and he was little of stature. Therefore, he climbed up into a sycamore tree.

When I looked up and saw him, I said: "Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down, for tonight I abide at thy house."

He received me joyfully. Others murmured saying that it

was not fitting that I should be the guest of a man who was not only rich, but a publican. Yet Zacchaeus said to me, "Behold, Lord, now that I know thee, half of my goods will I give to the poor."

I was gladdened. For if a rich man could surrender half of his fortune for belief in me, then must other walls be ready to fall in Jerusalem. And that night I slept well in the house of Zacchaeus.

Next morning, however, even as we set out, came two sisters of my follower Lazarus to meet us. With Lazarus had I dined on earlier travels, and he was a good man. Now, his two sisters, Mary and Martha, had walked a distance from his house in Bethany to join with us, and they said, "Lord, he whom thou love is sick, our Lazarus."

And by the way in which it was spoken, so did I ask: "Is this a sickness unto death?"

They wept and could not answer. Then, as if I were brother to his sickness, so was I put back again into in my own fever and my night of rest with Zaccheus was lost. Now did I have to abide two more nights without moving, still a full day's march from Jerusalem. When I awoke on the fifth

day of our departure from Galilee, I was well in body but otherwise in woe and I said, "Lazarus is dead."

The apostle Thomas who was simple, and so would say what others only chose to think, now said aloud, "Let us go to Jerusalem so we may die with him." And there was much displeasure with Thomas.

Then we marched for all of that day and into the evening and came to Bethany nigh unto Jerusalem which was where Lazarus lived and indeed not a walk of an hour from the Temple. And I could see many Jews on their way to the house of Lazarus to comfort his sisters. The one who was named Martha came out to meet me, and said in sorrow, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother had not died."

There was naught in my mind. Nonetheless, I said, "Thy brother shall rise again."

Then came the other sister named Mary, and she sat at my feet and also said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother had not died." And she was followed by others also weeping who came with her and when they looked at me, I said, "Where have ye laid him?"

They said: "Lord, come and see."

It was close that I did not weep. How could I know whether the Lord would allow me to return him to his sisters? He had been dead these two days.

And many Jews around me, friends of the dead man, seeing me in such anguish, said, "Behold, how he loved Lazarus!"

Once more did I know much guilt at coming to his house so late.

Then, they led me to the grave of Lazarus which was a cave with a stone across the entrance. Whereupon I said, "Take away the stone."

But Martha said: "Lord, who can now speak for his body?"

Yet at my sign, they removed the rock from the entrance to the tomb and I lifted my eyes and cried out, and my voice roared in my throat: "Father, let Lazarus come forth!"

And I was silent. I knew that when the spirit left a man, all that was unclean in his spirit had also been loosed, and was ready to call upon other ugly spirits. Thereby would the odor of the dead man insult the nose. If I would purify Lazarus, so must I live first in my own sins.

And my fears for Lazarus returned and were large. Of

myself I asked: "Whereby can I raise a man from the dead when evil is the measure of weight that keeps men in their tombs?" And I was like a horse before an ill wind and ready to gallop away.

Then, as if the Lord had heard me, so before my eyes, now closed, was the face of Lazarus in his tomb. And I saw Lazarus stir.

Again I cried: "Lazarus, come forth," but now I heard Lazarus deny me, and I could hear him, even if no one else could, for Lazarus was in his tomb and we were without.

"Oh, Master," said Lazarus, "small creatures speak to me, but they say, 'thou art not our god, Lazarus, only our wiping-cloth.' Thus speak the maggots and scorpions."

Now, in my prayer, did I call upon this pestilence to withdraw and to leave Lazarus in peace; and it was then that Lazarus, who had been dead, rose in his tomb and came toward me. Yet could he only move with little steps, being bound head and foot in his winding sheet. And his face was also wound about. I said to his sisters, "Loosen him, but do so without looking upon him." For I knew his face was ravaged.

Then, in the voice of a man who has dwelt among dreams

that others would abhor, so did Lazarus say, "Now the maggots have left me, and the scorpions," but his voice was like the small cry of a bird. Yet was he alive.

And the Jews who witnessed this fell back in wonder. Whereby I knew that the priests and the Pharisees and the scribes in the Temple would hear of this by the first witness to reach their presence, and they would gather in council. For now had more than a few seen Lazarus arise and knew that he stank of the grave, and spoke of maggots and scorpions. So did I also know that the Pharisees would calumniate me as a demon for had I not gained the power to raise those who had begun to rot?

And I could hear the Chief Priest in his council even as if I were close to him: He and his followers would declare: "If we leave this Jesus in peace, soon will all Jews believe on him. Then shall the Romans come and take away our place and our nation inasmuch as we will all be seen as in rebellion."

And I knew that the High Priest Caiaphas might even say, "Is it wrong for one man to die that the whole perish not?"

On that day I did not continue to Jerusalem but slept in

the house of Lazarus and with a heavy heart. In the morning when I said goodbye, he was weak, and his demeanor was low, yet I asked, "Do you believe?" and Lazarus said, "I am frightened of the things I saw when dead. Yet, I try to believe." And in his weakness, he took my arm and said, "Yet was an angel also with me as I came back and all is not heavy."

I said to Lazarus: "Fear not. The prayers for you were fluent in my mouth, and so you are well-favored by the Lord." And to myself I prayed that I was telling the truth.