

# **CRUCIFIXION BY AN EYEWITNESS**

with an Introduction by  
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Translated by  
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## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

What is truth?' asked Pontius Pilate and did not wait to receive the answer. How far Christian Missionaries follow the footsteps of this much condemned Pilate rather than those of Jesus Christ can well be known from their efforts to destroy the perhaps most important document ever published in connection with Jesus Christ's Divinity and his resurrection after death. The centenary of Rishi Dayananda who lived and died for truth, can hardly be better celebrated than by bringing out a letter which is sure to disillusion a major portion of human society and unveil the mystery on which the whole Christian faith is based. The writer of the letter, a little less than two thousand years ago, might never perhaps have thought that the paper he was writing to a private friend of his, would one day throw a flood of light upon the mysterious death of Jesus Christ and will cause an alarming consternation in the religious Christian world. The gentlemen through whose instrumentality it could come down to us deserve special gratitude of all the seekers after truth, as those who profess to love truth and therefore 'Jesus Christ', left no stone unturned in depriving the world of the only document that helps in clearly understanding one of the most mystified events of the world's history. Let those who have got vested interests say whatever they like. Those who love truth for truth's sake will, surely join us in thanking those but for whose efforts the letter could never have survived the zeal of Christian votaries to destroy it. We also thank Pandits Ghasi Ram M.A. and Chamupati M.A. for their valuable introduction which will, it is hoped, be appreciated by our readers.

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## INTRODUCTION

‘Resurrection of Jesus Christ after death’ is the most important article of the Christian faith. It is cited as the strongest proof of Christ’s Divinity. The Christians claim that it is a historical fact supported by the evidence of eye witnesses of indubitable veracity. If this be so, indeed, there would be no room left to doubt the Divinity of Christ.

Now the only question is whether there is in reality such an evidence available in support of this ‘fact’ as is claimed by the Christians. The coming to life of a dead man is the most extraordinary thing of which no man, living or dead, has had any experience since man made his first appearance on the earth. When we are therefore, asked to believe that such an event did actually happen in the case of Jesus Christ we are asked to believe a thing which had never happened before, nor, has ever happened since. We are, consequently, justified in insisting upon having the most clear, the most cogent, and the most convincing evidence in its support before we can transfer our belief to it.

The only evidence that is adduced by the Christians is that furnished by the four Gospels known after the names of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John who were among the twelve disciples of Jesus. We, as reasonable men, should be perfectly satisfied if it be shown beyond the possibility of doubt that the above Gospels are the works of those whose names they bear and that the writers were the men, who were eye witnesses to the ‘Resurrection’.

This evidence has been most carefully examined, sifted and analyzed by men of deep erudition and legal acumen who had made the study of the Bible their life-long work and their judgment is that the case at best remains ‘unproven’.

They have shown by the internal evidence of the Gospels themselves that they could not have been written by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, that they were written long after the death of these saints, that the Gospels differ from one another in the most important details in which they could not have differed if their authors had witnessed all that they relate with their own eyes.

Under such circumstances it is idle to claim that the Gospels establish

the truth of the events connected with the 'Resurrection'. There is no question of believing or disbelieving Matthew, Mark, Luke and John when they do not speak of any event with their own tongue. The evidence of the Gospels is, then, hearsay. We do not know who were the men who wrote the Gospels and fathered them on the four Evangelists, what their credentials were and what were the sources of their information. It is, therefore, too much to ask us to place implicit faith in their word.

Pitted against these scholars are equally eminent and learned men of the other school who hold that the discrepancies among the statements of the Gospels are more apparent than real, that the points of similarity far outnumber the points of difference and that the general effect left on the mind of the reader after reading these documents is that the information contained in them is derived from persons who witnessed all the events with their own eyes or from persons who came in personal contact with the eye-witnesses.

In such a state of affairs the general reader who is neither learned nor leisured enough to read the original works of the scholars of both schools is simply bewildered. He can not decide for himself as to whom to believe and whom to disbelieve, and the best thing for him is to suspend judgment until he receive more light.

Fortunately for us, a fresh evidence of a most startling nature! has been brought to light. It is the evidence of an eyewitness who noted down the events only seven years after their occurrence. It corroborates the statements of the Gospels in the most remarkable manner in the minutest details and is thoroughly convincing and natural at the same time. It was not meant for publication and no criticism can be leveled against it on the ground that the writer was trying to make a name for himself. It affords a natural explanation for the most unnatural phenomenon of a dead man coming to life again. And it is simply this that Jesus Christ was not really dead when his body was taken down from the Cross and that he was restored to consciousness from his death-like swoon by medical treatment and careful nursing.

This evidence is contained in a letter which was written, as we have already said, only seven years after death of Jesus Christ, by a private individual to a friend of his in response to an enquiry about the circumstances attending it. And it is the English translation of this letter which is now published.

Like the letter itself, its history also is most remarkable. The letter was written in Latin. For long centuries it lay hidden in some secret abode. After that it somehow found its way to a library in Alexandria. Along with the remains of this library it fell into the hands of a French literate who was a member of the Abyssinian Mercantile Company. From France it travelled to Germany and came into the possession of a German who gave it an English garb, and in that garb it was published for the first time in America in 1873. Its publication, however, created such a stir among the Christian circles that they seized every available copy and destroyed it. One copy, however, escaped destruction. It belonged to a Freemason. After his death his daughter handed it over to T.K. who published it again. This time also the Christians repeated their old game and it went out of circulation soon after. One copy again escaped the fate with which its other companions met and in its peregrinations it reached India and a lucky chance brought it to us. We felt that this most valuable piece of evidence on one of the most important events in human history ought not to be allowed to disappear and we are publishing it in the hope that it will clear up the mystery in which the Resurrection of Jesus Christ is shrouded. The letter consists of two parts, one describing the events connected with the Crucifixion and Resurrection and the other with the doctrines of the Esseen sect. The Esseens were a secret brotherhood of philosophers who flourished in the time of Christ. We are withholding the second portion as it is of no interest to the general reader.

It might well be asked, what is the proof that the letter is genuine and has not been forged by some enemy of Christianity? We think that the consternation that spread among the guardians of the Christian faith on the publication of this letter and the unbecoming zeal with which they destroyed its printed copies are the best answer to this question. If the letter was a forged one why were the Christians so much afraid of it? They could have tried to show that it was forged and then, if they had been able to prove their point, it would have died a natural death. Their vehement attempts to destroy it prove to our mind, that there is something in the letter which they cannot disprove in the field of fair controversy. Besides this, there are other considerations which in our opinion go a long way to negative the idea of a forgery having been committed. The very style of writing, which is visible in the translation also, proclaims it to be an ancient document. The writer did not mean it for publication. The occasion which necessitated its writing was perfectly natural. Wild rumours about the 'Resurrection' had got currency and had travelled to Alexandria and even to distant Rome. The friend of the writer in Alexandria, to whom that letter is

addressed, wanted to know the truth about them and he naturally turned to his friend the writer who was in Jerusalem. And the latter wrote out this document He was not an adversary of Jesus. On the other hand he was Jesus' 'well-wisher and regarded him as a holy man'. The writer says:-'You wonder that the belief in the supernatural and miracles should gain a foothold in our midst, when you know that we all have to bear responsibility for the actions of one of our members.

Therefore you ought to know that the rumour is like a wind When it commences it drives the pure air far ahead, but in its progress it receives all vapors and mist from the earth, and when it has traveled some distance it creates darkness instead of the clear pure air of which it was at first composed, and at last consists solely of the particles it has received during its progress.

It is even so with the rumours concerning Jesus and his fate". (Vide page 13-14)

Again he says, "In secrecy I will now inform of what I and our\_ brotherhood in Jerusalem have seen and witnessed (Vide page 30). Therefore pay good heed to what I tell you, that you may judge for yourselves of the rumours that have reached you hence and from Rome '. (Vide Page 31) (The italics are ours).

The details are given with such minutiae as only an eyewitness could give them. We shall note, in brief, the salient details described in the letter and compare them with those mentioned in the Gospels

The description, as it has come down to us, begins with the procession in the midst of which 'the doomed Jesus' marched to meet his fate. We now set down a few salient findings which even a casual reader of these documents may make from them.

## **Who bore the Cross**

It is doubtful whether Jesus, when he was led for crucifixion bore his own cross. The Gospels are divided in their testimony on this point. While Matthew (27-32) and Mark (15-23) make Simon of Cyrene bear the Cross, and Luke (23-26) speaks of the same man bearing it after Jesus, St. John (19-1) says -

'He (Jesus) bearing his Cross went forth'.

Our document appears to support either Luke's or St. John's version. It states:

They (women beheld Jesus almost sinking down under the weight of the Cross'. (Vide Page 32)

### **The Stupefying Drink'**

The drink that was offered to Jesus on the crucifixion consisted, according to Matthew (27-34) of vinegar mingled with gall, according to Mark (15-23) of vinegar mixed with myrrh. In our letter it is sour wine mixed with worm wood and called 'Toska'.

Jesus refused the drink, as he did not wish to die a drunkard. A valuable piece of information supplied by the letter. (Vide Page 33).

### **The Nails**

As to whether the nails were driven through the hands or feet or both, the Gospels are silent. It is believed they were driven through both. Our author, however, says:

'They drove through his hands thick iron nails, but none through his feet, for this was not customary.' (Vide Page 34)

The rumour set afloat at that time was that the feet too were pierced.

### **The Thieves Derision**

Jesus was crucified in the midst of two thieves, to show that 'his was the greatest crime'. The raillery that was showered on Jesus by the bystanders was partaken in by thieves. According to Matthew as well as Mark, both joined in the derisive mockery, while according to Luke, one of them misbehaved himself in this manner while the other reprimanded him, whereby he earned the Lord's benediction and was saved from the fire of hell. In our letter one of the crucified thieves is reported to have joined with them in deriding him. (Vide Page 35)

## **The Inscription Over Jesus**

Over the head of Jesus was, hung up in mockery the inscription Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews'. While other Gospels mention this circumstance without any further remark, John represents the Jews as objecting to it, instead of which they suggested the writing of the words, 'he said I am the king of the Jews'. Pilate answered, what I have written, I have written'. Our letter is at one with John. It runs:-'This (inscription) deeply angered the priests, but in as much as they feared Pilate, they exhausted their wrath by mocking Jesus'. (Vide Page 35)

## **The Breaking of Bones**

The death on the Cross was a slow death. The criminal hung there for days and days. He gradually lost his consciousness, till all at last he died either of hunger or of pain. The crucifixion of Jesus took place on the preparation days i.e., the day preceding Sabbath To hasten the death of persons crucified on such a day the custom was to break their bones and thus knock life out of their bodies. While John takes note of this cruel custom, the other Gospels are silent over it. John (19-32) avers that in the case of other culprits this custom was carried into action, while the body of Jesus, taken for already dead, was spared that hateful indignity. Then, according to this authority, went Joseph to Pilate, and begged of him the corpse of Jesus (19-38). The intervention of Joseph is noticed in other Gospels too. Our authority inverts the order of these happenings. According to him Joseph, accompanied by Nicodemus, a physician, came to the cross first. The latter discovered that Jesus was only unconscious and could, with proper care and treatment, be yet saved. It was at his instance that Joseph interceded with Pilate, who, after assurance was given him by the Centurion that Jesus had died, permitted him an honorable burial That a spear was 'struck' into his body, whereupon there flowed blood and water is noticed by both St. John and the writer of our letter. The former only records the circumstances without deriving from it any conclusion. The latter mentions the absence of convulsion on being 'struck as a proof to the Centurion that the body was without life. The flow of blood and water was to Nicodemus a sign that the crucified lived. (Vide. Page. 40-44)

C.C. writing in the Enc. Biblica says:-

'May it not have been a thoughtless, rather than a brutal act, the point of the lance being directed at something on the surface of the body, perhaps a discoloured wheal, bleb, or exudation, such as the scourging (Mt. 26-27) might have left, or the pressure of the (assumed) ligature supporting the weight of the body might have produced. Water not unmixed with blood from some such superficial force is conceivable; but blood and water from an internal source are a mystery'.

C.C. (See columns 960. 961)

The verb 'struck' used in the letter is thus more suitable than 'pierced' of St. John.

The reader will observe that the sequence of events as given by the letter is more natural and therefore more readily reliable.

## **Medical Treatment of Jesus**

St. John (19-39) mentions the coming of Nicodemus as a subsequent happening. Yet he is reported to have brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, a service proper to a physician. According to our authority "Nicodemus spread strong spices and healing salves on long <sup>1</sup> piece of 'byssus' which he had brought and whose use was known only in our order". These lie wound round Jesus' body, pretending that he I did so to keep the body from decaying". (Vide Page 46) John says the same thing but the purpose of this procedure is, in his opinion, different. According to him, this is the manner of the Jews to bury; while with our author, 'these spices and salves had great healing powers and were used... for the restoration to consciousness of those in a state of death like fainting'. (Vide Page 46)

Resurrection

The Crucifixion proper here ends. The next scene brought to view is that of resurrection. According to the orthodox account Jesus came to life again after death. He presented himself before certain women and his disciples. On the fact of resurrection the gospels are agreed. Their disagreement is in the description of detail. The writer on this subject in the *Eric. Biblica* tabulates as follows the principal discrepancies in the accounts of the Gospels under this heading.

By a study of the above table the reader will see that the very

happenings which in the Gospels are set forth as miraculous occurrences are according to our letter only ordinary incidents. The angels are no other than 'Esseens' clad in white robes, who on account of their transcendental serenity in deportment and conversation with common people, pass for angels. The resurrection of Jesus was simply his re-appearance after his pseudo-death. He was sate in the keeping of 'Esseens' who regarded him as their 'brother' and watched every movement of his with the solicitous care of a parent or a loving patron. Fear of his enemies who in those days of stark superstition could go to any length in persecuting him and blaspheming his mission, prevented him from venturing in public again. He saw his disciples and reassured them but did not disclose to them his whereabouts. Hence their feeling that all his workings at the stage belonged to what they thought was a supernatural state of existence. And his Ascension to Heaven? It was only a rapid movement through the mist after which, as the disciples rose from their prostrate obeisance, they found him not, and were consoled by the haphazard idea that he had risen to a higher abode.

We now request the reader to peruse the letter and form his own judgment. We trust that this edition will not share the fate of its sister editions and Christian charity will let it live so that the seekers after truth may have all the evidence on 'Resurrection' before them and may have a fair and full opportunity of arriving at an independent judgment after hearing both sides.

In conclusion, we assure our Christian friends that love for truth is our only motive in publishing this letter.

GHASI RAM, M.A. CHAMUPATI, M.A.

## PREFACE

A member of the Abyssinian Mercantile Company discovered, in Alexandria an ancient house, formerly occupied by Grecian friars, in whose library-to oblivion abandoned-was found an old parchment. A French literate, accidentally present, at once commenced deciphering it; but a missionary, in the ardour of fanatical orthodoxy, tried by all means to destroy the antique document. But the efforts of the Jesuit missionary do not seem to have been successful, as a copy of the Latin original was written, which copy, through the Freemasons, found its way into Germany.

It has been proved from the archaeological discoveries made on the spot, that the house, where the parchment was found, was owned and occupied by the 'Order of Esseens'. Further, that the document found was the only remains of literature from the once well-filled library of this scientific and religious Order or Brother-hood.

The French literate, who first conceived the importance and historical worth of the manuscript, tried hard to enrich the French Academy with the original, but, owing to the intrigues of the Jesuit mission in Egypt (bent on destroying a document so detrimental to their doctrine), he was not successful; although it was preserved principally through the interference of influential Abyssinian merchants and Pythagorean Societies, from whom the copy above spoken of came into the possession of the modern institution of Freemasons, and a society in Germany now possesses without doubt, the only copy in existence.

AS regards the discovered antique document, it consisted of a letter which the so-called Therapeut (the elder), the highest esteemed member of the Brotherhood, had written to his brethren in Alexandria, in the name of the Brotherhood in Jerusalem. This letter was written by him only a few years after the death of Jesus, giving a full description of the life, doctrine and death of Jesus, who the letter proves to have belonged to and been a member of their Brotherhood.

Rumors of his miracles, and finally of his martyrdom, had also reached Alexandria and as the brethren there had a conviction that he was their brother, preached their doctrines, used their sign of recognition, and lived in accordance with their rules, they manifested a desire to be informed on the subject, as to the real truth of the matter. To obtain this information<sup>1</sup>, their

leader, or "Terapeut", had written a letter to his colleague in Jerusalem, who in reply wrote the letter from which we obtain a clear and truthful account of this important and interesting subject. It is a fact, which never has been doubted by those familiar with ancient history, that the Esseers always spoke and wrote the strictest truth, and this, added to their moral and scientific lives, puts an end to any doubt as to the correctness and genuineness of the information given in the ancient discovered letter.

Although not at first organized among the Jews, this Order existed already in the days of the 'Maccabai'; and with them it assumed more of a national outward form, at the same time maintaining most of the ancient pythagoraical doctrines. Most of the members were agriculturists and gardeners, and assembled together to promote virtue and wisdom among themselves. Furthermore, they devoted themselves, especially in the higher degrees, to the art of healing, induced thereto through their studies of nature and art, and were well acquainted with the effects of most then known plants and minerals for healing and strengthening the human system. This knowledge they made useful by healing and comforting the sick.

They were true communists, and all put their gains into the common treasury. Before sunrise they never spoke to each other of earthly matters, but met in prayer at break of day. Having taken their morning meal and put on a peculiar kind of working clothes, they proceeded to their place of work. At noon they again came together, and, having washed their hands and feet and dressed themselves in clean white robes, they ate their dinner together.

According to their moral standing and ability, they were divided into four classes or degrees. In the first degree were especially adopted children (the "Esseens" hardly ever married), but in case an adult wished to be admitted into their Order, it was necessary to go through a very severe moral trial for the term of three years.

It was strictly prohibited for a member of high degree to divulge any of the secrets of his degree to any of lower rank.

The punishment for such a trespass was expulsion from the Brotherhood. Nothing but a strictly moral life, wisdom, godliness, and excellency in science, entitled to the higher degrees. In their domestic life they exercised hospitality and benevolence, kept the rules of the Order strictly, and never took any interest or part in politics or revolutions. Thus they showed a

thoroughly peaceable disposition.

Their greeting and sign or recognition was, "Peace be with you". At their meals they broke the bread and passed the cup, and worshipped Jehovah"; but never made any sacrifice in the temple, but performed their ceremonies in their homes. They knew no higher virtue than to suffer and die for their belief. Accordingly, death did not terrify them, as they believed the spirit a prisoner in the body, to be released through death, then to return to the celestial glory. Deceit and profanity were considered grave sins (as well as quarrelling and vengeance), and looked upon with abhorrence.

This Order, of which the present Freemasonry is the modern issue, was at the time of Jesus, widely diffused through Palestine and Egypt, and had their colonies scattered all over the country. They always kept up a congenial fraternal feeling in their meetings, and gave each other information about the affairs of the Brotherhood. They counted among their members men of all professions and stations in society, and although comprising a great many learned men and rich persons (who sometimes found it in their interest to keep this secret), they never excluded the poor nor persons in moderate circumstances.

Thus we have all reasons to credit this letter, dictated by the love of truth, and written by a man who had been an eyewitness to most of the important transactions in the life and death of Jesus, who, as a member of their Order, was embraced by them with all the fraternal devotion of the Order.

Dr. Tulsi Ram Sharma  
(Translator)

## DESCRIPTION OF JESUS

By His Contemporary, Publius Lentulus,  
Who was The Predecessor of Pontius  
Pilate as Governor of Judea.

A man of noble stature and of very beautiful countenance, in which such majesty resides that those who look on him are forced to admire him,

His hair is of the color of a fully ripe chestnut, and from his ear down his shoulders it is of the color of the earth, but shining. It is parted in the middle of his forehead, after the manner of the Nazarenes.

His forehead is smooth and very serene, his face free from wrinkle and spot, and with a slight colour.

The nostrils and lips cannot reasonably be found fault with.

The beard is thick, and, like the hair, not very long, and divided in the middle.

There is a look of terror in his grave eyes. The eyes are like the rays of the sun, and it is impossible to look him steadily in the face on account of their brilliancy

When he reproveth, he terrifies; when he admonishes he weeps. He makes himself loved, and is gravely cheerful. It is said that he was never seen to laugh, but he was seen to weep.

His hands and arms are very beautiful.

In conversation he is charming, but he seldom engages in it; and when he does converse he is very modest of countenance.

In presence he is the most beautiful man that could be seen or imagined; just like his mother, who is the most beautiful young person that was ever beheld in these parts.

In learning he is an object of wonder to the entire city of Jerusalem. He never studied at all, and yet he knows all sciences.

He wears sandals, and goes bareheaded. Many laugh at seeing him; but in his presence, and when speaking to him, they fear and tremble.

It is said that such a man was never seen or heard in these parts. In truth, as the Hebrews tell me, there never were heard such advices, such sublime doctrine as this Christ teaches and many of the Jews hold him for Divine, and they believe in him, while many others accuse him to me as being contrary to thy majesty.

It is acknowledged that he has never done harm to any age. but good. All that know him and have had dealings with him, say that they have received from him benefits and health.

The foregoing description is condensed from a letter written by Publius Lentulus, then Governor of Judea, to Tiberius Caesar, Emperor of the Romans.

## DEATH-WARRANT OF JESUS

Sentence Rendered by Pontius Pilate, Acting Governor of Lower Galilee, Stating that Jesus of Nazareth shall suffer Death on the Cross.

In the year seventeen of the Emperor Tiberius Caesar, and the 27th day of March, in the city of the holy Jerusalem-Annas and Caiaphas being priests, sacrificators of the people of God Pontius Pilate, Governor of Lower Galilee, sitting in the presidential chair of the praetory, condemns Jesus of Nazareth to die on the Cross between two thieves, the great and notorious evidence of the people saying:

1. Jesus is a seducer.
2. He is seditious.
3. He is the enemy of the Law.
4. He calls himself falsely the Son of God.
5. He calls himself falsely king of Israel.
6. He entered into the Temple followed by a multitude bearing palm-branches in their hands.

Orders the first Centurion, Qulius Cornelius, to lead him to the place of execution.

Forbids any person whomsoever either poor or rich, to oppose the death of Jesus Christ.

The witnesses who signed the condemnation of Jesus are

1. Daniel Robani, a Pharisee.
2. Jaonnus Robani.
3. Repheal Robani.
4. Capet, a citizen.

Jesus shall go out of the city of Jerusalem by the gate of Struenus.

The foregoing is engraved on a copper plate, on the reverse side of which is written: A similar plate is sent to each tribe".

It was found in an antique marble vase, while excavating in the ancient city of Aquila in the kingdom of Naples, in the year 1810, and was discovered by the Commissioners of Art of the French Army.

At the expedition of Naples, it was enclosed in a box of ebony and preserved in the sacristy of the Chartem (Certosa).

The French translation was made by the Commissioners of Arts.

The original is in the Hebrew language.

## PART 1

### LETTER

From an "Esseen" in Jerusalem to his brethren in Alexandria

PEACE be with you, dear brethren!

You have heard of the things that have happened in Jerusalem and Palestine in general. You were right to believe Jesus to be our Brother and a member of our Order, of whom his friends among the Romans and Jewish people relate, that he taught and wrought great wonders, and finally suffered the death of martyrs in Jerusalem.

He was born in Nazareth, by the entrance to the beautiful valley into which the river "Kisson" rushes down the steep declivities of the Mount Tabor. He was put under the protection of the Order by a member of our Brotherhood, by whom his father and mother found a refuge on their flight to Egypt. There are, as you know, many of our brethren living on the borders of Egypt.

In fine, Jesus was admitted into the Order at the same time with John in their years of early manhood. He lived then in Galilee and had just returned from a visit to Jerusalem, where he was watched by our Brotherhood. Jutha was the place of his initiation, close by the grand castle of Masseda, where the mountains raise their lofty peaks above the surrounding country.

My dear Brethren, you may all have been convinced that he has been a member of our Order, as well by the doctrines he has taught the people, and his signs of recognition, especially the baptism and the breaking of the bread and passing of the wine, as well as by his being baptized by one of our brethren, John, in Jordan, near the shore of the Dead Sea, in a westerly direction-for baptism, as you know, has been, since time immemorial, a sacred institution in our Order.

You wonder that the belief in the supernatural and miracles should gain foothold in our midst, when you know that we all have to bear the responsibility for the actions of one of our members.

Therefore, you ought to know that the rumour is like a wind. When it commences it drives the pure air far ahead, but in its progress it receives all vapours and mist from the earth, and when it has travelled some distance it creates darkness instead of the clear pure air of which it was at first composed, and at last consists solely of the particles it has received during its progress.

It is even so with the rumours concerning Jesus and his fate.

Furthermore, remember that the inspired men, who have written and spoken of him, were often carried away by the spirit of enthusiasm, and in their devotion and simplicity they believed all the things told them about him by the multitudes who were even more simpleminded and superstitious than they.

Bear ever in mind also that, in accordance with our rules, the secrets of our holy Brotherhood at all times remained unknown to these writers, and that only our higher members had any knowledge about the secret assistance and protection Jesus received from us.

And, finally, do not forget that our rigid laws prohibited us from interfering or taking any active part in the councils or plans of the rulers of the land.

Therefore we have acted quietly and secretly, and have suffered the law to run its course; at the same time we secretly aided and assisted our friend in ways which did not infringe the law and our rules.

Know then that Jesus was and is our "Brother", and himself vowed, when he at Jutha was made an initiate of our Order, that our Brotherhood thenceforth should be to him as father and mother, and truly we have proved us so in the spirit and the letter of our law.

I write this to you, my brethren, in the truth and knowledge of our Brotherhood, that you may know and understand the truth concerning what has come to pass. I tell you only of the things I know, and I have seen it all with mine own eyes and have taken a deep interest and an active part in all

these transactions.

Now, at the time that I write this to you, the Jews have seven times eaten of the lamb of the passover since our Brother was crucified, our Brother whom we all loved and in whom God was glorified. Nevertheless I have forgotten none of the things I have lived to see come to pass. Indeed, as true as are the words that pass from my lips, and the thoughts that I write, as verily do I believe from the depths of my soul, that Jesus was chosen of God and begotten by the Eternal Spirit. He called himself the son of God, and he proved himself to us by teaching in the name of God. He also lived a holy life and was deeply learned in the secrets of all the kingdoms of nature. In all these things we of the secret Brotherhood acknowledge God; and the man among us who can say: "Behold, I am of God", verily he is so; for he that is not cannot say it, not having the word in his heart, and not having learned it from the spirit. I will now tell you of the parentage of this man who loved all men, and for whom we feel the highest esteem, that you may have full knowledge of him.

He was from his infancy brought up for our Brotherhood. Indeed, he was predicted by an "Esseen" whom the woman thought to be an angel. This woman was given too many imaginings, delving into the supernatural and into the mysteries of life, and she found deep interest and pleasure in the things she could not explain.

Our Brother, the "Esseen", has acknowledged to us his part in these things, and has persuaded the Brotherhood secretly to search for and protect the child.

And Joseph, who was a man of great experience in life, and deep devotion to the immortal truth, through a messenger of our Order was influenced not to leave the woman nor to disturb her faith in the sacredness of her experience, and to be a father to the child until our Brotherhood should admit him as a novice.

Thus, during their flight to Egypt, Joseph was secretly protected and guided by our order and conducted as a guest to the congregated Brotherhood by the Mount "Cassius", at the slope of the mount, on which the Romans have built a temple dedicated to Jupiter. The "Esseers" who lived there were commissioned to introduce Joseph, his wife and the child into their congregation, that they might see our way of worshipping and praising God, "the Creator of all," and learn the ceremony of eating the

consecrated bread and drinking the holy wine.

At our request they informed our Brotherhood in Jerusalem how it all had been done. Joseph was placed among the half-circle of men on the right hand, and Mary, his wife, among the women on the left hand. There they with our Brethren, ate the bread and drank the wine, and all together sang the holy hymns.

Further, Joseph here vowed before the elder of our Brotherhood, that he renounced for ever any claim on the child who was thenceforth to belong to the Order. He was then made acquainted with the salutation and sign of the holy Brotherhood, which would enable him during his travels to make himself known to these. They also directed him which route to take to arrive in safety.

This route was through a part of the country where there lived many enlightened and learned Jews who were well versed in the Scriptures, and devoted to study. Among these our Order has many members. These were ordered to protect Joseph and be hospitable to him, even before he arrived among them. This was in the beautiful country of Heliopolis with its splendid forests, and near unto the temple to Jehovah, erected by Onias.

When the peril in Galilee was over and the Roman "Warus" was pillaging in Judea, making that country unsafe, Joseph went to Nazareth, which is situate near by the steep mount of Tabor.

But soon Archelaus brought new terror over Galilee, and Joseph was persuaded by our brethren to go to Jerusalem-on his way passing 'Luhem' and there seek protection by our Brotherhood. This was duly accomplished, and at passover they arrived at "Nisan".

Here I myself spoke with them. I was then in the lower degree of the Order, and in obedience to the command of the elder carried a message to Joseph. I found him to be a man of candor and wide experience who spoke with great judgment and wisdom. Indeed, he exhorted Mary to describe distinctly the differences between reality and dreamy imagination, things as different as the day is from the night and instructed her how to quiet her mind through prayer and devotion.

Her mind was filled with fiery imaginings that often lifted her thoughts to heavenly things and made her indifferent to the things of the earth. In

consequence she strongly influenced the mind of her son to the study and contemplation of immortal truths.

Joseph commended her for good influence over the child. He also instructed Jesus in knowledge and wisdom, and protected his pure mind against the power of overstrained imagination.

And when the child Jesus spoke with the scribes concerning holy things his doctrines gave deep offence of the Pharisees in Jerusalem in that they considered them dangerous and incredible.

Inasmuch as the Pharisees held rigidly to the traditions and details of the law of Moses, they were deeply aggrieved against everyone who did not believe with them, and who did not keep in outward form to the ceremonials of their temple service.

They gave alms in the sight of the multitudes. They taught of the kingdom of the dead", of the influence of good angel and evil spirits, and of the future grand eternal destiny of the Jewish people. Although they had many friends among the common people, and exercised great power and influence with them; nevertheless, the Spirit of God dwelt neither in their houses nor on their tongues.

But Joseph had come to be of our doctrines and without figures or mysteries he fixed them in the mind of the growing child. Indeed, the child thus early was touched by the miseries of the people, and they were enraptured to hear him teach the word of God. The scribes knew him to be from Galilee, and they despised him as they despised the whole people of Galilee.

But some of our brethren went to the temple, and without betraying themselves through our holy salutation, kept him in their midst, that they might thus protect him

When the divine child had spoken publicly, in the temple then were our brothers apprehensive of the dangers that threatened him; for they Knew that the Pharisees and the Rabbis were in private council fully determined to banish him from Galilee because of his doctrines. They therefore lured him to the synagogue of Sopherim by manifesting to him an assumed interest in the law, for they perceived that in all his ardor and enthusiasm he was influenced by nothing else.

Thus it came to pass that he was lost from his father and mother in the large city which then contained many people from the whole country, because of the passover.

Our friends, the Esseens. were informed of these things, and they saw that it was not safe nor wise for the child to remain longer among the Pharisees, as much more as a Rabbi, who had become a true friend and teacher to the child, no more could be present to moderate his zeal and ardor, contending as he was with the immoral hypocrites, as the Rabbi had gone on a journey to Jericho.

Therefore we informed Joseph and his wife, whom we found in double grief inasmuch as they at the time also had been informed that the husband of Elizabeth, Mary's friend, had died. Thus, for three days Mary had been searching for her son. in deep sorrow, and at the same time she felt a strong desire to go and see her friend. At last, on the fourth day. she found her son at Sopherim, according to the information given her by our Brethren.

And Nabbin, the Rabbi who had taken such deep interest in the' child, was a secret member of our Order, and had received instructions j to protect him.

Thus it came to pass that Mary, her husband and her son V returned to Jutha.

Here she found her friend Elizabeth in great grief, with her son, whose name was John.

Here the two youths were much together, and together they talked much about the sacred and the divine. Off they wandered into the wildest parts of the mountain regions. They grew to be devoted friends, and their attachment ripened into intimate acquaintance with each other in their search for truth.

John, who was the son of Zacharias, had already received the doctrines of the Nazarenes as regards reservedness, and he knew perfectly the Scriptures and traditions but comprehended not the beautiful and the exalted in this world, nor the laws of nature, as well as Jesus. He felt great dislike for the customs of the heathens, and despised and hated all tyrants.

And the time had come when Jesus should be admitted into the first degree of our Order And in the valley our Order had a Brotherhood, situate near the mountain where the castle Masseda stands, and the elder of our Brotherhood met them there, and listened to their conversation.

He taught them that wisdom and virtue are strengthened by fraternity; whereupon Jesus, in a transport of great joy, asked that he might be prepared at once for admittance into our holy Order. The example set by Jesus was followed by John, and the elder offered up a prayer which made Jesus a devotee of God.

According to the rules of our Order, the elder now said : You shall be my brethren as soon as you, by the next new moon, shall see the glare of the fire on the mountain where the temple is built, and where you then will appear. He that is initiated into our Order must at the same time dedicate his life to the service of others. Tell you father Joseph that the time is now come for him to fulfil the vow he made at Mount Cassius."

The Esseen then departed. But when the child had returned to his home Joseph was already remembered of his vow and of his duties to our brethren.

Joseph then, for the first time, made known to Jesus that he was not his father.

Together they kept secret the admission of Jesus into our Brotherhood, for fear of the Gaulanites.

At the appointed time they saw, in the evening, the fire signal ascend from the mountain, whereupon they immediately set forth to journey thither. When they were arrived at the temple they were met by the white-robed messengers sent by the Brotherhood.

According to our rules, Jesus was initiated into our holy Order after the following manner

Both were instructed and shown the way to enter into the assemblage, where the brethren were seated in four separated groups, according to the four degrees. Over the scene the crescent shed its lurid glare. The two were placed before the brethren. There they made their vow, the brethren in their white robes placing their right hands upon their breasts, with the left

hanging down at the side. And this was done as a token that none but the pure in heart shall see that which is sacred and holy.

And the two vowed indifference to the treasures of earth, to worldly power or name, and by the brotherly kiss they vowed obedience and secrecy.

And, in obedience to our custom, when these two had made their vow they were conducted into the lonely cavern where, for three days and nights, they were subject to self-examination and trial.

In the evening of the third day they were again brought before the assembled brethren to answer the questions put to them and then to pray.

Having received the brotherly kiss, they were clothed in white robes, emblems of sacred purity, and the trowel, emblematic of the labors of our Brotherhood, was put into their hands.

Having sung the sacred hymns and partaken of the feast of love by themselves, according to the custom of our Order none of the brethren participating, they were dismissed. After this they were instructed concerning the trials and the disciplines through which they must pass—living in the loneliness of solitude, separate from the world of man-kind, for the period of one year, at a point near the elder of the Order from whom they should receive instructions fitting them for advancement in the higher degree of our Order.

Both grew rapidly in divine knowledge. Jesus was frank and hearty of disposition, but John shrouded himself in stern seriousness and solitude.

When the year of trial and self-examination was passed, they were again, under the new moon, admitted into the Order, this time as <sup>real</sup> members, and initiated into the higher science.

When they had given a full account of their conduct during the preceding year, and acted in obedience to all the rules of the order, and performed the ceremonies of singing and prayer and partaking of the feast of love, they were conducted to the secret chamber of worship, and there they were instructed and admonished to search the Scriptures.

Inasmuch as the rules of our Order permit the admitted member either to

remain with the Brotherhood in secret labor and fellowship, or go out into the world to teach or heal, according to his election, so Jesus chose to go forth teaching while John chose to become a "terapeut", or elder.

Jesus felt himself called by the spirit of God, and longed to preach the doctrines of our Order to the people.

Thus it came to pass that John returned to Jutha, to live in solitude in the wilderness, and Jesus returned to Nazareth.

Here he proved gloriously his virtue, and fulfilled his vow to the Order. His friend Lazarus had a sister Mary, who loved Jesus; and he, in his heart, returned her love.

But, according to the rules of our Order, an Esseen is not allowed to take unto himself a wife after his own desire, lest the sacred work be thereby retarded.

And so it was that Jesus overcame his love for this woman by his dutiful devotion to unselfish service of the Brotherhood. But the struggle was hard, and at the hour of their parting both Jesus and Mary wept bitterly.

I have informed you of all these things, my Brethren, that you shall indeed know that Jesus was our Brother, and belonged to our Holy Order.

Thus all doubts and uncertainties on this matter must be ended Jesus, our Brother, willingly suffered death that he might thereby glorify the doctrines of our order; and the greatest reward to our virtue is that we may, in like manner, be allowed to sacrifice ourselves for it.

You have heard the accounts which the Jews and his disciples have given concerning him, that they have seen him in the mountains and on the road after they believed him to be dead

The divine providence has given us a minute knowledge of these events that is hidden from the people, and it is our duty to inform you of the facts in reply to your questions relative thereto.

Even as I write this, my eyes overflow with tears, and I seem to see our Brother in the midst of his torture and in the anguish of death; and my afflicted mind is anew wounded by the recollection of his majestic courage

and self-sacrifice.

He was sent of God, chosen by the Almighty, beloved of us all, and inspired both in teaching and in the knowledge of nature and its elements.

Hear then, my Brethren, what occurred in Jerusalem seven passovers ago. I have seen it all with my own eyes, and with my lips I have kept it a secret, that the world should not know it; for the Jews and the heathen believe only in the things they have seen with their eyes. And so they have no faith in God beyond that which they can conceive with their senses.

Therefore, my dear Brethren, you should give praise to God that it has thus come to pass. We have kept these things a secret from the people, lest their belief in providence should be diminished. For you know there are many pious and excellent men who have recorded and remembered the life and death of Jesus, but have them only from rumours, augmented and corrupted by superstition and from reverence and piety they believe what they hear of a beloved Master.

It was even so with those, chosen from among the people, who were called disciples of Jesus. Most of them have heard the story of his life and death only through tradition, as it has been told from man to man; although there were others who were present; but these have given no information concerning these important events.

In secrecy I will now inform you of what I and our Brotherhood in Jerusalem have seen and witnessed; and you know that an Esseer never permits aught to pass his lips save the strictest truth. Every man who has the gift of speech should magnify God, and give manifestation of him, even as God has given unto him a tongue in his mouth.

We might indeed have saved our beloved Brother from the vengeance of his enemies, if everything had not come to pass so quickly, and if our laws had not prohibited us from interfering in public matters.

Nevertheless, we have saved him in secret, fulfilled his divine mission in the sight of the entire universe. Indeed that a man die for his faith does not increase the glory of God; but that he, full of devotion and divine confidence, suffer himself to be subjected to martyrdom for his faith; and this resolution, firmly fixed in mind, constitutes the fulfilment of our work in the sight of the world.

Therefore, pay good heed to what I now tell you, that you may Judge for yourselves of the rumors that have reached you hence and from Rome!

(Here is a large vacant place in the document, caused by the destroying influence of time, the deciphering of which is not possible from the still existing remains.)

The procession in which was the doomed Jesus and the two thieves, wound its way out of the entrance to the valley that leads from Jerusalem to Golgotha, the place of execution.

The women cried loudly when they beheld Jesus almost sinking down under the weight of the cross, and his wounds, from the scourging he had undergone, bleeding profusely.

Having arrived at the barren mountain ridge 'Gileon', where nothing grows, and which lay on the north side, through which the lonely valley of death winds its way, they halted, and Jesus fell to the ground, his tortured body losing all its strength.

Meanwhile the Roman soldiers were selecting places for erecting the crosses. This done, they desired to prove their sympathy with the sufferers by giving to them a drink that made them unconscious, according to the custom before crucifixion. This drink was made from sour wine mixed with wormwood, and was called "Toska".

But Jesus did not wish to die for his faith and the truth as a drunkard wherefore he refused to drink of it, having knowledge, from our Order, of the qualities of the mixture, which he knew by testing it.

And the crosses being erected, the time was now come when the punishment was to be inflicted on Jesus. The first ceremony was to tear his clothes from his body. But in order that this might be done it was necessary to divest him of the soldier's mantle that he wore after scourging, and put on him his own clothes, which latter were then torn off his body as the law requires.

At the request of the servants of Sanhedrim, the cross designed for Jesus was placed in the middle, between those for the two thieves, thereby denoting that his was the greatest crime. They had even distinguished his cross from the others, for although they commonly were constructed in such

a manner that the perpendicular beam did not reach above the cross beam; his was of different form, the perpendicular beam reaching far above the cross beam.

They then laid hold of Jesus, and, lifting him up, placed him on ' the short stake which is always put in front of each cross that the body of the criminal may rest there while being tied. They tied the arms as usual with strong cords, and so tightly that all the blood went back to the heart, and breathing was thereby made difficult.

In the same manner they tied his feet, and half way up his legs with strong cords which also drove the circulating blood back to the heart.

After this they drove through his hands thick iron nails, but none through his feet, for this was not "customary, i note this particularly, my dear Brethren, in as much as it has been rumored that he was nailed through both his hands and his feet.

Thus Jesus hung, exposed to untold sufferings, in the heat of the sun, which on that day was extreme and fatiguing, while the soldiers took possession of his clothes, according to the custom. The cloak they cut into four parts; but the tunic was woven, and could not be torn asunder wherefore they cast lots for it.

After the noonday when the sun had turned, there came throngs of people from the city, drawn thither by curiosity; and there were several priests present, gloating over their sinful vengeance. They derided him, bowed down as he was with grief and pain, and exhorted the people to mock him. Jesus suffered quietly, directing his gaze to the sky. He heard not the women of his tribe from Galilee, who were standing some distance away wringing their hands and lamenting his, as they thought, untimely death.

These sounds of anguish and lamentation were drowned by the noise of horsemen advancing to the scene. This was the high priest 'Caiasphas" with a large escort of servants, who came to mock and deride the crucified son of God. And even one of the crucified thieves joined with them in deriding him, for he had secretly hoped that Jesus would have delivered both himself and them through a miracle.

Now the Romans, in derision of the Jews, had fixed a tablet or place on

the cross, over his head, whereon in four different languages they designated him 'King of the Jews'. This deeply angered the priests, but, inasmuch as they feared Pilate, they exhausted their wrath by mocking Jesus.

Darkness descended over the earth, and the people returned to Jerusalem. But Jesus' disciples, his friends and the elders of our holy Order remained on Golgotha, our Order having nearby a colony for worship and for partaking of our feat of love.

And Jesus recognized his mother among the weeping women from Galilee, standing close by the silent John (the Evangelist). Jesus called out loudly, in the anguish of his pain citing the twenty second Psalm, praying God thereby to deliver him from his sufferings.

There were still a few Pharisees remaining on the mountain, who intended mocking him, because they had expected and hoped that Jesus would descend from the cross, "the worldly savior of the people"; and as this had not come to pass, they felt themselves deceived and were therefore angry.

The heat grew steadily more intense, more unendurable, and a fire was forming in the earth and air, such as is essential to the purification of the elements. The Esseen brethren, through their knowledge of nature and its elements, knew that an earthquake was coming, as had formerly occurred in the days of our forefathers.

As the night approached the earth began a terrible shaking, and the Roman Centurion became so terrified that he prayed to his heathen gods. He believed that Jesus was beloved by the gods. Most of the I frightened people hastily departed from the place and returned to Jerusalem; and the Centurion, who was a noble man of compassionate nature, permitted John to conduct the mother of Jesus close to the cross.

Jesus was consumed with thirst. His lips were parched and dry, and the pain was burning in his limbs. A soldier put a sponge dipped in vinegar on a long cane of hyssop, and from this Jesus quenched his thirst.

As he recommended his mother to the care of John, it was growing darker, although the full moon should have been shining in the heavens. From the Dead Sea was observed to rise a thick, reddish fog. The mountain

ridges round about Jerusalem shook violently, and the head of Jesus sank down upon his breast.

When he uttered his last groan of anguish and pain, and passed away, a hissing sound was heard in the air; and they of the Jews that still remained were seized by a great fear, for they believed that the evil spirits who dwell between heaven and earth were proceeding to punish the people. It was that strange and unusual sound in the air that proceeds an earthquake.

Soon the mountain began to shake, the surrounding country and the city commenced to rock and the thick walls of the temple gave way until the veil in the temple parted and fell from its place. Even the rocks burst asunder, and the hewn sepulchers in the rock were destroyed, as were also many of the corpses kept therein.

And as the Jews regarded all this as extremely supernatural, so the Roman Centurion believed now in the divinity and innocence of Christ, and comforted his mother.

Although our brethren did not dare to tell the people as it is a secret with us, nevertheless they well knew the cause of this phenomenon of nature, and believed in their Brother without ascribing to him supernatural powers.

Dear Brethren, you have reproached us, in that we did not save our Friend from the cross by secret means. But I need only to remind you that the sacred law of our Order prohibits us from proceeding publicly, and from interfering in matters of state. Moreover, two of our Brethren, influential and experienced, did use all their influence with Pilate and the Jewish council in behalf of Jesus, but their efforts were frustrated in that Jesus himself requested that he might be permitted to suffer death for his faith, and thus fulfil the law; for, as you know, to die for truth and virtue is the greatest sacrifice a Brother can make.

There was a certain Joseph, from Arimathea. He was rich, and being a member of the council, he was much esteemed by the people. He was a prudent man and whilst he did not appear to belong to any party, he was secretly a member of our sacred Order and lived in accordance with our laws. His friend Nicodemus was a most learned man, and belonged to the highest degree of our Order. He knew the secrets of the "Terapeuts", and was often together with us.

Now it so happened that after the earthquake, and many of the people had gone away, Joseph and Nicodemus arrived at the cross. They were informed of the death of the crucified, in the garden of our Brethren, not far from Calvary.

Although they loudly lamented his fate, it nevertheless appeared strange to them that Jesus, having hung less than seven hours, should already be dead. They could not believe it, and hastily went up to the place. There they found John alone, he having determined to see what became of the beloved body.

Joseph and Nicodemus examined the body of Jesus, and Nicodemus, greatly moved, drew Joseph aside and said to him: "As sure as is my knowledge of life and nature, so sure is it possible to save him".

But Joseph did not understand him, and he admonished us that we should not tell John of what we had heard. Indeed, it was a secret which was to save our Brother from death.

Nicodemus shouted: "We must immediately have the body with its bones unbroken, because he may still be saved"; then, realizing his want of caution, he continued in a whisper, "saved from being infamously buried".

He persuaded Joseph to disregard his own interest, that he might save their Friend by going immediately to Pilatus, and prevailing upon him to permit them to take Jesus' body from the cross that very night and put it in the sepulcher, hewn in the rock close by, and which belonged to Joseph.

I, understanding what he meant, remained with John to watch the cross and prevent the soldiers from breaking the bones of Jesus.

No corpse is allowed to remain on the cross over night and the next day being Sunday, they would now take him down and bury him early.

The Jewish council had already demanded of Pilate on order to the soldiers to break the bones of the crucified, that they might be buried.

Soon after Joseph and Nicodemus had departed, each one on his sacred mission, a messenger arrived bringing the order to the Centurion to take down the corpses and bury them. I myself was greatly agitated by this information, for I knew if he were not handled with great care he could not

be saved, and still less if his bones were to be broken.

Even John was dismayed, though not from fear of the plans being frustrated, for of these he did not know; but he was deeply grieved at the thought of seeing the body of his friend mutilated. For John believed that Jesus was dead.

As the messenger arrived I hastened to him, thinking and hoping that Joseph already might have seen Pilate, a thing of which there in reality was no possibility.

"Does Pilate send you?" I asked of him.

And he answered, "I come not from Pilate, but from his Secretary; who acts for the governor in such unimportant matters."

The Centurion, observing my anxiety, looked at me, and in the manner of a friend I said to him: "you have seen that this man that is crucified is an uncommon man. Do not maltreat him, for a rich man I among the people is now with Pilate to offer him money for the corpse, I that he may give it decent burial".

My dear Brethren, I must here inform you that Pilate often did sell the bodies of the crucified to their friends, that they might thus bury them.

And the Centurion was friendly to me, inasmuch as he had conceived from the events that Jesus was an innocent man And therefore, when the two thieves were beaten by the soldiers with heavy clubs and their bones broken, the Centurion went past the cross of Jesus, saying to the soldiers: 'Do not break his bones, for he is dead'.

And a man was seen rapidly approaching along the road from the castle of Antonia to Calvary. He advanced to the Centurion and brought to him the order that he should quickly come to Pilate.

The Centurion then questioned the messenger to learn what Pilate wanted of him at so late an hour of the night. The messenger answered, that Pilate desired to know if Jesus was indeed dead.

"So he is," said the Centurion: "therefore we have not broken his bones".

To be the more sure of it, one of the soldiers stuck his spear into the body in such manner that it passed over the hip and into the side. The body showed no convulsions, and this was taken by the Centurion as a sure sign that he actually was dead; and he hurriedly went away to make his report.

But from the insignificant wound flowed blood and water, at which John wondered, and my own hope revived. For even John knew from the knowledge of our Brother-hood, that from a wound in a dead body flows nothing but a few drops of thickened blood, but now there flowed both water and blood.

I was deeply anxious that Joseph and Nicodemus should return. At last some Galilean women were seen approaching on their return from Bethania, whither they had brought Mary, the mother of Jesus, in the care of the Esseen friends.

And among the women was also Mary, the sister of Lazarus, who had loved Jesus, and she wept loudly. But before she could pour out her grief, and while John was gazing intently at the wound in Jesus' side, heeding naught else, Joseph and Nicodemus returned in great haste. Joseph through his dignity had moved Pilate, and Pilate, having received information as to the dead of the crucified, gave the body to Joseph, and without taking pay therefore.

For Pilate had a great reverence for Joseph and secretly repented of the execution. When Nicodemus saw the wound, flowing with water and blood, his eyes were animated with new hope, and he spoke encouragingly, foreseeing what was to happen.

He drew Joseph aside to where I stood, some distance from John, and spoke in a low, hurried tone: "Dear friends, be of good cheer, V and let us to work. Jesus is not dead. He seems so only because his strength is gone '.

"While Joseph was with Pilate I hurried over to our colony and fetched the herbs that are useful in such cases. But I admonish you that you tell not John that we hope to reanimate the body of Jesus, lest he could not conceal his great joy. And dangerous indeed would it be if the people should come to know it, for our enemies would then put us all to death with him".

After this they hurried to the cross, and according to the prescriptions of the medical art, they slowly untied his bonds, drew the spikes out from his

hands, and with great care laid him on the ground.

Thereupon, Nicodemus spread strong spices and healing salves on long pieces of "byssus" which he had brought, and whose use was known only in our Order.

These he wound about Jesus' body, pretending that he did so to keep the body from decaying until after the feast, when he would then embalm it.

These spices and salves had great healing powers, and were used by our Esseer Brethren who knew the rules of medical science for - the restoration to consciousness of those in a state of death-like fainting. And even as Joseph and Nicodemus were bending over his face and their tears fell upon him, they blew into him their own breath, and warmed his temples.

Still Joseph was doubtful of his recovery to life, but Nicodemus encouraged him to increase their efforts. Nicodemus spread balsam in both the nail-pierced hands, but he believed that it was not best to close up the wound in Jesus' side, because he considered the flow of blood and water therefrom helpful to respiration and beneficial in the renewing of life.

In the midst of his grief and sorrow, John did not believe that life would return to the body of his friend, and he did not hope to see him again until they should meet in "School".

The body was then laid in the sepulcher made in the rocks, which belonged to Joseph. They then smoked the grotto with aloe and other strengthening herbs, and while the body lay upon the bed of moss, still stiff and inanimate, they placed a large stone in front of the entrance, that the vapors might better fill the grotto.

This done, John, with some others, went to Bethania, to comfort his grief-stricken mother.

But Caiaphas, although it was the Sabbath day, had sent out his secret spies. He was anxious to know who were the secret friends of Jesus. His suspicions had fallen upon Pilate because of his having given Joseph of Arimathea the body without any pay, he being rich, a Rabbi and member of the high council, who never had appeared to take any interest in the case of Jesus previously, but who now had given his own place of burial for the crucified.

And so it was that Caia had anticipated secret plans between the rich Joseph and the Galileans, and knowing that they intended to embalm the body, he hoped there to watch them, as the idea had occurred to him that Joseph and Pilate were plotting against the Jews.

Fear of this caused him great anxiety, and for this reason he hoped to discover some secret means of accusing Joseph and having him thrown into prison. He betrayed this fact himself by sending late in the night a number of his armed servants to an obscure valley close by the grotto in which lay the body of Jesus. Some distance from them was stationed a detachment of the temple guard, to assist the servants of the high priest, if necessary.

But the rumor has told you that this guard were Roman soldiers, which was not the case. The high-priest even distrusted Pilate.

Meanwhile Nicodemus had hastened with me to our brethren, and the oldest and wisest came to confer as to the best means of restoring Jesus to life. And the brethren agreed immediately to send a guard to the grove. Joseph and Nicodemus hurried to the city, there to fulfil their further mission.

After midnight, and towards morning, the earth again commenced to shake, and the air became very oppressive. The rocks shook and cracked. Red flames burst forth from the crevices, illuminating the red mists of the morning.

This was, indeed, a dreadful night. Beasts, horrified by the earthquake, ran howling and crying in every direction. Through the narrow opening the little lamp in the grotto threw trembling shadows into the horrible night, and the servants of the high-priest were full of fear, listening to the hissing in the air and the roaring and rumbling in the earth.

One of our brethren went to the grave, in obedience to the order of the Brotherhood, dressed in the white robe of the fourth degree. He went by way of a secret path which ran through the mountain to the grave, and which was known only to the Order.

When the timid servants of the high-priest saw the white-robed Brother on the mountain slowly approaching, and partially obscured by the morning mist, they were seized with a great fear and they thought that an angel was

descending from the mountain. When this Brother arrived at the grave which he was to guard, he rested on the stone which he had pulled from the entrance according to his orders; whereupon the soldiers fled and spread the report that an angel had driven them away.

When the Esseen youth had set himself down upon the stone, there came a new earth-shock, and a draft of air passing down the grotto blew out the lamp and gave place for the morning light.

Thirty hours had now passed since the assumed death of Jesus. And when the Brother, having heard a slight noise within the grotto went in to observe what had happened, he smelled a strange odor in the air, such a smell often occurs when the earth is about to vomit forth fire.

And the youth observed with inexpressible joy that the lips of the body moved, and that it breathed. He at once hastened to Jesus to assist him, and heard slight sounds rising from his breast. The face assumed a living appearance, and the eyes opened and in astonishment gazed at the novice of our Order.

This occurred just as I was leaving with the brethren of the first degree, from the council, with Joseph, who had come to consult how to bring help.

Nicodemus, who was an experienced physician, said, on the way, that the peculiar condition of the atmosphere caused by the revolution of the elements was beneficial to Jesus and that he never had believed that Jesus really was dead. And he further said that the blood and water which flowed from the wound was a sure sign that life was not extinct.

Conversing thus, we arrived at the grotto, Joseph and Nicodemus going before. We were in all twenty-four brethren of the first degree.

Entering, we perceived the white-robed novice kneeling upon the moss-strewn floor of the grotto, supporting the head of the revived Jesus on his breast.

And as Jesus recognized his Esseen friends, his eyes sparkled with joy; his cheeks were tinted with a faint red, and he sat up, asking: "Where am I?"

Then Joseph embraced him, folded him in his arms, told him how it all had come to pass, and how he was saved from actual death by a profound

fainting fit, which the soldiers on Calvary had thought was death.

And Jesus wondered, and fell on himself; and, praising God. He wept on the breast of Joseph. Then Nicodemus urged his friend to take some refreshments, and he ate some dates and some bread dipped in honey. And Nicodemus gave wine to drink, after which Jesus was greatly refreshed, so that he raised himself up.

Then it was that he became conscious of the wounds in his hands and in his side. But the balsam which Nicodemus had spread upon them had a soothing effect, and they had already commenced to heal.

After the "byssus" wrappings had been taken off and the muckender was removed from his head, Joseph spoke and said: "This is not a place in which to remain longer, for here the enemies might I easily discover our secret, and betray us".

But Jesus was not yet strong enough to walk far, wherefore he was conducted to the house belonging to our Order, that is close by Calvary, in the garden, which also belongs to our brethren.

Another young brother of our Order was dispatched at once to assist the novice who had been watching by the grave of Jesus, to annihilate every trace of the byssus wrappings and the medicines and drugs used.

When Jesus arrived at the house of our brethren he was faint and weak. His wounds had begun to cause him pain. He was much moved, in that he considered it all as a miracle.

"God has let me rise", he said, "that he may prove in me that which I have taught, and I will show my disciples that I do live".

And after a little while the two young men who had gone to put the grave in order, came hurriedly back and brought the message that the friends of Jesus soon would come to seek him.

And they related how they had heard a noise, when at work in the grotto, as of many people coming to the fence that surrounds the garden. When they had retired yet further into the grotto, there came a woman on the road from Jerusalem. And when she saw that the stone had been rolled away from the grave she manifested great fear. She thought that something had

happened to the body, and hurried away to Bethlehem.

But soon thereafter other women came from Jerusalem, and approached the grave. Wondering greatly, they had entered the grave, and one of them, on looking for the body in the place where it had lain, beheld our Brother, and in terror pointed him out to her companions. When the other Brother also came in view, the women fell upon their faces, and thought they had beheld angels.

And the brethren spoke to them as they had been ordered by those of the first degree, and one of them said to the women, "Jesus is risen. Do not look for him here. Say to his disciples that they will find him in Galilee". And the other told them to gather the disciples and conduct them to Galilee.

This was devised by the wisdom of Joseph, he would not that they should look for Jesus at Jerusalem, for his safety's sake, and the brethren went out of the cavern by the rear entrance, and observed that some of the women hastened on the road to Bethania, whereupon the young Brother hurried to us in the house to tell us of what had come to pass.

Thus the Esseen friends pleaded with Jesus to remain in concealment, for his safety's sake, and to recover his strength. But Jesus was moved by a great desire to prove to his friends that he still lived. Impelled by this desire, and feeling himself refreshed and strengthened, he asked for clothes, that he might go forth among his friends. He was immediately clothed in the Esseer working garb, such as our brethren wear when at work. In this dress he appeared as a gardener,

In the meantime the two young Brothers had gone again to grave, as their work there was not yet completed. While there, they saw the same woman return who came first to the grave, as John and Peter meanwhile had made known among the disciples what had come to pass.

This woman, thus returning to the grave, thought the two novices were angels guarding the empty grave, and she wept

One of the novices, of kindly disposition, in a gentle and soothing voice spoke to the woman and asked her why she wept. This woman was Mary, whom Jesus had loved, and had been obliged to leave in accordance with the laws of our holy Brotherhood.

And as she was lamenting that Jesus did not lie where he had been placed before the Sabbath, Jesus stood behind her dressed in the garb of a gardener.

Animated by the desire to see again those he loved, and to proclaim to them that he still lived, he had disregarded the advice of the brethren that he remain in concealment, and; leaving the house, he had taken the path through the garden to the rock where the grave was hewn.

When Mary saw him she thought him to be the gardener. But Jesus knew her, and rejoicing in her love he spoke to her Still in his weak and suffering condition, she did not know him. But when he exclaimed, 'O Mary!' she knew him and longed to kiss his feet and there after embrace him.

But Jesus, feeling the pain in his hands and side, feared to embrace her lest he might thereby injure his wounds. He therefore moved back from her as she approached, and said:

"Touch me not. Though I still live, yet soon shall I go to my Father I in heaven, for my body is become feeble and soon shall be dissolved, j that my death may be fulfilled".

As the woman knelt down, and with great excitement fixed her eyes upon him, Jesus heard the sound of approaching footsteps, and, careful for his safety, hastened back, placing himself behind the garden wall not far from the garden of our friends.

And the two youths who were charged to guard the grave, and who had been instructed to thwart the enemies' spies who were seeking to find Jesus, had seen and heard all this.

Meanwhile Joseph, Nicodemus and the other brethren had come from the house into the garden to look after Jesus and take due care that he was not in peril because of his great weakness. This Nicodemus feared inasmuch as he had seen that the wounds were more inflamed and the flesh where the strong cords had been was now of dark color.

When we had arrived at the entrance of the garden we beheld Jesus standing behind the wall and resting against it as if he could go no further.

It was about this time that John hastened from the city, and looking into the grotto had found it vacant. For the two youths had made their way to our garden through the secret entrance to the grotto.

Peter also arrived, and both together searched throughout the grotto for signs of the body. Entering the inner part of the grotto they found the muckender where the novices had thrown it, whence they had fled at the arrival of these two strange persons.

In earnest conversations the two disciples hurried back into the city.

And Jesus had slowly walked along the wall until he had reached the little gate that opens to the valley of mount "Gihon". There he listened to the conversation of some women outside the wall. When he came forth and the women had beheld him they believed that they had seen an apparition. But Jesus spoke to them in order that they might know that it was indeed himself.

And inasmuch as the youth in the grove had said to the women that in Galilee they should see him, one of them remembered this and said to him: Lord, shall we obey the word of the angel, and see thee again in Galilee?"

This question astonished Jesus, for he did not know that the brethren had instructed the novice to mention that part of the country. But after consideration he answered her and said: "Yes, inform my friends and tell them that I go to Galilee and there you shall see me".

His weakness being increased, he desired to be left alone, and the women departed. And then it was that we, his secret protectors, went to him and conducted him back to the house that he might there rest and be refreshed.

Nicodemus again tied up his wounds, gave him a medical draught and admonished him to rest himself in quiet. But Jesus feared not death, and was buoyant of spirit, nevertheless his strength was gone, and he soon fell into a profound sleep, where upon Joseph, Nicodemus and the brethren counselled together as to how they might care for his safety. For this purpose they sent some of the brethren into the city that they might learn the rumors of Jesus among the people.

And strangely the rumors had told of many miracles in the city. The

fleeing guards having tried to conceal their cowardly fear, had circulated reports of terrible events that had burst upon the grave.

And the high-priest had been told of these things, and he knew not what to think. He feared lest the miracle would excite the people, for the women, and even the men, had been too excited thereby to keep it a secret, and the people already were busy discussing the subject.

Therefore, Caiphas gave the guard money, that they should report that his friends had stolen the corpse, that they (the disciples) ^ might say he was risen and thus delude the people.

And all day Jesus remained in his profound slumber, and was thereby filled with renewed life. It was evening when he awakened. His wounds were now less painful, inasmuch as the balsam which Nicodemus applied had produced a soothing effect. He was in good spirit, and with thankful heart he saw that his friends watched over him. Without assistance he rose from his couch, and, being hungry, asked that he might have food.

Having refreshed himself, he said:

"Now that I am strong again it behooves me that I no longer remain in concealment. For a teacher should be among his people, and a son embrace his mother".

Joseph answered him and said: "The Brotherhood is father and mother to thee now, according to its promise to thee, and it is therefore the duty of the Brotherhood to protect thee as its beloved child'

And Jesus said: "I fear not death, for I have fulfilled it, and the enemies shall acknowledge that God has saved me, and wills not that I die eternally".

Then one of the elders of the Brother-hood said: "Thou art not safe in this country, for they will search after thee Do not, therefore, go any more among the people to teach, for what thou hast taught will live among thy friends forever, and thy disciples will publish it to the world. Remain. I pray thee, dead to the world. The Brotherhood has brought thee back to life through its secrets, therefore life henceforth for our holy Order to which thou art bound. Live in the seclusion of wisdom and virtue, unknown to the world. We will secretly teach and assist the disciples among the people, and

they shall receive encouragement and help from the holy Brotherhood. And if the time shall come when thou shouldst again go out among the people, we will send for thee and inform thee".

But Jesus, in the ardor of his sacred enthusiasm, said. "The voice of God is more powerful within me than is the fear of death. I will see my disciples once more, and will go to Galilee".

Then the elder said: "Be it so, as God has called you; but it behooves men that they be wise and cautious in good thing. Therefore some of our brethren shall go with thee, and protect thee through the power of our connections in Galilee".

But Nicodemus did not approve of this journey, for he knew that the body of Jesus was weakened, though his soul was strong in its courage. And the faithful physician therefore entreated him not to go lest he thereby make impossible his recovery.

But Jesus answered: "Be it fulfilled that is to be". And Joseph wondered greatly at the spirit of Jesus, and more than ever believed in his great promises.

When evening had come, Jesus started on his journey, and he wished to go alone. It being cold, the brethren gave him a warm mantle in which he wrapped himself that the officers of the city might not recognize him.

And the brethren admonished him to stop only with the Esseen friends, and because of the feast not to travel on the highway. Therefore Jesus was persuaded to go by the way of Bethania and the Ephraimitical mountain, Samaria borders on Upper Galilee to the north,

Jesus went forth upon his journey, and when he was gone the brethren blessed his undertaking; but, advised by Joseph, they sent a novice to follow him and on the way secretly inform the Esseen friends.

Of all that has come to pass our friends have kept us fully informed.

While Jesus was journeying on the road to Emma us, a few hours' travel hence, his soul was filled with inspirations over the new life, and he spoke in a loud voice, so that our messenger could hear that it was of the prophecies of Daniel he was speaking.

Two men were travelling the same road from Jerusalem, and as they walked more rapidly than Jesus, they soon overtook him.

Jesus said to them: "peace be with you". At first he believed them to be Esseen friends, but soon thereafter he recognized them as two of his own friends from among the people, who often had heard him teach. They gave no heed to the quiet traveller. But he heard them speak of his death, and of the deep despair of his disciples. And from their words he conceived that his doctrine and his teachings were in danger of being destroyed and lost, by reason of the despair of his friends, who were without a leader to keep them from being scattered.

When one of these travellers lamented that the prophecy had not been fulfilled and that Jesus had not risen from the dead. Jesus spoke with ardor, and the two disciples were greatly interested in what he said, for it appeared to them that they had heard the same teachings before.

At the place in their journey where the two disciples stopped they detained Jesus when he desired to go farther on alone and in the night time. And at the common feast of love, in the house where they had stopped, the two disciples recognized Jesus; but he did not wish to be known in this place. He therefore, unobserved, passed out through the door and went to the house of the Esseen friend to whom he had been recommended.

Meanwhile the two disciples retraced their steps to Jerusalem to carry to their friends there the news of the risen one. Here they found Peter, and with him John.

But the Esseen friends met together and counselled what they were further to do. There was with them also the youth that our Order had sent to follow Jesus.

And Jesus conceived that he immediately must return to Jerusalem to reanimate the hope of his friends and correct the report given out by the two disciples who so hurriedly had returned to Jerusalem.

The Esseen friend gave him a beast of burden that he might mount and thus travel the more easily, and the novice whom we had sent accompanied him and walked by the side of the animal.

And thus it came to pass that, soon after the arrival of the disciples, Jesus came to the well-known home where our friends used to meet together. Jesus gave the sign by which the bar fell from the door by the hand of the doorkeeper, for the disciples were then in secret council

When Jesus heard how his followers spoke of his resurrection and were considering if it were possible, he came forward among them, and as they did not know him at first, they were alarmed, not knowing that the door had been opened.

But Jesus spoke to them, comforted them, and proved to them that he was really flesh and bones. Thereupon they joyously surrounded him, touched his hands, and Jesus leaned upon the breast of John, being faint from the fatigue of journey.

After he had rested, Jesus still more fully proved to his friends that he lived as do other people, by asking for food. Inasmuch as the friends had already eaten, there was left some bread, honey and fish, of which he ate and refreshed himself.

Thereupon he admonished them that they fulfil the work he had undertaken and not give up but be of good cheer. And he blessed them and said to them that he could not disclose to them where he should go, and that he should go alone, but that when they should want him he would come to them, for he yet had much to say to them.

Outside the door the novice was waiting with the animal, and when Jesus came forth he directed the novice to conduct him to the quiet dwelling of the Esseers. But another Esseer youth had come to seek information of him in Jerusalem, and the two now carried Jesus between them, as he was still weak and faint from the fatigue he had endured on his journey.

After much effort and many difficulties they brought him in the night time to the Brotherhood, to the house of the elder, which is located a few stadis from Jerusalem and close by Olive Mountain.

Here Jesus was placed on a soft bed of moss, where he soon fell into a profound slumber. And the Esseer youths hastened to Joseph, Nicodemus and the other Esseer friends to inform them of what had occurred.

Before the dawning of day a council was held that they might further

protect Jesus, he having returned to Jerusalem so openly, for the sake of the holy Spirit that he might strengthen his followers in their work. And with one accord they determined that no time should be lost, the priests in the city having their secret spies who were trying even to entrap his disciples.

It was in council agreed that he immediately must depart hence, that he might not be discovered, and that he should return to the quiet valley not far distant from Jutha and the castle of Masseda, where there is a wild and mountainous country. Here Jesus had lived before, together with John the physician, with whom he was admitted to the holy order of our Brethren. This was considered also a safe place in that many Esseens lived there.

While they yet were in council considering, Jesus awoke from his refreshing slumbers, and wondered greatly to see that he was surrounded by his brethren. But Joseph and Nicodemus beseeched him that he save himself and not again permit himself to fall into the power of the priests. Joseph even told him that it had come to him that Caiaphas had fixed his suspicions upon him that he, with the Galileans, formed a secret plot to overthrow the present condition of things, and that Caiaphas would demand of him an explanation why he had laid Jesus in his own tomb.

He had suspicion even on Pilate that he had secretly contrived with me, because that he had given the supposed corpse to me without receiving pay therefor.

And as Joseph persuaded Jesus, with much ardor, to comply with his wishes, and as all the elders supported him, Jesus answered:

Be it so; but I conjure you to encourage my disciples Help and protect them and tell them that they shall have no doubts, for I am with them still in body and spirit. '

And Joseph entreated him that he take further rest, as Nicodemus had expressed fear lest the excitement and enthusiasm of Jesus would endanger and not help his martyred body. For even if the wounds in his hands were beginning to heal, and the wound in his side emitted no more humor, his body was still weak and easily affected by the excitement of his mind. But, having slept, he for the immediate, present felt himself refreshed.

After further consideration Jesus said: "if my disciples are not convinced that: I really live, and if I do not go forth among them, they will think me an

apparition and a delusion of their imagination".

Joseph answered him and said : "Let us advance John to the higher degrees of our Order, that he may be convinced of thy living, and may execute thy directions and inform the other disciples concerning thee'.

But the elders of the brethren were not willing that John should be admitted all the secrets, inasmuch as he was yet only in the lowest degree, and they feared that in his ardor he might inform others that Jesus was here.

While they were yet in council considering, a novice of our Order arrived, who had been sent to the city. He reported that John, with his friends, had hastened to Bethania to comfort the women in Lazarus' house, and inform them that Jesus was yet alive and had rested upon his bosom.

And John had wondered that Jesus had not directed him to go to Galilee, as he had ordered the women to do. He did not think, therefore, that it was the intention of his Master, and that the disciples ought to wait for coming events.

And Jesus remained all that day with the Esseen friends; but when night came on we all departed by the secret road-Joseph, Nicodemus and the elders of the Order-and having passed the valley of Rephaim. we arrived at Masseda at the breaking of day; and following a narrow path known only to the Esseens, we came at last to the brethren in that wild valley.

Here the elder provided for Jesus. And when Joseph and we others were about to depart Jesus gave us his word that he would remain there until the Father should call him to fulfill his mission.

And each day the brethren sent a messenger to us to inform us of the health of our dearly beloved Brother. And we were told that Jesus had rested a number of days, but that his heart was sad and sorely afflicted with melancholy thoughts.

This was the same valley where he had wandered with John, his beloved companion, and with whom he had been initiated into our holy Order.

And Jesus meditated on that John who, as a physician, had founded a school and had baptized, had been slain by the enemies, while he had been saved by the hand of God, wherein he saw the command of God that he

should not rest, in that his body had been restored to him for some purpose.

By this thought his mind was oppressed and overwrought, and as he came to the place where he and John had solemnly vowed that they would die for truth and virtue, he felt that he was called to follow the mission in the cause of which his friend had died.

And Jesus went every day to this blessed spot and refreshed his body; viewing the splendors of nature. And he selected a place whence he could see the high tower of Masseda toward the west, shielded from the morning and the noonday sun by lofty mountains, whilst on the other side the view was unobstructed and he could see far away over an open country toward the sea and the valley of Sittim.

But the elder of the Brotherhood left him not alone, inasmuch as he had observed that Jesus often would lie in profound revery, and that the longing to be among his disciples would overcome all care for his own safety.

About this time it came to pass that our brethren of the Brotherhood in Jerusalem remembered the promise they had made to Jesus to protect his disciples and strengthen them in their belief in the resurrection of their Master. It had come to them that not all of the disciples were convinced of the resurrection of their Master. And one of them that doubted was Thomas, a deep thinker, who had received his education from the Esseen brethren. Because of this, he possessed profound knowledge in the secret powers and processes of nature. According to nature's laws he explained all the things that had come to pass, and he believed that there was no miracle, for, as an Esseen, he was raised above superstition.

Jesus confided in him and told him his mission, and Thomas believed in him and saw that his mission was one of great importance. This Jesus did in that Thomas was a man of clear vision and strong reason, excitement and passion, being unknown to him; and with patience and great perseverance he tried all things before his mind would be convinced.

And when the disciples were together in their secret place of meeting Thomas was with them, and he reasoned with them, not believing that a man can rise from the grave.

But John had himself and felt Jesus and held him on his breast. Nevertheless, Thomas would not be convinced, even though he believed in

the prophecies of the prophets and that they would surely be fulfilled.

For, dear Brethren, the Jews hoped to see the Messiahs come in the manner Elias had proclaimed.

And as our Brotherhood had promised to report all, especially as the disciples themselves did not agree, it was to be feared that their ardor in the good cause would diminish. We therefore, sent two youths to the valley at Masseda to inform the brethren that they might counsel with Jesus.

When Jesus heard these things his heart was filled with a great desire to leave the solitude, and show himself once more to his disciples.

And as the messenger had reported that Thomas would not believe that Jesus was still alive, except he could feel his hands and the wound in his side, Jesus no longer could restrain his desire, and even the elder counselled him to go and convince them.

This came to pass on the seventh day that Jesus had been in concealment.

And thus it happened that our brethren went with Jesus, and on the eighth day, when the disciples were together in Jerusalem, Jesus went forth among them, and Thomas was convinced.

Having accomplished this, Jesus spoke to his disciples and admonished them, for his own sake, that they were not safe, he also exhorted them to faith and to be of one accord. But he could not tell them when or where to meet him in Galilee, inasmuch as he had first to consider thereon.

After this he departed from them in the evening, and John went with him. And outside the house there was an Esseen youth who desired to commit himself to the service of Jesus. And Jesus sent him to report that he was in Bethania. Thereupon Jesus crossed Kidron with John as his companion. The night was beautiful and clear, and the moon shed a dim radiance over the scene.

At Gethsemane Jesus rested by the wall and spoke with John of his martyrdom and sufferings. Having received information of his disciples, he sent John forward to the house of Lazarus in Bethania, that he might announce his coming and learn if he there would be safe.

Immediately thereafter Jesus went into the house to see his mother and his friends.

After having thanked God that they were permitted once more to see each other, they ate and refreshed themselves together. On the following day he remained with them, comforting them and exhorting them that they believe in the truth He warned them of their false expectations, in that they had come to think that he would forever remain with them.

He told them that it now was time that he should go, as the night was at hand, he said to them that he would hasten to Galilee, there to strengthen his disciples that they persevere in the good work.

But even while Jesus was in Bethania dangers were threatening him. Caiaphas, the highpriest, had been informed that Jesus had been seen in Jerusalem. And he had spread the rumor that the disciples had stolen the body of Jesus, and had invented a miraculous story.

But there were many among the people in the city who believed that Jesus had risen by the hand of God, and these commenced to complain of the injustice done to him, and to believe in his doctrines.

And the high priest feared a revolution among the people, and believed that the Galileans were intending to overthrow the government, and set up a new ruler. He was, therefore, suspicious and watchful.

In the evening of the same day came Nicodemus to our Brotherhood and brought to us the information that Joseph of Arimathea had been arrested, and that they falsely attributed to him criminal purposes, in that he had been in secret association with Jesus. Whereupon great anxiety arose among our brethren, for we feared that also Jesus had been arrested, inasmuch as he had not been seen by any of us since the evening when he convinced Thomas.

Our elders thereupon met in council, wherein, it was agreed that we should search for Jesus, and use all efforts to liberate Joseph.

Two of our brethren were commissioned to array themselves in their white holiday garb and search for Jesus in Bethania, as Jesus had informed the Esseer youth that he would go thither.

And as they came to Bethania in the evening, & in the moonlight saw the house of Lazarus, not far distant, they met with a man on the secret road who carefully scanned the road. But the Esseens knew him, and they asked of him if Jesus was at his house. For this was Lazarus, and having recognized our Brethren, he acknowledged that it was even so, and that Jesus intended that very night to go to Bethania, and therefore he had examined the secret road to see if it were safe.

The brethren were conducted into the house. Here, in a small secluded room, they spoke with Jesus. And when the brethren had told Jesus of the arrest and danger of Joseph, Jesus recommended him to the protection of the Order, prayed to God, and thereafter sent John to Jerusalem that he might warn his disciples of their danger.

Having taken leave of women, we were accompanied by Lazarus as far as Gilgad. Thence he went further on alone in the night, and in the early morning he had come to the river Jordan, in the place where through John he was baptized by the Order.

Our holy Brotherhood in Jerusalem was now planning how to liberate Joseph, whereto we were in possession of many secret means.

And John had warned his friends, the disciples, as he had been ordered. And the next morning they went in great numbers to the borders of Galilee. Arriving there they asked, one from another:

"Whither shall we go? Our Master has fixed no time nor place".

And they thought of their homes from which, they had so long been separated, and as they were considering whether they would search for Jesus in Nazareth or in Capernaum, Peter said: "Let us provide for sustenance, and not be idle; but let us work till the master shall call us to a higher labor".

After hearing what Peter had said, they resolved to resume their former trades, and Peter repaired to Bethsaida, where some of the others also arrived before many days, to assist him and receive his counsel.

And Peter was a skilful fisherman, and he invited others to go with him to sea in the evening.

Jesus travelled each day but a short distance, and on the way stopped only with the Esseen friends who lived in the valleys. And these brethren were well informed by the Brotherhood in Jerusalem of all that happened to us, and from these Jesus learned that Joseph had been liberated from prison and was on the way to meet him.

And when Jesus declared that he would go forth in Galilee into the places where he had been known before, the Esseen friends entreated him that he should not do this, and explained the many dangers that were about him.

And Jesus heeded them, and reflected as to the place where he would meet with his disciples. And he selected a safe and lonely place where he was not known and where there was opportunity for his disciples to dwell.

But the Esseen friends had been advised by the leader of the Brotherhood in Jerusalem to choose for a place of meeting, the lonely valley at the foot of Mount Karmel, for the country is beautiful, and there live many Esseens. The valleys abound in powerful herbs, and the odors they give forth are healthful to the wanderer.

From this place our Brotherhood receives the herbs its physicians use in medicines. The clear water runs sparkling from the rocks. These rocks contain many caverns in which dwell they who seek the solitude.

And when the Esseen brethren advised Jesus to go to this country, he remembered how the prophets of old were said to have lived in the same places, Elias as well as Elisha.

And so it was that his mind was made up to go thither, for there he could teach his disciples without fear that his enemies would find his dwelling place, for in this country lived only members of our Order, our brethren.

But Jesus desired that none of the brethren should accompany him, and so he journeyed alone the road to Bethsaida, there to remain with Simon, who was one of his disciples.

Arriving In the early morning at the shore of the Sea of Galilee, he there found a hut which Peter had built for his own convenience in the pursuit of his trade, And he found there Peter, and with him John, and they were

fishing. Here Jesus refreshed himself, partaking with them of the feast of love. Here he learned that all the disciples had agreed to come together In Bethsaida that they might there counsel together what to do.

But Jesus called them to Mount Karmel, as he had promised the Esseens. And on the evening of the next day Jesus again pursued his journey.

Having rested and refreshed himself some days at the foot of Mount Karmel, Jesus was prepared to teach again. Here his disciples came, bringing with them many of his followers, for here in this lonely valley they were safe from danger, and the account of the resurrection of Jesus had created great excitement in Galilee.

But many of those who came were moved only by the spirit of wonder. They had come, therefore, to see Jesus do wonders and perform miracles. Others hoped for the coming of the new kingdom of Messias, and the deliverance of the Jews from the Romans.

Jesus was sorely grieved in his heart by these interpretations of his mission, for often had he spoken of these things, saying to his disciples that it was not meet that the Son of God should be clothed with worldly power and splendor.

But the Esseen brethren understood and did not share in these errors, for they well knew that according to the laws of the Order which he had vowed to keep, our brethren can take no part in matters of state, nor aspire to worldly power.

And the people, desiring much to see Jesus were informed by the disciples that the meeting would take place early in the morning.

Jesus descended from the summit of the mountain, where the fog assumed a reddish color from the sun. And because he wore the white robe of the Esseen Order, the people believed him to be a supernatural being, and they threw themselves down, with their faces to the ground. And many of the people were terrified, and drew aside out of his way.

And Jesus spoke with a loud voice, saying that he had not come to found a school, but the kingdom of God on earth, through wisdom and virtue.

And he instituted baptism, and disclosed to his disciples the knowledge

he had learned from the elders, how to heal the sick, determine the virtues of minerals and herbs as medicines, make harmless the savage beasts, counteract the destroying effects of poison, and many other things.

And the disciples and the people that had come with them remained many days in the valley, and Jesus taught them how they should live and preach the doctrine in his name.

But the Esseen brethren were informed by the elder of the Brotherhood in Jerusalem that the secret messengers of the priests and the grand council had been told of the excitement in Galilee, and that many people had repaired to the valley of Mount Karmel.

And the brethren warned Jesus of his danger that he might avoid his enemies and thus fulfil his mission. For they had been secretly informed that Caiaphas intended quietly to arrest and assassinate Jesus, in that he believed him to be a deceiver.

Jesus thereupon sent away his hearers and told them that if they would speak with him thereafter they must go thence to Bethabara, where he would await them.

Having spoken much to the people and taught them, he was weary and in need of rest.

And the time came when the Esseens partake of their feast of love. And all the brethren in the valley assembled in the house where Jesus dwelt. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus and we elders of the Brotherhood in Jerusalem departed to be together with him.

But Jesus was yet weak from his suffering, and his great joy at seeing again his beloved friends, Joseph and Nicodemus caused him great excitement. And he spoke much concerning his death.

‘Do not misapprehend me if I have not in everything lived according to the rules of our Brotherhood. For if I had labored in secret, as you have done, the truth would not now be known to the multitudes.’

"Even in public can the wise practice wisdom, the chosen virtue".

And Jesus exhorted the brethren to lay aside their secrecy and go forth

among the people, and unite with his disciples to teach together with them.

And the words he spoke took root in the hearts of many of the brethren, and therefore I now find many of them witness for Jesus, and have left their solitude.

And Joseph spoke to Jesus, saying:

"Knowest thou that the people who do not altogether understand your doctrine, are meditating to proclaim you a worldly king, to overthrow the Romans? But thou must not disturb the kingdom of- God through war and revolution. Therefore choose the solitude. Live with the Esseen friends and be in safety, that your doctrine may be proclaimed by your disciples".

But the elders of the Brotherhood were reflecting that it would cause great excitement among the people if Jesus were thus to disappear like the sun in the evening, and not reappear.

But Jesus feared that the words of Joseph might prove true, and he would not suffer that blood should flow for his sake, nor that revolution should cause destruction.

Therefore he consented that he would go into solitude, his body being very weak. And with Joseph and Nicodemus he went to Bethania. On the way they conversed together concerning the secrets of the Brotherhood; and Jesus desired to take leave of his friends in Bethania, and return to the lonely country near the Dead Sea.

In Bethania he comforted his mother, also the other friends of Lazarus, and explained to them that according to his doctrine he always was with them and remained with them.

But the knowledge that Jesus was in the vicinity of Jerusalem soon came to all his followers, and many came together and were directed to repair to a secret place at a fixed time. Thither now went Jesus.

And here many hundred people had come together, and as they made manifest their belief that Jesus would establish a worldly kingdom and liberate the land of his people from the yoke of the Romans, he instructed them and taught them that this would not come to pass.

But Jesus perceived that it was expedient that he should go away again into the solitude, that the people no more believe that his kingdom was of this world, but that they should believe in his words and his doctrines as the word of God.

That day it came to pass that Jesus went to Jerusalem, and his trusted disciples went with him.

But the high council already had sent out many secret messengers to circulate false rumours, and make Jesus a captive. But Jesus was warned and protected by the Esseen brethren, he was now both faint and weak. His wounds again began to pain him, and his face was pale.

When Jesus entered the city with Peter and John, his friends conducted him into a solitary house, here he called to him the elders of the Esseen Order.

He said to them that his time for rest was near at hand, and instructed them to wait for him at the "Olive Mount", and thence accompany him to the place of solitude.

Thereupon he gathered together his disciples, and went through the city and out of the gate that leads to the valley of Josaphat.

And his soul was greatly moved, and his heart was filled with sadness, for he knew that this would be his last walk.

Arriving at Kedron, he tarried for a little while and wept over Jerusalem. Thence he went onward in silence, and his disciples followed him.

And Jesus led them to the place most dear to him, near the summit of Mount Olives, where can be seen almost the whole of the land of Palestine, for Jesus longed once more to look upon the country where he had lived and worked.

To the east was seen Jordan, the Dead Sea and the Arabian Mountains; and to the west shone the fires from the Temple Rock, but on the other side of the mountain was Bethania.

And the chosen disciples believed that Jesus would lead them to Bethania. But the elders of the Brotherhood had silently come together on

the other side of the mountain, ready to travel waiting with Jesus, as had been agreed upon.

And he exhorted his disciples to be of good cheer, and firm in their faith. As he spoke his voice grew more and more melancholy, and his mind was absorbed in solemn transport.

He prayed for the friends he was about to leave, and lifting his arms he blessed them. And the mist rose around the mountain, tinted by the descending sun.

Then the elders of the Esseen Brotherhood sent word to Jesus that they were waiting, and that it was then already late.

As the disciples knelt down, their faces bent toward the ground, Jesus rose and hastily went away through the gathering mist. When the disciples rose there stood before them two of our brethren in the white garb of our Brotherhood, and they instructed them not to wait for Jesus, as he was gone, whereupon they hastened away down the mountain.

But the disappearance of Jesus filled his disciples with hope and confidence, for now they knew that they themselves were to proclaim the word of Jesus, as he, their beloved, would return no more.

Therefore faithfully they kept together and daily went to the temple and to the places where he had taught them, and the enemies dared not molest them.

But in the city there arose a rumor that Jesus was taken up in a cloud, and had gone to heaven. This was invented by the people who had not been present when Jesus departed. The disciples did not contradict this rumor, inasmuch as it served to strengthen their doctrine, and influenced the people who wanted a miracle in order to believe in him.

John who was present, knew all of these things, but he had not spoken nor written anything about it. Likewise Matthew. There are others who have gathered the rumors thereof into an illustration, which they believed themselves, as they were moved by the spirit to glorify Jesus.

Thus, one of them named Marcus wrote to congregation in Rome and gave an account to this event, but inasmuch as he had not been present, his source of information was only the rumours among the people.

Even thus is it with Lucks, who tried to do the same. The disciples were advised by the Esseen brethren to assume the customs and manners of the Esseens for the sake of unanimity. Therefore they formed a society wherein even the women took an officious part, especially Mary and her friends from Galilee.

But Jesus was accompanied on his way by the elders of the Brotherhood, likewise by Joseph and Nicodemus; and in the night time they procured a beast of burden for Jesus, who grew more faint. His mind was greatly moved leaving his friends, and he felt that his death would soon come.

When at the end of their journey, they had come to the Esseen brethren by the Dead Sea, Jesus was in deep suffering, so that only the physicians could care for him. Joseph and Nicodemus remained with him, and having heard his wishes in lengthy conversations, they took leave of him, promising to inform him minutely concerning the affairs of the congregation in Jerusalem.

But in Jerusalem none save John and Matthew knew that Jesus had returned to the solitude of the Order, that the people might not proclaim him their worldly king.

But Joseph and Nicodemus had three times been with him in his place of concealment. And on their return they informed us of him. But his body was not vigorous enough to overcome the suffering he had endured for want of rest.

His soul longed for his disciples, and he was anxious that nothing should be neglected. His restless mind found no consolation in the solitude, and anxiety consumed his vital powers.

But Joseph and Nicodemus had been with him the last time when the sixth full moon was waning, and they came to our Brotherhood as we were preparing to partake of the feast of love, and revealed the secret to the elders of the order.

And their hearts were sorely grieved, for the chosen one was taken into the heavenly dwellings of the Father.

The Eternal Spirit had gently burst the clay, and tranquil as his life was

his death.

And he was buried by the physician close by the Dead Sea, as bid the regulations of our brotherhood.

But Nicodemus enjoined silence concerning the death of his friend, to all who did not belong to the highest degree.

Here, my dear brethren, you have the only true account of our friend whom God had called to teach wisdom and virtue to the people through parables and noble deeds.

It is now a long time since then, and the Jews have seven times eaten the passover when I now write this for you information. And thus you may judge of the truth of the tradition as it is told by the people

For I know that many of his new disciples tell of miracles, even as they themselves have wished it might be. And the thoughtful do not contradict them, for the people are not yet wise enough to receive the truth without adding to it that which is supernatural.

As you yourself have conceived, there are many rumors come from Rome that I need not contradict, for you know yourself that a Brother of our Order has to do and not to do.

But not only the Jews tell of superhuman things concerning him that they believe, but also the Romans; for the pagans believe in gods, and these are identified with the miracles told by the Jews.

And I give you the authority to inform the elders of our Brotherhood in your country, what I have written to you, but not the novices nor those of the other degrees. For his is the glory, the son of God, whom we all worship more than the others who are removed to heaven.

And what Jesus has taught while he lived we ought to promote with good-will. For he has explained the doctrine minutely to everyone He has revealed the secret, therefore receive everyone friendly who is called by his name; for his disciples will go to all countries, and you will know them by their greeting, which is the same as that of our Order. And you ought to help them as our Brotherhood in Jerusalem and the whole country has served the Son of heavenly Father.

This is what I have to say. And as it is written, thus it has passed. For the elders of our Brotherhood have witnessed these things themselves, and my own eyes have seen him, and my ears heard him, and I am a friend of Joseph who sits in the grand council.

And forward to the brethren the greeting: Peace be with you.

**END**