

The month of April Jesus and the apostles worked in Jerusalem, going out of the city each evening to spend the night at Bethany. Jesus himself spent one or two nights each week in Jerusalem at the home of Flavius, a Greek Jew, where many prominent Jews came in secret to interview him.

The first day in Jerusalem Jesus called upon his friend of former years, Annas, the onetime high priest and relative of Salome, Zebedee's wife. Annas had been hearing about Jesus and his teachings, and when Jesus called at the high priest's home, he was received with much reserve. When Jesus perceived Annas's coldness, he took immediate leave, saying as he departed: "Fear is man's chief enslaver and pride his great weakness; will you betray yourself into bondage to both of these destroyers of joy and liberty?" But Annas made no reply. The Master did not again see Annas until the time when he sat with his son-in-law in judgment on the Son of Man.

1. TEACHING IN THE TEMPLE

Throughout this month Jesus or one of the apostles taught daily in the temple. When the Passover crowds were too great to find entrance to the temple teaching, the apostles conducted many teaching groups outside the sacred precincts. The burden of their message was:

1. The kingdom of heaven is at hand.
2. By faith in the fatherhood of God you may enter the kingdom of heaven, thus becoming the sons of God.
3. Love is the rule of living within the kingdom -- supreme devotion to God while loving your neighbor as yourself.
4. Obedience to the will of the Father, yielding the fruits of the spirit in one's personal life, is the law of the kingdom.

The multitudes who came to celebrate the Passover heard this teaching of Jesus, and hundreds of them rejoiced in the good news. The chief priests and rulers of the Jews became much concerned about Jesus and his apostles and debated among themselves as to what should be done with them.

Besides teaching in and about the temple, the apostles and other believers were engaged in doing much personal work among the Passover throngs. These interested men and women carried the news of Jesus' message from this Passover celebration to the uttermost parts of the Roman Empire and also to the East. This was the beginning of the spread of the gospel of the kingdom to the outside world. No longer was the work of Jesus to be confined to Palestine.

Isus i apostoli su proveli travanj radeći u Jeruzalemu, dok su svake večeri odlazili prenočiti u Betaniji. Isus je provodio nekoliko noći svakoga tjedna u Jeruzalemu, u domu grčkog Židova Flavijusa, gdje su se s njim potajno došli posavjetovati mnogi istaknuti Židovi.

Istoga dana kad je došao u Jeruzalem, Isus je otišao posjetiti Anu, prijatelja iz ranih dana, negdašnjeg visokog svećenika i rođaka Zebedejeve žene Šalome. Ana je dosta čuo o Isusu i njegovim učenjima, i kad se Isus pojavio pred njegovim vratima, primljen je s velikom uzdržanošću. Kad je Isus vidio Aninu rezerviranost, smjesta je ustao i pošao prema vratima, govoreći: "Strah je čovjekov najveći gospodar, a ponos njegova najveća slabost; zar ćeš izdati samoga sebe i prepustiti se ovim uništiteljima radosti i slobode?" Ana nije odgovorio na ovo pitanje. Učitelj nije ponovo vidio Anu sve dok ovaj nije, sa svojim zetom, počeo suditi Sinu Čovječjem.

1. UČENJA U HRAMU

Cijelog mjeseca u hramu su držali predavanja bilo Isus ili neki od njegovih apostola. Kad su mase na proslavi Pashe bile toliko brojne da nisu dopuštale ulazak u hram, apostoli su držali predavanja ispred njegovih zidina. Njihova je poruka bila:

1. Bliži se kraljevstvo nebesko.
2. Vjerom u očinstvo Boga čovjek može ući u nebesko kraljevstvo, postati sin Božji.
3. Ljubav je osnovno pravilo u kraljevstvu – čovjek prije svega treba biti odan Bogu i voljeti druge ljude kao samoga sebe.
4. Čovjek se treba povinovati Očevoj volji, roditi plodove duha u svom životu, što je zakon kraljevstva.

Ljudi koji je došli na proslavu Pashe čuli su ovo Isusovo učenje i stotine su se radovala radosnim vijestima. Glavni svećenici i vladari Židova su se jako bojali Isusa i njegovih apostola i među sobom su raspravljali što će s njima učiniti.

Pored učenja u hramu i oko hrama, apostoli i drugi vjernici su se bavili osobnim radom u korist narodnih masa okupljenih na proslavu Pashe. Ovi su zainteresirani muškarci i žene pronijeli bit Isusove poruke s ove proslave Pashe do najudaljenijih dijelova Rimskog Carstva i sve do Istoka. Bio je to početak širenja evanđelja kraljevstva spoljašnjem svijetu. Isusova djelatnost više nije bila ograničena samo na Palestinu.

2. GOD'S WRATH

There was in Jerusalem in attendance upon the Passover festivities one Jacob, a wealthy Jewish trader from Crete, and he came to Andrew making request to see Jesus privately. Andrew arranged this secret meeting with Jesus at Flavius's home the evening of the next day. This man could not comprehend the Master's teachings, and he came because he desired to inquire more fully about the kingdom of God. Said Jacob to Jesus: "But, Rabbi, Moses and the olden prophets tell us that Yahweh is a jealous God, a God of great wrath and fierce anger. The prophets say he hates evildoers and takes vengeance on those who obey not his law. You and your disciples teach us that God is a kind and compassionate Father who so loves all men that he would welcome them into this new kingdom of heaven, which you proclaim is so near at hand."

When Jacob finished speaking, Jesus replied: "Jacob, you have well stated the teachings of the olden prophets who taught the children of their generation in accordance with the light of their day. Our Father in Paradise is changeless. But the concept of his nature has enlarged and grown from the days of Moses down through the times of Amos and even to the generation of the prophet Isaiah. And now have I come in the flesh to reveal the Father in new glory and to show forth his love and mercy to all men on all worlds. As the gospel of this kingdom shall spread over the world with its message of good cheer and good will to all men, there will grow up improved and better relations among the families of all nations. As time passes, fathers and their children will love each other more, and thus will be brought about a better understanding of the love of the Father in heaven for his children on earth. Remember, Jacob, that a good and true father not only loves his family as a whole -- as a family -- but he also truly loves and affectionately cares for each individual member."

After considerable discussion of the heavenly Father's character, Jesus paused to say: "You, Jacob, being a father of many, know well the truth of my words." And Jacob said: "But, Master, who told you I was the father of six children? How did you know this about me?" And the Master replied: "Suffice it to say that the Father and the Son know all things, for indeed they see all. Loving your children as a father on earth, you must now accept as a reality the love of the heavenly Father for you -- not just for all the children of Abraham, but for you, your individual soul."

Then Jesus went on to say: "When your children are very young and immature, and when you must chastise them, they may reflect that their father is angry and filled with resentful wrath. Their immaturity cannot penetrate beyond the punishment to discern the father's farseeing and corrective affection. But when these same children become grown-up men and women, would it not be folly for them to cling to these earlier and misconceived notions regarding their father? As

2. BOŽJA SRDŽBA

Na proslavi Pashe u Jeruzalemu bio je jedan Jakob, bogati židovski trgovac s Krete, koji je došao k Andriji s molbom da nasamo porazgovara s Isusom. Andrija je ugovorio ovaj tajni sastanak s Isusom u domu Flavijusa, i zakazao ga je za narednu večer. Ovaj čovjek nije mogao shvatiti Isusova učenja i ovom je prilikom želio detaljnije upitati o Božjem kraljevstvu. Jakob je rekao Učitelju: "Ali, Učitelju, Mojsije i stari proroci kažu da je Bog ljubomoran, pun velike srdžbe i bijesa. Proroci kažu da Bog mrzi zlotvore i da se sveti onima koji ne slijede njegov zakon. Ti i tvoji učenici kažete da je Bog brižni i suosjećajni Otac koji toliko voli svoju djecu da ih poziva da uđu u ovo novo nebesko kraljevstvo za koje kažeš da uskoro treba doći."

Kad je Jakob završio s pitanjem, Isus je rekao: "Jakove, ti dobro poznaješ učenja starih proroka koji su poučavali djecu svoje generacije u skladu s prosvjetljenjem njihovog doba. Naš je Rajski Otac isti danas kakav je bio jučer. Ali koncepcije o njegovoj prirodi su se uveliko razvile i porasle od Mojsijevog do Amosovog doba, i do generacije proroka Izaije. Ja sam došao u tjelesnom obličju da obznam Oca u novoj slavi i da istaknem njegovu ljubav i milost prema svim ljudima svih svjetova. Kako se evanđelje ovog kraljevstva bude širilo cijelim svijetom sa svojom porukom o dobroj volji i radosti svim ljudima, ovo će učenje unaprijediti odnose među obiteljima i nacijama. Kako vrijeme bude prolazilo, porast će ljubav između očeva i djece i tako će porasti razumijevanje ljubavi Oca na nebu prema njegovj zemaljskoj djeci. Ne zaboravi, Jakove, da dobar i iskren otac voli svoju obitelj kao cjelinu – kao obitelj – ali da istovremeno voli i da se s ljubavlju brine o svakom njezinom individualnom pripadniku."

Nakon dulje rasprave o karakteru nebeskog Oca, Isus je pored ostalog rekao: "Ti, Jakove, koji imaš više djece, dobro poznaješ istinu mojih riječi." Jakov je odgovorio: "Ali, Učitelju, tko ti je rekao da imam šestoro djece?" Učitelj je odgovorio: "Neka bude dovoljno da kažem da je Ocu i Sinu sve poznato, da oni sve vide. Jednako kao što ti voliš svoju djecu kao njihov zemaljski otac, tako trebaš prihvatiti stvarnost ljubavi nebeskog Oca prema tebi – ne samo prema svoj Abrahamovoj djeci, već prema tebi, tvojoj individualnoj duši."

Isus je dalje rekao: "Kad su tvoja djeca mala i nezrela i kad ih moraš kazniti, ona mogu pomisliti da imaju ljutog i odbojnog oca. Njihova nezrelost ne može prodrijeti dalje od kazne i spoznati očevu dalekovidost i disciplinarnost njegove ljubavi. Ali kad ista ova djeca odrastu i postanu zreli muškarci i žene, zar im se ne bi bilo ludo držati ovih starih pogrešnih ideja o njihovom ocu? Kao odrasli muškarci i žene, oni trebaju biti u stanju spoznati ljubav svoga oca u svim

men and women they should now discern their father's love in all these early disciplines. And should not mankind, as the centuries pass, come the better to understand the true nature and loving character of the Father in heaven? What profit have you from successive generations of spiritual illumination if you persist in viewing God as Moses and the prophets saw him? I say to you, Jacob, under the bright light of this hour you should see the Father as none of those who have gone before ever beheld him. And thus seeing him, you should rejoice to enter the kingdom wherein such a merciful Father rules, and you should seek to have his will of love dominate your life henceforth."

And Jacob answered: "Rabbi, I believe; I desire that you lead me into the Father's kingdom."

3. THE CONCEPT OF GOD

The twelve apostles, most of whom had listened to this discussion of the character of God, that night asked Jesus many questions about the Father in heaven. The Master's answers to these questions can best be presented by the following summary in modern phraseology:

Jesus mildly upbraided the twelve, in substance saying: Do you not know the traditions of Israel relating to the growth of the idea of Yahweh, and are you ignorant of the teaching of the Scriptures concerning the doctrine of God? And then did the Master proceed to instruct the apostles about the evolution of the concept of Deity throughout the course of the development of the Jewish people. He called attention to the following phases of the growth of the God idea:

1. Yahweh -- the god of the Sinai clans. This was the primitive concept of Deity which Moses exalted to the higher level of the Lord God of Israel. The Father in heaven never fails to accept the sincere worship of his children on earth, no matter how crude their concept of Deity or by what name they symbolize his divine nature.

2. The Most High. This concept of the Father in heaven was proclaimed by Melchizedek to Abraham and was carried far from Salem by those who subsequently believed in this enlarged and expanded idea of Deity. Abraham and his brother left Ur because of the establishment of sun worship, and they became believers in Melchizedek's teaching of El Elyon -- the Most High God. Theirs was a composite concept of God, consisting in a blending of their older Mesopotamian ideas and the Most High doctrine.

3. El Shaddai. During these early days many of the Hebrews worshiped El Shaddai, the Egyptian concept of the God of heaven, which they learned about during their captivity in the land of the Nile. Long after the times of Melchizedek all three of these concepts of

God became joined together to form the doctrine of the creator Deity, the Lord God of Israel. ovim disciplinarnim radnjama. Zar ne bi i ljudski rod kroz buduća stoljeća trebao doći do boljeg razumijevanja istinske prirode i brižnog karaktera Oca na nebu? Kakva je korist budućim naraštajima od duhovnog prosvjetljenja ako ljudi nastave vidjeti Boga onako kako su ga vidjeli Mojsije i proroci? Kažem ti, Jakove, pod blistavim svjetlom ovog trenutka trebaš vidjeti Oca bolje od svih koji su ga nekoć gledali. I kad ga budeš vidio na ovaj način, osjetit ćeš radost stupanja u kraljevstvo kojim vlada Otac ljubavi i tako ćeš nastojati dopustiti njegovoj volji ljubavi da ovlada tvojim životom."

Jakov je odgovorio: "Rabbi, vjerujem; molim te da me uvedeš u Očevu kraljevstvo."

3. KONCEPCIJE BOGA

Kako je većina apostola imala priliku čuti ovu raspravu o Božjem karakteru, proveli su večer postavljajući brojna pitanja o Ocu na nebu. Učitelji se odgovori na ova pitanja najbolje mogu izraziti slijedećim suverenenim riječima:

Isus je blago prekorio dvanaesticu, u biti govoreći: Zar ne poznajete izraelske tradicije koje upućuju na rast i razvoj ideje o Jahvi i zar ne poznajete učenja Spisa o doktrinama o Bogu? Učitelj je zatim nastavio držati govor apostolima na temu evolucije koncepcije Božanstva tijekom povijesnog razvoja židovskog naroda. Skrenuo je njihovu pažnju na slijedeće faze rasta i razvoja ideje o Bogu:

1. Jahve – Bog sinajskih klanova. Ovo je bila primitivna koncepcija Božanstva koju je Mojsije uzvisio na višu razinu Gospodina Boga Izraelskog. Otac na nebu uvijek prihvaća iskreno obožavanje svoje zemaljske djece, koliko god grube bile njihove ideje o Božanstvu i kojim god imenom simbolizirali njegovu božansku prirodu.

2. Svevišnji. Ovu je koncepciju Oca na nebu prvi proglasio Melchizedek pri obraćanju Abrahamu, dok su je iz Salema pronijeli oni koji su tijekom budućih stoljeća prihvatili ovu unaprijeđenu i proširenu ideju Božanstva. Abraham i njegov brat su napustili Ur radi utemeljenja obožavanja sunca i zbog toga što su prihvatili Melchizedekovo učenje o El Elionu – Svevišnjem Bogu. Imali su složenu ideju Boga koja je bila rezultat stapanja njihovih starijih mezopotamijskih ideja s doktrinama Svevišnjeg.

3. El Šadaj. Za vrijeme ovih ranih dana mnogi su Židovi obožavali El Šadaja, egipatsku koncepciju Boga na nebu s kojom su se upoznali za vrijeme ropstva u dolini Nila. Dugo nakon Melchizedeka, ove su se tri ideje o Bogu stopile u doktrinu Božanstva kao stvoritelja, Gospodina Boga Izraelskog.

4. Elohim. From the times of Adam the teaching of the Paradise Trinity has persisted. Do you not recall how the Scriptures begin by asserting that "In the beginning the Gods created the heavens and the earth"? This indicates that when that record was made the Trinity concept of three Gods in one had found lodgment in the religion of our forebears.

5. The Supreme Yahweh. By the times of Isaiah these beliefs about God had expanded into the concept of a Universal Creator who was simultaneously all-powerful and all-merciful. And this evolving and enlarging concept of God virtually supplanted all previous ideas of Deity in our fathers' religion.

6. The Father in heaven. And now do we know God as our Father in heaven. Our teaching provides a religion wherein the believer is a son of God. That is the good news of the gospel of the kingdom of heaven. Coexistent with the Father are the Son and the Spirit, and the revelation of the nature and ministry of these Paradise Deities will continue to enlarge and brighten throughout the endless ages of the eternal spiritual progression of the ascending sons of God. At all times and during all ages the true worship of any human being -- as concerns individual spiritual progress -- is recognized by the indwelling spirit as homage rendered to the Father in heaven.

Never before had the apostles been so shocked as they were upon hearing this recounting of the growth of the concept of God in the Jewish minds of previous generations; they were too bewildered to ask questions. As they sat before Jesus in silence, the Master continued: "And you would have known these truths had you read the Scriptures. Have you not read in Samuel where it says: 'And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, so much so that he moved David against them, saying, go number Israel and Judah'? And this was not strange because in the days of Samuel the children of Abraham really believed that Yahweh created both good and evil. But when a later writer narrated these events, subsequent to the enlargement of the Jewish concept of the nature of God, he did not dare attribute evil to Yahweh; therefore he said: 'And Satan stood up against Israel and provoked David to number Israel.' Cannot you discern that such records in the Scriptures clearly show how the concept of the nature of God continued to grow from one generation to another?

"Again should you have discerned the growth of the understanding of divine law in perfect keeping with these enlarging concepts of divinity. When the children of Israel came out of Egypt in the days before the enlarged revelation of Yahweh, they had ten commandments which served as their law right up to the times when they were encamped before Sinai. And these ten commandments were:

4. Elohim. Od Adamovog se vremena zadržalo učenje o Rajskom Trojstvu. Zna li da Sveto Pismo počinje riječima: "U početku stвориše Bogovi nebo i zemlju"? Ovo pokazuje da je ideja Trojstva ili koncepcija triju Bogova bila dijelom religije naših predaka.

5. Vrhovni Jahva. U vrijeme proroka Izaije, ova su se vjerovanja o Bogu proširila u koncepciju Univerzalnog Stvoritelja koji je bio svemoćan i u isto vrijeme svemilosrdan. I ova je evolutivna promjena koncepcije Boga doslovce zauzela mjesto svih prijašnjih ideja Božanstva u religijama naših otaca.

6. Otac na nebu. Sada upoznajemo Boga kao našeg Oca na nebu. Ovo učenje nudi religiju u kojoj je vjernik sin Boga. Ovo je radosna vijest evanđelja nebeskog kraljevstva. Pored Oca postoje Sin i Duh, i ovo će se otkrivenje prirode i službe Rajskih Božanstava nastaviti proširivati i prosvjetljivati tijekom beskrajnih stoljeća vječnog duhovnog napredovanja uspinjućih sinova Boga. Tijekom bilo kojeg razdoblja i u svakom času, istinsko iskazanje obožavanja bilo kojeg ljudskog bića – što se tiče individualnog duhovnog napretka – prepoznaje i priznaje unutarnji duh kao znak poštovanja upućenom Ocu na nebu.

Apostoli nikada nisu bili ovoliko iznenađeni koliko su bili kad su čuli o ovom postupnom razvoju koncepcije Boga u židovskom umu i kroz prijašnje generacije; bili su suviše zbunjeni kako bi bili u stanju postaviti i jednog jedinog pitanja. Sjedili su ispred Isusa bez riječi, dok je Učitelj nastavio: "Vi bi ste znali o ovim stvarima da ste pročitali Svete Knjige. Zar niste čitali u Samuelu gdje piše: 'Još je jednom srdžba Jahvina planula na Izraelce te potakla Davida protiv njih, govoreći: 'Idi, izbroj Izraelce i Judejce'? I ovome se ne treba čuditi zato što su u Samuelovo doba Abrahamova djeca uistinu vjerovala da je Bog stvorio I dobro i zlo. Ali kad je suvremeniji pisac pominjao ove događaje, usljed proširenja židovske koncepcije o prirodi Boga, on se nije usudio pripisati stvaranje zla Jahvi, nego je rekao: 'Tada Satan ustade na Izraela i potače Davida da izbroji Izraelce.' Zar ne vidite da ovi zapisi iz Svetih Knjiga jasno ukazuju na razvoj ideje o prirodi Boga iz generacije u generaciju?

"Također trebate spoznati razvoj razumijevanja božanskog zakona koji savršeno drži korak s ovim proširenim koncepcijama o božanstvenosti. Kad su djeca Izraelska izišla iz Egipta u vrijeme uvećanog otkrivenja Jahve, imala su deset zapovijedi koje su bile njihov zakon sve do vremena kad su se ulogorili pred brdom Sinajom. Ovih je deset zapovijedi bilo:

"1. You shall worship no other god, for the Lord is a jealous God.

"2. You shall not make molten gods.

"3. You shall not neglect to keep the feast of unleavened bread.

"4. Of all the males of men or cattle, the first-born are mine, says the Lord.

"5. Six days you may work, but on the seventh day you shall rest.

"6. You shall not fail to observe the feast of the first fruits and the feast of the ingathering at the end of the year.

"7. You shall not offer the blood of any sacrifice with leavened bread.

"8. The sacrifice of the feast of the Passover shall not be left until morning.

"9. The first of the first fruits of the ground you shall bring to the house of the Lord your God.

"10. You shall not seethe a kid in its mother's milk.

"And then, amidst the thunders and lightnings of Sinai, Moses gave them the new ten commandments, which you will all allow are more worthy utterances to accompany the enlarging Yahweh concepts of Deity. And did you never take notice of these commandments as twice recorded in the Scriptures, that in the first case deliverance from Egypt is assigned as the reason for Sabbath keeping, while in a later record the advancing religious beliefs of our forefathers demanded that this be changed to the recognition of the fact of creation as the reason for Sabbath observance?

"And then will you remember that once again - in the greater spiritual enlightenment of Isaiah's day -- these ten negative commandments were changed into the great and positive law of love, the injunction to love God supremely and your neighbor as yourself. And it is this supreme law of love for God and for man that I also declare to you as constituting the whole duty of man."

And when he had finished speaking, no man asked him a question. They went, each one to his sleep.

4. FLAVIUS AND GREEK CULTURE

Flavius, the Greek Jew, was a proselyte of the gate, having been neither circumcised nor baptized; and since he was a great lover of the beautiful in art and sculpture, the house which he occupied when sojourning in Jerusalem was a beautiful edifice. This home was exquisitely adorned with priceless treasures which he had gathered up here and there on his world travels. When he first thought of inviting Jesus to his home, he feared that the Master might take offense at the sight of these so-called images. But Flavius was agreeably surprised when Jesus entered the home that, instead of rebuking him for having these supposedly idolatrous objects scattered about the house, he manifested great interest in the entire collection and asked many appreciative questions about each object as Flavius escorted him from room to room, showing him all of his favorite statues.

"1. Nemoj imati drugih bogova, jer Gospodin je Bog ljubomoran.

"2. Ne pravi sebi lika ni oblička.

"3. Sjeti se da svetkuješ dan beskvasnih kruhova.

"4. Od cijelog prinosa od stoke, svaki muški prvenac meni pripada, kaže Gospodin.

"5. Šest dana radi i obavljaj svoj posao, a sedmi dan neka bude dan počinka.

"6. Svetkuj blagdan berbe prvih plodova i blagdan žetve na prekreću godine.

"7. Ne prinosi žrtve s kruhom uskvasnim.

"8. Ne ostavljaj žrtve prinesene na blagdan Pashe da prenoće do jutra.

"9. U kuću Jahve, Boga svoga, donosi najbolje prvine plodova sa svoje zemlje.

"10. Ne kuhaj kozleta u mlijeku njegove majke.

"I zatim je, uz zvuke gromova i munja na Sinajskom brdu, Mojsije predočio novih deset zapovijedi za koje svi morate priznati da predstavljaju daleko vrijednije izjave i dostojniju pratnju sve široj ideji Jahve, koncepciji Božanstva. I zar nikada niste primijetili da su ove zapovijedi zabilježene na dva mjesta, da je u prvom slučaju izručenje iz Egipta navedeno kao razlog poštovanju subote, dok je usljed razvoja religioznog vjerovanja u drugom slučaju činjenica stvaranja neba i zemlje navedena kao objašnjenje subotnog počinka?

"Također ne zaboravite da je ponovo – usljed naprednijeg duhovnog prosvjetljenja u doba Izaije – ovih deset negativnih zapovijedi promijenjeno u veliki i pozitivni zakon ljubavi, poziv čovjeku da voli Boga iznad svega drugog i svog susjeda kao samoga sebe. I ovaj vam vrhovni poziv na ljubav prema Bogu i ljudima ponovo navodim kao cjelokupnu čovjekovu dužnost."

I kad je završio s govorom, nitko nije prozborio ni riječi. Otišli su na počinak, svaki na svoju stranu.

4. FLAVIJUS I GRČKA KULTURA

Grčki Židov Flavijus je bio preobraćenik koji nije bio ni obrezan niti kršten; i kako je jako volio ljepotu umjetnosti i kipova, u Jeruzalemu je boravio u jako lijepoj i velikoj kući. Ova je kuća bila ukusno namještena i ukrašena neprocjenjivim blagom koje je skupio na svojim svjetskim putovanjima. Kad je izvorno došao na ideju da pozove Učitelja u svoju kuću, bojao se da ne uvrijedi Učitelja prizorom ovih takozvanih idola. Ali Flavijus je bio prijatno iznenađen kad je Isus ušao u njegovu kuću i kad je, umjesto što će ga ukoriti zbog ovih navodno idolotarskih predmeta koji su bili raspoređeni po cijeloj kući, pokazao veliko zanimanje za njegovu kolekciju i postavio mnoga pitanja koja su obznanila veliko poštovanje prema umjetnosti dok ga je Flavijus vodio iz sobe u sobu pokazujući mu svoje omiljene kipove.

The Master saw that his host was bewildered at his friendly attitude toward art; therefore, when they had finished the survey of the entire collection, Jesus said: "Because you appreciate the beauty of things created by my Father and fashioned by the artistic hands of man, why should you expect to be rebuked? Because Moses onetime sought to combat idolatry and the worship of false gods, why should all men frown upon the reproduction of grace and beauty? I say to you, Flavius, Moses' children have misunderstood him, and now do they make false gods of even his prohibitions of images and the likeness of things in heaven and on earth. But even if Moses taught such restrictions to the darkened minds of those days, what has that to do with this day when the Father in heaven is revealed as the universal Spirit Ruler over all? And, Flavius, I declare that in the coming kingdom they shall no longer teach, 'Do not worship this and do not worship that'; no longer shall they concern themselves with commands to refrain from this and take care not to do that, but rather shall all be concerned with one supreme duty. And this duty of man is expressed in two great privileges: sincere worship of the infinite Creator, the Paradise Father, and loving service bestowed upon one's fellow men. If you love your neighbor as you love yourself, you really know that you are a son of God.

"In an age when my Father was not well understood, Moses was justified in his attempts to withstand idolatry, but in the coming age the Father will have been revealed in the life of the Son; and this new revelation of God will make it forever unnecessary to confuse the Creator Father with idols of stone or images of gold and silver. Henceforth, intelligent men may enjoy the treasures of art without confusing such material appreciation of beauty with the worship and service of the Father in Paradise, the God of all things and all beings."

Flavius believed all that Jesus taught him. The next day he went to Bethany beyond the Jordan and was baptized by the disciples of John. And this he did because the apostles of Jesus did not yet baptize believers. When Flavius returned to Jerusalem, he made a great feast for Jesus and invited sixty of his friends. And many of these guests also became believers in the message of the coming kingdom.

5. THE DISCOURSE ON ASSURANCE

One of the great sermons which Jesus preached in the temple this Passover week was in answer to a question asked by one of his hearers, a man from Damascus. This man asked Jesus: "But, Rabbi, how shall we know of a certainty that you are sent by God, and that we may truly enter into this kingdom which you and your disciples declare is near at hand?" And Jesus answered:

"As to my message and the teaching of my disciples, you should judge them by their fruits. If we proclaim to you the truths of the spirit, the spirit will

Učitelj je vidio da je njegov domaćin bio zbunjen njegovim prijateljskim stavom prema umjetnosti; kad su završili s pregledom cijele kolekcije, Isus je rekao: "Pošto ti poštuješ ljepotu onoga što je stvorio moj Otac i što su oblikovale umjetničke ruke ljudi, zašto očekuješ da te ukorim? Zar zbog toga što je Mojsije nekoć nastojao suzbiti idolotarstvo i obožavanje lažnih bogova, danas svi trebaju izbjegavati svaki oblik kopiranja prirodne gracioznosti i ljepote? Kažem ti, Flavijuse, Mojsijeva djeca nisu pravilno shvatila njegovu poruku i od ovih su riječi zabrane stvaranja likova nebeskih i zemaljskih stvari stvorila lažnog boga. Ako je Mojsije upućivao ove ideje zamračenim umovima onog vremena, kakve to ima veze s ovim vremenom kad se Nebeski Otac obznanjuje kao Duh-Vladar nad svim ljudima? Flavijuse, kažem ti da se u dolazećem kraljevstvu neće više govoriti, 'Ne obožavajte ovo i ne obožavajte ono'; ljudi se više neće zanimati zapovijedima koje zabranjuju jedno ili drugo, nego će se zanimati čovjekovom najvišom dužnošću. I ova se dužnost izražava dvjema velikim privilegijama: iskrenim obožavanjem beskonačnog Stvoritelja, Rajskog Oca i brižnom službom blišnjima. Ako volite svoje susjede kao sebe same, onda uistinu znate da ste sinovi Boga.

"U vrijeme kad ljudi nisu imali dobro razumijevanje moga Oca, Mojsije je dobro učinio što je nastojao suzbiti idolopoklonstvo, ali budućim će naraštajima Otac biti obznanjen u životu Sina; i zbog ovog novog otkrivenja Boga više neće biti potrebno zamijeniti Stvoritelja Oca s idolima od kamena i kipovima od zlata i srebra. Inteligenti ljudi tako mogu uživati u umjetničkom blagu i ne miješati ovo materijalno poštovanje s obožavanjem i poštovanjem Oca na Raju, Boga svih stvari i svih bića."

Flavijus je vjerovao u sve čemu ga je Isus poučio. Sutradan je otišao u Betaniju pored Jorana i tu su ga krstili Ivanovi učenici. I tako je učinio zbog toga što Isusovi učenici još uvijek nisu krstili vjernike. Kad se vratio u Jeruzalem, Flavijus je priredio veliku gozbu na koju je pozvao Isusa i šezdeset drugih prijatelja. I mnogi su ovi gosti također postali vjernici u poruku o nastupajućem kraljevstvu.

5. GOVOR O UVJERENJU

Jedan od velikih govora koji je Isus izručio u hramu prilikom ovoga tjedna Pashe predstavlja odgovor na pitanje jednog od njegovih slušatelja, čovjeka iz Damaska. Ovaj je čovjek upitao Isusa: "Ali, Rabbi, kako ćemo biti uvjereni da si došao od Boga i da uistinu možemo ući u ovo kraljevstvo za koje tvoji učenici kažu da se bliži?" Isus je odgovorio:

"Što se tiče moje poruke i propovijedi mojih učenika, trebate im suditi po njihovim plodovima. Ako mi proglašavamo istine duha, duh će

witness in your hearts that our message is genuine. Concerning the kingdom and your assurance of acceptance by the heavenly Father, let me ask what father among you who is a worthy and kindhearted father would keep his son in anxiety or suspense regarding his status in the family or his place of security in the affections of his father's heart? Do you earth fathers take pleasure in torturing your children with uncertainty about their place of abiding love in your human hearts? Neither does your Father in heaven leave his faith children of the spirit in doubtful uncertainty as to their position in the kingdom. If you receive God as your Father, then indeed and in truth are you the sons of God. And if you are sons, then are you secure in the position and standing of all that concerns eternal and divine sonship. If you believe my words, you thereby believe in Him who sent me, and by thus believing in the Father, you have made your status in heavenly citizenship sure. If you do the will of the Father in heaven, you shall never fail in the attainment of the eternal life of progress in the divine kingdom.

"The Supreme Spirit shall bear witness with your spirits that you are truly the children of God. And if you are the sons of God, then have you been born of the spirit of God; and whosoever has been born of the spirit has in himself the power to overcome all doubt, and this is the victory that overcomes all uncertainty, even your faith.

"Said the Prophet Isaiah, speaking of these times: 'When the spirit is poured upon us from on high, then shall the work of righteousness become peace, quietness, and assurance forever.' And for all who truly believe this gospel, I will become surety for their reception into the eternal mercies and the everlasting life of my Father's kingdom. You, then, who hear this message and believe this gospel of the kingdom are the sons of God, and you have life everlasting; and the evidence to all the world that you have been born of the spirit is that you sincerely love one another."

The throng of listeners remained many hours with Jesus, asking him questions and listening attentively to his comforting answers. Even the apostles were emboldened by Jesus' teaching to preach the gospel of the kingdom with more power and assurance. This experience at Jerusalem was a great inspiration to the twelve. It was their first contact with such enormous crowds, and they learned many valuable lessons which proved of great assistance in their later work.

6. THE VISIT WITH NICODEMUS

One evening at the home of Flavius there came to see Jesus one Nicodemus, a wealthy and elderly member of the Jewish Sanhedrin. He had heard much about the teachings of this Galilean, and so he went one afternoon to hear him as he taught in the temple courts. He would have gone often to hear Jesus teach, but he feared to be seen by the people in attendance upon his teaching, for already were the rulers of the Jews so at

biti svjedok u vašim srcima da je naša poruka istinita. Što se tiče kraljevstva i tvoje osobne sigurnosti da već imaš odobrenje nebeskog Oca, sam možeš reći koji će otac među vama koji se nosi kao požrtvovan i brižan otac, držati svoje djete u tjeskobi vezano za njegov obiteljski status ili njegovo mjesto i poziciju u pogledu odanosti očevog srca? Zar vi zemaljski očevi volite mučiti svoju djecu neizvjesnošću u pogledu njihovog mjesta i trajne ljubavi prema njima u vašim ljudskim srcima? Tako ni vaš Otac na nebu ne ostavlja svoju djecu duha u stanju neizvjesnosti u pogledu njihovog mjesta u kraljevstvu. Ako primite Boga kao svoga Oca, onda ste uistinu i u zbilji sinovi Boga. I ako ste sinovi, onda imate sigurnost na ovom mjestu i poziciji u pogledu svega što se tiče vječnog i božanskog statusa sina. Ako vjerujete u moje riječi, onda vjerujete u Onoga koji me posla i ovim vjerovanjem u Oca istovremeno osiguravate svoje nebesko državljanstvo. Ako činite volju Oca na nebu, nećete propustiti priliku za postignuće vječnog života napredovanja u božanskom kraljevstvu.

"Vrhovni će Duh biti svjedok s vašim duhovima da ste uistinu djeca Boga. I ako ste djeca Boga, onda ste rođeni od duha Boga; i tko god je rođen od duha ima u sebi moć da ovlada nad svakom sumnjom i ono je pobjeda koja nadilazi svaku nezivjesnost, vaša vjera."

"Kako je rekao prorok Izaija govoreći o ovim vremenima: 'Kad se na nas izlije duh iz visine, mir će biti djelo pravde, a plod pravednosti – trajan pokoj i uzdanje.' I svima koji istinski vjeruju u ovo evanđelje, ja ću biti garancija njihovom primitku u vječne milosti I trajni život kraljevstva moga Oca. Vi ste, dakle, koji čujete ovu poruku i koji vjerujete u ovo evanđelje kraljevstva, sinovi Boga, i imate život vječni; i dokaz je cijelom svijetu da ste rođeni od duha to što uistinu volite jedan drugog."

Svjetina je ostala više sati uz Isusa, postavljajući mu mnoga pitanja i pažljivo slušajući njegove odgovore. I sami su apostoli bili ohrabreni Isusovim učenjem pri propovijedi evanđelja kraljevstva s većom snagom i sigurnošću. Ovaj je događaj u Jeruzalemu pružio veliko nadahnuće dvanaestorici. Bio je to njihov prvi kontakt s tako velikom masom i naučili su brojne vrijedne lekcije koje su se pokazale vrlo korisnim pri njihovom budućem radu.

6. RAZGOVOR S NIKODEMOM

Jedne večeri u domu Flavijusa u posjetu Isusu došao je određeni Nikodem, bogati stariji pripadnik židovskog Velikog vijeća. On je mnogo čuo u učenjima ovog Galilejca i tako je jednog poslijepodneva otišao čuti njegove propovijedi u hramu. On je više puta želio otići da čuje Isusova predavanja, ali je strahovao da ga ne opaze i ne propoznaju okupljeni, kako su židovski vladari

variance with Jesus that no member of the Sanhedrin would want to be identified in any open manner with him. Accordingly, Nicodemus had arranged with Andrew to see Jesus privately and after nightfall on this particular evening. Peter, James, and John were in Flavius's garden when the interview began, but later they all went into the house where the discourse continued.

In receiving Nicodemus, Jesus showed no particular deference; in talking with him, there was no compromise or undue persuasiveness. The Master made no attempt to repulse his secretive caller, nor did he employ sarcasm. In all his dealings with the distinguished visitor, Jesus was calm, earnest, and dignified. Nicodemus was not an official delegate of the Sanhedrin; he came to see Jesus wholly because of his personal and sincere interest in the Master's teachings.

Upon being presented by Flavius, Nicodemus said: "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher sent by God, for no mere man could so teach unless God were with him. And I am desirous of knowing more about your teachings regarding the coming kingdom."

Jesus answered Nicodemus: "Verily, verily, I say to you, Nicodemus, except a man be born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Then replied Nicodemus: "But how can a man be born again when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born."

Jesus said: "Nevertheless, I declare to you, except a man be born of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit. But you should not marvel that I said you must be born from above. When the wind blows, you hear the rustle of the leaves, but you do not see the wind -- whence it comes or whither it goes -- and so it is with everyone born of the spirit. With the eyes of the flesh you can behold the manifestations of the spirit, but you cannot actually discern the spirit."

Nicodemus replied: "But I do not understand -- how can that be?" Said Jesus: "Can it be that you are a teacher in Israel and yet ignorant of all this? It becomes, then, the duty of those who know about the realities of the spirit to reveal these things to those who discern only the manifestations of the material world. But will you believe us if we tell you of the heavenly truths? Do you have the courage, Nicodemus, to believe in one who has descended from heaven, even the Son of Man?"

And Nicodemus said: "But how can I begin to lay hold upon this spirit which is to remake me in preparation for entering into the kingdom?" Jesus answered: "Already does the spirit of the Father in heaven indwell you. If you would be led by this spirit from above, very soon would you begin to see with the eyes of the spirit, and then by the wholehearted choice

već bili alarmirani Isusom i ni jedan se pripadnik Velikog vijeća nije želio javno s njime posvetiti. Nikodem je tako ugovorio s Andrijom da vidi Isusa nasamo nakon što se bude smrklo. Petar, Jakov i Ivan su bili u Flavijusovom vrtu na početku ovog razgovora, ali su zatim ušli u kuću gdje su nastavili s razgovorom.

Primajući Nikodema, Isus nije pokazao nikakvu naročitu naklonost; pri razgovoru nije pribjegao kompromisu ili bilo kakvom neumjesnom pritisku. Učitelj nije pokušao stvoriti odbojnost u svom tajnom gostu, niti je upotrijebio sarkazam. Pri svakom obraćanju ovom priznatom posjetitelju, Isus je bio staložen, iskren i dostojanstven. Nikodem nije bio službeni zastupnik Velikog vijeća; posjetio je Isusa radi svog osobnog i iskrenog zanimanja za Učiteljeve ideje.

Nakon što ga je Flavijus predstavio, Nikodem je rekao: "Rabbi, znamo da si učitelj koji je došao od Boga, jer nitko ne može tako poučavati osim ako je Bog s njim. Želim bolje upoznati tvoja učenja u vezi ovog nastupajućeg kraljevstva."

Isus je odgovorio Nikodemu: "Zaista, zaista, kažem ti, tko se odozgo ne rodi, taj ne može vidjeti kraljevstva Božjega." Odvratila mu Nikodem: "Kako se može čovjek, kad je već star, roditi? On ne može po drugi put ući u utrobu majke i roditi se."

Odvratila mu Isus: "Zaista, zaista, kažem ti, tko se ne rodi od duha svetoga, taj ne može ući u kraljevstvo nebesko. Što je rođeno od tijela, tijelo je, a što je rođeno od duha, duh je. Ne čudi se što ti rekoh: treba da se odozgo rodite. Vjetar puše gdje god hoće. Čuješ mu šum, ali ga ne vidiš -- ne znaš ni odakle dolazi ni kamo ide -- i tako je sa svakim koji je rođen od duha. Tjelesnim očima možete vidjeti ispoljenja duha, ali ne možete vidjeti duh."

Nikodem odgovori: "Ne razumijem -- kako to može biti?" Isus odvrati: "Zar je moguće da si ti učitelj u Izraelu, i ti ne razumiješ? Oni koji poznaju stvarnosti duha imaju dužnost obznaniti ove stvari onima koji jedino vide ispoljenja materijalnog svijeta. Ali hoćete li nam vjerovati ako vam budem govorio nebeske stvari? Imaš li hrabrosti, Nikodeme, vjerovati u onoga koji je sišao s neba, samog Sina Čovječjeg?"

A Nikodem odvrati: "Ali kako ću ja početi spoznavati ovaj duh koji me treba pripremiti za ulazak u kraljevstvo?" Isus odgovori: "Duh Oca već živi u tebi. Ako se budeš povodio za ovim duhom, uskoro ćeš početi vidjeti očima duha i tada ćeš svojim svesrdnim izborom vodstva ovog duha biti rođen od duha kako će ti jedini cilj življenja biti izvršenje volje tvoga Oca koji

of spirit guidance would you be born of the spirit since your only purpose in living would be to do the will of your Father who is in heaven. And so finding yourself born of the spirit and happily in the kingdom of God, you would begin to bear in your daily life the abundant fruits of the spirit."

Nicodemus was thoroughly sincere. He was deeply impressed but went away bewildered. Nicodemus was accomplished in self-development, in self-restraint, and even in high moral qualities. He was refined, egoistic, and altruistic; but he did not know how to submit his will to the will of the divine Father as a little child is willing to submit to the guidance and leading of a wise and loving earthly father, thereby becoming in reality a son of God, a progressive heir of the eternal kingdom.

But Nicodemus did summon faith enough to lay hold of the kingdom. He faintly protested when his colleagues of the Sanhedrin sought to condemn Jesus without a hearing; and with Joseph of Arimatea, he later boldly acknowledged his faith and claimed the body of Jesus, even when most of the disciples had fled in fear from the scenes of their Master's final suffering and death.

7. THE LESSON ON THE FAMILY

After the busy period of teaching and personal work of Passover week in Jerusalem, Jesus spent the next Wednesday at Bethany with his apostles, resting. That afternoon, Thomas asked a question which elicited a long and instructive answer. Said Thomas: "Master, on the day we were set apart as ambassadors of the kingdom, you told us many things, instructed us regarding our personal mode of life, but what shall we teach the multitude? How are these people to live after the kingdom more fully comes? Shall your disciples own slaves? Shall your believers court poverty and shun property? Shall mercy alone prevail so that we shall have no more law and justice?" Jesus and the twelve spent all afternoon and all that evening, after supper, discussing Thomas's questions. For the purposes of this record we present the following summary of the Master's instruction:

Jesus sought first to make plain to his apostles that he himself was on earth living a unique life in the flesh, and that they, the twelve, had been called to participate in this bestowal experience of the Son of Man; and as such coworkers, they, too, must share in many of the special restrictions and obligations of the entire bestowal experience. There was a veiled intimation that the Son of Man was the only person who had ever lived on earth who could simultaneously see into the very heart of God and into the very depths of man's soul.

Very plainly Jesus explained that the kingdom of heaven was an evolutionary experience, beginning here on earth and progressing up through successive life

je na nebu. I kada tako s radošću ustanoviš svoje ponovno rođenje i ulazak u Božje kraljevstvo, početi ćeš rađati u svom svakodnevnom životu obilne plodove duha."

Nikodem je bio potpuno iskren. Bio je jako impresioniran ali potpuno zbunjen. Nikodem je već bio postigao veliki uspjeh u pogledu samoostvarenja, samokontrole, pa i visokih moralnih kvaliteta. Bio je rafiniran, egoističan i altruističan; ali nije znao kako će potčiniti svoju volju volji Božanskog Oca, onako kako su se mala djeca voljna potčiniti savjetu i odlukama mudrog i brižnog zemaljskog oca i na taj način zbilja postati djecom Boga, naprednim baštinicima vječnog kraljevstva.

Nikodem je imao dovoljno vjere da stekne posjed kraljevstva. Blago je prosvjedovao kad su njegove kolege iz Velikog vijeća htjele osuditi Isusa bez sudskog procesa; zajedno s Josipom iz Arimateje, kasnije je javno proglasio svoju vjeru i otišao tražiti Isusovo tijelo, i to u časovima kad su mnogi njegovi učenici od straha pobjegli pred prizorom konačne muke i smrti njihovog Učitelja.

7. POUKA O OBITELJI

Nakon užurbanog razdoblja pouke i osobnog rada za vrijeme tjedna posvećenog proslavi blagdana Pashe, Isus je proveo narednu srijedu u Betaniji sa svojim apostolima, predan odmoru. Ovoga poslije podneva, Tomo je postavio pitanje koje je zahtijevalo dugi i pažljivi odgovor. Tomo je rekao: "Učitelju, kad smo postali apostoli kraljevstva, poučio si nas o mnogim stvarima, ali što ćemo govoriti masama? Kako će ovi ljudi živjeti nakon potpunije uspostave kraljevstva? Trebaju li tvoji učenici biti vlasnici robova? Hoće li tvoji učenici živjeti u siromaštvu i izbjegavati posjedovanje imovine? Hoće li jedino milost prevladati na svijetu i uništiti svaku potrebu za zakonom i pravdom?" Isus je proveo cijelo poslije podne i veče poslije objeda s dvanaesticom apostola, raspravljajući Tomina pitanja. U cilju ovog zapisa, predstavljamo slijedeći sažetak Učiteljevog nauka:

Isus je prije svega nastojao objasniti svojim apostolima da je došao na zemlju kako bi živio jedinstvenim zemaljskim životom, dok su oni, dvanaestorica apostola, bili pozvani da sudjeluju u ovom iskustvu darivanja Sina Čovječjeg; dalje je rekao da kao njegove kolege, apostoli moraju sudjelovati u ovim ograničenjima i obvezama cjelokupnog iskustva darivanja. U njegovim se riječima krila tvrdnja da je Sin Čovječji bio jedina osoba koja je ikad živjela na zemlji, koja je istovremeno mogla pogledati u samo srce Boga kao i u dubine ljudske duše.

Isus je vrlo jednostavnim riječima objasnio da je nebesko kraljevstvo bilo evolutivna pojava, da je započinjalo ovdje na zemlji i da se trebalo nastaviti

stations to Paradise. In the course of the evening he definitely stated that at some future stage of kingdom development he would revisit this world in spiritual power and divine glory.

He next explained that the "kingdom idea" was not the best way to illustrate man's relation to God; that he employed such figures of speech because the Jewish people were expecting the kingdom, and because John had preached in terms of the coming kingdom. Jesus said: "The people of another age will better understand the gospel of the kingdom when it is presented in terms expressive of the family relationship -- when man understands religion as the teaching of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, sonship with God." Then the Master discoursed at some length on the earthly family as an illustration of the heavenly family, restating the two fundamental laws of living: the first commandment of love for the father, the head of the family, and the second commandment of mutual love among the children, to love your brother as yourself. And then he explained that such a quality of brotherly affection would invariably manifest itself in unselfish and loving social service.

Following that, came the memorable discussion of the fundamental characteristics of family life and their application to the relationship existing between God and man. Jesus stated that a true family is founded on the following seven facts:

1. The fact of existence. The relationships of nature and the phenomena of mortal likenesses are bound up in the family: Children inherit certain parental traits. The children take origin in the parents; personality existence depends on the act of the parent. The relationship of father and child is inherent in all nature and pervades all living existences.

2. Security and pleasure. True fathers take great pleasure in providing for the needs of their children. Many fathers are not content with supplying the mere wants of their children but enjoy making provision for their pleasures also.

3. Education and training. Wise fathers carefully plan for the education and adequate training of their sons and daughters. When young they are prepared for the greater responsibilities of later life.

4. Discipline and restraint. Farseeing fathers also make provision for the necessary discipline, guidance, correction, and sometimes restraint of their young and immature offspring.

5. Companionship and loyalty. The affectionate father holds intimate and loving intercourse with his children. Always is his ear open to their petitions; he is ever ready to share their hardships and assist them over their difficulties. The father is supremely interested in the progressive welfare of his progeny.

kroz naredne živote, do Raja. Tijekom ove večeri jasno je izrazio svoju namjeru da u nekom budućem stadiju razvoja kraljevstva ponovo dođe u posjetu ovome svijetu, u punoj duhovnoj moći i božanskoj slavi.

Zatim je objasnio da "ideja kraljevstva" nije bila najbolji način da se objasni čovjekov odnos s Bogom; da je on koristio ovaj slikovni izraz zbog toga što je židovski narod očekivao utemeljenje kraljevstva, kao i zbog toga što je Ivan govorio o nastupajućem kraljevstvu. Isus je rekao: "U budućim dobima ljudi će bolje razumjeti evanđelje kraljevstva kad im isto bude predloženo u smislu obiteljskog odnosa – kad ljudi budu shvatili religiju kao učenje o očinstvu Boga i bratstvu među ljudima, sinstvu s Bogom." Učitelj je zatim nadugo govorio o koncepciji ljudske obitelji kao ilustraciji nebeske obitelji, ponovo naglašavajući dva osnovna zakona življenja: prvu zapovijed koja nalaže ljubav prema ocu, glavi obitelji, i drugu zapovijed koja nalaže uzajamnu ljubav među djecom, koja traži da čovjek voli svoga bližnjeg kao samoga sebe. I zatim je objasnio da se ova kvaliteta bratske ljubavi uvijek ispoljava u nesebičnoj i brižnoj društvenoj službi.

Nakon toga uslijedila je nezaboravna rasprava najbitnijih obilježja obiteljskog života i načina na koji se ista odražavaju u odnosu između Boga i čovjeka. Isus je naglasio kako se prava obitelj temelji na slijedećih sedam činjenica:

1. Činjenici egzistencije. Prirodni odnosi i nasljedne crte sličnosti između roditelja i potomstva predstavljaju dio obiteljskog života. Djeca nasljeđuju određene roditeljske osobine. Djeca vuku porijeklo od roditelja; postojanje djeteta kao ličnosti ovisi o činu roditelja. Odnos između oca i djeteta predstavlja prirodno obilježje prisutno u svim živim bićima.

2. Osjećaj sigurnosti i zadovoljstva. Istinski očevi s velikom radošću vode brigu o potrebama svoje djece. Mnogi očevi nisu zadovoljni jedino brigom o najosnovnijim potrebama svoje djece, nego im pored toga nastoje pružiti dodatne blagodati.

3. Obrazovanje i obuka. Mudri očevi pažljivo planiraju za obrazovanje i adekvatnu obuku svojih sinova i kćeri. Na ovaj način mladi ljudi postaju osposobljeni za buduće veće odgovornosti.

4. Disciplina i samokontrola. Dalekovidni očevi štoviše stvaraju uvjete za bitnu disciplinu, savjet, corekciju i nekom prilikom, stjecanje samokontrole, svog mladog i nezrelog potomstva.

5. Prijateljstvo i odanost. Brižni očevi imaju blizak i nježan odnos sa svojom djecom. Njegove su uši uvijek otvorene pred njihovim molbama; uvijek su spremni podijeliti njihove brige i pomoći im s njihovim poteškoćama. Otac je duboko zainteresiran za progresivnu blagodat svog potomstva.

6. Love and mercy. A compassionate father is freely forgiving; fathers do not hold vengeful memories against their children. Fathers are not like judges, enemies, or creditors. Real families are built upon tolerance, patience, and forgiveness.

7. Provision for the future. Temporal fathers like to leave an inheritance for their sons. The family continues from one generation to another. Death only ends one generation to mark the beginning of another. Death terminates an individual life but not necessarily the family.

For hours the Master discussed the application of these features of family life to the relations of man, the earth child, to God, the Paradise Father. And this was his conclusion: "This entire relationship of a son to the Father, I know in perfection, for all that you must attain of sonship in the eternal future I have now already attained. The Son of Man is prepared to ascend to the right hand of the Father, so that in me is the way now open still wider for all of you to see God and, ere you have finished the glorious progression, to become perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect."

When the apostles heard these startling words, they recalled the pronouncements which John made at the time of Jesus' baptism, and they also vividly recalled this experience in connection with their preaching and teaching subsequent to the Master's death and resurrection.

Jesus is a divine Son, one in the Universal Father's full confidence. He had been with the Father and comprehended him fully. He had now lived his earth life to the full satisfaction of the Father, and this incarnation in the flesh had enabled him fully to comprehend man. Jesus was the perfection of man; he had attained just such perfection as all true believers are destined to attain in him and through him. Jesus revealed a God of perfection to man and presented in himself the perfected son of the realms to God.

Although Jesus discoursed for several hours, Thomas was not yet satisfied, for he said: "But, Master, we do not find that the Father in heaven always deals kindly and mercifully with us. Many times we grievously suffer on earth, and not always are our prayers answered. Where do we fail to grasp the meaning of your teaching?"

Jesus replied: "Thomas, Thomas, how long before you will acquire the ability to listen with the ear of the spirit? How long will it be before you discern that this kingdom is a spiritual kingdom, and that my Father is also a spiritual being? Do you not understand that I am teaching you as spiritual children in the spirit family of heaven, of which the fatherhead is an infinite and eternal spirit? Will you not allow me to use the earth family as an illustration of divine relationships without so literally applying my teaching to material affairs? In your minds cannot you separate the spiritual

6. Ljubav i milost. Brižan je otac uvijek spreman oprostiti svojoj djeci; očevi ne gaje svetoljublje protiv svoje djece. Očevi nisu poput sudaca, neprijatelja ili kreditora. Prave obitelji počivaju na temeljima tolerancije, strpljenja i oproštenja.

7. Briga za budućnost. Zemaljski očevi vole ostaviti baštinu svojim sinovima. Obitelj se nastavlja iz generacije u generaciju. Smrt predstavlja kraj jedne generacije i početak druge. Smrt okončava individualni život ali ne i obitelj.

Učitelj je više sati govorio o primjeni ovih obiteljskih obilježja na odnose između ljudi kao zemaljske djece i Boga kao Rajskog Oca. Zaključio je slijedećim riječima: "Savršeno poznajem ovaj odnos između sina i Oca, jer sam u pogledu postignuća statusa sina već postigao sve što vi trebate postići. Sin Čovječji je spreman da se usigne do Očeve desne strane, tako da je u meni sada otvoren još širi put kojim možete vidjeti Boga i prilikom okončanja svog veličanstvenog napretka, postati savršeni, kao što je Otac na nebu savršen."

Kad su apostoli čuli ove zaprepastujuće riječi, sjetili su se Ivanovih tvrdnji u vrijeme Isusovog krštenja, a ovaj su događaj također jasno prizvali u sjećanje prilikom svojih propovijedi i učenja nakon Učiteljeve smrti i ukrsnuća.

Isus je božanski Sin, onaj koji uživa puno povjerenje Oca Svih. On je već prije ovih događaja bio kod Oca i u cjelosti ga razumije. On je već imao priliku živjeti punim životom u potpunom skladu s Očevom voljom i poslije ovog utjelovljenja primio je punu moć razumijevanja ljudskih bića. Isus je bio ljudsko savršenstvo; postigao je upravo onoliko savršenstvo kakvo ljudi trebaju postići pri ostvarenju svoje konačne sudbine u njemu i kroz njega. Isus je ljudima obznanio Boga savršenstva, dok je u sebi predočio usavršenog sina Božjih domena.

Premda je Isus govorio više sati, Tomo još nije bio zadovoljan, već je upitao: "Ali, Učitelju, mi često nađemo da se Otac Nebeski ne odnosi prema nama tako blago i milostivo. Vrlo često za svog zemaljskog života podnosimo teške patnje, i molitve nam nisu uvijek slišene. U čemu griješimo pri svom nastojanju da razumijemo tvoja učenja?"

Isus je odgovorio: "Tomo, Tomo, kada ćeš konačno steći sposobnost slušanja ušima duha? Kada ćeš konačno shvatiti da je ovo kraljevstvo duhovno kraljevstvo i da je moj Otac duhovno biće? Zar ne shvaćaš da vas ja poučavam kao duhovnu djecu u nebeskoj obitelji duha, kojom upravlja očinska osoba beskonačnog i vječnog duha? Zar mi nećeš konačno dopustiti da upotrijebim ovu ideju zemaljske obitelji kao ilustraciju božanskih odnosa, ne pokušavajući doslovce primijeniti moja učenja na materijalne stvari? Zar ne možete u svojim umovima odvojiti duhovne

realities of the kingdom from the material, social, economic, and political problems of the age? When I speak the language of the spirit, why do you insist on translating my meaning into the language of the flesh just because I presume to employ commonplace and literal relationships for purposes of illustration? My children, I implore that you cease to apply the teaching of the kingdom of the spirit to the sordid affairs of slavery, poverty, houses, and lands, and to the material problems of human equity and justice. These temporal matters are the concern of the men of this world, and while in a way they affect all men, you have been called to represent me in the world, even as I represent my Father. You are spiritual ambassadors of a spiritual kingdom, special representatives of the spirit Father. By this time it should be possible for me to instruct you as full-grown men of the spirit kingdom. Must I ever address you only as children? Will you never grow up in spirit perception? Nevertheless, I love you and will bear with you, even to the very end of our association in the flesh. And even then shall my spirit go before you into all the world."

8. IN SOUTHERN JUDEA

By the end of April the opposition to Jesus among the Pharisees and Sadducees had become so pronounced that the Master and his apostles decided to leave Jerusalem for a while, going south to work in Bethlehem and Hebron. The entire month of May was spent in doing personal work in these cities and among the people of the surrounding villages. No public preaching was done on this trip, only house-to-house visitation. A part of this time, while the apostles taught the gospel and ministered to the sick, Jesus and Abner spent at Engedi, visiting the Nazarite colony. John the Baptist had gone forth from this place, and Abner had been head of this group. Many of the Nazarite brotherhood became believers in Jesus, but the majority of these ascetic and eccentric men refused to accept him as a teacher sent from heaven because he did not teach fasting and other forms of self-denial.

The people living in this region did not know that Jesus had been born in Bethlehem. They always supposed the Master had been born at Nazareth, as did the vast majority of his disciples, but the twelve knew the facts.

This sojourn in the south of Judea was a restful and fruitful season of labor; many souls were added to the kingdom. By the first days of June the agitation against Jesus had so quieted down in Jerusalem that the Master and the apostles returned to instruct and comfort believers.

Although Jesus and the apostles spent the entire month of June in or near Jerusalem, they did no public teaching during this period. They lived for the most part in tents, which they pitched in a shaded park, or garden, known in that day as Gethsemane. This park was situated on the western slope of the Mount of

stvarnosti kraljevstva od materijalnih, društvenih, ekonomskih i političkih problema ovoga razdoblja? Kad govorim jezikom duha, zašto insistiraš na prevođenju značenja mojih riječi na zemaljski i tjelesni jezik jedino zato što u cilju ilustracije slučajno koristim svakodnevne i doslovne odnose? Moja djeco, molim vas da prekinete priijenjivati učenja kraljevstva duha na žalosna pitanja ropstva, siromaštva, gazdinstava i posjeda, kao i drugih materijalnih problema ljudskog poštenja i pravde. Ova se privremena zemaljska pitanja odnose na ljude ovoga svijeta i premda na određeni način pogađaju sve ljude, pozvao sam vas da me zastupate pred cijelim svijetom, upravo kao što ja zastupam svoga Oca. Vi ste duhovni poslanici duhovnog kraljevstva, specijalni zastupnici Očevog duha. Konačno bih trebao biti u stanju da vam se obratim kao potpuno zrelim i odraslim ljudima u kraljevstvu duha. Moram li vam se uvijek obraćati kao da ste djeca? Zar nikada ne mislite odrasti u spoznaji duha? U svakom slučaju, ja vas volim i nosiću se s vama, do samog konca našeg zemaljskog odnosa. A i nakon toga moj će duh ići pred vama u cijelom svijetu."

8. U JUŽNOJ JUDEJI

Prije kraja mjeseca travnja, toliko je porasla opozicija prema Isus među farizejima i saducejima, da su Učitelj i njegovi apostoli odlučili napustiti Jeruzalem na određeno vrijeme i otići raditi južno, prema Betlehemu i Hebronu. Proveli su cijeli svibanj u osobnom radu u ovim gradovima i među narodom u obližnjima selima. Na ovom putovanju nisu držali javne govore, već su jedino išli u posjetu ljudima od vrata do vrata. Dio ovog vremena, dok su apostoli poučavali evanđelje i služili bolesnima, Isus i Abner su proveli u En-gedi, u posjeti naziretskoj koloniji. Ivan Krstitelj je izišao iz ovoga mjesta, dok je Abner bio poglavar ove grupe. Mnogi su pripadnici nazaritskog bratstva postali vjernici u Isusa, dok je većina ovih asketa i ekcentričara odbijala da ga prihvati kao učitelja koji je poslan s neba zbog toga što nije preporučao post i druge oblike samoodricanja.

Ljudi iz ove oblasti nisu znali da je Isus rođen u Betlehemu. Uvijek su mislili da je bio rođen u Nazaretu, kao što je to mislila i većina jegovih učenika, dok su apostoli znali istinu.

Ovo je putovanje južnom Judejom bilo lagodno i plodonosno radno razdoblje; uveli su mnoge duše u kraljevstvo. Početkom lipnja agitacija protiv Isusa se toliko utišala u Jeruzalemu da se Učitelj vratio s apostolima kako bi nastavio s poukama i tješenjem vjernika.

Premda su Isus i apostoli proveli cijeli lipanj u Jeruzalemu i okolici, nisu držali jave propovijedi i učenja za vrijeme ovog perioda. Uglavnom su živjeli u taborima koje su podizali u sjenovitom parku, ili vrtu, koji je u ovo vrijeme bio poznat kao Getsemanija. Ovaj je park bio smješten na zapadnim padinama Maslinske

Olives not far from the brook Kidron. The Sabbath week ends they usually spent with Lazarus and his sisters at Bethany. Jesus entered within the walls of Jerusalem only a few times, but a large number of interested inquirers came out to Gethsemane to visit with him. One Friday evening Nicodemus and one Joseph of Arimathea ventured out to see Jesus but turned back through fear even after they were standing before the entrance to the Master's tent. And, of course, they did not perceive that Jesus knew all about their doings.

When the rulers of the Jews learned that Jesus had returned to Jerusalem, they prepared to arrest him; but when they observed that he did no public preaching, they concluded that he had become frightened by their previous agitation and decided to allow him to carry on his teaching in this private manner without further molestation. And thus affairs moved along quietly until the last days of June, when one Simon, a member of the Sanhedrin, publicly espoused the teachings of Jesus, after so declaring himself before the rulers of the Jews. Immediately a new agitation for Jesus' apprehension sprang up and grew so strong that the Master decided to retire into the cities of Samaria and the Decapolis.

Gore u blizini potoka Kidrona. Subote su uglavnom prorovidili s Lazarom i njegovim sestrama u Betaniji. Isus je jedino par puta ušao unutar zidina Jeruzalema, dok ga je veliki broj zainteresiranih došao posjetiti u Getsemaniju. Jednog su petka Nikodem i određeni Josip iz Arimateje došli da posjete Isusa, ali su se od straha okrenuli natrag nakon što su se našli pred samim njegovim taborom. Naravno, nisu znali da je Isus znao za njihova djela.

Kad su židovski učitelji saznali da se Isus vratio u Jeruzalem, spremali su se da ga uhite; ali kad su vidjeli da nije poduzimao javna učenja, zaključili su da je strahovao od njihove ranije agitacije i da je tako donio odluku da će nastaviti sa svojim učenjima na ovaj privatni način bez straha od maltretiranja. I tako su se poslovi odvijali tiho sve do posljednjeg lipanjskog dana kad je određeni Šimun, pripadnik Velikog vijeća, javno prihvatio Isusova učenja, što je objavio pred samim židovskim vladarima. Istog je časa započeo novi talas agitacije u cilju Isusovog uhićenja, koji je toliko ojačao da se Učitelj odlučio povući u gradove Samarije i Dekapolisa.