

Our Saviour

Anonymous

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OUR SAVIOUR

Father Tuck's NEW TESTAMENT Series.

[Illustration: Our Savior.]

Our Saviour.

[Illustration]

Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ had been quietly living for many years at His father's home in Nazareth when John the Baptist began to preach and prepare the people for His coming, as it had been foretold by an Angel before His birth that he should do, and we are told that all the land of Judea, and the people of Jerusalem, roused by his preaching, went to be baptized by him in the river Jordan, after confessing their sins.

John told them that One much greater than he was to come after him, One

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whose shoes he was not worthy to unloose, for he could only baptize them with water and exhort them to repent of their sins while there was yet time, but He who was to come after would baptize them with the Holy Ghost. This he did till Jesus Himself came from Nazareth to the Jordan, and desired John, the companion of His childhood, to baptize Him also. John objected, saying that he himself had need to be baptized of Jesus, and was not worthy to perform the office for Him, but our gracious Saviour insisted till John led Him into the river and baptized Him.

As they returned to the land a very wonderful thing happened, for the heavens opened above, and the Spirit of God, in the form of a dove, descended, and alighted upon Jesus, whilst a voice was heard saying "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Then John went on his way, preaching more and more to the people, and telling every one who would listen to him of the marvellous thing he had seen; whilst Christ went away by Himself into a lonely place called a wilderness, where, for forty days, and forty nights, He was tempted by the devil in all manner of ways, but finding that, by the help of God His Father, Jesus was enabled to resist all temptation to sin, and would worship and serve none but the true God, the devil at length left Him, and "Angels came and ministered unto Him."

[Illustration]

From that time, Jesus being then about thirty years of age, He began to preach, and exhort to repentance as John had done before Him. One day as He walked beside the sea of Galilee He saw two brothers named Simon-Peter and Andrew, fishing by the shore. These men He called to Him and bade them follow Him for He would make them fishers of men, and they immediately left their nets and followed Him. Presently, as they walked along the shore, they saw two other fishermen brothers--James and John, the sons of Zebedee, in a boat with their father, mending the great, brown nets with which they caught fish on the Syrian coasts, and called them also, and they too left their nets and their father and followed Him. They were the first four of the twelve disciples whom Jesus by degrees gathered about Him, and who were His companions and assistants in His future work. With His disciples Christ travelled over the whole land of Syria, now called the Holy Land, teaching in the churches and preaching about the Kingdom of His Father, and healing all manner of diseases and sicknesses amongst the people, until the fame of His sayings and doings spread every where, and the sick and suffering and diseased were brought to Him from all quarters that He might heal them. This He never refused to do, for His heart was so overflowing with divine love and pity for mankind that He could not see suffering or misery without healing it.

[Illustration: Jesus is Baptized.]

[Illustration]

But so immense grew the multitude of people who began to follow and press about Him, that He had no room to teach or to preach, no opportunity to rest and talk quietly with His disciples either night or day.

Seeing this He went up a mountain side, and sat down, and His disciples came to Him, and there He began to instruct the people by preaching to them that most grand and beautiful sermon called the Sermon on the Mount, which contains not only the lessons taught by the series of blessings called "The Beatitudes", at the commencement, but that prayer

of prayers known to every child as the "Lord's Prayer", because it is the only one which Christ Himself taught word for word with His own lips, and which has remained unaltered through the nineteen hundred years which have gone by since He lived on earth.

[Illustration]

The people were very much astonished, not only at what Christ preached to them, but because He spoke as if He had direct authority for what He said, and this they could not understand, because they had not forgotten that He was the Son of Joseph the Carpenter of Nazareth.

When Jesus came down from the mountain side, great multitudes followed Him, many of whom were sick and entreated Him to heal them, and He not only did so, but performed many yet greater miracles, such as making the blind to see and the deaf to hear, and even restoring to life some that were dead, always however, impressing on those about Him, that it was not by His own power that He did these things, but by faith in the Spirit of God His Father who moved within Him.

After having sufficiently taught His disciples by quiet talks, by speaking to them through parables and letting them behold the miracles He Himself performed, until they thoroughly believed in His Divine power, Christ called the whole twelve around Him and gave them also the power to perform miracles, to heal all manner of sickness and disease, and then sent them forth to teach and preach in all the cities of Israel. He laid upon them many injunctions as to their conduct as they travelled, how they were to give offence to no one, and to teach brotherly love and the forgiveness of injuries between man and man as freely as God had promised to forgive them.

[Illustration: By the Sea of Galilee.]

Now and then, by twos and threes, some of the disciples came back to Jesus to report to Him what they had done and how they had been received, and how the fame of His Name and teaching was spreading far and wide; and so it happened that He was seldom without one or two of these loved and trusted followers about Him as He journeyed, sometimes stopping a few days in one place, sometimes crossing the inland sea of Galilee, or going from city to city along the coast in a boat or ship, but always doing good wherever He went, preaching the Gospel of his Father, and winning men, women, and children to follow Him.

Our Saviour had no comfortable home such as you have; often and often He had nowhere to lay His head at night, but weary and hungry after a long day's ministry, He would stretch Himself on the ground wherever He might be at the time, and sleep with the grass for His bed, and the starry sky for His curtains.

[Illustration]

All through His life, which He spent in loving service towards men, our Saviour was specially kind and tender to little children. One day He was so much inconvenienced by the number of women with children in their arms pressing upon Him, and entreating Him to bless their little ones, that the disciples who were with Him rebuked the mothers; but Jesus said to them "Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." Then He told those about Him that if only they would receive His teaching of the Kingdom of God, and believe in Him as simply and entirely as little children did, they would inherit Eternal Life; and He would take the little ones who clustered

round His feet into His loving arms and bless them.

[Illustration]

On another occasion when His disciples were disputing as to who should be the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven, Jesus called a little child and set him in the midst of them, and said whoever should be as meek and humble as a little child should be the greatest; and whoever received a little child with love and reverence in His Name, received Him, and then He warned them to take heed and not despise little children, and never to say or do anything that should stain the innocency of their minds because "In Heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father." You, little children who read this book, must remember that you are just as much the care of your Good Shepherd now, as were those privileged ones of old who actually saw Him face to face, you must have faith in Him as they had, and believe that though you cannot see Him now, He is still, and always at your side, seeing all you do, hearing all you say, watching over you, and, if you will only let Him, willing to guide you safely to the Home in Heaven which He has gone to prepare for those that love Him and try to do His will.

[Illustration: The Last Supper.]

Feeling that He must go through Samaria, where He had not yet preached, our Saviour travelled on alone and came to a well which is called Jacob's well; being very weary He seated Himself on the edge to rest. He was very thirsty also, and on a woman coming up with a pitcher, He asked her to draw Him some water: when He had drunk, He said that if she knew who He was she would have asked Him for water instead, for He could give her the Living Water of Everlasting Life. Then He told her who He was, and she went away to the city telling every one she met Whom she had seen: some of the disciples then joined Him, and Jesus remained two days in the city preaching so that many believed in Him, and on the way back into Galilee He healed a nobleman's son of a mortal sickness.

[Illustration]

On returning to Bethany, Jesus heard that Lazarus, the brother of Martha and Mary, two sisters whom He loved, had died during His absence. Martha met Him weeping, and told Him of their grief saying "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died," for she knew Jesus would have saved him. Jesus Himself wept to see their sorrow, and going to the grave ordered the stone to be rolled away and called Lazarus to come forth; Lazarus did so, and many of those present believed in Jesus, but others went away and told the High Priests and rulers, who were much troubled, for they said "If we let this man go many will believe in Him, and His adherents will become too powerful, and will take our nation away from us."

The people of Bethany made a supper for our Lord, and Lazarus and Martha and Mary were there, together with the disciples; the Feast of the Passover was near, and Jerusalem was crowded, and the Chief Priests became still more uneasy for more and more of the people every day believed in Christ, and when they heard He was coming to Jerusalem went out to meet Him with branches of palm, crying "Hosannah--Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord," and the people said "Behold, the world is gone after Him."

[Illustration]

Jesus knew that the time was now come when He should depart from this

world and go to His Father, and told His disciples so, saying they must not be troubled, for there were many mansions in His Father's House and He was but going before to prepare a place there for them. Then, being sorrowful at heart, our Lord went up to a garden called Gethsemane, and prayed to His Father that the souls of all mankind might be saved and come at last to share the glory of Heaven. Whilst He prayed, one of His disciples, who knew where He was, wickedly betrayed Him to the Chief Priests, and guided a band of soldiers to the garden, who bound Him and led Him to the High Priest Caiaphas, who in turn sent Him to be judged by Pontius Pilate the Governor.

[Illustration: The Ascension.]

Pilate, when he had heard of what the people accused Jesus, knew that it was for envy they were excited against Him, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying he found no fault in Him, and he would have nothing to do with shedding the blood of an innocent man. "His blood be on us and our children" cried the people and they roughly dragged Him away, and beat Him, and made Him carry a heavy cross of wood up Mount Calvary where they crucified Him, by nailing Him to the cross. Now Mary the Mother of Jesus, and another woman, also named Mary, and many of the disciples had followed in the crowd; they could not save our Lord from His cruel death, but when He was dead, they, together with a good man called Joseph, were allowed to take His body down from the cross, and lay it in a tomb belonging to Joseph, hewn out of a rock in a garden, and they set a great stone upon it. It had been foretold that Jesus should rise again on the third day, so, fearing that His disciples should steal away the body, and pretend that He had risen, the Chief Priests set keepers to guard the tomb.

[Illustration]

Mary, the Mother of Jesus, and the other Mary, went to visit the tomb early in the morning of the third day, and there was a great earthquake and the Angel of God descended and rolled back the stone and sat upon it, so that the keepers shook with afright, but the Angel said "Fear not, for Jesus is not here, He is risen, as He, said." so the two Marys ran to tell His disciples the great news, and on their way met Jesus Himself, and they fell at His feet and worshipped Him. He told them to go and tell His disciples to go into Galilee and He would meet them there. This He did, and for the last time He met them on a hill side in Bethany, and again taught them, telling them still to go out into the world and preach repentance and the remission of sins in His Name. Then He lifted up His hands, and blessed them, and even as He did so, He was suddenly carried up into Heaven and hidden from their sight.

Helen Marion Burnside.

[Illustration]

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