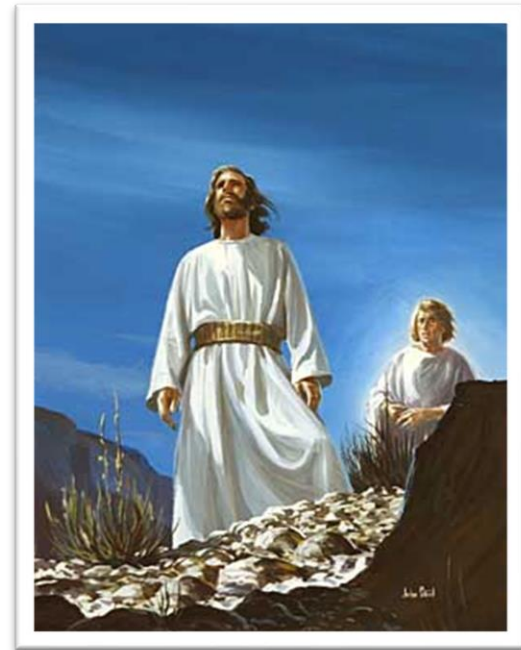


Jesus with Eliud, the Essenian

The valley through which Jesus went by night from Kisloth-Thabor is called Edron, and the shep-herd village in whose synagogue the Pharisees of Nazareth had so derided Him was named Chimki. The people with whom Jesus and the five disciples put up outside of Nazareth were Essenians and friends of the Holy Family. The Essenians, both men and women, dwelt around here in the ruins of old stone vaults, solitary and unmarried. The former wore long white garments, the latter mantles, and both cultivated little gardens. They had once dwelt near Herod's castle in the valley of Zabulon but out of friendship for the Holy Family had come hither. He with whom Jesus stayed was named Eliud. He was a very venerable, gray-haired old man with a long beard. He was a widower, and his daughter took care of him. He was the son of a brother of Zacharias. The Essenians lived very retired around here, attended the synagogue at Nazareth, and were very devoted to the Holy Family. The care of Mary's house during her absence had been entrusted to them.



Next morning the five disciples of Jesus went into Nazareth to visit their relatives and acquaintances, also the school. Jesus, however, stayed with Eliud, with whom He prayed and very confidentially conversed, for to that simple-hearted, pious man many mysteries had been revealed.

There were four women in Mary's house besides herself: her niece, Mary Cleophas; Johanna Chusa, a cousin of Anna the Prophetess; the relative of Simeon, Mary, mother of John Marc; and the widow Lea. Veronica was no longer there, nor was Peter's wife, whom I had lately seen at the place where the publicans lived.

The Blessed Virgin and Mary Cleophas came to Jesus in the morning. Jesus stretched out His hand to His Mother, His manner to her being affectionate, though very earnest and grave. Mary was anxious about Him. She begged Him not to go to Nazareth, for the feeling against Him there was very bitter. The Pharisees belonging to Nazareth, who had heard Him in the synagogue of Chimki, had again roused indignation against Him. Jesus replied to His

Mother's entreaties that He would await where He was the multitude that were to go with Him to the baptism of John, and then pass through Nazareth. Jesus conversed much with His Mother on this day, for she came to Him two or three times. He told her that He would go up to Jerusalem three times for the Pasch, but that the last time would be one of great affliction for her. He revealed to her many other mysteries, but I have forgotten them.

Mary Cleophas was a handsome, distinguished looking woman. She spoke with Jesus that morning of her five sons, and entreated Him to take them into His own service. One was a clerk, or a kind of magistrate, named Simon; two were fishermen, James the Less and Jude Thaddeus, and these three were the sons of her first marriage. Alpheus, her first husband, was a widower with one son when she married him. This stepson was named Matthew. She wept bitterly when she spoke of him, for he was a publican. Joses Barsabas, who also was at the fishery, was her son by her second husband Sabas; and, by her third marriage with the fisherman Jonas, she had another son, the young Simeon still a boy. Jesus consoled her, promising that all her sons would one day follow Him. Of Matthew, whom He had already seen when on His way to Sidon, He spoke words of comfort, foretelling that he would one day be one of His best disciples.

The Blessed Virgin returned from Nazareth with some of her female relatives to her abode near Capharnaum. Servants had come with asses from the latter place to conduct them home. They took several pieces of furniture with them which, after their last journey, had been left behind in Nazareth, various kinds of tapestry and woven stuffs, packages of other things, and some vessels. All were packed in chests formed of broad strips of inner or outer bark, and fastened to the sides of the asses. Mary's house in Nazareth was so ornamented that it had, during her absence, the appearance of a chapel. The fireplace looked like an altar. A chest was placed over it on which stood a flowerpot with a plant growing in it. After Mary's departure this time, the Essenians occupied the house.