

soul. Man's duty does not consist in belief or profession, but in performance of actions, moral, or spiritual. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God (*Greek*, thy Holy One) with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and Great Commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

January 3. Acts i:1-14.

It will serve no particular purpose so far as we are concerned to point out, as the Higher Criticism has done, what a flimsy piece of composition the Acts of the Apostles is from the historical point of view. Most scholars are agreed that it is a kind of patch-work in which several hands appear. We are more interested in trying to discover what unifying idea may underlie the self-contradictory statements that appear in it, and those which disagree with other New Testament writings. The Paul of the Acts, for example, is a different man to Paul of the Epistles. The narrative begins with an account of the Ascension from Olive Tree Hill of Jesus the Christ, or, (as these are titles and not names, His name being Emmanuel,) the Anointed Saviour. In I Samuel xvi: 11-13, we have a description of the anointing of the Beloved One, for the name David is also a title. To understand the writings of the Jewish Christians properly we must accept the statement made by them that Emmanuel, the Anointed Saviour, or Deliverer, was a reincarnation of David the Beloved. The technical expression Son of David meant neither more nor less than this, and the Prophet of Nazareth is the only "Son of David" who has the title. In Matthew xvi: 13-17, we have a conversation between the Lord and His disciples. "Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man (a title used by David, Psalms viii: 4 and cxliv: 3) am?" And they said, "Some say that Thou art John the Baptist; some Elijah; and others Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." He said unto them, "But whom say ye that I am?" And Simon Peter answered and said unto him, "Thou art the Anointed, the Son of

the living Holy One." And Jesus (the Deliverer) answered and said unto him, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in the Overworld" (*Ouranos*). His title of King of the Jews originated also from this fact of the secret teaching of the time. See also Revelation v: 5, and xxii: 16. The relation of the Messianic psalms to the events of the life of the Nazarene from any other point of view is purely arbitrary and artificial, and has long been a perplexity to sceptical writers and thinkers who can discover absolutely no external reason for the applications made by theologians who in turn have no reason to offer, except that of authority. The query in the present passage, verse 6, "Lord, dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" becomes at least intelligible, without making the disciples to appear to be such an entirely dunder headed and materialistic set of people as theologians tell us they were. The idea of a future coming has been much misunderstood and confused with the "coming in the clouds with great glory" described in Revelations, and copied from the Indian prophecies in the Vishnu Purana about the Kalki Avatar, and from the Persian scriptures about Sosiosh, whose coming is to take place 427,000 years hence when the race shall have been regenerated, at the close of the Kali Yuga or Black Age. "This Deliverer," said the two men in white apparel, "which was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld Him going into heaven (the Overworld)." If this be so, whatever our opinion about the Crucifixion and Resurrection, literal or mystical, there would be no more public knowledge of His return than of His departure. A few faithful ones alone would be aware of it. If His goings forth (Micah v: 2) have been from of old, from everlasting, we may suppose that they were all accomplished in the same quiet manner, "like a thief in the night." His direct promise was (Matt. xxviii. 20) "Lo, I am with you all the days even unto the consummation of the age."