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# THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS:

A Scriptural Exposition.

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## THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS.

“THERE was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day; and there was a certain beggar, named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table; moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell, he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried, and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime, receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed; so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us that would come from thence. Then he said, I pray thee, therefore, father, that thou wouldst send him to my father’s house; for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham; but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.” (Luke xvi. 19-31.)

That the first three verses of this remarkable and famous Scripture may be taken literally, is obvious. That a rich man should live in splendid style, and surround himself with the luxuries which wealth commands, is an every day fact, and has been so in all ages; that a beggar full of sores should be laid at his gate, desiring to be fed with crumbs from his table, and that the homeless dogs of an eastern city, came and licked the poor man’s sores, are also circum-

stances every way likely to have been frequently seen by our Lord's hearers. But the wonderful pictorial prophecy which is founded upon these ordinary facts begins in the next verse, and with it the literal ceases; whilst the literal basis of the parable is itself transformed into the highly parabolic by the reflex action of that which follows.

"And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom."

This at once settles the question of figure, or fact. Fact it cannot be. Otherwise, you have the extraordinary thought of angels carrying a dead man, a loathsome corpse, to the bosom of Abraham; and if by this last expression you understand "heaven," then the whole idea is so grossly, and repulsively absurd, that it must be rejected at once. But it is said that it was "the soul of Lazarus," not his body, that was carried to heaven. I know this is "said," but as the Lord does *not* say it, the interpolation, invented to support a theological theory, cannot be admitted. There is nothing here about soul or spirit, and it will be prudent for all Christian men to remember that it is not a proof of loyalty to put words into the Master's lips which he did not utter. We must either therefore insist upon angels bearing a dead man to heaven, or give up the notion that this Scripture is a narrative of facts describing the condition of the righteous and the wicked immediately after death. And, moreover, if you insist upon the literal, I must remind you of the important fact that there is nothing said about the moral character of either of these men. It is not said that the rich man was wicked, it is not even hinted that he was cruel, and that he forbade his servants to give the poor man at his gate the crumbs of his costly dinner; nor have we the slightest suggestion that Lazarus was a pious man. When an interpretation requires so many groundless assumptions, the best way is to give it up, as utterly destitute of doctrinal value.

"The rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom."

There is nothing said about the burial of Lazarus. Blessed be God, no! There is a glorious meaning in this, which will subsequently come before us. The rich man, however, was "buried," a parabolic suggestion of terrible significance, as will presently appear. "In hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments." Of course, these words cannot be lightly read. Their natural effect is to produce solemnity. The image they picture on the mind, is extremely painful; and the enormous horrors which theologians have heaped—ay, I am sorry to say, have sometimes apparently delighted to heap—upon them, can only be alluded to, in passing, as a distressing proof of the errors which have remained in the Church since

the dark ages. Our teachers should have seen that if a man was literally dead and buried he could not possibly lift up his eyes either in hell or anywhere else, and that consequently our Lord was suggesting some momentous truth to his Jewish hearers through the medium of a parable. And this parable is unequalled for the vividness of its imagery. The word translated "hell" here is *hades*, the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew *sheol*, and of the English *grave*, and would not suggest to the Jewish mind the hell-fire of Matt. v. 22. The design and place of that were well known to Christ's hearers. *Gehenna* is the abbreviated form of the Hebrew terms *ge-Hinnom*, the valley of Hinnom, or as it is also put, the valley of the son of Hinnom. The origin of the name is lost, but it is very ancient, as it is mentioned in Joshua (xv. 8). "And the border went up by the valley of the son of Hinnom, unto the south side of the Jebusite, the same is Jerusalem." But only in later times did the name acquire an evil meaning. Manasseh was the cause of its infamy, for this was the place in which that wretched man caused his children to pass through the fire to Moloch. "He caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom." (2 Chron. xxxiii. 6.) Josiah afterwards, among his reforming measures, defiled the place by making it the common receptacle of the filth of the city. Of course on such putrid matter worms fed; but fires were also constantly kept burning, to consume the refuse. Here, too, the dead bodies of criminals were thrown to be reduced to ashes; and *this* is the origin of Isaiah's expression: "They shall go forth and look upon the carcases of the men who have transgressed against me, for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched." This, too, is the "everlasting fire" of Scripture; a fire which shall not be quenched, meaning, of necessity, therefore, the *utter destruction* of every thing cast into it.

The popular pulpit doctrine, that the soul of the rich man was tormented in this hell, cannot be admitted, for there is nothing about "soul" in the text. There is not in the Bible a solitary instance of the punishment of "disembodied souls." We have a mournful superabundance of it in religious books, but not a hint of it in the Book with which all religious books should agree, if they are to be of any value. Neither rewards nor punishments are given until after judgment, and judgment takes not place until resurrection, for it is with living men "in the body" that the Judge will deal, and not with "disembodied souls."

Surely sober and serious thought must convince any one, that the conversation between the rich man and Abraham must be parabolic; for Abraham himself was dead. If Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are consciously alive, our Lord's argument to convince the Sadducees of resurrection loses its point. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living: *therefore*, these honoured saints shall rise

from the dead some day: that is the argument, and it is irresistible. The Sadducees felt it so, and they were not easily silenced.

There are other points that prove this Scripture a parable: for example: the extraordinary prayer that Lazarus would dip the tip of his finger in water, to cool the petitioner's tongue. Surely this was the very minimum of mercy, and yet it was refused. But all that seems necessary on this part of the subject has been said; and now let us try to gather from Scripture what the parable was meant to teach those in whose hearing it was spoken.

The essence of a parable is partly to conceal, and partly to reveal. The kingdom was in "mystery," because the people were about to reject the King. Without his presence, of course, the Kingdom was impossible. "Why speakest thou unto them in parables?" said the disciples to their Lord. His answer is the key to the position. "He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables, because they seeing, see not; and hearing, they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing, ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive; for this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." (Matt. xiii. 11-15.)

Now, by the "rich man," I have not the slightest doubt that the Jewish nation is represented. God dealt with his people *nationally*. That the descriptive phrases, "clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day," as symbolic proofs of his wealth, are applicable to the Jew, nationally considered, is beyond controversy. Let us look at the physical character of his estate: "The Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack anything in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass." (Deut. viii. 7-9.) "For the land whither thou goest in to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs; but the land whither ye go in to possess it is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven; a land which the Lord thy God careth for: the eyes of the Lord thy God are

always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year." (Chap. xi. 10-12.)

The Lord speaks by Ezekiel and Hosea of the rich productions of this estate as "My gold, and my silver, my fine flour, and oil, and honey; my corn, and my wine, my wool, and my flax."

This man had above all, wondrous wealth of religious privileges, whilst all other nations were in this respect desperately poor, miserable beggars, covered with the moral sores of abominable idolatries. Paul sums up the religious riches of Israel in a few words, each of which contains thought enough for a volume: "To whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever." (Rom. ix. 4, 5.)

He was clothed in "purple and fine linen." These royal and priestly robes gave him peculiar distinction and glory, as the chosen witness to the world of the only true God. This was the arrangement: "Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people; for all the earth is mine; and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation." (Ex. xix. 5, 6.) Thus, with his glorious climate, the treasures of the earth, the special blessing of heaven, and the knowledge of the only true God, this man was "rich" in a far higher sense than any of his neighbours that lived beyond the boundaries of this beautiful and fertile land. But, after all, though the royal purple, and the priestly linen adorn his person, he is only a conditional tenant, and if the condition of occupancy has not been fulfilled, it may be that the Divine proprietor will remove him from the estate, and put another in his place. And he did.

Let us suppose that you are in the palace of this princely man. He has honoured you with an invitation to dine with him. Come here for a few moments. Let us look out of this window. What a splendid scene! Vineyards, olive yards, forests of magnificent cedars, luxuriant valleys, a wonderfully picturesque river, with broad lakes here and there in its course: mountains covered to their summits with rich vegetation, innumerable flocks of cattle and sheep, cities and towns sparkling in the light of a Syrian sun, and above all, and shedding a mysterious glory over all, a splendid temple, the original design of which was formed in no human brain, and the worship in which is regulated by no human authority. *This* is the rich man's dwelling. Surely, he can never be so utterly infatuated as to break the covenant under which he holds this magnificent region.

But withdraw your view from distant objects. What is that lying at the gate? The pictorial prophecy tells you. It is a poor man waiting for some of the waste of your ample feast. Poverty seldom comes alone; and in this case, as it often does, it has

brought with it troublesome sores.\* And dogs, according to their affectionate nature, alleviate, as far as they can, the distressing heat and pain endured by the suffering man. The Jews branded the Gentiles as "dogs," unclean animals, from which ceremonial purity must keep at a safe distance. A pathetic illustration of this is given in the case of a woman of Canaan, who, with a mother's love for a daughter plagued with a demon, implored the Son of David to pity her. She admits the impropriety of casting the children's bread to dogs, but touchingly suggests the "crumbs" that fall from the children's table. "Lord, help me!" is her cry. Of course, he did. But what have we here? "Lord, help me!" Why, it is the very meaning of the poor man's name, Lazarus, *Λαζαρος*, or Eliezer,—*Ελιέζερ*—*God my help*. Lazarus, therefore, appears in the parable as the representative of the Gentiles. They had such help on the great questions of life, death, and eternity, as their priests and philosophers could give; but it amounted to no more in the way of moral light, and recovery from the abominations of idolatry, than did the licking of bodily sores by dogs towards robust physical health. But "God is the help" of poor Lazarus, and the rich man shall no longer have a monopoly of heaven's precious gifts, which he has turned into selfish luxury, and shamefully abused.

"And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom." This was the way that God helped him—became to him what his name, "Lazarus," signified. He "died." In a tropical or figurative manner, of course, for the parabolic structure of the speech is kept up throughout with wonderful accuracy. He died to his sores, and obtained health; to his poverty, and obtained wealth; to his crumbs, and went to take his seat with the father of the faithful himself at a table abundantly furnished with the bread and the water of life. This figurative use of death is found in several passages of Scripture. "How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? He that is dead is freed from sin." (Rom. vi. 2, 7.) "I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God." (Gal. ii. 19.) "Dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world." "Ye are dead,—ye died,—and your life is hid with Christ in God." (Col. ii. 20; iii. 3.)

He was "carried by the angels." There was no funeral in this case; happily, Lazarus has no company of mourners, either honest, or hired, to carry him to a grave; he is alive and full of joy; in fact, he was never acquainted with the sublime secret of human life until now; for he is "alive unto God in Christ." But who are the angels—*των αγγελων*—that carried Lazarus into Abraham's

\* For a description of the fearful "sores" of the Gentile world, see Rom. i. 20-32.



bosom? They are messengers; this is the meaning of the word. Peter was one of them, and he carried Cornelius, the Roman soldier, to the bosom of Abraham, as soon as God scattered his Jewish prejudices, and told him not to call the Gentiles common, or unclean any more. Paul was another honoured angel of the Lord sent to bring the Gentiles into God's great banqueting house. Here is the message with which this noble messenger was charged: "Rise, and stand upon thy feet; for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of those things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles unto whom I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." (Acts xxvi. 16-18.) Were it not painfully suggestive of the darkness that hangs over many portions of Scripture, through traditional theology, it would be amusing to read the reasons given by the Commentators, why the burial of Lazarus is not mentioned. One says, "He was buried, no doubt—necessity required this; but he had the burial of a pauper, while the pomp and pride of the other, followed him to the tomb." A second says, "Poor Lazarus was soon delivered from his sufferings by the friendly stroke of death; and as his body had not been the great object of his care, so no account is given how it was disposed of: the survivors, for their own sakes, would put it somewhere out of the way, where it would sleep till the resurrection." A third says, "His burial was too unimportant to mention." But this is enough of the light which guides no where.

"Into Abraham's bosom." What does this expression mean? Heaven? Abraham is not there yet. Paradise? The second Eden will not exist until the return of the Second Adam. The expression simply refers to the Jewish habit of reclining at meals when the nearest friend actually lay in the bosom of another. A well known instance occurs in connection with the last passover attended by our blessed Lord: "Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom, one of his disciples whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake. He then lying on Jesus' breast, saith unto him, Lord, who is it?" (John xiii. 23-25.) We, then, who are of the faith of Abraham, are *now* in Abraham's bosom. "Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So, then, they which be of faith, are blessed with faithful Abraham." (Gal. iii. 7-9.) "By revelation he made known unto me the mystery . . . which in other ages was

not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the Gospel." (Eph. iii. 3-6.) See also in this connection, Paul's beautiful metaphor of the branch of the wild olive grafted into a good olive tree. (Rom. xi.)

We come now to the case of the rich man; but let it be distinctly noticed, as proving the exact coherence of the images in the parable with the actual facts of history, that the death of Lazarus takes place first. Long before the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, which was, in fact, the death of the Jewish nation, and which took place in A.D. 70, great multitudes of Gentiles had received the Gospel, and were rejoicing in Christ Jesus.

"The rich man also died." Tropically,\* as in the case of Lazarus. He died to his wealth, to his purple and fine linen, and to his daily sumptuous fare. To pluck up and destroy a nation, to cut off a nation, and to cause a nation to perish, are expressions found in Scripture; and the thoughts they suggest are familiar to every one as entering largely into the history of the world. The unparalleled horrors of the death and burial of the rich man are related by Josephus, himself a Jew, a contemporary, and to some extent, an eye-witness of the ghastly scenes he describes. It makes one shudder to read the sixth and seventh books of the Jewish wars; the wholesale crucifixions, and burnings, and massacres, and torments to which the doomed people were subjected, have no parallel in human history. Their amazing obstinacy, their frantic resistance, under the idea that because they were the children of Abraham they could not be conquered, so maddened their conquerors that no kind of barbaric fury was thought bad enough for them. But it is too late to call upon Abraham when Abraham's faith and works are alike forsaken. It is too late to shout, "The temple of the Lord," when those who should have kept it sacred have turned it into a den of thieves. The people knew not their day of gracious visitation, and the strong eagle has fixed upon his prey, and will devour it.

But in fact, all this had stood on the prophetic page for fifteen centuries. Our Lord's parable of the death, burial, and torment of the rich man, condenses and confirms the prophetic word of his servant Moses. Let any one read that dreadful Scripture, Deut. xxviii. 15, to the end. It is a perfect storm of curses upon the nation, in case of disobedience to the commandments of God. I quote only one verse; but it gives a fearful picture of national calamities and death. "The Lord shall smite thee with a con-

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\* "The Lord God shall slay thee, and call his servants by another name." (Isa. lxxv. 15.) "The disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." (Acts xi. 26.)

sumption, and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and with an extreme burning, and with the sword, and with blasting, and with mildew ; and they shall pursue thee until thou perish." In Lev. xxvi. 16, it is written : " I will also do this unto you : I will appoint over you, terror, consumption, and the burning ague (fever), that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart."

" And was buried." This part of the picture need not detain us long ; for if the Jews were removed from Palestine, they were nationally buried. They were so by the triumphant Romans, the armies of the mighty empire officiating at the funeral. This too was clearly predicted : " I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land whereunto ye go over Jordan to possess it ; ye shall not prolong your days upon it, but shall utterly be destroyed." (Deut. iv. 26.) " Then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them ; and this house which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight ; and Israel shall be a proverb and a byword among all people." (1 Kings ix. 7.) " And the Lord said, I will remove Judah also out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off the city Jerusalem, which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, My name shall be there." (2 Kings xxiii. 27.) The multiplication of quotations on this point, is not necessary. Israel as a nation exists not. It is politically dead and buried ; and out of Palestine it can no more attend to the ceremonies of its religion than a dead man can attend to the duties of life. It is cast out of God's sight, as the literally dead are hidden in the grave.

" And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments." To the literally dead, the grave is the place between death and resurrection. It is the place of silent sleep, and its tenants know nothing of the care, and labour, and conflict of the living.

" There the wicked cease from troubling,  
And the weary are at rest.  
There the captives rest securely together,  
They hear not the voice of the oppressed.  
The small and the great are there,  
And the servant is free from his master."

But a nation metaphorically dead, for which a national resurrection is undoubtedly in store, may suffer much in its intermediate state of exile ; and so much and so fearfully have the Jews suffered for many ages and in many lands that the torment of fire and thirst is the only figure that can adequately express their experience.

The minor details of the parable, such as the " tip of the finger in water," and the " five brethren," whatever they may actually

teach, cannot affect the interpretation I have given; but there are three other matters upon which a few remarks seem necessary.

The "great gulf fixed," I understand as a side light on the question of time. I think it suggests that the Jews would continue in unbelief of the Messiahship of Jesus for a very long time, and of course, so long as this state of things continues, religious fellowship between Jews and Christians is quite impossible. No less than four times in one chapter (Lev. xxvi.) do we find the remarkable statement, that if the people would not accept God's chastisements, and turn to him, he would "punish them *seven times* more for their sins." This prolonging of the exile of the scattered nation seven times, in the event of their continued disobedience, is exceedingly suggestive. Eighteen centuries have elapsed since Judea was taken captive. The fatal cry, "We have no king but Cæsar," has not yet ceased to echo; but the great gulf will disappear some day, when the sevenfold chastisement will have done its work, and they shall say of JESUS, "Blessed be the KING!"

The phrase, "neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead," has its counterpart in the fact that One did rise from the dead; that his resurrection was amply proved by competent witnesses, and that some of these witnesses wrought undeniable miracles in the name of the Risen One; and yet they were not persuaded, nor are they to this day.

Finally, it is important to notice the connection between the three parables in Luke, of which this is the last. There is an obvious gradation, and this is the climax. We have the *elder son*, the *steward*, and the *rich man*. The family group shows us the proud elder son highly offended, because his father had received the prodigal. The elder son is the Jew, the penitent prodigal is the Gentile, and we all know how angry the Jews were with the apostles for preaching to the Gentiles. The next parable presents the Jew as an unjust steward. He is to lose his stewardship, for he had been unfaithful. Venality and corruption abounded. Sacred offices were shamelessly sold. Moral fitness was not thought of, and justice had fallen in the streets. "Thou mayest be no longer steward." After the Lord had spoken the second parable he said, "No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." The evangelist remarks, "And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things; and they derided him," mockingly sneered at him, indicating scornfully the contempt they felt for our Lord and his teachings. He then reminded them that their self-justifying habit was of no avail, as God knew their hearts; and that their conduct in the matter of divorce was a source of great immorality; and then he proceeds with the third parable which rung the knell of their national existence. By the abrupt commencement of the

parable in our English version the connection between it and the two preceding ones is lost. For some unaccountable reason, our translators have left out a little word of much value. The Lord said, "*But* there was a certain rich man." As if he had said, 'You interrupted me, but,—more,—further,—I have something to add about two men, one of whom was very rich, and the other very poor.' Probably, the absence of the conjunction in our translation has something to do with the fact that many people imagine they are reading a literal narrative, notwithstanding the internal evidence of its impossibility, when perusing the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus.

But I cannot close this discourse\* without a word of solemn warning to the Church. If she imagines herself "rich, and increased with goods," she is in danger. To boast of wealth, or numbers, or social influence, in connection with the Christian faith, is perilous, because it tends to forgetfulness of the condition of Christian existence. Our privileges are a sacred trust for the honour of our Lord, and every temptation to self-praise, should be resisted and crushed in the bud. The Christian life is a delicate plant, and, like the violet, thrives best in quiet places. The atmosphere of pomp and pageantry is not suited to its nature. The Christian graces *may* sometimes flourish under purple and lawn, but the experiment has not been remarkably successful. It is not without profound significance that believers are urged to cultivate meekness, humility, and lowliness of mind, and that the Lord spoke of the difficulty of a rich man entering the kingdom of heaven. The holy shall reign in good time; but they can afford to wait until their glorious Lord comes to his throne. Meantime, their highest and most honourable office while he is absent, is to bear witness for him—his character, his work, and his promised return; and they can do that in raiment of camel's hair as well as in gorgeous apparel,—perhaps a little better, although, of course, "the fashionable world" will not hear them.

On the subject of which we have been speaking, our apostle,—the apostle of the Gentiles,—"the angel," whom the Lord graciously sent to carry us into the bosom of Abraham,—writes very earnestly. Let us take heed to his words, for the Spirit of God speaks by him: "If some of the branches be broken off, and thou being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root,

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\* Delivered to the author's congregation, several of whom earnestly besought its publication. He willingly complies, in the hope that it may assist others in searching the Scriptures. It was not written before delivery, but his hearers will doubtless recognise in it substantially what they heard.

but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off that I might be grafted in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear. For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee goodness, if thou continue in his goodness; otherwise, thou also shalt be cut off. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graff them in again." (Rom. xi. 17-23.)

And it is certain that he will. The decree has gone forth, and will not be cancelled. The dead and buried nation will come to life again. "Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you unto the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, and shall put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord." (Ezek. xxxvii. 12-14.) "If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?" (Rom. xi. 15.) It is enough! O the measureless wisdom, and boundless love of God! Let us fervently pray for our elder brother, into whose inheritance of divine wealth we have entered through no merit of ours, that his eyes may be opened to see that the Lord Jesus whom we love is verily and indeed the King of Israel, and the Son of God. Amen!

