

be thy son's coat or no." Jacob at once recognized it, and rather rashly concluded that some evil beast had devoured his beloved child. Mark how one sin leads to another. Those wicked young men had only been prevented, by their cupidity, from murdering their brother. They had deprived him of his liberty, and now sought by falsehood to conceal their sin. Jacob mourned for his son, and "refused to be comforted," v. 35. A word from his sons might have set his mind at ease, but unmoved by the tears of their father they took care to keep their secret.—Meanwhile Joseph was sold by the Midianites to Potiphar an officer of Pharaoh; the favourite son of Jacob had to change his coat of many colours for the livery of a slave.

Learn 1. That we should love even those who hate us, Matt. v. 44.

2. That anger, envy, and every evil passion are in God's sight *murder*, they being the seeds from which murder spring, Matt. v. 22.

3. That evil propensities terminate in murder if not restrained by Providence or Grace, James i. 15.

4. That we should love no object on earth with inordinate affection, Col. iii. 2-5.

January 12th, 1862.

THE WIDOW'S SON RAISED,—LUKE vii, 11-17.

I. The stupendous miracle which our Saviour performed at Nain, viz: that of restoring a dead man to life was witnessed by two great companies of people—by those who accompanied our Lord, and by those who attended the funeral of the widow's son.

II. "And when the Lord saw her he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not." Her husband had been taken away from her, and now succeeded another most severe affliction, her son, her only son was dead.—No doubt, he had constituted her hope and her pride; to him she had been wont to look as the support and consolation of her old age. It is not told us the manner in which he died, but we can imagine her anxiety when she first observed the colour fade from the cheek of her darling boy, and how she watched him on his sick-bed, day after day, and night after night, with a mother's love and patience. We can fancy how, when life forsook that beloved form, she was scarcely able to realize the stroke. Rendered insensible by grief to external objects, and weeping in the bitter anguish of her spirit, the widow was accompanying the remains of her only son to the grave. Our gracious Lord could not look unmoved on her tears of grief. His gentle heart was touched with sympathy. "In all their afflictions he was afflicted," Isa. lx. 9.

III. "And he came and touched the bier, and they that bare him stood still," v. 14.—

"The most common way of carrying a corpse to the grave, was on a bier or bed, (2 Sam. iii. 31), which in some cases must have been furnished in a costly and elegant style. The bier, however, in use among the common and meaner sort of people was nothing but a plain wooden board, on which, supported by two poles, the body lay concealed only by a slight coverlet from the view of the attendants.—On such a humble vehicle was the widow's son, of Nain, carried, and 'this mode of performing funeral obsequies,' says an intelligent traveller, 'obtains equally in the present day among the Jews, Mahomedans, and Christians of the East.' The nearest relatives kept close by the bier, and performed the office of bearers in which, however, they were assisted by the company in succession."—[Kit. Cyc. of Bib. Lit.]

IV. "And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, arise," v. 14. Here again we have an instance of a command being given to one who had of himself no power to obey. But with the word, there went forth a quickening energy, and "he that was dead sat up and began to speak." In like manner does our Lord give life to the spiritually dead. His word is the means, but the means to become effectual must be accompanied with the all-powerful operation of the Holy Spirit, James i. 18; 1 Cor. ii. 4. "He began to speak."—This was an evidence that he was alive, and by speaking, thinking, and acting for Christ, the quickened soul gives evidence of its spiritual life.

V. "And he delivered him to his mother," v. 15. Then indeed, did the "widow's heart sing for joy." Her mourning was turned into gladness. We, too, when the Lord, by death removes from us any of our friends, should by faith hear him saying unto us, in accents sweet, "*Weep not.*" Soon shall our dear departed ones be restored to us. By his bloody death, our blessed Lord vanquished death, and him that had the power of death, 2 Tim. i. 10; Heb. ii. 14.

VI. "And there came a fear on all," v. 16. We should fear God as much for his goodness as for his greatness. "They glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us." The great prophet whom they were all at that time expecting—the Christ. "And, that God hath visited his people." In all times of revival, when dead souls are raised to spiritual life, the Lord visits his people. The report of this miracle quickly spread through the adjoining country and through the distant region of Judea, v. 17.

Learn 1. That Jesus is a compassionate Saviour,—Heb. iv. 15.