

Oct. 27.—**The Rich Man and Lazarus.**—
Luke 16: 19-31; A.D. 30.

GOLDEN TEXT.

"The wicked is driven away in his wickedness; but the righteous hath hope in his death."—Prov. 13: 22.

IN THE STUDY.

"Christ was still on His journey in Perea, wending His way slowly towards Jerusalem. After the touching parable of the Prodigal Son, He warns the Pharisees against covetousness by a parable and its application. But they deride Him; and He goes on in another parable, to warn them against that unbelief which was the source of their sin. They were not luxurious like the rich man in this parable, but their hoarding came from the same root of selfishness and unbelief. This parable is the only passage in Scripture which describes the feelings of the unconcerned after death. Is this a parable, or history? The answer depends very much upon the definition we give of a parable. The parable may be strictly a fictitious narrative, in which symbols may be used to represent some object or subject as the lost sheep to represent a sinner, or the mustard seed for the gospel. In this sense it is no parable; for the rich man represents not some other self or thing, but his own self; namely, a worldly rich man. He is taken as an example of his class. Nor is it a history in the sense of a narration of a particular real individual fact. It is not so much a detail of a particular case, as a picture of what takes place in thousands of cases."—*Whiston*.

"Christ, in all His parables, spoke them in accordance with the truth of those things; so that, whether this be a parable or not, its representations of things relating to the spiritual world and the future are according to fact. It teaches first, conscious existence after death; second, that men enter an death on a degree of their final state; third, that that condition is fixed."—*Whiston*.

"The parable speaks of the unseen world in the language, and with imagery current among Jews at the time; but, as Alford well observes, 'He whose essence is Truth, who does not have assumed as existing anything which could not exist.' Accordingly while the expression 'Abraham's bosom' is used, although it is only a figure, the state which it represents, viz., rest in bliss, is implied to be a true state."—*Stock*. "Hell, rather 'Hades,' the place of departed spirits until the resurrection, and to be carefully distinguished from 'Gehenna,' the place of final punishment. Both words are unfortunately rendered 'hell' in our version. In *Matt.* 16: 18; *Acts* 2: 27, 31; *Rev.* 1: 18; 6: 8; 20: 13-14, the word is Hades. In *Matt.* 5: 22, 29, 30; 10: 28; *23: 32; Mark* 9: 43, 45, 47, the word is Gehenna. The parable implies that the wicked suffer 'torments' in the pre-resurrection state. Hades is not the abode of the wicked only. There are two parts of Hades, one being called 'Abraham's bosom' and elsewhere 'paradise'—which is divided from the other part by the great gulf."—*Stock*. "It will be seen that our Lord did not descend into 'Gehenna' but into 'Hades' and that when He said to the thief on the cross 'To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise,' He signified that he would be with Him in the pre-resurrection state of the redeemed. This will also meet many difficulties suggested by scoffers at the doctrine of a place of punishment for the wicked. Nevertheless there must ever remain great mystery concerning the immediate future of the dead, both righteous and wicked; sufficient for us to know that the righteous dead are consciously happy. *Drut.* 29: 29.

"They die in Jesus and are blit."

And enough of solemn warning for all, in the knowledge that the works of the ungodly follow them into the future world, and that there they reap the fruit of their doings.

"Every Jew understood by 'Abraham's bosom,'

a place of perfect repose, communion and intimacy with the great and good in the ages to come. We leave behind us at death that only which enables the soul to communicate with the outward and material world, having no use for it in that world of spirit in which we wait for the resurrection body. All that constitutes the man—thinking, feeling, knowing—lives forever, without suspension of the continuity of its conscious life. The outward tent is struck, but the divine inhabitant lives. The ceasing of the pulse, the standing still of the heart, the insensibility of the senses, is not the destruction of the life, but only that machinery by which it acts and manifests itself to the world of matter. The musician endures, the harp strings only are removed. But this state, fact, or parable, is evidence of the immortality of the soul."—*Cummings*.

IN THE CLASS.

We have in our lesson three vivid and solemn contrasts. Two men different in their lives; different in their death; and different in their eternal state.

DIFFERENT IN THEIR LIVES.

There was a certain rich man. "His name is not given; for Dives, which many suppose to be his proper name is but the Latin for rich man."—*Whiston*. Purple. "This was the costly dye, (Tyrian) so celebrated in the East. It was exceedingly scarce, being from a rare shell-fish about Tyre, and only a few drops in each fish. The precious article and art are entirely lost. This was the outer garment or robe."—*Whiston*. Fine Linen. "This linen was chiefly produced from flax that grew on the banks of the Nile, in Egypt, Prov. 7: 16; *Ezek.* 27: 7. It was peculiarly soft and white and was therefore much sought after as an article of luxury."—*Whiston*. "The fling tells of a kind of fine linen, which was exchanged for its weight in gold. Its glory was in its dazzling whiteness. The linen was the inner vest, the purple the outer robe. The blue and white composed a highly prized combination of colors."—*Trench*. Fareed abruptly. "Ate and drank the best and dearest. This much is said of him to show his ample ability to help the poor if he would."—*Whiston*. "And what was his crime? A lazar lying at his gate and lying unrelieved. Nor is he even accused of being as he is sometimes called 'a glutton.' To call him such 'a Sir Epicure Mammon' serves only to turn the edge of the parable. He desired to remove far off all things painful to the flesh, to surround himself with all things pleasurable."—*Trench*. And there was a certain beggar. "Lazarus is an abridged form of Eleazar, or Eleadon, which means 'God only his help.' It is singular enough that the rich man's name is not mentioned, whereas the name of the beggar is. In this world the name of the rich man was sounded by a thousand trumpets. In the heavenly world all is reversed. Greatness alone is prominent now. Goodness alone will be prominent there."—*Cummings*. Laid at his gate. "Deposited there with the hope of attracting the rich man's pity. The portals of the wealthy were the customary resorts for mendicants." And desiring. "He desired, but in vain. Even the crumbs were not thrown to him, at least not in such measure that he could be satisfied with them." The dogs came. "Probably the homeless wandering dogs so frequent in Eastern cities. Ps. 59: 14-15.

"Man neglects his fellow-man with an unmoved heart, yet it was a misery that even the beasts had pity on." "There is nothing expressly said respecting the moral condition of Lazarus,—his faith, his patience, his resignation to the will of God. Yet these from the sequel must all be assumed, since his poverty itself would never have brought him to Abraham's bosom. We may safely assume that he suffered after a godly sort."—*Trench*.

DIFFERENT IN THEIR DEATH.

And it came to pass. "Lazarus died first. The ripe is oftenest taken. Saints are frequently gathered first." Was carried. "The Jews held the opinion that the spirits of the righteous were conveyed by angels to heaven at their death. Our Saviour speaks in accordance with this opinion; and as He expressly affirms the fact, it seems as proper that it should be taken literally, as when it was said, the rich man died and was buried."—*Barnes*. The rich man died and was buried. "It will appear subsequently to Lazarus, so that, as has been noted, the mercy of God was manifest in the order of their deaths. Lazarus was more early exempted from the miseries of his earthly lot; lives was allowed a longer space for repentance. But at last his day of grace came to an end. And was buried. Grandly buried, a magnificent funeral doleful: while Lazarus, whose burial is not mentioned was probably cast into some obscure corner. For a little moment they meet. They cross the line at death. Both taste of death, but it is only that there may be a greater divergence. The course of Lazarus is an ever ascending one. Up from misery to death; from death up to glory. Lives comes down from all his glory to death, and from death passes down to misery."

DIFFERENT IN THEIR ETERNAL STATE.

In hell. "In *hades*, the invisible place or region of disembodied spirits. While the body of man is in the grave his soul is in *hades*."—*Whiston*. As 'Abraham's bosom' is not heaven, though it will issue in heaven, so neither is *hades* 'hell' though it will issue in it when death and *hades* are cast into the lake of fire, which is the proper hell. *Rev.* 20: 14.

"It is the place of partial restraint, where the souls of the wicked are reserved to the judgment of the great day; it is the deep whither the departed pray that they might not be sent to be tormented before their time, *Luke* 8: 31; for as that other blessed place has a fore-taste of heaven, so has this place a fore-taste of hell."—*Trench*. And he cried. "This is the only instance in scripture of praying to saints."—*Whiston*. Favour of his finger. He dares ask but the smallest favour. Tormented. "Material fire could not have been here, for there was no material subject for it."—*Cummings*. "Hardened sinners have died crying 'Fire,' did the fire leave them when they left their bodies?"—*Alford*.

Son remember. Memory is the faculty that survives all. What makes personal identity? The consciousness of one's own existence at different times and in different places. Absolute loss of memory beyond all recall would destroy identity. "Memory like a whispering gallery returned the deeds of a life-time in crashes of infernal thunder." Edison has invented an instrument called a *microphone*, so that the smallest sound can be distinctly heard. May not the power of memory when freed from the deadening influences of the body be increased so as to recall every word and even thought. "Let memory survive, and it will strike to a thousand scorpions into the soul of the lost." Good things. "Not used for good but wasted on himself. Evil things. Sorrows, sufferings, pinching poverty, contempt, neglect. The possession of worldly goods was not a sin, but setting his heart on them and not using them properly, was. A great grief. A great *chagrin* was the result. This is directly opposed to the doctrine of purgatory, for souls in torment cannot pass to the regions of the blessed. Fixed. Had been firmly fixed, forever. Would pass. "How vain and anti-scriptural the dream of those who teach that there will be a final restoration of the lost."—*Whiston*.

They have Moses and the prophets. The Scriptures alone are a sufficient revelation of man's need and danger, and of God's love and