

25. Abraham said. The temptation is to get into this parable thoughts which may be correct enough, but which are not deducible from this text. It is well to notice also what Abraham did not say—he did not rebuke the rich man for praying to him, for instance. **Son.** Acknowledging the relationship on which the poor rich man builds his hopes. **Remember.** (7) *On memory will hang much of the joy and much of the pain of eternity. Thou in thy lifetime receivest thy good things.* The thought goes much further than that he merely got good things. The meaning is rather that he lived in those good things; that his horizon was sensuous; that he did not care for spiritual life. **Lazarus evil things.** He had in a true sense chosen pains on earth as the price of heavenly joys. Not that the offer ever was made to him to choose between a life of wealth and comfort and a life of poverty and pain. If that choice had been given him it would have been his duty to choose the better of the two, but he evidently had lived a spiritual life, and the story shows that that was accompanied by temporal misadventure of the most painful sort. So now in heaven comes God's opportunity to right the wrong.

26. Besides all this. Not only is thy request unjust, it is impracticable. **There is a great gulf fixed.** A chasm, a canyon. (8) *Character is permanent. Neither can they pass.* There is no hint of a purgatory, a progression, or an eternal hope; but we again caution our teachers and scholars against regarding this parable as a portraiture of the actual conditions in the eternal world. Throughout the story we are in the region of symbolic imagery.

27, 28. Send him to my father's house.

Perhaps from a burning desire to save others—perhaps in a weak attempt to accuse God of not having given him enough opportunity. **Five brethren.** If the story throws any light on conditions in the eternal world, then we are to gather from this that there is much solicitude and love on the part of the departed ones for those they have left on earth. **Testify.** Tell them what he had seen of their brother.

29. Moses and the prophets. Sufficient to warn a heedful man from wicked self-indulgence. (9) *But how much clearer light have we with the New Testament in addition to the Old!*

30. Nay. The unhappy man thinks he knows his brothers better than Abraham himself. **From the dead.** This thought is the same we all have. How impressive would be the words of a ghost spoken to us—if such a thing could really be. **Will repent.** The rich man here recognizes his failure to repent as being the reason of his being in the place of torment.

31. If they hear not Moses and the prophets. The Scriptures are sufficient for salvation. **Neither will they be persuaded.** (10) *They who spurn God's word would sneer at a voice from the grave.* The raising of Lazarus of Bethany was a singular confirmation of this statement. "An apparition from the dead," says Dr. Trumbull, "might frighten men, but it would not change their natures nor cause them to think less of self and its gratification." (11) *Infidelity and humble faith in God are produced in most instances, not by outward circumstances, but by a man's own decision.* (12) *There are few men who have not within handy reach all means necessary to secure their salvation.*

CRITICAL NOTES.

Verse 19. A certain rich man. This is a parable of contrasts, riches and poverty, feasting and hunger, rich clothing and fine company, nakedness and dogs, heaven and hell. Note that against this man no flagrant sin is charged. **Purple and fine linen.** Beautiful combination of colors and richness of material. The purple dye was obtained from a sea shellfish, and the small quantity produced by each fish made it very costly. The fine linen was the Egyptian byssus. It was of exceeding whiteness and very soft. Such was his clothing. **Fared sumptuously.** Cheered his heart, enjoyed himself every day in a sumptuous manner.

20. A certain beggar. Literally, a certain poor man. **Named Lazarus.** That is, Elcazer, "God-is-help." This is the only instance where a name is given to a character in any of the parables. **Was laid.** Had been laid as a customary act, perhaps.

21. Desiring to be fed. Was wishing to be

fed with the "scraps," says Bloomfield, "which chance to be sent from the table." **Dogs came . . . licked.** This is not said to show the ministry of the dogs, but the cruel neglect of the man at whose gate the poor man lay. His wretchedness might move the compassion of a dog, but it could not touch the heart of the self-indulgent man. Whether a dumb brute may have more humanity in him than a human being depends upon the human.

22. The beggar died. His death is to be attributed to neglect. This neglect is chargeable to the rich man, who had the means and the opportunity to relieve him. **Abraham's bosom.** In Jewish thought the general receptacle for the holy ones, where the patriarchs rest in peace and joy. The angels bear the soul of the outcast, friendless beggar to the company of the blessed in the eternal home. **Rich man . . . died, . . . was buried.** What a keen sense of the uses and power of language our Lord possessed! Contrast the