

in her heart a faint hope, but too faint to be expressed, that Jesus might raise her brother from his grave. Already at least two miracles of resurrection had been wrought, and it is almost certain that there had been others. God will give it thee. We too can rest in this mighty Intercessor, whose prayer in our behalf cannot fail.

**23. Jesus saith.** The purpose of Jesus in these words and those that followed was to awaken and lift up her faith. **They brother shall rise again.** Those words were not only for her comfort, but for ours. The raising of Lazarus, soon to be wrought, was to be a foretoken of another higher and more glorious resurrection.

**24. Martha saith.** Her utterance shows that she possessed the most enlightened views of her time concerning the hereafter. Not in vain had the two sisters received Christ under their roof. **The resurrection at the last day.** Probably her thought of the resurrection was less consoling than ours in like circumstances, for as yet the truth had not been revealed in its glorious fullness. And even now but few Christians realize how completely the resurrection triumphs over death.

**25. I am the resurrection and the life.** A mighty utterance. In it Jesus asserts that the true life by which the future resurrection shall come is in himself and derived from him. The word *life*, and its verb *live*, are in the original *zoe*, a word which in this gospel is used especially with reference to the spiritual life as distinct from the physical. **He that believeth in me.** It is faith in Christ which gives union with him, brings his divine life into us, and thus imparts the true life to us. **Though he were dead.** A mistranslation, corrected in the Rev. Ver. "though he die." **Yet shall he live.** He who believes in Christ shares in Christ's life, divine in its origin and spiritual in its nature. He may die, but he has in him the power which shall yet rise above death.

**26. Whosoever liveth and believeth.** In our opinion this means, "Whosoever possesses that spiritual life by believing in me shall never die." Other commentators regard it as meaning, "Whosoever, while in the physical life, believes on me; **Believeth thou this!** Notice how Christ by hint, by statement, and by appeal was drawing forth the faith of Martha.

**27. I believe that thou art the Christ.** We are not to suppose that Martha had an enlightened conception of Christ's personality, his divine nature, and his spiritual kingdom. But she believed in him as the Messiah, and that was faith sufficient for her day. Clearer views would come later to one who had laid the foundation of belief in the Messiahship of Jesus.

**28-38.** [These connecting verses are omitted in the *Lesson-helps*, but they should be read from the Bible in the class.] After her interview with Jesus, Martha returned to the house and quietly informed Mary that Jesus had come and had inquired for her—a fact which is not given in the account of the conversation. Mary went at once to meet Jesus, and fell at his feet, saying the same words that had been spoken by her sister in verse 21. All around were weeping, and Jesus also wept in sympathy with them. They came to the sepulcher, which was a cave, covered with a stone.

**39. Take ye away the stone.** He could have caused it to roll away by a word, but he chose to exercise their faith and make them, by partaking in the work, believe in the miracle more thoroughly. We cannot raise those who are dead in sin, but we can remove the hindrances which keep Christ from them. **Martha . . . saith unto him.** This remark comes more naturally from the active, practical Martha than from the quiet, retiring Mary. **By this time he stinketh.** She may have

thought that he desired as a friend to look upon the face of the dead; and reminds him that this he would not be consoling, but rather repulsive, for corruption had already begun its work. Incidentally, her words prove the certainty of Lazarus's death, and thereby make the miracle more manifest.

**40. Said I not unto thee.** Perhaps this is a reference to the message sent to the sisters in verse 4 of the last lesson; perhaps to some unrecorded utterance of Jesus. **If thou wouldest believe,** **thou shouldst see.** There was a sense in which the miracle of the raising of Lazarus was dependent upon the faith of the two sisters. Had they not possessed the heart of faith, a willingness to believe Christ, the miracle would not have taken place. Faith is spiritual insight, and he who believes sees. The glory of God, that is, a miracle which by revealing God's power discloses his glory.

**41. Jesus lifted up his eyes.** A natural and expressive attitude of prayer. **Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard.** In this prayer there seems to be a reference to some previous prayer, perhaps on the way to Bethany, culminating in the "groaning and the weeping" (v. 35). There can be no great spiritual triumph without a spiritual struggle.

**42. I knew that thou hearest me always.** Would that we might realize this as true with us as it was with him! No true prayer remains unheard or unanswered. Even when to "our blindfold eyes" the answer seems denied, the true and better answer is always given. **Because of the people which stand by.** The thanks was uttered publicly for the people's sake, not for God's; because God knew what was in the heart of his Son, while the people needed to have their thoughts turned, from the event at that moment to take place, to God who was about to effect the miracle. **May believe that he had sent me.** He said this before the miracle, showing an absolute confidence in his own power to work the miracle, and a revelation of his purpose in working it; which was to show men that he came with a divine authority.

**43. He cried with a loud voice.** He could have called the dead man forth in a whisper, or by an act of his will without a spoken word; but he wished to show to all present—among whom were many unbelievers—that the power dwelt in himself. **Lazarus, come forth.** Literally, "Lazarus, hither! out!" There is no verb in the original.

**44. He that was dead came forth.** Prompt to obey the call of Christ, as the dead will obey it on the resurrection morning. **Bound hand and foot.** The body was wrapped round and round with long strips of cloth, the grave-clothes, the arms being pinioned to the side, and the feet tied together, so that there is reason in the ancient opinion that the coming forth of Lazarus was "a miracle within a miracle." **Face was bound about.** A cloth was wrapped around the face, but it is not certain whether it covered it. **Loose him and let him go.** This command broke the spell upon those around by giving them something to do. The gospel answers no questions about the condition of Lazarus during "those four days," and thus shows its truthfulness, for a fabricator would have invented many stories. One tradition is mentioned. It is said that the first question which he asked Christ after being restored to life was whether he must die again; and being told that he must, he was never more seen to smile. The reader who would study a more realistic conception of Lazarus after his resurrection will find it in Robert Browning's poem, "An Epistle containing the strange Medical Experience of Karshish, the Arab physician." Another fine poem, of very different style, is by Tennyson, in "In Memoriam," No. XXXI.

## HOME READINGS.

- M.* The resurrection of Lazarus. John 11. 17-44.  
*Tu.* The result of the resurrection. John 11. 45-57.  
*W.* Assurance manifest. 1 John 3. 14-24.  
*Th.* The resurrection of the body. Job 19. 25-29.  
*F.* The resurrection declared by Christ. Mark 12. 18-27.  
*S.* The resurrection of Christ foretold. Matt. 16. 21-28.  
*S.* The resurrection of Christ witnessed. Matt. 28. 1-20.

## GOLDEN TEXT.

Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life. John 11. 25.

## LESSON HYMNS.

No. 217, Dominion Hymnal.

There's a land that is fairer than day,  
And by faith we can see it afar.

No. 218, Dominion Hymnal.

On the sweet Eden shore so peaceful and bright,  
The spirits made perfect are dwelling in light.

No. 219, Dominion Hymnal.

Beyond life's raging fever,  
Beyond life's troubled dream.