

Notes on the Parables
by
Archbishop R. C. Trench D.D.

PUBLISHERS' NOTE.(1902AD.)

THE present popular edition of the PARABLES, *with a translation of the notes*, carries out an intention which had long been in the Author's mind, but which want of leisure—and, when leisure at last was granted, failing health prevented him from accomplishing.

The text has received the Author's latest emendations, as made by him in his own copy during the last years of his life.

The notes are translated so as to bring them within the reach of general readers. In the few cases in which there existed any recognized versions of the original works quoted, these have been followed, so far as was compatible with correctness; but more often, no such version existing, a new translation has been made. The whole of the work, which has been valued by the Church and by scholars for nearly fifty years, is now brought in its entirety within the reach of all, and takes for the first time its final form. The Author never allowed his books to be stereotyped, in order that he might constantly improve them, and permanence has only become possible when his diligent hand can touch the work no more.

PARABLE XXVI.

THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS.

LUKE xvi. 19–31.

THE first question in the treating of the Scripture now before us is this, namely, Have we here a parable at all? Is it not of the essence of such that in it things heavenly should be set forth by aid of things earthly, that there should be, so to speak, an earthly rind and a heavenly fruit, and that we should pierce through the one to arrive to the other? But in this pregnant little history, as commonly, and I believe rightly, understood, there is nothing of the kind; and assuredly in strictness it does not fulfil the conditions of a parable. As much has been acknowledged by many in old times as in now.¹ There is indeed an interpretation of this passage, which has found a certain amount of favour, and which, if accepted, would restore it to its rights as a parable; but one which even for this gain I am not disposed to

¹ Thus the anonymous author of *Quæstiones et Responsa*, which are found in many editions of Justin Martyr, distinctly disclaims for it the right to be called a parable (*resp.* 60); Ambrosius in like manner ('it seems a narrative rather than a parable'); and so too Irenæus and Tertullian.

adopt. To this I shall again recur before leaving the Scripture which we have here in hand altogether. Setting for the present the question of parable or no-parable aside, and not further calling in question this title which is commonly given to it, I proceed to its nearer consideration. It is addressed to the Pharisees (see ver. 14, 15), and thus a difficulty presents itself at once. ‘*Covetous*’ no doubt these were; the Evangelist expressly declares as much (ver. 14; cf. Matt. xxiii. 14), but prodigal excess in living, like that of the rich man in the parable, is nowhere, in sacred history or profane, imputed to them.² So far from this, their manner of life was sparing and austere; many among them were rigid ascetics. Our Lord Himself allowed all this; his model Pharisee fasts twice in the week (Luke xviii. 12). Their sins were in the main spiritual; and what other sins they had were compatible with a high reputation for spirituality, which covetousness is, but not a profuse self-indulgence and an eminently luxurious living. Mosheim feels the difficulty so strongly, that he supposes the parable directed against the Sadducees,³ of whose selfish indulgence of themselves, and hard-hearted contempt for the needs of others (for they had wrought into their very religious scheme that poverty was a crime, or at all events an evidence of the displeasure of God), we shall then, he says, have an exact description. But the parable cannot be for them; there is no mention of Sadducees present, neither can there be any change between ver. 18 and 19 in the persons addressed; as is still more evident in the original than in our Version.

We may, perhaps, explain the matter thus. While it is quite true that covetousness was the sin of the Pharisees, and not prodigal excess, an undue gathering rather than an undue scattering, yet hoarding and squandering so entirely grow out of the same evil root, being alike the fruits of unbelief in God and in God’s word, of trust in the creature more than in the Creator, are so equally a serving of mammon (though the form of the service may be different), that when the Lord would rebuke their sin, which was the trust in the world rather than in the living God, there was nothing to hinder his taking an example from a sin opposite in appearance to theirs,—but springing out of exactly the same evil condition of heart,—by which to condemn them. For we must never forget that the primary intention of the parable is not to teach the dreadful consequences which will follow on the abuse of wealth and on the hard-hearted contempt of the poor,—this only subordinately,—but the fearful consequences of unbelief, of a heart set on this

² Josephus (*Antt.* xviii. 1. 3) says of them, ‘they think lightly of how they live, and in no wise give way to luxury,’ and that the Sadducees mocked them for their fasts and austerities.

³ *De Reb. Christ. ante Const.* p. 42. Wetstein, who says of the Pharisees, they fasted often, and were quiet in their attire.

world, and refusing to give credence to that invisible world here known only to faith, until by a miserable and too late experience the existence of such has been discovered. The sin of Dives in its root is unbelief: hard-hearted contempt of the poor, luxurious squandering on self, are only the forms which his sin assumes. The seat of the disease is within; these are but the running sores which witness for the inward plague. He who believes not in an invisible world of righteousness and truth and spiritual joy, must place his hope in things which he sees, which he can handle, and taste, and smell. It is not of the essence of the matter, whether he hoards or squanders: in either case he puts his trust in the world. He who believes not in a God delighting in mercy and loving-kindness, rewarding the merciful, punishing the unmerciful, will soon come to shut up his bowels of compassion from his brethren, whether that so he may put more money in his chest, or have more to spend upon his lusts. This was the sin of Dives, and source of all his other sins, that he believed not in this higher world which is apprehended by faith,—a world not merely beyond the grave,—but a kingdom of truth and love existing even in the midst of the cruel and selfish world; and this too was the sin of a worldly-minded Pharisee; and his punishment was, that he made discovery of that truer state of things only when the share in it, once within his reach, was irrecoverably gone. That his sin at the root is unbelief shows itself again in his supposing that his brethren would give heed to a ghost, while they refused to give heed to the sure word of God, to *‘Moses and the prophets.’* For it is of the very character of unbelief, to yield to portents and prodigies that credence which it refuses to God and his truth. Caligula, who mocked at the existence of the gods, would hide himself under a bed when it thundered;⁴ superstition and unbelief being as twin births of the corrupt heart of man, and of the number of those extremes, whose nature it is to meet. We must ever keep in mind that this, the rebuke of unbelief, is the main intention of the parable; for if we conceive its primary purpose to warn against the abuse of riches, it will neither satisfactorily cohere with the discourse in which it is found, nor will it possess that unity of purpose, which so remarkably distinguishes the parables of our Lord: it will divide itself into two parts, only slightly linked together,—having not a single but a double point. But when we contemplate unbelief as the essence of the rich man’s sin, his hard-heartedness towards others, with his prodigality towards himself, being only forms of its manifestation, we shall then at once admire the perfect unity of all parts of the parable, the intimate connexion of the conversation with Abraham in the later part, with the luxurious living of the earlier.

⁴ Suetonius, *Caligula*, 51.

There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously⁵ every day. The ‘purple and fine linen’ are named often together (Esth. i. 6; Rev. xviii. 12; Prov. xxxi. 22, where ‘fine linen’ would be better than ‘silk,’ as in the Authorized);⁶ both being in highest esteem, and the combination of colours which they offered, blue and white, greatly prized. The extreme costliness of the true sea-purple of antiquity is well known. It was the royal hue; and the purple garment then, as now, a royal gift (Esth. viii. 15; Dan. v. 7; 1 Macc. x. 20; xi. 58; xiv. 43); with it too the heathen idols were clothed (Jer. x. 9); there was as much, therefore, of pride as of luxury in its use. The byssus, or ‘fine linen,’ was hardly in less price or esteem.⁷ It is with a vesture of this that Pharaoh arrays Joseph (Gen. xli. 42); the coat and the mitre of the High Priest are of the same (Ex. xxviii. 39); even as the wife of the Lamb and the armies of heaven are said to be clothed in white linen (Rev. xix. 8, 14). All then of rarest and costliest he freely bestowed upon himself. Nor was it on some high days only that he so arrayed himself and feasted. The ‘purple and fine linen’ were his ordinary apparel, the sumptuous fare his every day’s entertainment. Yet with all this, as we cannot be too often reminded, he is not accused of any breach of the law,—not, like those rich men by St. James (ver. 1-6), of any flagrant crimes. ‘Jesus said not, a calumniator; He said not, an oppressor of the poor; He said not, a robber of other men’s goods, nor a receiver of such, nor a false accuser; He said not, a spoiler of orphans, a persecutor of widows: nothing of these. But what did He say?—‘*There was a certain rich man.*’ And what was his crime?—a lazar lying at his gate, and lying unrelieved.’⁸ Nor is he,—though sometimes so called, as in the heading of the chapter in our Bibles,—‘a glutton.’ To regard him as this, as a ‘Sir Epicure Mammon,’ serves only to turn the edge of the parable. He

⁵ Parkhurst is dissatisfied with this ‘fared sumptuously’, as failing to express the exultation and merriment of heart in which the rich man lived. He proposes ‘*who lived in jovial splendour;*’ Greswell, ‘*enjoying himself sumptuously;*’ and others, ‘*making merry sumptuously;*’ the Revised suggests this alternative: ‘*living in mirth and splendour.*’ Teelman (*Comm. in Luc. xvi.* p. 320, seq.) urges the same objection to the Vulgate, *epulabatur laute*. The old Italic, *jucundabatur nitide* (Irenæus, iii. 41), would have pleased the objectors better; or Luther’s, *lobte herrlich and in Freuden*.

⁶ See Delitzsch, *in loco*.

⁷ Pliny (*H. N.* xix. 4) tells of byssus exchanged for its weight in gold; it served, he says, ‘especially for the delight of women.’ We have no hendiadys here; not ‘fine linen dyed of a purple hue.’ The byssus did sometimes receive this colour, yet its glory was rather in its dazzling whiteness (Rev. xix. 8, 14); so Pliny (*H. N.* xix. 2), speaking of the fine linen of Upper Egypt, ‘No others are to be preferred to these either for whiteness or softness: they make most charming robes.’ The byssus here is the inner vest, the purple the outer robe (see the *Dict. of Gr. and Rom. Antt.* s. v. Byssus, p. 109; Winer, *Realwörterbueh*, s. v. Baumwolle; Bähr, *Symbolik d. Mos. Cult.* vol. i. pp. 310, 338, vol. ii. 72).

⁸ Augustine, *Serm.* clxxviii. 8. Massillon has from this point of view a deeply impressive Lent sermon upon this parable.

was one of whom all may have spoken well; of whom none could say worse than that he was content to dwell at ease, would fain put far from himself all things painful to the flesh, and surround himself with all things pleasant.—His name Christ has not told us, but the poor man’s only: ‘Seems He not to you,’ asks Augustine,⁹ ‘to have been reading from that book where He found the name of the poor man written, but found not the name of the rich; for that book is the book of life?’ ‘Jesus,’ says Cajetan, of a purpose named the beggar, but the rich man He designated merely as “a *certain man*,” so to testify that the spiritual order of things is contrary to the worldly. In the world, the names of the rich are known, and when they are talked of, they are designated by their names; but the names of the poor are either not known, or, if known, are counted unworthy to be particularly noted.’¹⁰

‘*And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus,*¹¹ *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.*’ In the porch or vestibule of the rich man’s palace, whose name, though well known on earth, was unrecognized in heaven, the beggar Lazarus was flung.¹² Such friends and familiars as he once had may have grown weary of him, and at length have cast him there, and with this released themselves of their charge, counting they had done enough, when they cast him under the eye, and thus upon the pity, of one so abundantly able to relieve him. How long he had lain there is not recorded; but long enough for the rich man, as he passed in and out, to have grown so familiar with him, that in Abraham’s bosom he recognizes him at once. Ignorance, therefore, of the beggar’s needs he could not plead. This excuse it was left for another to plead for him;¹³ who, in his eagerness to fasten charges of

⁹ *Serm.* xli.

¹⁰ So Bengel: ‘Lazarus is known in heaven by his name, the rich man is not reckoned by any name.’ Euthymius mentions that some called the rich man Nimeusis; and they used to show, perhaps still profess to show, the ruins of his house at Jerusalem. Thus an old traveller: ‘Fifteen paces further on is the house (as they make out) of the rich feaster, built of stones squared and hewn, of magnificent and elegant construction, and conspicuous for its high, though ruined, walls.’

¹¹ *Λάζαρος* = Deus auxilium, God is my help, a name exactly corresponding to the German Gotthelf. The name was a very common one. In the Index to Dindorf’s *Josephus* no less than twenty-three Eleazars are enumerated. The profound impression which this parable has made on the mind of Christendom is attested by the passing of the word *lazar* into so many languages.

¹² It is a pity that the Authorized Version has not given to *εβέβλητο* here its full force, and the Revised as little. Godet gives it well: ‘The word *εβέβλητο*, was *laid* or *cast*, expresses the carelessness with which those who placed him there abandoned him to the care of the people who in this great mansion were continually going and coming.’

¹³ Strauss (*Leben Jesu*, vol. i. p. 671); yet not he the first; for there is an essay (reprinted in Hase, *Theol.*) by A. L. Königsmann, *De Divite Epulone a Christo immisericordiae non accusato*, 1708. But Grotius rightly remarks, that Lazarus was cast, ‘in the very sight

unreason or injustice on Scripture, affirms that he is punished without cause, 'his only crime having been his wealth.' But he could not help knowing, and, if he had not known, that ignorance itself would have been his crime; for, with the leisure of wealth, he should not have remained unacquainted with the want and woe at his doors.

As the rich man's splendid manner of living was painted in a few strokes, in a few as expressive is set forth the destitution of Lazarus. Like Job (Job ii. 7), he was '*full of sores;*' hungry, and no man gave to him,—for, though these last words have properly no place in the text, doubtless we should understand that he desired, *but in vain*, '*to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table*' (Judg. i. 7); even these were not thrown to him, or not in measure to *satisfy* his hunger. Nor was this all. '*The dogs*'—such as wander without a master through the streets of an Eastern city (Ps. lix. 14, 15; 2 Kin. ix. 35, 36)—'*came and licked his sores.*' Chrysostom, and others after him, see here an evidence of the extremity of weakness to which disease and hunger had reduced him; there was not in him strength enough even to fray away the dogs, which, licking his sores, aggravated their pain. I believe they are right. It is true that medicinal virtue has been popularly ascribed to the tongue of the dog;¹⁴ which, moist and smooth, would, as it is urged, rather assuage than exasperate the smart of a wound. But most unwelcome, as we cannot doubt, would the service of this unclean animal have been to the Jew; an aggravation, not an alleviation, of his miserable estate. We have then stroke for stroke. Dives is clothed with purple and fine linen, Lazarus covered only with sores. One fares sumptuously, the other hungers for crumbs. One has hosts of attendants to wait on his every caprice; though this circumstance is left to our imagination to supply; the tender mercies of the dogs are all which the other knows.¹⁵

It has been often said that nothing is expressly told us of the moral condition of Lazarus, of his faith, his patience, his hope. Such is not exactly the case; for as names are realities in Christ's kingdom of truth, he who received the name Lazarus, or 'God is my help,' from his lips, must have had faith in God; and it was this his faith, and not his poverty, which brought him into Abraham's bosom. In all homiletic use of the parable this should

of the rich man, that the latter might in no wise be able to allege ignorance;' and see Neander, *Leben Jesu*, p. 205, note.

¹⁴ H. de Sto. Victore: 'The tongue of a dog when it licks has healing power' (of. Winer, *Realwörterbuch*, s. v. Speichel). When Hilary (*Tract. in Ps. cxxii.*) sets him on a dunghill (in *aggestu fimi*), this is an exaggeration of his own, a trait in fact borrowed from Job ii. 8.

¹⁵ Godet, as I am now satisfied, is right when he comments thus on these words: 'The words *yea even*, which betoken a gradation of suffering, forbid us to see in this fact of the dogs licking the sores of Lazarus any alleviation of his woes. The lick of the tongue which these unclean animals gave, as they passed, to the unbandaged wounds of the poor man is the last touch in the picture of his nakedness and desolation.'

never be forgotten. How often Augustine, having brought home to the prosperous children of the world the tremendous lessons which are here for them, turns round to the poor, warning them that something more is wanting than sores and rags and hunger to bring them into a conformity with Lazarus, and into the place of his rest. With this outward poverty another poverty, even poverty of spirit, must go hand in hand; for that other does not in itself constitute humility, though an excellent help to it; even as the riches of this world do not of necessity exclude humility, but only constitute an enormous temptation, lest they that have them be high-minded, and trust in those uncertain riches rather than in the living God: and he often reminds his hearers how that very Abraham into whose bosom Lazarus was carried, had on earth been rich in flocks and herds and in all possessions (Gen. xiii. 2).¹⁶

But this worldly glory and this worldly misery are alike to have an end: they are the fleeting shows of things, not the abiding realities. *‘And it came to pass, that the beggar died;’* and then how marvellous the change! he whom but a moment before no man served, whom only the dogs tended, *‘was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom.’*¹⁷ Some have by this understood ‘an eminence and privilege of joy which Lazarus had’ (Jeremy Taylor); that he was brought into the *chiefest* place of honour and felicity, such as the sons of Zebedee asked for themselves (Matt. xx. 23); not admitted merely to sit down among the rest of the faithful with Abraham at the

¹⁶ Thus *Serm.* xiv. 2: ‘Worn with weakness, covered with rags, faint with hunger, a beggar tells me: “The kingdom of heaven is my due, for I am like unto that Lazarus: it is to such as us that the kingdom of heaven is due, not to those who are clad in purple and fine linen, and who feast daily in splendour.”’ Augustine replies: ‘Whereas thou sayest that thou art even as that saint who was full of sores, I fear that in thy pride thou art not what thou sayst; thou must be truly poor, thou must be devout, thou must be humble. For if of this thy ragged and ulcerous poverty thou makest a boast, because thou art even as he who lay destitute at the door of the rich, thou lookest indeed to thy poverty, but lookest at nought else.’ *Enarr. in Ps.* lxxxv. 1: ‘Are we to say that the poor man by virtue of his poverty was carried by the angels, and the rich by the fault of his riches sent into torment? Rather we must understand that in the poor man it was humility which was honoured, and in the rich man it was pride which was condemned. That it was not riches but pride that was punished in the rich man is briefly proved. Of a surety the poor man was carried into Abraham’s bosom. Now of Abraham himself the Scripture says that he had here wealth of gold and silver, and was rich upon the earth. If whoever is rich is hurried to torments, how is it that Abraham had gone before the poor man, so as to receive him when he was carried unto his bosom? But Abraham amid his riches was poor and humble, fearing and obeying every commandment.’ Cf. *Ep.* clvii. 4; *Enarr. in Ps.* cxxx. 15, and in *Ps.* li. 9: ‘What does it profit thee, if thou lackest the means, and burnest with desire?’ This last passage is a profound commentary on Matt. xix. 23-26.

¹⁷ Luther: ‘So he who while he lived had not even one man as his friend, of a sudden is honoured by the ministry not of one angel, but of many.’ The belief was current among the Jews that the souls of the righteous were carried by angels into paradise (see Thilo, *Cod. Apocryphus*, vol. i. pp. 25, 45, 777).

heavenly festival, but to lean on his bosom, an honour of which only one could partake, as the beloved disciple leaned upon Jesus' bosom at the paschal supper (John xiii. 23). Not so, however; the image underlying these words is not that of a festival at all; in Hades there is no place for such, nor till the actual coming of the kingdom. 'Abraham's bosom' must find its explanation not from Matt. viii. 11; Luke xiii. 29, 30; but rather from John i. 18. It is a figurative phrase to express the deep quietness of an innermost communion.¹⁸ Besides, the Jews, to whose theology the phrase belongs, spoke of *all* true believers as going to Abraham, as being received into his bosom.¹⁹ The phrase was equivalent for them to the being 'in the garden of Eden,' or 'under the throne of glory,' gathered, that is, into the general receptacle of happy, but waiting souls²⁰ (see Wisd. iii. 1-3). Christ by using has been rightly considered as sanctioning and adopting the phrase; it has thus passed into the language of the Church,²¹ which has understood by it the state of painless expectation, of blissful repose, to intervene between the death of the faithful in Christ Jesus, and their perfect consummation and bliss at his coming in his kingdom. It is 'paradise' (Luke xxiii. 43); the place of the souls under the altar (Rev. vi. 9); it is, as some distinguish it, blessedness, but not glory.²² Thither, to that haven of rest and consolation, Lazarus, after all his troubles, was safely borne.²³

¹⁸ Lud. Capellus (*Spicilegium*, p.56): 'The expression Abraham's bosom seems here to be taken not so much from the custom of reclining at table (as the phrase is commonly understood) but rather from the instance of children dearly beloved by their parents, and fondled by them in their bosom or lap, where also at times they sweetly rest.' And Gerhard (*Loc. Theoll.* loc. xxvii. 8, 3): 'It is called a bosom by a metaphor taken from parents, who, when their children are wearied with much running about, or are returned home from a journey, or by some mischance have been made to weep, in order to soothe them take them into their lap that there they may take sweet rest.' Jeremy Taylor has a curious suggestion: 'Or else [it] may be rendered "the bay of Abraham," alluding to the place of rest where ships put in after a tempestuous and dangerous navigation. The angel of the Lord brought the good man's soul to a safe place where he should be disturbed no more.'

¹⁹ Josephus (*de Macc.* 13) puts this exhortation into the mouth of one of the Maccabæan martyrs: 'For if we die thus Abraham and Isaac and Jacob will receive us into their bosoms.'

²⁰ See Lightfoot, *Hor. Heb.* in loc.

²¹ For ample quotations from the Greek Fathers, see Suicer, *Thes.* s. v. *κολπος*: compare Augustine (*Ep.* 187) and Tertullian (*De Animâ*, 58). Aquinas (*Sum. Theol.* pars 3^a, qu. 52, art 2) gives the view of the Middle Ages; Cajetan, of the modern Romish Church: 'In the limbo of the fathers there was the consolation alike of the certainty of eternal bliss, of holy fellowship, and of freedom from all punishment of the sense.' Limborch (*Theol. Christ.* vi. 10, 8) in a striking passage compares the immediate state of the good to a sweet and joyful dream, while the wicked are as those afflicted with horrible and frightful dreams, each being to waken on the reality of the things of which they have been dreaming; exactly as Tertullian calls the state a 'foretaste of judgment.'

²² Beatitudo, but not gloria.

²³ Augustine (*Serm.* xli.): 'The burden of Christ is as wings. By these wings this beggar flew into Abraham's bosom.'

‘*The rich man also died, and was buried;*’ we naturally conclude, from the course of the narrative, *after* Lazarus, the mercy of God being manifested in the order of their deaths: Lazarus more early delivered from the miseries of his earthly lot; Dives allowed a longer space for repentance.²⁴ But his day of probation comes also to an end. Possibly the setting of Lazarus under his eye had been his final trial; his neglect of him the last drop that had made the cup of God’s longsuffering to run over. Entertaining him, he might have unawares entertained angels; but having let slip this latest opportunity, on the death of Lazarus follows hard, as would seem, his own. There is a sublime irony, a stain upon all earthly glory, in this mention of his burial, connected as it is with what is immediately to follow. The world, loving its own, followed him no doubt with its pomp and pride, till it could not follow any further. There was not wanting the long procession of the funeral solemnities through the streets of Jerusalem, the crowd of hired mourners, the spices and ointment very precious, wrapping the body; nor yet the costly sepulchre, on which the genial virtues of the departed were recorded. This splendid carrying of the forsaken tenement of clay to the grave is for him what the carrying into Abraham’s bosom was for Lazarus; it is his equivalent; which, however, profits him little where now he is²⁵ (Eccles. viii. 10). For death has been for him an awakening from his flattering dream of ease and self-enjoyment upon the stern and terrible realities of eternity. He has sought to save his life, and has lost it. The play in which he acted the rich man is ended, and as he went off the stage, he was stripped of all the trappings with which he had been furnished that he might sustain his part: there remains only the fact that he has played it badly, and will therefore have no praise, but uttermost rebuke, from Him who allotted to him this character to sustain.²⁶

²⁴ Thus Jeremy Taylor (*Sermon preached at the Funeral of the Lord Primate*): ‘According to the proverb of the Jews, “Michael flies but with one wing, and Gabriel with two;” God is quick in sending angels of peace, and they fly apace; but the messengers of wrath come slowly; God is more hasty to glorify his servants than to condemn the wicked. And therefore in the story of Dives and Lazarus we find that the beggar died first; the good man Lazarus was first taken away from his misery to his comfort, and afterwards the rich man died.’

²⁵ Augustine (*Enarr. in Ps. xlvi. 18*): ‘A spirit is being tormented among the souls below, what does it profit it that the body is lying in cinnamon and spices and wrapped round with costly linen? It is as if the master of a house should be exiled, and thou wert to adorn the house’s walls. Its master is needy and in exile, he is fainting for hunger, and scarcely finds a hut in which to sleep, and thou sayest “He is well off, for his house is garnished;”’ cf. *Enarr. in Ps. xxxii. 22*. According to Jewish notions, it was this very burial which handed him over to his torments; for in the book Sohar it is said: ‘The soul which is not righteous abides in this world until the body has been buried: when this is accomplished it is led down to gehenna.’

²⁶ Both these images, that of awakening from a dream of delight, and bringing to an end some proud part in a play, are used by Chrysostom to set forth the altered condition of the

From this verse the scene of the parable passes beyond the range of *our* experience into the unknown world of spirits; but not beyond the range of *his* eye, to whom all worlds, visible and invisible, are equally open and manifest. He appears as much at home there as here; He moves in that world as one perfectly familiar with it: speaking without astonishment as of things which He knows. He continues, indeed, to use the language of men, for it is the only language by which He could make Himself intelligible to men. Yet it is not always easy now to distinguish between that which is merely figure, vehicle of the truth, and that which must be held fast as itself essential truth.²⁷ We may safely say that the form in which the sense of pain, with the desire after alleviation, embodies itself (ver. 24), is figurative. Olshausen will have it that the entire dialogue between Abraham and Dives belongs in the same way to the parabolical clothing of the truth; that it is nothing else than the hope and longing after deliverance, which alternately rises and is again crushed by the voice of the condemning law speaking in and through the conscience. But we are left in such entire ignorance

Rich Man after his death (*Ad Theod. Laps.* i. 8): 'For as they who toil in the mines, or undergo some other penalty more terrible even than this, whence perchance they fall asleep under their many labours and their most bitter existence, and in dreams behold themselves lapped in delights and in all rich abundance, yet after they are awakened owe no thanks to their dreams; so also that rich man, as in a dream being wealthy for this present life, after his migration hence was punished with that bitter punishment.' And again (*De Laz. Conc.* 11): 'For as on the stage some enter, assuming the masks of kings and captains, physicians and orators, philosophers and soldiers, being in truth nothing of the kind, so also in the present life wealth and poverty are only masks. As then, when thou sittest in the theatre, and beholdest one playing beneath, who sustains the part of a king, thou dost not count him happy, nor esteemest him a king, nor desirest to be such as he; but knowing him to be one of the common people, a ropemaker or a blacksmith, or some other such, thou dost not esteem him happy for his mask and his robe's sake, nor judgest of his condition from these, but holdest him cheap for the meanness of his true condition: so also here, sitting in the world as in a theatre, and beholding men playing as on a stage, when thou seest many rich, count them not to be truly rich, but to be wearing the masks of rich. For as he who on the stage plays the king or captain, is often a slave, or one who sells figs or grapes in the market, so also this rich man is often in reality poorest of all. For if thou strip him of his mask, and unfold his conscience, and scrutinize his inward parts, thou wilt there find a great penury of virtue, thou wilt find him to be indeed the most abject of men. And as in a theatre, when evening is come, and the spectators are departed, and the players go forth from thence, having laid aside their masks and their dresses, then they who before showed as kings and captains to all, appear as they truly are; so now, when death approaches and the audience is dismissed, all laying aside the masks of wealth and of poverty depart from hence, and being judged only by their works, appear some indeed truly rich, but some poor; and some glorious, but others without honour.' Cf. Augustine, *Serm.* cccxlv.; Calderon, *La Vida un Sueño*, and again, *El gran Teatro del Mundo*.

²⁷ Some in Augustine's time took all this to the letter. Tertullian (*De Animâ*, 7) of course had done so; but Augustine has doubts (*De Gen. ad Lit.* viii. 6): 'As to the interpretation of the flame of the nether world, the bosom of Abraham, the tongue of the rich man, the finger of the beggar, the thirst of torment, the drop of cold water, all this is perhaps hardly to be discovered by calm enquirers, and by contentious disputants, never.' Gregory of Nyssa (*De Animâ et Resurr.* vol. iii. pp. 216-221, Paris, 1638) has much of interest on this matter.

of all the conditions of existence in that mysterious world of Hades, that it seems as impossible to affirm this as to deny it.

But to return; he that had that splendid funeral on earth is now ‘*in hell*,’—or, ‘*in Hades*’ rather, as one may be glad to see the Revised Version has had the courage to render it; for as ‘*Abraham’s bosom*’ is not heaven, though it will issue in heaven, so neither is Hades ‘*hell*,’ though to issue in it, when cast with death into the lake of fire, which is the proper hell (Rev. xx. 14). It is the place of painful restraint,²⁸ where the souls of the wicked are reserved to the judgment of the great day; it is ‘the deep,’ whither the devils prayed that they might not be sent to be tormented before their time (Luke viii. 31); for as Paradise has a foretaste of heaven, so has the place where he is a foretaste of hell. Dives, being there, is ‘*in torments*,’ stripped of all wherein his soul delighted; his purple robe a garment of fire;²⁹ or as he himself describes it, he is ‘*tormented in this flame*.’

For a while he may have been quite unable to realize his new condition, to connect his present self with his past: his fearful change seeming to him only as some ugly dream. But when convinced at length that this was indeed no dream, but an awaking, then, that he might take the measure of his actual condition, ‘*he lift up his eyes, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom*’³⁰ (cf. Isai. lxxv. 13, 14; Luke xiii. 28). If this is merely a figure, yet assuredly a figure of the true, conveying to us the fact that the misery of the lost will be aggravated by a comparison which they will be over making of their estate with the blessedness of the saved. *And he cried and said, Father Abraham,*’—for he still clung to the hope that his fleshly privileges would profit him something; he would still plead that he has Abraham to his father (Matt. iii. 9; Rom. ii. 17; John viii. 41), not perceiving that this, his glory once, is now the very stress of his guilt. That he, a son of Abraham,—the man of that liberal hand and princely heart, in whom, as the head of the elect family, every Jew was reminded of his kinship with every other, of the one blood in the veins of all, of the one hope in God which ennobled them all from the least to the greatest—should have so sinned against the mighty privileges of his high calling, so denied all which the name, ‘son of Abraham,’ was meant to teach him,—it was this which had brought him to that place of torment. Poor and infinitely slight is the best alleviation which he looks for: ‘*Have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue;*³¹ for I am

²⁸ Φυλακή ‘prison’ (1 Pet. iii.19) = ἀβυσσος, ‘the deep’ (Luke viii. 31). See Campbell (*On the Four Gospels*, vol. i. pp. 253-291) on the difference between *hades* and *gehenna*.

²⁹ Augustine (*Serm.* xxxvi. 6): ‘To the purple and fine linen succeeded the fire, and he burned in a tunic of which he could not divest himself.’

³⁰ Ambrose: ‘As if in some haven of quiet and retreat of holiness’

³¹ Bengel: ‘He had especially sinned by his tongue,’

tormented in this flame.' And this is all which he ventures to ask! so shrunken are his desires, so low the highest hope which even he himself presumes to entertain.³² This prayer of his is the only invocation of saints whereof the Scripture knows; and it is far from being an encouraging one (Job v. 1). He can speak of '*father Abraham*' and his '*father's house*;' but there is another Father of whom he will know nothing—the Father whom the prodigal had found; for he is as far as hell is from heaven from the faith of the prophet: 'Doubtless *thou* art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not' (Isai. lxiii. 16).

'*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;*' or '*in anguish,*' as in the latest Revision. In the answer of the Father of the faithful there is no harshness, no mocking at the calamity of his unhappy and guilty descendant. He addresses him as '*Son,*' while at the same time coupling an allowance of the relationship which the other claimed, with a denial of his request, he rings the knell of his latest hope. And first he brings home to his conscience that all which is happening to him now is just, and that he, if he will only consider, must acknowledge this. '*Thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things.*' I cannot accept the interpretation which by the '*good things*' of Dives understands certain good actions which in some small measure he had wrought, and the reward of which he had in this present life received; even though it can claim such supporters as Chrysostom in the Greek Church,³³ Gregory the Great in the Latin,³⁴ and Bishop Sanderson in our own. The following paraphrase of the words is from a sermon of Sanderson's:³⁵ 'If thou hadst anything good in thee, remember thou hast had thy reward in earth already, and now there remaineth for thee nothing but the full punishment of thine ungodliness there in hell: but as for Lazarus, he hath had the chastisement of his infirmities [his "*evil things*"] on earth already, and now remaineth for him nothing but the full reward of his godliness here in heaven.' Presently

³² Augustine: 'The proud man of this life is the beggar of the nether world.'

³³ *De Laz. Con.* 3. He lays a stress on the . . . *wast paid*, not simply *didst receive*; see too Theophylact (in loc.). Thus far the five other passages of St. Luke, in which *απολαμβάνειν* occurs (vi. 34, bis; xv. 27; xviii. 30; xxiii. 41), quite bear him out.

³⁴ *Hom.* 40 in *Evang.*: 'Whereas it is said, Thou wast *paid* good things in thy life, the rich man is shown as having had some good in him, whence in this life he was paid good things. Again, whereas it is said of Lazarus that he was paid evil things, assuredly Lazarus is exhibited as having had some evil in him to be purged away. But Lazarus was afflicted and purified by poverty, Dives was rewarded and rejected by his wealth.' Cf. *Moral.* v. 1. In like manner the Jewish doctors said, 'Even as in the world to come to the pious there is repaid a reward for even the lightest good work which they have done, so in this world there is repaid to the impious a reward of every good work however light.'

³⁵ On Ahab's repentance (1 Kin. xxi. 29).

before Sanderson had said, ‘For as God rewardeth those few good things that are in evil men with these temporal benefits, for whom yet in his justice He reserveth eternal damnation, as the due wages, by that justice, of their graceless impenitency, so He punisheth those remnants of sin that are in godly men with these temporal afflictions, for whom yet in his mercy He reserveth eternal salvation, as the due wages, yet by that mercy only, of their faith and repentance and holy obedience.’ Whether there be such a dealing of God with men as this or not, it is very far-fetched to find it here; and the more obvious explanation of the words agrees much better with the general scope of the parable, and of Abraham’s discourse in particular. The ‘*good things*’ of the rich man were his temporal felicities, his purple and fine linen, and his sumptuous fare. These, which were ‘*goods*’ to him, in his esteem the highest or indeed the only ‘*goods*,’ and besides which he would know no other, he had ‘*received*.’ He had his choice, the things temporal or the things eternal, to save his life here, or to save it there; and by the choice which he had made he must abide.³⁶

This lesson the words, either way interpreted, will contain, namely, that the receiving of this world’s good with no admixture of its evil, the course of an unbroken prosperity, is ever a sign and augury of ultimate reprobation³⁷ (Ps. xvii. 14; Job xxi. 7-21; Luke vi. 24, 25; Heb. xii. 8). Nor is it hard to see why. There is in every man dross in abundance, needing to be purged away, and which can only be purged away in purifying trial fires. He therefore who knows nothing of these purifying fires, is left with all his dross in him, is no partaker of that holiness, without which no man shall see God. Thus Dives, to his endless loss, had in this life received good things without any share of evil.³⁸ But now all is changed: Lazarus, who received in this mortal life evil things, ‘*is comforted*’ (Matt. v. 4; 2 Cor. iv. 17; Acts xiv. 22), but he is ‘*tormented*.’ He had sown only to the flesh, and therefore, when the order of things has commenced in which the flesh has no part, he can only reap in misery and emptiness, in the hungry longing and unsatisfied desire of the soul (Gal. vi. 8). The pity too which he refused to show, he fails to obtain; so that we have here the severe converse of the beatitude; ‘Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy’ (Judg. i. 7; Jer. li. 49; Matt. xviii. 32-34; Jam. ii. 13; Rev. xvi. 6; xviii. 6). The crumbs which he denied to another have issued in the drop of water which is denied to him.³⁹

³⁶ Augustine: ‘O good things of this world that in the nether world are evils.’

³⁷ Augustine: ‘What is more hapless than the happiness of sinners?’

³⁸ Meuschen, *N. T. ex Talm. illust.* p. 66.

³⁹ Augustine: ‘He who gave not a crumb of bread now yearned for a drop of water’—a thought which makes Gregory the Great exclaim (*Hom. 40 in Evang.*): ‘O how great is the nicety of God’s judgments! How strictly is the reward exacted alike of good actions and of bad.’

Having omitted to make ‘himself friends of the mammon of unrighteousness,’ now when he has failed, he has none to receive him into everlasting habitations.

Nor is this severe law of the divine retaliations the only obstacle to the granting of his request. There is further brought home to the conscience of this man, once so rich, and now so poor, that with death an eternal separation of the elements of good and evil, elements in this world mingled and confounded, begins (Matt. xiii. 40, 41). Like is gathered to like, good by natural affinity to good, and evil to evil; and this separation is permanent: ‘Beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf⁴⁰ fixed,’ not a mere handbreadth only, as the Rabbis fabled,⁴¹ but ‘a great gulf,’ and this ‘fixed’⁴²—an eternal separation, a yawning chasm, too deep to be filled up, too wide to be bridged over;—‘so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.’ The latter statement contains no difficulty; it is only natural that the lost should desire to pass out of their state of pain to the place of rest and blessedness, but it is not so easy to understand the other—‘they who would pass from hence to you cannot;’ for how should any desire this? Not, of course, with a purpose of changing their *own* condition, but they cannot pass, Abraham would say, even for a season; they have no power to yield even a moment’s solace to any in that place, however earnestly they may wish it.

But though repulsed for himself, he has still a request to urge for others. If Abraham cannot send Lazarus to that world of woe, at least he can cause him to return to the earth which he has so lately quitted; between these worlds there is no such gulf interposed: ‘I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest 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.’ He and they, Sadducees at heart, though perhaps Pharisees in name, may oftentimes have mocked together at that *unseen* world,⁴³ and by Lazarus he would fain warn them now of the fearful reality which he had found it. *He*

⁴⁰ The use of ‘gulf’ here as a rendering of *χάσμα* takes us somewhat by surprise; but it is worth while to remember that when the Authorized Version was published, the word ‘chasm’ did not exist in the English language. Fuller, a good deal later, that is in his *Church History*, writes ‘chasma.’

⁴¹ Eisenmenger, *Entdeckt. Judenth.* vol. ii. p. 315.

⁴² Augustine (*Ad Evod. Ep.* 164); ‘Not only is there a gulf, but it is also fixed.’

⁴³ Augustine (*Serm.* xli.): ‘I make no doubt but that in talking with his brothers of the prophets and their persuasion unto good and prohibitions of evil, their warnings of future torments and their promises of future rewards, he jested at all these things, and said with his brothers, ‘What life is there after death? What memory is there in corruption? What feeling in ashes? ... of whom have we heard as returning thence?’

could testify at once of heaven and of hell.⁴⁴ In this anxiety for the welfare of his brethren, which he, who hitherto had been merely selfish, expresses, some have seen the evidence of a better mind beginning, and the proof that suffering was already doing its work in him, and awakening the slumbering germ of good.⁴⁵ With this, were it so, would of necessity be connected his own ultimate restoration, and the whole doctrine of future suffering not being vindictive and abiding, but corrective and temporary. But the rich man's request grows out of another root. There lies in it a secret justifying of himself, and accusing of God. What a bitter reproach against God and against the old economy is here involved: 'If only I had been sufficiently warned, if only God had given me sufficiently clear evidence of these things, of the need of repentance, of this place as the goal of a sensual worldly life, I had never come hither. But though I was not, let, at all events, my brethren be duly warned.' Abraham's answer is brief and almost stern; rebuking, as was fit, this evil thought of his heart: they *are* warned; they have enough to keep them from that place of torment, if only they will use it: '*They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them*'⁴⁶ (cf. John v. 39, 45-47). Christ putting these words into Abraham's mouth, evidently gives no countenance to them who see an entire keeping back of the doctrine of life eternal and a future retribution in the Pentateuch; but to '*hear Moses*,' is to hear of these things; as elsewhere more at length He has shown (Matt. xxii. 31, 32; Luke xx. 27).

But the suppliant will not so easily be silenced. '*Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.*'⁴⁷ We are told of the faithful, that 'their works do follow them;' their temper here is their temper in heaven; not otherwise does the contempt of God's word, which this man manifested on earth, follow him beyond the grave.⁴⁸ That word, as he deems, is not sufficient to save men; they must have something more to lead them to repentance. We have here reappearing in hell that 'Show us a sign, that we may believe,' so often upon the lips of the Pharisees on earth. They will believe, or flatter themselves that they would believe, signs and

⁴⁴ In the legend of Er the Pamphylian (Plato, *Rep.* x. 614), he is to return from the place where souls are judged, 'to be a messenger to men of the things there,' to testify of the greatness of the rewards of the just, the dreadfulness of the doom of sinners.

⁴⁵ Aquinas (*Summ. Theol. Supp. ad 3 part. qu.* 98, art. 4) has a discussion to which this verse gives occasion: 'Whether the damned in hell wish others to be damned, who are not so?' He determines, despite this passage, that they would.

⁴⁶ Bengel: 'This is spoken severely. No one is compelled. We are saved by a faithful hearing, not by apparitions.'

⁴⁷ Gregory of Nyssa: 'That the message might gain persuasiveness from its unexpectedness.'

⁴⁸ Bengel: 'When he had left his luxury behind, the wretched man carried his contempt of Scripture with him in hell.'

portents: but they will not believe God's word (Isai. viii. 19, 20). A vain expectation! *'If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.'* Every word in this reply, with which we may profitably compare Isai. viii. 19, demands to be accurately weighed. Dives had said, *'they will repent;'* a moral change will be wrought in them; Abraham replies, they will not even *'be persuaded.'* Dives had said, *'if one went unto them from the dead;'* Abraham, with a prophetic glance at the world's unbelief in a far greater matter, makes answer, *'No, not though one rose from the dead.'* He in fact is saying: *'A far mightier miracle than you demand would be ineffectual for producing a far slighter effect: you imagine that wicked men would repent on the return of a spirit,'*—the history of the last days of Saul might have taught him better (1 Sam. xxviii.),—*'I tell you they would not even be persuaded by the rising of one from the dead.'*⁴⁹

This reply of Abraham is most important for the insight it gives us into the nature of faith as a moral act; not therefore to be forced by signs and wonders: for where there is a determined alienation of will and affections from the truth, no impression which miracles will make, even when accepted as genuine, will be more than transient. There will always be a loophole somewhere or other by which unbelief can escape;⁵⁰ and this is well, else we should have in the Church the faith of devils, who believe and tremble (Jam. ii. 9). When the historical Lazarus was raised from the dead, the Pharisees were not by this mightiest of all miracles persuaded of the divine mission and authority of Him who had raised him; and this though they did not deny the reality of the miracle itself (John xi. 47; xii. 10). A greater too than Lazarus has returned from the world of spirits; nay, He has risen from the dead; and what multitudes, who acknowledge the fact, and acknowledge it as setting a seal to all his claims to be heard and obeyed, are not brought by this acknowledgment a whit nearer to repentance and the obedience of faith. And it is very observable, how exactly in the spirit of Abraham's refusal to send Lazarus, the Lord Himself acted after his resurrection. He showed Himself, not to the Pharisees, not to his enemies, *'not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God'* (Acts x. 41), to his own disciples alone. It was a judgment upon others, that no sign should be given them but the sign of the prophet Jonas (Matt. xii. 89); and yet it

⁴⁹ Observe the change of words: *πορευθη* in the request of Dives, *αναστη* in the reply of Abraham; *απο νεκρών* in the request, *εκ νεκρών* in the reply.

⁵⁰ When, for instance, Spinoza declared himself ready to renounce his system and to become a Christian, if only he were convinced of the truth of the raising of the historical Lazarus, he must have known very well that in his sense of the word *convince*, and with the kind of evidence that he would demand, it was impossible to satisfy his demand (see Bayle, *Diction.* art. Spinoza, note I.).

was mercy too, for they would not have been persuaded even by one that had risen from the dead.⁵¹ A satisfaction of the longing, in itself most natural, that one should return from the world beyond the grave, and assure us of the reality of that world,—a satisfaction which Abraham could not give,—was by Christ granted to those who were seeking the confirmation of faith, and not an excuse for unbelief.⁵²

I have alluded already (p. 455) to an interpretation of this Scripture, which, if admitted, would restore it at once to its full rights as a parable, even according to the strictest definition of such; for the purely historical or narrative character of it would quite disappear, an allegorical and prophetic taking its room. The interpretation of which I speak, though never the predominant one, has frequently made itself heard, having found more or less favour with Augustine, with Gregory the Great, and with modern commentators not a few. Should it obtain allowance, the parable, like so many others which we owe exclusively to St. Luke, will set forth the past and future relations of the Jew and the Gentile. Dives will in this case represent the Jewish nation, arrayed in the ‘purple’ of the king, and the ‘fine linen’ of the priest—the kingdom of priests, or royal priesthood (Exod. xix. 6; 1 Pet. ii. 9). Of this elect people it might be truly said that they ‘fared sumptuously every day,’ being furnished to the full with all things necessary for life and godliness. Salvation was of the Jews (John iv. 22); to them pertained ‘the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises’ (Rom. ix. 4).⁵³ But while all this was

⁵¹ I cannot forbear to quote here some admirable remarks in Sepp’s *Leben Jesu Christi*, vol. v. p. 486: ‘From this parable of Christ there further proceeds a lesson for modern times. The dead rise not up, neither by God’s will do spirits reveal themselves by table-turning, writing, or word of mouth, for Christ saith: “They have Moses and the prophets, if they hear not these, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.” The Lord is here speaking warningly, to the end that the Christian should not reckon on communications from the further world or from the kingdom of the dead. Such apparitions can never possibly lead to any faith pleasing to God: and in truth there is no lawful intercourse between this and the other side of the grave. The Jews had Moses and the Prophets to listen to: we have Christ and the Apostles, or all the Holy Church. Therefore let no man build on the revelations of necromancy or the like, unless he would join himself with an unholy power that is alien to Christ.’

⁵² Augustine (*Enarr. in Ps.* cxlvii. 14): ‘Thanks be to thee, O Lord, for thy compassion: thou wast pleased to die that one might rise from the dead, and this one not anyone, but it was Truth itself which so rose.’ Plato’s legend of the *revenant*, referred to already (p. 474, note), is a remarkable witness for this craving in the mind of man, that he who gives assurance of a world after death should have himself visited that world. The same reappears in that, which, however, is an evident imitation of Plato’s narrative, the story of Thespesius in Plutarch’s admirable essay, *De Serâ, Numinis Vindictâ*.

⁵³ Augustine (*Quæst. Evang.* ii. qu. 32): ‘In Dives we must see the proud among the Jews, who knew not the righteousness of God, and desired to set up their own. The splendid feasting is the boastfulness of the law in which they gloried, rather abusing it for the vain shows of pride, than using it for the need of salvation.’ Cf. Gregory the Great (*Hom.*

so richly their portion, they, instead of imparting of it to those who needed it the most, were at all pains that no share of it should reach any others; or, if they did make a proselyte, they made him not for God but for themselves, and he reproduced in exaggerated form all that was worst in themselves (Matt. xxiii. 15). Making their boast of God (Rom. ii. 17), they did nothing to spread among the heathen the true knowledge of his name.⁵⁴ Others, if fed at all, were fed only from the crumbs which fell from their table. Lazarus, the beggar,⁵⁵ lay untended at their gate—at their gate and without it; for the Gentiles were ‘aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers

40 in *Evang.*; *Mor.* xxv. 13): ‘By the rich man feasting splendidly is denoted the Jewish people, who received the abundance of the law not unto the needs of salvation, but unto the vain shows of pride, not modestly refreshing themselves in the words of its commandments, but making boasting display. By the beggar full of sores, whose name, Lazarus, is by interpretation “he that is helped,” the nature of the Gentile people is expressed, whom the divine help exalts in proportion as they are more distrustful of the sufficiency of their own powers.’ And H. de Sto. Victore (*Annot. in Luc.*); ‘Here the rich man denotes the Jewish people, who outwardly had all the cultivation of life, and used the delights of the law committed to them, not unto edification but unto display.’ Theophylact: ‘He was clad in purple and fine linen, having the kingship and the priesthood.’ Lomeier has wrought out this view at length, *Obs. Analytico-Didact. ad Luc.* xvi. p. 91, seq. Von Meyer (*Blätter für höhere Wahrheit*, vol. vi. p. 88) has an exposition identical with this in its spirit; and Bengel: ‘Dives is a type of the Pharisees, Lazarus an example of the poor in spirit.’ Teelman (*Comm. Crit. et Theoi. in Luc.* xvi. Amstel. 1695) offers an elaborate explanation, like in part, but with important differences. Dives is the Jewish people, but Lazarus is Christ, rejected and despised by the proud nation, and full of sores, bearing, that is, his people’s sins (Isai. liii. 3-5). With him agree Vitringa (*Erklär. der Parab.* p. 939) and Gill (*Exp. of the N. T. in loc.*). But this was long since suggested by Augustine (*Quæst. Evang. ii. qu. 38*): ‘We must take Lazarus as signifying the Lord ... who lies at the rich man’s door, inasmuch as by the humility of his Incarnation He cast himself down before the haughty hearing of the Jews (2 Cor. viii. 9) . . . The sores of the beggar are the sufferings of the Lord from the infirmity of the flesh which for our sake He deigned to take upon him . . . The bosom of Abraham is the sanctuary of the Father, whither after his passion the risen Lord was taken up.’ Compare Ambrose (*Exp. in Luc.* viii. 15): ‘To whom also [*i.e.* Lazarus] I account him as like, since, beaten often-times by the Jews, for the patience of believers and the calling of the Gentiles He offered the sores of his body to be licked as if by dogs;’ then he quotes Matt. xv. 27.—Schleiermacher’s supposition that Herod Antipas, infamous for his incestuous marriage (see ver. 18), is pointed at in Dives, is curious, yet even this is not original; for Tertullian (*Adv. Marc.* iv. 34) sees at ver. 18 an allusion to Herod’s marriage, and observes how close the connexion between that verse and our parable: ‘For the parable as far as the surface of the Scripture is concerned was put forth suddenly, and as regards the aim of its import it agrees with the mention of the bad treatment of John, and of his affronting Herod for his evil marriage, describing the end of both, the torments of Herod and the refreshment of John.’ See Suicer, *Thes. s. v. Λάζαρος.*

⁵⁴ H. de Sto. Victore: ‘They held the teaching of the law not unto charity but unto elation.’ And Gregory the Great (*Hom.* 40) explains the refusal of the crumbs: ‘The Jews in their pride did not admit the Gentiles to a knowledge of the law.’

⁵⁵ Theophylact: ‘The poor man of heavenly graces and wisdom.’

from the covenants of promise' (Ephes. ii. 12):—'*full of sores,*' for their sins and their miseries were infinite. St. Paul, at Rom. i. 23-32, gives us a fearful glimpse of some of the worst among those sores, though indeed we must include in them not sins only, but all the penal miseries consequent on sin. '*And the dogs came and licked their sores,*' and this was all the alleviation which they had. They wore slight and miserable assuagements of its want and woe, ineffectual medicine for its hurts, which the heathen world obtained from its legislators, philosophers, and poets. 'Physicians of *no value*' we must not call them; for the moral condition of the world would have been far worse without them; but yet they could only heal slightly at the best the hurt of their people.

The desire of the beggar to be fed with crumbs from the rich man's table, finds no exact counterpart in any longing on the part of the Gentiles for the satisfaction of their spiritual hunger from the table of the Jews. Such longing there might have been, if these had held, and held forth, the truth as they ought. But, whether from the repulsive aspect under which they presented it, or from some other causes, this desire did not in any large measure exist; though, indeed, the spread of Judaism, and the inclination, especially among women of rank, to embrace it, is more than once noted by Roman writers about the time of the first emperors.⁵⁶ Still the yearning of men's souls after a truth which they had not, was a yearning after something which the Jew had, and had richly; and which, had he been faithful to his position, he would have imparted to them, and they would have been willing to receive of him. Christ was 'the Desire of *all* nations; 'and thus there was no yearning after deliverance from the bondage of corruption which was not in truth a yearning after Him; so that *implicitly* and unconsciously the nations of the world were desiring to live upon truth which had been entrusted to the Jew, and entrusted to him that he might share it with them.

The dying of Lazarus, with his reception into Abraham's bosom, will find their counterpart in the coming to an end of that economy in which the Gentile was an alien from the covenant, and in his subsequent introduction by '*the angels,*' or messengers of the covenant, into all the immunities and consolations of the kingdom of God;—'which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy' (1 Pet. i. 10; Ephes. ii. 11-13). But Dives dies also; the coming to an end of that preparatory economy, being life to the Gentile, is death to the Jew, who had desperately clung to this, and who would know of no other. And now Dives is in torments,—'*in hell;*' surely not too strong

⁵⁶ See Neander, *History of the Church*, vol. i. p. 84 (English transl.).

a phrase to describe the anguish and despair, the madness and astonishment of heart, which must be their portion who, having once known God, refuse to know Him any more. Who can read the history, as given by the great Jewish historian, of the final agony of his nation,—when turning fiercely upon its foes, it turned with a yet more deadly rage upon itself; like a scorpion, which, girdled with fire, fixes its sting in its own body,—and not feel that all which constitutes hell was already there? And ever since have they not been ‘*tormented*’? What a picture of their condition as the apostate people of God does the sure word of prophecy supply (Lev. xxvi. 14-39; Deut. xxviii. 15-68). What gnashing of teeth, what madness of heart, does Christ announce shall be theirs, when they shall see the despised Gentiles sitting down in the kingdom of God, from which they themselves are excluded⁵⁷ (Luke xiii. 28-30). Nor has history failed to justify these pictures to the full. What a commentary on all this does the whole medieval history, with its record of all the ignominy and shame, all the frightful indignities and outrages, inflicted on the Jewish race during all those ages, supply; nor despite of all our vaunted toleration have we even now seen the last of these.

But as Dives looked for some consolation from Lazarus, whom before he despised, so the Jew is looking for the assuagement of his miseries through some bettering of his outward estate,—some relaxation of severities, inflicted upon him,—some improvements in his civil condition:—expecting from the kingdoms of the world that which, even if they gave, would be but as a drop of water on the burning tongue. For it is the wrath of God which constitutes his misery; and till this is removed, till he turns from Abraham to Abraham’s God, he is incapable of true consolation. The alleviation which he craves is not given; it had been useless to give it. There is but one true alleviation, that he should be himself received into the kingdom of God, that he should bewail his guilt, and look on Him whom he pierced, and mourn because of Him. The true consolations would abound to him then. Whatever is short of this is nothing. The upholders of this interpretation urge, and with reason, that the absence of any allusion in the parable to a future time, when the ‘*great gulf*’ of unbelief which now separates the Jew from his blessings shall be filled up, makes nothing against it. The same silence is observed in the parable of the Wicked Husbandmen (Matt. xxi. 88). No hint is there given that the vineyard shall one day be restored to its first cultivators, which yet we know will be the case (Rom. xi. 26; 2 Cor. iii. 16).

By the ‘*five brethren*’ of Dives will be set forth to us, according to this

⁵⁷ Theophylact; ‘They are consumed in the flame of envy.’

scheme, all who hereafter, in a like condition and with like advantages, are tempted to the same abuse of their spiritual privileges. The Gentile Church is in one sense Lazarus brought into Abraham's bosom; but when it sins as the Jewish Church did before it, glorying in its gifts, but not using them for the calling out of the spiritual life of men, contented to see in its very bosom a population outcast, save in name, from its privileges and blessings, and beyond its limits millions upon millions of heathens to whom it has little or no care to impart the riches of the knowledge of Christ,—then, as it thus sins, it only too much resembles the five brethren of Dives, who are in danger of coming, and for sins similar to his, to the same '*place of torment.*' Nor are we to imagine that, before judgment is executed upon a Church thus forgetful of its high calling, it will be roused from its dream of security by any startling summonses,—any novel signs and wonders,—any *new* revelation,—any Lazarus rising from the dead and bidding it to repent. It has enough to remind it of its duty; its deposit of truth, its talent wherewith to trade till its Lord's return. The parable thus contemplated, speaks to us Gentiles in the very spirit of those awful words which St. Paul addressed to the Gentile converts at Rome: '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' (Rom. xi. 22).

Those who uphold this allegorical interpretation maintain that the parable will not, through admitting it, lose any of its practical value. Whatever, according to the more usual interpretation, might be drawn from it of solemn warning for the children of this present world, who have faith in nothing beyond it,—for all who forget, in the fulness of their own earthly goods, the infinite want and woe of their fellow-men, the same may be drawn from it still. Only, superadded to this warning to the world, it will yield another and still more solemn warning to the Church, that it do not shut itself up in selfish pride; glorying in the multitude of its own privileges but at the same time with no feeling sense of the spiritual wants and miseries of those who know not God, with no earnest effort to remove these distresses; that on such forgetfulness a terrible judgment must follow.