

## THE TEMPTATION.

MATTH. iv. 1-11.

A POINT of great interest with us, is the contrast of the temptations of the *first* and *second* Adam. Each represented the human race, MAN; each was MAN.

The *first* was in the highest grade of excellence, soul and body, and in the midst of full supplies for all his needs. "And the Lord God planted a garden, \* \* \* and there he put the man. \* \* \* And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, \* \* \* And commanded, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." *Gen. ii. 8-17.*

The *second* was in a condition of infirmity. Though it is with difficulty that the mind admits this thought, which the Scripture teaches in describing Him as a partaker of flesh and blood; in all things made like us; tempted; suffering. *Heb. ii. 14-18.* And instead of Eden, a WILDERNESS, deprived of society and food. Forty days and forty nights did He fast; and then, while in this loneliness and destitution, comes the tempter, proposing to Him also an improvement of His condition—that He should use His own resources, be independent of God, supply Himself with provisions, guards, and a kingdom, instead of continuing to be a destitute, lonely occupant of a miserable wilderness.

The first man, in all the superiority of his condition, failed—yielded to the temptation—and the earth became gloomy with sin, death, and woe.

The second man, under all His disadvantages, overcame—resisting the temptation successfully—showing

Himself the master of the tempter, and kindling in the earth the bright hope of a restoration to righteousness, life, and bliss.

The particular passage, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (verse 5), we understand to signify, that, as a creature, man must obey his Creator, wholly, in every respect, if he would be happy. It is highly reasonable, that the Creator's will must be fulfilled, for man to be happy. Having bread is God's will, but not His entire will. Food is given by express revelation, and man must seek it, even though it cost him hard toil. *Gen.* i. 29; ii. 16; ix. 3. But this bread is to sustain the body, while the higher needs of man are sought for, in obedience to God's revealed will, regulating all our relations to Himself and to our fellows; and while bread may be properly obtained by the sweat of our brow, it cannot be properly obtained by a violation of any precept of God; as such violation is injustice to Him, to our fellow, to ourself; is a sin—and sin is death, not life. Man may *die*, but cannot *live*, by bread alone. Man's life is in obedience to all the will of God. So a grand preacher said, "I have not shunned to declare unto you ALL THE COUNSEL (*pasan teen bouleen*), ALL THE WILL of God." He desired that they should LIVE.

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## THE KINGDOM OF GOD BENEFICENT.

MATTH. vi. 33.—But seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

**W**E should not busy ourselves with the affairs of this life, as if they were our highest, ultimate interests; but as our first, chief, essential obligation, we should seek

to understand our relation to God; our obligations to Him; our expectations from Him.

1. God, THEOS: the PLACER, DISPOSER, ARRANGER of all things: so *Herodotus*, Book II, chap. 52, "The Pelasgians at first offered all things in sacrifice to the gods, giving them neither names nor surnames, for they knew of none such. But they called them *theous* (placers, disposers), because they looked upon them as being those (*thentes*) disposing in order and beauty all the constituents of the universe." The old Greek *theo* signified to *put*, to *place*. He who was wise, good, and mighty enough to create and arrange the universe, must necessarily will His plan to be carried out, that all His intelligent creatures should understand, enjoy and glorify Him through it. Man, God's representative on earth; His vicegerent; put above all earthly beings; with his face not prone to the earth, like a mere animal, regarding that as the source of his supply; but, with his face lifted from earth and toward heaven, that he might seek thence the supply needed by his higher nature, that makes him so superior to the creatures around him, and under his dominion.

2. THE KINGDOM OF GOD: king and kingdom are relative terms; in Greek, *basileus* and *basileia*; the latter derived from the former; as is kingdom from king. *Basileus* is derived from *basis*, a support, a base; and *laos*, the people; as though the king were to be the *support* of the people; which is true only of the Kingdom of God. For in the human plan, royalty is on top, pressing down upon the people, who support the king in his power, glory, wars, everything. They pay for all, with their property, persons, lives. The greater the human king, the more glorious and warlike, the more the people are oppressed. Kings and popes are not supports of the people. "The kings of the Gentiles (nations) exercise lordship (*kurieuouein*, lord it)

over them. But you not so (you shall not use this principle, there shall be neither king nor pope among you, whom I am leading back to God TO BE SUPPORTED by Him, on His plan), for you are to be like God, benefactors, doing good to each other." *Matth.* xx. 25; *Mark* x. 42; *Luke* xxii. 25. God alone, of all kings, fulfills this promise of support to His people, and, so, is the only true King. Therefore, it is our highest interest to seek admittance into His Kingdom.

3. *His righteousness*; His method of counting one righteous; *i. e.*, of acknowledging him as a subject, invested with the rights, privileges and obligations of His kingdom; *i. e.*, His naturalization law. The condition is *faith*, true faith in the Gospel of His Son, Jesus Christ. A faith that works, works by love, and purifies the heart. Just as he is, the sinner is to approach, believing that Jesus died in his stead, that His blood cleanseth him from all sin, and that he is accepted for Jesus' sake.

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## THE CENTURION.

MATTH. viii. 9.—For *I* am a man under authority, having soldiers under *me*, and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth, etc.

THE centurion was remarkable for his *humility* and *faith*. In his estimate his house was unworthy of a visit from the Messiah, who was quite able to heal his palsied servant by His will, His order, without His presence. *I* am a man under authority, accustomed to obey orders from my superiors, understanding obedience to be necessary on the part of one *under* authority; other-

wise I should be punished. So, I have soldiers under *me* and they must obey *me*, under pain of my displeasure and punitive authority.

This common-sense view of the matter greatly pleased our Lord, who highly commended it, and granted his prayer. Common-sense presentations of the Gospel are better than metaphysical speculations. The few only are capable of subtle, abstract reasonings; while the Gospel being designed for the many, the masses, is presented in plain figures of speech, easy to be understood. How the will influences the muscles, who can understand? That such is the fact, is known to every one by *experience*.

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## IMITATION OF CHRIST.

MATTH. xi. 29.—And learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

**J**ESUS, the Christ, the second Adam, was MEEK (*praus*), gentle, content, satisfied with his position; LOWLY IN HEART (*tapeinos teei kardiai*), not aspiring, not ambitious, not wishing to be anything other than the second Adam.

The teacher moulds the pupil, makes him to resemble himself. If the teacher be a musician, he moulds the pupil to be like him. I am meek and lowly in heart; therefore I have rest; I am content with my position: learn of me; be meek and lowly in heart, and you, too, shall find rest unto your souls. There is no other path to rest, and no other need be sought after; nothing but

learning of Christ, and so being like Christ, will ever satisfy any of our sinful race.

Adam was not meek and lowly in heart; was not content with his splendid condition and position, his brilliant surrounding and glorious leadership of humanity; but aspired to a higher condition, the divinely appointed one no longer being satisfactory. But, by his ambition, neither he nor we found rest. The infinite, unerring Wisdom appointed him a happy lot, amid all things necessary and delightful; and how could he be happy, at rest, in abandoning his position?

Jesus, amid the gloomy surroundings of sin and death, occupied his position of second Adam, second Leader of humanity, with the dreadful woe of Gethsemane, Calvary, and the Sepulchre before him, content with His position, aspiring to be nothing other than the bearer of human guilt, the sympathizer with human misery, the sharer of human temptations, the deliverer of humanity from guilt, death, and despair. For, beyond all the horror, he saw the joy of success, endured the cross, despised the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the Throne of God. *Heb. xii. 2.*

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## THE RULER'S DAUGHTER.

MATTH. ix. 18-25; MARK iv. 22-43; LUKE viii. 41-56.

IT is a question, Was the ruler's daughter dead? Perhaps this cannot be demonstrated *pro* or *con*. The writer, upon careful examination of the narratives of the three Evangelists, believes she was not really, but apparently, dead.

According to *Matth.*, the ruler Jairus, when he came to and worshipped our Lord, said, "My daughter is even now dead (*arti eteleuteese*);" *Mark*, "My little daughter lieth at the point of death (*eschatoos echei*);" *Luke*, "\* \* \* he had an only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a dying (*kai hautee apethneeske*)." Jairus testifies, first, She is dead; secondly, She is at the point of death; while *Luke* affirms, She lay a dying. *Matthew* and *Mark* relate the words of *Jairus*; *Luke* gives the statement of the fact in his own words. *Apethneeske*, used in the last instance, is in the imperfect tense, and is thought by some to be equivalent to *Matthew's eteleuteese*, both signifying that she was dead. But as the present renderings of the three passages are two to one that she was *not* dead, the proposed change would merely give us two to one that she *was* dead, and would not harmonize the accounts. Moreover, *Wetstein*, as quoted by *Parkhurst*, shows that the Greek writers use this form of the verb in the sense *was a dying*: as *Maximus Tyrius*, xxiv. 9:—*Memphetai teei Xanthippeei oduromeneei oti* (read *ote*) *apethneeske*, "He blames Xantippe for bewailing when he *was a dying*." *Lidd. & Scott* give *to be dying* as one of the meanings of this verb; and refer to *ekthneeskoo*, a verb that is used by *Plato* to signify *to lie for dead, to lie in a swoon*, opp. to *ontoos tethneekenai*, actually dead.

*Mark* and *Luke* both state that while *Jairus* was with our Lord on the way to the house, word was brought him that his daughter was dead—a fact that cannot be reconciled with the hypothesis that she was dead when her father left her. It is most likely, then, that he had left her, as he supposed, *in extremis*, as *Mark* represents him declaring, *eschatoos echei*, she is in her last moments; that by the time he reached our Lord she had died (as seems to be hinted by *arti* and the indefinite

*aorist*), which was not the case. But soon thereafter, the household supposing her to be dead, as she lay insensible in a swoon, the news of her seeming death was sent to the father, that he need not put our Lord to the trouble of a useless visit. The household thought her dead; they were weeping and bewailing her; but in the very midst of the lamentation and despair, Jesus said, as He entered the chamber, Weep not; she is not dead (*ou apethanen*), but sleepeth (*katheudei*). The three Evangelists are in entire agreement here, each using *apethane* and *katheudei* for dead and *sleepeth*. Jairus said she was dead, and also she was dying; Luke says she was dying; the message from the house to Jairus was that she was dead. But Matthew, Mark, and Luke, with one voice, declare that Jesus said, She is *not dead*, but *sleepeth*. True, the wailers, hearing this, scorned Him, "knowing (*eidotes*) that she was dead (*apethanen*)."<sup>1</sup> But the force of *eidotes*, here, cannot be stronger than *they perceived, in their judgment*, etc.

In the case of Lazarus (*John xi. 11*), where our Lord says, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth, the word used is *kekoimeetai*, a very different word from *katheudei*, it being found eighteen times in the New Testament, four of which allude to *sleep* and fourteen to *death*; while *katheudo* is used twenty-one times, and, omitting the three passages under discussion, there is not one clear, indisputable instance in which it signifies *death*. The two passages in which it *may* mean death, are *Ephes. v. 14*; *I Thess. v. 10*. And mark the order in which our Lord uses these words. In the case of *katheudei*, He declares she is *not dead*, *but* sleepeth. In the case of *kekoimeetai*, He declares, first, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; and when He saw they misunderstood Him, He said unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead (*apethane*). Apart, then, from the difference in the words, the distinction of order, style, circumstances, is very obvious.



Of the maid, He denies first that she is dead, and affirms that she sleepeth ; of Lazarus, He first says, figuratively, He sleepeth ; then plainly, He is dead.

But upon the hypothesis that the maid was really dead, why did our Lord deny it, and rebuke the mourners who believed her dead, turning them "all out"? In the case of Lazarus, who was really dead, but who was to be raised from the dead presently, when He saw Mary "weeping, and the Jews also weeping who came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled;" and more than that, He wept; He united with the weepers, although He was then on His way to call him back to life. If, then, the maid was dead, why did He rebuke those who thought her dead, and were mourning for her, as the other Jews and Mary were mourning for Lazarus? Was it not as proper to mourn for the maid as for the man? If the maid was dead only for a season, presently to be raised, such, precisely, was the case with Lazarus. Further, there is no negative in what He said of Lazarus: he sleepeth; he is dead; not, he is not dead, but sleepeth; but, he sleepeth, and, more plainly, he is dead. And supposing there was no difference between the words *dead* and *sleepeth*, then our Lord meant that the maid was not dead, but was dead—an utterance that, perhaps, we should not attribute to Him.

But where is the impropriety of accepting our Lord's statement? It is very plain, very intelligible. She was not dead, but sleeping; insensible, seemingly dead, in a swoon, but really not dead; "and he took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise. And her spirit (*pneuma*, breath) came again, and she arose straight-way," etc. There is nothing to embarrass us; the narrative is intelligible; the maid was not dead; she was ill; had swooned.

But, in this case, there was no miracle; and why was the incident put upon record? We must admit, that

if the maid was not dead, as by our hypothesis, there was not indeed the miracle of raising the dead ; but there was the miracle of curing the disease which had caused the fearful swoon, the suspended animation ; as shown by “ her breath coming again, her rising straight-way, and His command to give her food.” The disease fled at His touch ; at His call, her health returned ; nor is there any need of affirming, against our Lord, that the maid was dead, so as to demonstrate His power to raise the dead ; the proof of His possessing such power not needing the attestation of this incident ; as it is established by other and abundant testimony. The widow’s son ; Lazarus ; “ the dead are raised ;” etc.; leave no testimony to be needed on that point. There is no questioning our Lord’s *power* to raise the dead ; the only question being, is this a case needing the exercise of that power ; or was it, as we have interpreted, a case of *suspended animation*, restored by our Lord’s healing the violent disease that had caused it ?

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