

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



**PATREON**

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

**PayPal**

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

---

A table of contents for *The Expositor* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_expositor-series-1.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expositor-series-1.php)

IN THE STUDY OF THE GREEK TESTAMENT.

FROM MY NOTE-BOOK.

I.

*DID our Lord authorize the apostles to raise the dead while He Himself lived?*

So says the received text of Matt. x. 8, and with it both the Authorized and Revised Versions. But let us see.

What are the presumptions?

1. The raising of the dead was the mightiest of the mighty works which none other man did.

2. Only three cases are recorded of the dead having been raised even by Himself. And what is noteworthy, they were at three stages of decay: (1) Immediately after death, in Jairus' daughter (Mark v. 23, 35, 39-42); (2) probably in the evening of the day of death, in the widow of Nain's son (Luke vii. 11-15); (3) four days after death, in Lazarus (John xi. 39, 43, 44).

3. No case is recorded of the dead having been raised by any of the apostles. Had any such case occurred, is it credible that no record of it should have been preserved? I cannot believe it.

4. Some one has remarked (I think *Bengel*) that no case is recorded of death having occurred in presence of the Prince of life. In this view, what an emphasis it puts upon these words of His: "Lazarus is dead: and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there" (John xi. 14, 15)!

5. When the Seventy were sent forth, with each the same, if not the identical, powers as the Twelve, and, on their return, reported their success, far exceeding expectation, they said, "Even the demons are subject unto us in Thy name" (Luke x. 17). But if either they or the Twelve had raised the dead, would they have specified, not that, but the inferior miracle?

So strong are these presumptions, that even if the textual evidence were overwhelmingly in favour of the received text, I was prepared to regard this as one of the cases where we are obliged to resist it. But it is by no means overwhelming. Were I to go into minute critical details, I think I could show that, taking all the facts together, the evidence of both MSS. and Versions *against* and *for* the clause is pretty nearly balanced.

It only remains to explain how this clause—"raise the dead"—might creep into the text, though not there originally.

When the poor Baptist, a solitary prisoner, had heard of the mighty works which his Master was doing, he sent two of his disciples<sup>1</sup> with the desponding question, "Art Thou He that should come? or look we for another?" Without a word of reply to them, "in that hour He cured many of diseases and plagues and evil spirits; and to many that were blind He restored sight"; and then said to them, "Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how the blind receive sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor," etc. (Luke vii. 19-23).

Now suppose the scribes had to copy this verse, and this remarkable scene in Luke vii. 22 to be ringing in their ears when they wrote, "heal the sick, cleanse the lepers," might they not slip in the clause, "raise the dead," though not in their text? And this is all the less improbable, since *the clauses are reversed* in some of the MSS. (which critics in such cases deem rather suspicious).

On the whole, I cannot but think that this clause slipped in *per incuram* of the scribes—authorizing the Twelve to do what, so long as He was amongst them, the Prince of life reserved to Himself.

<sup>1</sup> δύο τινάς, "certain two"; *i.e.* two *picked* ones.

II.

1 Peter ii. 1, 2: "Wherefore laying aside all malice, . . . as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby" (A.V.)

"Putting away therefore all, . . . as newborn babes, long for the spiritual milk [marg., Gr. "reasonable"] which is without guile, that ye may grow thereby unto salvation" (R.V.)

The *context* is always the best guide to the sense of any difficult passage, or at least the first thing to be looked at. Now the first chapter expressed emphatically two great truths: that they had been "born again"; and that the instrument of this was "*the word of God*, which liveth and abideth for ever." But as yet (he says, chap. ii.) ye are only "newborn babes," and, as such, have need to "*grow*." And, just as the proper nourishment of babes is the milk of her that bare them, so the milk of that *word* by which ye were born again is what ye must crave, and grow thereby. That this is the real sense of the verse in question seems to me so evident, that I cannot but hold that the A.V. expresses it, though not perhaps so well as might be; whereas the R.V.—as if it were necessary to translate the Greek adjective (λογικός) by a corresponding English one—has given an unnatural and scarcely intelligible rendering of the verse. The Greek adjective is used only once elsewhere in the New Testament, in Rom. xii. 1, and there it is properly rendered "reasonable"; but though the Revisers could hardly translate "reasonable milk," they have used "spiritual" as the nearest to what seemed the meaning. But the apostle is not characterizing the milk he is speaking of as incorporeal, nor characterizing it at all; he wants to hold up the *word* itself as the milk they were to crave, and to express this he turns the noun *logos* into an adjective *logikos* (a kind of play upon the

word for which we have no English equivalent). *Bengel*, whose exegetical instinct seldom fails him, takes this view of it. And so *Beza*, whom our A.V. follows. So Canon Cook (*Speaker's Commentary*), and *Cremer* (*Bibl. Theol. Lexicon of New Testament Greek*), who has some good remarks on the word.

The sense of the verse thus settled, we think the translation may be considerably improved. "Desire" is too weak to express what the apostle means by ἐπιποθήσατε, the *craving* of newborn babes after their mother's milk. And "long for" is not a happy substitute either for the natural or the spiritual milk. But "crave," a good English word, and the very thing intended, should doubtless be the word used. "Sincere milk" probably meant (in the old sense of the word) "pure," unalloyed; and "unalloyed" well enough expresses the sense of the Greek adjective. But as applied to milk, "unadulterated" is the best word; and a word of the same import is applied to the *word* of God by the Apostle Paul: "We are not as many which *corrupt* the word of God" (2 Cor. ii. 17). The Revised Version here is most unhappy. A guileless *person* we understand, but a guileless substance is nonsense. The English word most suitable here expresses the idea to every intelligent reader. To "adulterate milk" every milk-boy understands. The word, though long, would soon create no difficulty in the humblest cottage—now that elementary education of the best kind is compulsory—were they made to read 1 Peter ii. 2 thus: "Crave the unadulterated milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."

### III.

Hebrews xii. 2: "(Jesus) the author and finisher of [our] faith" (A.V.).

" . . . author and perfecter of [our] faith" (R.V.).

It is surprising to me that, when the true sense of this

verse had been so evidently missed by the Authorized Version, the Revisers should have repeated the mistake, only substituting "perfecter" for "finisher."

What the apostle here says,<sup>1</sup> is not that Christ is the author and completer of *our own* faith, but that He is Himself the Inaugurator and Perfecter of the life of faith, that He it is who at once leads the van and brings up the rear of the army of victorious believers, the Alpha and the Omega of "the life, walk, and triumph of faith" (to use the phrase with which Abraham Booth entitles one of his Puritan treatises).

The context makes it perfectly plain that this is the sense. In the preceding chapter a noble galaxy of the ancient heroes of faith had been spread out before the readers as examples for Christians to follow; but when he comes to the Prince of believers, all that went before Him seem to pale before Him. 'Fired by the sight of such a cloud of witnesses to the power of faith to overcome the world, do ye run the same race,' but "looking (away) unto Jesus (*ἀφορῶντες*), the Instaurator and Perfecter of faith." There is no word for "our" in the Greek. But, as if to force the passage to refer to our own faith, both versions introduce the italic "our"—an inexcusable liberty in such a case. Why not render thus: "the Captain and Perfecter of faith"? I have only to add, that what puts sense

<sup>1</sup> I decline to say "the writer," as if the author of the substance as well as the phraseology of the epistle were both equally unknown. In the earliest Church, both matter and style were held to be Paul's; and even when, on closer inspection, the *style* did not seem to such a competent scholar as *Origen* to be his style, he still held the matter to be his. And the more I study the characteristic terms, and certain almost unnoticeable ingenuities of the apostle, the more I read his very mind in this epistle. Theologically, he stands out *facile princeps* in the Epistles to the Romans and the Colossians; experimentally in the Ephesians, etc. But on the great High Priest of our profession, who could open up the treasures of the Old Testament *Preparatio Evangelica* with such surpassing richness but our one apostle? But to suppose that this incomparable epistle came out of the hands, matter and style alike, of some absolutely unknown Christian, is more than I can take in.

beyond all doubt, as the thing meant, is that the apostle specifies in the verse following *the very exercise of faith* by which Christ overcame: "Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." The *object* held out to Him was "the joy" of being able to "see of the travail of His soul (the fruit of His sufferings) and be satisfied,"—able to "present unto Himself a glorious Church (of ransomed souls), not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. v. 27). That joyous object He held ever before Him. His Incarnation and sufferings unto death, even the death of the cross, were the indispensable *conditions* of the crown promised Him. He grasped it by faith, held it fast by faith, and by the expulsive power of the higher affection made "the shame" of the cross—between two criminals, and amid the jeers and contempt of all classes, which to His exquisite *human* sensibilities must otherwise have been unbearable—seem the reverse of shameful. That was the triumph of faith.

Now what a pity it is that all this bright light thrown on our Lord's Example, as the "Leader and Conductor" of the army of believers, has been lost to the English reader by both versions of this passage!

But some one may say, Is this view of Christ as our Example as a believer anywhere else expressed in the New Testament? I answer, Thank you for asking the question; for it directs us to some outstanding passages in which it is by many all but overlooked. When, on being filled with the Holy Ghost after His baptism, "He was driven into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil," and there to try on His new furniture for the work before him, the tempter's aim was to persuade Him that the voice from heaven, calling Him the Son of God, was a mere illusion, the dream of an ambitious youth: of which everything around Him

was enough to show its absurdity—the Son of God left in a waste, howling wilderness, alone among wild beasts, and without food for forty days! Finding His faith still unshaken, and the cravings of hunger at the end of those days in all their keenness, laying Him open at every pore in that direction, the tempter returns to the onset: Well, be it so. “If you *are* the Son of God,” let us see what you can do. Just tell these stones to become bread; they will obey the Son of God, sure enough. “But He answered and said, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” What the Son of God *can* do, is not the question, but what *man ought to do*; and that is My law of action. Israel was not forty days, but forty years in a wilderness that yielded no natural sustenance; but God never left them to starve. And the lesson thus taught for all time I have learnt, and I will wait His time. Seeing how invincible was his faith in Scripture, the tempter next tries Him with a text. “But what is this I see,” says stately Bishop Hall: “Satan himself with a Bible under his arm and a text in his mouth?” “If Thou art the Son of God, cast Thyself down” from this dizzy height. Thou art doubly safe. Nothing can hurt the Son of God; and besides, “*it is written*, He shall give His angels charge over Thee.” True, but there is another text, “Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God,” and the Lord *My God* I will not tempt. Despairing now of success by plying him as a friend, the tempter throws off the mask, and working upon that ambition natural to robust manhood, he holds out to Him the splendid bribe of universal dominion, which he was free to dispose of to whom he would, “if only Thou wilt fall down and worship me.” This was too much. He could repel the proposal of a professed friend in friendly terms. But standing forth now *the naked devil*, He draws Himself up, and with a withering look of horror

and execration He orders him off: "Get thee behind Me, Satan; for *it is written*, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve"; and the Lord *My God* I mean to worship, and Him only to serve.

What I wish to press here is *the one attitude* in which our Lord met the tempter throughout. It was that of a *believing Man, resting His faith on the word of God written*, and overcoming by faith, as the Leader and Commander of His people.

One word more. At the cross, among the jeers that saluted Him, was this, "He *trusted in God* that He would deliver; let Him deliver Him." And the great apostle, whose penetrating vision in the Old Testament I find in its element in this epistle, when shewing the identity of nature in the Sanctifier and the sanctified, quotes some choice passages to prove this from the Old Testament, one of which is "*I will put my trust in Him*" (Heb. ii. 13).

DAVID BROWN.

## PERSONAL REMINISCENCES OF CARDINAL NEWMAN.

### II.

I BEGAN the article which appeared last month with the remark that it was with some reluctance that I had undertaken to write sundry reminiscences of the great Cardinal for publication. It is true that in August, 1884, nearly a year after I had left Birmingham, I wrote for the *Pall Mall Gazette* a short sketch of the Oratory there as a "Centre of Spiritual Activity," in which of necessity Newman was the chief if not the only figure; and this sketch I know he read with something like approval. But later I had my doubts whether, considering my peculiar position, it was quite in good taste for me to make public a view of his life