

Notebook containing Dean Inge's sermon.

*King's College, Cambridge. The Papers of Rupert Chawner Brooke. RCB/Xb/2/2*

'Thy dead shall live.'

Isaiah 26.19

St Paul's, Easter 1915

Isaiah 26,19. Thy dead shall live; my dead bodies shall arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust; for thy dew is as the dew of lights, and the earth shall cash forth the dead.

The 25th and 26th chapter of Isaiah, which probably belong to the later, post-exilic portion of the book, contain perhaps the clearest anticipation of Christian hope that are to be found in the Old Testament. The sun of Easter has not risen, but it has begun to gild the clouds in mythical

the eastern sky. ~~And~~ This is no ^ doctrine of the future life, borrowed from Babylonia or some other foreign nation; it is a spontaneous flash of inspired insight, a glorious hope such as 'man's unconquerable mind', exalted by faith in a good and just God, projects upon the blackish clouds and clears them through and through. Let me try to give you the train of thought in this 26th chapter. It is not easy, for the prophet writes with such tension of feeling that he is almost incoherent.

a of the nation

The hope of ~~the~~ resurrection ^ has already ~~broken-out-in~~ found utterance

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the preceding chapter. God will destroy in this mountain face

(on his own holy hill of Zion) the ~~veil~~ of the covering that is cast over all peoples, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He hath swallowed up death for ever; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces.' Then he fills up the picture of the joyous restoration. But – the thought suddenly clutches him- What of Israel's dead? What of all her true-hearted sons and daughters who have died in exile-died in faith, not receiving the promise? Are they to be left deliverance

out when the day of ~~restoration~~ comes? 'The dead rise

not; ~~the deceased rise not~~ shades do not live. ~~It must be that~~ Thou visiteth and destroyeth them, and makest all their memory to perish? They are gone: they have ceased to exist; there is none to tell them that 'Thou hast increased the nation, O Lord, thou hast increased the nation ; Thou art glorified; Thou hast enlarged all the boundaries of the land.' And they, our beloved dead, who prayed so earnestly when thy chastening was upon them, are left out of it all; they are forgotten. So intelorable is

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the thought, that the moral claim upon God's goodness and justice, which God himself has taught us that we may make, takes the form of a prohecy or rather a vision. The nation speaks; returned Israel makes answer [to] herself, 'Thy dead shall live! My dead bodies shall arise! Awake and sing, ye dwellers in dust; for thy dew is a dew of lights (shed, it probably means, by the heavenly light which outshines the sun), and the earth bringeth forth the dead.' The Sun of righteousness shall arise, and the thirsty ground shall sparkle everywhere with the life-giving dew.

This wonderful passage, then, is primarily a vision of the dead Israelites, whose lives have ended in sorrow and captivity, being raised to share in the joyful restoration of the people to their own land and to the favour of God. The Jews were very slow and backward to believe in a future life, much more backward than the surrounding nations. They thus escaped the superstitions about death and what

peoples

follows death, which are common among barbarous ~~nations~~; and they only adopted the belief when it was forced upon them, as it were, by an alternative which was morally intolerable.

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realise

And what helped them to <sup>realise</sup> it was their disinterested love and

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a foreign land

sympathy for their brethren who had died in ~~exile~~

Belief in the fondness of God, and human affection, are still the two great supports of our ~~be~~ hope of immortality.

Christ himself, I feel sure, would have it so. He knew that those who hear not Moses and the prophets would not be

can

persuaded, though one rose from the dead.' Nor indeed ~~could~~ it be much comfort to us in bereavement to know that

that

the body of Lazarus and ^ of Christ himself, was restored



hope. It is a worthy thought, that the dust out of  
the  
which a ~~dead-soldi~~-happy warrior's body was once  
compacted is consecrated for ever by the cause for which  
he died. Yet is there not a tinge of materialism in  
such an idea? The spirit of heroism and self sacrifice  
knows no restrictions of this kind. When it has once shown  
itself in action, it becomes ~~the~~ part of the whole world's  
spiritual wealth. The earth is a better place because  
such things have been done in it. The spirit of the

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martyr-patriot is everywhere near, where there is a man to  
to

say, 'This is how I should like to live and ^ die.' And  
a Christian will hardly be quite content to think of the  
soul

brave man's ~~heart~~ as ~~exists~~ living on only as 'a pulse  
would

in the eternal mind.' Some will be satisfied, and more  
than satisfied, with such a promise, but the Christian  
hope of immortality is not impersonal. We believe  
that each life represents a distinct, and in a sense  
an unique, value in God's right; and it is this  
meaning and value which constitute the personality  
which we believe will exist for ever, in the blessed  
light of God's presence, but not merged in this existence.  
The Easter Message is not the indestructible life of the  
divine Word, the Logos ; it is the victory over death  
won by him who was crucified for our salvation. And  
the hope that we are to derive from the resurrection is  
that there is a real immortality for the living and above  
all for the loving, personality, the man or woman whom  
we have known on earth. The Church of Christ cries,  
like the Spirit of Israel in Isaiah : 'Thy dead shall live;

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my slain shall arise.' As a dew of lights is the dew  
which waters their graves; it sparkles with the uncreated  
light, the light that never was on sea or land. Our  
loved and honoured dead, whom are alien, but never  
again an unfriendly soil conceals, will one day join  
us in the triumph when the kingdom of God shall be  
established not in word but in power. In the words  
of this glorious chapter of the evangelical prophet: The  
ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing  
unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their

heads; they shall find gladness and joy, and sorrow  
and sighing shall flee away'