

SECOND SECTION 2.5-18

Jesus, even in His humiliation as Man, more than the Angels The reason of His humiliation

CHAPTER XI.

THE WORLD MADE SUBJECT TO MAN, NOT TO ANGELS

2.5. For not unto angels did he subject the world to come, whereof we speak.

*6. But one hath testified somewhere, saying (Ps. 8. 5),
What is man, that thou art mindful of him? Or the Son
of man, that thou visitest him?*

*7. Thou madest him a little lower than the angels;
Thou crownedst him with glory and honour,
And didst set him over the works of thy hands:*

*8. Thou didst put all things in subjection under his feet.
For in that he subjected all things to him, he left nothing
that is not subject to him. But now we see not yet all things
subjected to him.*

9. But we behold Jesus crowned with glory and honour.

As the Son of God Christ is more than the angels. As the Son of Man Jesus is more than the angels too. He was indeed, as man, made a little lower than the angels, and yet, because to man the world to come, of which the Spirit of Christ in the prophets spake, had been made subject, he had a place of honour and dominion greatly excelling them. Not only the divinity but the humanity of Christ will prove how infinitely superior the new dispensation is to that which was given by the ministry of angels.

For not unto angels did He subject the world to come, that world to which the Psalm looks forward, the kingdom of the Messiah, the kingdom of heaven upon earth. The Psalm does not speak directly of the Messiah, but of man and his destiny. But it is applied most justly to the Messiah, because in Him the Psalm and man find the fulfilment of what is promised.

The Psalmist first speaks of man's littleness and the wonder that God should notice him. **What is man that Thou art mindful of him? or the son of man that Thou visitest him?** He then points out how high the place is which man occupies. His nature is little less than divine. **Thou madest Him a little lower than the angels; Thou crownedst him with glory and honour.** And universal dominion is assigned to Him. **Thou didst set him over the works of thy hands. Thou didst put all things in subjection under his feet.** Our Epistle points out how this promise, though not yet true of man, has received its fulfilment in Jesus. **Now we see not yet all things subjected to man, but we see Jesus crowned with glory and honour.** What was true of man in promise, we see fulfilled in Jesus: what we see in Jesus, will be made true of man. What wonderful thoughts the Psalm suggests.

How glorious is the destiny of man! Created in the image of God, he was to bear God's likeness in this too, that as king he was to be ruler of all. The whole world to come was made subject to him. Man has received from God a life, a nature, a spirit, capable of partaking of His own life and spirit. His will and His holiness, capable of likeness to and fellowship with Himself, even to the sitting on His throne, and sharing with Him the dominion over all creation. What a destiny!

How gloriously we see that destiny fulfilled in Jesus! It

was because man had been created with a nature capable of such a destiny, that the Son of God could become man, and not count it unworthy of His divine glory Himself to work out that destiny. He came and proved what the life of man was meant to be – how humility and subjection to God were the sure path to glory and honour. He came and glorified a life of humiliation as the training-school for the exaltation to the right hand of God; fulfilling man's destiny in Himself as Son of Man, He, as Son of God, fulfilled it for us too.

How gloriously and certainly man's destiny will yet be realised! Jesus, the Son of Man, came as the Second Adam. He stands to us in a relation as close, as real, as intimate, as Adam did. As complete as was Adam's communication of a sinful nature will be His impartation of a new, of His own nature. As Son of God, Creator and Upholder of all, in whom all things consist, He has a divine power of living within us with all that He was in Himself. His humanity is the revelation of what we can be; His divinity the pledge that we can be it. **We see not yet all things subject to man, but, and that is enough, we see Jesus crowned with glory and honour.**

It was by His union with us in our life in the flesh, by His identifying Himself with our nature, that Jesus was able to claim and to work out and enter into possession of the glory God had promised to man. It is by our receiving His nature, and identifying ourselves with Him in this life on earth and in heaven, that what He has achieved for us can really become ours. Let us here, at the very outset of our Epistle, get well hold of the truth that what Christ does for us as our Leader, our Priest, our Redeemer, is not anything external. All that God works in nature in heaven or on earth, in the stars or in the

trees, He does from within, by laws that pervade their whole existence. All that Adam wrought in us is from within, by a power that rules our inmost life. And all that Christ does for us, whether as Son of God or Son of Man, is equally and entirely a work done within us. It is when we know that He is one with us and we with Him, even as was the case with Adam, that we shall know how truly our destiny will be realised in Him. His oneness with us is the pledge, our oneness with Him the power, of our redemption.

1. Thy destiny, O man, is to sit with Jesus on His throne. Live as one preparing for it. Cultivate a royal spirit. Abide in Him: He will abide in thee.

2. The world made subject to man. How terrible the ruin of sin, by which man was made subject to the world. Its king became its slave, and is so just when he appears most to master it. Christ teaches us to conquer the world by denying it; to hold it in subjection by not being of it. It is in the path of humiliation and self-denial alone that man's destiny can be realised.

3. The Epistle has two things to show us in Jesus, as inseparably connected: the place of glory where He is now; the path of humiliation that brought Him there. Make it thy care to follow Christ in His humility; He will make it His care to bring thee to His glory.

4. Study to see the intimate connection, the real unity between the two. It is the spirit that is subject to God on earth, to which God makes all things subject in heaven. The soul that in the humiliation of earth makes God all is fit for the heavens, when God is manifested in glory as the All in All.