

CHAPTER XIV.

THE LEADER OF OUR SALVATION

2.10. For it became Him, for whom are all things, and, through whom are all things, in bringing (leading) many sons unto glory, to make the author (Leader) of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

WE have seen that there is more than one reason for the humiliation of the Lord Jesus, even unto the suffering of death. Here we have the first: that as the Leader of our salvation, through whom God leads His sons to glory, He might open up the path, the way of life, in which we were to go. For this He needed to be made perfect through suffering and death. So only could He become a Leader (The Dutch version has: “The Leader-in-Chief.” The translation “Lender” makes more clear the connection with what precedes: “God leading (*agagon*) makes the *Leader-in-Chief* (*Archêgos*) perfect.” Of *Captain* in A.V. and *Author*, R.V” Westcott says: “Neither word gives the fulness of sense. The *Archêgos* Himself first takes part in that which He establishes.” In 12. 1 he adopts the word “Leader” in his translation – Jesus the Leader and Finisher of faith.) in the true and full sense of the word. In suffering, His will was perfected, His character fashioned, His dependence on God and delight in His will was confirmed and made manifest. In suffering, His obedience unto death opened up the living way in which alone the creature can reach the Creator – the deepest humility and entire surrender. As Leader He opened up the path of life, a mode of living and acting, in which we are to follow.

It is this that we also spoke of as the second aspect of

Christ's death. That death is not only atonement but fellowship. It is only in suffering, in being crucified and dead with Christ, that we know Christ and His salvation. Christ was made perfect through suffering that He might be a Leader, that in conformity to Him, and in partaking of His Spirit and likeness, we might find the path to God and to glory.

The work of a leader supposes three things. The first: He must Himself lead the way, passing through all its difficulties and dangers, knowing and showing it to those who follow. The second: those who follow must yield themselves wholly to His guidance, walking even as He walked. The third: He must take charge of His followers, seeing that all hindrances are removed, and providing for all their needs. Let us see how blessedly all this is fulfilled in Jesus, and what a comfort it brings us to know that Jesus bears this name too: the Leader of our salvation.

The leader must walk in the very path his followers have to go.— The path we sought in vain was one that could bring us out from under the dominion of sin, both in its guilt as transgression against God, and its power as death to all that is holy and good. There was no possible way out of this state of sin and guilt and death, but by the submission to the judgment of God, and by giving proof, in bearing that judgment, of entire and willing surrender to God's will. There was no way to come out of fallen nature, with the power of self and selfwill ruling it, but by entirely dying to it; suffering anything rather than let it have its way. This was the way in which Jesus would have to lead us. And He had to walk in it Himself. **It became God, in leading many sons unto glory, to make the Leader of their salvation perfect through suffering,** Christ was perfect from His birth; every wish and inclination

was as it should be; but only as a disposition, as a power, that needed to be tested and developed and strengthened by trial. What the suffering and the death effected in Christ personally, in perfecting His character, is the groundwork of what it effected on our behalf. It was needful that God should make Him perfect through suffering; the perfectness that comes through suffering is meekness and gentleness, patience and perfect resignation to God's will. It was because of the humility and meekness and lowliness of heart, which the Lamb of God showed here upon earth, that He is now the Lamb on the throne. Through suffering He was made perfect, and found worthy to be our High Priest.

A leader must be followed.— His followers must walk in the very path in which he walks. Jesus came and was made like us: we must come and be made like Him. His suffering and death is not only substitution and atonement. It is that, thank God! but it is much more too. It calls to fellowship and conformity. The substitution rests on identification: out of that conformity has its growth and strength. The Lamb of God has no salvation and no perfection to give us but His own meek spirit of entire dependence and absolute submission to God. The meekness and humility that it was needful God should perfect in Him are as needful for us. We must suffer and be crucified and die with Him. Death to self and the world, at the cost of any suffering or self-denial, this is the only path to glory the Leader of our salvation has opened up to us.

A leader cares for his followers.— He does not say, Follow me, who can. He watches over everyone, the very feeblest. Remember what care Stanley took in darkest Africa to gather in the stragglers – to leave the feeble ones provided in camp, and then to wait for their coming up. Jesus is a Leader, com-

passionate and sympathetic, and most faithful: with all the faithfulness and steadfastness with which He walked that path Himself on earth, will He help everyone, who will only in meekness trust and obey Him, to walk in that way to the end.

My brethren! do you understand what it means that the Father, in leading you to glory, has made Jesus **the Leader of our salvation**. Jesus is responsible for you. Take Him and trust Him as your Leader. The great need in one who follows a leader is a tender, teachable spirit. Rejoice that you have such a Leader, Himself made perfect in meekness and submission through suffering, that He might lead you in the blessed path that brought Him, and will bring you as surely, to the glory of the Father.

And remember who this Leader is – the Son of God, the divine Maker and Upholder of all things. Not only the Son of Man as a Leader outside of us, influencing us by example and instruction, by authority and kindness does He guide us. No, but as the Son of God who works in us by His Spirit, yea who Himself dwells within us. Even as it was God who worked in Him and perfected Him, will He, as God, now work in us and perfect us.

1. Christ came to give us an entirely new conception of what true life is, to show us a new way of thinking and living, to teach us that a heavenly life consists in giving up everything that has the slightest connection with sin for the sake of pleasing the Father perfectly; This is the new and living way He opened up through the rent veil of the flesh.

2. "It became God to perfect Him." All that Christ wrought, and all that was wrought in Him, was wrought by God. He yielded Himself to God: He did nothing of Himself: He allowed God to do all in Him. This is the path of perfection, the path to glory, in which Jesus leads. His divinity is inexpressibly precious to us for that He can be and do in us. But as inexpressibly precious His humanity, showing us how He was perfected, how God worked in Him, what we must be, that through Him we can most surely be.

3. Seek to get very clear hold of the truth that He is only a Saviour as He is a Leader: Salvation is being led by Him.