

## CHAPTER XVII.

### THAT HE MIGHT BRING TO NOUGHT THE DEVIL.

*2.14. Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, he also himself in like manner partook of the same; that through death he might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;*

*15. And might deliver all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.*

**T**HE previous verses spoke of the oneness of Jesus and His brethren from the divine side: they are all of One. Here we have it put before us from its human side: **Since the children are sharers in flesh and blood, He Himself in like manner partook of the same.** We have already said that for this, Christ becoming man, there was more than one reason. The first, that, as our Leader, He might Himself be perfected, and so prepare a way—a way or state of living, a nature, a life, in which we might draw nigh to God. The second, that He might deliver us from the power of death and the devil. The third, that in all His work for us and in us, He might be a merciful High Priest in things pertaining to God, able to understand and sympathise with us, and ready to bear and to succour. Here it is the second of these three aspects of Christ's incarnation that is brought out: He became man that He might meet and conquer and destroy the power of death and the devil.

**Since the children are sharers in flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise partook of the same.** However familiar the thought of the incarnation is, let us again seek to realise fully

all that it means. As Adam never could have brought us under the power of sin and death, if he had not been our father, communicating to us his own nature, so Christ never could save us, except by taking our nature upon Him, doing in that nature all that we would need to do, had it been possible for us to deliver ourselves, and then communicating the fruit of what He effected as a nature within us to be the power of a new, an eternal life. As a divine necessity, without which there could be no salvation, as an act of infinite love and condescension, the Son of God became a partaker of flesh and blood. So alone could He be the Second Adam, the Father of a new race.

**That through death He might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.** Death is a power that has its sanction from God Himself. In the very nature of things it could not be otherwise than that man, when he turned from God, the fountain of life, to Satan and to self, fell under the power of death. He had yielded himself to Satan, and Satan had power over him. As the jailor keeps the prisoner under the authority of the king, Satan holds the sinner in the power of death so long as no true legal release is given. The only way for us to come from under the power of Satan and death was, to lay off that fallen nature over which they had power, to come out of that sinful life by dying to it, and, in dying, to be entirely freed from it. We had no power to do this. Jesus entered into all the conditions of our fallen humanity. He entered into our death, and endured it as the penalty of sin, and, enduring it, satisfied the law of God. And so, because the law had been the strength of sin, He took from sin and the devil the power of death over us. He endured death as the end of the life of the flesh, in full acknowledgment of God's righteous judgment, yielding up His spirit to the Father. Death, as the penalty of the

law, death as the end of the life of nature, death as the power of Satan over man, was destroyed, and he that had the power of death was brought to nought. And now, as little claim or power as death has on Him, has it on those who are in Him, on those in whom the power of His life now works. **He also Himself partook of flesh and blood, that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.**

**And might deliver all them who, through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.** The power of death and the devil has been so completely broken that there is now perfect deliverance from that fear of death which keeps so many in bondage. Under the Old Testament, life and immortality had not yet been fully brought to light. No wonder the older saints often lived and spoke as those subject to bondage. But how sad that the redeemed of Jesus Christ, His brethren, so often prove that they know but little of the reality and power of His deliverance, or of the song of joy: "Death is swallowed up in victory. Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

My brother! art thou living in the full experience of this blessed truth? Because thou sharest in flesh and blood, Christ came and likewise partook of the same, that there might be perfect oneness between Him and thee. Livest thou in this oneness? By His death He destroyed the devil, that thou mightest be entirely freed from out of his power. Is thy life in this liberty? He delivers from the fear of death and the bondage it brings, changing it into the joy of the hope of glory. Is this joy thy portion? Let us believe that he, who is now crowned with glory and honour, is indeed able to make all a reality to us, so that, as those who are one with Him by

the double bond of the birth from God, and the birth in flesh and blood, we may be His ransomed, His sanctified ones, His beloved brethren. He gave Himself to be wholly like us and for us—shall we not give ourselves to be wholly like Him and for Him ?

*1. “Through death destroyed him that had the power of death.” Death had its power from the law. There was no way of conquering it but by fulfilling its claim. Through death He destroyed death. This is the way for us too. As I give myself up to death, as I give up the sinful life, and die to self in the power of Christ’s death, the power of His deliverance will work in me.*

*2. Through death to life. This is the law of nature, as seen in every corn of wheat. This is the law of the life of Christ, as seen in His resurrection. This is the law of the life of faith, to be felt and experienced every day, as the power of the New Death which Christ died, and the New Life He lives, works in us.*

*3. The first chapter revealed to us the divinity of Christ, as the foundation of the gospel, that we might know that all that He accomplished in His humanity has been effected in divine reality, and works in us in divine creative power.*