

CHAPTER IV.

THE SON-THE GLORY OF HIS WORK

I.-3. Who, when he had made purification (Effected the cleansing) of sins, sat down on the right hand of' the Majesty on high.

THE description of the glory of Christ's person is followed by that of the work of this Son in whom God speaks to us. God's words are deeds. It is in what Christ is and works that God speaks to us. In His divinity and incarnation we see what God has given us. In His life and death and ascension we see how the gift of God enters and acts in all our human life, how complete our salvation is, and what God now asks of us. All Christ's work is God's word to us.

That work consists in two parts: the one on earth, the other in heaven. Of the former it is said, **When He had effected the cleansing of sins;** of the latter, **He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.** In a healthy Christian life we must know and hold fast both parts of Christ's work. The work He did upon earth was but a beginning of the work He was to do in heaven; in the latter the work on earth finds its perfection and its glory. As Priest He effected the cleansing of sins here below; as Priest-King He sits on the right hand of the throne to apply His work, in heavenly power to dispense its blessings, and maintain within us the heavenly life.

When He had effected the cleansing of sins. The cleans-

ing of sins, as something effected by Christ ere He went to heaven, is the foundation of all His work. Let us learn, at the very outset, that what God has to speak to us in Christ begins here: sin must be cleansed away. This is the root-thought of redemption. As long as we seek salvation chiefly from the desire of personal safety, or approach the study of Christ's person and work as the revelation of what is true and beautiful and good, we cannot enter fully into its power. It is the cleansing of *sin* God insists on; in a desire so intense that He gave His Son to die for it. It is in the intense desire after the cleansing of sins, that, all the way through the Christian life, the spiritual capacity to approach and enter into the salvation of Christ will be found. It lies at the root of all. It is the secret of Christian perfection. It was only when He had effected this that heaven opened to Him. The full acceptance of the cleansing of sins, as the meaning of the word will be unfolded later on, will be to us, too, the entrance into the heavenly life.

When He had effected the cleansing of sins, **He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.** *There* He lives, opening up and keeping open the blessed access to God's presence and fellowship for us; lifting us up into and maintaining us in its enjoyment; and in the power that prevails there, making the kingdom of heaven a reality within the heart. It is the great object of the Epistle to bring home to us the *heavenly glory of' Christ* as the ground of our confidence, the measure of our expectation, and the character of that inward salvation He imparts. That Christ as our Leader and Forerunner has rent asunder the veil, and in the power of His blood has taken possession and secured access into the Holiest of All, does *not* mean only that we are to enter heaven when we die. The whole practical teaching of the Epistle is summed up

and applied in the one word: “We have boldness for entering in: let us draw nigh: let us enter in.” Christ seated on the throne in heaven means our being actually brought, in the supernatural power which the coming down of the Holy Spirit supplies, into God’s holy presence, and living there our daily life. It was because the Hebrews did not know this, because they had rested content with elementary truths about faith and conversion, and then the life in heaven after death, that they had so signally failed. Truly to know Jesus at the right hand of God would be the healing of their diseases, the restoration to the joy and the strength of a life in accordance with their heavenly calling.

The Church of our days is suffering from the same cause, and needs the same cure. It is so much easier to appropriate the work of Christ on earth than that in heaven. It is so much easier to take in the doctrine of a Substitute and an atonement, of repentance and pardon, than of a High Priest bringing us into God’s presence, and keeping us in loving communion with Him. It is not the blood-shedding upon earth only, *it is the blood-sprinkling in heaven, and the blood-sprinkling from heaven on heart and conscience*, that brings the power of the heavenly life unto us. And it is this alone that makes us Christians, who not only seek to enter the gate, but who daily press on in the living way that leads ever deeper into the Holiest.

Let no one think that I speak of what is too high. I speak of what is your heritage and destiny. The same share you have in Jesus on the cross, you have in Jesus on the throne. He ready to sacrifice the earthly life for the heavenly; to follow Christ fully in His separation from the world and His surrender to God’s will; and Christ in heaven will prove in you the reality and the power of His heavenly priesthood. Let the cleansing of

sins be to you, as it was to Christ, the entrance to the Holiest. He who effected the cleansing on earth, and applies it in person from heaven, will assuredly lead you into all the fulness of blessing it has opened up for Him and for you.

1. Faith has in its foundation four great corner-stones on which the building rests-the Divinity of Christ, the Incarnation, the Atonement on the Cross, the Ascension to the Throne. The last is the moat wonderful, the crown of all the rest, the perfect revelation of what God has made Christ for us. And so in the Christian life it is the moat important, the glorious fruit of all that goes before.

2. The Holy Spirit was sent down after the ascension. Why? That He might witness to us of a heavenly Christ, and bring the Kingdom of heaven into our hearts and lives.

3. "Cleansing of sins." Some one says: "At this time I saw plainly that whatever the Lord would communicate and make known of Himself and the mystery of His kingdom, He would do it in a way of purity and holiness." There are two sides from which we can approach the higher truth of God's word as to holiness and likeness to Jesus. The one is the desire to know all scripture truth fully, and to have our system of doctrine complete and perfect. The other is the deep, intense longing to be made free from sin, be free as God can make us in this life. It is only from this side that real access will be given into the heavenly life of Christ.