

that by the example of His all-holy life, He might be the pattern and example to all humanity, and by the sacrifice of His precious death might deliver mankind from sin, and from death, the wages of sin. But the angels being, so far as is revealed to us, of one uncompounded nature only, and having nothing of the nature of material substance, are incapable of death, though they were not incapable of sin, and of falling from their high estate. In the case of man, though he fall and fall deeply into sin, he is still capable of repentance; the flesh may betray him with its many lusts, but there is always the Spirit striving against the flesh even as the flesh lusteth against the Spirit. But if an angel fall, he must fall, so far as we can see, entirely and altogether; "there is no longer any hold for good in one part of his being, when another has given way, as there is in the case of man." There is no compound or complex nature to render him capable of inward strife; no possibility of repentance and amendment, so far as we know; no possible growth into holiness, when innocence has once been lost. And therefore we sing, and sing truly, in one of our children's hymns, of the "Song which even angels can never, never sing, for they know not Christ as Saviour, though they worship Him as King."

In the revelation that was given to St. John, wherein is unveiled before us the worship of the heavens, we may see clearly this distinction in the very words with which the angels and the redeemed from among men glorify the Lamb that was slain. The four living creatures and the four-and-twenty elders, being men, fall down before the Lamb, singing a new song, and saying: "Thou art worthy..... for Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth." But the angels, in number ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, who stand about the throne, and about the living creatures and the elders, cry with a loud voice, "Amen; worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and wisdom and riches and strength, and honor and glory and blessing." Surely these thoughts of our utter unworthiness of ourselves, and yet of God's infinite love and condescension in giving His own dear Son to take our nature upon Him and bear our iniquities in His own body on the tree of shame, should move us to value, more than we have ever done before, to value as far above all earthly comforts and pleasures, that ever blessed redemption which God has procured for us through the precious death and blood-shedding of Jesus Christ, our Saviour and our King.

2. And again, it follows from what we have already seen, that there are capacities and powers belonging to redeemed mankind which are not within the capacity and power of even the highest of the angelic host. The example of the life of Jesus, not so much in its aspect of perfect obedience to the Father's will, as in that heart-touching, soul-constraining aspect of self-sacrifice for the sake of