

Of Christ, the Mediator of the Covenant.

by John Gill

Christ is the one and only Mediator between God and men, who makes satisfaction for sin and reconciles God's justice and mercy.

Scripture: John 3:16, Acts 20:28, Romans 5:10, 2 Corinthians 5:19, Ephesians 2:18, Colossians 1:21, 1 Timothy 2:5, Hebrews 8:6, Hebrews 9:15, Hebrews 12:24

Topics: "Reconciliation", "Mediation of Christ"

Description

John Gill expounds on Christ as the Mediator of the Covenant, emphasizing His unique role in reconciling God and humanity. He explains that Christ, being both fully divine and fully human, is the only suitable mediator who can bridge the gap caused by sin. Gill highlights that Christ's mediation involves not only intercession but also the satisfaction of divine justice through His sacrifice. He asserts that this reconciliation restores the relationship between God and the elect, who were once alienated due to sin. Ultimately, Gill underscores the necessity of Christ's dual nature for His mediatorial work, affirming that He is the sole mediator for both Jews and Gentiles.

Transcript

A Body of Doctrinal Divinity

Book 2--Chapter 11

OF CHRIST, THE MEDIATOR OF THE COVENANT.

Another relation, or office, which Christ bears in the covenant, is that of Mediator; three times in the epistle to the Hebrews is he called the Mediator of the new, or better covenant or testament, (Heb. 8:6, 9:15, 12:24) the same with the everlasting covenant, only so called in reference to a former administration of it. The apostle Paul asserts, that there is "one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5). Both Jews and Gentiles have a notion of a Mediator; the Jews[1] call the Messiah *aeuma*, the Mediator, or middle one; and so Philo the Jew[2], speaks of the most ancient Word of God, as *mesov*, a middle Person between God and men, not unbegotten as God, nor begotten as man, but the middle of the extremes, one between both.

The Persians[3] call their God *Mithras*, *mesithy*, a Mediator; and the Demons, with the heathens, seem to be, according to them, mediators between the superior gods and men; but we have a more sure word of

prophecy to direct us in this matter; Christ is the one and only Mediator. It will be proper to enquire, 1. First, In what sense Christ is the mediator of the covenant; not as Moses, who stood between God and the people of Israel, "to show" them "the word of the Lord", (Deut. 5:5) to receive the law, the lively oracles, and deliver them to them, said to be ordained, or disposed by angels, in the hand of a mediator, supposed to be Moses (Gal. 3:19).

Christ indeed is the revealer and declarer of his Father's mind and will, and the dispenser of the covenant of grace in the different administrations of it, in each of the periods of time; but this more properly belongs to him as the "angel" or "messenger of the covenant", as he is called, (Mal. 3:1) than the mediator of it. Christ is a mediator of reconciliation; such an one as interposes between two parties at variance, in order to bring them together, and in some way or other reconcile them to each other.

"A mediator is not of one", of one party; for where there is but one party there can be no difference, and so no need of a mediator; but "God is one", he is one party, the offended party, and man is the other, the offending party; and Christ is the mediator between them both to bring them together, who are through sin at as great distance as earth and heaven; and he is the antitype of Jacob's ladder, that reaches both and joins them together; the daysman between them, who lays his hand on them both, and makes peace between them; and so a learned Grecian^[4] interprets the word for "mediator" εἰρηνοποιός, "a peacemaker"; and this work he performs not merely by way of intreaty, as one man may intreat another to lay aside his resentment against an offender, and not pursue him to his destruction, which lies in his power; or as Moses intreated God with great vehemence and importunity to forgive the Israelites, or blot him out of his book; for however commendable this may be for one man to intercede with another, or with God for an offender, in such a manner; yet it seems too low and mean an office for Christ the Son of God, barely to intreat his Father to lay aside the marks of his displeasure against a sinner, and not so honourable for God to grant it, without satisfaction; wherefore Christ acts the part of a mediator, by proposing to his Father to make satisfaction for the offence committed, and so appease injured justice.

Christ is a mediator of reconciliation in a way of satisfaction; reconciliation in this way is Christ's great work as mediator; this is what was proposed in covenant, and what he therein agreed to do, and therefore is called the mediator of the covenant. Reconciliation supposes a former state of friendship, a breach of that friendship, and a renewal of it; or a bringing into open friendship again. Man in a state of innocence was in a state of friendship with God, had many high honours and special favours conferred upon him; being made after the image and likeness of God, had all the creatures put in subjection to him, was placed in a delightful garden, had a right to eat of the fruit of all the trees in it but one; to him the creatures were brought to give them names, and an help meet was provided for him; but man being in this honour abode not long, sin soon separated chief friends, and he was drove out of his paradisaical Eden; and appeared to be, as all his posterity are, not only at a distance from God, and alienation to him, but enmity against him, as the carnal mind of man is; and in this state the elect of God were considered, when Christ undertook in covenant to be the mediator of reconciliation for them; and in this condition he found them, when he came to make actual reconciliation for them; "you that were sometimes alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled", (Col. 1:21) and hereby has brought them into an open state of grace and favour with God; into greater nearness to him, and into a more exalted state of friendship with him than was lost by the fall.

It should be observed, that the elect of God are considered in the covenant of grace as fallen creatures; and that Christ being a mediator of reconciliation and satisfaction for them, supposes them such. In the covenant of works there was no mediator; while that covenant remained unbroken, and man continued in

a state of integrity, he needed none; he could correspond and converse with God without one; though he might have knowledge of Christ as the Son of God, and second person in the Trinity, which was necessary to his worship of him, yet he knew nothing of him as mediator, nor needed him as such; he could hear the voice of God, and abide in his presence without fear or shame; it was after he had sinned, and not before, that he hid himself among the trees, on hearing the voice of God: nor is there any mediator for angels, none was provided, nor admitted, for the fallen angels, they were not spared; and the good angels needed not any, having never sinned; they are admitted into the divine presence without a mediator to introduce them; they stand before God, and behold his face continually.

Some have thought that Christ is the medium of union of angels with God, and of elect men, chosen in Christ, and considered as unfallen, which I will not object to; but a mediator of reconciliation and satisfaction, Christ is only to fallen men, and they needed one; a reconciliation was necessary, and without such a mediator the purposes of God concerning elect men, the covenant of grace made on their account, the prophecies of the Old Testament, and the salvation of men could not have been accomplished; nor the perfections of God, particularly his justice and holiness, glorified in it.

Sin has been committed, which is offensive to God, provoking to the eyes of his glory, and deserving of his wrath, even of eternal death; the law broken, which reflects dishonour on the lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy; justice injured and affronted, and which insisted on making a satisfaction, and that nothing less than perfect obedience to the law, and a bearing the penalty of it; fallen man could not make his peace with God, nor reconcile himself to him on such terms; Christ, as mediator of the covenant, undertook to make reconciliation for elect men; and God set him and sent him forth to be, and he is become the propitiation for their sins; and God is pacified towards them for all that they have done, and has taken away all his wrath, and turned himself from the fierceness of his anger, and removed all the visible marks and effects of his displeasure.

Nor is this reconciliation Christ is the mediator of, as thus stated, any contradiction to the everlasting love of God to his elect in Christ; where there is the strongest love among men, when an offence is committed, there is need of reconciliation to be made. David had the strongest affection for his son Absalom as can well be imagined; Absalom committed a very heinous offence, murdered his brother Amnon, David's firstborn, and heir to his crown; he fled from justice, and from his father's wrath and vengeance he might justly fear; Joab became a mediator between them, first more secretly, by means of the woman of Tekoah, and then more openly in his own person, and succeeded so far as to obtain leave that the young man be called from his exile; nevertheless, when returned, David would not admit him into his presence until two years after, when, and not before, a full and open reconciliation was made and declared; and yet all this while the heart of David was towards his son, and continued, even notwithstanding his unnatural rebellion against him.

And so the love of God to his people is from everlasting to everlasting, invariably the same: with him there is no shadow of turning; there is no change in God, as not from love to hatred, so not from hatred to love; he is in one mind, and none can turn him, no, not Christ himself; nor was it the work of Christ's mediation, nor the design of it, to turn the heart of God; for that proceeded according to the unalterable and unchangeable will of God; nor did the mediation of Christ procure, nor was it intended to procure the love and favour of God to his elect; so far from it, that itself is the fruit and effect of that love (John 3:16; Rom. 5:8; 1 John 4:10).

It was love that set forth and sent forth Christ to be the propitiation for sin; it was owing to the good will and free favour of God, that a Mediator was admitted for sinful men; and it appeared still greater, in providing one to be a Mediator of reconciliation for them; and the reconciliation the scriptures speak of, as made by the blood, sufferings, and death of Christ, is not a reconciliation of God to them, as to his love, but justice; but a reconciliation of them to God; and that not so much of their persons, which are always acceptable and well pleasing to God, as considered in Christ, in whom they were chosen, as for their sins, (Rom. 5:10; 2 Cor. 5:19; Col. 1:20, 21; Heb. 2:17) and which is no other than a satisfaction for them to divine justice; for the reconciliation of their persons in that way, is not to the love and affections of God, from which they were never separated, but to the justice of God, offended by their sins; and the whole is a reconciliation of the divine perfections to each other in the business of salvation; for though these agree among themselves, yet with respect to that, had different claims to make; the love and grace of God pleaded for mercy, and mercy pleaded for itself, that it might be shown to the objects of love; but justice insisted on it, that satisfaction be made for the offences committed; the difficulty was how to answer each of these pleas; Christ interposed, and offered himself in the covenant, to be a Mediator of reconciliation, or to make satisfaction for sin; and so mercy and truth have met together, and righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

Reconciliation then is the principal branch of Christ's office in the covenant as Mediator. Another follows, namely, His intercession, or advocacy, which proceeds upon reconciliation or satisfaction made; "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the Propitiation for our sins", (1 John 2:1, 2) and it is his being the Propitiation for sin, that is the foundation of his advocacy, or on which is grounded his plea for the remission of it; he is the Angel of God's presence, who always appears there for his people, and ever lives to make intercession for them; he is first the Mediator of reconciliation, and then of intercession; as they are reconciled to God by his sufferings and death, they are saved through his interceding life.

He is called the Angel of God's presence, not only because he enjoys it himself; but because he introduces his people into it, and presents their petitions to God, offers up the prayers of all saints, perfumed with the much incense of his mediation; through which they become acceptable to God. Christ is the medium of access to God, to the throne of his grace; there is no drawing nigh of sinful men to God without a Mediator, without him he is a consuming fire; no man can come to the Father but by Christ; he is the only Way, the new and the living Way; and through him, his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, there is access with boldness and confidence.

And he is the medium of acceptance, both of persons and services, which are only accepted in the Beloved, and become acceptable through his prevalent mediation and intercession; and he is the medium of conveyance of all the blessings of the covenant of grace to his people, which are all communicated in virtue of his advocacy for them; and he is the medium of the saints' communion and fellowship with God now, as he will be the medium of their glory and happiness to all eternity.

The next thing to be considered is, 2. Secondly, The fitness of Christ for his work and office, as the Mediator of the covenant; since a mediator was necessary, and he must be one of the divine Persons in the Trinity; the Son of God being the middle Person in it, seems most proper and suitable to preserve the order, name, and place of the Persons in it: it does not seem so decent, that the first Person should be a Mediator to the second; but rather, since, as Dr. Goodwin expresses it, the suit of trespass was commenced, and ran in the name of the Father, of the first Person for the rest; it seems most agreeable that the reconciliation be made to him by one of the other Persons; and since the second Person bears the

name of a Son, as the first of a Father, it seems most in character that the Son should mediate with the Father, than the Father with the Son; and since it was proper that the Mediator should become the Son of man, as will be seen hereafter, it seems most agreeable, that he who is the Son of God should become the Son of man; otherwise there would be two Sons in the Trinity, or two Persons so called: and for the first or third Person to become a Mediator between God and man, does not seem so becoming, as he who is the second or middle Person among them.

But the principal fitness of Christ for his office, as Mediator, at least for the execution of it, lies in the union of the two natures, human and divine, in his one Person; whereby he is the Immanuel, God with us, God manifest in the flesh; and as he partakes of both natures, he has an interest in, and a concern for both; he is fit to be a Mediator between God and man; both to take care of things pertaining to God and his glory, and to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. 2a.

It was requisite that he should be man, assume human nature into union with his divine Person, even a true body, and a reasonable soul. 2a1. That he might be related to those he was a Mediator, Redeemer, and Saviour of; that he might be their brother, their near kinsman, their God, and so have an apparent right to redeem them, as the near kinsman, according to the law, had Leviticus 25:48, 49. 2a2. That sin might be satisfied for, and reconciliation be made for it, in the same nature which sinned; and whereas, according to the scheme of mediation and salvation by Christ, the same individuals that sinned were not to suffer; it seems requisite and reasonable that an individual of that nature should, in their room and stead, that so it might come as near to what the law required as could be (Gen. 2:17). 2a3.

It was proper that the Mediator should be capable of obeying the law, broken by the sin of man: as a divine Person could not be subject to the law, and yield obedience to it; and had he assumed the angelic nature, that would not have been capable of obeying all the precepts of the law, which are required of men; and universal perfect obedience was necessary for the justification of a sinner before God; hence Christ was made of a woman, that he might be made under the law, and yield obedience to it; by which obedience men are made righteous in the sight of God (Gal. 4:4; Rom. 5:19). 2a4.

It was meet the Mediator should be man, that he might be capable of suffering death; as God he could not die, and had he assumed the nature of an angel, that is incapable of dying; and yet suffering the penalty of the law, death, was necessary to make reconciliation; a sacrifice for sin was to be offered, and therefore it was proper Christ should have somewhat to offer; even a true body, and a reasonable soul, Which he did offer; peace was to be made by blood, and reconciliation by the sufferings of death, and therefore a nature must be assumed capable of shedding blood, and of suffering death; and without which he could not be made sin, and a curse for men, as the law required he should.

In a word, it was highly becoming, that the Captain of our salvation should be made perfect through suffering, that he might be a perfect Saviour, which could not be, without the assumption of human nature (see Heb. 2:10, 14, 15, 5:9, 8:3). 2a5. It was fit the Mediator should be man, that he might be a merciful, as well as a faithful High Priest, have a fellow feeling with his people, and sympathise with them under all their temptations, afflictions, and distresses, and succour and relieve them, from love and affection to them, as their friend and brother (Heb. 2:17, 18, 4:15). 2a6.

It was necessary that he should be holy and righteous, free from all sin, original and actual, that he might offer himself without spot to God, take away the sins of men, and be an advocate for them, (Heb. 7:26, 9:14; 1 John 3:5 2:1) but it was not enough to be truly man, and an innocent person; he must be more than

a man, to be a mediator between God and man; it was requisite, therefore, 2b. That he should be God as well as man. 2b1. That he might be able to draw nigh to God, and treat with him about terms of peace, and covenant with him; all which a mere man could not do; and therefore it is with wonder said, and as expressive of the arduousness of the task, of the difficulty of the work, and of the necessity of a divine Person to do it; "Who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me, saith the Lord?" (Jer. 30:21) to mediate between him and sinful men, to lay his hands on both, and reconcile them together; none but Jehovah's fellow could or dared to do this. 2b2.

That he might give virtue and value to his obedience and sufferings; for if he had been a mere man, his obedience and righteousness would not have been sufficient to justify men, nor his sufferings and death a proper sacrifice and atonement for sin. But being God as well as man, his righteousness is the righteousness of God; and so sufficient to justify all that believe in him, and them from all their sins; and his blood is the blood of the Son of God, and so cleanses from all sin, and is a proper atonement for it. 2b3.

Being Mediator, Redeemer, and Saviour, it naturally and necessarily leads men to put their trust and confidence in him, and rely upon him, for peace, pardon, and salvation; whereas, if he was a mere man, and not God, this would entail a curse upon them; "for cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm", (Jer. 17:5) and even to worship and adore him, and ascribe divine honour and glory to him; which to do would be idolatry, was he not God; for though he that is Mediator is to be worshipped by angels and men, yet not as mediator, but as God; for it is his Deity that is the foundation of worship, and renders him the proper object of it; God will "not give" his "glory to another", (Isa. 42:8) not even the glory of being a Mediator to any other but a divine Person; for of Christ, in his mediatorial capacity, are the words spoken, as appears from the whole preceding context: it is necessary that the Mediator should be God, that he might be the proper object of trust, worship, honour, and glory divine.

Nor is it any objection to his being a Mediator, as to his divine nature, that then the Father and the Spirit would be Mediators too, the divine nature being common to them all; since it is not in the divine nature, essentially considered, but as it subsists in the second Person, the Son of God, that Christ is Mediator, and performs his office; and to exercise this office in it, is no lessening and degrading of his Person, since it is a glory that none but a divine Person is fit to bear: and it may be observed, that among men this office is sometimes assumed and exercised by one superior to either of the parties between whom he mediates; and though the Father may be said to be greater than Christ, considered in his office capacity, yet this does not suppose any subjection and inferiority of his divine Person: nor is it any objection to Christ being Mediator, as to his divine nature, that then he must be a Mediator to himself, or reconcile men to himself; for not to observe, that Christ in his office may be distinguished from himself, as a divine Person; as one may be distinguished from himself as to different circumstances of age, office, &c. there is no impropriety that Christ is a Mediator for himself, or has made reconciliation and satisfaction to himself; for if the Father may be said to reconcile men to himself by his Son, as in (2 Cor. 5:18, 19; Col. 1:20) why may not the Son be said to reconcile men to himself, as God, by his sufferings and death as man?

There is no impropriety, that if a man has offended a society of men, one of that society should take upon him to be a mediator for him, and reconcile him to that society, though he himself is a part of it, and as such, equally offended as they: or, still nearer to the case in hand, supposing a rebellion in a nation, against the king of it, and this king should have a son, who is heir to his throne, and so must be equally offended with the rebels as his father, and yet should take upon him to be a mediator between his father and the rebels, and make peace between them; where would be the impropriety of it, though he himself,

with his father, is the party offended?

The mediation of Christ thus stated, meets with and militates against two errors; one of those, who say he is only a Mediator as to his human nature; and that of others, who assert him to be only a Mediator as to his divine nature. But most certain it is, that there are various acts and works of Christ, as Mediator, in which both natures manifestly appear, and are concerned; not to make mention of the incarnation itself, or Christ's assumption of human nature, which manifestly implies both; for it was a divine Person that partook of flesh and blood, or assumed, not an angelic, but an human nature: it was the Word, which was in the beginning with God, and was God, that was made flesh, and dwelt among men; it was he that was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with him, that was found in fashion as a man, and took on him the form of a servant; it was God manifest in the flesh.

In the obedience of Christ both natures are to be perceived; not only the human nature, in his being obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; but the divine nature also; or otherwise, where is the wonder, that "though he was a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things that he suffered", (Heb. 5:8) and it was that which gave virtue to his obedience, and made it satisfactory to the justice of God, and made the law more honourable than the perfect and perpetual obedience of angels and men could do.

In the act of laying down his life for men, both natures appear; the human nature, which is passive in it, and is the life laid down; the divine nature, or the divine Person of Christ, who is active in it, and laid down his life of himself, he having such a power over his life as man, and that at his dispose, as no mere creature ever had; and both are to be observed in his taking of it up again; his human nature, in his body being raised from the dead; his divine nature or person, in raising it up of himself, whereby he was declared to be the Son of God with power: he was put to death in the flesh, in human nature, and quickened in the Spirit, or by his divine nature; the sacrifice of himself, was his own act, as Mediator; what was offered up were his soul and body, his whole human nature; this was offered by his eternal Spirit, or divine nature, which gave virtue to it, and made it a proper atoning sacrifice for sin.

To observe no more, the redemption and purchase of his people, is a plain proof of both natures being concerned in his work as Mediator; the purchase price, or the price of redemption, is his precious blood, his blood as man; but what gave virtue to that blood, and made it a sufficient ransom price, is, that it was the blood of him that is God as well as man; and therefore God is said to purchase the church with his own blood (Acts 20:28). 2c. It was not only requisite and necessary, that the Mediator should be God and man, but that he should be both in one Person, or that the two natures should be united in one Person; or, rather, that the human nature should be taken up, and united to, and subsist in the Person of the Son of God; for the human nature, as it has no personality of itself, it adds none to the Son of God; it is no constituent part of his Person; he was a divine Person, before his assumption of human nature; and what he assumed was not a person, but a nature, and is called a "thing, nature, seed", (Luke 1:35; Heb. 2:16) had it been a person, there would be two persons in Christ, and so two mediators, contrary to the express words of scripture, (1 Tim. 2:5) and if the human nature was a person, as it must be a finite one, what was done and suffered by it, must be finite also, and of no use but to that person, and could have no sufficient virtue and value in them to justify men, and atone for sin; but these two natures being in personal union, the works and actions of either, though distinct and peculiar to each, yet belong to the whole Person, and are predicated of it; and so those of the human nature have virtue and efficacy in them, from the personal union, to make them effectual to the purposes for which they were designed, without which they would be ineffectual.

Hence it may be observed, that Christ is described in one nature, by qualities, works, and actions, which belong to him in the other, and is what divines call a communication of idioms, or properties; thus the Lord of glory is said to be crucified; God is said to purchase the church with his blood; and the Son of man is said to be in heaven, while he was here on earth, (1 Cor. 2:8; Acts 20:28; John 3:13) the advantage of this personal union is, that the divine nature has an influence upon, and gives virtue and dignity to whatsoever is done or suffered in the human nature; which is of the utmost concern in the mediation of Christ: nor is it any objection that two natures should influence one and the same action, or be concerned in the production or perfection of it; when it is observed, that the soul and body of man, united together, concur in the performance of the same action, whether good or bad.

I shall next enquire, 3. Thirdly, How Christ came to be the Mediator of the covenant, even the Mediator of reconciliation in it: it was owing originally to a thought in the heart of God, the offended Party; whose thoughts were "thoughts of peace, and not of evil", towards offending man; this affair began with God the Father; "All things are of God", that is, the Father, as appears by what follows; "Who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation"; the doctrine of it, to publish and declare to the world; the sum and substance of which is, "to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself", (2 Cor. 5:18, 19) that is, consulting with Christ his Son, and with him contriving the scheme and method of reconciling to himself the world of his elect, considered as sinful fallen creatures in Adam: upon the first thought of peace and reconciliation, a council of peace was held between the divine Persons, which issued in a covenant of peace in which it was proposed to Christ, and he agreed to it, to be the Peace maker, upon which he was constituted the Mediator of it; "I was set up from everlasting", (Prov. 8:23) says Christ; that is, by his divine Father; though not without his own consent: or, "I was anointed", which does not design a collation of any gifts, qualifying him for the office of Mediator; as when he is said to be anointed with the Holy Ghost; only his investiture with that office, so expressed, because the rite of anointing was used in the consecration of kings, priests, and prophets to their office.

And God not only set him up, but "set" him "forth", in his eternal purposes and decrees, to be the "propitiation for sin", to make reconciliation and satisfaction for it, (Rom. 3:25) and declared him in prophecy to be the Prince of peace, and the Man that should appear in human nature, and make peace and reconciliation between him and men; he sanctified him, or set him apart to this office before the world began; and in the fulness of time, sent him to be the propitiation, or propitiatory sacrifice, for the sins of men; and even before his incarnation, being constituted in covenant the Mediator of it, he acted as such, throughout the whole Old Testament dispensation: he exercised in each of his offices then; his prophetic office, by making known to Adam the covenant of grace, immediately after his fall; by preaching by his Spirit to the disobedient in the times of Noah, the spirits that were in prison, in the times of the apostle Peter; and by his Spirit, in the prophets testifying beforehand his own sufferings, and the glory that should follow.

His Kingly office, in gathering, governing, and protecting his church and people, who acknowledged him as their King, Judge, and Lawgiver: and his Priestly office, through the virtue of his blood reaching backward to the foundation of the world, and therefore said to be the Lamb slain so early, (Rev. 13:8) and instances there are of his intercession under the former dispensation, (Zech. 1:12, 13, 3:1-4) the actual existence of Christ's human nature from eternity, was not necessary to his being a Mediator of the covenant; it was enough that he agreed in covenant, to be man in time; that this was known he would be, and was certain he should be; and accordingly he was, from the instant of the covenant making, reckoned and accounted, and bore the name of the God-man and Mediator, and acted as such.

Some parts of his work did not require the actual existence of the human nature; he could draw nigh to God, as Jehovah's fellow, without it; he could treat with God about terms of peace, and promise to fulfil them, and covenant with God without it: it no more required the actual existence of his human nature, to covenant with his Father, about the reconciliation and redemption of man, than it required that the Father should assume such a nature to covenant with his Son about the same: there were other parts of Christ's work as Mediator, which required its actual existence; as obedience to the law, and suffering death, the penalty of it; but then, and not before, was it necessary for him to assume it, when the fulness of time was come agreed on, to obey and suffer.

It only remains now, 4. Fourthly, To show what a Mediator Christ is, the excellency of him, and the epithets which belong to him as such. And, 4a. He is the one and only Mediator; "There is one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus"; and there is no other: the papists plead for other mediators, angels and saints departed; and distinguish between a Mediator of redemption, and a mediator of intercession; the former, they own, is peculiar to Christ, the latter common to angels and saints; but there is no Mediator of intercession, but who is a Mediator of redemption and reconciliation; the instances produced are insufficient, and respect either the uncreated angel, Jesus Christ himself, (Zech. 1:12; Rev. 8:3) or saints, ministers, and members of churches in the present state, and not as departed, (Rev. 5:8) and if it is to be understood of departed spirits, it is only an (Rev. 6:9) instance of prayer for themselves, and not for others: the passages in (Ex. 32:13; Job 5:1) with others, are quite impertinent. 4b.

Christ is a Mediator of men only, not of angels; good angels need not any, and as for evil angels, none is provided nor admitted, as before observed. Yet not of all men; for the world, said to be reconciled to God by Christ, is not all the individuals in it; but the world Christ gave his flesh, or human nature for the life of, since there is a world for which he is not so much as a Mediator of intercession, and much less a Mediator of reconciliation (see 2 Cor. 5:19; John 6:51, 17:9).

The persons for whom Christ acted as a Mediator, by means of death, for the redemption of their transgressions, were such as were called, and received the promise of the eternal inheritance (Heb. 9:15). 4c. Yet he is the Mediator both for Jews and Gentiles; for some of both these are chosen vessels of mercy; and God is a covenant God, not to the Jews only, but to the Gentiles also; and Christ is a Propitiation, not for the sins of the Jews only, but for the sins of the whole world, or of God's elect throughout the whole world: and therefore both have access to God through the one Mediator, Christ, (Rom. 9:23, 24, 3:29, 30; 1 John 2:2; Eph. 2:18). 4d.

Christ is Mediator both for Old and New Testament saints; there is but one Mediator for both, but one Way to the Father, which is Christ the Way, the Truth, and the Life; but one Way of life, peace, reconciliation, and salvation; but one Redeemer and Saviour; but one name given under heaven among men, whereby they can be saved; Old and New Testament saints are saved by the grace of our Lord Jesus; he is the Foundation of the apostles and prophets. 4e. Christ is a prevalent Mediator, his mediation is always effectual, ever succeeds, and is infallible; as his work was to make peace and reconciliation, and he agreed and engaged to make it; he has made it, the thing is done, and done effectually; and as for his prayers, they are always heard, his intercession ever prevails, and is never in vain; "I knew that thou hearest me always" (John 11:42). 4f.

Christ is an everlasting Mediator; he was Mediator from everlasting, and acted as such throughout the whole Old Testament period and still continues; he has an unchangeable priesthood; his blood always speaks peace and pardon, and he ever lives to make intercession; and when his mediatorial kingdom will

be completed, and there will be no need of him, either as a Mediator of reconciliation or intercession, at least in the manner he has been, and now is; for sin being wholly removed from the saints, even as to the being of it, they may have access to God, and he may communicate unto them, without the intervention of a Mediator; as is the case of the holy angels; though Christ may be the medium of the glory and happiness of his people to all eternity; and since the happiness of the saints will greatly lie in beholding the glory of Christ as God-man, and the glory of God will be most illustriously displayed in him, it may be admitted: I shall observe no more, only that this office of Christ, as Mediator, includes his Kingly, Priestly, and Prophetic offices; all which will be considered in their proper place. ENDNOTES:

[1] R. Joseph Albo, Ikkarim, Orat. 2. c. 28.

[2] Quis Rer. Divin. Haeres, p. 509. Vid. ibid. de Cherubim, p. 112.

[3] Plutarch. de Isid. et Osir.

[4] Suidas in voce mesiths.

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