

## SERMON XIII.

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THE MEDIATOR OF THE COVENANT, DESCRIBED IN HIS PERSON,  
NATURES, AND OFFICES.*And one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.—*  
1 Timothy ii. 5.

COMMUNION with God is our only happiness ; it is the very heaven of heaven, and it is the beginning of heaven here on earth. The only foundation of this communion is the covenant of grace ; and it is the great excellency of this covenant of grace, that it is established in such a Mediator, even Jesus Christ : “ And one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” This epistle, as to the substance and main design of it, is a short directory unto Timothy, how he might faithfully discharge that great office to which the Lord had called him in the church of Ephesus. In the first chapter, he instructs him concerning the doctrine he should preach ; in this chapter, concerning the persons for whom he should pray.

1. *More generally* : “ For all men ; ” (verse 1 ; ) that is, men of all ranks, conditions, and nations in the world.

2. *Particularly* and especially for magistrates. (Verse 2.)

The magistrates of those times were not only Pagans, but persecutors ; strangers to Christ themselves, and enemies to every thing of Christ in others.\* Yet, pray for them. There are indeed some persons whom Christ leaves out of his prayers, (John xvii. 9,) and would have us leave out of ours. (1 John v. 16.) But yet thus far we may and ought to pray for all men, the worst of men,—that the Lord would either make them truly good, or else restrain them from doing evil ; that he would either show mercy to them in their own souls, or else keep them from being instruments of mischief unto others ; that under them you “ may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.”

The encouragements unto prayer in this extent are,

1. *The good will of God to all men.* (Verse 4.)—That is, men of all ranks and degrees.† For though God by his preceptive will commands every individual man in the world to mind his salvation, (Acts

\* *Diversus orandi modus ac scopus in diversis hominum generibus accuratè observetur. Non enim quidvis pro quovis orandum est, quia sic precatio nostra divinæ voluntati repugnaret.*—CONRADUS VORSTIUS *in loc.* “ Let us accurately observe a different mode and scope in our prayers for different kinds of men. For we must not pray for every thing to be bestowed on all men alike, because our supplications will then be repugnant to the will of God.”—EDIT. † *Non omnes sine discrimine, sed ex omnibus ordinibus.*—PAREUS *in loc.* “ Not all men indiscriminately, but men of every rank and condition.”—EDIT.

xvii. 30,) and by his approving will, delights in saving lost creatures ; nay, though he vouchsafe to all men so much grace as will leave them inexcusable in their neglect of salvation ; yet can we not from hence stretch the grace of God into that unlimited and boundless universality as the Pelagians do from this scripture. For did God peremptorily and determinately will the salvation of every particular person in the world, man's stubbornness could not be too strong for God, nor could our impotency resist his omnipotent will.

2. *The mediation of Christ.*—Which lies open to all men to make use of. As God is not “the God of the Jews only,” but “of the Gentiles also ;” (Rom. iii. 29, 30 ;) so is Christ a Mediator for all : “And one Mediator,” &c.

In the words [we have],

1. *The only way of friendly intercourse between God and man :* it is through a “Mediator.”

2. *The only Mediator between God and man :* “One Mediator, the man Christ Jesus.”

1. *The only way of friendly intercourse between God and man.*—It is through a Mediator ; that is implied. Whether man in the state of innocence needed a Mediator, is disputed among persons learned and sober ; but in his lapsed state, this need is acknowledged by all.\* God cannot now look upon men out of a Mediator but as rebels, traitors, as fit objects for his vindictive wrath ; nor can men now look up to God but as a provoked Majesty, an angry Judge, a consuming fire. And therefore were it not for a Mediator, (that is, a middle person interposing between God and us, who are at variance, to procure reconciliation and friendship, as the word *μεσιτης* imports,) we could not but so dread the presence of this God, that, like our first parents, (in that dark interval betwixt their sinning, and the succour of that promise, Gen. iii. 15,) we should have endeavoured to hide ourselves what we could “from the presence of the Lord.” (Gen. iii. 8.)

2. *The only Mediator between God and men.*—“One Mediator,” that is, but one. Papists acknowledge one Mediator of reconciliation, but contend for many of intercession. But as God, in the former part of this verse, is said to be one God, by way of exclusion of all others ; so is Christ said here to be “one Mediator,” that is, but one.

This Mediator is here described partly by *his nature* : “The man ;” and partly by *his names* : “Christ Jesus.”

(1.) *His nature* : “The man ;” that is, “That eminent man,” so some ; † “He that was made man,” so others. †

OBJECTION. “But why is this Mediator mentioned in this nature only ?”

ANSWER 1. *Negatively* : not by way of diminution, as if he were not God as well as man, as the Arians argue from this scripture ; nor as if the execution of his mediatorship were either only, or chiefly, in

\* ANTHONY BURGENSE'S *Vindicia Legis*, pp. 133—135. † *Singularis ille homo.*—VORSTII *Paraphr.* in loc. † *Qui factus est homo.*—*Versio Æthiop.*

his human nature, as some of the Papists affirm, though others of them deny: as Cornelius A Lapide *in loc.*; \* asserting Christ's mediatorship *secundum utramque naturam*, "according to both natures."

2. *Positively*: to prove that Jesus Christ was the true Messiah whom the prophets foretold, the fathers expected, and who had in that nature been so frequently promised: as in the first gospel that ever was preached, (Gen. iii. 15,) he is promised as the Seed of the woman. Besides, the apostle mentions Christ in this nature, only as an encouragement to that duty of prayer [which] he had before persuaded; to the like purpose he is mentioned in this nature only. (Heb. iv. 14—16.)

(2.) *His names*: "Christ Jesus." *Jesus*, this was his proper name; *Christ*, this was his appellative name.

*Jesus*: that denotes the work and business for which he came into the world; as appears from the reason which the angel, that came from heaven as a herald to proclaim his incarnation, gives of the imposition of this name: "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." (Matt. i. 21.) This name, though it be given to others in scripture, yet to him eminently; to them as types of that complete Saviour who should come after them, and "save his people from their sins."

*Christ*: that denotes the several offices, in the exercise whereof he executes this work of salvation; Christ in the Greek being the same with Messiah in the Hebrew; that is, "anointed." Under the law, the solemn ordination, or setting apart, both of things and persons, to special services, was by anointing. Thus we read of three sorts of persons anointed,—kings, priests, prophets; and in respect of all these offices, Jesus is called Christ.

From the words thus briefly explained arise these two observations:

I. *That there is now no other way of friendly communion between God and man, but through a Mediator.*

II. *That there is no other Mediator between God and man, but Jesus Christ.*

DOCTRINE I. *That there is now no other way of friendly communion between God and man, but through a Mediator.*—And, indeed, considering what God is, and withal what man is; how vastly disproportionable, how unspeakably unsuitable our very natures are to his; how is it possible there should be any sweet communion betwixt them, who are not only so infinitely distant, but so extremely contrary? God is holy, but we are sinful. In him is nothing but light, in us nothing but darkness. In him nothing that is evil, in us nothing that is good. He is all beauty, we nothing but deformity. He is justice, and we guiltiness. He "a consuming fire," and we but dried stubble. (Isai. vi. 3, with Gen. iii. 5; 1 John i. 5, with Eph. v. 8; Rom. vii. 18.) In a word: he an infinitely and incomprehensibly glorious majesty, and we poor sinful dust and ashes, who have sunk and debased ourselves by sin below the meanest rank of creatures,

\* *In Christo non solus Deus est Mediator nec solus homo, sed Deus-homo.* "In Christ, neither is God alone the Mediator, nor man alone; but God-man is the Mediator."—EDIT.

and made ourselves the burden of the whole creation. And can there be any communion, any friendship, between such? "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos iii. 3.) And what agreement can there ever be but through a Mediator?

If ever God be reconciled to us, it must be through a Mediator; because of that indispensable necessity of satisfaction, and our inability to make it. (Rom. viii. 7.) If ever we be reconciled to God, it must be through a Mediator; because of that radicated enmity that is in our natures to every thing of God, and our impotency to it. And thus in both respects,—that God may be willing to be a friend to us, and that we may not be unwilling to be friends to him,—there needs a Mediator. (2 Cor. v. 19, compared with John xiv. 6.)

**DOCTRINE II.** *That there is no other Mediator between God and man, but Jesus Christ.*—"And one Mediator;" that is, but one. The fondness of Papists in their multiplicity of mediators, not only unto God, but to our Mediator himself,\* having no other foundation than only their superstition, cannot be of moment with them who labour to be wise according to scripture. That those members of the church who are contemporary here on earth do indeed pray for one another, cannot be denied; but that they are therefore mediators of intercession, hath been denied by the more ancient Papists themselves. This title of Mediator is throughout the New Testament appropriated unto Christ. (Heb. viii. 6; ix. 15; xii. 24.) And indeed there is none else fit for so high a work as this but only he.

**REASON I.** *The singular suitableness of his PERSON to this eminent employment.*—To interpose as a Mediator betwixt God and men, was an employment above the capacity of men, angels, or any other creature; but Jesus Christ, in respect of the dignity of his person, was every way suited for this work. Which you may take in these four particulars:—

(I.) *That he was truly God, equal with the Father, of the same nature and substance.*—Not only *ὁμοιοσιος* but *ὁμοουσιος* "of the like nature" but "of the same nature," as is excellently cleared by that famous champion for the deity of Christ against the Arians, Athanasius. "In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." (Col. ii. 9.) "It is not the fulness of the Divinity, but of the Deity; †" thereby intimating an identity of essence with God the Father and Holy Ghost. Though the divine essence be after a several manner in the several persons of the blessed Trinity;—in the Father *αγεννητως*, "without receiving it from any other," in the Son by an eternal generation, and in the Holy Ghost by proceeding;—yet it is the same essence of God that is in all three persons; because such is the infinite simplicity of this essence, that it cannot be divided or parcelled. ‡ Thus Christ (not to speak any thing concerning the other persons) is styled so the Son of God, as one equal with the Father;

\* *Opus est mediatore ad Mediatorem istum.*—BERNARD., p. 262; LEO. I, PAPA ROMANUS, epist. 83, *ad Palestinianos Episcopos*, cap. 4. "We must have a mediator to that Mediator."—EDIT. † *Non παν το πληρωμα θεοτητος, sed θεοτητος non Divinitatis, sed Deitatis.*—D. PRIDEAUX, *Fasciculus*, p. 76. ‡ TYLEN. *Syntagm.* p. 401. LYFORD'S "Plain Man's Senses exercised," p. 82.

for upon this it is that the Jews ground their charge of blasphemy against him, that "he said God was his Father, making himself equal with God." (John v. 18.) The force of their reason lies in this: the natural Son of God is truly God, and equal with God; as the natural son of man is man, equal, and of the same substance, with his father.\* Angels and men are the sons of God by adoption; but Christ is the natural Son of God, the only Son of God, and therefore truly God: "I and my Father are one." (John x. 30.) He "thought it not robbery to be equal with God." (Phil. ii. 6.)

For the further confirmation of this, take these arguments:—

1. *He whom scripture honours with all those names which are peculiar unto God, must needs be God.*—That Christ hath these names ascribed to him appears from these instances: He is not only styled God: "The Word was God;" (John i. 1;) but God with such additional discriminations, as neither magistrates (who, because they are God's deputies and vicegerents here on earth, are sometimes called "gods," Psalm lxxxii. 6) nor any creature is capable of: "The great God:" (Titus ii. 13:) "The true God:" (1 John v. 20:) "The mighty God:" (Isai. ix. 6:) "Over all, God blessed for ever:" (Rom. ix. 5:) "The Lord of glory:" (1 Cor. ii. 8:) "The Lord from heaven:" (1 Cor. xv. 47:) yea, that great name Jehovah: "The Lord" (or, "Jehovah") "our righteousness." (Jer. xxiii. 6.)

2. *He in whom are those high and eminent perfections, those glorious attributes, of which no creature is capable, must needs be more than a creature, and consequently God.*

(1.) *He that is omnipotent, whose power is boundless and unlimited, must needs be God.*—The highest power of creatures hath its *non ultra*; thus far may it go, "but no further:" but Christ is said to be "Almighty;" (Rev. i. 8;) "The Lord God omnipotent." (Rev. xix. 6.)

(2.) *He that is omniscient, that searcheth hearts, that hath a window into every man's breast, that can look into all the rooms and corners of our souls, that can see through all those veils and coverings which no creature-eye can pierce, must needs be God.*—And these are the excellencies ascribed to Christ: "He needed not that any should testify of man, because he knew what was in man." (John ii. 25.) "I am he which searcheth the heart and reins." (Rev. ii. 23.) "He knew their thoughts." (Luke vi. 8. So Mark ii. 8; John xiii. 19, 21—27, &c.)

(3.) *He that fills heaven and earth and all places with his presence, must needs be God.*—And thus was Christ in heaven, while he was on earth: "The Son of man which is in heaven." (John iii. 13.) "That where I am." (John xiv. 3.) Christ as God was then in heaven, when as man he was on earth; so as God he is still on earth, though as man he sits at the right hand of God in heaven: "I" will be "with you to the end of the world." (Matt. xxviii. 20.)

(4.) *He that is immutable and eternal, must needs be God.*—"The heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou

\* LYFORD, p. 93.

shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end." (Psalm cii. 25—27.) So is Christ "the everlasting Father:" (Isai. ix. 6:) "The same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." (Heb. xiii. 8.)

(5.) *He that hath life in himself, and is the fountain of life to others, must needs be God.*—And thus is Christ "the Prince of life" to others, (Acts iii. 15,) and hath "life in himself." (John v. 26.)

3. *He to whom those works of infiniteness are ascribed, to which no less a power is sufficient than that of Omnipotency,—he must needs be more than a creature.*—He that laid the foundation of the earth, that by a word commanded all things out of nothing, that preserves them from mouldering, and sinking into their first nothing again; that could pardon sin, destroy him that had the power of death, subdue principalities and powers, redeem his church, carry his people triumphing into heaven; (Mark ii. 5, 7—10, &c.; Heb. ii. 13—15; )—he must needs be God. And all these works of infiniteness are ascribed to Christ: The work of creation: "Without him was not any thing made that was made;" (John i. 3;) of conservation: "Upholding all things by the word of his power;" (Heb. i. 3;) of redemption: "Which he purchased with his blood." (Acts xx. 28.)

4. *He whom angels adore, before whom the highest and best of creatures fall down, giving that worship which is peculiarly due to God, must needs be more than a creature.*—And thus it is to Christ: "Let all the angels of God worship him." (Heb. i. 6. So Matt. ii. 11.)

I might add the equality of Christ in all those solemn benedictions and praises upon record in the New Testament; all which argue strongly, that he must needs be truly God.

(11.) *As he is truly God, so is he complete and perfect man;* having not only a human body, but a rational soul; and in all things was like to us, sin only excepted.

That he had a real, not an imaginary, body, appears from the whole story of the gospel. He that was conceived, born, circumcised, was hungred, athirst, sweat drops of blood, was crucified; he that went from place to place, and had all those sinless affections which are proper unto bodies; had a true and real body: and such was the body of Christ.\*

That he had a human soul is clear also from the story of the gospel. He that grew in wisdom and knowledge, as it is said of Christ; (Luke i. 80; ii. 40;) he whose knowledge was bounded and limited, as was also said of Christ: "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son" of man, "but the Father." (Mark xiii. 32.) As God, he knew all things; as man, his knowledge was but the knowledge of a creature, and therefore finite. All which argue [that] he had a human soul, as well as body, and was complete man. The whole nature of man was corrupted, destroyed; and therefore it was needful [that] Christ

\* GERHARDI *Loci Communes*; FORBESII *Disputat. Historico-Theolog.*, lib. ii.

should take upon him whole man, that the whole might be repaired and saved.\*

(III.) *He is God and man in one person.*—He had two natures, but was but one person: there was a twofold substance, divine and human, but not a twofold subsistence; for the personal being which the Son of God had before all worlds, suffered not the substance to be personal which he took, although, together with the nature which he had, the nature which he took continue for ever. Thus both natures make but one Christ.† He was the Son of God, and the Son of man; yet not two Sons, but one person. He was born of God, and born of a virgin; but it is in respect of his different natures.‡ Thus was Christ David's Son, and David's Lord; Mary's Son, and Mary's Saviour and Maker too.

By the right understanding of this, we may be very much helped in reconciling those seeming contradictions which frequently occur in scripture concerning Christ. He is said to be born of a woman, and yet to be without "beginning of days." Himself says his Father is greater than he, and yet he is said to be equal with the Father.§ All which may be cleared by this: he was but one person; and therefore, as in man, who consists of soul and body, the actions of each part are ascribed to the person; (the man is said to understand: it is not his body, but soul, that understands; yet this is ascribed to the person, though it be but the formal act of one part;) so in regard of this hypostatical union of two natures in one person, the acts of each nature are ascribed to the person.|| Thus it is said, the Jews "crucified the Lord of glory;" (1 Cor. ii. 8;) that is, they crucified that person who was the Lord of glory. In Acts xx. 28, God is said to purchase his church by his blood: as God, he could not shed his blood; but it was that person who was God. Thus is Christ said to be in heaven, when he was on earth; that is, as God, he was in heaven. And so what is proper to each nature, by reason of the hypostatical union, is ascribed to the whole person.

(IV.) *This union of two natures in one person is without confusion or transmutation; the natures remaining distinct, and the properties and operations of both natures distinct, notwithstanding this union.*—Some things are proper to the Godhead, of which the manhood is incapable; and some things proper to the manhood, of which the Godhead is incapable. We cannot say, the Godhead was athirst, weary, died; neither can we say, the manhood was the fountain of all being, the Creator and Preserver of all things; or that it is ubiquitous or omnipresent; though we may say all of the same person.

It is observed by learned writers,¶ that the dividing of the person

\* *Propterea totum hominem sine peccato suscepit, ut totum quo constabat homo, a peccatorum peste sanaret.*—AUGUSTINUS. "Wherefore he took on himself our entire manhood, that he might heal the whole of man, of which human nature consisted, of the plague induced by transgression."—EDIT. *Sicut totum hominem diabolus decipiendo percussit; ita Deus totum suscipiendo salvavit.*—FELGENTIUS. "As the devil, by his deceit, smote and struck down the whole man; so God, by taking on himself our entire nature, has saved the whole man."—EDIT.

† LYFORD, p. 293.

‡ LYFORD, p. 100.

§ ZANCHIUS in *Ephes.*, p. 35.

|| LYFORD, p. 101.

¶ HOOKER'S "Ecclesiastical Polity," p. 299.

which is but one, and the confounding of the natures which are two, have occasioned those grand errors in this article of faith, by which the peace of the church hath been so much disturbed. And suitably to these four heads that have been spoken to,\* there have arisen four several heresies:—

1. The Arians, denying the Deity of Christ; against whom the council of Nice determined that he was *αληθως Θεος*, “truly God.”

2. The Apollinarians, who maimed and misinterpreted his human nature; against whom the council of Constantinople determined, that he was *τελειως ανθρωπος*, “complete and perfect man.”

3. The Nestorians, who divided Christ into two persons, because of his two natures; against whom the council of Ephesus determined, that he was God-man in one person, *αδιαιρετως* [“without separation”].

4. The Eutychians, who confounded these two natures in one person; against whom the council of Chalcedon determined, that he was God-man in one person, *ασυγχυτως*, “without confusion or mutation” of natures.

But in the four above-named heads enough hath been said by way of antidote against those dangerous mistakes. And, all being duly considered, we cannot but see great reason why he should be called “Wonderful.” (Isai. ix. 6.) Well might the apostle cry out by way of admiration: “Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh.” (1 Tim. iii. 16.)

(V.) *The singular fitness of Christ for this work of mediation arises from his being God-man in two natures, united in one person without confusion or transmutation.*

1. Had he not been truly God, he had been too mean a person for so high an employment. It was God that had been offended, an infinite Majesty that had been despised; the person therefore interposing must have some equality with him to whom he interposes. Had the whole society of persevering angels interposed on man’s behalf, it had been to little purpose; one Christ was infinitely more than all, and that because he was truly God.

2. Had he not been completely man, he had been no way capable of performing that indispensably-necessary condition, upon which God was willing to be reconciled; namely, the satisfying of that righteous sentence [which] God had pronounced: “In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.” (Gen. ii. 17.) That therefore he might be capable of dying, (which as God he could not,) and that the justice of God might be satisfied in the same nature by which it had been offended, it was necessary he should be man.

3. Had he not been God and man in one person, the sufferings of his human nature could not have derived that infinite value from the divine nature.† We could not have called his blood “the blood of God,” as it is called Acts xx. 28; it would have been no more than

\* HOOKER, *ibid.*

† *Mediatio Christi est ανθρωπινη. αυτου θεουργια.* “The mediation of Christ is human, through his own divine agency.”—EDIT.



the blood of a creature, and consequently as unavailable as the blood of bulls, &c. (Heb. ix. 12; x. 4.)

4. Had he not been God-man without confusion of natures, his Deity might either have advanced his humanity above the capacity of suffering; or his humanity might have debased his Deity below the capability of meriting, which is no less than blasphemy to imagine.

And this is the first reason, the singular fitness of Christ for this work, because of the dignity of his person.

REASON II. *The singular fitness of Christ for this employment in respect of the suitableness of his OFFICES.*—There is a threefold misery upon all men, or a threefold bar to communion with God.

1. *The guilt of their sins*, which themselves are never able to expiate, or satisfy for.

2. *The blindness of their minds*, the cure whereof is too difficult for any creature-physician.

3. *Their bondage and captivity to sin and Satan*, which are enemies too strong for man to deal with.

Suitably to these three great necessities, Jesus Christ is anointed of God to a threefold office, of a Priest, a Prophet, a King; the former of which offices he exercises on our behalf to God, and the last two from God to us.

(I.) *The priestly office of Christ is the great, the only relief we have against the guilt of sin.*—The work of the priesthood consisted, under the law, chiefly of these two parts:

1. *Satisfaction for the sins of the people.* (Lev. iv. 15—19, &c.)

2. *Intercession unto God on their behalf.* (Lev. xvi. 15—17.)

Both which were verified in Christ our “great High Priest.” (Heb. iv. 14.) And hence it is that the apostle encourages us to “come with boldness unto the throne of grace.” (Verse 16.) What was done by others typically, was done by Christ really.

1. *His satisfaction*, in discharging those debts which his people had run into with Divine Justice to the utmost farthing. And this he did by offering up that one single sacrifice which was infinitely more worth than all those multitudes of sacrifices offered up of old, and from which all former sacrifices had their virtue and efficacy. The priests of old offered up creatures, but this High Priest offers up himself. (Eph. v. 2.) They offered the blood of bullocks, &c; (Heb. ix. 12, 13;) but Christ, the blood of God. (Acts xx. 28.) They offered many sacrifices, and Christ but one; but such an one as infinitely exceeded all their many; such an one as “perfected for ever them that are sanctified.” (Heb. x. 14.) One sun is worth more than thousands of stars, and one jewel than millions of ordinary stones; and so one Christ is more effectual than all Lebanon, or “the cattle on a thousand hills.”

2. *His intercession*; this is the other part of his priestly office. His satisfaction,—that was performed on earth; his intercession is performed chiefly in heaven. By the former he purchased pardon and reconciliation; (2 Cor. v. 19, compared with verse 21;) by the latter he applies the benefits he hath purchased. His sufferings,

though they were but while he was on earth, yet the benefit of them extends to all ages of the church, both before and since his passion; and his intercession is that which sues out these blessings for his people; and therefore that great apostle joins both together as the foundation of all his comfort: "Christ hath died, who still maketh intercession;" (Rom. viii. 34;) and both these are so full, so sufficient a relief against the guilt of sin, that as we have no other, so we need no other. As the high priests bore the names of the people before the Lord, so does Jesus Christ the names of his elect. But the high priests of old were at certain times only to appear before the Lord, once a year to enter into the holy place; but Christ, our spiritual High Priest, is not only entered, but sat down at the right hand of God, to negotiate constantly on his church's behalf. "He ever liveth to make intercession." (Heb. ix. 12, 24, 25; x. 12; vii. 25; 1 John ii. 1.) And besides the constancy, consider the prevalency of his intercession; that God that regards the cry of ravens, that will not altogether neglect the humiliation of Ahab, that God that is so ready to answer and honour the prayers of his own people, cannot but much more regard the prayers of his only Son, praying by his blood, and praying for nothing more than what himself hath deserved and purchased. He that is such a great High Priest, is excellently fitted in respect of this office for the work of mediation.

(II.) *The prophetic office of Christ is the great, the only relief we have against the blindness and ignorance of our minds.*—He is that great Prophet of his church whom Moses foretold, the Jews expected, and all men needed; (Deut. xviii. 15; John i. 24, 25, 45; vi. 14;) that Sun of Righteousness, who by his glorious beams dispels those mists of ignorance and error which darken the minds of men; and is therefore styled, by way of eminency, "that Light," (John i. 8,) and "the true Light." (John i. 9.)

The execution of this prophetic office is partly by revealing so much of the will of God as was necessary to our salvation; partly by making those revelations powerful and effectual.

1. *In revealing the will of God.*—For "no man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." (John i. 18.) The manner of revealing the mind of God hath been different in several ages.

(1.) *Sometimes making use of instruments.*—Who were either ordinary: as, under the law, the priests whose lips should preserve knowledge; (Mal. ii. 7; 2 Chron. xv. 3;) and under the gospel, pastors and teachers. Or else extraordinary: as prophets, under the law; and apostles and evangelists, in the first plantation of the gospel. (Eph. iv. 11—13.)

(2.) *For some time instructing his church immediately in his own person.*—"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." (Heb. i. 1, 2.)

2. *In enlightening effectually the souls of his people.*—In causing the blind to see, and making them who were once darkness to be

“light in the Lord.” (Eph. v. 8.) Thus he instructs by his word and by his Spirit, (1 Peter i. 12,) and, by that sovereignty he hath over the hearts of men, opens their hearts to receive his counsels. He that can thus speak, not only to the ear, but to the heart, is also in this office excellently fitted for the work of mediation.

(III.) *The kingly office of Christ is the great, the only relief we have against our bondage to sin and Satan.*—He to whom “all power is given in heaven, and in earth;” (Matt. xxviii. 18;) He whom God hath “raised from the dead, and set at his own right hand in heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and hath put all things under his feet, and gave Him to be the Head over all things to the church;” (Eph. i. 20—22; Heb. ii. 8; Phil. ii. 9—11; 1 Cor. xv. 27, 28;) it is He that restores “liberty to the captives,” and “opens the prison doors to them that are bound.” (Isai. lxi. 1.)

This great office of a King he executes chiefly in these royal acts:—

1. In gathering to himself a people out of all kindreds, nations, and tongues; (Gen. xlix. 10; Isai. lv. 4, 5;) and in making them a willing people in the day of his power. (Psalm cx. 3.)

2. In governing that people by laws, officers, and censures of his own ordaining. (1 Cor. xii. 28; v. 4, 5; Isai. xxxiii. 22; Eph. iv. 11, 12; Matt. xviii. 17, 18.)

3. In bringing all his elect into a state of saving grace, and preserving that grace alive in their souls, which himself hath wrought, though it be as a spark of fire in an ocean of water; in carrying it on to perfection, and crowning it with glory. (1 Peter i. 3—5; Eph. iv. 12, 13; 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17.)

4. In restraining, over-ruling, and at last destroying all his and his church’s enemies. (Psalm cx. 1.) Those who will not submit to the sceptre of his grace, he rules with his “iron rod,” and will at last “dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.” (Psalm ii. 9.)

And thus is Christ, not only in respect of the dignity of his person, but the suitableness of his offices, the only fit Mediator between God and man.

The doctrinal part of this scripture being thus cleared, take one word by way of application.

#### USES.

USE I. *This may inform us of the unspeakable folly and misery of all such as despise this Mediator.*—There is but one Mediator, but one way of reconciliation unto God, but one way of having sin pardoned, our natures cleansed, the favour of God restored, our lost condition recovered, and that is through the mediation of Christ; and shall it be said of any of us, as Christ himself speaks of those foolishly obstinate Jews, they would not come unto him that they might have life? (John v. 40.) There is in Christ the life of justification, to free us from that eternal death [which] the law sentences us unto; the life

of sanctification, to free us from that spiritual death we are under by nature; (Col. iii. 4;) there is in him a sufficient relief against whatever is discouraging; and shall we be so little our own friends, so false to our own concerns, as to reject his proffered help, notwithstanding we do so highly need it?

1. In rejecting this Mediator, *you sin against the highest and greatest mercy that ever was vouchsafed to creatures.*—It is mentioned as an astonishing act of love in God, that he should “so love the world, as to give his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life:” (John iii. 16 :) *so*, beyond all comparison, *so*, beyond all expression. And O, what an amazing condescension was it in Christ, who, though he “thought it not robbery to be equal with God,” was yet pleased to “make himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross;” (Phil. ii. 6—8; John xv. 13; compared with Rom. v. 8;) and all this as our Mediator! There is not any mercy we enjoy, but it is the fruit of this mercy.

2. *You hereby read your condition.*—The same with Pagans; the emphasis of whose misery consists in this, that they are without Christ, and therefore without hope. (Eph. ii. 12.) Nay, the same with devils; who have no mediator interposing on their behalf to God; but as they sinned with a tempter, so they perish without a Saviour. This is their misery; and shall this be any of our choice?

3. *Your condition is hereby rendered in this respect worse than theirs, in that you despise that mercy which they were never proffered.*—The danger of this sin, you may find awakingly set down by the apostle. (Heb. ii. 3; x. 28—30; xii. 25.)

USE II. *Be persuaded then to make use of Christ in all his offices, in whom you have an universal antidote against all discouragements.*

Are your consciences alarmed with the thunder of scripture-threats and curses of the law? Fly to that “blood of sprinkling,” the voice whereof is much louder than the cry of your sins. (Heb. xii. 24.)

Are you stung with the sense of your corruptions? Look up to Christ as your Brasen Serpent, that he may cure these wounds, and deliver you from death. (John iii. 14.)

Are you discouraged from prayer, because your prayers have hitherto been so sinfully defective? Consider the intercession of Christ, and take encouragement from thence. (1 John ii. 1; Heb. iv. 14, 16.)

Are you afflicted with your own unteachableness? Look up to him as the great Prophet sent of God, and beg of him the inward and effectual teachings of his Spirit, that he would speak as powerfully in his word to your dead hearts, as he once spoke to dead Lazarus. (John xi. 43.)

Are you disquieted with doubts and fears, in respect of your own perseverance? Though temptations are boisterous, and corruptions violent, look up to Him who sits at the right hand, till all his enemies

become his foot-stool, that he would strengthen you. (Psalm cx. 1 ; Col. i. 11.)

Are you full of fears because of Zion, the afflictions, dangers, enemies of the church? Remember, he is the Head over all things to the church. (Eph. i. 22.)

In a word: whatever your afflictions or troubles are, the mediation of Christ is a sufficient relief; and therefore sit not down dejectedly mourning, like Hagar weeping at the fountain-side. (Gen. xxi. 16, 19.)

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## SERMON XIV.

BY THE REV. JOHN MERITON, D.D.

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OF CHRIST'S HUMILIATION.

*He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*—Philippians ii. 8.

THIS chapter begins with one of the most pathetic and powerfully-pressed exhortations that we meet with in the whole scripture. The apostle is in one of his high strains and raptures of rhetoric, conjuring the Philippians, as it were, by all that they accounted dear and precious, unto brotherly unity and amity, and, to this end, to humility of mind, and a mutual condescension. "He that will lift up and embrace another that is fallen, must himself stoop down."\* And because men are rather drawn by example, than driven by precept, he propounds to them a pattern beyond all parallel: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men," &c. As if he had said, "Jesus Christ was as high as the highest, co-equal with God. It was his right to stand upon even ground with his Father, and, without any wrong to him, [he] might have pleaded his peerage; and yet he strangely humbled and abased himself. Here is your copy." How lowly should Christians be, seeing humanity, "the form of a servant," nay, death itself, was not accounted too low for their Lord! Christ himself hath just such another argument: "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet." (John xiii. 14.) Let no Christian stand upon his pantofles, seeing Christ "humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

In which words we have,

\* *Nullus jacentem suscipiat nisi inflexione sui.*—JOH. EUSEB. NIEREMBERGIUS.