

3. God *delights in nothing but holiness, and holy ones*; he hath set all his pleasure in the saints. Be ye holy herein, as God is holy. Indeed, there is this difference betwixt God's choice and yours; he chuses not men, because they are holy, but that they may be so; so you are to chuse them for your delightful companions, that God hath chosen and made holy. "Let all your delights be in the saints, even them that excel in virtue," Psal. xvi. 3.

4. God *abhors and hates all unholiness*; do ye so likewise that ye may be like your Father which is in heaven. And when the spirit of holiness runs down this upon you, a sweeter evidence the world cannot give, that Christ was sanctified for you. Holy ones may confidently lay the hand of their faith on the head of this great sacrifice, and say, "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us."

SERMON VIII.

Of the NATURE of CHRIST'S MEDIATION.

1 TIM. ii. 5.

And one Mediator betwixt God and Man, the man Christ Jesus.

GREAT and long preparations bespeak the solemnity and greatness of the work for which they are designed; A man that had but seen the heaps of gold, silver and brass, which David amassed in his time, for the building of the temple, might easily conclude before one stone of it was laid, that it would be a magnificent structure. But lo, here is a design of God as far transcending that, as the substance doth the shadow. For, indeed, that glorious temple was but the type and figure of Jesus Christ, John ii. 19, 21. and a weak adumbration of that living, spiritual temple which he was to build, cementing the lively stones thereof together with his own blood, 1 Pet. ii. 5, 6. that the great God might dwell and walk in it, 2 Cor. vi. 16. The preparations for that temple were but of few years, but the consultations and preparations for this were from eternity, Prov. viii. 31. And as there were preparations for this work (which Christ dispatched in a few years) before the world began; so it will be matter of eternal admiration and praise, when this world shall be dissolved. What this astonishing glorious work is, this text will inform you, as to the general nature of it; it is the work of media-

tion betwixt God and man, managed by the sole hand of the man Christ Jesus*.

In this scripture (for I shall not spend time to examine the words in their contexture) you have a description of *Jesus the Mediator*; and he is here described four ways, viz. by his work or office, a *Mediator*; by the singularity of his mediation, *one Mediator*; and by the nature and quality of his person, employed in this singular way of mediation, *the man*; and lastly, his name *Jesus Christ*.

1. He is described by the work, or office he is employed about Μεσιτης , a Mediator, a middle person. So the word imports a fit, indifferent, and equal person, that comes between two persons that are at variance, to compose the difference and make peace. Such a middle, equal, indifferent person is Christ; *a day's man, to lay his hand upon both*; to arbitrate and award justly and give God his due, and that without ruin to poor man.

2. He is described by the singularity of his mediation, one Mediator, and but one. Though there be many mediators of reconciliation among men, and many intercessors in a petitionary way, betwixt God and man; yet but $\epsilon\iota\varsigma \text{Μεσιτης}$, one only mediator of reconciliation betwixt God and man: and it is as needless and impious to make more mediators than one, as to make more Gods than one. *There is one God, and one Mediator betwixt God and men.*

He is described by the nature and quality of his person, $\alpha\gamma\theta\epsilon\omega\tau\omicron\varsigma$, $\chi\epsilon\iota\omicron\varsigma$, &c. *the man Christ Jesus*. This description of him by one nature, and that the human nature also (wherein, as you shall see anon, the Lord especially consulted our encouragement and comfort); I say, his being so described to us, hath, through the corruption of men, been improved to the great dishonour of Jesus Christ, both by the *Arians* and *Papists*.† The former took occasion from hence to affirm, that he was but $\psi\iota\lambda\omicron\varsigma \alpha\nu\theta\epsilon\omega\tau\omicron\varsigma$, a mere man.

The latter allow him to be the true God, but on this weak ground affirm, that he performed not the work of mediation as God, but only as man. Thus what the Spirit ordered for our comfort, is wickedly retorted to Christ's dishonour; for I doubt not but he is described by his human nature in this place; not only because in this nature he paid that ransom (which he speaks of in the words immediately following) but especially for the

* God is most holy, Man a lump of iniquity. Extremes meet not but by their middle; sinful man can never have communion with, or enjoyment of God, but in, and by a Mediator.

† Wherefore, think ye, has he added the term, *man*: but to express that nature, whereby Christ is mediator. *Bellarmino on the Mediation of Christ*, book V. chap. 3. vol. 2.

drawing of sinners to him; seeing he is the man Christ Jesus, one that clothed himself in their own flesh; and to encourage the faith of believers, that he tenderly regards all their wants and miseries, and that they may safely trust him with all their concerns, as one that will carefully mind them as his own, and will be for them a merciful and faithful High Priest, in things pertaining to God.

4. He is described by his names; by his *appellative name* *Christ*, and his *proper name* *Jesus*. The name *Jesus*, notes his *work* about which he came; and *Christ*, the *offices* to which he was anointed; and in the execution of which he is our *Jesus* *. “In the name “*Jesus*, the whole gospel is contained, it is the light, the food, “the medicine of the soul,” as one speaks. The note from hence is,

Doct. *That Jesus Christ is the true and only Mediator betwixt God and men.*

“Ye are come to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant,” Heb. xii. 24. “And for this cause he is the Mediator of the New “Testament,” &c. Heb. ix. 14. I might shew you a whole vein of scriptures running this way; but to keep a profitable and clear method, I shall shew,

First, What is the sense of this word *Μεσιτης*, a Mediator. †

Secondly, What it implies, as it is applied to Christ.

Thirdly, How it appears that he is the true and only Mediator betwixt God and men.

Fourthly, In what capacity he performed his mediatory work.

First, What is the sense and import of this word *Μεσιτης*, a Mediator? The true sense and importance of it, is a *middle Person*, or one that interposes betwixt two parties at variance, to make peace betwixt them. So that as Satan is *medium disjungens*, a medium of discord; so Christ is *medium conjungens*, a medium of concord and peace. And he is such a Mediator, both in respect of his person and office; in respect of his person, he is a Mediator; *i. e.* one that hath the same nature both with God and us, true God, and true man; and in respect of his *Office* or work, which is to interpose, to transact the business of reconciliation between us

* *Ipse nomine JESU totum latet Evangelium; hoc nomen est lux, cibus, et medicina animæ.* Glassius.

† We call one, a Mediator, who interposes either between parties at variance, or in some degree only united, so as to reconcile the one, and unite the other more strictly by a new covenant. The name of mediator, in its proper signification, is not the name of a substance, but the name of an office or employment; wherefore, the substance and execution of the office do not constitute two kinds of mediation, but one and the same. *Ames. Bclarm. Enerv.* lib. V. p. 117.

and God. The former some call his *substantial*, the latter his *energetical*, or operative mediation: Though I rather conceive that which is called his substantial mediation, is but the aptitude of his person to execute the mediatorial function; and that it doth not constitute two kinds of mediation. His being a middle person, fits and capacitates him to stand in the midst betwixt God and us. This, I say, is the proper sense of the word; though *Μεσιτης*, a Mediator, * is rendered variously; sometimes an umpire or arbitrator; sometimes a messenger that goes betwixt two persons; sometimes an interpreter, imparting the mind of one to another; sometimes a reconciler or peace-maker. And in all these senses Christ is the *Μεσιτης*, the middle person in his mediation of reconciliation or intercession; *i. e.* either in his mediating, by suffering to make peace, as he did on earth; or to continue, and maintain peace, as he doth in heaven, by meritorious intercession. Both these ways he is the only Mediator. And he manageth this his mediation,

1. As an *umpire* or *arbitrator* †; one that layeth his hands upon both parties, as Job speaks, chap. ix. 33. so doth Christ, he layeth his hands (speaking after the manner of men) upon God, and saith, Father, wilt thou be at peace with them, and re-admit them into thy favour? if thou wilt, thou shalt be fully satisfied for all that they have done against thee. And then he layeth his hand upon man, and saith, Poor sinner, be not discouraged, thou shalt be justified and saved.

2. As a *messenger* or *ambassador*, so he came to impart the mind of God to us, and so he presents our desires to God; and in this sense only *Socinus* would allow Christ to be Mediator. But therein he endeavours to undermine the foundation, and to exclude him from being Mediator by a suretiship; which is,

3. The third way of his mediation. So the apostle speaks, Heb. vii. he is *εγγυος* ‡, the surety, or pledge. Which, as the learned David Pareus well expresseth it, is one that engageth to satisfy another, or gives caution or security by a pledge in the hand for it. And indeed, both these ways, Christ is our mediator by suretiship, *viz.* in a way of satisfaction, coming under our obligation to answer the law; this he did on the cross and in a way of caution, a surety for the peace, or good behaviour. But to be more explicit and clear, I shall,

* Christ is called a Mediator, both as he is a middle person, and as he is one who mediates; he is middle in person; he mediates by office. *Treecat. Instit.* p. 98.

† *Μεσιτης*. An Umpire, Arbitrator, a midsmen, a reconciler.

‡ *Εγγυος* is a surety, one that engages for another, by pledge in hand. From *γυιον*, which signifies hand, and *εν* in, as if it were, *εν γυιω*, in hand; or, as *Suidas* would have it, from *γυρι*, or *γαρια* the earth which is firm, stable, immoveable.

Secondly, In the next place enquire, what it implies and carries in it, for Christ to be a Mediator betwixt God and us. And there are, mainly, these five things in it.

1. At the first sight, *it carries in it a most dreadful breach and jar betwixt God and men*; else no need of a Mediator of reconciliation. There was indeed a sweet league of amity once between them, but it was quickly dissolved by sin; the wrath of the Lord was kindled against man, pursuing him to destruction, Psal. v. 5. "Thou hatest all the workers of iniquity." And man was filled with unnatural enmity against his God, Rom. i. 30. *ὀσουςυεις*, *haters of God*; this put an end to all friendly commerce and intercourse between him and God. Reader, say not in thy heart, that it is much, that one sin, and that seemingly so small, should make such a breach as this, and cause the God of mercy and goodness so to abhor the works of his hands, and that as soon as he had made man: for it was a heinous and aggravated evil. It was upright, perfect man, created in the image of God, that thus sinned: he sinned when his mind was most bright, clear and apprehensive; his conscience pure and active; his will free, and able to withstand any temptation: his conscience pure and undefiled; he was a *public* as well as a perfect man, and well knew that the happiness or misery of his numberless offspring was involved in him.

The condition he was placed in, was exceeding happy: no necessity or want could arm and edge temptation: he lived amidst all natural and spiritual pleasures and delights, the Lord most delightfully conversing with him; yea, he sinned while as yet his creation-mercy was fresh upon him; and in this sin was most horrible ingratitude: yea, a casting off the yoke of obedience almost as soon as God had put it on. God now saw the work of his hands spoiled, a race of *rebels* now to be propagated, who, in their successive generations would be fighting against God: he saw it, and his just indignation sparkled against man, and resolves to pursue him to the bottom of hell.

2. It implies, *a necessity of satisfaction and reparation to the justice of God*. For the very design and end of this mediation was to make peace, by giving full satisfaction to the party that was wronged. The Photinians, and some others, have dreamed of a reconciliation with God, founded not upon satisfaction, but upon the absolute mercy, goodness, and free-will of God. "But concerning that absolute goodness and mercy of God, reconciling sinners to himself, there is a deep silence throughout the scriptures*:" and whatever is spoken of it, upon that account, is as it works to

† *De absoluta enim bonitate, et voluntate salvandi, scriptura magis muta est quam piscis.* Dieteric.

us through Christ, Eph. i. 3, 4, 5. Acts iv. 12. John vi. 40. And we cannot imagine, either how God could exercise mercy to the prejudice of his justice, which must be, if we must be reconciled without full satisfaction* ; or how such a full satisfaction should be made by any other than Christ. Mercy, indeed, moved in the heart of God to poor man ; but from his heart it found no way to vent itself for us, but through the heart-blood of Jesus Christ : and in him the justice of God was fully satisfied, and the misery of the creature fully cured. And so, as † Augustine speaks, “ God neither lost the severity of his justice in the goodness of “ mercy, nor the goodness of his mercy in the exactness of his “ severity.” But if it had been possible God could have found out a way to reconcile us without satisfaction, yet it is past doubt now, that he hath pitched and fixed on this way. And for any now to imagine to reconcile themselves to God by any thing but faith in the blood of this Mediator, is not only most vain in itself, and destructive to the soul, but most insolently derogatory to the wisdom and grace of God.

And to such I would say, as ‡ Tertullian to Marcion, whom he calls the murderer of truth, “ spare the only hope of the whole “ world, O thou who destroyest the most necessary glory of our “ faith !” All that we hope for is but a phantasm without this. Peace of conscience can be rationally settled on no other foundation but this ; for God having made a law to govern man, and this law violated by man ; either the penalty must be levied on the delinquent, or satisfaction made by his surety. As good no law, as no penalty for disobedience ; and as good no penalty, as no execution. He therefore that will be made a mediator of reconciliation betwixt God and man, must bring God a price in his hand, and that adequate to the offence and wrong done him, else he will not treat about peace ; and so did our Mediator.

3. Christ being a Mediator of reconciliation and intercession, implies *the infinite value of his blood and sufferings, as that which in itself was sufficient to stop the course of God's justice, and render him not only placable, but abundantly satisfied and well pleased, even with those that before were enemies.* And so much is said of it. Col. i. 21, 22. “ And ye that were sometimes alienated, and enemies in your minds by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled, in

* From these positions, it follows, that neither the perfect nature nor perfect justice of God can allow any transgression of the law to pass without full satisfaction. *Bradshaw on Justification*, p. 68.

† *Nec in bonitate misericordiae perdit iudicii severitatem ; nec in iudicando cum severitate amittit misericordiae bonitatem.* Aug. in Psal. 100.

‡ *Parce unice spei totius orbis, O tu qui destruis necessarium decus fidei.* Tertul. lib. de Carne Christi.

“the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy, and “unblameable, and unrepveable in his sight.” Surely, that which can cause the holy God, justly incensed against sinners, to lay aside all his wrath, and take an enemy into his bosom, and establish such an amity as can never more be broken, but to rest in his love, and to joy over him with singing, as it is, Zeph. iii. 17. this must be a most excellent and efficacious thing.

4. Christ’s being a Mediator of reconciliation, implies *the ardent love and large pity that filled his heart towards poor sinners*. For he doth not only mediate by way of entreaty, going betwixt both, and persuading and begging peace; but he mediates, (as you have heard) in the capacity of a surety, by putting himself under an obligation to satisfy our debts. O how compassionately did his heart work towards us, that when he saw the arm of Justice lifted up to destroy us, would interpose himself, and receive the stroke, though he knew it would smite him dead! Our Mediator, like Jonah his type, seeing the stormy sea of God’s wrath working tempestuously, and ready to swallow us up, cast in himself to appease the storm. I remember how much that noble act of Marcus Curtius is celebrated in the Roman history, who being informed by the oracle, that the great breach made by the earthquake could not be closed, except something of worth were cast into it, heated with love to the commonwealth, he went and cast in himself. This was looked upon as a bold and brave adventure. But what was this to Christ?

5. Christ being a Mediator betwixt God and man, implies as *the fitness of his person, so his authoritative call to undertake it*. And indeed the Father, who was the wronged person, called him to be the umpire and arbitrator, trusting his honour in his hands. Now Christ was invested with this office and power *virtually*, soon after the breach was made by Adam’s fall; for we have the early promise of it, Gen. iii. 15. Ever since, till his incarnation, he was a virtual and effectual Mediator; and, on that account, he is called, “the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world,” Rev. xiii. 8. And *actually*, from the time of his incarnation. But having discussed this more largely in a former discourse, I shall dismiss it here, and apply myself to the third thing proposed, which is,

Thirdly, How it appears that Jesus Christ is the true and only Mediator betwixt God and men. I reply, it is manifest he is so,

1. Because he, *and no other, is revealed to us by God*. And if God reveal him, and no other, we must receive him, and no other as such. Take but two scriptures at present, that in 1 Cor. viii. 5. “The heathen have many gods, and many lords,” *i. e.* many great gods, supreme powers and ultimate objects of their worship; and lest these great gods should be defiled by their immediate and un-

hallowed approaches to them, they therefore invented heroes, demi-gods, intermediate powers *, that they were as agents, or lord-mediators betwixt the gods and them, to convey their prayers to the gods, and the blessings of the gods back again to them. “But unto us (saith he) there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we by him,” *i. e.* one supreme essence, the first spring and fountain of blessings, and *one Lord*, *i. e.* one Mediator, “by whom are all things, and we by him.” By whom are all things which come from the Father to us, and by whom are all our addresses to the Father: So Acts iv. 12. “Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.” No other name †, *i. e.* no other authority, or rather, no other person authorized under heaven, *i. e.* the whole world: for heaven is not here opposed to earth, as though there were other intercessors in heaven besides Christ: no, no, in heaven and earth God hath given him, and none but him, to be our Mediator. One sun is sufficient for the whole world; and one Mediator for all men in the world. So that the scriptures affirm this is he, and exclude all others.

2. Because he, and no other, is fit for, and capable of this office. Who but he that hath the divine and human nature united in his single person, can be a fit day’s-man to lay his hand upon both? Who but he that was God, could support under such sufferings, as were, by divine justice, exacted for satisfaction! Take a person of the greatest spirit, and put him an hour in the case Christ was in, when he sweat blood in the garden, or uttered that heart-rending cry upon the cross, and he had melted under it as a moth.

3. Because he is alone sufficient to reconcile the world to God by his blood, without accessions from any other. The virtue of his blood reached back as far as Adam, and reaches forward to the end of the world; and will be as fresh, vigorous, and efficacious then, as the first moment it was shed. The sun makes day before it actually rises, ‡ and continues day sometimes after it is set: so do doth Christ, who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for

* All the intercourse and communion between the gods and men is by means of demi-gods. *Plut.*

† *Ὀνομα ἐρεγον*, other name, *i. e.* other power, or authority of any whatever. By name, the thing itself is understood, even Christ himself; *ὑπο τον οὐρανον*, under heaven, *i. e.* any where; for heaven is not here opposed to earth, as if there were other saviours besides Christ in heaven, but not on earth: but in the Hebrew the expression is a pleonasm. *Beza* on this place.

‡ The sun, before he is seen, illuminates the world.

ever; so that he is the true and only Mediator betwixt God and men: no other is revealed in scripture; no other is sufficient for it; no other needed beside him.

Fourthly, The last thing to be explained is, in what capacity he executed his mediatory work.

About which we affirm, according to scripture, that he performs that work as God-man, in both natures*. Papists, in denying Christ to act as Mediator, according to his divine nature, do at once spoil the whole mediation of Christ of all its efficacy, dignity and value, which arise from that nature, which they deny to co-operate, and exert its virtue in his active and passive obedience. They say, the apostle, in my text, distinguishes the Mediator from God, in saying, "there is one God and one Mediator." We aptly reply, that the same Apostle distinguishes Christ from man, Gal. i. 1. "Not by man, but by Jesus Christ." Doth it thence follow that Christ is not true man? Or that according to his divine nature only, he called Paul? But what need I stay my reader here; Had not Christ, as Mediator, power to lay down his life, and power to take it up again? John x. 17, 18. Had he not, as Mediator, all power in heaven and earth to institute ordinances, and appoint officers? Matt. xxviii. 18. to baptize men with the Holy Ghost and fire? Matt. iii. 11. to keep those his Father gave him in this world? John xvii. 12. to raise up the saints again in the last day? John vi. 54. Are these, with many more I might name, the effects of the mere human nature? Or, were they not performed by him as God-man? and besides, how could he, as Mediator, be the object of our faith, and religious adoration, if we are not to respect him as God-man? *But I long now to be at the application of this: and the first inference from it, is this,

Inference 1. That it is a dangerous thing to reject Jesus Christ the only Mediator betwixt God and man. Alas! there is no other to interpose and screen thee from the devouring fire, the everlasting burnings! *O it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!* And into his hands you must needs fall, without an interest in the only Mediator. Which of us can dwell with devouring fire? Who can endure the everlasting burnings? Isa. xxxiii. 14. You know how they singed and scorched the green tree, but what would they do to the dry tree? Luke xxiii. 31. Indeed, if there were another plank to save after the shipwreck;

* The divine, without the human nature, or the human nature without the divine, is not mediatorial; but between the divine alone, and the human nature alone, the human divinity, and divine humanity, is mediatorial. *Aug. Hom. 2.* The appellations respecting his office, are due to Christ according to both natures. *Anes. Bellarm. Enerv. chap. 5.*

any other way to be reconciled to God, besides Jesus the Mediator, somewhat might be said to excuse this folly; but you are shut up to the faith of Christ, as to your last remedy, Gal. iii. 23. You are like starving beggars, that are come to the last door. O take heed of despising, or neglecting Christ! if so, there's none to intercede with God for you; the breach betwixt him and you can never be composed. I remember, here, the words of Eli, to his profane sons, who caused men to abhor the offerings of the Lord, 1 Sam. ii. 25. "If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him; but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall intreat for him?" The meaning is, common trespasses betwixt men, the civil magistrate takes cognizance of it, and decides the controversy by his authority, so that there is an end of that strife; but if man sin against the Lord, who shall intreat or arbitrate in that case? Eli's sons had despised the Lord's sacrifices*, which were sacred types of Christ, and the stated way that men had then to act faith on the Mediator in. Now, (saith he) if a man thus sin against the Lord, by despising Christ shadowed out in that way, who shall intreat for him? what hope, what remedy remains?

I remember, it was the saying of Luther, and he spake it with deep resentment, *Nolo Deum absolutum*, "I will have nothing to do with an absolute God," i. e. with God without a Mediator. Thus the Devils have to do with God: but will ye, in whose nature Christ is come, put yourselves into their state and case? God forbid!

Inf. 2. Hence also be informed, how great an evil it is to join any other Mediators, either of reconciliation, or meritorious intercession with Jesus Christ. O this is a horrid sin, and that which both pours the greatest contempt upon Christ, and brings the surest and sorest destruction upon the sinner! I am ashamed my pen should English what mine eyes have seen in the writings of Papists, ascribing as much, yea, more to the mediation of Mary than to Christ, with no less than blasphemous impudence, thus commenting upon scripture: "What is that which the Lord saith, I have trod the wine-press alone, and of the people there was no man with me? True Lord, there was no man with thee, but there was a woman with thee, who received all these wounds in her heart which thou receivedst in thy body." I will not blot my paper with more of this, but refer the learned reader as under †, where he may (if he have a mind to see more)

* They had trampled on sacrifices, and all the laws of God: and thus, as far as in them lay, had taken away all relief and means of safety. *Grotius on this place.*

† *Martialis Argentinensis*, lib. 1. cap. 4. fol. 15. *Vincent. Brun. in medit. fest.*

be informed, not only what blasphemy hath dropped from single pens, but even from councils, to the reproach of Jesus Christ, and his blood.

How do they stamp their own sordid works with the peculiar dignity and value of Christ's blood; and therein seek to enter at the gate which God hath shut to all the world, because Jesus Christ the prince entered in thereby, Ezek. xlv. 2, 3. He entered into heaven in a direct immediate way, even in his own name, and for his own sake; this gate, saith the Lord, shall be shut to all others; and I wish men would consider it, and fear, lest while they seek entrance into heaven at the wrong door, they do not for ever shut against themselves, the true and only door of happiness.

Inf. 3. If Jesus Christ be the only Mediator of reconciliation betwixt God and men; then reconciled souls should thankfully ascribe all the peace, favours, and comforts they have from God, to their Lord Jesus Christ. Whenever you have had free admission, and sweet entertainment with God in the more public ordinances, or private duties of his worship; when you have had his smiles, his seals, and with hearts warmed with comfort, are returning from those duties, say, O my soul, thou mayest thank thy good Lord Jesus Christ for all this! had not he interposed as a Mediator of reconciliation, I could never have had access to, or friendly communion with God to all eternity.

Immediately upon Adam's sin, the door of communion with God was locked, yea, chained up, and no more coming nigh the Lord: not a soul could have any access to him, either in a way of communion in this world, or of enjoyment in that to come. It was Jesus the Mediator that opened that door again, and in him it is that we have boldness, and access with confidence, Eph. iii. 12. "We can now come to God by a new and living way, consecrated for us through the vail, that is to say, his flesh," Heb. x. 20. The vail had a double use, as Christ's flesh answerably hath: it hid the glory of the *Sanctum Sanctorum*, and also gave entrance into it. Christ's incarnation rebates the edge of the divine glory and brightness, that we may be able to bear it and converse with it; and it gives admission into it also. O thank your dear Lord Jesus for your present and future heaven! these are mercies which daily emerge out of the ocean of Christ's blood, and come swimming in it to our doors. Blessed be God for Jesus Christ!

Inf. 4. If Jesus Christ be the true and only Mediator, both of reconciliation and meritorious intercession betwixt God and men,

how safe and secure then is the condition and state of believers? Surely, as his mediation, by sufferings, hath fully reconciled, so his mediation, by intercession, will everlastingly maintain that state of peace betwixt them and God, and prevent all future breaches. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our "Lord Jesus Christ," Rom. v. 1. It is a firm and lasting peace, and the Mediator that made it, is now in heaven to maintain it for ever, and prevent new jars, Heb. ix. 24. "There to appear in the presence of God for us;" according to the custom of princes and states, who, being confederated, have their agents residing in each others courts, who upon all occasions appear in the presence of the prince, in the name and behalf of those whom they represent, and negotiate for.

And here it is proper to reflect upon the profound and incomprehensible wisdom of God, who hath made an advantage to us, even out of our sin and misery. Come, see and adore the wisdom of our God, that hath so improved, reduced, and disposed the fall of Adam, as to make a singular advantage thereby to advance his offspring to a better state! It was truly said by one of the ancients upon this account, "That Job was a happier man on the "dunghill, than Adam was in paradise*." His holiness indeed was perfect, his happiness was great: but neither of them permanent and indefeasible, as our happiness by the Mediator is. So that, in the same sense some divines call Judas's treason, *felix scelus*, a happy wickedness: we may call Adam's fall, *felix lapsus*, a happy fall, because ordered and over-ruled by the wisdom of God, to such an advantage for us. And to that purpose Austin somewhere sweetly speaks, "† O how happily did I fall in Adam, who "rose again more happy in Christ!" Thus did the Lord turn a poison into an antidote, thus did that dreadful fall make way for a more blessed and fixed state. Now are we so confirmed, fixed, and established in Christ, by the favour of God, that there can be no more such fatal breaches, and dreadful jars betwixt God and his reconciled ones for ever. The bone that is well set, is stronger where it is knit, than it was before. Blessed be God for Jesus Christ!

Inf. 5. Did Jesus Christ interpose betwixt us and the wrath of God, as a Mediator of reconciliation? did he rather chuse to receive the stroke upon himself, than to see us ruined by it? *How well then doth it become the people of God, in a thankful sense of this grace, to interpose themselves betwixt Jesus Christ and the evils they see like to fall upon his name and interest in the world? O that there were*

* *Felicitior Job in sterquilinio, quam Adamus in Paradiso.*

† *O quam feliciter cecidi in Adamo, qui post lapsum feliciter resurrexi in Christo.* Aug

but such a heart in the people of God! I remember it is a saying of Jerom, when he heard the revilings and blasphemings of many against Christ, and his precious truths, “* O (said he) that they “would turn their weapons from Christ to me, and be satisfied “with my blood!” And much to the same sense is that sweet one of Bernard, “† Happy were I, if God would vouchsafe to “use me as a shield.” And David could say, “The reproaches “of them that reproached thee, fell on me, Psal. lxxix. 9. Ten thousand of our names are nothing to Christ’s name: his name is *καλον ονομα*, a worthy name; and no man that gives up his name as a shield to Christ, but shall thereby secure and increase the true honour of it. And though wicked men, for the present may bespatter them, yet Jesus Christ will take it out of the dirt, (as one speaks), wipe it clean, and give it us again ‡. Oh, it is the least one can do, to interpose ourselves and all that is dear to us, betwixt Christ and the wrath of men, when he (as you hear) interposed himself betwixt you and the eternal wrath of God!

SERMON IX.

The first Branch of CHRIST’S Prophetical Office, consisting in the Revelation of the Will of God.

ACTS iii. 22.

A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, of your Brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things, whatsoever he shall say unto you.

HAVING, in the former discourses, shewn you the solemn preparations, both on the Father’s part, and on the Son’s, for the blessed design of reconciling us by the meritorious mediation of Christ; and given you a general prospect of that his mediation, in the former sermon; method now requires, that I proceed to shew how he executes this his mediation, in the discharge of his blessed offices of *Prophet, Priest and King*.

His *prophetical office* consists of two parts; one *external*, consisting in a true and full revelation of the will of God to men, accord-

* *Utinam in me convertant tela, et meo sanguine satientur.* Jer.

† *Bonum est mihi, si dignetur Deus me uti pro clypeo.* Bern.

‡ Oh, if I could be a bridge over the water for my Lord Jesus to walk upon, and keep his feet dry! Oh, if my poor bit of heaven could go between my Lord and blasphemy and dishonour! *said another worthy.*