

LECTURE XL.

THE MEDIATOR.—Continued.

SYLLABUS.

7. Is there any other mediator between God and man, than Jesus Christ? (Against Papists).
For Popish view, see Council of Trent. Session xxv. Cat. Rom. pt. iii, ch. 2, Qu. 4-7, pt. iv, ch. 6. Bellarmine's Controversies. Dens' Theol. Daniel's Thesaurus Hymn, Vol. 1, p. 241, Vol. 2, p. 133. *Missale Romanum passim*. Turretin Loc. xiv, Qu. 4. Ridgley Qu. 36. Essay (15th) on Romanism, Presb. Bd. Dick Lect. 59.
8. How was Christ inducted into His office?
Dick, Lect. 54. Turretin, Loc. xiv, Qu. 6, and Loc. xiii, Qu. 12. Ridgley, Qu. 41, 42.
9. How many offices does Christ fulfil as Mediator; and why these?
Turretin, Loc. xiv, Qu. 5. Dick, Lect. 54. Calv. Inst. bk. ii, ch. 15. Ridgley, Qu. 43. Conf. of Faith, ch. 8.
10. Prove that Christ is Prophet. Under how many Periods and Modes did He fulfil this office?
Turretin, Loc. xiv, Qu. 7. Dick, Lect. 54, 55. Ridgley, Qu. 43.

THE Apostle Paul teaches us, (1 Tim. ii : 5,) that as there is but one God, there is only "one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." Rome seeks to evade this and similar testimonies, by speaking of a primary and a secondary mediation, reserving the first exclusively to Christ. The activity of angels and dead saints as secondary mediators, Rome argues, first, from the benevolence and affection of these pure spirits. This kindness we daily experience at the hands of the saints while alive; and the Saviour (Luke xv : 7,) seems to ascribe similar feelings to the angels. The Church believes that the dead saints retain a local interest in the places and people which they loved while living; and she thinks that Dan. x : 13, teaches the angels, as ministers of God's providence, have their districts,

7. Christ only Mediator. Rome's Argument for Contrary.

and man, the man Christ Jesus." Rome seeks to evade this and similar testimonies, by speaking of a primary and a secondary mediation,

and even their individuals, (Matt. xviii : 10,) whom they serve and watch. Second. Rome urges that numerous cases exist in which the mediatorial intervention of one saint for another occurs, in the Bible. Of this the most obvious instance is the requesting of the brethren's prayers (e. g., 1 Thess. v : 25 ; 2d Thess. iii : 1,) and this case alone, Rome thinks, would be enough to rebut the Protestant objections that such intercession interferes with the mediatorial honours of Christ. But, say they, there are numerous instances of more definite intervention, where the merit of a saint availed for other men expressly ; or where, (better still,) the pardon of men was suspended on the efforts of some eminently meritorious saint in their behalf. (See Gen. xx : 7 ; xxvi : 5 ; 1 Kgs. xi : 12, *et passim* ; Job. xlii : 8 ; Luke vii : 3-6. And they assert the actual intercession of angels in heaven is taught. (Gen. xlvi : 16 ; Rev. v : 8, or viii : 3.)

Rome argues also, reciprocally, that the worship of saints and angels implies their mediation ; because the only thing for which we can petition them, consistently with theism, is their intercession. Hence all the rational and scriptural arguments in favor of saint-worship, are by inference, arguments in favor of their mediation. See, then, such considerations and such texts as these : God commands an appropriate reverence of teachers, magistrates, parents, kings. Can we believe that He intends no proportionable honor of these more beneficent and majestic beings ? Can it be wrong to ask their aid with Christ, when we should esteem it pious to ask the aid of Christian friends on earth ? Surely these glorified creatures have not become less benevolent toward us, or less acceptable to Christ, by reaching heaven. Then see scriptural instances (Gen. xviii : 2-23 ; xix : 1 ; xxxii : 26 ; Josh. v : 14.

The closing argument of Rome is from tradition, and the Apocrypha.

One valid reply, though the least one, is, that all such appeals to the mediation of the saints or angels in heaven, are superstitions. As to dead saints, the Scripture representation is, that they are effectually severed from all earthly relations, and are done with all earthly interests. Rev. xiv : 13. They "rest from their labors." 1 Tim. vi : 7. "For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out." Isa. lvii : 2. "He shall enter into peace ; they shall rest in their beds." Eccles. ix : 6. "Neither have they any more a portion forever in anything that is done under the sun." Job. iii : 17. "There the weary be at rest." xiv : 21. "His sons come to honour, and he knoweth it not ; and they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them." The simple idea of asking a share in the prayers of dead friends, if it were all of the Romish doctrine, would be thus shown to be only foolish and superstitious ; for since we know we have no

Replies.

access to them, our words are thrown away. It may be urged, that though this be true as to the dead saints, it may not hold as to the angels, who do have intercourse with earth, as they are "sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation." Our answer is, that the Scriptures only teach an intercourse on one side; they may know some of our acts and needs; we know nothing of their nearness or absence. So that, as to the angels likewise, this attempted intercourse is wholly unwarranted by Scripture, and therefore superstitious. But:

Second, in our ignorance of their nearness or absence, we can never know that they hear our plea for their intercession, without imputing to them divine attributes. This fact was briefly stated in our 31st Lecture. Thus the doctrine of their intercession is idolatrous in its tendencies, and a robbery of God. Especially is this true of the more popular gods and goddesses of the Romish pantheon, the Virgin, Peter, Gabriel; to whom Romanists the world over are generally praying. They must have omnipresence to be with their votaries in various lands at the same time; omniscience, to discriminate, understand and judge wisely of their varied requests; omnipotence, to bear the burden of care laid upon them; infinite benevolence, to make them willing to bear so much care and take so much trouble for others; and immutability, to be a secure reliance for the wants of a priceless soul. The poor subterfuge of the hypothesis of the saints' beholding all earthly affairs *in speculo Trinitatis*, has been exposed; it only pretends to meet one of the points we have here made.

Third. Were the design of papists merely to seek a communion in the prayers of dead saints and angels, it would only be superstitious and idolatrous. But this does not at all satisfy them. The essential peculiarity of their doctrine is, that the mediatory access of these holy creatures is founded on their merits with God. This their divines expressly teach; and the hymns to which we cited the student, expressly assert this element of doctrine. But it is expressly injurious to Christ, utterly false, and indeed impious. No one who comprehended the rudiments of either the Covenant of Works, or of that of Grace, would ever dream of making the supererogatory merit of an unfallen, much less of a fallen creature, a basis for an imputed righteousness. In that sense the creature cannot merit. Take the case of Abraham, Gen. xx: 7. The Romish argument is ruined by the fact that Abraham was himself "justified by faith." If he was himself a sinner, accepted in the righteousness of another, how could he have supererogatory merit to spare for a fellow-sinner? Job is mentioned, xlii: 8, as sacrificing for his erring friends; Because he was righteous. But see the 6th verse, where Job avows his utter sinfulness. Surely, then he was not righteous in such a sense as to be a meritorious mediator. Job was directed to sacrifice for his

friends. What? Himself? No; but bullocks and rams, typical of the "Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." This tells the whole story: that his intervention was ministerial, and not mediatorial. As to King David, 1 Kings xi: 12, compare David's own language, Ps. xxxii: 1, 2. It is God's regard for His own gracious covenant with David, and His own fidelity, which leads Him to favour Solomon. David himself, although comparatively a faithful ruler, was indebted to God's mercy both in his personal and official capacities, for escaping condemnation. If Christ made full expiation for our sins, how can other intercessors be intruded without an insult to the sufficiency of His sacrifice and intercession? Is the plea this: that He intercedes with the Father; while the lower mediators intercede with Him? I reply: Why may we not directly obey His gracious command: "Come unto Me, all ye that labour?" Does the same argument which persuades us to go to the Virgin to ask her Son to ask His Father to save us, also require us to seek another intermediary between us and Mary? If the Papist says "yes," to this question, then by the same argument we shall need still a second intermediary between us and the one who is to commend us to Mary; and we have a ridiculous regressus, which may be endless; we have to go all around the world, in order to reach Christ. But if a negative answer be given, then the Papist must answer this question: Why does Mary need an intermediary between us and her, less than Jesus does? This implies that she is more benevolent and placable than Christ! "But greater love hath no man than this that he lay down his life for his friends."

The student should know, that this theory of creature-mediation is not only condemned by the utter silence of the word and the express and implied assertion of truths incompatible with it: but that it has been articulately examined and rejected in the Scriptures. That inspired refutation, as it is seen in the Epistle to the Colossians, furnishes us the best possible argument. It is substantially our third argument. The Judaizing Gnostics were infesting the Colossian church with this very theory: that the saving work of Christ must be supplemented by the intercession of some super-angelic beings; (See Ch. ii: 18,) and by the practice of asceticism. (ii: 21). The first of these innovations the Apostle meets, with admirable sagacity, by laying down a few indisputable, gospel-statements. Christ, the eternal Son of God, hath already made for us a sacrifice in His blood, so complete as to secure to believers a full justification and an actual translation into God's family, (i: 13, 15, 22). This our Priest is the Image of God, eternal, the creator and actual ruler of all creatures, including these very thrones and dominions proposed as angelic intercessors, (verse 16, 17,) so that instead of their guiding Him, He governs them: and they themselves derive their heavenly adoption (not indeed

from His sacrifice,) but from His ministerial providence, (verse 20). This Divine Christ is also human, (ii : 3-10,) so that He is as near akin to us as any advocate can be : just as truly our kinsman, as near by blood, as approachable, as tender, as it is possible for Peter or Paul, or Mary to be. Whatever love and beneficence these have, they received from Him. Thus He has in Himself all possible qualifications for the intercessory work ; all the higher (verses 3 and 9,) and all the softer and gentler. Hence, (verse 10,) the believer is "complete in Him." Christ so completely satisfies the demands of an intercessory work, that no room is left for any other intercessor ; even as His righteousness so satisfies the claims of law, that there is no room for any ritual or ascetic righteousness to procure fuller adoption. This, in a word, is the Apostle's argument. That Christ's priestly work is such, it is not possible that any other intercessory agency can be needed, or be added. The plea, that the Apostle discards the intercession of the Gnostic *æons*, because they are imaginary beings, is of no avail ; because his argument is evidently construed designedly, (see Ch. i : 16,) so as to hold, equally, whether the creatures invoked might be real, or not. In conclusion of this head, it should be noted, that the vital point in the popish theory is, that these creature-mediators have an imputable merit of their own, to plead for us. Hence the cases they cite, where Christians ask an interest in each others' prayers, are wholly inapplicable, and their citation is indeed, uncandid.

The question of angelic mediation may be easily disposed of.

4. No Created Angel Mediated.

The only instances in which an angel is worshipped, are those of the worship of the Angel of the Covenant, the eternal Word. Let the student examine all the cases of angel-worship claimed by the Romanists, and he will find that each one is a worship of that Divine Person. We are referred to Rev. v : 8, and viii : 3, for instances of angelic mediation. In the first, the odours presented by the four living creatures, and the four and twenty elders, are their own. They both, beyond doubt, symbolize the ransomed Church : (see verse 9,) and the prayers they present are simply their own. In Rev. viii ; 3, we assert that the great Angel, who takes the golden censer, and offers the incense, is Christ ; the Angel of the Covenant again. It is objected that the Redeemer has already appeared in the scene, as "the Lamb in the midst of the throne." This is no valid objection to our exposition. The natures and functions of Christ are so glorious and full, that one symbol fails to exhaust them. Hence the multiplication of symbols for the same Divine Figure, even in the same scene, is not unusual in the prophets. The symbol of the Lamb represents Christ's humanity, the victim of justice, while that of the Angel conveys to us Christ the prophet, and intercessor, and king ; a priest upon his throne. There is, then,

no exegetical difficulty in receiving this angel as a symbol of Christ; and the coherency of this view, with the whole passage, and the whole Scripture, every way recommends it.

In conclusion, the powerful demonstration which the Scripture gives us against creature worship, is the strongest proof against creature mediation; for if they mediated, they must be worshipped.

The Scripture testimony must hold the fifth, and crowning place. We have heard the Apostle assert, (1 Tim. ii : 5,) that as there is one God, there is one Mediator, between God and men; and that this is the Being who gave himself a ransom for all. As the words, "one God," doubtless express the exclusive unity of God, so we are bound to construe the counterpart words, "one Mediator," in the same way. And it is implied that He who mediates must have given the adequate ransom, on which to found His plea. So, our Saviour declares, (Jno. xiv : 6,) "No man cometh to the Father but by me," and Peter, (Acts iv : 12,) "There is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby ye must be saved." So, the words of Christ, (Jno. vi : 37,) "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out," at least prove that any other intercessor is superfluous. It is said, that affirmations do not prove the counterpart negative. But when we find the Scriptures full of such passages as Rom. viii : 34; Heb. viii : 25; 1 Jno. ii : 1, 2, which all assert with emphasis that the Lord Jesus Christ is our Mediator; and that there is an absolute silence throughout the Bible as to any other, even this proof is complete.

Feeble efforts are made to break the force of this testimony. To show that saints do make imputable merit for their brethren, Papists point us to Col. i : 24, where Paul claims that "he is filling up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ, for his body's sake, which is the church." We reply that this construction makes the Apostle here teach precisely what he repudiates in 1 Cor. i : 13, "Was Paul crucified for you?" The scope of his argument requires us to construe this question: Was Paul a propitiation for you? Has Christ any rival to divide his credit or claim as the sole propitiation? No. Paul was afterwards beheaded and Peter crucified. Shall we give so preposterous a sense to the argument that the opponent could, after these events, meet the apostolic negative with a flippant 'Yes' and say: "Yes, both Paul and Peter have died for the Church, and so, Christ is now divided, and the threefold faction is legitimate." It is only the ministerial and exemplary features of Christ's sufferings, in which the Apostle claims a share in Colossians. In that sense, every true labourer and martyr is still furthering the work which Christ began. But His sufferings alone could be vicarious.

The attempt is made to escape the force of the places which assert the oneness of Christ's intercession, by saying that

He is the only Mediator of Redemption; saints and angels are Mediators of Intercession. On this subterfuge I remark: (a) 1 Tim. ii: 5, asserts the singleness of Christ's intercessory work first, and at least as pointedly as of His ransoming work. (b) Since intercession is grounded only in redemption by satisfaction, the two kinds of mediators must be one. (c) Romanists themselves undermine their own distinction by impiously ascribing to their creature-intercessors an imputable merit as the necessary ground of their influence with Christ.

The consequences of this doctrinal error give us the strongest practical argument against it. It has been the means of thrusting Christ aside, out of the thoughts and affections of Papists, until Mary and the saints attract a larger share of worship than the Son of God. As the idea of creature-Mediators is virtually pagan, it has thrown an almost pagan aspect over the Romish countries.

The words Messiah, Christ, mean "Anointed," in allusion to the spiritual unction bestowed on Christ. Christ's Anointing. This was appropriate to all His offices; witness the anointing of Aaron, Saul, David, Solomon, Elisha. The thing typified by the oil, was spiritual endowment; and this was bestowed without measure on Christ. (See Ps. xlv: 2; Is. xi: 2; xlii: 1; lxi: 1, &c; Matt. iii: 16; Jno. iii: 34; Acts x: 38, &c.) The seasons of this anointing were, not a journey into heaven during the forty days' temptation—a notion unknown to Scripture, and moreover refuted by Luke ii: 46, 47,—but His birth and baptism especially. The immediate seat of these spiritual influences was His humanity. His divinity was already infinite, perfect and immutable. He is Himself a source of the Holy Ghost, as God. The consequence was, to make Him, not infinite as to His humanity, nor incapable of progress, but perfectly holy, and wise, pure, zealous, faithful, &c., above all others. All forms of grace appropriate to a perfect man acted in Him, in such manners as were suitable to His Person.

That Christ fulfils, as Mediator, the three offices of Prophet, Priest and King, is proved by this argument. We find these three offices predicated of Him in Scripture in a specific and pointed manner, while all other terms of function or service applied to Him as "Servant," "Elect," "Messenger," &c., are rather to be regarded as general appellatives. For the prophetic office, see Heb. i: 1; Is. xi: 2, xlii: 1, 2, lxi: 1; Deut. xviii: 15, with Acts iii: 22-26; Is. xlix: 6; John iv: 25. For the priestly, see Ps. cx: 4; Heb. viii: 1, &c., *passim*; 1 John ii: 1. Kingly, Ps. ii: 6; Is. ix: 6, 7; Ps. cx: 1; Zech. vi: 12-14, &c., 1 Cor. i: 30, displays all three offices.

That the offices of Christ are these three, we prove again by showing in detail, that all His mediatorial works can be

9. Christ's Offices
Three, and Why?

referred to one or more of these three classes. All is either instructing, or atoning, or interceding, or conquering and ruling or several of them together. The necessity for these offices, (which we show) also proves it. Man lay under three evils—ignorance, guilt, rebellion. And redemption consists of three parts—announcing, purchasing and applying salvation.

The proof has already been presented, that Christ performs the office of a Prophet.

The Prophet is God's Spokesman, נִבִּיָּא either to enforce, reveal or predict. Christ, in the highest sense, did all. For definition of His prophetic work, see Cat., Que. 24. The work of our Savior had three different stages. 1st, from the fall to His baptism by John; 2d, during His personal ministry until His ascension; 3d, thence to the final consummation. During all these stages, He has carried on His prophetic work, by these agencies common to the three: His Revelation given to us by the hand of Prophets and Apostles: His Spirit applying that revelation, and giving understanding and love; His providence, directing our conduct and the events happening us, including a constant, universal and particular control of our mental laws and states, as well as physical. (This trenches on His kingly powers). But, during the first stage, Christ acted as Prophet, in addition, by His theophanies, for which see Hengstenberg's *Christol*, vol. i, pp. 164-170, and His Prophets, see I Pet. i: 10, 11.

During the second stage, Christ literally fulfilled the work of a Prophet in His own person, by inculcating truths known, revealing truths, and predicting future events. During the last stage, He gave His Holy Ghost to Apostles and Evangelists, thus enduing their teachings with His own authority. See John xvi: 12-15; Acts i: 8; xv: 28; ii: 4; I Thess. i: 5.

Dick contrasts Christ's prophetic work with that of all other Prophets, in its fullness, its perspicuity, (arising from His fuller endowments and knowledge, as well as from a clearer dispensation), its giving realities instead of types, its authority, arising from His divinity, and its efficacy, arising from His divine power to send forth spiritual influences along with His word. But when we say Christ was fuller as a revealer, let us not fall into the Socinian's error, who, to make a *nodus vindice dignus*, while they deny Christ's vicarious work, teach that Christ not only developed, but made substantial additions to, and alterations in, the Old Testament. A perfect and holy God could not reveal a faulty code. See also Matt. v: 17; Mark xii: 31; Rom. xiii: 9. And if the pretended cases of alteration be examined, they will be found supported by the teachings of the Old Testament.

10. Christ's Prophetic Work. Its three stages.

Wherein Superior to Human Prophets.