

The Mediator (Hebrews 9:15–28)
By Pastor Jeff Alexander (4/9/2017)

Introduction

1. Back in chapter 5 Paul stated, “*About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing*” (5:11). As we have noted, the problem with the Hebrew Christians is that they were stuck in a mode of thinking with expectations that prevented them from moving on to a full experience of what God prepared for them.
2. We observed the superiority of Christ’s priestly service over that of Aaron in the following ways: (1) Christ ministered in the perfect tent, His own flesh (v. 11). (2) Christ offered to God a perfect sacrifice, His own blood (v. 14). (3) Christ sprinkled His blood on the true mercy seat in heaven (v. 12). (4) Christ’s sacrifice secured eternal redemption (v. 12). (5) Christ’s work was done through the eternal Spirit (v. 12). (6) Christ’s work secured for His people full and complete cleansing from all impurity of conscience (v. 14). (7) Christ’s work made possible His people’s freedom to serve the living God (v. 14).
3. Redemption (v. 12) is the act of purchasing something in order to take full possession of it.
 - a. The work of Christ effects the liberation of a slave of sin through the payment of a ransom price.
 - b. Redemption liberates from sin’s bondage and from the judicial consequences of that bondage resulting in true freedom (Rom. 6:5–11; John 8:36).
 - c. Thus, the freedom Christ secured for us is *Legal*, from the curse of the law (Gal. 3:13), *Experiential*, from the power and dominion of sin (Rom. 6:14), and *Real and potential*, enabling His own to draw near to God and to serve Him in righteousness (Rev. 7:14; 19:8).

I. What Is a Mediator?

1. “*Therefore*” (v. 15; “for this reason”) indicates the purpose of God in the sacrificial work of Christ.
 - a. *Therefore* looks back at the fitness of Christ’s person and the superiority of His sacrifice with respect to the purpose of God.
 - b. *Therefore* also looks forward to the fulfillment of that purpose—“*so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance.*”
2. “*Mediator*” is an *arbitrator* between two parties at odds, signifying the need for Christ to administrate the promised eternal inheritance (1 Tim. 2:5, 6).
 - a. Christ’s person and obedience qualified Him for His mediatorial role, which God appointed for the benefit of His people.
 - b. The need of arbitration also speaks of the weakness or failure of one or both parties to live up to conditions of the covenant.
3. “*Since a death has occurred*” is the phrase that forms the basis upon which the promised eternal inheritance is possible.
 - a. This “death” redeems or ransoms the guilty who transgressed (creating a breach) the first covenant.
 - b. This “death” makes Jesus the surety or guarantor of the covenantal status of those He represents (7:22).

4. Christ has *four* positions relating to the covenant: (1) He is the *surety* (7:22), (2) the *mediator* (9: 15; 12:24), (3) the *messenger* (Mal. 3:1; Rev. 8:3–5), and (4) the *testator* of the covenant (9:16; Psa. 89:3).

II. For Whom the Covenant?

1. “*So that those are called*” is the clause identifying those for whom Christ is mediator.
 - a. What Christ does for them is also noted: “*a death . . . redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant*”—the OT covenant breakers.
 - b. In Isaiah 49, we have the prophetic announcement of the one who would “*bring Jacob back to Him and that Israel might be gathered to Him*” (vv. 4, 5), according to the election of grace.
 - 1) “*Israel*” is God’s chosen people, and “*Jacob*” is the name given them reflecting their sinful natural state.
 - 2) To bring these “called” ones back to Him, Christ became true Israel (Isa. 49:3), suffering God’s wrath for the transgressions committed under His covenant.
 - 3) However, God’s intention was to broaden Israel from ethnic Hebrews to include Gentiles (Isa. 49:6).
 - 4) Thus, “*called*” represents not merely individuals but a collective “*nation*” (I Pet. 2:9)—the body of Christ (Gal. 3:28, 29).
2. In my study of 1 John 2 (the new and old commandments), I came to understand the significance that the *new* over the *old* lay not so much in content as in the freshness of it.
 - a. This also applies to the covenant, the freshness being that Christ, as mediator and surety, guarantees that His own are able to keep the conditions of it.
 - b. OT Israel failed to keep the commandments because they were unregenerate. Christ keeps them perfectly.

What This Means for Us

1. How do you view your relationship to Christ and new covenant? Individually or corporately? Sadly, many believers do not see how much they need the fellowship, accountability, and counsel of the body of Christ as it pertains to their Christian lives. The power of the gospel lies in the unity of body agreeing together in prayer and witness. That is why the corporate prayer meeting is so important.
2. You in Christ and Christ in you—cleansed from dead works and enabled to serve the living God! Christ represented us in securing salvation and favor with God—justification and sanctification. If Christ through the eternal Spirit offered Himself, does not Christ in you through the eternal Spirit offer Himself through you in the service of God?