

MESSIAH THE PRINCE,
Or, The Mediatorial Dominion of Jesus Christ.
By William Symington.
Sabbath Afternoon Studies: Part 34.

CHAPTER 10.
THE PERPETUITY OF THE
MEDIATORIAL DOMINION.

4. The *necessities of the redeemed*, not less than the reward of the Redeemer, appear to us to require the continuance for ever of his mediatorial character. This, indeed, is the ground on which the sentiment for which we are contending is opposed. It is supposed that there can be no need for mediatorial administrations after the final judgment: that then the scheme of redemption shall be fully executed, and the official character may be laid aside as no longer required.

‘Then thou thy regal sceptre shalt lay by,
For regal sceptre thou no more shalt need;
God shall be all in all.’

Milton.

► ‘The kingdom will end,’ says one of the writers on this subject, ‘when its design is accomplished; he will cease to exercise an authority which has no longer an object.’ ‘Nothing will remain to be done by the power with which our Saviour was invested at his ascension; and, his work being finished, his commission will expire.’ ‘May we not conceive his mediation to terminate like any other plan, in the execution of which the intention of the contriver has been fulfilled? Why should intercession continue, when there are no sins to be forgiven, and no wants to be supplied, and when the objects of redeeming love are established in a state of perfection beyond the possibility of failure?’ However plausible the statements contained in these extracts, we have but to look closely at them to see that they assume the very point to be proved, that they take for granted the very matter in dispute, namely, that through eternity there shall exist no need for the mediatorial administration of our Lord. This we are disposed to question. We freely admit that there will not be need for the same kind of administration; the grounds of necessity will be different from what they were before. The King of glory will have no need to dispense pardon, to subdue rebellious passions, to ward off enemies, or to intercede for the bestowment of the initiatory blessings of redemption. But are there no other things that may call for the exercise of the mediatorial functions? We submit that there are.

May not the continuance of the relations subsisting between Christ and his people render this necessary? In the day of grace, a vital union is formed on the part of the renewed soul to

the Lord Jesus Christ, which is essential to the privileges and duties of the Christian life and character. In consequence of this, Christ becomes, to the believer, at once a Head of merit—conferring on him a right to all new covenant benefits,—and a Head of influence—communicating to him all needed supplies of strength and enjoyment. It is clearly to him as *Mediator* that this union is formed. Now this union is indissoluble. Christ can never cease to be the Head of merit and of influence to his people. ► Their right to all the blessings, and their fitness for all the services, and their experience of all the pleasures, of the celestial state, spring from their relation to him. They can spring, neither from themselves, nor from God absolutely considered. Nor are they the mere *effects* of what Christ has done, but effects to the continued existence of which their abiding in him is indispensable. But they could not abide in him as Mediator, unless he continued to be Mediator; and it is the rejoicing of believers' hearts to know that the union between them and their Lord shall never be dissolved. 'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord,' [Rom. 8.35,38,39.]

The redeemed in glory are to be engaged, throughout eternity, in the service of God. 'They serve him day and night in his temple. His servants shall serve him.' [Rev. 7.15; 22.3.] While studying the character and works of Jehovah himself, hymning his praises, and performing offices of friendship to one another, they shall be actively employed in serving the Lord. And how are these services to find acceptance with God, but through the merits and intercession of the Mediator? As sinners saved, as captives redeemed, they can never claim acceptance on their own merit. Nor does it even appear consonant to the character of the great and holy God, to suppose him holding absolute and immediate intercourse with persons of this description, such as he holds with the angels who have never sinned. Moral fitness or propriety would seem to require, that the fellowship of redeemed men with the Majesty of heaven and of earth, should ever be conducted so as to indicate the peculiarity of their character, and to distinguish them from the unfallen sons of light. And this, we have reason to believe, will be done, by all their communion with God being through a Mediator, without whose intervention they shall not receive one ray of light or one token of divine regard.¹

The very nature of the believer's glorious reward, supposes the perpetuity of Christ's mediatorial character. In what is this reward to consist, but in being associated with him in his kingdom? It is abundantly plain, from the following sayings of Holy Writ, that *regal dignity in connexion with Christ* is to constitute a part, at least, of the reward of the redeemed. 'When the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall SIT UPON TWELVE THRONES, judging the twelve tribes of Israel—They who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness, shall REIGN IN LIFE by one Jesus Christ—If we suffer we shall also REIGN WITH HIM—They shall REIGN for ever and ever—To him that overcometh will I grant to SIT WITH

1 The language of 1 John 3.2, 'We know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, *for we shall see him as he is,*' may be regarded as confirming the reasoning in the text.—ED. [AMS].

ME ON MY THRONE.² According to the opinion we are combating, how are these expressions to be interpreted? The saints, agreeably to these Scriptures, are to reign in glory with Christ as Mediator: but, according to the opinion in question, Christ as Mediator is not to reign in glory at all, posterior to the consummation of all things. His reign is to terminate just when theirs is beginning. When theirs commences his ceases. As they ascend *their* throne, he abdicates *his*. When they are made kings to God, he is to be king no more.

Moreover, the perpetuation as well as the nature of the reward of the redeemed, supposes the continuance of the mediatorial dominion. To the continued efficacy of the Saviour's sacrifice, the continued enjoyment of the blessings it procured is to be ascribed. But continued efficacy and application suppose a continued administration, which can only be conducted by the Saviour himself. In the same manner as the suspension of that divine energy by which all things are upheld, would involve the annihilation of all things, so, it appears to us, would the suspension of the mediatorial administration involve the annihilation of all the eternal privileges of redemption. It is the prerogative of a king to reward his subjects; but the King of saints must not only confer, but perpetuate, the reward of his people. In whatever this reward may be supposed to consist,—in dignity, honour, exaltation, fellowship, or blissful communications,—it will require to be continued, and this can be secured only by the administration of the King of glory.

To the redeemed before the throne, divine communications shall be constantly dealt out, through eternity. This is no way inconsistent with their being made perfect in glory at the last day. The perfection of creatures must never be identified with infinity. To be made perfect in knowledge, holiness, love, does not suppose the possession of these qualities in an infinite degree. Such a thing is impossible. It only means being free from the imperfections of the present state, while abundant room is left for progressive advancement in every attribute of intellectual and moral being. If angels advance, as we know they do, why may not the redeemed? The infinite character of the sources of eternal bliss admits of endless progression; while the necessary increase of capacity, arising from the exercise of all the faculties, renders progressive communication and advancement as unavoidable in itself as it is essential to the happiness of beings constituted as men are. ► We have every reason, therefore, to conclude, that there will be everlasting communications of light, life, power, love, and ineffable satisfaction, made to the souls of the redeemed. And through what channel shall these communications flow? Surely through the medium of the King of glory. New covenant blessings can flow only through the Mediator of the covenant. It is not enough that Jesus as Mediator has procured for his people the provisions of the covenant, and brought them in safety to heaven, but he shall administer to them for ever the fulness of his Father's house. 'The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters.' 'The pure river of the water of life' proceeds out of the throne, not merely of God, but *of the Lamb.*' [Rev. 7.17; 22.1.]

2 Matt. 19.28; Rom. 5.17; 2 Tim. 2.12; Rev. 22.5; 3.21.

It is surely reasonable to suppose that, as the heavenly state is so often spoken of as a kingdom, it must have a ruler. A kingdom necessarily supposes the existence of a king who exercises sovereign rule over it so long as it exists. But the character of the king must bear a relation to the nature of the kingdom. Now, the kingdom of heaven being a mediatorial kingdom, cannot be consistently supposed to be presided over by any but a mediatorial king. Accordingly, we find everlasting dominion ascribed to Christ as Mediator. Jude says, 'To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory, and majesty, and *dominion*, and power, both now and *for ever*.' Of the Prince of the kings of the earth, we find John the divine saying, 'To him be glory and *dominion for ever and ever*.' Every creature in heaven and on earth is, also, represented as shouting, 'Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the *Lamb for ever and ever*.' [Jude 25; Rev. 1.5-6; 5.13.] It hence appears, that it is part of the regal administration of Christ in glory to bear rule over the whole kingdom of redeemed saints. ► Nor is there anything in this, incompatible with the dignity of their station, as exalted to the right hand of the majesty on high. They are still creatures, dependent creatures, whose very nature involves the idea of subjection. So far from its being derogatory to their exalted character to be subject to Messiah the Prince, it is their happiness to be placed under his mild and blissful reign. It is with ineffable delight that they bow before his throne, cast their crowns at his feet, and shout, in full and rapturous chorus, *Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth!* What a glorious reign! A King infinitely wise, holy, powerful, beneficent, divine: an administration righteous, pure, gentle, and unspeakably happy: and subjects, all of whom can appreciate the excellencies of their Prince's character and the blessings of his administration, and among whose countless myriads there occurs not a single rebellious action, word, or wish! To do homage to their King is not only the delight, but the ceaseless occupation of the redeemed; and, without the perpetuity of his mediatorial dominion, there would be none to receive their ascriptions of praise, and gratitude, and honour, and glory.

On all these grounds, we may safely conclude that our Redeemer will never lay aside his mediatorial authority, never cease to act in the capacity of King of glory. Indeed all the mediatorial offices, would seem to be exercised in heaven;—the prophetic, in diffusing spiritual illumination; the sacerdotal, in securing the blessing and giving acceptance to the services of his saints; and the regal, in bearing rule, receiving homage, and administering reward to the children of the kingdom. The mediatorial reign is no parenthesis in the plan of God's moral government. It is rather the last and greatest of his works, the climax of his wise and holy administration.

The preceding remarks may help us, in some degree, to form an idea of the nature of the mediatorial administration in glory. Let us lay aside every prejudice that would prevent us from cordially rejoicing in a subject so delightful and animating. It cannot but be honouring to Christ to regard him as reigning for ever and ever; and it cannot but be pleasing, beyond all description, to his saints to think that they are never to lose sight of him as their King, never to cease to be his subjects, never but to yield him their grateful heartfelt homage. It cannot but rejoice them to know that they are to be ever under his rule, and that, even after they are taken

to glory, they shall continue to behold him as the Lamb in the midst of the throne for ever and ever. What a prospect! How should it excite us to prepare for its being realised! Happy they who, having submitted themselves to him in time as King of saints, shall be eternally under his sway as King of glory!

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Supplement: Concluding Paragraphs of R. Traill's Sermon (#12) on Heb. 10.23:

—*For he is faithful that promised.*

There is one more, and that I would conclude with. I have been exhorting you to glorify God's faithfulness, by venturing on the promise of salvation by Christ in the gospel; to glorify God's faithfulness, by believing all covenant-blessings by the way; and to glorify God's faithfulness, by believing eternal life in the end. Only one word more, and that is the greatest of all. Glorify God's faithfulness by believing the promises about Sion and Christ's kingdom, though its state be ever so low. It was a good saying of a believer, in dark and dismal times, "Now it is time to believe." The great believer had a kind of joy in dark hours, because there was such a fair field for faith to act on God's faithfulness. I believe many of you do not know much of the state of the work of Christ abroad in the world, and a great many are little careful to know it that should; but, by all the little hints that we have any manner of way, it is exceeding low at this day: let us believe, notwithstanding, it shall be well; this great faithful promiser hath promised great things about Christ's kingdom, and we must believe greatly about them; the strongest faith should be put forth here.

1. The promises that we are to believe on for Christ's kingdom, are Christ's promises. My meaning is, not only that they are by Christ, for all are so: but they are made to him; so, in some sense, all are too; but they are made to him primarily, they are made to him for his body's sake, the church. Shall we not believe firmly the promises of the Father to the Son? *Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever: the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this,* Isa. 9.7. Let the faith of believers believe it then.

2. These great promises we are to believe about Christ's kingdom, are most free to the church, but they are most dear to Christ Jesus, and he hath already paid the price for them; he hath bought the kingdom already, and all that glory that is given him; *that name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father,* Phil. 2.10,11.

3. These promises are greatly fulfilled already, and we should believe them the more firmly upon that account. Our Lord himself, the great heir of the promises, is, as well as we can wish him, and better than we can think, exalted at the Father's right hand above all his enemies. If

there were a host of all Christ's enemies together, it may be, they would be as bold as ever; but if all the devils in hell, and all wicked men on earth, were conjoined against him, yet a sight of his glory would chase them into hell, Eph. 3.20.

4. Believe these promises, for they are the largest and most comprehensive of all. The promises of Christ's kingdom, are the stock of all the faith of God's children in all ages. Pray, whence comes thy conversion, justification, calling, or being brought home to God? It came out of the womb of the promises of the Father made to his Son: *He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities.* All the saving grace that we receive, comes from these promises that are made to Christ; and what we desire now, is but the fulfilling of them. What is there that we desire in all this world but this, that a great many ungodly people may be converted, and that all the godly may be eminent in grace, and at last ripe for glory? All these are contained in Christ's promises, these promises wherein the faithfulness of God is engaged: he hath promised this to David, that he will establish his seed for ever, and build up his throne to all generations, Psalm 89.4. You have ground sure enough for your faith, and you cannot be more happy than to have faith enough for your work. The Lord furnish you with it.

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Discussion Questions:

1. What is the fourth reason of Dr. Symington to further prove his conclusion that Christ's Mediatorial Reign shall be for ever?
 - A. As the reward of the Redeemer necessitates this, so there are also the necessities of the redeemed. We should not assume that they no longer need their Redeemer: it is assuming the answer to the question.
2. How does the relation subsisting between Christ and his people render this necessary?
 - A. The vital union which they have with him makes him a "head of influence" for spiritual life: communicating supplies of strength and enjoyment. The "love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" is that from which believers cannot be separated by anything.
3. Is there a reward for the believer himself which has bearing on this question?
 - A. Yes. It is his reward to be associated with Christ in his kingdom. He is to have regal dignity as one who is to "reign with him" and "sit with him in his throne." (Rev. 3.21.) But they do not "reign with him" if he ceases to reign when they most truly begin to reign.
4. Does the perfect state of the Redeemed, enjoyed after the day of judgment, preclude all possibility of progress or increase in their blessedness?
 - A. They are then free of all imperfection; but as their capacity is increased, so there may be an increase of their bliss and happiness, derived from the King of glory.
5. What should we gather from the fact that the heavenly state is referred to as a kingdom?
 - A. If it is a kingdom, it must have a ruler, but the Scriptures themselves teach us that this kingdom is to be contemplated as ruled by God and his Christ: Him that sitteth upon the throne, and the Lamb (Rev. 5.13; 7.10.)
6. If it is an honor to Christ to reign forever as Mediator, should we feel this is any dishonor to us?
 - A. It ought to be pleasing to us: that we should never lose sight of our King, never cease to be his subjects.