

CHAPTER X.

**JESUS, THE MEDIATOR
OF THE NEW COVENANT**

“I give thee for a covenant of the people.” ISA. 42. 6; 49. 8.

“The Lord shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in.” MAL. 3. 1.

“Jesus was made Surety of a better covenant.” HEB. 7. 22.

“The Mediator of the Better Covenant, established upon better promises The Mediator of the New Covenant Ye are come to Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant.” HEB. 8. 6; 9. 15; 12. 24.

WE have here four titles given to our Lord Jesus in connection with the New Covenant. He is Himself called a Covenant. The union between God and man, which the Covenant aims at, was wrought out in Him personally; in Him the reconciliation between the human and Divine was perfectly effected; in Him His people find the Covenant with all its blessings; He is all that God has to give, and is the assurance that it is given He is called the Messenger of the Covenant, because

He came to establish and to proclaim it He is the Surety of the Covenant, not only because He paid our debt, but as He is Surety to us for God, that God will fulfil His part; and Surety for us with God, that we will fulfil our part And He is Mediator of the Covenant, because as the Covenant was established in His atoning blood, is administered and applied by Him, is entered upon alone by faith in Him, so it is experimentally known only through the power of His resurrection life, and His never-ceasing intercession. All these names point to the one truth, that in the New Covenant Christ is all in all.

The subject is so large that it would be impossible to enter upon all the various aspects of this precious truth. Christ's work in atonement and intercession, in His bestowal of pardon and the Holy Spirit, in His daily communication of grace and strength, are truths which lie at the very foundation of the faith of Christians. We need not speak of them here. What specially needs to be made clear to many is how, by faith in Christ as the Mediator of the New Covenant, we actually have access to and enter into the enjoyment of all its promised blessings. We have already seen, in studying the New Covenant, how all these blessings culminate in the one thing that the heart of man is to be put right, as the only possible way of his living in the favor of God, and God's love finding its satisfaction in him. That he is to receive a heart to fear God, to love God with all his strength, to obey God, and to keep all His statutes. All that Christ did and does has this for its aim; all the higher blessings of peace and fellowship flow from this. In this God's saving power and love find the highest proof of their triumph over sin. Nothing so reveals the grace of God, the power of Jesus Christ, the reality of salvation, the blessedness of the New Covenant, as the heart of a believer, where sin once abounded, with grace now abounding more exceedingly within it.

I do not know how I can better set forth the glory of our Blessed Lord Jesus as He accomplishes this, the real object of His redeeming work, and as He takes entire possession of the heart He has bought and won and cleansed as a dwelling for His Father, than by pointing out the place He takes, and the work He does, in the case of a soul who is being led out of the Old Covenant bondage with its failure, into the real experience of the promise and power of the New Covenant. (For a practical illustration in the life of Canon Battersby, see Note D). In thus studying the work of the Mediator in an individual, we may get a truer conception of the real glory and greatness of the work He actually accomplishes, than when we only think of the work He has done for all. It is in the application of the redemption here in the life of earth, where sin abounded, that its power is seen. Let us see how the entrance into the New Covenant blessing is attained.

The first step towards it, in one who has been truly converted and assured of his acceptance with God, is the sense of sin. He sees that the New Covenant promises are not made true in his experience. There is not only indwelling sin, but he finds that he gives way to temper, and self-will, and worldliness, and other known transgressions of God's law. The obedience to which God calls and will fit him, the life of abiding in Christ's love which is his privilege, the power for a holy walk, well pleasing to God, –in all this his conscience condemns him. It is in this conviction of sin that any thought or desire of the full New Covenant blessing must have its rise. Where the thought that obedience is an impossibility, and that nothing but a life of failure and self-condemnation is to be looked for, has wrought a secret despair of deliverance, or contentment with our present state, it is vain to speak of God's promise or power. The heart does not respond: it knows well enough, it is sure, the liberty spoken of is a dream. But where the

dissatisfaction with our state has wrought a longing for something better, the heart is open to receive the message.

The New Covenant is meant to be the deliverance from the power of sin; a keen longing for this is the indispensable preparation for entering fully into the Covenant.

Now comes the second step. As the mind is directed to the literal meaning of the terms of the New Covenant, in its promises of cleansing from sin, and a heart filled with God's fear and God's law, and a power to keep God's commands and never to depart from Him; as the eye is fixed on Jesus the Surety of the Covenant, who will Himself make it all true; and as the voice is heard of witnesses who can declare how, after years of bondage, all this has been fulfilled in them—the longing begins to grow into a hope, and the inquiry is made, as to what is needed to enter this blessed life.

Then follows another step. The heart-searching question comes whether we are willing to give up every evil habit, all our own self-will, all that is of the spirit of the world, and surrender ourselves to be wholly and exclusively for Jesus. God cannot take so complete possession of a man, and bless him so wonderfully, and work in him so mightily, unless He has him very completely, yea, wholly for Himself. Happy the man who is ready for any sacrifice.

Now comes the last, the simplest, and yet often the most difficult step. And here it is we need to know Jesus as Mediator of the Covenant. As we hear of the life of holiness, and obedience, and victory over sin, which the Covenant promises, and hear that it will be to us according to our faith, so that if we claim it in faith

it will surely be ours, the heart often fails for fear. I am willing, but have I the power to make, and what is more, to maintain this full surrender? Have I the power, the strong faith, so to grasp and hold this offered blessing, that it shall indeed be and continue mine? How such questions perplex the soul until it finds the answer to them in the one word: Jesus! It is He who will bestow the power to make the surrender and to believe. This is as surely and as exclusively His work, as atonement and intercession are His alone. As sure as it was His to win and ascend the throne, it is His to prove His dominion in the individual soul. It is He, the Living One, who is in Divine power to work and maintain the life of communion and victory within us. He is the Mediator and Surety of the Covenant—He, the God-man, who has undertaken not only for all that God requires, but for all that we need too.

When this is seen, the believer learns that here, just as at conversion, it is all of faith. The one thing needed now is, with the eye definitely fixed on some promise of the New Covenant, to turn from self and anything it could or need do, to let go self, and fall into the arms of Jesus. He is the Mediator of the New Covenant: it is His to lead us into it. In the assurance that Jesus, and every New Covenant blessing, is already ours in virtue of our being God's children; with the desire now to appropriate and enjoy what we have hitherto allowed to lie unused; in the faith that Jesus now gives us the needed strength in faith to claim and accept our heritage as a present possession; the will dares boldly to do the deed, and to take the heavenly gift—a life in Christ according to the better promises. By faith in Jesus you have seen and received Him as to you, in full truth, the Mediator of the New Covenant, both in heaven and in your heart. He is the Mediator who makes it true between God and you, as your experience.

The fear has sometimes been expressed that, if we press so urgently the work that Christ through the Spirit does in the heart, we may be drawn off from trusting in what He has done and ever is doing, to what we are experiencing of its working. The answer is simple. It is with the heart alone that Christ can be truly known or honoured. It is in the heart the work of grace is to be done, and the saving power of Christ to be displayed. It is in the heart alone the Holy Spirit has His sphere of work; there He is to work Christ's likeness it is there alone He can glorify Christ. The Spirit can only glorify Christ by revealing His saving power in us. If we were to speak of what we are to do in cleansing our heart and keeping it right, the fear would be well-grounded. But the New Covenant calls us to the very opposite. What it tells us of the Atonement, and the Righteousness of God it has won for us, will be our only glory even amid the highest holiness of heaven: Christ's work of holiness here in the heart can only deepen the consciousness of that Righteousness as our only plea. The sanctification of the Spirit, as the fulfilment of the New Covenant promises, is all a taking of the things of Christ and revealing and imparting them to us. The deeper our entrance into and our possession of the New Covenant gift of a new heart, the fuller will be our knowledge and our love of Him who is its Mediator; the more we shall glory in Him alone. The Covenant deals with the heart, just that Christ may be found there, may dwell there by faith. As we look at the heart, not in the light of feeling or experience, but in the light of the faith of God's Covenant, we shall learn to think and speak of it as God does, and begin to know what it is, that there Christ manifests Himself and there He and the Father come to make their abode.