

REVIVAL NEWS
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JESUS THE MEDIATOR

The Context

In **1 Timothy 2:1-9** Paul is giving us some clear and strong directions and instructions concerning prayer. He stresses the importance of *“supplications, prayers, intercessions, and the giving of thanks ... for all men”* (v.1). He stresses the importance of praying for kings [modern day Presidents and Prime Ministers] and *“all who are in authority”*. Generally the contemporary churches around the world do not put much emphasis on the church praying for their nations, and for their rulers and authorities, and yet this is the responsibility of the church and God has authorised such prayer as being a primary responsibility of the church (**1Tim.1:1-2; Matt.6:10**).

The immediate result of such prayer is *“that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence [dignity]”* (**1 Tim.2:2b**). What a wonderful result of committed corporate prayer!

Paul then teaches us that praying for rulers and authorities *“is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour”* (v.3). We can know that our prayers for our governmental leaders are good and acceptable in the sight of God. God *“desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth”* (v.4). Our first and ongoing prayer is to pray for the salvation of the governmental leaders and all in authority.

The Grand Proclamation

Then in **1 Timothy 2:5-6**, Paul gives us another one of his grand proclamations that make clear who God is and how men can be saved:

*“For there is one God
and one Mediator between God and men,
the Man Christ Jesus,
who gave Himself a ransom for all,
to be testified in due time”.*

This is the Gospel in simple terms. Paul speaks of the oneness of God; Paul speaks of the man Christ Jesus [God manifest in the flesh, **1Tim.3:16**]; Paul speaks of the atoning sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross; the atonement through His body and blood which paid the ransom price for all men to be saved. This must be testified of! This must be preached in every nation throughout the world.

What does it mean to call Jesus the Mediator?

A mediator is one who goes between two parties. The Greek word literally means ‘to go in the middle, a go between, umpire, reconciler, arbitrator, intermediary. The word

‘mediator’ is used in **Galatians 3:19** referring to Moses bringing the law to the people along with angelic assistance. When the word is used in reference to Jesus, it speaks of His ‘accomplishing salvation by His vicarious death [taking away our sins by the atonement]’ (**1Tim.2:5**). Jesus as the Mediator mediated the New Covenant. {see Word Wealth at **Galatians 3:19** in Spirit Filled Life Bible}.

The Scripture says there is “*one Mediator between God and men*” (**1Tim.2:5**). That one is the “*Man Christ Jesus*” (**v.5**). Jesus as the Mediator is much more than an angelic messenger; Jesus is the one who administers the coming of the New Covenant between God and men. Jesus as the Mediator is sent by God and Jesus came in obedience to God to mediate the New Covenant. This mediation was done through the offering of His body and blood.

Mediation is a ministry of the High Priest

There are so many references to the High Priest in the book of Hebrews. It seems in general that we have not appreciated the great importance of the Priesthood that Jesus Christ came to set in place. **Hebrews 5:6** declares concerning the Priesthood of Jesus the Christ the Son of God that it is of a different order to that of Aaron. “*You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek*” (**Psalm 110:4**). This verse declares that the same one who will be the Messiah, will be a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek. This Scripture is quoted exactly again in **Hebrews 7:17**. We are exhorted in **Hebrews 3:1** to have a confession of Jesus Christ the High Priest.

The order of priesthood that God set in place through Jesus is so much better and different to the order of Aaron, primarily because Jesus made one sacrifice forever, establishing the New Covenant, that no longer requires daily, monthly or yearly sacrifices, which could never take away the stench of sin. We needed a High Priest who would mediate a new covenant. **Hebrews 8:1** says, “*We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens*”.

This High Priest has “*obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was based on better promises*” (**Heb.8:6**). Note that it is the High Priest who is the mediator of the better covenant. Jesus mediates the New Covenant as the High Priest.

The difference between a ‘mediator’ and an ‘intercessor’

God mediates His covenants through a mediator. **Galatians 3:19** referred to Moses being the mediator of the old covenant, with the help of angels. That covenant brought the people of God into a relationship with God and that relationship was meant to be preserved through the old covenant laws and ordinances and the ministry of the priests, especially the High Priest.

Jesus is the Mediator of the New Covenant, sent by God, but coming as the “*Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*” (**Rev.13:8**).

- Jesus as mediator represents God and mediates God’s covenants with His people. The mediator is appointed by God from heaven.

An intercessor is someone who goes before the authority on behalf of another. Jesus went into heaven victoriously with His blood, and He *“continues to make intercession”* on behalf of all of us believers (**Heb.7:25**). *“Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us”* **Rom.8:34**.

- Jesus as the intercessor represents God’s people in the earth, making them acceptable to God and continuing in God’s presence in that intercession.

In a real sense the intercession is representing the people of the earth before God in heaven; the mediator mediates God’s will from heaven to God’s people in the earth. The ministry of the mediator has been completed; the ministry of the intercessor continues in heaven.

The Mediator of the New Covenant

“To Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant” (**Heb.12:24a**). We have already learnt that this covenant is a better covenant; that it required a High Priest of a new order to mediate this new covenant.

In the context of **Hebrews 12:22-24**, we are made aware of what has now been made possible: that we as the people of God who have received the mediation of Jesus to become the people of God, have actually been brought to:

- Mount Zion
- and to the city of the Living God, the heavenly Jerusalem
- to an innumerable company of angels,
- to the general assembly [or festal gathering]
- to the church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven
- to God the judge of all
- to the spirits of just men made perfect
- and to the blood of sprinkling

What a marvellous inheritance we have received, and Jesus is the Mediator of this covenant. We have such a High Priest and He has done this (**Heb.8:1**). And He is the Mediator of a better covenant (**Heb.8:6**). The better covenant is the new covenant.

In mediating the new covenant, Jesus has provided a way through the veil: *“By a new and living way which He has consecrated for us, through the veil, that is His flesh”* **Heb.10:20**. This is what Jesus was referring to when He took the bread *“on the night in which He was betrayed ... and said ‘Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you’”* (**1Cor.11:23-24**). The death of Jesus in His body was opening the door to the Holy of Holies.

Then it is by the blood of Jesus that we have *“boldness to enter the holiest”* (**Heb.10:19**). Understanding the ministry of the High Priest – the ministry of Jesus the Mediator – is linked more closely than we realise to the Table of the Lord, and this understanding deepens our appreciation of, and edification in the reality of the Lord’s Table: eating the bread and drinking the cup.

The reality of what Jesus has done as the Mediator

“Through the eternal Spirit [Christ] offered Himself without spot to God” (Heb.9:14), thus cleansing our conscience from dead works to serve the living God. It is through His blood that we are cleansed.

“And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance” Heb.9:15.

Christ as the Mediator *“has not entered the Holy places made with hands, copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us” (Heb.9:24).*

As the suitable High Priest, of the order of Melchizedek, *“Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many” (Heb.9:28a).*

Appearing the second time

The second part of **Hebrews 9:28** is a remarkable statement, *“To those who eagerly wait for Him, He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation”*. This statement is drawn from the description of the High Priest’s ministry in **Leviticus 16:9-16**. When we read this passage carefully, we find that the High Priest actually entered the Holy of Holies twice. The first time he *“shall bring the bull of the sin offering which is for himself and make atonement for himself and for his house” (v.11).*

Then the High Priest came back out and killed the goat of the sin offering, *“which is for the people”* and he was to *“bring its blood inside the veil”* and *“do with the blood as he did with the blood of the bull and sprinkle it on the Mercy Seat and before the Mercy Seat” (v.15).*

In this way *“He shall make atonement ... because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, because of their transgressions, for all their sins” (v.16).* The people were looking for the High Priest to *“appear a second time”*, and then they would know that atonement was made; that God accepted the sacrificial offerings made on their behalf. This was the fulfilment of the Day of Atonement: all of Israel’s sins in that year were atoned for.

When Jesus appeared the first time, He offered the perfect sacrifice of Himself. He is not appearing a second time concerning atonement: His substitutionary death on the cross was for sin and has fully atoned for all sin. When He appears a second time it is for salvation in all of its fulness. It speaks of the fulness of all that God has done and is bringing to completion in the life of His church.

The message of the Mediator must be preached

Paul says in his great proclamation (**1 Timothy 2:5-6**) – that the reality of there being a *“Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus”*, and that this Mediator *“gave Himself a ransom for all”* – is *“to be testified in due time”*. There is a great need for this message, this great proclamation which summarises the good news of the gospel, to be preached far and wide.

This work of the Mediator is to be testified to!

Remember this is in the context of the call to prayer, *“supplications, prayers, intercessions, and the giving of thanks be made for all men” (1Tim.2:1).* It is God’s desire

that *“all men be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth”* (v.3-4). How will God answer our prayers? Paul says it is through the appointment of preachers, apostles and teachers, *“in faith and truth”* (v.7).

God will appoint ministries who will testify to the great truth that *“there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time”* (1 Tim.2:5-6). Paul says, *“for which I was appointed”* (v.7). Paul was appointed to testify *“in due time”*. Paul says his appointment was threefold *“a preacher and an apostle – I am speaking the truth in Christ and not lying – a teacher of the Gentiles [nations] in faith and truth”* (v.7).

Jesus, in His ascension, gave gifts, *“He gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers”* (Eph.4:11). All of these ministries are given by Christ and are necessary for bringing the church to full operational and functional maturity [read the passage from **Ephesians 4:7-16**]. God’s answer to the needs of the nations, brought to Him in prayer, is to appoint ministries in the nations, to testify to the work of the Mediator that is already done.

Paul Galligan