

ROMAN CATHOLICISM IN LIGHT OF THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

XIV. Catholicism's Multiple Mediators Versus Christ Our Sole Mediator

(Hebrews 9:15-24 et al.)

I. Introduction

- A. A number of our Church members have come from Roman Catholic backgrounds, and they often seek support in Biblical truths that counter the strong, errant indoctrination they faced in their past.
- B. The epistle to the Hebrews was written to counter the errant traditionalism of first century Judaism that was similar in theological thrust to much of Catholicism, so we study Hebrews for edification in this matter.
- C. The author of Hebrews in Hebrews 9:15-24 contrasted Judaism's inferior covenant made with the blood of sacrificial animals versus Christ's sacrifice of His own blood as the Mediator of a better covenant. In doing so, the passage critiques Catholicism's teaching on multiple mediators between God and man.
- D. We study this passage for our insight, application and edification:

II. Catholicism's Multiple Mediators Versus Christ Our Sole Mediator, Hebrews 9:15-24 et al.

- A. Though Scripture offers "(n)ot one word . . . about Mary, or a pope, or the priests, or the saints, as mediators . . . Romanism teaches that there are many mediators, and the great majority of Roman Catholics, if asked, would say that our primary approach to God is through the Virgin Mary, and that only as she begs for us can we enter the presence of God." (Lorraine Boettner, Roman Catholicism, 1978, p. 148)
- B. Indeed, canonized saint Bishop Alphonse de Liguori, in his book, The Glories of Mary, 1931, p. 94, wrote of Mary, "'And she is truly a mediatrix of peace between sinners and God. Sinners receive pardon by . . . Mary alone' (pp. 82, 83). 'Mary is our life . . . Mary in obtaining this grace for sinners by her intercession, thus restores them to life' (p. 80). 'He fails and is LOST who has not recourse to Mary.' (p. 94).'" (Ibid., p. 138)
- C. In contrast, Hebrews 9:15-24 and other Scriptures present Christ as man's sole Mediator with God since Christ as God Incarnate with His Substitutionary Sacrifice alone can even qualify to be our Mediator:
 - 1. Christ died as the Ransom to set sinners free from sins committed under the first covenant of the Mosaic Law, so He is the Mediator between God and sinful man of a new covenant that believers might receive God's promised eternal inheritance, Hebrews 9:15 NIV, ESV.
 - 2. In the case of a will, it is in force only upon the death of the one who made it, not while the one who made the will is still living, Hebrews 9:16-17.
 - 3. Even under the first covenant of the Aaronic priesthood, that covenant was put into effect with the death of sacrificial animals and the shedding of their blood and its application to the scroll of the Law and the people who were to observe it, Hebrews 9:18-19, 20.
 - 4. Moses also had to use the sacrificial blood to sprinkle the tabernacle and everything used in its ceremonies, for without the shedding of blood there was no forgiveness of sins, Hebrews 9:21-22.
 - 5. Likewise, the heavenly things corresponding to the earthly tabernacle and its furnishing had to be sprinkled, but not with the blood of sacrificial animals, but with the blood of Christ when He entered heaven to appear on behalf of us believers as our Mediator with God, Hebrews 9:23-24.
- D. Thus, no substitutionary death of Mary, of a pope, of a priest or of a saint can be used for any one of them to act as our mediator with God, for all of them have sinned and come short of the glory of God, Romans 3:23. Only the sinless Son of God with His substitutionary atonement can satisfy the righteous demands of God, so only Jesus Christ can be our Mediator!
- E. Other passages of Scripture attest to the fact that Jesus Christ is our Sole Mediator with God the Father:
 - 1. In John 14:6, Jesus said He was the way, the truth, and the life, that no one came to the Father but by Him.
 - 2. Acts 4:12 declares that there is salvation in no other name other than in the name of Jesus Christ.
 - 3. 1 John 2:1 asserts that we have an Advocate with God the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.
 - 4. Romans 8:34 teaches that Christ Jesus at the right hand of God the Father makes intercession for us.
 - 5. Hebrews 7:25 claims Jesus is able to save completely them that draw near to God the Father through Him.
 - 6. 1 Timothy 2:5 claims that there is one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.

Lesson: *Contrary to the old covenant under the Mosaic Law and to Roman Catholicism, only the Substitutionary Atonement of the sinless Lord Jesus Christ qualifies Him to be our Mediator with God. Mary, the popes, the priests or the saints cannot qualify as sinless parties so as to be our Mediator like the sinless Jesus does.*

Application: *May we rejoice in our Sole and All-Sufficient Mediator with God, our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.*