

## The Christian.

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## EDITORIAL.

CHRIST'S LIKENESS AND ALSO HIS SUPERIORITY TO MOSES.

Acts iii. 22; Hebrews iii. 3.

Moses was a lawgiver—the greatest and best of human kind. His law immeasurably transcends in wisdom and righteousness that of any man or nation on earth, and the nearer the laws of a nation conform to Moses' law, allowing for peculiar circumstances, the wiser and mightier will that nation be. "The law is good if a man use it lawfully, knowing that it was not made for a righteous man but for the lawless and disobedient . . . for anything contrary to the doctrine of the glorious gospel of the blessed God." 1 Tim. i. 8-11. Christ is also a Lawgiver, worthy of more glory than Moses. Moses gave laws to one nation; Christ gives laws to all nations. Moses' law referred to time; Christ's law takes in time and eternity. Both these laws meet sinners, but in a way entirely different—the one to punish without mercy; the other to pardon and justify. Both display God's hatred to sin, and His justice in punishing sin. In Moses' law we see the sinner dying for his own sin; in Christ's law we see Himself bearing our sin in His own body on the tree. In the first law, God speaks by His prophet to the Jewish fathers in thunder tones, "Charge the people lest they break through unto the Lord to gaze and many of them perish." Ex. xix. 21. In the second He speaks by His Son, saying, "That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Luke xxiv. 47. Heb. i. 1. In the law of Moses, we hear a just and holy God threatening guilty men with death if they approached Him; but in the law of Jesus we behold God manifest in the flesh, dying for our sins, and feel as it were around our necks a brother's arms drawing us closer and still closer to His bleeding heart.

In 2 Cor. iii., Paul treats of Moses' law and of the law of Christ, and of the glory and influence of each. The first he calls the letter, the second the spirit—the first the ministration of condemnation, the second the ministration of the spirit. The first he says is done away, the second remains. The first was glorious. It shone among and above all the lights in the heathen world, revealing the purity and power of God. But when Jesus came He taught a morality still brighter and better than that of Moses, gradually eclipsing his glory. When He taught His disciples to love their enemies, and pray for their persecutors, He did this every day Himself. And when His enemies were without a sacrifice for sin, He offered Himself, and in death prayed for their pardon. His life was brighter than Moses' law, and His death a better sacrifice than all its offerings. As the sun swallows up the lesser lights of night, so He became the focal point of all that was glorious in the law, and exhibits all its brightness in "the glory that excelleth," for He "hath abolished death and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." 2 Tim. i. 10. "For that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. For if that which was done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious." 2 Cor. iii. 10, 11.

While the law of Moses gave a glorious exhibition of God's justice and purity and power, and taught man to do right to others, it failed to exhibit God's love to His enemies, or enjoin on man to do good to those who hated him, hence its glory was something to be done away. The gospel, which is the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, displays the justice and purity and power of God. It also

manifests His love to a world in enmity and arms against Himself—a love that would pour out the very treasures of heaven to enrich that world. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life." God is love, and the gospel is His last law, revealing Him as such, and carrying pardon to the chief of sinners through Jesus Christ. It has salvation for all, condemnation for none. Only those who determinately refuse the gospel are condemned. "For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world," and Christ sent not His gospel into all the world to condemn, but to save. It reveals a divine love that slays man's enmity and reconciles him to God.

Men received the law of Moses by learning it from each other. A man was to teach his neighbor and a father his children, saying, "Know the Lord." But the law of Christ is written on the believers' hearts. They all for themselves know the Lord from the least to the greatest, for He forgives their iniquity, and will remember their sin no more. So the Lord foretells by the mouth of Jeremiah, when contrasting the laws of Moses and Christ. Jeremiah xxxi. 31-34. When David, in the 110th Psalm, looks forward to Jesus' day and government, he says, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power," because all the people of God in the gospel day love Him and serve Him from choice. Just as the softened wax receives the impress of the stamp, the penitent believer's heart, melted by the influence of Jesus' dying love, receives the divine image which he is exhorted to keep full and bright until the resurrection day, when he shall appear in the complete image of the glorified Son of God. "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." Eph. iv. 30. As the stamp on the cold, hardened wax only grinds it to powder, so it must be with the sinner whom God visits, who has not his heart softened with the melting influence of the cross of Christ.

Paul says the letter (or Moses' law) killeth, but the spirit (or the gospel) giveth life; so as an index to each of these systems we notice the following facts:

1. When the law was given by Moses to Israel, *three thousand* of that nation were killed (Ex. xxxi. 28.) They had sinned in making and worshipping a golden calf, and for that sin *three thousand* died.

2. When the law of Christ was first given to the Jews *three thousand* of that nation were made alive to God. Acts ii. 41. It was a great sin to make and worship that idol, but it was vastly greater sin to reject and crucify the Son of God and insist on a murderer being granted unto them, but instead of any being put to death for that, *three thousand* enjoyed God's salvation and the promise and foretaste of eternal life. Jesus as a lawgiver is worthy of more glory than Moses.

Moses was a judge as well as a lawgiver, the supreme judge of Israel. Cases which the lower courts could not decide were brought to Moses, and his decision was final. Ex. xviii. Christ is also a Judge worthy of more glory than Moses. Moses judged one nation, Christ judges all nations. God has given Him authority to execute judgment because He is the Son of Man. "The Father judgeth no man but hath given all judgment unto the Son." John v. 22-27. How wise and good it is in God appointing Jesus to be our Judge.

1st. This Judge is divine and will guard the character and the government of God. As the Supreme Judge He will do right.

2nd. He is human, has loved our race so as to die for us and will most assuredly justify all who come to God by Him.

3rd. He knows all our weakness and all our temptations by experience, and can make such a wise allowance as no one else can do.

4th. He can justly estimate the sin that rejects all the salvation that He has purchased by His agonies on the cross.

5th. As the omniscient and omnipresent Judge before whose eyes all things are naked and opened, He will be fully prepared to deal justly with every man.

6th. Having told us in advance how our judgment will turn, the word that He has spoken will judge us in the last day.

Let each remember that from His sentence there will be no appeal. If He says to us, "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," no voice in the universe will object. But if we should hear Him say, "Depart, ye cursed," every place in God's universe but hell will roll back the awful echo. Oh! the thought that the final Judge is still a loving Saviour waiting to be gracious!!

But we must defer the conclusion of this subject till another issue, in which we purpose considering the likeness of the two courses in which Moses and Christ led their followers. D. C.

## Original Contributions.

## SOUNDNESS vs. FRUITFULNESS.

It often happens that there are trees in an orchard which bear no fruit. They have the same treatment as their neighbors, which are every year ready to break down with their rich burden. Moreover, in their outward appearance, they are just as promising, perhaps more so. They are clean and thrifty, and sound from the bark to the heart; there is not a blemish in them that the eye can detect. Yet they stand, year by year, drinking in the blessings of heaven, and devouring the soil of the farmer, without yielding any return. Such trees are not wanted in an orchard. They would do very well by the roadside as ornaments to the landscape, and shelter to the weary traveller. But when an orchard is planted the object is to obtain fruit, and the tree which meets that object best is most highly prized. It may not be so shapely and beautiful as some of its neighbors; it may even have great sore spots on it where the wood has begun to decay. Yet it is cherished for its fruit and valued because it meets the end for which it was planted.

There are many Christians just like those unfruitful trees. They have been carefully taught and trained. They have all the advantages of Christian institutions. They appear well to the eye of man. Their conduct is irreproachable. They are splendid *negative* Christians. They don't do any evil. And, as respects the gospel, they are sound to the core. They won't compromise the faith once delivered to the saints one iota. They are constantly on the alert to detect and denounce any apparent heresy in their brethren. And yet, when you come to look for fruit in their lives you find "nothing but leaves." You enquire in vain for anything they have ever done to make men better or happier. No naked have been clothed, or hungry fed, or sick visited by them. They have been satisfied to drink in the rich dews of grace, and to bask in the sunshine of God's love, and to profit by the active life of the church, without ever giving out to the world one blessing in return.

Now such men as this will do very well for the world. But they are out of place in the church. The church is God's orchard, planted with trees of righteousness, and God the husbandman looks to every tree for fruit. The church is God's chosen instrumentality for redeeming the world. And the active work which is necessary to relieve want, alleviate suffering, reach and rescue the sinner, and turn the wilderness of this sinful earth into a blooming garden of the Lord, is the fruit which