

The Christian.

ST. JOHN, N. B. SEPTEMBER, 1890.

EDITORIAL.

GOD SPEAKING TO MEN.

God who at many times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the Fathers by the Prophets, hath in these last times spoken unto us by His Son, etc. Heb. 1. 2.

This letter bears no name. It was written to Jewish Christians, who were sorely pressed by their unbelieving countrymen to turn from Christ and His religion to Moses. It bears visible marks of being the production of Paul, who, from his superior talent and clear knowledge of both Testaments, was eminently qualified to handle the important subjects discussed in the letter. Perhaps his name was withheld to gain a candid hearing from the nation, who were prejudiced against the apostle for espousing the cause of the Gentiles. He cheerfully awarded Moses his meed of praise, because he loved his brethren and respected the great law-giver, whom he held up as an eminent type of the Son of God. We are told that God has spoken at different times, by different speakers, and to different classes of hearers. To understand this subject we must keep before us the contrast between the parties, both speakers and those spoken to. Did God speak to the fathers (of the Jewish nation) by His Son? No; but by the prophets. Did He speak to us by the prophets? No; but spoke to us by His Son. Even the prophets did not know the things which God afterwards spoke by His Son. The prophets are put in contrast to the Son—the fathers in contrast to us.

Moses was the great prophet of Israel, and God spoke to them by him as follows: Of the twenty-seven chapters of Leviticus twenty-one begin with these words or their equivalent: "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel," etc., etc. The same is true of twelve of the first twenty chapters of Numbers. God spoke unto Moses and told him what to say to Israel. They were to hear Moses, and do all he commanded them, or suffer for disobedience. Other prophets spoke to the people, urging them to obey what God had commanded them by Moses. The prophets sometimes spoke of Him who was to come, charging those who should see Him to hear Him in all things.

But it may be asked, Did not God speak to us by the prophets, and are we not bound to do what they were commanded to do?

We will suppose a case. A wise and good man sets up his son in business in a distant city. He writes his son letters, which are published and read by many. In them he tells him what to do, what kind of goods to keep, and where to purchase them. We read those things though they are not written to us. He also charges his son to be always upright and truthful, to be obliging to all, etc. We feel that we are in duty bound to do so also. So we are to do some of the things he tells his son to do, and others we are not to do. He wrote to him, not to us. We find out from these letters something of the father's character, and are otherwise benefited.

God has spoken to the fathers. At one time he tells them all about a lamb which they were to kill and roast and eat while they sprinkled its blood on the door posts (Ex. xii.) At another he tells them to build an altar of shittim wood, so long and so broad (chap. xxvii.) Again he tells them all about a red heifer which they were to kill, etc., etc. They were to do these things, but we are not.

But Moses told them not to steal, not to kill, not to bear false witness, not to worship other gods. These things we are also forbidden to do. We are bound to do some things God told the fathers to do,

and equally bound not to do some other things which He told them to do, for he spoke to them, not to us.

There is an immense contrast between the parties spoken to as well as between the speakers. Between the FATHERS and us the former was confined to one nation and to past times; the latter embraces all nations till the end of time.

But how different was the effect of God's voice in the two cases. In one it proclaimed death; in the other life (II. Cor. iii.) When the law was first given to the fathers three thousand Israelites were killed (Ex. xxxii. 28). When the law of Christ was first given, three thousand of the same nation were made alive to God (Acts ii. 4). God spoke on each occasion to sinners—the peculiar crimes of the first were in making and worshipping a golden calf; those of the second were in rejecting and crucifying the Lord of Glory. But it was by His Son God spoke to them—the Son who came not to condemn but to save.

He wears no terror on His brow,
He speaks in love from Zion now.
It is the voice of Jesus' blood
Calling poor wanderers back to God.

God told the fathers to stone the Sabbath-breaker till he die—neither to pity nor to spare him. Would the dying sinner feel any emotion of love to God? Would it kindle one kind affection in the hearts of those who throw one stone after another at him until the vital spark went out? No. It was the awful purity and justice of God that was then on exhibition. From this turn to the Son when in the agony of the cross, forsaken by His own Father, yet pleading for the pardon of His mocking murderers, and what is the effect on these murderers and upon all who will consider? Here the divine character in all its justice, purity and love shines forth. Paul says, even in his day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart, but when the reading shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. Looking to Jesus and hearing Jesus speaking from the cross removes the veil and fills the heart with the love of God.

All Jesus' words and actions showed that His mission was to the world. As soon as He was publicly proclaimed by His Father as His only begotten Son, and the Holy Spirit in form of a dove rested upon Him and was in Him without measure, He manifested a love for the Gentiles as well as for the Jews. He praised the faith of a Centurian who asked Him to heal his servant by the word of His power. When a Gentile woman cried to the son of David for mercy on her daughter, he tried her faith, and with great delight healed her daughter. And when two of his disciples told him that certain Greeks wished to see him he joyfully described the results of his death and resurrection (John, 12. 20. 24.) His death would give life to many. Among Jesus' first discourses was the announcement that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him might not perish, but have everlasting life. Thus God manifested His love for the world and Jesus tells it. But as actions speak louder than words, God speaks to the world from the cross of Christ. He there tells how He loved us and on what grounds He pardons us. He hath set Jesus forth to declare how He saved believers who died before His coming, and also how he might be just and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus (Rom. iii. 25, 26).

After Jesus rose from the dead He sent His apostles into all the world. They were to leave out no part, they were to speak to every creature, every lost man and woman on earth. They were not only to speak but to preach to every creature. They were to preach the gospel to every creature not only to preach where every creature could hear them, but to preach the gospel to every creature, that is to tell every man and woman that Jesus

died for his or her sins according to the scriptures, that He was buried and rose again the third day, according to the scriptures. Here was God's speaker sending this message to every sinner in the world by His chosen apostles. But Jesus adds to this gospel, He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned. Thus God speaks to every creature by His Son. What a grave mistake to tell sinners to go to the prophet by whom God spoke in times past to the Fathers to find out his will respecting them, and how they are to be saved instead of pointing them to His Son who tells them what to do. The gospel is Christ's message to the lost, so full of the love and power of God that it affects the heart of every sinner who believes it with all his heart, and Jesus tells such how he can be saved as plainly as words can tell. When the believer makes a full surrender to Jesus by obeying Him, he receives the spirit of Christ bearing witness with His own spirit that he is born of God, filling him with joy and peace and the hope of glory.

To the Christian God speak by His Son most plainly and forcibly. What Jesus commands others to do He always did Himself, so that His sweet voice in every command is "come." This voice will never change until He shall say, "come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you, etc." Christ is their leader as well as their commander. It became Him who bringeth many sons into glory to make their leader perfect through sufferings, and the rejoicing confidence that "both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified are all of one" will nerve their arm for every conflict until they shall be more than conquerors through Him that loved them. Let each follower attentively hear the Son and pray and strive daily to be more like Him.

God will again speak by His Son to all that are in their graves, and they shall hear His voice and come forth, they that have done good to the resurrection of life and they that have done evil to the resurrection of condemnation. That voice cannot be resisted. The parties spoken to will have no voice. The good-doers will rise to live forever. The evil-doers will rise to be condemned forever. The Son of God will have no successor, His word will stand when heaven and earth pass away. Reader, what will be your last sentence—"come," or "depart?"

Original Contributions.

ATTENTION!!

Those who are coming to the Annual Meeting by train, to Bridgewater, can return for one-third fare. Pay full fare to Milton, which is \$4.55 from Annapolis, and you can return for one-third of this. This includes all who come by train. Those who are coming this way must let us know a day before, as the coachman, who lives in Liverpool, must know how many to provide for, in time to reach Bridgewater. Be sure and make a note of this. Because if we do not know how many are coming this way no provision will be made, as the coachman will not provide extra teams unless he knows there are persons to come. Unless you come by the regular coach line, you will not get the benefit of the reduced fare. It will cost \$4.00 extra to hire a team in Bridgewater to come to Milton. You see it will pay you well to let us know a day or two before you leave that you are coming by way of Bridgewater. You can send a postal card or telegram; a telegram one night before you leave will do.

You can come off to Milton the same night if you chose, getting to Milton at midnight. But if you would wait till morning, the coachman will wait and bring you off in the morning. If the evening