

IT IS SETTLED!

"Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13b)

By Howell Lasseter

Old Testament Introduction

Before we begin our travel through the Old Testament, we must first notice from the New Testament the importance of the things that have been written for us.

Members of the churches of Christ seek only what "is written" in God's divinely inspired Word, the Bible, for faith and practice in worship and service to God. Matthew 4:1-11 describes the devil's temptations of Christ. In the three temptations recorded, Jesus answered the devil with "It is written." That must be our answer today in all that we do spiritually in worship and service to God, and in our moral lives - our conduct toward each other: it is written.

What has been written for us? In our last lesson, we referred to Romans 1:16,17: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith" (Emphasis mine - HL). Do we not notice something different here? In our last lesson, it was said some believe that the "Old" Testament is still the law we are to obey. Think for just a moment, and answer this question: To whom was the Old Testament written? Was it to both the Jew and the Greek? All who know anything about the Old Testament law know it was written (given) to the Jews. The Greeks (Gentiles) were not given the Law of Moses. Romans 2:14: "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves" (Emphasis mine - HL). So, the Gentiles were not given the law of Moses. But, the gospel of Christ is for both the Jew and the Greek (Gentile). What has happened then, to make both Jew and Greek (Gentile) subject to God's law? Hebrews 10:9: "Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second." How do we know that the New Covenant has been established? Hebrews 9:15: "And for this cause he is the mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator" (Emphasis mine - HL). We ask then, which testament did Christ die to establish? Hebrews 10:4 states, "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins."

Friends, we today are not under the Old Testament law that relied on the blood of bulls and goats as a sin offering, but we are to obey the New Covenant (testament) that was dedicated with "the precious blood of Christ" (1 Peter 2:19; Colossians 2:14).

Yes, we are under a New Covenant today. All are to be subject to it, both Jew and Gentile. So says the Word of God; therefore, it is settled! Those who are not Jews would never have been subjects of the Old (first) Law, or Testament. And yet, we are to study and learn from it. We will begin such a study next week. (Romans 15:4)