

IT IS SETTLED!

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

By Howell Lasseter

The "better," or "perfect," sacrifice has been made by the Son of God. By His death, Jesus fulfilled the "Old Testament." Notice what Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 3:14: *"But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the **Old Testament**; which veil is done away in Christ"* (emphasis mine-HL). When Jesus died, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom (Mark 15:38). The "Old Testament," which included the "law of Moses," was fulfilled and taken out of the way.

When does a testament (or, "will," as we call it today) become of force? At the death of the one who made the will (the "testator"), the will is in force, and cannot be changed. Hebrews 9:15-17: *"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. For a testament is of force 'after' men are dead: otherwise, it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth"* (emphasis mine - HL). A question to consider: can we change legally the will of the one who has died? When one dies, if he leaves a legally-prepared will, it cannot be changed. The Holy Spirit, has revealed to man, through the Word, the last will and testament of the Lord Jesus. It is the *"New Testament in my blood,"* the Lord said (1 Corinthians 11:25), and through His testament we might be saved.

Since we have a perfect sacrifice - Jesus - we have a perfect law whereby we can be saved and by which to govern our lives, so that we might be like Him. James 1:25: *"But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being **not** a forgetful hearer, but a **doer** of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed"* (emphasis mine - HL). Through this perfect law, then, liberty comes. Liberty from what? Romans 6:1-8 teaches that, when we submit to baptism, we are in the likeness of His death, and are "freed" from sin. Therefore, the liberty is from the sentence of death which we were under while living in sin.

Having learned from God's Word that we have a perfect law whereby we can be freed from sin, let's each consider this: Often, one hears a preacher say that God has spoken to him; or, that God has laid on his heart a certain thing to tell. A study of the Bible teaches clearly that God has revealed to us in His written Word all He wants us to know. Galatians 1:6-9 pronounces a curse on any person or angel who teaches any other gospel than that which has been delivered. Also, one might hear a preacher say: "To receive salvation, pray this little prayer: Lord, I know I am a sinner, I receive you as my Savior, I am sorry for my sins; I give you my life," or similar wording. Most of the events recorded in the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John took place under the Old Testament law. Jesus lived under that law, and kept it perfectly. Jesus said plainly that, while on earth, He had power to forgive sins. However, there is not one example in the New Testament, after Jesus left this earth, of an unbaptized believer being saved by prayer. Remembering that Hebrews 9 taught us that one's testament (or will) comes of force after the testator's death, it is clear Acts 2 records the coming into force of the Lord's will!