

# CHRISTIANS ARE NOT GOVERNED BY THE OLD TESTAMENT

Lesson #4  
PART ONE

**Introduction:** A common misconception of the Bible is that God's will to mankind of every age is written on every page. If such were correct, then Paul's admonition to Timothy ("*rightly dividing the word of truth*" 2 Tim. 2:15) would be pointless. All of the Bible is God's Word but NOT ALL of God's Word is applicable to all men.

In Lesson #3 we showed three distinct, separate, identifiable dispensations of God's will to mankind since the world began – Patriarchal, Jewish and Christian. We demonstrated how the commands given to the patriarchs **before Moses** applied only to the person or family to whom given (e.g., Noah alone was commanded to build an ark to the saving of his house – no one else).

At the end of the patriarchal age (roughly 2,500 years, from Adam to Moses) God gave a special law to ONE NATION – Israel – whom He had especially "*chosen*" to be "*his people*." This "*law*" known as "*the covenant*," "*the law of the Lord*," or the "*law of Moses*," was not given to Israel's fathers (Deut. 5:3); neither was it binding upon the Gentiles (Rom. 2:14); but it was for those "*brought ... out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage*," i.e., Israel (Exod. 20:2; Deut. 5:1-4).

For the succeeding 1,500 years, God no longer dealt with people by individuals and families, but with the "*children of Israel*" AS A NATION. Then Jesus came, not to "*destroy*" the law, but to "*fulfill*" it (Matt. 5:17-18). This law could not "*pass*" until it was "*fulfilled*" (v. 18). Jesus finished the work He came to do (John 17:4). Since He came to fulfill the law, He FULFILLED it; and, being fulfilled as we shall learn in this lesson, **THE LAW WAS NAILED TO THE CROSS WITH JESUS CHRIST.**

Thus the way was opened for a NEW law, covenant or testament to come into force, as it did 53 days later, on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2). However, before turning our attention to the requirements of the NEW testament, we must first consider if the OLD testament continues to be in force in any sense whatever. Many honest people have been led to believe that the NEW testament was merely ADDED ON to the OLD testament; and that Christians are governed by BOTH testaments. Such an arrangement would lead to endless contradiction; for the two testaments do not require the same things. Once it is understood that the law given by God through Moses (i.e., the Old Testament) was given to the "*children of Israel*" EXCLUSIVELY, and that Christians are under a new law ENTIRELY, these otherwise necessary contradictions will disappear.

## I. LUKE 5:36-39 – Jesus illustrates a BASIC PRINCIPLE of His New Testament.

- A. He says, "*No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old*" (v. 36). He gives two reasons:
  1. The new will make a "*rent*" (i.e., tear) in the old.
  2. The piece that was taken out of the new does not agree with the old.
- B. "*And no man putteth new wine into old bottles* (i.e., wineskins)" (v. 37). He gives two reasons:
  1. The new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled.
  2. The bottles will perish.
- C. "*But new wine must be put into new bottles, and both are preserved*" (v. 38).

**NOTE:** Evidently this passage refers to the TWO TESTAMENTS, the NEW and the OLD. Jesus was trying to get His disciples to see that these two testaments were to be kept separate. Verse 39 must refer to the Jews, who had drunk deeply of the OLD Testament. They did not soon desire the new wine (i.e., the NEW testament) for they said the old wine (i.e., the Old Testament) is better. The record shows that fleshly Israel, as a whole, did not accept the New Testament; they said the Old Testament was better. Many still claim the same thing.

## II. ROMANS 7:1-7 – Paul shows a PARALLEL between HUMAN MARRIAGE and our being MARRIED SPIRITUALLY to the Law of Moses and/or Christ.

- A. The human law of marriage has dominion over a man for as long as he lives (v. 1).
  1. The woman who has an husband is bound by law to this husband while he lives (v. 2).
  2. But if the husband dies, she is LOOSED (i.e., freed or discharged) from the law of her husband (v. 2).
  3. If, while the husband lives, she is married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress (v. 3).

4. But, if the husband dies, she is FREE from the law, so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man (v. 3).
- B. In like manner, CHRISTIANS have been made “DEAD to the LAW” by the BODY OF CHRIST, that we should be married to another, even to HIM WHO IS RAISED FROM THE DEAD (i.e., Christ), that we should bring forth fruit (i.e., have children) unto God (v. 4).
  1. We have been “*delivered*” (i.e., discharged) from the law (v. 6).
  2. What law? The law that said, “*Thou shalt not covet...*” (v. 7).  
Read Exodus 20, and you will find it was the ten commandment’s law given on Mount Sinai that said, “*Thou shalt not covet...*” See especially verse 17. This is the law, then, that Romans 7:1-7 teaches we are both “*dead to*” and “*delivered from.*”

### III. 2 CORINTHIANS 3 – Paul contrasts the LIBERTY we have IN CHRIST with what went before.

- A. After asking the Christians at Corinth if he and his fellowworkers needed epistles of commendation either to or from them, he compliments them by saying, “*Ye are our epistle* (i.e., letter of recommendation) *written in our hearts, known and read of all men*” (vs. 1-2).
  1. Being “*the epistle of Christ,*” ministered by Paul and Timothy, Paul shows the Corinthians as “*written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart.*”
    - a. To say the Corinthians were “*written ... with the Spirit*” proves their liberty from the law on the tables of stone. Verse 17 declares, “*Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.*”
    - b. To say the Corinthians were “*written ... not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart,*” differentiates them from the children of Israel, who, when Moses finished communing with God upon mount Sinai, were given by God through Moses and two tables of testimony, tables of stone written with the finger of God (Exod. 31:18).
  2. Although the Corinthian Christians were not written in tables of stone, but in the heart, they did not count their sufficiency as of themselves, but as of God.
    1. Paul said, “*And such trust have we through Christ to Godward*” (v. 4).
    2. “*...our sufficiency is of God*” (v. 5).
- C. Paul said that God “*...hath made us able ministers of the New Testament*” (v. 6).
  1. This ministry was “*not of the letter*” (i.e., not of the law from Sinai) ... “*for the letter killeth*” (v. 6).
  2. Rather this ministry was “*of the Spirit*” (i.e., of the New Testament) ... “*the spirit giveth life*” (v. 6).
  3. Paul calls the “*letter (that) killeth*” (v. 6) “*the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones*” (v. 7).
  4. He says what was “*written and engraven in stones*” ... “*was glorious.*”
    - a. In fact, it was SO glorious “*that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance*” (v. 7; cf. Exod. 34:29-35).
    - b. This “*glory*” (i.e., glory “*written and engraven in stones*”) was to be “*done away*” (v. 7).
  5. The “*ministration of the spirit,*” Paul teaches, is “*rather glorious*” (i.e., more glorious), (v. 8), than what was only “*glorious,*” i.e., what was “*written and engraven in stones.*”
  6. What he has already styled as the “*letter*” that “*killeth,*” and the “*ministration of death,*” Paul next refers to as the “*ministration of condemnation*” (v. 9).
    - a. Thus what was “*written and engraven in stones,*” the ten commandment law, was the “*ministration of condemnation.*”
    - b. The “*ministration of condemnation*” is “*glory*” (v. 9).
    - c. But the “*ministration of righteousness*” (or what he has just called the “*New Testament,*” “*the spirit,*” and “*the ministration of the spirit*”) “*much more doth ... exceed in glory*” (v. 9).
  7. Even that which was made “*glorious,*” thus had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth (v. 10).

NOTE: For instance, the moon, at night, is glorious indeed; but, when morning comes, and the sun rises, the glory of the moonlight is lost by reason of the excelling glory of the sunlight. Even so the Old Testament law had glory until the much more excellent glory of the New Testament came into being.

8. Speaking of what was “*glorious*” (i.e., what was “*written and engraven in stones*” – see verse 7 again) as having been “*done away,*” Paul says what “*remaineth*” (i.e., the NEW

- Testament) is *“much more ... glorious”* (v. 11).
9. Paul further says that which came by Moses is *“abolished”* (v. 13). Cf. Exodus 34:29-35.
  10. He shows that the *“reading of the Old Testament”* constitutes a *“vail”* upon the heart of the children of Israel (vs. 14-15).
    - a. Thus their minds are *“blinded”* (v. 14).
    - b. The *“reading of the Old Testament”* continues as a *“vail”* upon Israel’s heart.
    - c. However, this vail (i.e., the reading of the Old Testament) is *“done away”* in Christ.
    - d. Nevertheless, when Israel’s heart *“shall turn to the Lord, the vail* (i.e., the reading of the Old Testament) *shall be taken away”* (v. 16).

**CONCLUSION:** As long as Israel continues to follow the reading of the Old Testament, her heart has not yet *“turned to the Lord.”* And what is true of Israel, is true of ALL; for there is no respect of persons with God (Rom. 2:11).

**FROM OUR STUDY OF 2 CORINTHIANS 3,** what have we learned? **(1)** That a difference exists between God’s writing under the NEW Testament (*“in our hearts”*) and what it was under the OLD Testament (*“written and engraven in stones”*). **(2)** Even so, our sufficiency is not of ourselves, but of God. **(3)** That we are not of the OLD Testament (i.e., not of the *“letter”* that *“killeth,”* the *“ministration of death,”* the *“ministration of condemnation”*). **(4)** That the old testament *“was to be done away”* (v. 7), *“is done away”* (v. 11), *“is abolished”* (v. 13). **(5)** That we are rather, ministers *“of the New Testament”* (v. 6), which is *“rather glorious”* (v. 8), *“much more ... exceeds in glory”* (v. 9), has a *“glory that excelleth”* (v. 10), is *“much more ... glorious”* (v. 11), and *“remaineth”* (v. 11). **(6)** That as long as the heart is blind, the reading of the Old Testament, continues, which constitutes a *“vail”* upon the heart. **(7)** Nevertheless, when the heart turns to the Lord, it will no longer follow the reading of the Old Testament, which vail shall be taken away. **(8)** Instead, as ministers *“of the spirit”* (v. 6), we shall realize that where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, i.e., freedom from Old Testament. See verse 17. We are thus free to be changed into the image of the glory of the Lord, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord (v. 18). The implication seems clear that if the Old Testament was yet binding, we should not be thus free.

#### IV. GALATIANS, Chapter 4 though 6.

- A. An *“heir,”* while yet a child, is treated like a servant (4:1). Under tutors and governors (v. 2).
- B. God’s *“children”* (Israel) were *“in bondage ... under the law”* of the Old Testament (vs. 3-5).
  1. Christ, born under the law, redeemed them that were under the law (vs. 4-5).
  2. A thing *“redeemed”* is no longer bound.
- C. Because those who were under the law have been redeemed; received the *“adoption of sons”* (v. 5).
  1. Because we are *“sons,”* God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts (v. 6).
  2. Therefore, we are no more to be treated as a servant, but as a son (v. 7).
  3. If a son, then an heir of God through Christ (v. 7).
- D. Those who try to keep the law of Moses and to be Christians are said to *“turn ... again to the weak and beggarly elements”* (v. 9).
  1. They desire to be in bondage again (v. 9).
  2. They *“observe days, and months, and times, and years”* (v. 10).
  3. Paul says he is *“afraid”* of such, lest he had bestowed upon them labour *“in vain”* (v. 11).
- E. Those who desire to be under the law, Paul invites to hear the law, re: Abraham’s sons (vs. 21-22).
  1. One son was by a bondmaid – Hagar (v. 22; cf. Gen. 16:15).
  2. Other son was by a free woman – Sarah (v. 22; cf. Gen. 21:2).
  3. The son of the bondwoman was born *“after the flesh”* (v. 23).
  4. The son of the free woman was *“by promise”* (v. 23).
  5. This is an allegory of the two covenants or testaments (v. 24).
    - a. The covenant from mount Sinai *“gendereth to bondage.”* Defined as *“Jerusalem”* that then was, when Paul was writing, (i.e., the Jewish nation), she was *“in bondage”* with her children (v. 25) – in bondage to the law given from mount Sinai.
    - b. But *“Jerusalem which is above”* is free (v. 26).

**NOTE:** This evidently refers to what Hebrews 12:22 calls *“the heavenly Jerusalem,”* which is the church (v. 23). This second *“Jerusalem”* is the *“mother”* of Christians. Being *“free,”* she is like Sarah, the *“free woman.”* Thus, like Isaac, we Christians are *“children of promise”* (v. 28), not of bondage.

6. The scripture says, *“cast out the bondwoman* (i.e. the law from mount Sinai) *and her son* (i.e., Israel): *for the son of the bondwoman* (Israel) *shall not be heir with the son of the*

- freewoman* (i.e., Christians)" (v. 30).
7. We (Christians) are NOT children of the bondwoman (the law from mount Sinai), but of the free (the church) (v. 31).
- F. Christians, therefore, should stand fast in their liberty, keeping FREE from the yoke of bondage, i.e., the law from mount Sinai (Chapter 5:1).
1. If we keep PART of the law (e.g., circumcision), we are bound to keep it all (vs. 2-3).
  2. If we try to be justified by the law, we are "*fallen from grace*" (v. 4).
  3. In Christ, keeping the law (from Sinai) or not keeping it (e.g., circumcision) is nothing; what counts is faith (in Christ) working by love (v. 6).
  4. Paul argues that he no longer preached circumcision, i.e., the law of Moses; for, had he done so, the Jews should not have persecuted him (v. 11).
  5. The law from Sinai was fulfilled in one word: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself (v. 14).
  6. If we are led by the Spirit, we are "*not under the law*" (v. 18).
    - a. The "*fruit*" of the Spirit is defined as "*love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance*" (vs. 22-23).
    - b. Against such there is no law (v. 23).
- G. In Christ, it is neither circumcision nor uncircumcision that avails, but "*a new creature*" (6:15).
1. Even those compelling circumcision were not keeping the law (v. 13).
  2. Rather they were merely glorying in the flesh (vs. 12-13).
  3. Paul condemns glorying, save in the cross of Christ (v. 14).

## V. EPHESIANS 2:11-19.

- A. Gentiles once were "*aliens*" from the "*commonwealth of Israel*" (v. 12).
- B. Gentiles were "*strangers*" from the "*covenants of promise*" (v. 12).
- C. Gentiles were "*afar off*" – now "*made nigh*" by the blood of Christ (v. 13).
- D. Christ is "*peace*" between Jews and Gentiles (v. 14).
  1. He made both Jews and Gentiles ONE (v. 14).
  2. He broke down the "*middle wall*" of partition (v. 14).
    - a. "*Middle wall*" was the "*law of commandments contained in ordinances*" (v. 15).
    - b. The law was "*abolished*" (v. 15).
  3. Christ's reason for breaking down and abolishing the law was to make in Himself of Jew and Gentile "*one new man*" – so making peace (v. 15).
  4. Both Jew and Gentile were reconciled unto God "*in one body*" (v. 16; cf. Eph. 1:22-23).
  5. The "*enmity*," (i.e., the law, was "*slain*" by the cross (v. 16).
  6. Peace was preached to Gentiles as well as Jews (v. 17).
  7. Through Christ, both Jew and Gentile have access to God (v. 18).
  8. Now, therefore, Jews and Gentiles are no more strangers and foreigners to each other, but "*fellow-citizens*" (v. 19).

NOTE: If the law, which had been a "*middle wall of partition*" between Jews and Gentiles, had not been "*broken down*," "*abolished*," and "*slain*" (vs. 14-16), this new arrangement of fellow-citizenship would not be possible. The middle wall (or law) had to go first; fellow-citizenship followed as a result.

## VI. COLOSSIANS 2:14-17.

- A. The "*handwriting of ordinances*," i.e., "*the law of commandments contained in ordinances*" (cf. Eph. 2:15).
  1. Blotted out (v. 14); Taken out of the way (v. 14).
  2. Nailed to the cross (v. 14).
- B. Therefore, Christians are not to be judged: In meat or drink (v. 16). Or in respect of a holy day, a new moon, or of the sabbath (v. 16).
- C. Foregoing things are called "*a shadow*" of things to come; but "*the body*" is Christ (v. 17).

NOTE: Christ, of course, has already "*come*" one time, and will be coming again. These ordinances of the law were blotted out, taken out of the way and nailed to the cross. They are gone!

1. To what nation of people was the ten commandment law given? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What is the **central idea** taught by Jesus in Luke 5 concerning the new and old garments and the new wine?

3. Is it all right, according to Romans 7, for a woman to be married to another man, while her first husband is still alive?

4. Are Christians "*married*" to Christ? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Are Christians married to "*the law*" at the same time they are married to Christ? \_\_\_\_\_

6. If not, then what does Romans 7:4 and 6 say is their relationship to the law? \_\_\_\_\_

7. What law? \_\_\_\_\_

8. Is the "*epistle of Christ*" written on stone or on the heart? \_\_\_\_\_

9. What was the law given by God through Moses written on? \_\_\_\_\_

10. Are Christians ministers of the OLD testament, the NEW testament, or BOTH? \_\_\_\_\_

11. What was the "*letter*" that "*killeth*"? \_\_\_\_\_

12. What was "glorious"? \_\_\_\_\_

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13. What was "much more ... glorious"? \_\_\_\_\_

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14. In 2 Corinthians 3 Paul said something was "done away" and "abolished." What was it?

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15. According to 2 Corinthians 3:11 he said something "remaineth." What is it? \_\_\_\_\_

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16. In Galatians 4, Paul describes those who try to keep the law of Moses and be Christians also. What does he say of them?

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17. In the allegory in this chapter, to what is Hagar, the "bondwoman," compared? \_\_\_\_\_

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18. Are Christians children of the "bondwoman" or of the "free woman"? \_\_\_\_\_

19. In Ephesians 3 what does Paul say has happened to "the law of commandments"? \_\_\_\_\_

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20. Are Christians to be judged as to what meat we eat? \_\_\_\_\_

As to whether we keep the sabbath? \_\_\_\_\_

Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

# Basic Bible Course

by Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

Lesson

# #4

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