

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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DEAD TO THE LAW

The inspired apostle Paul reminded Jewish Christians at Rome that they had "become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that (they) should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead." (Rom. 7:4.) He makes it clear as to what "law" he refers to when in verse seven he says, "... I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." Just what is the significance of this statement, "Dead to the law"?

The Law Given To Jews

In Deuteronomy 5:2-f we read, "The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day." We can read of that incident in such passages as Exodus 19-ff. The only way for a Gentile ever to have been under (alive to) the law of Moses was by proselyting, or becoming of "the circumcision."

The Purpose of That Law

In Galatians 3:19 we read that the law "was added because of transgression," and in verse twenty-four that it was to serve as a "schoolmaster to bring us (the Jews) unto Christ, that (they) might be justified by faith." These passages, as well as others, clearly show that the law of Moses was intended to be a temporary system of instructions for the Jews.

Jesus Was Born Under the Law

"But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." (Gal. 4:4,5.) Although there were many attempts to prove Jesus guilty of violating the law, none were successful. He alone kept that law perfectly. In fact, He himself said that he came to "fulfill" the law. (Matt. 5:17-f.) While some would accuse Him of "destroying" the law, He assured them that He had not, and that nothing would pass from the law "till all be fulfilled."

The Duration of the Law

This is implied in two of the passages given to show the purpose of the law; namely, "till the seed should come," which "Seed" was the Christ, according to verse sixteen, and "... the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ" (Gal. 3:19,24.) But note the statement of our theme: Paul said the Jews had become "dead to the law." Death basically means a "separation." They had become separated from the law, that they might be married to

Christ. Now note that he says this was accomplished "by (or through - ASV) the body of Christ." As we have noted, Jesus said He came to "fulfill" the law, and this He did. (See John 17:4.) When He had fulfilled the law, He "took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." (Col. 2:14.) Thus, by His death Jesus brought the law of Moses to an end. In this He was "blotting out the handwriting of ordinances which was against us, which was contrary to us," or He was breaking down "the middle wall" which stood between Jew and Gentile. The apostle reminded the Ephesians that in this He made it possible to "reconcile both (Jew and Gentile) unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby." (Eph. 2:16.)

Law of Moses No Longer Binding

As we have noted, the law was never binding upon the Gentiles, and the Jews became "dead" to it by the death of Christ; therefore, that law, having served its purpose, is not binding upon anyone now! In fact, the Galatian Christians, who were being misled by Judaizing teachers, were told that "Christ shall profit you nothing," if they attempted to be justified by the law; they had "fallen from grace." (Gal. 5:1-4.) The Colossians were reminded that they were not to be judged by stipulations of the law, such as "meat, or drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon or of the sabbath days." (Col. 2:16.)

The law of Moses is no more binding on anyone today than is God's law of marriage upon one whose companion is dead. (Text.) We, therefore, cannot justify anything in religion today by

that law, but must rather turn to the law of Christ for all things. (Col. 3:17.)

Conclusion

No one can serve God today while appealing to the law of Moses for their authority for such, whether it be Sabbath keeping, burning of incense or mechanical music in worship. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.' (Heb. 1:1-2a.) "Then," someone asks, "does the Old Testament serve no good purpose today?" Yes. We are reminded that "whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning." (Rom. 15:4.) We see a good illustration of this in First Corinthians 10:1-12, wherein we are reminded that the same thing that happened to God's people back in the wilderness might very well happen to us! And so we can gain many good things from the Old Testament now; but for authority for our teaching and practice in religion today we must appeal to the law of Christ. We are (or should be) "married to Christ."

- Charles G. Maples, Sr.

Thanksgiving Thoughts

This month we will all pause and observe a day our nation sets aside as a holiday. It is "Thanksgiving Day." Hopefully all Americans will pause to remember just how grateful they should be for the privileges and blessings afforded us. It is doubtful that

will happen because of the decided turn toward secular humanism our government and society has taken.

It hasn't always been that way. In 1863, a noble statesman from Kentucky wrote the following Thanksgiving Proclamation. Abraham Lincoln wrote:

“It is the duty of nations as well as of man to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God; to confess their sins and transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon; and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations are blessed whose God is the Lord.”

“We know that by His divine law, nations, like individuals, are subjected to punishments and chastisements in this world. May we not justly fear that the awful calamity of civil war which now desolates the land may be a punishment inflicted upon us for our presumptuous sins, to the needful end of our national reformation as a whole people?”

“We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven; we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; we have grown in numbers, wealth and power as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and

multiplied and enriched and strengthened us, and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us.”

“It has seemed to me fit and proper that God should be solemnly, reverently and gratefully acknowledged, as with one heart and one voice, by the whole American people. I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November, a day of Thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father Who dwelleth in the heavens.” — A. Lincoln, 1863

What a pity that men who guide our government and men who greatly influence the morality of our society today do not have the sentiments expressed by one of the greatest leaders this nation ever produced.

Let us be thankful every day, and especially this season of the year. When we gather as families on Thanksgiving Day, let us be truly thankful for the benevolence God has lavishly poured out on us.

— Dudley Ross Spears

Hold Fast Your Integrity

If somebody took away everything you have would you be left with anything? You might think this is a ridiculous question, but really it's not. The Bible contains the story of a rich man named Job whom God had also blessed with a large and loving family. In the blink of an eye Satan killed all ten of Job's children, destroyed all his wealth, and then attacked his body with painful boils. It would appear that Satan had taken everything away from Job, and yet when Job's wife spoke to him she asked, "Do you still hold fast your integrity?"

After all that Satan had done, there was one thing he could not take; Job's trust and faith in God. Job had integrity because his faith was not based upon the stuff he had. He didn't serve God simply for what he hoped to gain from it. His devotion to God came from within. It was the very essence of who he was.

Job's integrity was the one thing Satan really wanted, but Job refused to give it up. Job held fast to the one thing that truly matters in this life. If somebody took away everything you have would you be left with anything?

- Simon Harris

Many Members, One Body

“But now indeed there are many members, yet one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I have no need of you’; nor again the head to the feet, ‘I have no need of you.’ No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary.”
(1 Cor. 12:20-22)

One day it occurred to the members of the body that they were doing all the work and that the belly was having all the food. So they held a meeting and after a long discussion decided to strike work until the belly consented to take its proper share of the work. So for a day or two the hands refused to take the food, the mouth refused to receive it, and the teeth had no work to do. But after a day or two, members began to find that they themselves were not in very active condition. The hands could hardly move, the mouth was all parched and dry, while the legs were unable to support the rest. Thus, they found that even the belly, in its dull quiet way, was doing necessary work for the body, and that all must work together or the body would go to pieces. (From Aesop)

- > "Sin's Arithmetic: Sin adds to your troubles, subtracts from your energy, multiplies your difficulties, and divides your interest in God's work! It also pays wages: death!"
 - > "God made you as you are in order to use you as He planned!"
 - > "It is far better to forgive and forget than to resent and remember!"
 - > "Those who received Jesus gladly were soft-hearted, not hard-headed!"
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THIS WEEK'S LESSONS: Sunday morning: "*Why Do We ...? Why Don't We ...?*" (Text: 1 Pet. 3:15); Sunday evening: "*What Is That In Your Hand?*" (Exod. 4:1-5).

GOSPEL MEETING 2016: Our Gospel Meeting is scheduled for July 24-29, with Josh Thornhill, of Wildersville, preaching.