

## WHAT I HAVE WRITTEN I HAVE WRITTEN

"Pilate answered, What I have written I have written." (Jno. 19:22)

After Jesus had been betrayed by Judas Iscariot and apprehended by the angry mob, He was carried through five distinct trials. First, he was brought before Annas, the ex-high priest, who was father-in-law to Caiaphas, the high priest at the time; then He was brought to trial before Caiaphas; after that he was brought before Pilate's court; then before Herod; and last before Pilate again. When Jesus stood before Pilate the last time this Roman governor consented to the clamour of the mob that Jesus be crucified. Luke said, "And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required." (Luke 23:24) John further said, "And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin. Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews. Pilate answered, What I have written I have written." (John 19:19-22).

Pilate was the man in authority. He could have changed the ~~inscripti~~ inscription if he had so desired. However, when he gave the final decision it could not be changed.

This New Testament account of events connected with the great occasion of the crucifixion of Jesus, is suggestive of our lesson at this time. Have you thought about the fact that God has also written? He has written words of authority and power. Like ~~Luk~~ Pilate, "What He has written He has written." God's word has always been authoritative. Concerning the law which God gave to Israel, He said, "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you." (Deut. 4:2). In the closing words of the last chapter of the Bible, the Lord through John said, "If any man shall add unto these

things, God shall add unto him the plaques that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the ~~book of life~~ holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." (Revelation 22:18-19).

Like Pilate, God has the authority to change what He has written if He desires to do so. But when He gives a law that becomes final, and no man can change it. Only God can alter it.

### WHAT GOD HAS WRITTEN

The law of Moses was the first thing that we have a record of which God wrote. When God summoned Moses to the top of Mount Sinai to receive the Decalogue, Jehovah said to Moses, "Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that thou mayest teach them!" (Exodus 24:12). Reading from Exodus again, we find these words, "And he gave unto Moses, when he made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God." (Exodus 31:18) "And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables." (Exodus 32:16). We are told very clearly what was written on the tables of stone. "And he was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments." (Exodus 34:28). This law was called "the law of Moses" and "the law of the Lord" interchangeably. (Read Nehemiah 8:1,8 and Luke 2:22-24). It was called "the law of the Lord" because it was given by the Lord, and it was ~~given~~ called "the law of Moses" because God gave it through Moses as a mediator.

This law was authoritative. He who destroyed it was punished because it was God's law. At this point Paul said, "Every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward." (Hebrews 2:2) Again

Paul said, "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses." (Hebrews 10:28).

Christ recognized the authority of God's written word. In the hour of His temptation He relied upon its power to overcome the tempter. He met each assault of the devil with "It is written." Hence following the temptation it is said, "Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold angels came and ministered unto him." (Matthew 4:11). Here then is a demonstration of the fact that "The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword." (Hebrews 4:12).

The next thing we read about in the Bible which God has written is on the handwriting which appeared on the wall in the palace of Belshazzar in Babylon. When Nebuchadnezzar had been removed from the kingdom and Belshazzar reigned in his stead, it seemed that he was more wicked than his father. He made a great feast to a thousand of his lords. He commanded that the sacred vessels of gold, confiscated from the temple in Jerusalem, be brought in and they drank their wine from these holy vessels. In the midst of this reveling there came out of the dark sleeve of the night the finger of a man's hand that wrote upon the palace wall the sentence of doom for Belshazzar and his kingdom. "And this is the writing that was written, MENE, MENE, ~~ME~~ TEKEL, UPHARSIN. This is the interpretation of the thing: MENE;--God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. TEKEL;---Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. PERES;----Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians (Daniel 5:25+28).

The same night Darius, the king of the Medes, came down from the North and Belshazzar was slain and Babylon was delivered into the hands of the Medes and Persians, and the great Medo-Persian Empire was divided into 127 provinces. WHY? Because God's work was authoritative. "What He had written He had written," and it had come to pass.

GOD HAD THE AUTHORITY TO CHANGE HIS LAW

Just as Pilate could have changed the inscription which he wrote upon the cross of Jesus, even God had the authority and prerogative to change His writing when he saw fit. This He has done, for He did not design the law of Moses to endure forever. It was only given for a limited time; it was given only to be a type of that which was to come later. God through Jeremiah said to Israel, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which ~~they~~ my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, said the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it upon their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (Jeremiah 31:31-34).

The writer of the Hebrew letter quotes this prophecy from Jeremiah, and then says, "In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away." (Hebrews 8:13). In the same epistle the writer further says, "He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." (Hebrews 10:9-10) In the sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am come not to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." (Mt. 5:17-18). Hence the law of Moses was to remain until it was fulfilled, or until it had accomplished its purpose. The law was

only a shadow or type of that which was to be given later. Paul said, "For the law having a shadow of good things to come." (Hebrews 10:1) Thus fulfilling its purpose it was taken away. Paul said to the Colossians, "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." (Col. 2:14). Hence Paul told the Roman Christians, "For ye are not under the law, but under grace." (Romans 6:14) In John 1:17, we read "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Therefore we easily conclude that we are under the law of Moses today, but under the grace that we find through Jesus Christ.

Why, then, was the law given? Paul asks and answers that very question in these words, "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgression, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hands of a mediator." (Gal. 3:19) Continuing, the apostle further says, "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster." (Gal. 3:23-24) This is too clear for any honest heart to misunderstand. Therefore, we conclude that we today are not to keep the Sabbath, offer sacrifices, or keep the Jewish feasts and ordinances God required of the Jews under the law of Moses. We have a new law, a new Law Giver, a new Mediator, and a new covenant "established upon better promises."

#### GOD SPEAKE TO US TODAY THROUGH HIS SON

Paul said, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son." (Heb. 1:1-2) While Jesus was with His apostles training them concerning those things of His coming kingdom, He said to them, "The word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me." (John 14:24) Having schooled the apostles for over three years in these words of His Father, He then went back to the Father in heaven, and upon the first Pentecost immediately following His resurrection, He sent the Holy Spirit upon the apostles to lead them in the revelation of the New Covenant. While with them he made to them this promise, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth." (John 16:13) Thus after the Holy Spirit had come,

Paul could say, "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual." (Cor. 2:12-13) Hence we may be assured that the New Testament contains the revelation of the Father, that which the Lord has written through the inspired apostles.

### MAN ALSO WRITES

Every man, good or bad, is writing in a book, his own book of life. Each day that we live we are writing a page in this book. When we find a page wrongly written we can go back and change it. As long as we have life and penitence we can make this change, but when life is ended the word "finished" is written across the last page. At the judgment of God in the last day, what we have written will be compared with what God has written. John was given a vision of the great day of judgment. Of this occasion he said, "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." (Rev. 20:12) Jesus declared that we shall be judged by His Word in the last day. (John 12:48) So in the day of judgment "the books" shall be opened, that is the Old and New Testaments. Those who lived under the Old Covenant will be judged by the Old Testament, and those who have lived under the New Covenant will be judged by the New Testament. But "the book of life" shall be opened. If our names are enrolled in it, we shall be permitted to enter into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. But John further said, "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." (Rev. 20:15).

Let us be cautious what we write, knowing that when we come to the end of life's journey, we shall say with Pilate, "What I have written I have written."