

The Law in Galatians



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THE LAW OF CEREMONIES

Which Law was Nailed to the Cross?



The Law in the Book of Galatians

**Is it the Moral Law, the Ten Commandments,
or does it refer to that system of laws,
uniquely Jewish, referred to as
the Law of Ceremonies or
the Mosaic Law?**

By G. I. Butler

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The question before us is one of interpretation. In the brief letter of the apostle Paul to the Galatian church, we have at the commencement some historical facts given concerning himself and his apostleship, and an argument concerning "the law," and in the latter part, practical instruction concerning various Christian duties. Running all through the epistle are expressions in which the apostle finds fault with them for their course of conduct after he left them, caused by Jewish teachers who had led them astray, so they had really taken positions contrary to the gospel of Christ. In these censures the apostle makes constant reference to some law concerning which the Galatians had taken a wrong position. As a people, we believe there are two laws, or systems of law: (1.) The moral law and the principles of moral duty which grow out of it; (2.) The ceremonial law, embracing the typical remedial system pointing forward to Christ, and the civil laws growing out of the special relation existing between God and the Jewish people to the cross. We hold the former to be ever binding upon man, while the latter passed away.

Our inquiry is now as to which of these laws the apostle has principally in view in the letter to the Galatians. The question is an important one, and is therefore well worthy of consideration. Truth, for its own sake, is important concerning the meaning and application of any scripture; and the truth concerning the law in Galatians is especially so, because the apostle's references to the law in this letter are used by our opponents as a strong support to their Antinomian doctrines. It is evident that the position which is a truthful exposition of the apostle's argument is in every way preferable, and will be easier to defend than one which is erroneous. It will enable us to meet our opponents more successfully, and thus the great system of truth which we hold will be strengthened. All our people ought to greatly desire we come to a unity of position on this subject.

We hold the letter to the Galatians was written to meet one of the greatest difficulties with which the gospel had to contend in the apostle's days. This difficulty was the opposition of Judaizing teachers and disciples who still taught the obligation of the ceremonial law, and of circumcision and those laws connected with it which served to separate Jews and Gentiles. These confused the minds of the disciples, and obscured the great principles of the gospel, virtually destroying it. We find constant reference to the work of this class of teachers in Paul's writings and in the book of Acts, as we shall see. Indeed, it may well be doubted whether a large portion of the early church who were Jews before conversion ever fully realized the scope and extent of the gospel in setting aside those ceremonial laws, uniquely Jewish. They clung to them, and were zealous for them long after they were abolished at the cross. To Paul we are in debt, through the blessing of God, for the only full explanation of the proper relation of these laws to the plan of salva-

tion and the gospel; and he himself was looked upon with great suspicion by many of the Hebrew converts, because he plainly taught the cancellation of many things which they continued to hold sacred.

Nor is this to be wondered at when we take a view of the past history of that people, and the special influences which had been at work for fifteen centuries. We cannot well realize the peculiar circumstances surrounding the early church, and the special influences with which they had to contend, without looking at the causes which led to them. We will briefly notice these. Because the mass of mankind had gone into idolatry, and utterly apostatized from God, the Lord chose Abraham and his descendants to be His peculiar people. They were such till the cross. He gave them the rite of circumcision—a circle cut in the flesh—as a sign of their separation from the rest of the human family. In the process of time, after special experiences and training, He gave them a land all their own, and built about them, by special laws, ordinances, rites, and services; a wall of separation, which made them a distinct people even to the present day. The sign of circumcision to the Jew implied and embraced all this. It was the one rite which separated the Jews from the Gentile world. This is shown by the fact that any Gentile could become a proselyte, and be entitled to all the privileges of the nation, by being circumcised and uniting with them. Without this, in the old economy no man could come under the provisions of salvation; with it, all the hopes, promises, covenants, laws, light, and privileges of the Israelite were his. Hence circumcision implies all those privileges, especially Jewish. The term was used in this well-understood sense. The circumcised were God's peculiar people. The uncircumcised were all the rest of the world. Hence for a man to drop circumcision was really to cast aside all the peculiar blessings and privileges of the Jews, and to lower himself to a level with the rest of the world he so much despised; while to maintain it, was to maintain all his supposed superiority. Hence we see what was involved in the controversies over circumcision in the early gospel church.

Should we inquire into the reasons why God thus separated the descendants of Abraham from the rest of the world, as the rite of circumcision implied—we may readily discover them. Every effort of the Almighty to maintain a pure people in the earth had in length of time seemed to fail. At the flood all had gone astray save Noah and his family, and the destruction of the mass of the race thus became necessary in order to start anew. Another great defection made the destruction of the cities of the plain necessary. Scarcely any but Abraham remained true to their allegiance in his time. So God now adopts a more effective method. He takes the painful rite of circumcision as a separating sign, and builds a wall around His people, protecting them in a measure from the inundation of evil coming from the outer heathen world, thus pre-

serving a seed, a church, till Messiah should come and inaugurate a more effective system with which to bless mankind. The object was noble, and such as was worthy of a wise, benevolent Creator.

This people, thus protected, were made the recipients of numberless blessings. God entrusted to them His holy law, with His holy Sabbath,—inestimable blessings—which gave them an infinitely clearer view of moral duty than was possessed by the most enlightened nations around them. He made rich provisions for their temporal good in the fertile country bestowed upon them. Had they been obedient, He would have made them the highest of the nations. He gave them rich promises, instructed them by holy prophets, and caused the Messiah to be made manifest through their race. They were indeed a most favored nation.

But these great blessings, which should have made Israel a humble, grateful people, full of love to God, they perverted, and became proud, boastful, haughty, stiff-necked, and selfish, looking down upon all others, and feeling they were the only ones God regarded. They filled up the measure of their iniquity by crucifying their long-promised Messiah. So selfish were they that they could not appreciate the spirit of love to all, which so overflowed from His precious life.

Then came the cross, when all their special privileges, with circumcision as their representative and sign, were swept away. They had forfeited them by disobedience and rebellion. The time and event, the limit to which they reached had come. Their iniquity, in view of the light they had received, was even greater than that of the nations around them. There was no propriety, therefore, in still keeping up the wall of separation between them and others. They all stood now upon the same level in the sight of God. All must approach Him through the Messiah who had come into the world; through Him alone man could be saved.

But did the Jews take kindly to this new order of things?—Far from it. The thing which maddened them most of all was the intimation their special privileges were taken away. These had served to exalt them in their own eyes, and they had used them for ages to exalt themselves above others. They had been very zealous in proselytizing among the nations because of this superiority. And now to have this lowly Nazarene and His poor, despised followers, who had never been honored as learned or talented, place them on the same level with others, was like destroying their whole stock in trade. Their sacred privileges and special blessings were the only things they had to boast of. They were oppressed by the Romans, and despised by the Greeks as being ignorant of philosophy, and not generally liked by the nations because of their pride and vainglory. To take away their only claim of being God's peculiar people was more than they could endure.

Their hatred was especially bitter against the apostle Paul, because he, more than any other, clearly defined and demonstrated this fact. He

was the apostle to the Gentiles, which made it necessary for him to make this fact prominent. He pointed them to Christ as their only hope. They had nothing to gain from circumcision and the special privileges it represented. Hence we see the Judaizing teachers representing the various sects of zealots among the Jews and the Hebrew disciples who were not willing to accept the truth as Paul taught it, opposing him, following him from city to city, persecuting and in many instances trying to kill him. They were exceedingly zealous for circumcision and the law of the fathers. The hardest battle the great apostle had to fight was upon this very ground.

There were really two leading questions which required special attention as the gospel went among the Gentiles beyond the confines of Judaism. The special circumstances which had surrounded the Jewish people for ages in the past made these questions prominent, then the new order of things was introduced, and Jews and Gentiles stood alike upon the same basis. (1.) One was the binding claims of the law of God upon all mankind, and the special fact connected with it that the Jews were condemned by that law as sinners—and hence, needed a Saviour just as much as everyone else. (2.) The other was the fact already referred to—the cessation at the cross of types and services pointing to Christ, with the special privileges granted to Israel as God's peculiar people, symbolized by circumcision. Until these positions were well understood, and the great principles growing out of them were thoroughly comprehended, the gospel could never accomplish its destined work in the world; the Christian system would be in disorder and confusion. For Jew and Gentile alike to have a Saviour, both alike must be sinners. Thus both could come into one brotherhood, and constitute one family. But this could not be if this middle wall of ceremonies still stood as a separation between them. Hence it must be thoroughly understood, the ceremonial wall must be broken down.

Both of these facts were unpalatable to the Jew. He greatly disliked to be reckoned a common sinner with the hated Gentile. He strenuously contended also for circumcision and its attendant privileges. Hence it was necessary, both of these great facts should be faithfully developed, and the underlying reasons given for this new arrangement. Paul was the man specially raised up by God to do this work.

We shall claim in the epistle to the Romans, Paul fully considers the former question, and in the letter to the Galatians, the latter. We cannot agree with some who claim the design, scheme, or argument in the two epistles are substantially the same. We freely admit there are expressions alike in both; but we believe the main line of argument and the ultimate object in view are widely different; many of the similar expressions used are to be understood in a different sense, because the argument of the apostle demands it.

In the other epistles of Paul these facts are alluded to; but in none of them is the argument anywhere near so fully developed. It does not look reasonable on the face of it, that the apostle would have principally the same object in view in two different epistles. These were written by direct inspiration of God, to be the special guidance of the Christian church. He was bringing out the great principles which should serve as the governing influence of the church for all future ages. We therefore believe it to be an unreasonable view that both have the same design.

In the epistle to the Romans, after a few preliminary remarks, Paul sets before us the condition of the heathen world, and how they came to forget God, and their terrible degradation. They certainly needed a Saviour. Yet they were amenable to the moral law of God; for it had originally been "written in the heart" at creation, and some remnant of the work of it still remained.

But the Jews had a great advantage, inasmuch as the "living oracles" were directly placed in their keeping. They had constant access to them, but had constantly transgressed them. The apostle plainly proved all to be under sin. All had gone astray. None did good, no not one. He concludes: "What then? are we [Jews] better than they?—No, in no wise; for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin." Romans 3:9. Every mouth was stopped, and all the world became guilty before God. The ten commandment law was not "made void," but "established."

The apostle proceeds in a most articulate and powerful argument to show the agency of the moral law in the plan of salvation in all its various relations to the sinner; the necessity of faith in Christ in order that the law-breaker may be justified; its agency in the death of the old carnal man; and its necessity as a standard of right-doing which the repentant sinner alone can reach by the assistance of Christ through the Holy Spirit. So, to the Epistle to the Romans we ever look for the most complete and thorough exposition of the law of God in its relation to the plan of salvation and the ultimate justification of the repentant transgressor.

But, is the scheme of the letter to the Galatians the same? Does the apostle have in view the same object? We think he had a widely different end in view. Instead of trying to impress upon Jew and Gentile alike the obligation of the moral law as his main object, he has constantly in view a class of Judaizing teachers who had troubled the disciples, and introduced doctrines which subverted the principles of the gospel. The believers had been turned away from the faith by these teachings, to "another gospel." They had loved the great apostle when they first received the truth, with a fervency which would have prompted them to pluck out their eyes for him; but through the influence of these disturbing teachers, love had almost been lost. Paul was greatly grieved at this sudden change in their feelings and views. Throughout the whole epis-

tle he constantly refers to it, reproaching them for their sudden change, and appealing to them to return to their former position.

What was the change in them of which he complains so strongly? Was it they had kept the moral law so well—had observed the Sabbath, refrained from idolatry, blasphemy, murder, lying, stealing—they felt they were justified by their good works, and therefore needed no faith in a crucified Saviour? Or was it they had accepted circumcision, with all it implied and symbolized, the laws and services which served as a wall of separation between Jews and Gentiles, and the ordinances of the typical remedial system? We unhesitatingly affirm it was the latter. In endorsing the former remedial system of types and shadows, they virtually denied Christ, the substance to which all these types pointed, had come. Hence the error was a fundamental one in doctrine, though they might not realize it. This was why Paul spoke so forcibly and pointed out their error with such strength of language. Their error involved practices which were subversive of the principles of the gospel; they were not merely errors of opinion.

Let us notice a few expressions of the apostle, scattered through Galatians, before we come to an examination of the epistle itself. This will serve to bring out the point more clearly:

“I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel.” Galatians 1:6.

“O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth?” Chap. 3:1.

“But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?” Chap. 4:9.

“I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain.” Verse 11.

“Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.” Chap. 5:2, 3.

“Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?” Verse 7.

“As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.” Chap. 6:12.

It will be noticed these texts are selected all through the epistle. Many others of similar import could also be given. They relate to the principal theme in the apostle’s mind which caused him to write this letter to the Galatians. He had one leading object in view; hence he is constantly referring to it. The errors in the Galatian church which Paul was so vigorously combating, were not merely the theoretical view, they were justified by their obedience to the moral law and hence did

not need a Saviour; but they were practices which really undermined the truth of the gospel, connecting it with circumcision, the symbol of all those laws that are uniquely Jewish.

We do not here quote these texts to make an argument upon them. We reserve them for their proper connection when we examine the epistle point by point. We present them now as an illustration of what was especially occupying the apostle's thoughts from one end of the epistle to the other. He apparently could not keep out of his mind the fundamental errors into which these children in the faith were fallen. These errors of doctrine he had to meet wherever he met a Jew. Throughout his whole Christian life he had to stand up to them. Because of the bitterness of feeling entertained by the Jews in sustaining their claims of superiority because of these separating laws involved in circumcision, Paul had to endure whippings, imprisonment, insult, hatred, a long captivity, and worst of all, see multitudes of those he desired to save, of his own kinsmen according to the flesh, lost forever. Their ears were closed against him and the precious gospel he preached. He would willingly have died to save them; but their ears were closed against the gospel because he could not sustain those separating laws which served as a line of demarcation between the Jew and the Gentile. This question with Paul, therefore, was a live question, one ever before him. Hence all through the book of Galatians it is constantly brought to view. Circumcision and the remedial system connected with the old dispensation are constantly in his mind from the commencement in the first chapter till his close in the last chapter.

There are, no doubt, several references to the moral law in the epistle. Indeed, we do not see how it could well be otherwise while discussing a remedial system providing pardon in figure for violation of that law. In some places the apostle uses arguments which will embrace all systems of law, and which may and do refer to and include both. But we emphatically deny that the law of God is the leading subject under consideration in this letter. We now propose to examine the whole epistle consecutively, having a relation to this subject. To enable the reader to easily follow us, we will quote the language of the apostle.

Galatians 1:1-9: "Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by men, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;) And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia: Grace be to you, and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: To whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from

heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”

These are the introductory words of the epistle. In the parenthetical clause in verse one, Paul especially refers to his call to the apostleship, which was high and honorable. It placed him on an equality of authority with the other apostles. Indeed, his call was more especially marked by divine manifestation than the others, indicating, perhaps, God’s choice of him for the most important work. He dwells upon this in other places in this letter, because there was a disposition on the part of the Judaizing element to underrate the apostle, and exalt those whose special sphere of labor was among the Jews, and who had never taken such strong ground as Paul had in showing all national distinctions were gone. Paul gives them to understand he is fully prepared by God’s appointment to instruct them in the gospel.

Before he has proceeded a dozen lines in his introduction, Paul bursts out in strong language concerning the great theme which was in his mind. “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you ... unto another gospel.” Verse 6. “There be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.” Verse 7. If angel or man “preach any other gospel, ... let him be accursed.” Verse 8. And to make it doubly emphatic, he repeats this last statement. To be “accursed” is to be “doomed to destruction.” Verse 9. It is a very strong term, indeed. What is it that has prompted this patient, meek, humble servant of God to pour forth so suddenly such an outburst of holy indignation? Not another letter of his can be found in which he commences with such vehemence and apparent impatience. And we may be sure, he would not indulge in them here but for great provocation and a clear sense, that some very dangerous doctrine, calculated to greatly mar the Christian system, was being proclaimed. The gospel was being “perverted” and undermined, and other means of salvation substituted. Would such language have been in place if these Jewish teachers had been trying to have them keep the ten commandments strictly, and the Galatians were following such instructions closely, neither killing, lying, committing adultery, nor stealing, thinking thus to be justified by their good works? To our mind such a conclusion would be absurd. But if these teachers were trying to lead the Galatian brethren to adopt circumcision with its attendant typical remedial system, virtually doing away with the great sacrifice on Calvary, then such language would be very much in place. We must bear in mind also how Paul was constantly beset by this same class of teachers, as we shall see. They came near to taking his life at Damascus, when he first believed in Christ. Multitudes in Jerusalem thirsted for his blood, and even swore

they would never eat or drink till they had killed him. They met him in every city he entered, stirring up the people against him. And now in his absence, with their Jewish notions of circumcision, they had turned away his beloved children in the Lord. No wonder the righteous indignation of the apostle is aroused!

Galatians 1:10-24: "For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ, But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: And profited in the Jews' religion above many [of] my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother. Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not. Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia; And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judea which were in Christ: But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed. And they glorified God in me."

In this quotation Paul begins by again referring to the proof of his divine call to the apostleship, a fact to which he refers over and over in this letter. Evidently these Judaizing teachers had minimized him and his position, and exalted the apostles at Jerusalem far above him, because he taught that these special Jewish distinctions were set aside.

He next refers to his former zeal in the "Jews' religion," or in "Judaism," as it is translated in the Diaglott. "Ye have heard of my conversation," or course of life, "in time past in Judaism," and how I "persecuted the church of God, and wasted it." Verse 13. He "profited in Judaism" above his equals, being "more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of his fathers." Verse 14. Why does the apostle present this striking reference to his former experience in Judaism as a zealot and a persecutor, in his argument with the Galatian brethren?—Because it was wonderfully in place. These Judaizing teachers were leading the brethren back to the very doctrines Paul had discarded, telling them they must be circumcised, and keep up the wall of separation, or they could not be saved, as we shall soon see. But had not Paul been over

all that ground before? Had he not profited in this kind of religion more than any in his nation? Had he not excelled them all in his zeal for these very things they were trying to sustain? Could these teachers or the brethren they were leading astray hope to practice or comprehend those doctrines as well as he had, with his great ability, knowledge, and remarkable zeal?—Certainly not. But when Christ revealed himself to Paul, on the road to Damascus, he had seen the utter worthlessness of all these peculiar doctrines of Judaism by which they were now trying to be saved. The great light of Christianity had fully defined the purpose and design of all those ordinances for the past. Should they now go back to those things which Paul had fully explored, understood, and discarded, and cast aside the glorious light which he had received by direct revelation from the Lord, and preached to them?—Preposterous! If they should, they would be going back from light into darkness. These were considerations which Paul's reference to his former experience must have fastened upon the minds of the Galatian brethren.

But what were these doctrines of Judaism to which he refers, and for which he was so zealous before his conversion? Was it a special zeal for the doctrines of the moral law which so distinguished him, and led him to persecute the church? No Seventh-day Adventist will claim such. No doubt the disciples whom he persecuted, kept that law much better than he did or his associates. So far as we know, the Jews themselves never claimed the principles of the ten commandments to be peculiar to their nation. They believed that all men were morally bound to keep them, the Sabbath included. They well knew there was nothing Jewish about the moral law. But it was the claims of another law, involving "the traditions of the fathers," Jewish superiority and exclusiveness, circumcision, kindred ordinances, and salvation through Judaism and its doctrines—but not through Jesus, which aroused Paul to such a pitch of zeal. His leading design in writing this letter was to set before them the folly of their Judaizing defection.

In the remaining part of this quotation, the apostle continues the narration of his personal experience, presenting his course of action after his conversion. He was called by God to preach Christ "among the heathen." He had a divine call to this special work which no other apostle had to the same degree. He did not receive his knowledge of Christian doctrine from the church at Jerusalem or through the apostles, but from direct revelation. And though he did spend fifteen days with Peter three years after his conversion, yet it was not through him or any human authority that he received his commission. God's providence separated Paul from the leading influential men in the church, and by special illumination prepared him to take a leading position in bringing the gospel to the heathen world. His former experience and education, his thorough knowledge of Judaism had prepared his mind to comprehend all it

could accomplish for humanity. And when the light of the gospel was fully revealed to him, he was thoroughly equipped to meet the opposing Judaizing teachers found in every city, expose their weakness, and bring the light of the gospel in all its fullness to the Gentile world. No other apostle was prepared to do such a work in this direction as Paul. In this letter to the Galatian believers he refers to these things so they may understand his thorough qualification as an apostle, which these false teachers had tried to belittle.

Galatians 2:1-5: "Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also. And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain. But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised: And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you."

We here reach a most interesting point in the consideration of the subject before us. The circumstances mentioned in this connection unmistakably identify this visit with the one mentioned in Acts 15. The questions agitating the minds of the disciples in both cases are the same. The circumstances mentioned are the same. The parties or persons referred to are substantially the same. The chronology of both is the same. And no other recorded visit of the apostle will harmonize the statements of the chronology of this visit but the one recorded in Acts 15. Conybeare and Howson, in their *Life and Epistles of the Apostle Paul*, present an exhaustive argument in favor of this view, in which every objection to it ever urged, is considered and answered. They declare "the majority of the best critics and commentators" agree on the identity of these visits. For lack of space we cannot enter into a lengthy argument to prove this. It is not necessary. Most likely none of our brethren will question this; but those who wish to examine this point fully, we refer to the seventh chapter of Conybeare and Howson's valuable work. Dr. Clarke and many other commentators, and Sr. White also, sustain this view.

To obtain a comprehensive view of this visit and its significance, we notice the corresponding facts in Acts 15: "And certain men which came down from Judea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question." Verses 1, 2.

After reaching Jerusalem, and giving an account of their past labors, the record continues: "But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses. And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter. And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they." Acts 15:5-11.

Perhaps there never was a greater crisis in the early church than this. The cloud had been gathering for years. Questions concerning the obligation of the law of Moses had been constantly arising. The gospel was now spreading far and wide. Multitudes of Gentiles were becoming interested in it, and man had embraced it. These Judaizing teachers were everywhere stirring up trouble. Paul and Barnabas had great "dissension and disputation" with them. They followed on the track of these apostles who were preaching especially to the Gentiles, disturbing those converted, and unsettling their faith in that which these apostles preached. They crept in "privily to spy out the liberty" which the disciples had in Christ, constantly thrusting in their Jewish notions. They were determined to bring the believers "into bondage" to their notions of the obligation of Jewish laws and customs. The extent to which they carried their teachings is clearly set forth in these scriptures. They said: "Except ye be circumcised," and keep the law of Moses, "ye cannot be saved." All the Gentile world, then, must be circumcised and really become Jews. All those rites, services, and customs in Moses' law must be obeyed. In this case the glorious light and freedom of the gospel must be circumscribed to the narrow bounds of Jewish bondage.

It is no wonder Paul declares, "We gave place by subjection" to them, "no, not for an hour." Gal. 2:5. He saw at a glance, the integrity of the whole gospel system was at stake. If these Jewish positions were to stand, and be generally accepted, Christ could not be the promised Messiah, and his death was in vain. Faith in him was not the saving principle. They were to be saved by circumcision and the services of the law of Moses. The wellbeing of the Christian church demanded, and the system of faith in Christ which he taught required that this question should be settled once and forever. It was the turning point in the history of the Christian church, between liberty and bondage, Jewish narrow-

ness and exclusiveness and the freedom which is in Christ Jesus. The gospel never could accomplish its mission to the ends of the earth with such a burden placed upon it. The circumstances of the case required, and a special revelation from the Lord directed this momentous question to be brought before the highest tribunal of the church for settlement—a general conference of the believers at Jerusalem.

Paul and Barnabas, the special apostles to the Gentiles, and a company of the brethren went up from Antioch to attend; they took Titus with them. He was an example and an illustration of the whole question, an uncircumcised Greek, but a devoted Christian. What would the brethren do with him? Would they receive him as a brother in the common faith? or would they cast him aside, and refuse to own him as one of them until he should receive this old test of Jewish discipleship—circumcision? Was the test of Christianity to be the same as that of Judaism? Or was a heart made pure by faith in a crucified Saviour to be the test? Paul could not, in any possible way, have brought the matter home more forcibly than he did by taking the devoted Titus with him.

It is impossible for us, after eighteen centuries of Gentile freedom, to realize the intense interest which centered in this contest which was to be decided by the Council. It seemed to the Hebrew converts who had been strict Pharisees, everything which they had held sacred in their past experience was now to be swept away. For centuries subsequent to the captivity, scattered as they were among the Gentiles; they had struggled to maintain their distinctive national characteristics under great difficulties. They had been hated for it, and often persecuted. And now these were all to be swept aside, and they be placed on a level with the Gentiles, against whom they had guarded themselves so strictly. The reason for their blindness was because they failed to discern the vast importance of the death of Christ. Had they realized this as Paul did, all would have been plain.

No wonder there was much “disputation” and heat manifested as they approached the solution of this great question. Paul, like a wise manager, had held private consultations with the apostles and leading brethren. When they came to consider the subject, they could not fail to see that his position was the only sound one, the only possible one to take. Peter in the Council rehearsed the facts connected with the conversion of Cornelius (Acts 10), the first plain instance of Gentile conversion. In this case God had given the witness of His Holy Spirit as a divine evidence of acceptance without circumcision. What testimony could have been stronger than this? And large numbers of others had been converted, and received the same evidence. Should they now go backward, and impose a yoke of bondage upon these disciples after God had accepted them and given them the same Spirit the Hebrew disciples had received? This would be highly absurd.

Then Paul and Barnabas recounted the wonderful instances of divine power attending their ministry among the Gentiles. Many had received the gospel, and mighty miracles had been wrought giving evidence that God was with them in their work; no apostle had performed greater miracles. They had not required these Gentiles to be circumcised. Would it now be reasonable to set aside all the evidences of divine sanction and refuse to accept them as disciples by erecting the old ceremonial wall of separation? Preposterous!

These were arguments which the Jewish disciples, zealous for Moses' law, found it hard to answer. Finally James, the brother of our Lord, arose, a man of venerable appearance and great sanctity, usually called "James the Just." He was acting as the presiding officer on this occasion. He presented other strong reasons in behalf of the position of Paul and Barnabas, and then the decision of the Council was rendered: "Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment: it seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; that ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well." Acts 15:24-29.

Thus this momentous question was settled, and gospel liberty gained a great victory. The Gentile believers could become members of the family of Christ Jesus without obedience to the ritual law. Circumcision, the badge of Jewish exclusiveness, was set aside. Titus was not "compelled to be circumcised" (Gal. 2:3), and the Jewish zealots were decidedly snubbed. What a vast load this Council lifted from the church! What a terrible nightmare would have fallen upon it had the decision gone the other way! Paul must have returned to Antioch with a light heart.

But what does this Council and its decision do with the question we are considering—the law in Galatians? It has everything to do with it. The very same question precisely which came before the Council is the main subject of the apostles letter to this church. If the moral law is the main subject of the epistle, why did Paul bring in the work of the Council at Jerusalem? Will any Seventh-day Adventist claim the moral law was the subject considered by the Council? Was it the moral law which Peter characterizes as "a yoke ... which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?" Acts 15:10. Were the moral and ceremonial laws all mixed up

and confounded in the Council? Did the decision of that body set aside the laws against stealing, lying, Sabbath-breaking, and murder? We all know better. **The Council took no cognizance of any of the ten commandments. There was no dispute about their universal obligation. But not so concerning the Jewish law; it was the ceremonial law that was in dispute.** Paul, then, in Galatians, makes the subject of Moses' law prominent, bringing in this Council at Jerusalem as a most forcible evidence of the wrong position of the Galatian church. It is the ceremonial and not the moral law he had in view. To take any other position concerning his reference to this Council would be to claim that Paul had no proper ideas of a logical argument; for assuredly if he was trying to prove to the Galatians the binding obligation of the moral law, and their justification through faith for its transgression, there would be no force whatever in prominently referring to the decision of a council which limited its consideration to an entirely different law. The view we advocate makes Paul's argument perfectly logical and consistent throughout. The opposite view breaks it up, and renders it illogical.

Galatians 2:6-10: "But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person:) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me: But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter; (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles;) And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision. Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do."

In this quotation an interesting fact is presented, which had an important bearing upon the question Paul was discussing with the Galatian brethren. It would seem from this description, that the position of Paul's apostleship, as to its relative importance in the work of the gospel, was here defined and settled as never before. Paul's experience had been peculiar and striking. First a bitter persecutor, the worst one the disciples had to meet, carrying terror and dismay wherever he went: then, after his remarkable conversion, which many might not have been aware of, he became, after a season, a laborer in the gospel. After his conversion, he disappeared in Arabia for about three years. Many may have thought he had apostatized. From several scriptures it appears there was much suspicion in the church concerning the genuineness of his change; till Barnabas sought him out. When he began to labor, it was for the Gentiles; and the doctrines he taught were very unpalatable to the Hebrew converts. Until this meeting at Jerusalem, he seems not

to have been generally acknowledged as having an independent mission. But it seems likely some thought him "antagonistic to the apostles at Jerusalem; others, that he was entirely dependent upon them." Such is Conybeare and Howson's view.

All was changed at this Council. They fully discerned his mission, and saw the Holy Spirit had placed this work of reaching the Gentile world especially under his charge. The views he taught were now fully accepted by the apostles and the church at large, at least in theory. Paul and Barnabas now received the right hand of fellowship, signifying their course was fully approved. They were sent on their mission to "the heathen," while Peter still continued to act a leading part among the Hebrew portion of the church. A wonderful victory had been gained for the cause of truth taught by Paul in this great crisis. The prominence of this question in the apostolic church may be discovered from the fact, no other general Council of like character ever occurred in the early church. From this time onward, the whole burden of the work of the gospel, as its history is given in the book of Acts, seems to have been among the Gentiles. This Council gave great encouragement to the work among the heathen. The main interest of the history of the church centers in Paul's labors from this point. These facts, as cited by the apostle in his letter, must have had great force with the Galatian brethren, who had fallen under the influence of these same Judaizing teachers.

We do not see how his argument could be more forcible. Paul essentially said to them, Are you going back to the ceremonial law and circumcision, after the great Council at Jerusalem has decided against them, and after the doctrines I have taught and my special mission to the Gentile world has been fully approved by the apostles at Jerusalem and the whole church of believers? Will you follow these false teachers rather than the church? It must have been a most convincing appeal.

Galatians 2:11-21: "But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews? We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we

ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid. For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."

We have here the third historical reference to facts in Paul's experience, having a special bearing upon the subject discussed in his letter, being his public reproof of the apostle Peter in the presence of others, and the substance of the remarks made on this occasion. It seems Peter came down to Antioch soon after the great Council, before Paul and Barnabas left on their next tour of labor. At first he lived as Paul did, eating with the Gentiles, and paying no attention to Jewish laws and customs. But when some of the disciples from Jerusalem came to Antioch, who were still zealous for all the requirements of Moses' law, Peter withdrew, and no longer acted as before. The current became so strong in that direction that even Barnabas, Paul's companion, was carried away with the rest. It took a man of great nerve and stamina and intelligent, conscientious conviction, like Paul, to withstand the pressure of influence brought to bear on this occasion. This shows how strong the feeling was on behalf of the customs of Judaism in the early church. It is astonishing that after the decisions of the Council such an eminent man as Peter was in the church, and one who had acted in the Council with Paul in behalf of the same positions concerning Moses' law which Paul had held, should be so soon swept under this influence. And still more so that Barnabas, companion of Paul, who had participated with him in his experience among the Gentiles, and strongly contested for the same positions, should also fall under the influence of these Judaizing teachers. These wonderful inconsistencies, however, only show the pressure of influence brought to bear on behalf of these national distinctions at that time in the church, which centered at Jerusalem. This influence made the call of a great council necessary. And though the decision had been wholly in favor of the truth as Paul held it, yet the spirit of national caste still remained. Such influences are the very hardest to overcome of any with which poor human nature has to contend.

We have illustrations of the same principle, in a measure at least, in our day, in the feelings of many white people toward those who have been in slavery in the past; and in India in the distinctions of caste. When parties from both sides are converted to Christ, it seems impossible, even then, to get those in one position to associate socially with those from another class. This was even more the fact in the case of Jewish and Gentile converts, and was especially the case in regard to

eating together. Says Conybeare and Howson, p. 178: "The peculiar character of the religion which isolated the Jews was such as to place insuperable obstacles in the way of social union with other men. Their ceremonial observances precluded the possibility of their eating with the Gentiles." As Peter said to Cornelius it is "an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation." Acts 10:28. The great charge against him upon his return to Jerusalem was, "Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them." Acts 11:3. And though the principles on which the decisions of the Council were based would overthrow such views theoretically, yet the feeling still existed, and even Peter and Barnabas had no strength to stand before it.

It may well be doubted if the churches of Judea and Jerusalem ever fully recovered from this feeling; for in Paul's last visit the same feelings existed so strongly he, with James' advice, gave up to it in a measure, and participated in some of the services of the ceremonial law, and in consequence was captured in the temple, and suffered a long imprisonment. (See Acts 21:17-40 and chapters 22-28.) The obligation of the ceremonial law was really involved in this eating question just as truly as in the questions concerning circumcision, which came before the Council; only it was a different phase of it.

That Paul should have rebuked the apostle Peter in such a public manner as he did on this occasion, shows he must have considered the issue an exceedingly important one, involving the integrity of the gospel teaching which he preached. Simon Peter had long been among the foremost of the apostles. Taught by the Saviour himself, the "gospel of the circumcision" had been especially "committed" to him, as the uncircumcision had to Paul. Great miracles had been wrought by him. The whole Christian church looked up to him as the leading man in it. Christ had greatly honored him. He was doubtless an older man than Paul; yet Paul, the junior laborer, usually a very meek and humble man, publicly reproved this eminent apostle to his face. We may be sure this never would have been done had not Paul felt very deeply in his soul that the occasion demanded it, because a great principle was to be vindicated.

Peter "was to be blamed." It was at an important crisis, just as the great principle of gospel liberty was struggling for supremacy in the church against the desperate, persistent efforts of those who were determined to impose the yoke of Jewish ritual bondage upon the necks of the Gentile converts. Peter, through fear of man, permitted himself to be placed on the wrong side of this question, dragging Barnabas and nearly all other Jews present, along with him. Paul was forced by his regard for truth to speak out, even to reprove his brethren of great influence older than himself. Paul well knew, if such examples as these were to be followed, the cause of God would be hindered. If Jew and

Gentile Christians could not eat together, how could they ever make one body, one family in Christ? It would be impossible. This rebuke was deserved. God sustained Paul's reproof, and has permitted this historical fact to stand on the page of inspiration, showing the weakness of one of his most eminent servants. Peter never attempted to answer, for he well knew no answer could be given.

Why does Paul bring up this circumstance in his letter to the Galatian brethren?—Because it was the case, exactly in point. They were going back to the same principles and practices for which Peter had been justly rebuked. Their course had been condemned, even in one so high as the great apostle Peter; and he had submitted to the reproof as just. Should they now, under the influence of a similarly troublesome class of Judaizing teachers, continue in a wrong course which had demanded and received such a rebuke?—Certainly not.

Question: Did this course of Peter involve the question of the ten commandments? Had it the slightest reference to them? Were they under consideration in any sense whatsoever in this transaction?—By no means. The whole matter related to the law of types and uncleanness, the obligation of the law of Moses. **The moral law was not involved.**

Let us now consider Paul's remarks to Peter and those who had followed him: "If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles [as he had been doing before certain Jews came from Jerusalem] and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?" Gal. 2:14. This, of course, was a wonderful inconsistency, caused solely by Peter's fear of man, lest his influence among the Jewish disciples should be lessened. He knew he would likely be called in question for his course when he returned to Jerusalem. "We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles [such as Peter, Barnabas, and Paul are considered as], knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." Verses 15, 16.

We must remember, these words were spoken in reproof to those who recognized the Jewish laws of uncleanness to still be in force. These were intimately associated with, and really a part of, the great typical remedial system which passed away at the cross.

Peter and Barnabas well knew, though all their earlier lives they had regarded and obeyed them, yet that fact did not afford salvation. They themselves, all of them strict Jews in the past, had to be saved by faith in Christ. How preposterous then, to set up the old typical standard of ceremonies and "divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation" (Heb. 9:10) for the Gentiles to obey, as in effect they had been doing at Antioch in refusing to eat with Gen-

tiles! If these old provisions of Moses' law would not save such devout men as Peter, Barnabas, and Paul had been, could they be any benefit to the Gentiles who had never regarded them?—Certainly not. Our explanation of verses 15 and 16 on the previous page is correct. Paul in his reproof is referring directly to the wrong course of Peter and Barnabas, who virtually acknowledged the requirements of the laws of eating and drinking, in refusing to eat with the Gentiles.

“But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid. For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” Gal. 2:17-20.

Paul says, “If I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.” Verse 18. Peter and Paul both had shown that those laws were destroyed, by eating with the Gentile converts in terms of equality. But then, Peter and Barnabas, in refusing to eat with the Gentiles, had now recognized them as still being in force. Therefore, by their own acts they made themselves “transgressors,” literally “violators of law” (original Greek), i.e., sinners. What effect then, had their faith in Christ upon them? According to their course of conduct, they had first recognized the insufficiency of these ceremonial laws to save them by believing in Christ, no longer regarding those laws which had passed away. But now Peter had gone back and recognized those laws as binding, and commenced to observe them again. Hence this would make Christ the minister of sin; Christ would not be sufficient for salvation. If this old law concerning uncleanness must be kept in order to obtain salvation—against such a false position Paul uttered an emphatic—God forbid! It is evident the Jewish converts still felt they must keep those laws which were abolished at the cross in order to be justified; while, in Paul's teaching, Christ was the only source of justification.

We cannot admit in these words addressed to Peter, showing him the folly and inconsistency of the position he had assumed in refusing to eat with the Gentile Christians, there is the slightest reference to the moral law. Though there are expressions which are similar to those used in Romans and other scriptures which in those places refer to the moral law, yet it proves nothing certain. We are perfectly free to admit if some of these expressions were used where the premises of the apostle's argument had been considering the moral law, they might properly apply to it. But such is not the case, and hence similarity of expression proves nothing. To get the sense of a writer's thought, the connection must be considered, the facts upon which the argument is based, and the objective point of it. We have had nearly two entire chapters in this

letter, about one third of the whole epistle, and hitherto we have not had a single reference to the moral law; but through it all constant reference is made to the ceremonial law, the law of Moses. And immediately preceding these expressions are the plainest references to the subject in his reproof to Peter on the question of defilement in eating. Does the moral law cover such ground? Which of the ten commandments would have been violated in eating with the Gentiles? Were these Jewish disciples forcing such a pressure to oblige the Gentiles to keep the laws of the Decalogue? We all know such conclusions are perfectly absurd.

To suppose that Paul had reference to the moral law in the expressions, “not justified by the works of the law” (2:16) and “I through the law am dead to the law” (2:19), is to pervert the whole argument of the apostle, implying that while all through the Galatian letter, he had been referring to the ceremonial law, and reproving Peter for sustaining it by example, then he suddenly turned away from the subject and brought in an entirely different law, which had no relation to the subject before him; such a violent assumption is entirely inadmissible and wholly unnecessary. The argument of the apostle as we have presented it, is entirely consistent with itself, with all the facts thus far brought to view in the letter, and with his main object in writing to that church. Paul was strenuously contending for the liberty of the Christian church against Judaizing teachers who wanted to again impose the yoke of bondage, which neither he nor his fathers were able to bear.

“I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.” Gal. 2:21. These teachers did frustrate the grace (favor) of God which came through the death of Christ and his pardoning love. No law could be given through which weak, sinful man could reach the standard of righteousness which God required. It must be attained through the help of Christ. How foolish were Peter and Barnabas and these Jewish disciples under pressure to go back and recognize the old yoke of bondage, which they themselves had once destroyed? It had always been “weak,” “unprofitable,” “carnal.” It could never “take away sin.” Why, then, should these men revive it. Paul’s argument was triumphant for the occasion, and Peter made no reply.

A word further concerning “justification.” We fully believe the Epistle to the Galatians, as well as to the Romans, proves the necessity of being justified by faith for our transgressions of the moral law, and the **absolute impossibility** of being justified by future obedience to any law for our sins of the past. But in that age there were two laws supposed by some to be in force; and there were even more who looked to obedience to the ceremonial law, with its circumcision, types, shadows, and multitude of observances, for justification, than to the moral law. And this was natural, for it contained the typical remedial system of the past dispensation. All the virtue it possessed was the fact that it pointed to

Christ. Most likely many did not discern this and thought obedience to its provisions alone would take away sins. After Christ came, and it lost all its virtue, they still looked to it for justification. To correct this error was the main object of Paul's letter to the Galatians.

The mistake of our brethren is in trying to prove the Galatians were seeking justification through obedience to the moral law, whereas they were really seeking it through obedience to the Mosaic law. We believe the term "works of the law" refers to the ceremonial law in almost, if not, every instance where it is used.

Galatians 3:1-9: "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain. He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham."

We now reach the commencement of a special argument of the apostle on the subject in hand. There are three general divisions in this epistle. The first two chapters are mainly occupied with historical references to facts in Paul's experience which, as we have seen, have an important bearing on the subject. Then follows an argument of the apostle, composed in the next two chapters and a little more, while nearly a remaining third of the letter is given to precious practical instruction of various Christian duties, interspersed with a few references concerning the main subject of the epistle.

We claim the historical facts which we have thus far noticed, and the argument which follows in chapters three and four, are intimately and logically connected; and are really parts of Paul's special effort to correct the errors into which the Galatian church had fallen. It was an answer once and forever to the persistent efforts of these Judaizing teachers to bind the yoke of ceremonial observances upon the Gentile church. As one proof of this we mention the conclusion of Paul's argument in the beginning of chapter five: "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is be-

come of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." Gal. 5:1-4. Here we have the leading conclusion of Paul's lengthy argument in chapters three and four.

We have quite carefully noticed the first division of his letter, with three historical references: (1.) His account of his own religious experience in Judaism—how weak and unprofitable it was, though he excelled all others in zeal for and proficiency in it; (2.) His reference to the Council at Jerusalem, and its decision against the position the Galatian brethren had taken in regard to circumcision; (3.) His public reproof of Peter for weakly going back to the ceremonial law. All these refer wholly to that law. Then follows his argument and the conclusion reached. This last, we see, relates to precisely the same subject. "If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing." Verse 2. "Every man that is circumcised ... is a debtor to do the whole law." Verse 3. "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Verse 1. Can we conclude with the premises of the argument relating to circumcision and the ceremonial law, the conclusion of it relating to the same things; to say the argument relates to a whole different law—how absurd. Therefore, as we enter upon the argument, we have every reason to expect it will be found in perfect harmony with its premises and conclusion.

The revised version renders the first verse as follows: "O foolish Galatians, who did bewitch you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was openly set forth crucified?" the clause "that ye should not obey the truth," being omitted. Gal. 3:1. The Diaglott is substantially the same, there being nothing in the literal Greek text to answer that expression. "Foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you?" literal Greek, "misled by delusive pretenses." Here wrong practices seem to be intended. It is not likely Paul would have used such an expression, and spoken in such cutting language if these Galatians had been making a special point of keeping the ten commandments, thinking by so doing they would be justified by their good works. He would have spoken in milder language if their practice had been right, and simply their views of doctrine wrong. But how natural such an expression would be after his threefold reference to the ceremonial law in reproving them for going back to those "weak and beggarly elements." Paul had preached a crucified Saviour as their only hope. He made known unto all nothing but "Christ and him crucified." 1 Cor. 2:2. What folly, to go back to the yoke of bondage!

In the second verse and onward, the apostle proceeds to contrast the work of faith in Christ which had been preached to them, with the "works of the law." Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish, having begun in the Spirit, as to now seek to be made perfect by the flesh? Have all your sufferings from persecution been in vain, if it be yet in vain? Does he who works mira-

cles among you do it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Those were all pertinent questions. What does the apostle mean by the term "works of the law"? Does he mean keeping the Sabbath, and refraining from swearing, lying, stealing, murder, and adultery? Or does he mean acts of obedience to the ceremonial law, which had been abolished? We all believe there are two separate, distinct laws brought to view in the Bible. Paul must have had one or the other in view. Both had "works" connected with them. The law of rites had an immense amount of duty, so they constituted a "yoke of bondage" grievous to be borne (see Matthew 23:4), which Paul claimed had passed away.

Much turns on the meaning we attach to this expression "works of the law," in the discussion of the law in Galatians. The sense in which it is used in any given scripture, must be determined from the connection and the subject of discourse. None of us can deny there are two laws, and both of them have "works" connected with them; and this same apostle in different places discourses upon each of them. It will not, therefore, conclude in every case where the term "works of the law" occurs, it must refer to obedience to the law of God. We claim it usually refers to the other. Which class of works are referred to in these verses? Our reasons for understanding it to refer to circumcision, are as follows: (1.) This has been Paul's subject thus far in his letter. (2.) He has not spoken of the moral law previous to this, but has spoken many times of the ceremonial law. (3.) He uses the same term in Gal. 2:16, in reproofing Peter, "because he was to be blamed," when he recognized the laws of defilement, a few verses previous to this. There the reference to the works of the ritual law are unmistakable. He must use the term here in the same sense, to be consistent with his argument. (4.) In the question, "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law?" the language would imply, when they did receive the Spirit, they did not perform the works of the law. This would be an absurd conclusion if applied to the moral law; for they would not have received the Spirit had they not kept it. But the language is perfectly appropriate when applied to the ritual law. (5.) It is evident the term being "made perfect by the flesh," in Gal. 3:3, is an expression meaning the same as the term doing the "works of the law," found in verse two. But this would be improper language when speaking of obedience to the moral law. The ten commandments are not fleshly. With our view, the argument is connected and logical throughout. In verse four he speaks of their persecutions for the gospel's sake. In Gal. 6:12 we see they could have avoided this by obedience to the ceremonial law. Then the offense of the cross would have ceased. In such a case, if circumcision was accepted, all their persecutions had been for naught, and their embracing the gospel was useless. Circumcision and the ceremonial law were the saving ordinances. Christ's death could not save them without these. Such conclusions Paul shows, were

the result reached, if the positions assumed by the Galatian brethren were right.

He next refers to the case of Abraham, and how faith saved him. (See Gal. 3:6.) He did not obtain his righteousness by obedience to any such laws; but through faith. The gospel was preached to him, and he believed in the coming Seed. We become the children of Abraham by imitating his course. He believed in Him who was to come. We believe in Him who has come. In doing this, God will bless us as He did faithful Abraham. Verse 7. How foolish then, the course of these Galatians, who were "bewitched" by these Judaizing teachers, to go back to circumcision, and virtually cast aside their faith in Christ!

Galatians 3:10-14: "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."

"For as many as are of the law [that is, as many as look to the works of the law concerning which he is speaking, for their justification, as these Galatians were doing by accepting circumcision and all that it implied] are under the curse." Verse 10. This curse is only found in Deuteronomy 27:26. The "book of the law" which was placed "in the side of the ark," or at the side, contained both the moral and ceremonial laws as written by Moses in a scroll. The language is not, Cursed be he that continueth not in all things written in the ten commandments to do them, as it doubtless would have been, had Paul had only the moral law in view. But the curse applied to any and all violations of the ceremonial law as well; for that was written in the book. Indeed a very large part of the "book of the law" was devoted to the ceremonial and civil laws of the Jews. It is impossible to circumscribe this language to the transgressions of the moral law alone; for we know the "book of the law" contained more. We have no objection to the claim that the heaviest part of the curse would fall upon the violator of the moral law. But while the whole "book of the law" remained in force, the curse would also apply to violations of such. Therefore it was proper for Paul to refer to this in his argument. If these Galatians were going to reestablish the whole Jewish system, which would be the logical result of their action in adopting circumcision, they must thereby bring themselves under a curse. They well knew they had not always continued "in all things ... written in the book of the law to do them." Instead of obtaining a blessing in their

new departure from the faith of the gospel, they were bringing upon themselves a curse by going back to the ceremonial law.

“But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith” Gal. 3:11. Justification by the law is here used in the same sense as in chap. 2:16, where Paul is reproving Peter for not eating with the Gentiles, thus raising up again what he had formerly thrown down. Also in chap. 5:3, 4: “For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.” The connection in both these cases shows what law he was talking about. These Galatians were going back to the old, abolished ceremonial system for justification. The Judaizing teachers had told them they could not be saved by Christ without it. They virtually cast aside Christ as their Saviour. They were “fallen from grace.” But Paul taught the folly of it all. There was no law in the universe ever given which would justify the breaker of it. “The law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.” Gal. 3:12. Any law enacted by competent authority, demands perfect obedience while it remains in force. This principle is true of moral, ceremonial, and civil laws alike. But as this has never been fully done, another provision must be made. God has provided it in justification by faith. The ceremonial law and the remedial system connected with it never did present adequate provisions for pardon and justification. The blood of bulls and goats could never take away sin. All the multitude of services, ceremonies, “divers washings, and carnal ordinances” were imposed only “until the time of reformation.” (See Heb. 9:10.) How foolish, then, for these Galatians to go back and set up the abolished law to obtain justification! This seems to be the reasoning of the apostle.

“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.” Gal. 3:13. The original word rendered “redeem,” means to “buy from, redeem, or set free.”—Greenfield. (He quotes this text as an illustration.) We accept this statement to its fullest extent. Our friends who claim the moral law is the subject of Paul’s discussion in this epistle, make their strongest argument, we think, upon this text. We wish to go with them as far as we can consistently. We are perfectly willing to admit the curse brought to view in this text, from which Christ redeems his people, includes transgression of the moral law; and the words, “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire” (Matthew 26:41) refer to the time when the curse of God will fall upon the sinner who fails to exercise faith in Christ and be thus “redeemed” from this curse. But how far does this go in setting aside our position upon the law in Galatians?—Not far, we think.

In order to have a clear, connected view of the apostle’s argument,

we must keep before us all the circumstances of time and place. He stood at the time of transition from the old dispensation to the new. But few up to this time had realized there was any great transition. They did not comprehend those laws which had distinguished God's people for nearly two thousand years were to pass out of existence. Their feelings revolted at the thought. It took a long time for the bulk of the Hebrew church to take this in. They supposed these laws were still binding. They did not comprehend all that was contained in the death of Christ. God had to raise up Paul as a special instrument, and inspire him especially with light to make this subject clear. To them Paul's argument sounded very different than it does to us, after eighteen centuries of Gentile influence. They would be likely to understand the curse of the law would also apply to those who did not obey the law of Moses. And who will dare say the curse would not apply to violators of the law of Moses contained in the "book," while that law was in force? It most assuredly would. But "Christ hath redeemed us [literally, set us free] from the curse of the law" by being made a curse for us by hanging "on a tree." Gal. 3:13. What force would this have to the Galatian church?—A very great force. They were trying to remove the curse of condemnation from themselves so they could be "saved" by being circumcised, and going back to the abolished law of Moses for their justification. Paul told them, and proved it from the Scriptures, **the death of Christ alone furnishes redemption**. They were entirely wrong in their expectations. This conclusion is in perfect harmony with Paul's whole argument.

Abraham received a great blessing through his faith in the promised Seed. We receive the same blessing by imitating his conduct; by believing in Him, Christ, who has come, who demonstrated His Messiahship by fulfilling all the conditions set before Him in the Scriptures. We receive the Holy Spirit by accepting Him. The Galatians did not obtain the Spirit through their obedience to the law of Moses. They received it when faith in Christ as their only Saviour was cherished.

Galatians 3:15-19: "Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise. Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator."

The apostle first speaks of the sacredness of a covenant or a prom-

ise. Even a man's covenant, if confirmed, is sacred and cannot be set aside. He then refers to the promises to Abraham and bases an argument upon the fact that in making the promise, God uses the singular number instead of the plural when he brings to view the expected Seed. The promise was not to "seeds" (plural), but to his "Seed," showing the promise was not fulfilled in all of Abraham's descendants according to the flesh, but to be met in the one descendant, Christ the heir. And this promise, properly confirmed by God, cannot be set aside by a law given four hundred and thirty years after. The promise has the precedence in time and importance. And this promise of the "Seed," Christ, is the foundation of our hope of the future inheritance. Our hope does not originate with this law made four hundred and thirty years later. How foolish then, that the Galatians should ignore the promise and go back to that law for their hope of salvation, thus virtually setting aside Christ, the real foundation of their hopes for future good. The great fact that God gave the inheritance by promise to Abraham through this Seed, four hundred and thirty years before this law was given, to which they looked for justification, conclusively shows their folly in basing their hopes upon this ceremonial law.

"Wherefore then serveth the law?" this law of which he is speaking, what was its object or purpose? What use did it serve? "It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made: and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator." Gal. 3:19. This verse is a great central illuminator in the apostle's argument. He here gives us the design of that law of which he was speaking, the time when given, the point to which it extended, the agencies by which it was brought into existence, and the reasons why it was given. If these conditions reasonably, naturally apply to the moral law, then our friends who hold that view concerning the law in Galatians should have the benefit of the evidence. Let us examine this scripture carefully. What law is intended by these expressions?

1. It is reasonable to suppose this reference to the law will be in harmony with Paul's argument in the preceding part of the letter, which clearly brings to view the ceremonial law and not the moral law.

2. This law was given four hundred and thirty years after the promise to Abraham. Could it, therefore, be the same as "my commandments, my statutes, and my laws" which Abraham kept? (See Genesis 26:5.) They were evidently the moral law; hence this is not.

3. This law was "added because of transgressions." The original word signifies "to pass by or over; to transgress or violate." This law, then, had been "added" because some other law had been "passed by," "transgressed," or "violated." It was not "added" to itself because it had been "violated." This would be absurd if applied to the moral law; for none of us claim there was any more of the moral law really in existence

after the ten commandments were spoken than there had been before. They all existed before, though Israel may have been ignorant of portions of them. If the word rendered “added” in both the old and revised versions be rendered “appointed,” as some do render it, the conclusion is equally clear. It could not properly be said the moral law was “appointed four hundred and thirty years after Abraham, when we see it existed and he fully kept it at that time. It would be absurd to suppose this law was “added” to itself. It does apply reasonably to another law, brought in because the one previously existing had been “violated.” A law cannot be transgressed unless it exists; for “where no law is, there is no transgression.” Romans 4:15.

4. The law “added because of transgressions” unmistakably points to a remedial system, temporary in duration, “till the seed should come.” The moral law is referred to as the one transgressed. **But the “added” law, of which Paul is speaking, made provision for the forgiveness of these transgressions in figure, till the real Sacrifice should be offered.**

5. “Till the seed should come,” limits the duration of this remedial system, beyond all question. The word “till,” or “until,” ever has that meaning. The “added” law, then, was to exist no longer than “till the seed should come.” Did the moral law extend no farther than the full development of the Messiah? No Seventh-day Adventist will admit the moral law has been done away with. But this was precisely the case with the ceremonial law.

6. The “added” law was “ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.” Gal. 3:19. All agree this “mediator” was Moses, who went between God and the people. The original word for “ordained” is rendered “promulgate” by Greenfield, who cites this text as an illustration. Was it true the ten commandments were “ordained, or promulgated,” “by angels” in or by the hand of Moses? **God himself spoke the moral law with a voice that shook the earth, and wrote it with his own finger on stone tablets.** But the other law was given through angels, and written in a “book” by the “hand of Moses.” If the reader desires to see some of the instances where the same expression is used when speaking of the “law of Moses,” we refer him to Numbers 4:37; 15:22, 23; and especially Nehemiah 9:13, 14, where the distinction is clearly made between the laws which God spoke and the “precepts, statutes, and laws” given “by the hand of Moses.” Many others might be cited. These reasons seem clearly to prove the law concerning which the apostle is speaking, is the law of Moses written in a book, especially the typical remedial or ceremonial system.

Our friends who hold the view—it is the moral law, of course make every effort possible to avoid this conclusion. They claim the typical law was also in existence long before the law was given on Sinai; that it was

recognized when the patriarchs offered sacrifices, even from the time of Abel, and it would be as proper to speak of the “ordaining” of the moral law at Sinai as of the ceremonial, since both had a previous existence; that the principles of both laws had been lost sight of through sin and the captivity in Egypt. We know this is measurably true. But there remains this difference: the language unmistakably refers to a remedial system. “It was added because of transgressions.” A previous law existed to be transgressed, and this added law was to provide a temporal remedy “till the seed should come.” This language can never reasonably apply to the moral law; but it does apply to the ceremonial. No matter whether added at Sinai or as soon as man sinned in the Garden of Eden, it remains true of the typical remedial system, it was “added because of transgressions,” but this is not true of the moral law.

We also contend the typical remedial system was not really “ordained” before Sinai and understood by the people in any such sense as the moral law was. We admit they did make offerings of beasts in sacrifice, and knew of some other services afterward incorporated into the law of Moses. But as a system it was not known to any such degree as were the principles of the ten commandments. We can find constant references to these, where persons well understood their existence. Cain knew very well he had broken God’s law and was guilty. Abraham kept these statutes, commandments, and laws. The antediluvians and Sodomites were destroyed as “sinners;” i.e., transgressors of them. Joseph understood as well as we the wickedness of adultery, and would not commit this “great wickedness, and sin against God.” (Genesis 39:9.) Enoch and Noah were “perfect” men and “walked with God.” (Genesis 5:24; 6:8, 9.) They must, therefore, have been well acquainted with the principles of the moral law.

By far the largest portion of the typical remedial system owed its very existence to the time of Moses. The Passover, the new moons, the sanctuary services other than offerings, the Day of Atonement, Pentecost, the special laws concerning uncleanness, the Feast of Tabernacles, various death penalties, the immense number of ordinances, growing out of the priesthood work of the Levites and the civil laws of the Jewish nation, the special offerings connected with the scape-goat, and many other things too numerous to mention, here connected with that system, were never heard of, indeed had no existence before the book of the law was given. They were “ordained” at that time, as Paul indicates.

Another argument, a very late invention, designed to avoid the conclusion that the “added” law terminated at the cross, we briefly notice. It is the claim—that “the seed” has not yet come, and will not come till the second advent of Christ. It would be hard for the writer to think any believer in Christ would take such a position, had we not read it in our own

beloved *Signs of the Times*, July 29, 1886. It is seriously argued through two or three columns with the expression “till the seed should come to whom the promise was made” (Gal. 3:19); that it cannot be fulfilled till the promises made to the Seed are fulfilled. A large number of these are cited. How unfortunate to still have Judaizers in our day.

Does the language of the article really indicate this? The coming of the Seed is one thing, and the fulfillment of the promises made to that Seed quite another thing. If the Seed never comes till the promises made to him are fulfilled, we shall have to wait a long time for the coming of the Seed; for some of them reach through eternity. “For unto us a child is born [the birth of this child by the woman, and His development until an offering for the sins of men is provided, is the coming of the Seed], unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever.” Isaiah 9:6, 7. The promises to this Seed, many of them, reach beyond the second advent—as does this one—even into eternity. So, according to this reasoning, we may wait for all eternity for the Seed to come. But the apostle, in the expressions used, does not say promises, but “promise,” referring directly to the promise made to Abraham. But in the promise made to Abraham (Genesis 12:1-7; 17:1-8; both promises are really one), he agrees to make him and his seed a blessing to all the nations of the earth, and to give him the land of Canaan, which Paul, in Romans 4:13, enlarges to include the whole “world.”

Shall we conclude a part of this promise is not already in process of fulfillment? Are not the nations of the earth already being greatly blessed in that Seed by virtue of the way of salvation being opened to all, and because of the precious influences of the gospel? Who dares deny it? If a part of these promises are being fulfilled in this present state, then according to the writer’s own reasoning the Seed has already come. If we must wait till all the promise made to Abraham is fulfilled before we look for the Seed, then the Seed cannot come till the end of the one thousand years; for the land on planet earth is not inherited by Abraham till that time. Instead, the earth is a waste, a howling wilderness, for one thousand years after Christ comes. We can but regard such a position as utterly untenable and absurd.

The coming of the Seed is one thing, and the fulfillment of the promises after the Seed comes, quite another. Indeed, of necessity the Seed must come before any of the promises made to the Seed could be fulfilled. A portion of them are already being fulfilled; hence the Seed has already come. Paul says in Gal. 3:16, “And to thy seed, which is Christ.”

The “seed” and Christ, then, are one and the same. Therefore if the “seed” has not come, Christ has not come, in which case we are all in our sins, lost, without hope. To such preposterous conclusions does this position in the *Signs of the Times* lead.

Again, if the Seed does not come till the Second Advent, as the existence of the law was to terminate when the Seed came, if that law is the moral law, we must of necessity conclude God’s law ceases when Christ comes the second time—a conclusion but little less erroneous than the one which teaches its abrogation or cancellation at the First Advent. But why are such astonishing and erroneous positions as this taken?—To escape in some way the conclusion of Galatians 3:19, this “added” law was to terminate at the cross. The Seed has come, born of a woman, the God-man, partaking of our nature. He can never become to all eternity any more “the seed of the woman” the promised “seed of Abraham,” than he already is. We would like to have someone tell us how Christ becomes any more like the “seed of Abraham” at the second advent than he was at the first? Is he to be born again of another descendant of the great patriarch? The whole idea is preposterous. **This promised Seed made His great sacrifice for the race, by which they are being blessed, and there this “added law” terminated.**

Galatians 3:20-29: “Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our school-master to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a school-master. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”

In these verses the apostle continues to discuss this “added” law with special reference to the object it was to accomplish. It was not against the promises of God, but rather designed to provide a temporary help to the people till in the “fullness of time,” when the “seed should come,” and the promises through the Seed should begin to be fulfilled. During all this time preceding the coming of the Seed, this promise of the Seed was the great hope of the people. The law given four hundred and thirty years after, by the same God who made the promise, of course would not stand in the way of, or set aside, a most glorious

promise given by a God who could not lie. (See Titus 1:2.) This “added” law would conduce or aid to the same end by preparing the minds of the people for the full fruition of the promise—the promise that all the nations of the earth would be blessed in this Seed, the greatest hope ever given to the race. This law was secondary to the promise, not “against” it. It was impossible, in the nature of things, for a law to be given which could give life to a race of sinners who had violated the divine law, the great moral rule which had ever been in force. The hope of the promised Seed, a more efficient agency than any law could be given, was provided by infinite wisdom to meet this want. Doubtless many Jews believed “life” could be obtained by obedience to the “added” law of types, ceremonies, offered beasts, and blood streaming down the altars. But they did not see clearly the object of this law. They did not realize it was only a temporary arrangement, shadowing forth darkly in figures, types, and allegories, the coming of the Seed and His great sacrifice. And even after Christ had come and died, many did not comprehend it who professed to believe in Him. They still said, “Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.” Acts 15:1.

This kind of teaching followed Paul wherever he went. God had raised him up with special reference to clearly explaining this great transition from the old to the new dispensation. And now he presents the matter to these Galatian brethren who had been bewitched by this Judaizing teaching. “If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law;” (Gal. 3:21) and the terrible sacrifice of the Son of God would not have been necessary. These Galatians had taken the contradictory position of believing in Christ, and at the same time going back for salvation to services which, if in force, would make His death unnecessary; looking for salvation to obedience to a law whose main object had been to point out Christ’s great sacrifice for sin.

“But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.” (Verse 22) The revised version and the Diaglott say, “shut up all under sin.” This is the meaning of the original Greek word. All are sinners, Jew and Gentile alike. All need a Saviour. Though the Jews had kept this “added” law, and taught it to the Gentiles as necessary to salvation, yet they needed a Saviour just as much as did the Gentiles. How inconsistent, then, for the Galatians to go back to a law which would not save those who had kept it! “But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.” (Verse 23.) Is this text speaking of individuals previous to conversion, under the condemnation of the moral law till faith in Christ dawns upon their hearts? Or does it speak of Paul’s nation, the Jews, under guardianship as wards, under a provisional temporary system until Christ should come? Much

turns upon which of these positions is the true one. We take the latter view unhesitatingly. The revised version reads: "But before faith came [the faith, margin] we were kept in ward under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed." Being "in ward," Webster defines as "the state of being under guard, or guardianship," "the condition of a child under custody." The Diaglott renders it, "And before the coming of that faith, we were guarded under law, being shut up together for the faith being about to be revealed."

There can be no question but the text brings to view a peculiar provisional arrangement, a "guarding" of a body of people, a "shutting them up together," an "enclosing of them," as the original Greek word signifies, until a certain time is reached when "that faith" will be revealed. We confidently assert the word "faith" here is not used in the sense of a person's individual belief in Christ as a means of personal pardon for his sins, but is used in the sense of a great system of truth devised by God for the salvation of man—the belief in a crucified Saviour and kindred truths growing out of this central fact. **Jude writes of the "common salvation," and that we "should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."** Verse 3. We speak of keeping "the faith of Jesus." Paul, in his closing words, said he had "kept the faith." And in this same epistle to the Galatians he speaks of the faith which he preached (chap. 1:23), and of the "household of faith." Chap. 6:10. Indeed, in a large number of instances where the word "faith" is used in the New Testament, it has this sense, as any one can see by taking his concordance.

The Jewish people and all proselytes who had any regard for the God of the Hebrews, were thus kept under this provisional system of the "added" law, "shut up," hedged about by national barriers of distinction, from the rest of the world. They could not eat with them or associate intimately with them. A "middle wall of partition" divided them from others. They were "enclosed," guarded on the right hand and on the left, till the great system of faith in a crucified Saviour was "afterwards revealed" by the coming of the promised "Seed."

We would be much pleased to have our friends who hold this "added" law as the ten commandments, tell us how the law against blasphemy, murder, lying, stealing, etc., "shut individuals up," "guarded" them "in ward," in the relation of a "child to a guardian," to a "revelation" to be made "afterwards." But it is thought in this verse, the expression "under the law," must refer to the sinner under the condemnation of the moral law. Lengthy arguments have been made in support of this; but we fail to see evidence to prove this position. We claim this expression "under the law" has two significations: (1.) Primarily meaning under the authority of the law, or under obligation to keep it; (2.) Under the condemnation of the law, with its penalty impending over us, or already suf-

fering it. The expression itself does not decide which of these meanings is to be understood; the connection must decide it.

The Greek word rendered “under,” is *hupo*. It is used a great many times in the New Testament, and in the great majority of instances is rendered. “of,” “with,” or “by,” as the reader will see by examining his Greek concordance. Greenfield gives a variety of definitions, such as the sense in many places requires, one of which is, “Of subjection to a law.” He gives no instance where it is used in the sense of being subject to the condemnation of the law; yet we are free to grant it sometimes has that sense. But this is not the primary meaning of the term.

We read in Matthew 8:9 of “a man under authority, having soldiers under” him; i.e., authority was over him, and he was in authority over the soldiers, and each was to obey; not, he was under the condemnation of authority or the soldiers under his condemnation. “Under” in both cases is from the same word *hupo*. In Romans 13:1 we read: “The powers that be are ordained of God.” “Of, is from *hupo*; i.e. under the authority of God. In Galatians 4:2 we read of the child living “under [*hupo*] tutors and governors;” i.e., they have authority over the child, not, he or she is under their condemnation. Other illustrations might be given the same meaning. Indeed, the very nature of the expression itself signifies this, “under the law” simply meaning the law being above or having authority over the persons who were under it. This is the primary, simplest meaning of this term; and unless strong reasons can be adduced to the contrary, we should always give the expression this signification or meaning. Where reasons can be given to show the sense requires us to understand it to mean the condemnation of the law, then we will understand it, and not before. But evidently in the text we are now examining, it means simply, the Jews were “shut up” under the authority of that typical remedial system, with its barriers, walls of separation, etc., till the system of faith should be revealed under which they could find salvation.

“Wherefore the law was our school-master to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.” Gal. 3:24. “Wherefore” “expresses a consequence” from his preceding reasoning. The original Greek word requires this, as Greenfield states. The law “was [revised version, hath been] our *paidagogos*” (literal Greek), or pedagogue. The word occurs but three times in the New Testament, twice in this connection and once where it is rendered “instructor.” Greenfield defines it as follows: “A person, usually a slave or freed man, to whom the care of the boys of a family was committed, who trained them up and formed their manners, attended them at their play, led them to and from the public school, and, when they were grown up, became their companions, noted for their imperiousness (authoritative behaviour) and severity; in the New Testament, director, governor, instructor, leader. 1 Corinthians 4:15; tropi-

cally spoken of [as] the Mosaic law. Galatians 3:24, 25.”

We have no person in our domestic or educational system in this age answering to this term. It is not properly a “school-master” or an “instructor” in the sense in which we would understand those terms. This person led the boys to school to be instructed by others. They did not continue to occupy this relation to them after the boys were grown to manhood. They merely held a temporary position, to pass away when the boys were fully developed. They were “noted for their imperiousness [egotism] and severity.” They had the boys especially under their charge merely for a season. Does the holy eternal law of God, the “law of liberty,” occupy such a position as this? Is its relation to man that of a slave, an inferior, in any period of his life? Is it severe, “imperious” [or egotistic] because empowered with a little temporary authority? Is its position merely a temporary one, lasting till the Christian is developed, and then ceasing its claims? Was it the office of the “paidagogos” after he got the boys to school, to then turn around and become their instructor, their supreme authority, ever after? Such views of the relation of God’s law to the sinner or anyone else, would be manifestly absurd.

But this relation eminently fits if we apply it to a provisional temporary system of law in which the Jew and proselyte were “shut up,” “in ward,” till the “middle wall of partition” was “broken down.” It was a “severe” system, “yoke of bondage” which they could not bear, which was “against” them, and “contrary to” them.

Paul draws his conclusion from his reasoning in the previous verses, which we have examined. The moral law never leads a man to Christ, then leaves him. It always stays with him. We may be delivered from its condemnation; but its supreme authority must be regarded then as before. Its claims never leave us. There is nothing in that law about Christ, not a hint. All the law does is to condemn those who break it, and justify those who keep it. It is the sense of guilt in the man’s conscience which is acted upon by the Spirit of God, which makes him go to Christ; not anything in the moral law itself. **But the “added” law did lead to Christ. Every type, every sacrifice, every feast day, holy day, new moon, and annual Sabbath, and all the priestly offerings and services pointed out something in the work of Christ.** They were as a body “shut up,” “guarded,” under the control of this “severe,” “imperious” pedagogue, till the great system of justification by faith was reached at the cross of Christ. Mr. Greenfield could readily see this pedagogue must be used as an illustration of the “Mosaic law.” It is strange that all others cannot see the same. “But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a [pedagogue, or] school-master.” Gal 3:25. The coming of “that faith” is the full development of the great system of faith or truth growing out of the death of Christ. “We are no longer under a” “pedagogue,” no longer under his authority; his authority is no longer over us,

because his office ceased when the "Seed" came. Then all who accept Christ in His true character are children of God. They are "baptized into Christ," and hence "have put on Christ." (See verse 26.)

What, now, does Paul conclude from these grand truths? "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Gal 3:28. All national social barriers are broken down in the presence of the liberty which is in Christ Jesus; all stand on a level before God. The proud Jew must come to God through Christ, the same as the despised barbarian. The females are no longer to be divided off into different worshipping assemblies by a special court because God looks upon a man with so much more favor than upon a woman. The poor slave can come to the blessed Saviour just as freely as can the lordly master who pretends to own him. **All God now requires is a humble heart, repentance and confession of sin, faith in the precious blood of Christ, and a determination to serve God and obey all his requirements; and God regards one class as well as another.**

This may seem to us, eighteen centuries (now, twenty-two centuries) after these national and social distinctions have been swept away, as so plain a truth it need not be demonstrated by an argument. But when Paul proclaimed it, it stirred up a bitterness in the minds of the arrogant Jews, of which we can scarcely conceive. They followed him everywhere, thirsting for his blood. The Jew had no thought of surrendering the preeminence he had so long held. The Greeks and Romans also exalted themselves as highly favored people. This great truth needed then, and ever since, has been used to keep down pride, caste, and all social exclusiveness.

This forcible statement of the equity of all before God, is clearly a conclusion of the apostle's argument. To deny this, would be to charge the apostle with bringing in foreign matter in no way related to his subject. But will our friends explain to us how this conclusion would grow out of his argument if it concerned the moral law? Did this law, in its relation to the sinner, create national distinctions between the Jew and Greek, bond and free, male and female?—Certainly not. But the ceremonial law did. It was the very agency which created for them, circumcision and what it represented.

"If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Gal. 3:29. Here we have another of Paul's important sub-conclusions, growing out of his argument. These poor Galatians had been made to believe, and myriads of others, the same danger, that they "must be circumcised," and "keep the law of Moses," in order to be "Abraham's seed." So these had been turned away to "another gospel." But Paul has shown by this very process of reasoning that **faith in Christ, the promised "seed" of Abraham, would make them heirs**

according to the promise. Hence circumcision and the “law of Moses” was all unnecessary. They were no longer “under” that law.

Galatians 4:1-11 “Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: 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. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain.”

In the first verses of this quotation, the apostle again brings to view the provisional nature of this added law, as he did in the scriptures recently noticed. He illustrates the subject by the case of an heir, who, as long as he remains a child, is really in the same condition as a servant. He is under tutors and governors until he reaches the age of maturity, when he is an independent freeman, to go forth and perform work suitable to those who have reached the stage of manhood. He “is under tutors and governors, until the time appointed of the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world.” Verses 2 & 3. This continued until a certain time was reached, “the fullness of time,” when “God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law.” Verse 4. Here are certain expressions which have a very important bearing on the argument concerning the law in Galatians. In Paul’s illustration we see the Jewish people were “under the elements of the world,” even as the minor was “under tutors and governors,” till “the fullness of time was come.” This point of time is the very same as when Christ was made “under the law, to redeem them that were under the law” (verse 5) spoken of in the previous chapter. It is plain, therefore, being under the “elements of the world,” and “under the law,” are precisely the same thing. The use the apostle makes of the pronoun “we” is also significant, evidently referring to himself and his people previous to the coming of “the fullness of time.” When he comes to speak of the Galatians, he says “ye,” in each case. Those whom he speaks of as “we,” were in a state of minority, children, “under the elements of the world,” till “the fullness of time was come,” that “we might receive the adoption of sons.”

Verse 5. They could not receive this full “adoption” till the promised “Seed” came. Then when they became Christ’s, they were adopted as a part of Abraham’s seed.

What are these “elements” which the apostle speaks of, in which they were in bondage until God sent forth His Son, made under the law? Are they the commandments of God, the law of liberty, that holy, pure law which will be the rule in the judgment? We think this would be an absurd conclusion. We claim with great confidence, these “elements” refer to a different system. The original word is defined by Greenfield: “Elementary instruction, first principles, the lowest rudiments in knowledge, science, etc.” The word is translated “rudiments” in the revised version and in the Diaglott. The same word occurs in Colossians 2:20, where it is translated “rudiments:” “Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to, ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not),” Verse 21. These words occur just after he had been speaking of “Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and” taking “it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;” saying also, “Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days; which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.” Col. 2: 14, 16, 17. It is very plain therefore the apostle in Colossians, is speaking of the rudiments of the world—the same expression precisely in the original as we have in Galatians—refers to matters connected with the ceremonial law. He also states their being under these “elements,” or rudiments, brought them into “bondage.”

How plain it is, these “elements” are the same as the law of which Paul speaks in Galatians 5:1, 2: “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.” Also as the law spoken of by the apostle Peter in Acts 15:10, in the famous Council: “Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?” referring, as everyone knows, to the law of Moses, circumcision; also to that mentioned in Col. 2:14: “Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us.” In all of these scriptures, the reference is unmistakably to a law of temporary duration, onerous, burdensome, and different from the gospel of free salvation through Christ, the ritual or ceremonial law and not the moral law of ten commandments.

The parallel condition under these rudiments cannot refer to the individual experience of persons but must refer to the condition in which all were placed until “the fullness of the time was come” when “God sent forth his Son.” It would be preposterous to say of each individual person

in a condition of sinfulness, under the condemnation of the moral law, that he should remain in such a condition until "the fullness of the time" was reached when God should send forth his Son, "made under the law." Gal. 4:4. This expression refers to the full development of Christ as the Messiah; but it is eminently applicable when spoken of the Israelites before Christ's gospel was preached. They were in the position of children under mere rudimentary instruction, awaiting the fullness of time when God should send forth his Son with great effulgence or radiance of light. Their instruction was in shadows and ceremonies, all pointing forward to the time when God should send forth His Son.

This scripture we understand to be parallel in many respects with the statement in the preceding chapter, where the added law is spoken of, which was to last "till the seed should come" Gal. 3:19; and with the statement in verse 23, where they were "shut up [kept in ward] unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed." When these temporary provisions had reached their consummation, and the fullness of time had come, then the temporary gave place to the permanent, the shadowy to the substance, the condition of childhood to that of manhood; and the middle wall of partition passing away, all could now become one in Christ Jesus, a child of God of the seed of Abraham, who had received the adoption of sons of God, God giving them special witness in the pouring out of His Spirit. They were no longer servants under a temporary arrangement, but heirs of God through Christ.

In verse 4, where Paul speaks of God sending forth His Son, made of a woman, we have the expression "made under the law." We have already considered the meaning of this term, "under the law," and have clearly shown it does not always mean under the condemnation of the law, but rather under the authority of the law, or under obligation to keep it. The term evidently has this meaning here. Both the revised version and the Diaglott translate "made under the law," "born under the law." Greenfield, in the definition of the original word, which has a great variety of significations, quotes its use in this fourth verse with the definition, "subject to the law." This evidently is the correct sense in which it should be used. It is not true that our Saviour was born under the condemnation of the law of God. This would be manifestly absurd. He did voluntarily take the sins of the world upon Him in His great sacrifice upon the cross, we admit; but He was not born under its condemnation. He was pure, and had never committed a sin in His life, it would be an astonishing perversion of all proper theology to say He was born under the condemnation of God's law. (See 1 Peter 1:18, 19.)

But how clearly and forcibly this applies to the facts in Jesus' life; if we understand it as referring to His being subject to the Mosaic law. He was born as a Jew, was circumcised when eight days old, and His parents went through the accustomed days of purification, according to the

law of Moses. They presented the child as their firstborn, as the law required, and offered as a sacrifice a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons. He lived under all the ceremonies and observances of the law of Moses the same as did the other Jews. Thus He was "born under the law," and subject to it. (See Luke 2:21-24.) All His life He was careful not to break any of its provisions, and He never permitted His disciples to do it to the day of His death. He even refused to labor especially for the Gentiles, because He was sent to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Matt. 15:24. How plainly we see, then, He was "made under the law;" and was subject to the law the same as others, so He might "redeem them that were under the law." Gal. 4:5. "He came unto his own [the Jewish people], and his own received him not." John 1:11. And we cannot doubt, had they received Him, a way would have been provided by which that nation would have been greatly honored, and all the Gentiles would have come to their knowledge of Christ through God's adopted people. But they rejected Him, and this opened the way for the Gentiles even more so they would have access to Him. We see great force in this expression of Christ being **under the law**; that is, **subject to its requirements**.

God had honored the Hebrew nation by separating them from the world by those peculiar institutions of which circumcision was a sign. He ordained that the true children of Christ should come through them, and gave them the greatest light of all others, so they might have no excuse, but be honored of God, if they would accept the Messiah. His great desire was to redeem them from sin, those who were under or subject to that law. This was the desire of Paul also. He would have been willing to give his life if he could have saved his own nation by doing so. But in their stubborn exclusiveness, and arrogant ideas of themselves as the only people whom God could honor, they lost the blessing which they might have obtained by humbly accepting Christ. All these "elements," or rudiments of knowledge which they obtained by means of the typical system, pointed them forward to the precious blessings which came through the knowledge and acceptance of the Son of God.

This expression "under the law" in Gal. 4:4, is evidently used in precisely the same sense as "under tutors and governors," in verse 2. "Under tutors and governors" does not mean under their condemnation, or frown, or rod of punishment; no, not by any means; but under their protection, guidance, authority, etc. So Christ was made, or born, under the law, or subject to it, in the same sense that they were under tutors and governors. This is in the same sense as the word is used in Gal. 3:23: "Before faith came, we were kept under the law;" or subject to it, shut up with it, until the time when Christ should come. The apostle's illustration of their previous condition under the ceremonial law, as a child under tutors and governors, is a most forcible evidence that our

position is correct; the law in Galatians refers to the ceremonial system and cannot possibly refer to the moral law. The language concerning "elements of the world" (Gal. 4:3)—these "weak and beggarly elements" (verse 9) to which they desired to return, under which they had been in servitude—it is utterly inconsistent to apply to the moral law which is "spiritual," "holy, just, and good." (See Ro. 7:14, 12.)

After having spoken in the first verse of the chapter of the condition of God's people previous to the coming of Christ, in Gal. 4:6 he makes his argument applicable to the Galatian believers, to whom he was writing. They had become converted, had become "sons." God had sent forth his Holy Spirit into their hearts, so they could cry, "Abba Father." Now they were no longer servants to go back to the old provisional system; hence their course in following the teachings of these Jews was all out of place. They were heirs of God through Christ when they received the gospel. In Gal. 4:8-11 we have an interesting point noticed, as follows: "Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods; but now, after ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain." We claim this language to be strong evidence of the truthfulness of our position, and therefore, wholly inconsistent with the position our friends take, that this law is the moral law of God. To avoid this conclusion, they even argue that the "weak and beggarly elements," the observance of "days and months and times and years" has reference to heathen customs, not to those of the ceremonial law. We cannot accept this view of the subject; for we feel sure it is not the truth. The language clearly shows, the persons referred to had in some period of their lives been the worshipers of other gods. This we admit. We also admit that some of the Galatians were of this class. But these admissions do not, by any means, necessitate the conclusion our friends would draw from this scripture.

Our position is, these persons referred to were proselytes. We present a brief argument on this subject to make our position clear. No intelligent student of history will deny, at the time of Christ's advent, and for a generation preceding that event, there were most earnest efforts made by the Jewish people to proselyte Gentiles to their faith. From the time of the Babylonian captivity, they had been largely scattered among all the nations round about Palestine. They were an enterprising and commercial people, as they always have been. Scarcely any nation could have stood the persecution and hatred which followed them, and yet maintained themselves as a distinct people, as the Jews have in almost every part of the earth. Comparatively few in the nations ever returned from captivity to Judea to make it their home. Vast multitudes

would come from nearly every part of the Roman Empire on the feast days, so much so, even more than a million would often be in or encamped around the holy city. There was scarcely a nation of any importance with whom the Jews did not trade and carry on the avocations of life. Their synagogues were established in the leading cities. Any one who has read the book of Acts knows, in every prominent place where Paul went to labor, he entered the synagogue of the Jews first. These synagogues were, of course, established in the midst of idolatrous populations whose religious systems were unreasonable and absurd. Many of the more sensible people became attached to these Jewish synagogues, and attended them to learn of the true God.

This is evidently one great reason why God permitted His people to be scattered to all these countries. He placed them in the land of Palestine, which was like a bridge, or open pathway, through which the nations of the earth traveled to and fro between Egypt, Assyria, and the nations of the earth. This was done so His moral law might enlighten the people of the world. When Israel went into captivity, and saw that their idolatry and neglect of God's law had brought His frown upon them, they became more zealous, so they never lapsed into idolatry again; and, being scattered throughout the nations of the world, they prepared the way for the advent of the Messiah.

The Jews had a disposition to proselyte, there can be no question. Our Saviour said of them, "Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte." Matthew 23:15. This language shows the intense interest they had in the work of making people favorable to their views. The reason for this can be seen at a glance, when we consider they were scattered among the different nations, and their vocations in life were at the mercy of the heathen around them; they would naturally desire to have them take a favorable view of their religion, and be interested in it. Some of them might proselyte for the purpose of saving their souls; but selfish motives evidently actuated these of whom our Saviour speaks, for they made them even more the children of hell than themselves. Their success in proselytizing is evident from many scriptures; even some eminent persons like the queen of Sheba in the Old Testament (see 1 Kings 10), and Candace in the New Testament (Acts 8:27), and King Izates, with his queen, Helena, as mentioned by Josephus, are royal representatives. Conybeare and Howson, in their *Life and Epistles of the Apostle Paul*, speak concerning the extent of this work of proselytizing, as follows:

"During the time of the Maccabees, some alien tribes were forcibly incorporated with the Jews. This was the case with the Itureans, and probably with the Moabites, and above all, with the Edomites, with whose name the Herodian family is historically connected. How far Ju-

daism extended among the vague collection of tribes called Arabians, we can only conjecture from the curious history of the Homerites, and from the actions of such chieftains as Aretas (2 Corinthians 11:32). But as we travel toward the west and north, into countries better known, we find no lack of evidence of the moral effect of the synagogues, with their worship of Jehovah and their prophecies of the Messiah." There are numerous instances in the Acts of the Apostles where we see these views are indicated.

Nicholas of Antioch, one of the seven deacons, was a proselyte. Acts 6:5. There were vast multitudes of Greeks attending worship at Jerusalem, many of whom were evidently proselytes. In Acts 13:50 we read: "But the Jews stirred up the devout and honorable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas." These were evidently of the same class. Timothy was really a proselyte, and it cannot be doubted the way the apostle gained access to the Gentiles was largely through the interest many of them had in the worship of the synagogues. This was the case in nearly every city into which they entered. These proselytes were of two classes, as any one may see by examining the dictionaries, or Cruden's large concordance. One class, called the "proselytes of justice," were those who fully accepted the teachings of the Jews, being circumcised, offering sacrifices, according to the law of Moses. But a far larger class were called "proselytes of the gate;" those who regarded God and the Bible, and obeyed the moral principles of its teachings, separating themselves from the Gentile heathen customs, and worshiping the true God. Such men as Cornelius, the centurion (Acts 10), and vast numbers of others in all parts of the Gentile world where the Jewish religion was known, were of this class.

Smith, his Unabridged Dictionary of the Bible, Conybeare and Howson, Barnes, in his Notes, and others all agree, a large number of Jews settled in Galatia a century or two earlier than Paul's time, so the whole country became familiar with Jewish ideas and the Bible religion. Having the same disposition to proselytize as their brethren in other parts of the country, we cannot doubt; a large number of this class were "proselytes of the gate," were ready for the labors of Paul, and were of the number who received the gospel with great joy. They had been, as Gal. 4:8 indicates, at one time, those who "did service unto them which by nature are no gods," or had known something of the true God, but had not fully identified themselves with the Jewish customs. They had regarded their rites and ceremonies with respect, and had in a measure separated themselves from idolatry. Conybeare and Howson state there were large numbers of this class of proselytes scattered all through the Roman Empire, especially in the countries around Syria, etc. They say: "Under this term we include at present all those who were attracted in various degrees of intensity toward Judaism—from those who by cir-

cumcision had obtained full access to all the privileges of the temple worship, to those who, only professed a general respect for the Mosaic religion, and attended as hearers in the synagogues. Many proselytes were attached to the Jewish communities wherever they were dispersed." Page 28.

Dr. Clarke, in his comments on Galatians, in several places speaks of there being many proselytes among the disciples. He says: "The Jewish religion was general in the region of Galatia, and it was respected, as it appears, the principal inhabitants were either Jews or proselytes." Again, "Judaism was popular, and the more converts the false teachers could make, the more occasion for glorying they had. They wished to get these Christian converts who had been before proselytes of the gate, to receive circumcision so they might glory in their flesh. 'Behold my converts!' Thus they gloried or boasted, not that the people were converted to God, but that they were circumcised." Large numbers of these proselytes no doubt received the gospel from Paul, and enjoyed its liberty, and the Spirit of God enabled them to cry, "Abba, Father." Gal. 4:6.

But after he went away, those Judaizing teachers came with their usual burden—"Except ye be circumcised," and "keep the law of Moses," "ye cannot be saved." This filled Paul's heart with great sadness; for, as we have seen, he had met this thing ever since his conversion, and nearly lost his life several times because of the bitter, exclusive spirit. So he writes this letter to the Galatians; and calling their attention to these facts, he says: "How turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?" Verse 9.

Our friends will struggle hard to escape the conclusion, these "weak and beggarly elements" refer to the ceremonial law; and in reason we can come to no other conclusion. They are evidently the same as the "rudiments" under which God's people were held, mentioned in the third verse. They brought them into the same bondage, as brought to view in Gal. 5:1, where the apostle pleads with them not to be "entangled again with the yoke of bondage," as they would be if they were circumcised, in which case Christ would profit them nothing.

This is evidently the same "yoke" which Peter speaks of in the 15th chapter of Acts, when the same subject was under consideration. In this epistle the apostle had not been saying one word about Gentile customs, or Gentile observances, or heathen worship, or services, or anything of the sort; he had simply made reference in the verse to the fact they had been at a certain time, heathen. This, of course, was true in their case, seeing they had become proselytes. But he constantly refers, from the beginning to the end of this epistle, to the Mosaic system, circumcision, etc.; and we cannot believe Paul was so poor a logician he would strike off on something entirely foreign to the subject he was

bringing before the Galatians.

The identification of these “elements of the world”—these “weak and beggarly elements” into which the Galatians desired to return into bondage—with the ceremonial law, is an important link in this argument. (See Gal. 4:9.) There can be no question but that our position on this point is correct. Dr. Schaff, in his comments on these “rudiments,” says: “According to my view, the expression applies in any case only to Judaism, especially to the law (an apostle Paul could not possibly comprehend heathenism and Judaism under one idea, regarding them thus as virtually equivalent).” We trust our friends who sometimes endeavor to apply these “rudiments” partially to heathenism, will consider this well.

Dr. Clarke says, “On rudiments of the world” (see Col. 2:20), “the rudiments or principles of the Jewish religion.” He says, also, the “weak and beggarly elements were the ceremonies of the Mosaic law.” Dr. Scott takes the same position. It would certainly be little better than blasphemy to apply such terms to the moral law which God has said is “perfect,” “spiritual,” “holy, just, and good.” (See James 1:25; Ro. 7:14, 12.) And by no consistent reasoning can they be made to apply to the Gentile idolatry, as this is not the subject of the apostle’s reasoning in his epistle. But these expressions are in every way consistent with his language when speaking of the ceremonial law.

“Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.” These are precisely the things Paul refers to in Colossians 2:16, just before he speaks of the “rudiments,” in verse 20. “Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days,” etc. Verse 16. These Galatians under their Judaizing teachers were becoming all absorbed in these old shadows pointing forward to Christ, after the substance had come, thus really denying Christ; for if the shadow was to be observed, certainly the substance had not come. No wonder he says, “I am afraid [for] you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain.” Gal 4:11. We claim, this is the only logical, reasonable view of this argument of Paul’s.

But how could we apply these expressions to the moral law? Could we say, these days which they observed were seventh-day Sabbaths, which made the apostle fearful of them? This would be excellent for our Antinomian friends; for it is just such texts as these they try to refer to the ten commandments. Our friends would thus give them great aid and comfort. Are the “weak and beggarly elements” here presented in Gal. 4:9 the terms by which Paul describes the moral law? It is evident the Galatians desired to go back into obedience to something, and thus place themselves under bondage. Was it obedience to the law of God? They observed something, they rendered obedience to “days, and months, and times, and years.” Verse 10. Surely this does not refer to the moral law. We know our friends will undertake to apply these to the

heathen rites and ceremonies, and thus throw the apostle's argument all out of connection with his whole theme; but this we have seen is inadmissible. He complains of these persons for obedience to something which they ought not to obey. He is not speaking about their being justified by their good works because they did not lie, steal, or murder; this is not his subject at all; but it certainly is about going back to a ceremonial law which was abolished.

Galatians 4:12-20: "Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am; for I am as ye are: ye have not injured me at all. Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first. And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as [ye would have received] Christ Jesus. Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me. Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth? They zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them. But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you. My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you, I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you."

Paul now gives an affectionate turn to his argument, setting before them his infirmities, temptations, devotion to their interests, and faithfulness in laboring on their behalf. He talks to them from a personal standpoint, pleading with them affectionately, to obtain once more their sympathies against the Judaizing teachers who were perverting the truth in their midst. They had once loved him so much they would have plucked out their eyes for him; but through these teachers they had lost their interest in him. He refers to these Judaizing teachers in verse 17: "They zealously affect you, but not well;" or, as the Diaglott has it, "They show affection toward you, but not honorably." The thought is plainly this: these teachers, by making a great show of love by flattery and pretense, wished to draw the affections of the disciples toward themselves, and shut Paul out of their affections; and evidently they had succeeded. But Paul reasoned with them to show them how much he had suffered for them, and endeavored to call them again to the truth—all those whom he had brought out with great self-sacrifice. They had once been willing to pluck out their eyes for him; but now they almost regarded him as an enemy, through the miserable influence of these Judaizing teachers, who had followed Paul everywhere with the same object, and added bitterness to his life. **Can we believe these hypocritical teachers were intensely interested to get these Galatians to refrain from murder, Sabbath-breaking, adultery, covetousness, etc.? This conclusion, of course, is too preposterous for any one to believe; but**

they evidently were trying to get them to do something. It was not merely to have a mental view, that they were justified by obeying the ten commandments. There is no hint in any part of the Bible these teachers had any such purpose as this. But they were trying to exalt the exclusive Mosaic system that had made them a peculiar people, the yoke of bondage which had passed away at the cross. Paul was in great perplexity in regard to these Galatian disciples, to know what they were going to do. His soul travailed with an anxious burden on their behalf, until Christ should be again fully accepted, and the shadowy system of types and ceremonies be left behind.

Galatians 4:21-31: "Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the Scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free."

Galatians 5:1-5: "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith."

"Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?" Gal. 4:21. Here we have the expression "under the law" repeated once more. We have already dwelt at some length upon this phrase, and have claimed its uses in the letter to the Galatians referred to being subject to the law, under its authority. But one of our friends who is enthusiastic in his devotion to the view that the law in Galatians is the moral law, goes so far as to claim, in every case where this expression is used, it signifies "being in a state of sin or condemnation;" i.e., in a position where the penalty of the law hangs over one's head. The penalty is

the “second death” in “the lake of fire.” (See Revelation 20.) We have, then, according to this view, these Galatian brethren desiring to be in a state of guilt, which would expose them to the lake of fire. “Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law,” with this equivalent expression substituted, would read, “Tell me, ye that desire to be under the condemnation of the law—Tell me, ye that desire the condemnation which results in the second death.” We have known men to desire many strange things, but we never before knew one to desire the second death. But if such a view of the subject is correct, and this law is the moral law, and all these expressions “under the law” mean under its condemnation, then we have no possible escape from this conclusion. To think of these new, zealous converts to Christianity desiring to go into a state of condemnation exposed to such a doom is too preposterous for a moment’s consideration. But to such absurdities do these positions drive us.

The true position is: these Galatians desired to go back and place themselves under obligation to keep the ceremonial law. This is manifestly in harmony with all the apostle’s reasoning.

“Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?” Gal. 4:21. Having noticed the first part of the expression, we also notice the latter part—“do ye not hear the law?” He then quotes from the book of Genesis 16, 17, and 21 the story of Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar as an allegory. Here the word “law” is used to include the book of Genesis. Certainly this could not mean the moral law, but must include the book of the law containing all the requirements of the Mosaic dispensation. The original law of circumcision constantly referred to in this epistle, stands in close connection with this story of Hagar in Genesis 17:23-27. The term “the law” among the Jews generally included the five books of Moses, thus including the whole system, moral, ritual, typical, and civil. This system these Judaizing teachers desired to maintain. Circumcision was a sign of the whole. We believe so far as being obligatory upon Christians, all was abolished except the ten commandments and the principles which grew out of them. When Paul says, “Ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?” (Gal. 4:21), isn’t the law they were to hear the same as the one they desired to be under? But the law they were to “hear” was not the ten commandments, but that which embraced the whole Mosaic system. The law here referred to cannot therefore be the moral law.

As another illustration of Paul’s argument, he now calls attention to the facts connected with Abraham’s two marriages with Sarah and Hagar. He tells us this history is an “allegory,” i.e., as Clarke says, “more being intended, in the account than meets the eye.” The original word has just this meaning. What then, is this hidden meaning which the inspired apostle has discovered in this simple narrative?—That Hagar and Sarah spiritually represented the two covenants. “The one from Mount

Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar.” This “answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children.” (See Gal 4:24, 25.) This covenant must embrace all those peculiar separating ordinances embraced in the middle wall of partition. It must have special reference to the “added” law concerning which he has been all the time speaking, else he would entirely diverge from his line of argument, and his conclusions be illogical, disconnected from his premises.” Tell me, ye that desire to be under the [ceremonial] law, do ye not hear the law?” Verse 21. Then immediately he introduces the illustration of the two covenants. It has direct reference to the conclusion in the first verses of chapter 5. Those in that covenant were “in bondage” with their children. The covenant itself “gendereth to bondage,” i.e., “bringing forth” or “bearing children for servitude or bondage” (revised version and Diaglott). Hence the conclusion of his argument, “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage,” Gal. 5:1—the “yoke” which Peter says that, “neither our fathers nor we were able to bear.” Acts 15:10. We can but conclude, this covenant which brings forth children to bondage embraces the law of circumcision and all it represents. The services connected with this covenant centered at Jerusalem. All its sacrifices must be made there. Its feasts were observed there, every Jew constantly prayed with his face toward that city, and his wailings and longings, pilgrimages and devotions, all pivot on old Jerusalem, even to this day. All this is shadowed forth in the covenant represented in Hagar. But Sarah, the true wife, represents the glorious freedom and precious blessings of the new covenant. New Jerusalem is our holy city. This is “above,” and it is “the mother of us all.” We are the children of the “promise” if we have come under the new covenant even as Isaac did.

The promise of the “Seed” [the Messiah] was through Israel. Some of our good brethren think the promise of the “seed” is still in the future, the “seed” has not yet come. If the promise of the “Seed” is not yet fulfilled, then the covenant of liberty represented by Sarah, which this promised “Seed” was to make, has certainly not yet gone into force. So our friends, we suppose, are still under the old covenant of bondage, represented by Hagar. We should pity them greatly if their own theory was true. But we are thankful we have glad tidings for them. **The Seed has come. We trust, they are the children of the New Jerusalem.** We hope to save them in spite of their theories. Is it possible anyone can believe this covenant which is represented by Hagar, and gendereth to bondage,” is a proper illustration of God’s holy law? Does it “answer to Jerusalem” which is in bondage with her children?

Then comes the grand conclusion of the argument of the apostle, not only of the immediate connection, but of all he has said in the whole epistle thus far. We have referred to it several times, but we are sure it

will be in place again. "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." Gal. 5:1-4. These are strong, emphatic, most powerful words. The Galatians would never have been called out by the meek apostle except a great crisis existed. The very foundation of the gospel system was involved in this question of circumcision. If they were circumcised, they were debtors "to do the whole law." Circumcision was the sign of the whole Mosaic system. They must offer sacrifices, regard the special laws concerning uncleanness, maintain the old wall of separation between themselves and all the rest of mankind, making the progress of the gospel, in its beneficent mission of blessing to all nations of earth, excessively hard and virtually denying the gospel itself. For when they did all these things, they virtually said: "Christ has not come;" for it would be impossible to do the work prophecy said His coming would accomplish, if this fearful dead weight were hung upon the gospel. And above all, if salvation was to be obtained through these old abrogated laws, then the death of Christ was not sufficient to save men who might repent and believe in Him. These false teachers said: "Ye cannot be saved" "except ye be circumcised" and "keep the law of Moses." So circumcision and the law of Moses was the real saviour for them, rather than the death of Christ.

The proselytes in Galatia did not realize all the consequence of their actions until Paul explained it to them, nor did thousands of others to whom these Judaizing teachers have access to. This made it necessary for God to raise up Paul, whose education, early life, thorough understanding of Judaism, his conversion, and wonderful spiritual illumination fully equipped him to be a true apostle to the Gentiles. Years passed after Christ's death before the gospel made much impression on the heathen world. The influences centering in Jerusalem seemed to stand in the way of the Gentile branch of the work. Such large numbers of Jewish converts as well, seemed to have been affected with Jewish prejudices; it required a clear-headed, strong man to undertake this gigantic task. The Judaizers followed Paul to every place in order to introduce their exclusive notions. Christians in that age could see and feel the pressures put upon them like we cannot now.

The reason why our brethren err in their application of the law in Galatians, is because they fail to grasp the tremendous importance of the issue involved in apostolic times in Judaism, and the questions growing out of it. They reason from the standpoint of certain questions in our present day: But these concluding words of the apostle's argument

shows how important he regarded this question. The language in Galatians five unmistakably refers to the Mosaic law, and cannot by any possibility be twisted to refer to the moral law. "If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing." Verse 2. Ye are debtors "to do the whole law." Verse 3. "Be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Verse 1 "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." Verse 4.

The apostle's intense interest in this question, is not only shown by these expressions, but by others throughout the epistle, as we have seen, referring to the same subject: "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel." Gal. 1:6. Those that "trouble" you "would pervert the gospel of Christ." Verse 7. "Oh foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you?" Gal. 3:1. "Are ye so foolish? ... Are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" Verse 3. "I would they were even cut off which trouble you." Gal. 5:12. Some try to make this expression mean something very mild, and fail to sense the intense feelings of the apostle in view of the evil they were doing. They were "false brethren," who "came in privily," in a secret, underhanded manner, to destroy their liberty and bring the whole gospel system into "bondage." Gal. 2:4. Paul says of those who preach another gospel, Let them "be accursed." Gal. 1:8, 9. Their course was ruinous to souls, destroying the very way of salvation through Christ, putting aside God's merciful provisions for the blessing of the nations of earth, to hold new converts in their narrow, exclusive circle, and exalt the selfish, arrogant Jewish spirit that would bring all men to acknowledge the superiority of these Jews, who in their selfish egotism had forfeited God's favor by stubbornness, rebellion, and putting to death His Son.

Paul found many evils to complain of in the different churches. Among the Corinthians he found great immoralities and various forms of error which were very serious. So of other churches. But not one of them called forth such words of condemnation as those to the Galatians, and so many of them in the same space. Why is this?—Because, though the evils in the other churches were serious, yet, they did not so fully undermine the principles of the gospel as did the positions which Paul found in Galatia. These were radical, fundamental errors.

Paul's grand conclusion of his argument in the letter to the Galatians must have maddened the whole force of Judaizing teachers, and made their work much more difficult. Wherever these words were read, these teachers would not be able to influence the Gentile disciples as before. We believe this Epistle to the Galatians was a grand turning-point in this whole controversy which had so long affected the church, making the call of the great Council necessary (see Acts 15), and constantly interfering with the apostle's work among the Gentiles. The whole question was now clarified.

We further notice a few points before proceeding to other scriptures.

“Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.” Gal. 5:4. This verse is often separated from its connection, and used as having a bearing upon our personal justification by faith for our transgressions of the moral law. Now justification by faith is one of the grandest and most glorious doctrines of the gospel of Christ. We love, delight, and rejoice in that precious truth second to none. We know Paul has explained it as no other writer in all the Bible has, in Romans and other epistles. No man can be saved by his good works alone. “All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” Ro. 3:23. We are weak and utterly helpless, covered with pollution, and never can remove our guilt and uncleanness by present or future efforts of obedience. Indeed, we are utterly weak and helpless; and if our sins have been forgiven, we must have constant faith in and help from a crucified Saviour, constant access to His unfailing fountain of strength, in order to obtain any real help or accomplish anything whatever that will meet God’s favor in the line of good works. All this and vastly more we cheerfully acknowledge and most fully believe. Yet the most careless reader ought to see the apostle is speaking of being “justified by the law” (Gal. 5:4) in this connection, is not speaking of being justified through obedience to the moral law. Such a view would make the statement utterly foreign to the words in its immediate connection, both before and after. He has just said, if they be circumcised, Christ shall profit them nothing: that they are in that case debtors “to do the whole law.” Verse 3. Christ becomes of no effect. “Ye are fallen from grace.” Verse 4. They plainly looked to their obedience to these dead, lifeless ceremonies connected with circumcision as that which would make them just or justified; or bring them to a savable condition; whereas they could only be made such by faith in Christ. For this reason, looking away from the only fountain opened for uncleanness, away from the only name who could save, to that law of bondage, they had “fallen from,” the grace of Christ.

We see, therefore, in the expression, “justified by the law,” that it is as necessary to know what law Paul is speaking of, as it is anywhere in the New Testament when speaking of a law that is binding or abolished. The same expression “justified by the works of the law,” is evidently used in the same sense in Gal. 2:16, as the connection shows. Indeed, it is evident for justification and forgiveness of transgressions to the moral law, many Jews had looked to the works required by the ceremonial law. It was for this purpose that it was added, because of transgression. Only the spiritual-minded saw its true design. Hence they were even more in danger of looking to obedience to the ceremonial law for their justification than to obedience to the ten commandments. So Paul exposed the utter worthlessness of the ceremonial rituals now that

Christ had come and died.

Another point: Who will dare say the law Paul speaks of in Galatians 4 is not the same as the one he reasons upon in chapter 3? They must be the same. Will any dare claim the conclusions presented in the first verses of chapter 5 are not the consequence of his argument drawn from the words preceding, in chapter 4? Then they must also have reference to the same law in chapter 3. But the moral law cannot possibly be the one considered in chapter 4; therefore the law in chapter 3 cannot be the moral law either.

Galatians 5:6-14: "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love. Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth? This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded: but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be. And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offense of the cross ceased. I would they were even cut off which trouble you. For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

Galatians 6:12-15: "As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh. But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature."

We omit the remaining portion of the Galatian letter, as it wholly refers to practical Christian duties, and does not relate to the subject we are considering. In Gal. 5:6 Paul states the utter uselessness of circumcision so far as the religion of Christ Jesus is concerned. It alone would make no difference. A man would need to repent and believe on Christ just the same, whether he was circumcised or not. It was only when these Judaizing teachers were trying to bring in circumcision and all it represented as necessary to salvation; that Paul felt stirred up to vigorously combat it. In Gal 6:7 he refers to the zeal with which they received the gospel, and to the fact, someone had hindered them, driven them back (margin), so now they did not obey the truth as before. These were unauthorized, self-appointed Judaizers, who had no real connection with him who had called them. They were not really the friends of Christ. The whole church was in danger; for a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. But Paul still had hopes for the Galatian church, that they would

return to their allegiance to the truth. In Gal. 5:13 he speaks of the liberty in Christ to which the brethren had been called, and cautions them to use this liberty, not for an occasion of the flesh, but "by love" to "serve one another." True Christian liberty never leads to fleshly gratifications. "For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Verse 14. Having just shown by the most indisputable argument, the ceremonial and typical system of the Mosaic service was abolished, all that remained of the law relating to our fellow-men was simply fulfilled in this: "Thou shalt 'love thy neighbor as thyself'—the substance of our obedience to the law of God so far as it relates to our fellow-men.

In Gal. 5:11, 12, we have a very interesting point, again forcibly presented, to which we have referred several times in this argument; the malice with which disciples, affected by the Judaizing doctrines and the Jews themselves, followed Paul. It would seem from this language the whole reason for the special bitterness of the Jewish people toward him was because he did not preach circumcision or give it any countenance. If he had done so, they would have left him comparatively alone. But when they saw he took the course he did, they followed him from city to city, making his life bitter. And of these pretended brethren, who claimed to be disciples, who thus misled the Galatian church, Paul would that they be "cut off" (verse 12) because they undermined the true gospel system. This cutting off refers to nothing less than excommunication and may signify utter destruction, judging from past references, as we have seen in the first chapter where a solemn curse was pronounced upon those who were perverting the gospel. This shows how weighty a question the apostle considered this whole subject to be.

Before we close this argument, we wish to impress this point more fully, to convince our friends if possible, who hold the opposite view, that this question of circumcision in the apostolic church was not one of minor importance but in its effect upon the progress of Christianity and the presentation of gospel truth, was equal in the apostle's mind to even the much-vaunted doctrine of justification by faith. As we have said, we hold the latter to be a very important doctrine. But the special thing with which the apostle had to contend in his work among the Gentiles, was to show the proper relation between his work and the old system which was passing away.

Let us trace this subject to show how bitterly the Jews contended against the idea of an equality before God of the Gentiles with themselves, which was the great point of contention. If circumcision passed away, all could see they stood on the same level; for circumcision represented the whole system, and was the wall of separation dividing the Jews and the Gentiles. They could not tolerate the idea that the Gentiles were just as important as they were and on an equal plain.

We will commence with the case of Cornelius, a devout man who feared God. Evidently God saw Peter would not dare go to preach to Cornelius unless he gave him special light to open the way, even though he was a man of good repute. So he gave Cornelius a vision to send for Peter, and Peter a vision to prepare him to go to Cornelius, a Gentile, letting down the various kinds of unclean beasts in a sheet, and telling him to rise, slay, and eat. We know God poured out his Holy Spirit upon Cornelius and the Gentiles, even before hands were laid upon them. Peter had hardly returned to Jerusalem before he was taken to task for doing thus. Acts 11:2: "And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they who were of the circumcision contended with him, saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and did eat with them." This occurred quite a number of years after the crucifixion of Christ and the abolishment of the ceremonial law; so it must be evident, neither Peter nor any of the other apostles had been accustomed to doing such a thing as this up to this point. They had not realized the Gentiles were to receive light on the same terms as they. They had not laid aside their Jewish prejudices, or God would not have found it necessary to give this vision to open Peter's eyes. They had not yet comprehended the real breadth of the gospel. When Peter rehearsed his experience with Cornelius, all had to submit, as God's direction was so manifest in it.

We do not discern any special bitterness on the part of the Jews shown to the apostles at Jerusalem, except among the leading men; and Herod's persecution seems to have been prompted by them. But as soon as Paul and Barnabas went among the Gentiles, then they were followed at every step by a dogged determination of the Jews to destroy them and break up their work. When they came to Antioch in Pisidia (Acts 13), after speaking at length to the Jews, the Gentiles, doubtless most of them being proselytes, came and desired to hear from them the next Sabbath, and the whole city came together. But the Jews, when they saw that the Gentiles were receiving light, and the Gentiles were attracted to this new teaching of the gospel, were exceedingly mad, as expressed in Acts 13:45: "They were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming." The apostle did not make it necessary for these Gentiles to be circumcised, and thus failed to acknowledge the Jewish superiority. Nothing could have stirred the Jews more than this. When Paul finally told the Judaizers he and Barnabas would turn to the Gentiles, and labor for them, their anger knew no bounds. They stirred up devout women (Acts 13:50), and the chief men, and raised a fearful persecution against them, and expelled Paul and Barnabas from their coast. The apostles fled to another city, Iconium (Acts 14:1), but the Jews followed them there with such bitterness they had to flee to Lystra and Derbe (14:6). But the Jews of Antioch and Iconium came after them, and persuaded

the people, who stoned Paul, and left him for dead (14:19).

Then follows the Council at Jerusalem to consider the subject., which reminds the reader, this question was raised in the church itself, showing Paul's work among the Gentiles had not only affected the Jews, but also the Jewish believers, who said to the new believers, "Except ye be circumcised" and "keep the law of Moses," "ye cannot be saved." But God helped his servant to bring the matter around in such a way, a great triumph for the spread of the gospel was the result. After this, when Paul preached in Thessalonica (Acts 17), the Jews still followed him, mingling with the baser elements of the people, and set the whole city in an uproar. Paul had to flee again, and went to Berea; but the Jews from Thessalonica immediately followed him to this place, and Paul had to flee once more. After passing through Athens, and coming to Corinth, he labored with his usual energy on behalf of the gospel, and continued there for some time. But here again he met the bitter hatred of the Jews, and through their influence was summoned to appear before Gallio, the deputy of Achaia. What was the charge against this great apostle? In Acts 18:13 we find this accusation: "This fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law." They even undertook to try him before the Roman deputy for his course in not sustaining the ceremonial law, as though it was a great crime. This reveals the special burden of the Jews against Paul. After laboring a long time at Corinth, where the Jews did not have power because of their fear of the deputy, and did not dare molest him, he had great success. But as soon as he appeared in Greece (Acts 20), the Jews lay in wait for him, and tried to kill him, but did not succeed. Paul expresses the situation in his talk with the elders of the church at Ephesus (verse 19), and gives as the greatest cause of his persecution and difficulties which he had to meet, "Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews," who were constantly dogging his steps at every turn because he did not preach the ceremonial law.

In his final, closing visit to Jerusalem, we have quite a vivid picture presented to us of the effect of this feeling, even in that church. No doubt Paul's anxiety to go to Jerusalem was prompted by his great desire to have a better state of feeling exist between the Jewish and Gentile Christians. He carried large gifts to them from his Gentile converts, hoping to appease their distrust and dislike by thus showing his regard for the poor. We can readily see this was a great crisis in the apostle's life. And what a source of sadness it must have been to a man like him, —who had given his life unreservedly to his Master, suffering every indignity, pain, imprisonment, and finally death itself—to be forced to see his labors were not appreciated; he himself was looked upon with distrust, even among excellent members at Jerusalem, the point from

which the gospel had started. But he felt if it was possible, this union between the two must be strengthened, and these feelings of distrust and dislike removed; so he made the trip to Jerusalem. He presented his gifts to show his love for them, and walked circumspectly in their midst. They received his gifts gladly at first, yet the feelings of dislike were not removed from their heart; for in Acts 21:20, 21 we see these feelings manifest: "Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the [ceremonial] law; and they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs."

Here we see the same old bitterness, even in the church. Now they give some advice, that he should treat these customs which he had discarded, with respect, by performing some of the services according to the law, and thus appear to recognize them. **We fully believe this was an inconsistent course for the apostle to take.** These brethren in giving this advice, yielded to the pressure brought to bear against Paul on account of the doctrines which he preached. **This very advice to Paul was the cause of his long imprisonment, which deprived the church of his labors; and it was thus brought about by the advice of the disciples themselves.** Paul, willing to give way to the very utmost extent consistent with principle if he could bring about peace between them, accepted their advice, and went into the temple to purify himself, and at quite a heavy expense. He not only paid the money required for himself but for others who also had vowed.

It would have been better if Paul had kept away from this temple service; **but God turned even this to good account, and made his servant useful, even in prison.** While performing this service, some Jews who had seen him elsewhere, stirred up the people against him, "Crying out, Men of Israel, help: this is the man, that teacheth all men everywhere against the people, and the law, and this place." Acts 21:28. So we see the great cause of their hatred was that he did not teach the ceremonial law. We all know what followed, how Paul was captured from the mob by the Roman authorities, and finally permitted to make a speech to the people; and when they heard him speak in Hebrew, we learn from Acts 22 they listened patiently until he reached the troublesome point: "And he [the Lord] said unto me, Depart; for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles. And they gave him audience unto this word, and then lifted up their voices, and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live." Verses 21, 22. They then threw dust into the air, and acted like mad men.

How plain it must be to any candid mind, this question of making the Gentiles equal to them by breaking down the ceremonial law, was the leading question in the whole matter of sending the gospel in the apos-

toloc age outside of the Jewish population. It was not simply an insignificant question, though it may be considered as such today, when everything has changed from what it was centuries ago, at the very beginning of the gospel work. It was a question which was worthy of calling out an epistle from this great champion to the gospel.

Sister White, in her *Sketches from the Life of Saint Paul* also dwells considerably upon this subject. On page 64 she says: "The Jews had prided themselves upon their divinely-appointed services; and they concluded that as God once specified the Hebrew manner of worship, it was impossible that he should ever authorize a change in any of its specifications. They decided that Christianity must connect itself with the Jewish laws and ceremonies. They were slow to discern to the end of that which had been abolished by the death of Christ, and perceive that all their sacrificial offerings had but prefigured the death of the Son of God, in which type had met its antitype, rendering valueless the divinely-appointed ceremonies and sacrifices of the Jewish religion."

In speaking of the causes which led to the Council at Jerusalem (Acts 15) in which she agrees with the position we have taken, it was the same as the visits brought to view in Galatians 2, she says (page 64) they felt "if the restrictions and ceremonies of the Jewish law were not made obligatory upon their accepting the faith of Christ, the national peculiarities of the Jews, which kept them distinct from all other people, would finally disappear from among those who embraced the gospel truths." Here we see the true cause of their feelings again as we have many times stated. On page 195 she shows how this same feeling existed: "Paul in his preaching at Corinth, presented the same arguments which he urged so forcibly in his epistles. His strong statement, 'There is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision,' was regarded by his enemies as daring blasphemy. They determined that his voice should be silenced." (A similar expression occurs in this very epistle to the Galatians.)

On page 210, in speaking of his standing before the brethren at Jerusalem when he presented his gifts and made his remarks, she says: "He could not recount his experience in Galatia without stating the difficulties he had encountered from those Judaizing teachers, who had attempted to misrepresent his teachings and pervert his converts." Here she evidently has in view Paul's epistle to the Galatians. This, she indicates, caused some feelings. On page 212 she says, the advice given by James to recognize the ceremonial law by going before the priests, "was not consistent with that decision [Council of Acts 15] which had also been sanctioned by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God did not prompt this advice. It was the fruit of cowardice. By non-conformity to the ceremonial law, Christians would bring upon themselves the hatred of the unbelieving Jews and expose themselves to severe persecution."

Page 213: "The disciples themselves yet cherished a regard for the ceremonial law, and were too willing to make concessions, hoping by so doing to gain the confidence of their countrymen, remove their prejudice, and win them to faith in Christ as the world's Redeemer. Paul's great object in visiting Jerusalem was to conciliate the church of Palestine. So long as they continued to cherish prejudice, they were constantly working to counteract his influence. He felt that if he could by any lawful concession on his part win them to the truth, he would remove a very great obstacle to the success of the gospel in other places. But he was not authorized of God to concede so much as they had asked. This concession was not in harmony with his teachings, nor with the firm integrity of his character."

Page 214: "When we consider Paul's great desire to be in harmony with his brethren, his tenderness of spirit toward the weak in faith, his reverence for the apostles, who had been with Christ, and for James the brother of the Lord, and his purpose to become all things to all men as far as he could do this and not sacrifice principle—when we consider all this, it is less surprising that he was constrained to deviate from his firm, decided course of action. But instead of accomplishing the desired object, these efforts to conciliation only precipitated the crisis, hastened the predicted sufferings of Paul, separated him from his brethren in his labors, deprived the church of one of its strongest pillars, and brought sorrow to Christian hearts in every land." Many other expressions could be quoted to the same effect; but we should despair of being able to show how important this subject was regarded among the early church, if what we have presented does not clearly prove it.

We will only notice the remaining references to circumcision in the sixth chapter of Galatians. Evidently Paul had finished his long argument, and was now giving the most precious Christian instruction for the benefit of the believers: but it seems he cannot get this subject out of his mind. "As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ." Verse 12. There he shows how preaching the gospel with circumcision released one from persecution; but to preach the gospel without circumcision, not acknowledging its claim, brought persecuting elements upon him from every quarter. But he would rather preach the truth of God in its purity, whether persecuted or not. Circumcision saved no one, and uncircumcision saved no one; but there must be a new creature in Christ Jesus. Thus we see, from the beginning of the Galatian epistle to the end, this is the great theme the apostle had in mind.

We now leave the subject with the reader, claiming for our view that it makes one connected, consistent, harmonious argument throughout. The conclusions are all consistent with the premises. We have shown

there was a sufficient issue to demand such an argument; hence we conclude, the apostle has the ceremonial law mainly in view throughout this letter. Our brethren, with their position, though they may present quite an argument upon some detached passages of scripture, utterly fail to present a harmonious, systematic view of the whole epistle found in the position we have herein advocated, while there are many references throughout the Galatian epistle which utterly forbid their application of it being the moral law.

This question which has long been in agitation among us is most unfortunate. As our brethren have presented their views in such a public manner, in a way which we cannot think is proper or consistent, we have felt it our duty to present our view of the subject before our leading brethren. Yet we feel the same brotherly feeling as ever toward those who differ with us, believing they have been misled in regard to their duty. We ask our leading brethren to consider the points of this argument carefully, and weigh it well. We leave the result with them and God.

Written by
G. I. Butler

Printed by
Abe Schellenberg

For additional copies contact:

New Life Mission

PO Box 258

Dover OK 73734

Or

PO Box 340

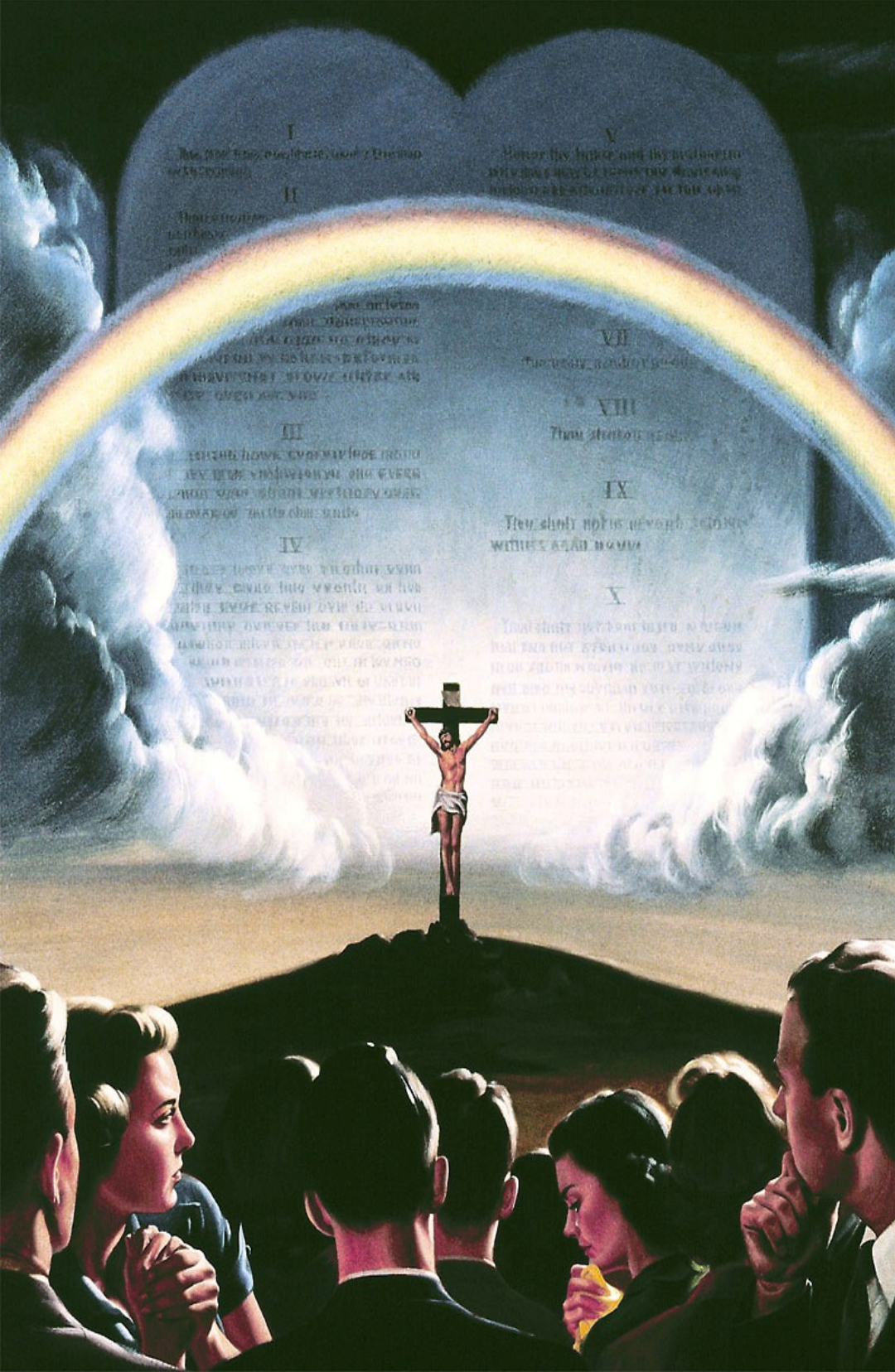
Okeene OK 73763

(877) 357-8773

(580) 822-4848

NewLifeMission1986.org

Note: As we have studied this document by Elder Butler, it seems obvious that there is nothing new under the sun. The Judaizers were not just in Paul's day, they have come to us as well. Those Judaizers have been busy through the centuries and are still busy in our church today! NLM.



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