

Studies in Galatians

A. T. Jones

Originally published in:
The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald
July 25, 1899 to November 13, 1900

Fonts used:
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March 2018
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1. Introduction: Two Gospels

Several letters have been received asking what law is the subject of consideration in the book of *Galatians*.

The answer is, Not any law at all. It is the gospel that is the subject, and the whole subject, under consideration in the book of *Galatians*.

So emphatically is this so, that in the very first part of the first chapter it is declared and repeated,

Galatians 1

⁸ 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.

⁹ As we said before, so say I know again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that you have received, let him be accursed.

¹¹ I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.

¹² For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

In *Galatians* it is not a question of one law or another, the sole question is the truth of the gospel; for in telling what he had done, Paul says that he did it,

Galatians 2

⁵ ...that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

He withstood Peter to the face at Antioch, because he and those who followed his example

¹⁴ ...walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel.

It is not a question of one law or another, but of one gospel or another. See, the first words in the book, after the salutation, are these:

Galatians 1

⁶ I marvel that you are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:

⁷ Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

⁸ 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.

⁹ As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that you have received, let him be accursed.

In the book of *Galatians*, therefore, the question under consideration is not at all a question of two laws; but altogether a question of two gospels,—the true gospel as against a false one,—the one or another, which indeed is not another,—the true gospel as against a perversion of that gospel (verses 6-7).

Now the true gospel is the gospel of the true way of salvation from sin. And as the subject in *Galatians* is the true gospel as against a false one, therefore the subject of the book of *Galatians* is the true way of salvation from sin as against a false way,—the true way of salvation as against a perversion of that way.

Accordingly, we there read that when Peter and others “walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel,” and Paul withstood Peter to the face on account of it, these are the words with which he withstood him:

Galatians 2

¹⁶ 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 be justified.

²¹ I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

And when his appeal is made directly to the Galatians themselves, it is in these words:

Galatians 3

² This only would I learn of you, Received you the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

Again:

³ Are you so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are you now made perfect by the flesh?

Again:

⁵ He therefore that ministers to you the Spirit, and works miracles among you, does he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

Again:

¹¹ That no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.

And again:

Galatians 5

⁴ Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; you are fallen from grace.

It is therefore perfectly plain that the subject of the book of *Galatians* is the true gospel—the gospel of salvation, of justification, of righteousness, by FAITH—as against a false gospel; as against a perversion of the gospel of Christ,—a gospel of salvation, of justification, of righteousness, by works by LAW, by THE FLESH.

The question in the book of *Galatians* is solely the question of salvation by grace, not by law; by faith, not by works; by the Spirit, not by the flesh; by Christ, not by self.

2. Introduction: The Works of the Law

THOUGH it is true that the great subject in the book of *Galatians* is the true gospel as against a false gospel, salvation by faith of Jesus Christ and not by works of the law, still the question is asked,

What law is referred to in the phrase “works of the law,” which is several times used?

The answer is, It is not any particular law exclusive of all other laws; it is any law at all, all laws, in the general idea of law. accordingly, the *Revised Version* puts in the margin each time, “works of law,” and other translations render it directly “works of law,” as of the idea of law in general.

The Greek also sanctions this; for in each place where the expression, or a kindred one, is used, it is written without any article: “works of law,” or “of the law,” or “the law.”

The expression, then, being that of the general idea of law, that men are justified by faith of Christ and not by works of law, in the nature of the case any law and all law would be comprehended, and therefore the highest of all law—the law of God—as well as all other; that there is no justification, no righteousness, no salvation, by any law whatever, nor by the works of any law whatever; but only by the faith of Jesus Christ.

And that more than one law is included in the argument is evident from the text itself.

1. In *Galatians* 5:14 it is written: “All the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” which is unquestionably a direct reference to the law of God, while in the same chapter, and even all through the book, the question, the law, of circumci-

sion—the law of Moses (*John* 7:23)—is involved.

2. In *Galatians* 6:13 it is written, “For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law.” Here plainly both the law of Moses and the law of God, the ceremonial law and the moral law, are referred to; because it says that they who are circumcised do not keep the law. Now their being circumcised was in itself to keep the law of circumcision—the law of Moses. Therefore if only the one law were referred to, it could not be said that they who are circumcised do not keep the law. But when it is borne in mind that circumcision, both in the mind of God (*Deuteronomy* 30:6) and in the scheme of these controversialists, was the sign that the law of God was kept, and these who were so tenacious of circumcision did not keep the law, then it is perfectly plain that both the law of circumcision and the law of God are referred to in the words, “Neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law.”
3. The same thing is shown also in *Galatians* chapter two, verses 12-14 with 17-19.
4. All this shows that in *Galatians* there is involved the same matter that was raised by the “Pharisees which believed,” and that was considered in *Acts* 15:1 - “Except you be circumcised after the manner of Moses, you cannot be saved.”. They must be circumcised to be saved! They “must be circumcised and keep the law” to be justified, to be righteous, to be saved! Justification, righteousness, salvation, must be by work of law!

But there Peter showed that God had already settle the matter, saying,

Acts 15

⁷ Men and brethren, you 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.

⁸ And God, which knows the hearts, bore them witness, giv-

ing them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us;

⁹ And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.

¹⁰ Now therefore why tempt you God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

And when the sentence was pronounced by James, and the decree was framed and sent forth, it showed that it was the general idea of law—including all law—that was involved, rather than any specific law, exclusive of all others; for the sentence was that:

Acts 15

²⁰ ...they abstain from pollutions of idols [the moral law], and from fornication [the moral law], and from things strangled [the ceremonial law], and from blood [the ceremonial law].

And that it is not the merit of any law in itself, not even of the ceremonial, nor the relative merit of certain laws, that is involved; but solely of law as a means of justification, of righteousness, of salvation, is doubly emphasized by this fact: when certain in Jerusalem wanted Titus circumcised in accord with their views of justification, Paul would give “place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue.” *Galatians* 2:4-5.

Yet when the question had been settled, and the decree proclaimed, and Paul and Silas went through the cities of Syria and Cilicia, and “delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem;” when they came to Derbe and Lystra and found there Timothy, whose father was a Greek, and whom Paul would have to go forth with him, Paul “took and circumcised him, because of the Jews that were in those quarters.” *Acts* 15:40-41; 16:1-4.

That is to say: So long as people clung to circumcision as essential, or as a means, to justification, Paul would not coun-

tenance such a thing for a moment. But when there was in it no question of justification, he would do it when entrance for the gospel could the better be gained by it. So long as law was held up as essential, or as a means, to justification, or as having any part in it, Paul would not recognize it at all. But when it was acknowledged that justification is by faith alone, without any deeds of any law whatever, then he would recognize and consider the merit, the purpose, and the place of any law and of every law.

Thus the object of the book of *Galatians* is salvation by the gospel, not by law; it is justification, righteousness, life, by faith of Christ, not by works of law. It is to show that as a means of justification, of righteousness, of salvation, any law of any kind, and all law of every kind, is absolutely excluded.

Galatians 2

²¹ If righteousness come by law, then Christ is dead in vain.

As to what law is referred to, whether the moral, the ceremonial, or law in the abstract, in particular verses, this is easily discovered in and by the details of the argument, when the great thought—the two gospels—is held constantly in mind.

Now let all who are interested in the book of *Galatians*, read that book through seven times with the thought of this article in mind, and they will be prepared for the next chapters.

3. Introduction: Ceremonialism

Now, a question has been asked that calls for another preliminary study before beginning the study of the book in detail. The inquiry is:

“Since the ceremonial law, the moral law, and the general idea of law, are all involved in the argument, what then becomes of the view that has been so long held, and that seems to rest upon authority, that the ceremonial law is the chief subject as to law in the book of Galatians?”

The answer is, It is true. Yet in this answer there must be borne in mind what is comprehended in the term “ceremonial law,” and especially the ceremonial law involved in the book of *Galatians*. That it is not the ceremonial law, as expressed in sacrifices and offerings, that is particularly the subject, is evident from the fact that from the beginning to the end of the book, neither sacrifices nor offering is even once referred to.

That it is the ceremonial law, as expressed in circumcision and its meaning among the “Pharisees which believed,” is evident from the fact that, over and over, circumcision is mentioned. When, then, was the meaning of circumcision among the “Pharisees which believed”? How much did circumcision cover in that Pharisaic ceremonial system? Rabbi Jehuda Hakkadosh declared,

“So great is circumcision that but for it the Holy One, blessed be he, would not have created the world;”

“But for circumcision, heaven and earth could not exist. It is as great as all the other commandments.”

“How great is circumcision, since it is equivalent to all the commandments of the law”!¹

¹ Farrar’s *Life of Paul*,” chap. 15, note to par. 4 from end; and chap. 22, note to par. 5.

By this it is evident that with those “false brethren” (*Galatians* 2:3-5) who are answered in the letter to the *Galatians*, circumcision comprehended all the commandments of the law—even all the commandments of the moral law, equally with any other. So that one who was circumcised, in that bore the certificate that he was a keeper of the law. This is also evident from their demand:

Acts 15

²⁴ You must be circumcised, and keep the law;

And from the expression:

Galatians 6

¹³ For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law.

Now it is true that in the mind of God true circumcision did signify the full and perfect keeping of the law. But true circumcision was, and is always...

Romans 2

²⁹ ...that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter,

of which the outward circumcision in the flesh was only the sign. Therefore it is written:

Deuteronomy 30

⁶ The Lord your God will circumcise your heart, and the heart of your seed, to love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul.

And to love the Lord with all the heart and with all the soul, is the keeping of all the commandments.

Wherein, then, were the people wrong, who were bothering the Galatians and all other people to whom Paul preached, in insisting that “you must be circumcised, and keep the law,” and that circumcision comprehended all the commandments?

They were wrong in this, that with them it was all of works; it was all done to be justified, to be saved—except you do so,

“you cannot be saved.”

On the other hand, while in the mind of the Lord circumcision also comprehended all the commandments, here it was all of faith. With the Lord, the sign of circumcision was a seal of righteousness of faith (*Romans* 4:11; *Galatians* 3:5-7):

Galatians 5

⁶ ...faith which works by love.

But,

1 John 5

³ ...this is the love of God that we keep his commandments.

Therefore, it was a faith that keeps all the commandments. With the “Pharisees which believed,” those “false brethren,” men must perform these works of circumcision and keeping the law in order to be justified. With the Lord and Paul, men are justified by faith without any deeds of any law.

With the “Pharisees which believed,” men must work in order to be justified. With the Lord and Paul, men must be justified in order to work.

With the “Pharisees which believed,” everything was of works, of the flesh, outward, and formal. With the Lord and Paul, everything must be of faith, of the Spirit, inward, and spiritual; and outward only as the manifestation of the new life within.

With the “Pharisees which believed,” everything was ceremonial; because it was outward, of works, of the flesh, of self; everything was done, and must be done, in order to be justified by it, in order to be righteous by it, in order to be saved by it.

In this way the moral law itself was made merely ceremonial—the moral law, the ceremonial law, all law, was thus reduced to one vast system of ceremonialism. And of this vast

system of ceremonialism, circumcision was the very nucleus.

And it is this system, and this spirit, of ceremonialism, that is combated and repudiated in the book of *Galatians*. And this is the ceremonial law which, over all and through all, is the great subject as to law in the book of *Galatians*; and which, as a false gospel, subverted souls, and perverted and opposed the true gospel.

Bear in mind, however, that this is not by any means to say that such is the true ceremonial law. There was nothing true about it; it was ceremonialism entire: circumcision was perverted; the moral law was perverted; everything as to law was perverted by it; and it fought hard to pervert even the gospel.

But it could not prevail: the book of *Galatians* was written to set the ceremonial law, the moral law, and the gospel, in their true and relative positions; and to annihilate ceremonialism forever.

4. Paul's Apostleship

Galatians 1

¹ Paul, an apostle (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead),

² And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia.

The first two chapters of the book of *Galatians* are an explanation and defense of Paul's apostleship and of the gospel that be preached. This first verse is a defense of his apostleship. This is the cause of the words in parenthesis, saying that be was an apostle,

Galatians 1

1 ...not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead.

Another translation is:

Paul, an apostle, not from men, nor by the instrumentality of any man, but by Jesus Christ and God our Father who raised him from the dead.

Another is:

Paul, an apostle, not by man, nor through a man, but appointed by Jesus Christ and his Raiser from the dead, God the Father.

The Revised Version is:

Paul, an apostle (not from men, neither through man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him them the dead).

This defense shows that his true apostleship was denied, and that he was opposed and denounced as being only an apostle of men, appointed and sent only by a man or by men.

Nor was this opposition sown only among the churches of Galatia. It was sown everywhere, especially in the churches

that Paul had raised up. There were “false, skulking brethren” (*Galatians* 2:4), who made it their business and their message, even to follow up Paul, and sow these seeds of distrust and of evil as the council at Jerusalem described it, “digging up from the foundations” the souls of those who believed his preaching.

These evil seeds were sown at Corinth. After Paul’s departure from there, these false brethren had told the brethren that he was not an apostle; and cited as proof that he had not seen Jesus; that he was only a tent-maker, who went about working for a living; and even that he was not an apostle because he had no wife!

In his letter to the Corinthians he makes answer thus (we use Conybeare and Howson’s translation, as this, with our common version, makes the matter plain):

1 Corinthians 9

¹ Is it denied that I am an apostle? Is it denied that I am free from man’s authority? Is it denied that I have seen Jesus our Lord? Is it denied that you are the fruits of my labor in the Lord?

² If to others I am no apostle, yet at least I am such to you; for you are yourselves the seal which stamps the reality of my apostleship, in the Lord;

³ This is my answer to those who question my authority.

⁴ Do they deny my right to be maintained [by my converts]?

⁵ Do they deny my right to carry a believing wife with me on my journeys, like the rest of the apostles, and the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas?

⁶ Or do they think that I and Barnabas alone have no right to be maintained, except by the labor of our own hands?

¹¹ If I have sown for you the seed of spiritual gifts, would it be much if I were to reap some harvest from your carnal gifts?

¹² If others share this right over you, how much more should I? Yet I have not used my right, but forgo every claim, lest I

should by any means hinder the course of Christ's Glad-tidings.

¹⁴ The Lord commanded those who publish the Glad-tidings, to be maintained thereby.

¹⁵ But I have not exercised any of these rights, nor do I write this that it may be practiced in my own case. For I had rather die than suffer any man to make void my boasting.

They circulated also the slanderous report, and really themselves affirmed, that Paul had held and taught the pernicious doctrine,

Romans 3

⁸ Let us do evil, that good may come.

These are only some of the "perils among false brethren," which Paul cites with the many other perils among which he so constantly moved that his Christian life has been not inaptly termed a "long martyrdom."

And it was false brethren such as these who, as at other places, had crept in among the churches of Galatia, and were perverting the gospel, which they had received, dragging them from liberty to bondage, from the Spirit to the flesh, from justification by faith to justification by works, and on "digging up from the foundation" their very souls' salvation.

Of Paul it has also been truly said:

It was throughout life, Paul's unhappy fate to kindle the most virulent animosities; because, though conciliatory and courteous by temperament, he yet carried into his arguments that intensity and forthrightness which awaken dormant opposition. A languid controversialist will always meet with a languid tolerance. But any controversialist whose honest belief in his doctrines makes him terribly in earnest, may count on a life embittered by the anger of those on whom he has forced the disagreeable task of reconsidering their own assumptions.

No one likes to be suddenly awakened. The Jews were in-

dignant with one who disturbed the deep slumber of decided opinions. Their accredited teachers did not like to be deposed from the papacy of infallible ignorance...If arguments are such as cannot be refuted, and yet if those who hear them will not yield to them, they inevitably excite a bitter rage.²

Thus it was, not only with the Jews who did not believe, but also with those “Pharisees which believed,”—those Jews who, not knowing true faith, thought to bind Christianity in the hard bands of their ceremonialism.

And thus it is ever with those who insist that all new wine must be put into old bottles. But Christianity demands always that the old bottles shall be made altogether new, that they may receive and hold the new wine.

² Farrar, *The Life and Work of St. Paul*.

5. The Gospel

Galatians 1

³ Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ,

⁴ 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:

⁵ To whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

1:3 – Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ.

Such is the salutation in every epistle by Paul except that to the Hebrews; and, slightly varied, in both by Peter. Yet it is not by any means a mere form. These epistles have come to us by the word of God, which they are in truth. This salutation, then, though often repeated,—yea, even because often repeated;—comes to us as the word of God in greeting and full assurance of his favor and peace everlastingly held forth to every soul.

Grace is favor. The word of God, then, extends his favor to every soul who ever needs it, or who hears it. His very name is Gracious—extending grace. His name is only what he is. And what he is, is:

Hebrews 13

⁸ ...the same yesterday, and today, and forever.

With him is:

James 1

¹⁷ ...no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

Therefore by him grace, boundless favor, is always extended to every soul. Oh, that all would only believe it!

“And peace.” He is the “God of peace” (*Romans* 15:33, 16:20; *Philippians* 4:9; *1 Thessalonians* 5:23; *Hebrews* 13:20). There is

no true peace, but that of God. And

Isaiah 57

²¹ There is no peace, says my God, to the wicked.

²⁰ The wicked are like the troubled sea, which cannot rest.

But all the world lies in wickedness, yet the God of peace speaks peace to every soul.

Ephesians 2

¹⁴ For he [Christ, the Prince of peace,] is our peace, who has made both [God and man] one...

¹⁵ Having abolished in his flesh the enmity...for to make in himself of two [God and man] one new man, so making peace;

Colossians 1

²⁰ And, having made peace through the blood of his cross...

Ephesians 2

¹⁷ [He] came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.

Peace to you all. Therefore, always and forevermore, his salutation to every soul is, "Peace to you." And all from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ!

Oh, that every one would believe it; so that the peace of God, which passes all understanding could keep the heart and mind through Christ Jesus.

Colossians 3

¹⁵ Let the peace of God rule in your hearts...

Let it; that is all he asks of you. Don't refuse it, and beat it back; let it.

1:4 – Who gave himself for our sins...

O brother, sister, sinner, whosoever you be, laden with sin though you be, Christ gave himself for your sins. Let him have them. He bought them—your sins—with the awful price of his crucified self. Let him have them.

He does not ask you to put all your sins away before you can come to him and be wholly his. He asks you to come, sins and all; and he will take away from you, and put away forever, all your sins. He gave himself for you, sins and all; he bought you, sins and all; let him have what he bought, let him have his own, let him have you, sins and all.

1:4 – ...that he might deliver us from this present evil world.

Notice that to deliver us from this present evil world, he gave himself for our sins. That shows that all that there is of this present evil world to each one of us, is for our sins.

And they were “our sins.” They belonged to us. We were responsible for them. And so far as we were concerned, this present evil world lay in our own personal selves, in our sins. But, bless the Lord, he gave himself for us, sins and all; he gave himself for our sins, ourselves and all; and that he did in order that he might deliver us from this present evil world.

Would you like to be delivered from this present evil world? Let him have yourself, sins and all which he bought, and which therefore by full right belong to him. Please do not rob him of what is his own, and so still remain in this present evil world, when at the same time you would like to be delivered from this present evil world. Please do not commit the additional sin of keeping what does not belong to you.

As they were our sins, and he gave himself for them, it follows plainly enough that he gave himself to us for our sins. Then, when he gave himself for your sins, your sins became his; and when he gave himself to you for your sins, he became yours. Let him have your sins, which are his, and take to them him, who is yours.

1:4 – ...according to the will of God and our Father.

Blessed exchange; for him you have as your very own, all the fulness of the Godhead bodily; and all “according to the

will of God.” Thank the Lord.

1:5 – To whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Why should there not be to him “glory forever and ever”?
And why should not you and all people say, “Amen”?

2 Peter 1

²¹ For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man:
but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy
Ghost.

2 Samuel 22

² The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me.

Then the Scriptures are the words of the Holy Spirit. Then if
you will the Holy Spirit to speak to you, and to be perfectly
sure that he speaks to you, just open your Bibles and read.

6. The True Gospel

As the “Pharisees which believed” said that Paul was not a true apostle, so also they said that the gospel which he preached was not the true gospel. And as the first verse of the epistle is a defense of his apostleship as true, so chapters 1:6 to 2:14 is a defense of the gospel that he preached as the true, and the only true gospel.

Galatians 1

⁶ I marvel that you are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:

⁷ Which is not another;³ but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

⁸ 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.

⁹ As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that you have received, let him be accursed.

And as those “false brethren” had reported that he preached, and was ever ready to shift his ground, only to please men, he now interjects the words:

Galatians 1 [Farrar’s Translation]

¹⁰ Well, am I now trying to be plausible to men, or to conciliate God himself? Had I still been trying to be a man-pleaser, I should not have been what I am—a slave of Christ.

Again, he turns to the defense of the gospel which he preached:

¹¹ Not I declare to you, brethren, as to the gospel preached by me that it is not a mere human gospel.

¹² For neither did I myself receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but by revelation from Jesus Christ.

³ “simply a contrivance of some people to disturb you.” -Fenton.

And that he could not possibly have received it from merely man, he proves by the fact that:

Galatians 1 [Conybeare and Howson's Translation]

¹³ You have heard of my former behavior in the days of my Judaism, how I persecuted beyond measure the church of God, and strove to root it out,

¹⁴ And outran in Judaism many of my own age and nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.

That is to say: As when he was a Pharisee, he was ahead of many of his own day and nation, was more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of the fathers than were others, and was far beyond them in persecuting the church of God, and in striving to root it out as wild boars uproot a vineyard,—since all this was true, there was no mere man from whom he could have possibly received what he was now preaching.

But the false brethren were saying that even though he had not received his gospel merely from man, at the very most he had received it only from the true apostles, and not from the Lord direct, as had the true apostles. This he confutes by a series of indisputable facts:

First Fact

Galatians 1 [Farrar's Translation]

¹⁵ But when he who set me apart even from my mother's womb and called me by his grace,

¹⁶ Thought good to reveal his Son in me that I should preach him among the Gentiles, immediately I did not confer with mere human teachers,

¹⁷ Nor did I go away to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia, and returned to Damascus.

And these very false brethren who had now disconcerted the Galatian Christians, knew that at Damascus he had preached the gospel, and confounded the Jews who dwelt

there, “proving that this is very Christ,” that this he had done many days at Damascus; and that he was driven away from Damascus by the Jews who sought to kill him—all this before he had ever met personally a single one of those who were apostles before he became an apostle.

Second Fact

¹⁸ Next, after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to visit Kephas, and I stayed at his house fifteen days;

¹⁹ But not a single other apostle did I see, except James, the Lord’s brother. Now in what I am writing to you, see, before God, I am not lying.

Third Fact

²¹ Next I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia;

²² And was quite unknown by person to the churches of Judea which were in Christ,

²³ Only they were constantly being told that our former persecutor is now a preacher of the faith which once he ravaged.

²⁴ And they glorified God in me.

Fourth Fact

Galatians 2 [Conybeare and Howson’s Translation]

¹ Then fourteen years after, I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also.

² At that time I went up in obedience to a revelation, and I communicated to the brethren in Jerusalem the glad-tidings [the gospel] which I proclaim among the Gentiles; but to the chief brethren I communicated it privately, lest perchance my labors, either past or present, might be fruitless.

³ Yet not even Titus, my own companion (being a Greek), was compelled to be circumcised.

⁴ But this communication [with the apostles in Judea] I undertook on account of the false brethren who gained entrance by fraud, for they crept in among us to spy out our freedom (which we possess in Christ Jesus) that they might enslave us unto their own yoke.

⁵ To whom I yielded not the submission they demanded; no, not for an hour; that the truth of the glad-tidings might stand unaltered for your benefit.

In this citation of fact there are several facts, each of which disproves the charge that he had received his gospel from the apostles at Jerusalem:

1. He communicated to them the gospel which he preached, instead of their having communicated it to him.
2. And this he did, not especially to teach the apostles anything, but because of the false reports of the false brethren, so that the apostles might understand the truth of the matter.
3. He took Titus with him, whom, with him, the apostles received, and did not compel him to be circumcised: thus the apostles at Jerusalem themselves utterly disregarded the claim of the "Pharisees which believed," that "except you be circumcised...you cannot be saved."
4. He gave not an hour's subjection to the demands of the false brethren; this in the very presence of the apostles at Jerusalem; and the apostles did not require him to yield.
5. Not only did the apostles not require him to yield anything; but "James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars," actually gave to him and Barnabas "the right hands of fellowship" (verse 9).
6. And more than this, those who were the chief in reputation, he says, "added nothing to me"—"gave me no new instruction" (verse 6).

All this was positive and conclusive confutation of the claim that he had received his gospel from the apostles. But he does not stop even here: that which is already conclusive, he makes overwhelming by the citation of:

Fifth Fact

Galatians 2

¹¹ When Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.

¹² 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.

¹³ And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; inso-much that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.

¹⁴ But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter, before them all, If you, being born a Jew, are wont to live according to the customs of the Gentiles, and not of the Jews, how is it that you constrain the Gentiles to keep the ordinances of the Jews?"

¹⁵ We are Jews by birth, and not unhallowed Gentiles;

¹⁶ Yet, knowing that a man is not justified by works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, we ourselves also have put our faith in Christ Jesus, 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.

When he had publicly withstood to the face even Peter, and had called him back to the truth of the gospel, and through him even James, for it was "certain which came from James" who caused Peter to swerve, nothing more needed to be said, and indeed what more could be said, to settle it forever that the gospel which he preached was not received from men, nor from the Lord through men, not even through the first apostles, but from the Lord himself direct.

Thus in the book of *Galatians* is set forth the only true gospel, in its perfect purity, direct from the Lord himself by the hand of Paul. And whosoever misses this perfect gospel in the book of *Galatians* misses the whole book of *Galatians*.

7. Why Galatians was Written

It was “certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed” (*Acts* 15:5) who had caused all the trouble in the churches in Galatia, and called forth a letter to the Galatians.

It was these also who had troubled the brethren at Antioch, and raised the controversy abroad at the council of Jerusalem.

It was these who, even after the council, had caused Peter to swerve, at Antioch, from the truth of the Gospel, which, in turn, forced Paul to withstand him to the face.

It was these of the sect of the Pharisees who spread a false gospel against the true, and subverted souls who were even already saved—as at Antioch and in Galatia.

In a study of the Book of *Galatians*, it is, therefore, essential to know just what the sect of the Pharisees did hold.

When Jesus would give an illustration of “certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others,” he chose “a Pharisee.” And this Pharisee, even in praying, first thanked God that he was not like other men; and then presented himself to the Lord for approval upon what he had done (*Luke* 18:9-12). It is therefore perfectly plain that the one great peculiarity of the sect of the Pharisees was self-righteousness—claiming righteousness upon what they have done.

Consequently everything that a Pharisee did, was done that he might obtain righteousness by the doing. And if there was anything that he was not inclined to do, he must force himself to do it, by a direct vow, and then still claim the merit of righteousness in the doing. And it was the very righteousness of God that was claimed as the merit and the result of the doing; because it was the word of God that was followed, it was

the command of the Lord that was obeyed, in the doing.

The word “Pharisee” is from *parash*, which signifies “separated,” or “set apart.” The Pharisees were those who were separated, set apart, from the rest of the people by their superior righteousness, which was because they had done more than any others. And they were separated, set apart, unto God because it was in the doing of the law of God that their righteousness consisted.

- Everything that God had commanded, required, or directed, must be done in order that righteousness may be obtained in the doing.
- And to be perfectly certain that they could rightfully claim the righteousness when the thing was done, it was essential that every obligation must be performed so exactly right that there could be no question.
- And in order that this might be so, every requirement in the word of God was drawn out in divisions and subdivisions to the smallest minutiae, even to each particular letter of each word, each one to be scrupulously and ceremoniously performed.

The very *raison d’etre* of the Pharisees was to create “hedges” of oral tradition about the law.⁴

These “hedges” were to protect the law from violation. They were assurances to the doer of them that in the doing of them he was preserved from violating the law, and that so he was a doer of the law.

This led to an utter perversion not only of every commandment and ordinance of the Lord, but of the very idea of every commandment and ordinance.

God had given the ten commandments, not as a means of obtaining righteousness by the doing of them, but:

⁴ Farrar’s *Life of Christ*, Excursus 9, par. 1.

1. to give the true knowledge of sin, that forgiveness and salvation might be found by faith; and
2. to witness to the righteousness obtained by faith.

This was shown:

1. in the service that was commanded, and
2. in the very terms used in speaking of the tables of the law.

In the service commanded it was plainly said that when they had done anything against the commandments of the Lord concerning things which ought not to be done, and were guilty, they were to bring a sacrifice of a young bullock, and confess the sin, and with the blood the priest should make atonement for them, and it should be forgiven them (*Leviticus* 4:13-21). Here were the ten commandments to give the knowledge of sin, and of the guilt; here was forgiveness and at-one-ment with God without the doing of the law, but solely through faith.

The term used in speaking of the tables of the law was “the tables of the testimony.” The ark, in which was the law, was called the “ark of the testament.” And the tabernacle, in which was the ark, was called the “tabernacle of the testimony.”

Now testimony is the evidence borne by a witness; and that this is the meaning of the word here is certain by the fact that the tabernacle was plainly called “the tabernacle of witness.” (*Numbers* 17:7-8; 18:2; *2 Chronicles* 24:6). The tables of the testimony were the tables of witness, which in itself testified that the law was intended, not to be a means of the righteousness of God obtained by it, but to be witness to the righteousness of God obtained without it.

God had given the ordinances of sacrifice and offering and burnt offering and offering for sin, not as a means of obtaining righteousness by them, but as expressions of the faith that

obtained the righteousness of God without them—faith that obtained the righteousness of God through a sacrifice and offering already made by God, and promised to be sent in due time.

God had given circumcision, not as a means of obtaining righteousness by it, but as a sign of the righteousness of God obtained by faith and held by faith before circumcision was performed.

Thus the Pharisees perverted into works and righteousness by works, all that God had given to be of faith. All that God had given to be a blessing and a delight they turned into a burden and a yoke of bondage.

And when it did not give peace to the straining and toiling workers, as it could not, to the many fine-spun distinctions drawn upon the plain word of God they yet further added a multitude of exactions of their own.

To the Sabbath commandment alone there were added four hundred and one requirements. A whole treatise was devoted to hand-washings (*Mark* 7:1-5); another whole treatise was occupied with the proper method of killing a fowl.

The letter of the law thus lost its comparative simplicity in boundless complications, until the Talmud tells us how Akibba was seen in a vision by the astonished Moses, drawing from every horn of every letter whole bushels of decisions.⁵

Another evil was wrapped up in this: The facility of interpretation that was developed in drawing out the infinite variety of distinctions in sentences, in words, and even in letters, in order to discover the exact degree of obedience required to attain to righteousness, was readily employed in evading any obligation of the law of God that the covetous heart might desire (*Mark* 7:9-13; *Mathew* 23:14-28).

⁵ *Ibid.*

We know the minute and intense scrupulosity of Sabbath observance wasting itself in all those *abhoth* and *toldoth*,—those primary and derivative rules and prohibitions, and inferences from rules and prohibitions, and combinations of inferences from rules and prohibitions, and cases of casuistry and conscience arising out of the infinite possible variety of circumstances to which those combinations of inference might apply,—which had degraded the Sabbath from “a delight, holy of the Lord, honorable,” partly into an anxious and pitiless burden, and partly into a network of contrivances hypocritically designed, as it were, in the lowest spirit of heathenism, to cheat the Deity with the mere semblance of accurate observance....

Teachers who were on the high road to a casuistry which could construct “rules” out of every superfluous particle, had found it easy to win credit for ingenuity by elaborating prescriptions, to which Moses would have listened in mute astonishment. If there be one thing more definitely laid down in the law than another, it is the uncleanness of creeping things; yet the Talmud assures us that “no one is appointed a member of the Sanhedrin who does not possess sufficient ingenuity to prove from the written law that a creeping thing is ceremonially cleaned,” and that there is an unimpeachable disciple, at Jabne, who could produce one hundred and fifty arguments in favor of the ceremonial cleanness of creeping things. Sophistry like this was at work even in the days when the young student at Tarsus set at the feet of Gamaliel.⁶

Thus the Pharisees in their exactions and ceremonialism had developed to perfection the self-love of self-righteousness in the merit of their own doings. A perfect illustration is found in what Rabbi Simeon, the son of Jochai, said:

If there were only thirty righteous persons in the world, I and my son should make two of them; and if there were but twenty, I and my son would be of the number; and if there were but ten, and I and my son would be of the number; and if there were but five, and I and my son would be of the five;

⁶ Farrar, *Life and Work of Paul*, chap. 4, par. 2-6.

and if there were but two, I and my son would be those two; and if there were but one, MYSELF should be that one. (*Emphatic Diaglott*, at Luke 18:11).

They had received unsanctified and confused interpretations of the law given them by Moses: they had added tradition to tradition; they had restricted freedom of thought and action until the commandments, ordinances, and services of God were lost in a ceaseless round of meaning less rights and ceremonies. Their religion was a yoke of bondage.

The views of the people were so narrow that they had become slaves to their own useless regulations.

This confidence in themselves and their own regulations, with its attendant prejudices against all other nations, caused them to resist the Spirit of God, which would have corrected their errors.

Thus, in their earthliness, separated from God in Spirit, while professedly serving him, they were doing just the work that Satan wanted them to do—taking a course to impeach the character of God, and cause the people to view him as a tyrant. In presenting their sacrificial offerings in the temple, they were as actors in a play. The rabbis, the priests and rulers, had ceased to look beyond the symbol of the truth that was signified by their outward ceremonies.

They expected to derive righteousness acceptable to God from the performance of the ceremony of offering a symbol which, to them, was meaningless for any other purpose than as a means of gaining righteousness in the performance of the ceremony.

The beginning and end, the all in all of the religion of the Pharisees, whether it related to the moral law, to the God-given ceremonial law, or to their own traditions, was ceremonialism, and ceremonialism alone. And Paul had been one of these Pharisees, of “the most straightest sect” (*Acts* 26:5).

And this is what those “certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed” thought to drag over and fasten upon Chris-

tianity. They wished to force even the divine faith of Christ into their low, narrow human ceremonialism.

Oh, yes! It is well enough to believe in Jesus; but that is not enough:

Acts 15

¹ Except you be circumcised and keep the law [their whole boneless system of interpretations of the law, moral and ceremonial, their whole mass of ceremonialism], you cannot be saved.

And that even when they had done all that the system of the Pharisees demanded, they could not be saved, was confessed in the despairing cry of the rabbis:

If but one person could only for one day keep whole law, and not offended one point,—nay, if but one person could but keep that one point of the law which affects the due observance of the Sabbath,—then the troubles of Israel would be ended, and the Messiah at last would come.⁷

And from every really conscientious heart it forced that other despairing cry:

Romans 7

²⁴ O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

But in his great mercy and his divine goodness, without requiring all the burdens and toil of the Pharisaic ceremonialism, and in answer to the longing cry of every burdened heart, the Messiah came, and brought to all men the free gift of the righteousness of God, and of his full salvation.

This righteousness and this full salvation, Saul the Pharisee found, and it made him forever Paul the Christian, nevermore desiring the...

⁷ *Idem.*, par. 3.

Philippians 3

⁹ ...righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.

And then, having in Christ perfect righteousness, full salvation, and the power of an endless life; having found in Christ the living gospel instead of the dead form of law; because he would never more admit the multitudinous exactions, the vain strivings, the hollow self-righteousness, and the false gospel of the Pharisees, he was persecuted, and his work in the gospel of Christ was opposed, till the day of his death, by “the Pharisees which believed,” as well as by all the Jews, who did not believe, by false brethren as well as by open enemies.

And this it was that called forth the book of *Galatians*.

8. Eating with the Gentiles

Galatians 2

¹⁴ But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If you, being a Jew, live after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why do you compel the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?

¹⁵ We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,

¹⁶ 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.

The opposition that those of “the sect of the Pharisees which believed,” carried on against Paul and the true gospel, and the difficulty and confusion that they were able to create, were the stronger and more perplexing because of the encouragement they found, in the attitude of the apostles themselves, especially of Peter and James the Lord’s brother.

We say, “the encouragement they found,” for no encouragement was really and intentionally given by these brethren to the work and course of the Pharisees who believed. Yet while no encouragement was intentionally given by the apostle, nor even by Peter and James the Lord’s brother, the temporizing and compromising attitude held by these was such that “the Pharisees which believed” found in it encouragement, made a handle of it, and used it to the fullest possible extent in making their efforts effective.

These brethren, in their intended kindness of heart, thought to harmonize the two elements by occupying an intermediate position. They did not at once clearly discern the true and all-important issue that was really involved.

They did not perceive that the difference between Paul's teaching and that of "the Pharisees which believed" was one of principle, essential and vital; they therefore thought to find a middle ground upon which—each side, especially Paul, modifying some of their "strong statements," and yielding some of their "extreme positions"—there would be found a harmony.

They did not at first discern that the two things were not so much alike that they gradually shaded into each other and would allow a new one to be formed, or developed, from both. They did not perceive that the two were of absolutely antagonistic principles; that they had no kinship to any extent whatever; and that therefore the only true course must be the utter abandonment of the old and the complete espousal of the new.

As Peter and James are both involved in the matter of the letter to the Galatians, and at least incidentally in the events that called it forth, it is essential to an intelligent study and understanding of the book of *Galatians* that this phase of the subject should be understood.

All know that as late as several years after Pentecost it required a special vision, and that the substance of the vision should be three times shown, to break down traditionalism in the mind of Peter, and to open his eyes to the divine truth that God is no respecter of persons (*Acts* 10).

And that this was the object and the necessity of the vision, is made certain by the words of Peter himself, speaking directly on that subject. For when, in obedience to the word of the Lord, he had gone to the house of Cornelius and begun to speak to the "many that were come together" there, the very first words that he said were these:

Acts 10

²⁸ You know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation;

but God has showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.

The *Interlinear Greek*, the word-for-word translation, gives Peter's words thus:

You know how unlawful it is for a man, a Jew, to unite himself, or come near, to one of another race.

Not simply, "you know that it is an unlawful thing"; but, "You know how unlawful it is."

But the truth is that it never was an unlawful thing at all, except by their pharisaic inventions and traditionalism. Those pharisaic inventions and traditions; and that traditionalism, were never entitled to any recognition whatever as law or obligation. And so far as they were so recognized, their only effect was to make void the whole word and Spirit of God both in the law and in the gospel of God.

How unlawful it really was, however, by that Pharisaic ceremonialism, is worth stating here, and is seen in this piece of teaching of the rabbis:

He who eats with an uncircumcised person, eats, as it were, with a dog; he who touches him, touches, as it were, a dead body; and he who bathes in the same place with him, bathes, as it were, with a leper.⁸

In view of this, how expressive is the statement that when Cornelius fell down at his feet, and worshiped him "Peter took him up...and as he talked with him, he went in;" showing that Peter both touched him and walked and talked familiarly with him as with a brother. And the explanation of it all was:

Acts 10

²⁸ ...God has showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.

⁸ Farrar's, *Life and Work of Paul*, chap. 15, note to par. 4 from end.

In truth, God had never showed anything else: it was only the traditionalism and ceremonialism of Pharisaism that had ever showed otherwise. But that was not the last of it.

Acts 11

¹ The apostles and brethren that were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God.

And not only this, but the news reached there of the awful thing that Peter had done in associating with Gentiles.

² And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him,

³ Saying, You went in to men uncircumcised, and did eat with them.

That the word of God's salvation had been preached to lost men, and that they had received it, was nothing, yea, was worse than nothing in presence of the awful fact that a Christian should have associated with men uncircumcised, and had even eaten with them!

⁴ But Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning, and expounded it in order unto them;

And after giving the full account, he appealed to themselves:

¹⁷ Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?

And,

¹⁸ When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then has God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

Yet, though for that particular occasion they acknowledged the truth and the propriety of Peter's course, they did not hold fast to the truth. For when the gospel began to spread among the Gentiles, it was some of these men of Judea who went to

Antioch and...

Acts 15

¹ ...taught the brethren, and said, Except you be circumcised after the manner of Moses, you cannot be saved.

The controversy thus urged by the Pharisees who believed, caused the council at Jerusalem. In the council, Peter stood firmly and openly for the truth, as he had been instructed in the vision and by the Holy Spirit, and as he had stood when called to account by those at Jerusalem. He said the same thing now as before (*Acts 15:7-11*). The council decided the same way, and published to all the churches their decision accordingly.

Yet after all this, still the Pharisaic ones nursed their traditionalism and ceremonialism, and soon began again to urge it, especially against Paul.

However, when, after the council, Peter went to Antioch, he still stood firmly and openly in the truth, and “did eat with the Gentiles.” But presently “certain came from James” and from Jerusalem, and so strongly urged their traditionalism and ceremonialism that Peter actually abandoned his instruction in the vision; surrendered his firm and consistent stand at Jerusalem when called to account, and when in the council; and forsook brotherhood with the Christians who were from the Gentiles the uncircumcised (*Galatians 2:12*).

This was caused, says the record, “by certain which came,” not from Judea nor from Jerusalem alone, but “from James.” This shows that before reaching Peter they had affected James; and then, coming from James, had used the prestige of James to affect Peter and to draw him away.

James, too, had stood firmly and openly for the truth in the council. It was his sentence that had settled the question in the council. The very words of his decision were adopted by

the council, and were published as the decision of the council. And yet even him the Pharisaic traditionalists and ceremonialists “which believed” had succeeded in dragging back from the truth.

The real position of James at this time, and indeed to a much later time, is shown in the record of Paul’s last visit to Jerusalem—his last visit just because of this attitude of James; even long after the letter to the *Galatians* was written. The account is in *Acts* 21:18-26. This visit was made especially to win the brethren in Jerusalem. Paul and his company arrived at Jerusalem, and the brethren received them gladly.

Acts 21

¹⁸ And the day following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the elders were present.

This shows that James was the chief one who was the object of the visit, though all the elders were present, yet Paul and his companions “went in...unto James.” And what did they meet there?

¹⁹ [When Paul] had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry.

²⁰ And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord, and said unto him...

...what do you think? They began at once to try to drag even him away from the truth of the gospel to a compromise on traditionalism and ceremonialism.

Sketches from the Life of Paul, p. 211-212:

Instead of doing justice to the one whom they had injured, they still appeared to hold him responsible for the existing prejudice, as if he had given them cause for such feelings. They did not nobly stand in his defense, and endeavor to show the disaffected party their error: but they threw the burden wholly upon Paul, counseling him to pursue a course for the removal of all misapprehension.

And this even from James, who had stood so straight and true in the council, and who, after hearing from Paul a full statement of the gospel that he preached, could add nothing to it, and therefore had given him his right hand in fellowship! They said unto him:

Acts 21

²⁰ You see, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law;

²¹ And they are informed of you, that you teach 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.

²² What is it therefore? the multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that you are come.

²³ Do therefore this that we say to you: We have four men which have a vow on them;

²⁴ Them take, and purify yourself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads: and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning you, are nothing; but that you yourself also walk orderly, and keep the law.

²⁵ As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no such thing...

Sketches from the Life of Paul, p. 212:

The brethren hoped that by this act Paul might give a decisive contradiction of the false reports concerning him. But while James assured Paul that the decision of the former council [Acts 16] concerning the Gentile converts and the ceremonial law still held good, the advice given was not consistent with that decision which had also been sanctioned by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God did not prompt this advice. It was the fruit of cowardice.

These facts throw a strong light upon the expression that when “certain came from James,” Peter withdrew from the Gentiles and “separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.” This also gives a better idea of the powerful

influence that was exerted to draw Peter back from the truth—the influence which; was indeed so powerful that even “Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.”

But Paul knew the gospel that he was set to preach. He knew that it was the truth. And though thus left to stand alone against, to him, the most powerful human influence in the world, he cared not for this.

Galatians 2

¹⁴ But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, said unto Peter before them all, if you, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compel then the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?

¹⁵ We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,

¹⁶ 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.

Both Peter and James did finally come to clear faith; but it took time for them to do it; and while they were coming to it, their course had no little influence in creating the condition that called forth the letter to the *Galatians*.

9. Ceremonialism

In a [previous chapter](#) we remarked that while it is true that “the ceremonial law is the chief subject, as to law, in the book of *Galatians*,” yet even then it is not the ceremonial law as given by the Lord; that even where the ceremonial law as given by the Lord is involved, it is such a perversion of it as to make it altogether another thing than what it was in truth; and consequently that the great subject, as to law, as to works, is more ceremonialism—ceremonialism entire—than it is the true ceremonial law itself, in any phase of it.

That traditionalism was an essential part of the teaching of those who had driven back the Galatian Christians is certain from the fact that Paul cites it as a thing in his own experience, and shows how he had been delivered from it by the gospel, which he preached.

Galatians 1

¹³ You have heard of my conversation [manner of life] in time past in the Jews’ religion...

¹⁴ And profited in the Jews’ religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.

¹⁵ But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by his grace,

¹⁶ To reveal his son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood.

That is to say:

This very thing that these disturbers are trying to fasten upon you, I myself once held even more zealously than they; for “beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it.”

But from that I was delivered and redeemed by the revelation of the gospel of Jesus Christ—by the revelation of the

Son of God in me. I have preached to you, and am now preaching to you simply what I know through my own heart's experience and the revelation of the gospel of Christ.

I know that the gospel of Christ, the gospel which I preach, delivers the soul from all the burden and the toil of the traditions that those men bring to you, and sets the soul free in the light and liberty and joy of a perfect righteousness.

I know that all that they seek by the many toilsome exactions of their traditions is found unto perfect and soul-rejoicing fulness in Jesus Christ, and that it is obtained simply by faith alone in him.

That one passage, in the connection in which it is placed, even if there were no more, would be sufficient to show that, whatever else was included, the ceremonies of "the traditions" of the Jews were assuredly involved.

But that is not all: the thing which brought the crisis at Antioch in the case of Peter, and which is the crisis in the introduction to the real subject in the book of *Galatians*, was the question of eating with the Gentiles, with men uncircumcised. This too, was the thing which marked the crisis in the work of Peter as to Jew and Gentile, as is shown in his experience in the vision at Joppa, and at the home of Cornelius; and which he himself summed up in the words:

Acts 10

²⁸ You know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company or come unto one of another nation; but God has showed that I should not call any man common or unclean.

But eating with the Gentiles was not an unlawful thing at all, except by their own traditionalism. This exclusiveness was never enjoined nor inculcated by anything which the Lord had ever committed to the Jews. The Scriptures, which they themselves had, were against it.

That exclusiveness was altogether of their own construc-

tion, built up from their own exclusive self-righteousness. Yet this was a vital point and an essential element in the contention of the “Pharisees which believed,” that called forth the letter to the Galatians. And this being so, it is certain that the traditional ceremonial law of the Jews was an essential part of the ceremonial law that is the chief subject, as to law, in the book of *Galatians*.

It is true that the ceremonial law that God gave is also included in the controversy that called forth the letter to the Galatians; and yet even that, as God gave it, is not included. Circumcision is included; but so far perverted from the true intent and meaning as God gave it, and so laden with traditionalism, as to be only another phase of sheer pharisaic ceremonialism.

From the history of James in this connection, especially in *Acts* 21, it is plain that the rest of the true ceremonial law was also included—even to self-contradiction in the offering of sacrifices for sin while professing to believe in Christ. For one of the offerings made in purification of the Nazarite was:

Numbers 6

¹⁴ ...[a] lamb of the first year without blemish for a sin offering.

And when Paul, out of deference to the brethren at Jerusalem, especially to James the brother of Jesus, had yielded so far for appearance's sake as to accompany some men who were actually practicing this ceremony, (which to a believer in Jesus was self-contradictory,) it was while “he was conversing with the priest concerning the sacrifice to be offered,” that the mob broke loose, and dragged Paul away.

However, it is not strictly correct to say that just then the mob broke loose. The truth is that just then God let loose the mob to save Paul from the effect of his deference to the ill advice of the compromising brethren.

Sketches from the Life of Paul, p. 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 for 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.

Sketches from the Life of Paul, p. 231-232:

The Saviour's words of reproof to the men of Nazareth apply in the case of Paul, not only to the unbelieving Jews, but to his own brethren in the faith. Had the leaders in the church fully surrendered their feelings of bitterness toward the apostle: and accepted him as one specially called of God to bear the gospel to the Gentiles, the Lord would have spared him to them still to labor for the salvation of souls. He who sees the end from the beginning, and who understands the hearts of all, saw what would be the result of the envy and jealousy cherished toward Paul. God had not in his providence ordained that Paul's labors should so soon end; but he did not work a miracle to counteract the train of circumstances to which their own course gave rise.

The same spirit is still leading to the same results. A neglect to appreciate and improve the provisions of divine grace, has deprived the church of many a blessing. How often would the Lord have prolonged the life of some faithful minister, had his labor, been appreciated. But if the church permit the enemy of souls to pervert their understanding, so that they misrepresent and misinterpret the words and acts of the servant of Christ; if they allow themselves to stand in his way and hinder his usefulness, the Lord removes from them the blessing which he gave.

Satan is constantly working through his agents to dis-

hearten and destroy those whom God has chosen to accomplish a great and good work. They may be ready to sacrifice even their own life for the advancement of the cause of Christ, yet the great deceiver will suggest: doubts, distrust, jealousy, concerning them, which, if entertained, will undermine confidence in their integrity of character, and thus cripple their usefulness.

Too often he succeeds in working through their own brethren, to bring upon them such sorrow and anguish of heart that God graciously interposes to give his persecuted servants rest. After the hands are folded upon the pulseless breast, after the voice of warning and encouragement is silent, then death may accomplish that which life has failed to do; then the obdurate may be aroused to see and prize, the blessings they have cast from them.

On the part of the Pharisees who believed, the “false skulking brethren” who confused the Galatian Christians, and even weakened Peter and James, the moral law was not included, except incidentally. But the infinite variety of ceremonial observances, which by “oral tradition” had been invented and set up as hedges about the law, and which were more to them than the God-given law itself,—these were included, and were an essential part of their side of the controversy. Simply to neglect the washing of hands, etc., as referred to in *Mark* 1,

...was as bad as homicide [murder], and involved in forfeiture of eternal life.⁹

However, in the book of *Galatians*, in Paul’s setting forth of the only true gospel, the moral law is included, both in showing that it is impossible to be justified by any law whatever, even the moral law, and in showing that the very object of faith in Christ, the very object of the true gospel, is to accomplish in men the righteousness of that law, perfect obedience to the ten commandments.

⁹ Farrar’s *Life of Christ*, chap. 31, under “ablutions”.

If anything is needed to make plainer or more certain that ceremonialism altogether is the ceremonial law involved in the book of *Galatians*, here it is:

Sketches from the Life of Paul, p. 188-193:

Tidings had been received at Corinth from the churches in Galatia, revealing a state of great confusion, and even of absolute apostasy. Judaizing teachers were opposing the work of the apostle, and seeking to destroy the fruit of his labors.

In almost every church there were some members who were Jews by birth. To these converts the Jewish teachers found ready access, and through them gained a foothold in the churches. It was impossible, by Scriptural arguments, to overthrow the doctrines taught by Paul; hence they resorted to the most unscrupulous measures to counteract his influence and weaken his authority. They declared that he had not been a disciple of Jesus, and had received no commission from him; yet he had presumed to teach doctrines directly opposed to those held by Peter, James, and the other apostles.

Thus the emissaries of Judaism succeeded in alienating many of the Christian converts from their teacher in the gospel. Having gained this point, they induced them to return to the observance of the ceremonial law as essential to salvation. Faith in Christ, and obedience to the law of ten commandments, were regarded as of minor importance. Division, heresy, and sensualism were rapidly gaining ground among the believers in Galatia.

The doctrine which the Galatians had received could not in any sense be called the gospel; they were the teachings of men, and were directly opposed to the doctrines taught by Christ...In the Galatian churches, open, unmasked error was supplanting the faith of the gospel. Christ, the true foundation, was virtually renounced for the obsolete ceremonies of Judaism....

The apostle urged upon the Galatians as their only safe course to leave the false guides by whom they had been misled, and to return to the faith which they had received from the Source of truth and wisdom. Those false teachers were

hypocritical, unregenerate men, unholy in heart, and corrupt in life. Their religion consisted in a round of ceremonies, by the performance of which they expected to receive the favor of God. They had no relish for a doctrine which taught, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Such a religion required too great a sacrifice. Hence they clung to their errors, deceiving themselves, and deceiving others.

To substitute the external forms of religion for holiness of heart and life, is still as pleasing to the unrenewed nature as in the days of the apostles...Paul...describes the visit which he made to Jerusalem to a settlement of the very questions which are now agitating the churches of Galatia, as to whether the Gentiles should submit to circumcision and keep the ceremonial law.

And of the question as considered at Jerusalem, we read:

Sketches from the Life of Paul, p. 63, 71:

They [certain Jews from Judea] asserted, with great assurance, that none could be saved without being circumcised and keeping the entire ceremonial law. Jerusalem was the metropolis of the Jews, and there were found the greatest exclusiveness and bigotry. The Jewish Christians who lived in sight of the temple would naturally allow their minds to revert to the peculiar privileges of the Jews as a nation.

As they saw Christianity departing from the ceremonies and traditions of Judaism, and perceived that the peculiar sacredness with which the Jewish customs had been invested would soon be lost sight of in the light of the new faith, many grew indignant against Paul, as one who had, in a great measure, caused this change. Even the disciples were not all prepared willingly to accept the decision of the council. Some were zealous for the ceremonial law, and regarded Paul with jealousy, because they thought his principles were lax in regard to the obligation of the Jewish law.

Thus the ceremonial law that is the chief subject, as to law, in the book of *Galatians*, is the ceremonial law both divine and human, but with the divine so perverted as in its pervers-

sion to be only human, and in a word, ceremonialism entire—
a dead formalism against a living faith.

10. By Faith Alone

Galatians 2

¹⁵ We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,

¹⁶ 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.

As we have now passed the preliminaries, and have come to the study of the real substance of the book of *Galatians*, the first thing to be noted is the surpassing value of what is here to be studied. This is made known in those remarkable words:

Galatians 1

⁸ 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.

⁹ As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that you have received, let him be accursed.

This shows that if there could be any distinctions made among books of the Bible, then of all places in the Bible, the gospel, in its perfect sincerity, would be found in the book of *Galatians*. It would be found that whatever might be done with other books of the Bible, it must stand that in the book of *Galatians* the gospel is presented in such truth that even an angel from heaven could not alter it without incurring the curse. This being so, surely a study of the book of *Galatians* should enlist the most earnest attention and the deepest interest of every one who loves the gospel of Christ.

In our studies we have reached chapter 2:15. And, after the introduction, here, in Paul's appeal to Peter upon principle, is

where the real consideration of the gospel upon its merits is first entered upon. So much so is this, that it is acknowledged by some of the best scholars that it is impossible to tell just where Paul's speech to Peter ends and his definite word to the Galatians begins.

This indeed is natural enough; because Paul's address to Peter was an argument and an appeal for "the truth of the gospel" (verse 14), and the letter to the Galatians is the same identical thing. Therefore as his address and appeal to Peter was in very substance what his address and appeal must be to the Galatians, there was no need of any definite break to mark the point at which his direct word to Peter ceased and that to the Galatians began.

Accordingly, after the introduction, chapter 2:15 is where is begun the direct representation of the gospel to the Galatians.

Galatians 2

¹⁵ We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,

¹⁶ 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.

The word "law," as used in these two verses is not any particular law demanding the definite article, "the law;" but in Greek is simply the word "law"—*nomos*—without any article. The word-for-word rendering is thus:

We Jews by nature, and not sinners of [the] nations, knowing that a man is not justified by works of law [*nomou*]; but through faith of Jesus Christ, also we on Christ Jesus believed, that we might be justified by faith of Christ, and not by works of law [*nomou*]; because shall not be justified by works of law [*nomou*] any flesh.

By this it is plain that it is law in general, the idea of law, that is considered in this text; that men are not justified by any law at all, nor by all law together; but solely by faith of Jesus Christ without any works of any law whatever.

Evidently it could not be otherwise. For to specify some particular law, and assert that men were not justified by that law, would leave the question open to the implication that men might be justified by some other law. But “the truth of the gospel” is that men cannot be justified by any law at all, nor by all laws together; but only by the faith of Christ; simply by believing in Jesus.

The vital point in this appeal to Peter is not discerned without careful attention. It is this: We who are Jews by nature, who have all the advantages that pertain to the Jews, whose are the fathers, and the covenants, and the laws, and the ordinances, all given by the Lord himself directly to the Jews—who are thus Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles;

Galatians 2

¹⁶ ...even we have believed in Jesus Christ that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by works of law; for by the works of law shall no flesh be justified.

The very fact that we Jews, with all the native advantages of all the laws of the Jew, have believed in Jesus Christ that we might be justified by faith,—this in itself is open confession and positive evidence that there is no justification in law.

And when this is so with us Jews who have all these advantages, what else can possibly be the hope of the Gentiles who have no shadow of any such advantage? When “even we” must be justified by faith, how much more must the Gentiles be justified by faith!

When we who have all these laws cannot be justified by them, but must be justified by faith, without them, what shall the Gentile do who has none of these laws at all, if he is not to

be justified by faith without them?

And when we have confessed that we cannot be justified by these laws, how can we ask the Gentiles to do the same, which we ourselves were not able to bear, and which, by the liberty of the faith of Christ, we have thrown off?

Therefore, “if you, being a Jew, live after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews”—if you have abandoned the ground of the Jews, which, in order to be justified, is the right thing to do, and have gone over to the ground of the Gentiles, which, in order to be justified, is the right way to do, why will you require the Gentiles to abandon their ground, and go over to that of the Jews, which we have confessed must be abandoned?

All this was simply, in other words, the very argument that Peter himself had made in his statement of the truth of the gospel in his own experience, in the council at Jerusalem.

Acts 15

⁷ ...Men and brethren, you 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.

⁸ And God, which knows the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us;

⁹ And put no difference between us and them [note: not between them and us; but between us AND THEM], purifying their hearts by faith.

¹⁰ Now therefore why tempt you God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

¹¹ But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, EVEN as THEY.

Note again: not “they shall be saved even as WE”; but “we shall be saved, even as THEY”. And “THEY” were justified by FAITH without the deeds of any law—they must be; for they did not have any deeds of the law; and “WE,” the Jews, being

saved even as THEY, must be justified by faith without the deeds of any law, even though “WE” had all the laws that ever were.

Thus by the instruction of God and the demonstration of the Holy Spirit, it was made plain to all that Jew and Gentile are saved in precisely the same way—by a common faith in Jesus Christ, without any deeds of any law.

By this faith of Jesus Christ the middle wall of partition between them is annihilated, and all are made one with God and with one another in the blessedness, the righteousness, and the joy of the glorious gospel of the blessed God, who is blessed, and shall be blessed forevermore. Amen.

11. The Place of the Law

Galatians 2

¹⁷ But if, we while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid.

Having abandoned all law as a means of justification, have we abandoned all law altogether? God forbid. For while seeking to be justified by Christ, it is possible that we might be found sinners. And what is a sinner?

1 John 3

⁴ ...whosoever commits sin transgresses also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.

And what law is it, the transgression of which is sin?

Romans 7

⁷ I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, You shall not covet.

The word then—"You shall not covet"—belongs in a law: it is a part of a law. It is not simply the commandments; it is NOT:

"I had not known lust except the commandment had said,
You shall not covet."

But it IS:

"I had not know sin, but by THE LAW."

It IS:

"I had not know lust, except THE LAW had said, You shall not covet."

Now that law which says, "You shall not covet," says also:

"You shall not kill."

“You shall not steal.”

“You shall have no other gods before me.”

“You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.”

It is the Ten Commandment law: it is the law of God, which he spoke from heaven, and wrote twice with his own hand on tables of stone, and which he writes with his own Spirit on the tables of the heart of the believer in Jesus.

That is the law by which is the knowledge of sin. That is “THE LAW,” the transgression of which is “sin.” And that is the law, and the only law, by which, while seeking “to be justified by Christ,” we could be “found sinners.”

And as this word in *Galatians* recognizes the possibility that, while seeking to be justified by Christ, we might be found sinners; and as there is no knowledge of sin without the law of Ten Commandments, this is therefore conclusive evidence that, while it is true that all law must be abandoned as a means of justification, all law is not abandoned altogether.

It is conclusive evidence that THAT law by which is the knowledge of sin,—the law of Ten Commandments,—is NOT abandoned as the means of the KNOWLEDGE OF SIN.

That law, the law of Ten Commandments, while it, with all other law, must never be used as a means of justification, is NOT abandoned altogether; because that would make Christ THE MINISTER OF SIN. And against any such suggestion as that the Lord plunges his emphatic “Gob forbid” against all idea that the law of Ten Commandments is abolished or in any sense “loosed down” or done away.

The Lord Jesus did not come into the world to minister to sin, but altogether to save from sin. Sin is the transgression of the law of Ten Commandments; and as the Lord Jesus came to save men from the transgression of that law.

By that law is the knowledge of sin; and as Jesus came to

save men from sin, his mission would be completely nullified and altogether vain if the law were taken away. For to take away the law would take away the knowledge of sin and the very means of the knowledge of sin; and this in itself would make it impossible to save men from sin.

And to make the coming of the Lord Jesus create a condition of things in which it would be impossible to save men from sin, would be nothing else than to make Jesus the minister of sin. It would make Christ confirm what would satisfy Satan forever.

And why should not God cry out against it forever, “God forbid”? And to this everlasting “God forbid,” who that would not play directly into the hands of Satan can ever say anything but “Amen”?

Therefore “if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners,” transgressors of the law of Ten Commandments, does Christ sanction that? “God forbid.”

- Does he justify men in order that they may be free to transgress the law? “God forbid.”
- Does he save men from sin in order that they may continue in sin? “God forbid.”
- Do we believe in Jesus in order that we may continue to be sinners? “God forbid.”
- Do we “seek to be justified [made righteous] by Christ” in order that we may continue to sin? “God forbid.”

And let all the people forever say Amen.

Let it be borne in mind and upon the heart forever by every soul, that justification (being made righteous) by faith of Jesus Christ, means, in itself, in every sentiment of it, the total abandonment of sins, and the destruction of the body of sin in order that henceforth we should not serve sin. Otherwise I build again in works what I destroyed by faith:

Galatians 2

¹⁸ For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.

Faith will never justify sin. The two are eternal opposites; for “whatsoever is NOT of faith is sin.” And in Christ Jesus nothing avails but faith, which works by love that keeps the commandments of God.

12. Rebuilding Sin

Galatians 2

¹⁸ For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.

¹⁹ For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.

What is it that is referred to in the words, “If I build again the things which I destroyed”? There are at least two special thoughts involved in these words:

Justification by Law

The one great idea of those who had turned back the Galatian Christians was justification by LAW. Whereas the truth of the gospel, which Paul had preached to the Galatians, and which even “an angel from heaven” could not contradict, is justification by FAITH.

Paul has already shown, in verses 15-16, that even they who were Jews by nature, and so had all the laws that the Lord had given, had believed on Christ in order that they might be justified by faith and not by works of law: and this for the accepted reason that by works of law no flesh can be justified.

This was the utter abandonment and destruction of all idea of justification by law. And having abandoned all idea of justification by law, in order, by believing in Jesus, to be justified by the faith of Christ, now, being justified by faith, shall I set up again the idea and the hope of being justified by law?

Having abandoned the idea of justification by law, in order to find justification by faith, having found justification by faith, shall I again adopt the idea of justification by law? God forbid; for when, to be justified by faith, I must abandon all idea of justification by law, if I now adopt again the idea of justification by law, I must abandon justification by faith.

But when I abandon justification by faith, I make myself a transgressor; for “whatsoever is not of faith is sin.” Therefore, if I build again the structure of justification by law, which I destroyed by justification by faith, I make myself a transgressor; because by the law is the knowledge of sin.

The Old Man

That which I destroyed by abandoning all idea of justification by law, and adopting justification only by the faith of Christ, is “the old man,” “the body of sin.” And to build again that which I destroyed is only to bring back from the dead that old man, is only to make alive the body of sin, and that can only make me a transgressor.

Justification by the faith of Christ means in itself the total abandonment of all sins committed, the remission of all “sins that are past,” and also the destruction of the body of sin, so that:

Romans 6

⁶ ...henceforth we should not serve sin.

Therefore while seeking to be justified by faith, we must not be found sinners. For if I build again the body of sin which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. And in again adopting the idea of justification by law, I do build again, in works, what I destroyed by faith; because all seeking of justification by law is seeking justification by our own works, and our own works are simply works of the flesh, which are all sin; for

Galatians 5

¹⁹ The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

²⁰ Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

²¹ Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like.

And in building again the structure of justification by law,

which I abandoned in order to be justified by faith, I make myself a transgressor;

Galatians 2

¹⁹ For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.

Since abandoning the idea of justification by law and adopting justification by faith caused me to become dead to the law and alive unto God, then adopting again the idea of justification by law, which, in itself, is the abandonment of justification by faith, would cause me to become alive to the law and dead unto God.

But to be dead unto God is nothing but to be dead in trespasses and in sins. And as to be dead unto God is to be dead in trespasses and in sins, and to be dead unto God is to be alive to the law, then to be alive to the law is only to be a transgressor.

Therefore, my brethren, justification by faith forever, without any works of any law of any kind whatever,—this is the only ground of hope of salvation.

13. Crucified with Christ

Galatians 2

²⁰ I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives 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.

It may not be amiss to emphasize what this scripture does say, by noting what it does not say. It does not say:

“I want to be crucified with Christ.”

It does not say,

“I wish I were crucified with Christ, that he might live in me.”

It actually says,

“I am crucified with Christ.”

Again, it does not say:

“Paul was crucified with Christ; Christ lived in Paul; and the Son of God loved Paul, and gave himself for Paul.”

All that is true; but that is not what the scripture says, nor is that what it means; for it means just what it says. And it does say:

“I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives 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.”

Thus this verse is a beautiful and solid foundation of Christian faith for every soul in the world. Thus it is made possible for every soul to say, in full assurance of Christian faith:

“He loved me.”

“He gave himself for me.”

“I am crucified with Christ.”

“Christ lives in me.”

Read also *1 John* 4:15.

For any soul to say, “I am crucified with Christ,” is not speaking at a venture. It is not believing something on a guess. It is not saying a thing of which there is no certainty. Every soul in this world can say, in all truth and all sincerity, “I am crucified with Christ.” It is but the acceptance of a fact, the acceptance of a thing that is already done; for this word is the statement of a fact.

It is a fact that Jesus Christ was crucified. And when he was crucified, we also were crucified; for he was one of us. His name is Immanuel, which is “God with us”—not God with him, but “God with us.”

When his name is not God with him, but “God with us;” and when God with him was not God with him, but God with us, then who was he but “us”? He had to be “us” in order that God with him could be not God with him, but “God with us.” And when he was crucified, then who was it but “us” that was crucified?

This is the mighty truth announced in this text. Jesus Christ was “us.” He was of the same flesh and blood with us. He was of our very nature. He was in all points like us.

Hebrews 2

¹⁷ It behoved him to be made in all points like unto his brethren.

He emptied himself, and was made in the likeness of men. He was “the last Adam.” And precisely as the first Adam was ourselves, so Christ, the last Adam, was ourselves. When the first Adam died, we, being involved in him, died with him. And when the last Adam was crucified,—he being ourselves,

and we being involved in him,—we were crucified with him.

As the first Adam was in himself the whole human race, so the last Adam was in himself the whole human race; and so when the last Adam was crucified, the whole human race—the old, sinful, human nature—was crucified with him. And so it is written:

Romans 6

⁶ Knowing this, that our old man IS CRUCIFIED WITH HIM, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

Thus every soul in this world can truly say, in the perfect triumph of Christian faith:

“I am crucified with Christ; my old sinful human nature is crucified with him, that this body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth I should not serve sin.”

Galatians 2

²⁰ ...Nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me.

2 Corinthians 4

¹⁰ Always bearing about in my body the dying of the Lord Jesus,—the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus, for I am crucified with him,—] that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in my body.

¹¹ For I who live am always delivered unto death, for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in my mortal flesh.

And therefore:

Galatians 2

²⁰ ...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.

In this blessed fact of the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus, which was accomplished for every human soul, there is not only laid the foundation of faith for every soul, but in it there is given the gift of faith TO every soul.

And thus the cross of Christ is not only the wisdom of God displayed from God to us, but it is the very power of God manifested to deliver us from all sin, and bring us to God.

O sinner, brother, sister, believe it. Oh, receive it. Surrender to this mighty truth. Say it, say it in full assurance of faith, and say it forever:

“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives 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.”

Say it; for it is the truth, the very truth and wisdom and power of God, who saves the soul from all sin.

14. Righteousness by Christ's Death

Galatians 2

²¹ I do not frustrate the grace of God; for if righteousness come by law [*nomou*—law; not *ho nomos*—the law] then Christ is dead in vain.

This is one of those mighty, universal statements of eternal principles so frequently found in the writings of Paul. It is the climax of the argument begun in his protest to Peter when “before them all” Paul withstood him to the face because he “walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel.” It will therefore make plainer to the reader the force of this climacteric, if we recall the issue as it was begun in Paul’s words to Peter:

Galatians 2

¹⁴ But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all, If you, being born a Jew, are wont to live according to the customs of the Gentiles, and not of the Jews, how is it that you constrain the Gentiles to keep the ordinances of the Jews?

¹⁵ We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,

¹⁶ 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 [in order that] we might be justified by the faith of Christ and not by works of law: for by works of law shall no flesh be justified.

That is to say: We who are Jews by nature, who have all the advantages that pertain to the Jews, whose are the fathers, and the covenants, and the laws, and the ordinances, all given by the Lord himself directly to the Jews,—we who are Jews by nature and not sinners of the Gentiles, **EVEN WE** have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ and not by works of law: for by works of law shall

no flesh be justified.

The very fact that we Jews, with all the native advantages of all the laws of the Jews, have believed in Christ in order that we might be justified by faith—this in itself is open confession that there is no justification by law.

When even we cannot be justified by all these laws, laws which even the Lord gave to us, but must be justified by faith in Christ, that is both confession and demonstration that there is no possibility of justification by law.

Nor in this is there any denial or frustration of the grace of God. It is true that it was the grace of God that gave to us all these laws, which are indeed all advantages; but these laws—any of them, or all of them together—were not given that we should be justified or find righteousness by them.

The one great object of all these laws was and is Christ. In his great grace God gave to us all these laws that we might more plainly see, more clearly discern, and more fully know, Christ. They were all given that we should be justified—not by the laws but—by Jesus Christ; that we should find righteousness—not by doing the laws, but—by believing in Jesus.

Therefore when we who are Jews by nature, and who, as such, have all the advantages of all the laws ever given to the Jews,—when even we have believed in Jesus in order that we might find righteousness by faith of Jesus Christ and not by works of law, in so doing we do not frustrate the grace of God; for this is the very purpose of all these laws which themselves were given by the grace of God.

And since Christ, and righteousness by faith in Christ, was and is the very object of all these laws, then “if righteousness come by law, Christ is dead in vain.”

And, finally, since Christ has died for our offenses, and is risen again for our justification, now for anybody to seek to

be justified by law and not by faith of Christ, is to deny that Christ ever was the object of the laws, and so is to assert that justification is and always was by works and not by faith; and so is, in a word, the utter repudiation of Christ now and ever; because he is...

Revelation 13

⁸ ...the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

1 Peter 1

²⁰ Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world.

Consequently it is an eternal and universal principle that:

Galatians 2


²¹ ...if righteousness come by law then Christ is dead in vain.

“And let all the people say, Amen, and Amen.”

15. Christ and Him Crucified

Galatians 3

¹ O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ has been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

hrist having been set forth, crucified among them, it was easy for the Galatians to understand the words of chapter 2:20: “I am crucified with Christ.” When he was set forth, crucified among them, it was easy enough for all who were willing, to be crucified with him.

Paul preached only “Christ, and him crucified.” This he preached wherever he went. And wherever he went, he preached Christ crucified among the people in that place. That is, when he was in Galatia, he preached not only Christ crucified down in Judea, but also in Galatia. When he was in Corinth, he preached not only Christ crucified away over at Jerusalem, but also Christ crucified there in Corinth.

In other words, Christ crucified at Jerusalem in Judea, was also Christ crucified wherever there is a man on the earth. And the preaching of Christ crucified at Jerusalem in Judea, to be the true preaching of that fact must be also the preaching of Christ crucified wherever the fact is preached. It is simply the preaching of the universal and ever-present Christ the Saviour.

The preaching in Galatia, in Corinth, in Rome, in Britain, in the United States, of Christ crucified only at Jerusalem in Judea, is too far away both in distance and in time for the people readily to grasp it as a power in their own lives.

But in preaching of Christ crucified at Jerusalem in Judea, and also wherever there is a human soul,—this brings to each soul, just where that soul is, Christ, the crucified, the risen,

and the ever-living Saviour. And then and there each soul who hears the preaching can be crucified with him (*Romans* 6:6), can rise with him (*Ephesians* 2:5-6), and can live with him (*Romans* 6:8), as the ever-crucified, ever-risen, and ever-living Saviour.

Such preaching, and such alone, is the true preaching of Christ and him crucified. Such preaching, and such alone, is the true preaching of the cross of Christ. Such preaching of the cross of Christ is the preaching of “the power of God;” and such preaching of Christ crucified is “Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.” *1 Corinthians* 1:17-18, 23-24.

We can do no better than to say again, in this connection, what we said two weeks ago, on chap. 2:20: Jesus Christ was “us.” He was of the same flesh and blood with us. He was of our very nature. He was in all points like us.

Hebrews 2

¹⁷ ...it behoved him to be made in all points like unto his brethren.

He emptied himself, and was made in the likeness of men. He was “the last Adam.” And precisely as the first Adam was ourselves, so Christ, the last Adam, was ourselves. When the first Adam died, we, being involved in him, died with him. And when the last Adam was crucified,—he being ourselves, and we being involved in him,—we were crucified with him.

As the first Adam was in himself the whole human race, so the last Adam was in himself the whole human race, so the last Adam was in himself the whole human race; and so when the last Adam was crucified, the whole human race—the old sinful human nature—was crucified with him. And so it is written:

Romans 6

⁶ Knowing this, that our old man IS CRUCIFIED WITH HIM, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we

should not serve sin.

Thus every soul in this world can truly say, in the perfect triumph of Christian faith:

“I am crucified with Christ; my old sinful human nature is crucified with him, that this body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth I should not serve sin.” *Romans 6:6.*

Galatians 2

²⁰ Nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me...

2 Corinthians 4

¹⁰ Always bearing about in my body the dying of the Lord Jesus, [the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus, for I am crucified with him,] that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in my body.

¹¹ For I who live am always delivered unto death, for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in my mortal flesh.

Galatians 2

²⁰ ...and therefore 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.

In this blessed fact of the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus, which was accomplished for every human soul, there is not only laid the foundation of faith for every soul, but in it there is given the gift of faith TO every soul.

And thus the cross of Christ is not only the wisdom of God displayed from God to us, but it is the very power of God manifested to deliver us from all sin, and bring us to God.

O sinner, brother, sister, believe it. Oh, receive it. Surrender to this mighty truth. Say it, say it in full assurance of faith, and say it forever:

“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives 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.”

Say it; for it is the truth, the very truth and wisdom and power of God, which saves the soul from all sin.

16. Faith is the Only Way

Galatians 3

² This only would I learn of you, Did you receive the Spirit by works of law [*nomou*], or by hearing of faith?

³ Are you so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are you now made perfect by the flesh?

⁴ Have you suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain.

⁵ He therefore that ministers to you the Spirit, and works miracles among you, does he do it by works of law [*nomou*], or by the hearing of faith?

In these verses is revealed the deep secret of the difficulty with the Galatians, and especially with those who had bewitched them, which called forth the letter to the Galatians.

That secret is that they held that:

- men are justified, not by faith in Christ, BUT by faith in Christ AND works of law.
- men are saved, not by faith in Christ, BUT by faith in Christ and something else.
- these who have never yet believed in Christ may be justified by faith in Christ; but those who believe in Christ must be justified by works of law.
- a man who is only a sinner must be justified by faith; but when he has been justified, and has become a Christian, then he must be justified by works of law.
- righteousness is obtained by faith, but it must be kept by works.
- the righteousness of Christ must be received in place of all our sins, and to set us in the way of right; but our own righteousness keeps us in the way of right.
- Christ avails in all that we cannot do; but in all that we

can do we ourselves avail.

- we begin the Christian course by faith; but we must complete it by works.

In short, and in the words of Inspiration, that we begin “in the Spirit,” but are “made perfect by the flesh.”

That this analysis is correct is shown in other words that are a material part of the story of the controversy that called forth the letter to the *Galatians*.

Note, it was not the Pharisees alone, but “the Pharisees which BELIEVED,” who started this controversy, and continued it, and carried it into Galatia, and planted it among the Galatian Christians. It was these professed believers in Christ who said to believers in Christ,

“Except you be circumcised,...you cannot be saved.”

It was these professors of faith in Christ who insisted that those who had faith in Christ must be also circumcised and keep the law, in order to be saved.

Thus with those “Pharisees which believed,” faith in Christ is not enough to save: it must be faith in Christ and something else. It required what Christ had done, with what we can do added to that.

This is further confirmed by the fact, which some time ago we pointed out, that the controversy, so far as circumcision was concerned, was not as to the merits of circumcision in itself; but altogether as to whether believers in Christ must be circumcised in order to be saved. This is certain because that after the question had, in council, been decided against circumcision, Paul circumcised Timothy.

It was so also as to the keeping of the law of God: it was not a question of keeping or not keeping the law of God on its merits, but altogether the question of keeping the law in order

to be saved by the keeping of the law.

And the most singular phase of this whole story is that those people thought that it was the true gospel, that it was righteousness by faith! They thought that they were the ones who held the true faith in Christ, and that Paul was an innovator, the chief enemy of true faith, that he was making void the law of God, and undermining all righteousness.

But the truth is that they did not know what is righteousness by faith. They had no true idea of faith, and so could not know truly what is righteousness by faith.

Now the letter to the *Galatians* was written to correct this fearful error, and to show to them and to all people forever what righteousness by faith is in the very truth of the gospel.

It was written to make plain that:

- the faith of Jesus Christ, and that alone, saves the soul, at the beginning and at the end and all the way between:
- what is received by faith is kept only by faith:
- what is begun by faith is completed only by faith:
- faith alone sets us in the right way, and faith alone keeps us in the right way:
- “in Christ Jesus neither circumcision avails anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which works,” not faith and works, but “faith WHICH works by love.”

And as love is the fulfilling of the law, then in Christ nothing avails but faith which fulfills the law—not faith and the fulfilling of the law, but faith which fulfills the law.

The law is kept, not in order to be saved, but because we are saved. It is only the saved, the righteous, man that can fulfill the law; therefore he fulfills the law only because he is saved; and he is saved only by grace through faith.

The power, the virtue, to fulfill the law is in the faith, which

is received as the free gift of God through Jesus Christ. And this neither frustrates the grace of God nor makes void the law of God. On the contrary, it magnifies the grace of God, and establishes the law of God. It is the true righteousness by faith.

17. Father of the Faithful

Galatians 3

⁶ Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

⁷ Know you therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.

⁸ And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In you shall all nations be blessed.

⁹ So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

The great contention of those who had confused the Galatians was that the Gentiles who believed in Christ must be circumcised in order to be saved. In the nature of the case, they carried back to Abraham the obligation of circumcision; because in his family circumcision was instituted. They disconcerted the Galatians Christians by presenting to them this fallacious argument:

“The promise of inheriting the world, and, indeed, all the promises, was made to Abraham. Abraham and all his family were circumcised.

“Now it is perfectly proper to believe in Jesus for the forgiveness of sins; but in addition to this you must be circumcised, and so become children of Abraham, in order that, as children of Abraham, you can be heirs to the inheritance, the world to come, that was promised to Abraham.

“None but true children can inherit from the father. Therefore do you not see that if you would inherit from Abraham, you must be children of Abraham? That is plain enough. But Abraham, to whom the property belongs, was circumcised. You can be children of his only by circumcision; because all his children must be circumcised.

“Therefore do you not see that while it is proper and even necessary to believe in Jesus for the forgiveness of sins, it is

essential that in addition to that you shall be circumcised in order to be saved, and so to inherit the land and all the promises given to Abraham, the father?

“Do you not now see how Paul is robbing you of your inheritance, and shutting you out from all the blessings of Abraham our father, by telling you that you need not be circumcised?”

Now, that argument is wholly fallacious, and is shown to be fallacious in the double fact that Abraham received the promise of the inheritance, and, indeed, all the promises, and also that which makes sure the inheritance, before he was circumcised.

In other words, it was while Abraham was a Gentile that he received the promises; and he received them altogether by faith. Then, whosoever are of faith, these are the children of Abraham. *Galatians* 3:7.

Righteousness is that which makes sure the inheritance; and it is written:

Galatians 3

⁶ Abraham believed God, and it [his believing God] was accounted to him for righteousness.

Thus Abraham obtained the righteousness of God by believing God. He obtained the inheritance, the world to come, also by believing God. Thus both the inheritance and the righteousness that makes it sure were received by Abraham by faith alone.

So, then, all that are of faith are the children of Abraham; and, being children of Abraham, are heirs of the inheritance, which is the world to come.

It was also while Abraham was yet uncircumcised, while in that respect he was yet “a heathen,” that God gave to him the promise that he would “justify the heathen,” in the words:

Galatians 3

⁸ ...In you shall all nations be blessed.

Therefore, again, as it was while he was yet a heathen that Abraham was justified, and justified wholly by faith; and, as it was then too that God promised to Abraham that he would justify all the heathen exactly as he had justified Abraham, it follows inevitably that all the heathen must be justified by faith, in order to be children of Abraham.

And, so, being thus by faith children of Abraham, they are “heirs according to the promise” given to Abraham.

Galatians 3

⁹ So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

And this justifying, saving faith is not faith and circumcision; but faith without circumcision. For:

Romans 4

⁹ Does this blessedness come then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness.

¹⁰ How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.

¹¹ And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised.

And this was so in order...

¹¹ ...that he might be the father of all them that BELIEVE, though they be NOT circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also;

¹² And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised.

That is to say that even though they were children of Abra-

ham by natural birth confirmed by circumcision, yet he was their father, and they were really his children only when they were justified by that faith which he had, and when they walked in the steps of that faith which he had while he was yet, as regards circumcision, a Gentile.

And now when He had come in, whom Abraham, while a Gentile, had believed in and had been justified and had obtained the promises, and these Gentiles had believed in Him, just as had Abraham when he was a Gentile, for those who were circumcised to insist that those believing Gentiles must be circumcised in order to be the children of Abraham and to be saved, was simply to show themselves altogether behind the times, and sadly lacking in understanding of the very truths which they themselves professed, and of which they bore the mark.

Therefore:

- it is faith in Christ, and faith alone, that avails:
- it is faith in Christ that avails to obtain forgiveness of sins;
- it is faith in Christ that obtains the inheritance;
- it is faith in Christ that obtains the righteousness which, alone, can make the inheritance sure.

And it is faith in Christ, and that alone, that can enable the one whose sins are forgiven, so to walk in the path of righteousness that he shall enter, in full and assured heirship, upon the inheritance that was given to Abraham and his seed, through the righteousness of faith.

18. Why Was Circumcision Given?

Galatians 3

⁶ Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

⁷ Know you therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.

⁸ And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In you shall all nations be blessed.

⁹ So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

The Galatians and other Gentiles were justified by faith in Christ without circumcision. They thus became children of Abraham, because Abraham was justified by faith in Christ without circumcision.

They thus became heirs also of the inheritance promised to Abraham, because Abraham received the promise of the inheritance by faith, without circumcision. Therefore, since they were children of Abraham, and heirs according to the promise to Abraham, and had the righteousness which fully entitles them to the inheritance,—all without circumcision,—and since in all this they were exactly as Abraham was, and were walking in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham which he had being yet uncircumcised, what possible need could there be of circumcision?

This is the answer that was made to the demands of the Pharisees who believed, who insisted that Gentiles who believe in Christ must be circumcised in order to be saved. This is the answer, in both *Romans* and *Galatians*, to the contention of the Pharisees who believed. This is the Christian argument.

But to this they came back with the questions:

“What profit was there ever in circumcision?”

“What was circumcision for?”

“How did it ever come in?”

“And why should it ever have come in?”

And they argued, even admitting that Abraham had all this before he was circumcised, and the Gentiles now coming in and finding it all by faith without circumcision, just as Abraham did, the fact is that after Abraham got it all by faith, he was circumcised.

Then, admitting that these have it all by faith, as he got it, why should not these be circumcised after they have it by faith, just as Abraham was circumcised after he got it by faith?

Thus, claimed the Pharisees, it is not enough to say that Abraham received this by faith without circumcision, and that the Gentiles have gone far enough when they have received it all without circumcision, as did Abraham; because, when Abraham had received it without circumcision, he was afterward circumcised.

Then the Gentiles have not gone far enough in the way of Abraham unless they, having what Abraham had without circumcision, also, as did Abraham, go yet farther, and be circumcised.

This was the claim of the Pharisees who believed, and who went everywhere in opposition to the work of Paul, insisting that all the Gentiles who believe in Christ must be circumcised in order to be saved.

And this same question is raised, even to this day, by many persons. Even today there are large numbers of people who ask the question,

“Why should not Christians be circumcised, because surely Abraham was circumcised, and he is the father of all them that believe?”

So that, though the same contention is not still carried on that was started by the Pharisees of Jerusalem in the days of the apostles, yet really the same query abides.

And *Romans* and *Galatians*—*Galatians* particularly—is, even today, present truth; not only because of its insisting upon the everlasting truth that those who are justified by faith, as was Abraham without circumcision, are the children of Abraham, and heirs of the promise without circumcision.

Why, then, was Abraham circumcised after he received the righteousness and the promises, and yet his true children—his children by faith—now be not circumcised?

The answer is: For the simple reason that circumcision was not in the original plan. It was no part, and is no part, of the original order of God in justification or salvation. The truth is that if Abraham had continued to walk in the faith in which he walked before he was circumcised, he never would have been circumcised, nor any of his children.

Why, then, was Abraham circumcised? It is important to know. And in order to know, it is important to look at the record in the Bible; for it is all there, and it is all plain.

Notice, in *Genesis* 11:29-32 is the record of Abram's leaving his native country.

Then *Genesis* 12:1 tells us that the Lord "had said" unto Abram,

Genesis 12

¹ Get out of your country, and from your kindred, and from your father's house, unto a land that I will show you.

This shows that it was in obedience to the call of the Lord that Abram left his country, though his father's house and his kindred were with him in this.

And it was at that time, when God "had said" to him thus,

that God also showed that he would justify the heathen through faith; for then it was that he preached the gospel unto Abram, saying,

Genesis 12 [*Galatians* 3:8]

³ In you shall all families of the earth be blessed.

After his father died, Abram came into the land of Canaan, and then it was that

⁷ The Lord appeared unto Abram and said, Unto your seed will I give this land.

But Abram's kindred were yet with him; and though the Lord had now promised him the land, he had not yet showed it to him as he had said he would do, and he could not show it to him until he had become separated from his kindred as well as from his country and from his father's house.

But in the thirteenth chapter, Lot and his people, the only kindred that were with him, did separate from him; and just then, "after that Lot was separated from him," the Lord said unto Abram,

Genesis 13

¹⁴ Lift up now your eyes, and look from the place where you are northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward:

¹⁵ For all the land which you see, to you will I give it, and to your seed forever.

And the land which Abram then saw, and which was then promised to him, included "the world;" for this promise was

Romans 4

¹³ ...the promise, that he should be the heir of the world.

Then in *Genesis* 15, Abram said to the Lord:

Genesis 15

³ Behold, to me you have given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is my heir.

⁴ And, behold, the word of the Lord came unto him, saying,

This shall not be your heir; but he that shall come forth out of your own bowels shall be your heir.

⁵ And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if you be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall your seed be.

⁶ And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

At the same time the Lord said to him:

⁷ I am the Lord that brought you out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give you this land to inherit it.

And Abram asked,

⁸ Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?

In answer the Lord made a covenant with Abram,—a covenant of sacrifice,—pledging his own life to the fulfillment of all that he had promised and spoken; for he told Abram to take

⁹ ...a heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle dove, and a young pigeon.

And when Abram had divided them all in the midst except the birds, and had laid the pieces one against another upon the altar in sacrifice to God, and watched the sacrifices until the going down of the sun, then

¹² ...a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and lo, a horror of great darkness fell upon him,

¹⁷ [and] when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces.

And

¹⁸ The Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto your seed have I given this land.

Thus Abram had received:

- the blessing of God, which was to make him a blessing to all nations;
- the promise of the world for an inheritance;
- the promise of the seed in whom all nations should be blessed;
- the righteousness of God;

And God had made his covenant with him, in which he pledged himself: and all this by faith alone, utterly without circumcision, and with no mention or even hint of circumcision, or of any necessity for it.

Thus the Lord had given to Abram, and by faith Abram had received, all that the Lord has to give anybody, and all that anybody ever can receive. And it was, and is, altogether of faith, and faith alone—faith without works, without circumcision.

In the sixteenth chapter of *Genesis*:

Genesis 16

² Sarai said unto Abram. Behold now, the Lord has restrained me from bearing: I pray you, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai.

Hagar conceived and bare Ishmael. And we know, from the other scriptures, that this whole arrangement was altogether a scheme of the flesh, springing wholly from distrust of the promise of God, springing from unbelief. And Abraham had to repudiate it all, and bear the fearful test of the offering of his only son Isaac, on Mount Moriah, before he recovered his true standing in faith alone.

It was an effort of themselves to fulfill the promise of God, which, in the nature of things, God alone could fulfill. It was an effort of the flesh to do the works of the Spirit, and so was a lapse by Abram from the true faith and work of God, into

unbelief and the plans of self and the works of the flesh.

Then it was that circumcision came in. And it was because of this that circumcision did come in. It was a mark made in the flesh as a reminder, a humiliating reminder, of Abram's resort to the flesh; and thus also a reminder that every one who bore it must not make the same mistake that Abram did, but must remain true to the faith and work of God.

Consequently, it is written:

Romans 2

²⁵ Circumcision verily profits if you keep the law, but if you be a breaker of the law, your circumcision is made uncircumcision.

And Abraham was "the father of circumcision" to them who are of the circumcision, when, and only when, they walked "in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised." *Romans* 4:12.

Thus it was:

Spirit of Prophecy, vol. 1, p. 262:

...a token that God had cut them out and separated them from all nations as his peculiar treasure.

This must be so until the seed should come in the line of Abraham, in whom alone all these things can be fulfilled.

Thus it is perfectly plain that if Abraham had been faithful to that which he received from God by faith, he never would have been circumcised. And it is equally certain that when any one, receiving by faith in Christ alone, as Abraham received it, that which Abraham received, he needs not to be circumcised.

Since the Seed has come who is the giver of all the promises, who is the pledge of the covenant, who is the one from whom must come all that was promised to Abram, and which Abraham received by faith alone, then, whosoever believes in

Him and walks by faith alone in him, as did Abram before he was circumcised, in the nature of things he needs not be circumcised.

For the fruit of this faith was, in Abram, and is in every one who believes, the keeping of the commandments of God. *Genesis* 26:5; *Galatians* 6:1; *1 Corinthians* 7:19. And so it is written:

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 364:

If man had kept the law of God, as given to Adam after his fall, preserved by Noah, and observed by Abraham, there would have been no necessity for the ordinance of circumcision.

And since the faith of Jesus brings to the believer in Jesus, and gives to the believer in Jesus, the perfect keeping of the law of God, the perfect righteousness of God, there is “no necessity for the ordinance of circumcision.” And let all the people say, Amen.

This is the mighty truth that Paul saw. This is the mighty truth that Stephen saw. And though it is made so plain in the Scriptures, and is now so plain to us, yet to the carnally minded Jews and the formalistic “Pharisees which believed,” it seemed but the uprooting of all religion, and as fairly an attack upon the very foundations of the Throne.

19. The Law Reveals Sin

Galatians 3

¹⁰ For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continues not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

The reason that all who are of the works of the law are under the curse is that “by the law is the knowledge of sin.” *Romans 3:20*. Since “by the law is the knowledge of sin,” who ever by the law is of the works of the law, his works are only the works of sin; and of course he is under the curse, because he is only under sin, and sin brings only the curse.

All that the law of itself ever says, or ever can say, to any man is that he is a sinner. As it is written,

Romans 3

¹⁹ Now we know that what things soever the law says, it says to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

Then how could it be expected that the law, which in all things whatsoever declares a man guilty, could of itself by any possibility declare him innocent? But when he is guilty, he is under the curse. And as in whatsoever works he does the law still declares him guilty, even though it be in endeavor to do the works of the law he is still under the curse.

²⁰ Therefore [it is that] by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

In order for any man who is of the works of the law, any man by the works of the law, to be anywhere but under the curse, there would have to be by the law the knowledge of righteousness. But if by the law were the knowledge of righteousness, then, though all the world has gone overwhelm-

ingly into sin and is laden with iniquity, none could ever know it; and the law, bringing to such persons the knowledge of righteousness, would ruin the universe, because in so doing it would be only declaring sin to be righteousness.

But sin is not righteousness; and no variance from true righteousness can ever be sanctioned in any degree whatever. Therefore as this world has wholly gone so far out of the way that “there is none righteous, no, not one,” “all have sinned,” it is all-essential that they should know that they are in sin, and lost, so that they may be saved.

Romans 5

¹⁹ Moreover the law entered, that the offense might abound [to make sin appear, “that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful”]. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:

²⁰ That as sin has reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

But it may be asked,

“Does not the law in giving the knowledge of sin, and in condemning sin, give by contrast the knowledge of righteousness?”

The answer still is, No. In this way of contrast the law does indeed convey, or impress, the idea that there is such a thing as righteousness; but as for righteousness itself, what it really is, and the knowledge of it in the life, which is the only true knowledge—none of this is, and none of it can be, conveyed by the law.

The reason of this is that the only true righteousness that there is, is the righteousness of God. Anything that does not meet in full measure the standard of God’s righteousness is not righteousness at all; but is sin. Now it is the truth that the utmost measure of righteousness that any man can see or find

in the law of God, comes far short of the true measure of God's righteousness. But just so far as it does come short of God's righteousness, it is sin. It is, in fact, simply the man's own measure of righteousness according to the measure of his own powers of comprehension.

And though lived up to by himself in complete measure, it is only his own righteousness instead of the righteousness of God; because it is according to his own measure instead of the measure of God; it is simply self-righteousness instead of God's righteousness, and so is sin. Consequently by the law is only the knowledge of sin.

Yet it is also true that the very righteousness of God is in the law; because the law is but the expression of the will of God, it is only the transcript of his character. And since this is so, it follows in the nature of the case that nobody can see in the law the righteousness of God, nobody can find in the law the righteousness of God, but God himself.

And this only emphasizes the mighty truth that all that anybody, whether God or man, can ever see or find in the law is HIS OWN righteousness. On the part of man, this is sin; because it comes short of the righteousness of God. But on the part of God, it is righteousness; because it is the very righteousness of God in all perfection.

And this makes clear and emphasizes the mighty and eternal truth that the righteousness of God that is in the law can never come to anybody by the law: but must come as the gift of God, from God alone, "without the law." Therefore it is written,

Galatians 2

²¹ If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

Romans 3

²² But now the righteousness of God without the law is mani-

fested,...even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

²³ For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

By the law is the knowledge of sin; by the gospel is the knowledge of righteousness,

Romans 1

¹⁷ ...for therein is the righteousness of God revealed...

As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse, because by the law is the knowledge of sin; as many as are of the faith of the gospel are delivered from the curse, because

¹⁷ ...therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

20. The Just Shall Live by Faith

Galatians 3

¹⁰ For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continues not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

¹¹ But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.

¹² And the law is not of faith: but, The man that does them shall live in them.

Note the proof that is given that “as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse.” It is this:

“Cursed is every one that *continues not* in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.”

Now, since the proposition is that “as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse,” why does not the proof of that proposition read:

“Cursed is every one that *continues* in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them”?

Well, the simple reason is that the fault which brings the curse is not in the law, but in those who would be the doers of the law: not in the law, but in the people.

No curse could ever possibly come to any who really do the law. But all who “are of the works of the law are under the curse” simply because their works are not truly the works of the law, but are their own works, which they themselves have shaped by their own blurred and imperfect conception of what the law really is; and are therefore sin.

Therefore the curse is upon all who “are of the works of the law,” simply because they have not continued “in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them;” but

have all sinned. If they had begun and had continued truly “in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them,” there never could have been any curse.

However, mark this: though they had begun and had continued truly in all things which are written in the book of the law, or in the law, to do them, even then their righteousness would not have been of the law; because they would necessarily have had to be righteous before they could begin in righteousness to do the righteousness of the law. As it is written:

1 John 3

⁷ He that does righteousness is righteous.

He has to be righteous, in order to do righteousness. For, in the nature of things, it is impossible for one who is unrighteous to do righteousness: it is impossible for a sinner, while he is a sinner, to do good.

The law is perfect with the very perfection of God. Therefore, in the very nature of things, it is impossible for an imperfect person to do the law. Therefore every man must be righteous to begin with, in order to do righteousness. And he must remain righteous in the same way that he became righteous to begin with, in order to continue to do righteousness.

And this righteousness, which every soul must have to begin with in order to do righteousness, is:

Romans 3

²¹ ...the righteousness of God without the law.

That is, it is a righteousness which he obtains from God, and not at all from the law. Accordingly, it is written:

1 John 3

⁷ He that does righteousness is righteous, even as HE is righteous.

Every soul must be righteous to begin with, before he can, by any possibility, do righteousness. There is no true right-

eousness except the righteousness of God. Therefore every soul must have the righteousness of God to begin with, before he can ever do righteousness; which is simply to say that every soul must have the righteousness of God before he can show it: it must be in him before it can appear.

The only true righteousness of the law of God is the righteousness of God. But nobody but God can see in the law the righteousness of God. Consequently, nobody but God can find in the law the righteousness of God. Everybody else can find only his own righteousness, which comes as far short of the righteousness of God as the individual differs from God.

Therefore the righteousness that every soul must have before he can ever do the righteousness that is in the law of God, must be the righteousness of God. And as nobody but God can see or know this righteousness that is in the law of God, it follows inevitably that it is from God alone that every soul must obtain the righteousness which he must have to begin with, and which he must have always, in order to manifest at any time in his life the righteousness of the law,—the true keeping of the commandments of God.

And this righteousness that every man must have to begin with, before it can possibly be manifest in his life,—this righteousness which he must have in his life to begin with, before the righteousness that is in the law can appear in his life,—this righteousness which is the righteousness of God, and which comes only from God,—in the nature of things, can come only as the gift of God, and can be received only by faith. It never can come to any soul by the law, but only by faith. Therefore it is written:

Galatians 3

¹¹ That no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident...

And what is the evidence? Ah! the evidence is precisely

that, and because:

¹¹ ...the just shall live by faith.

That is, God's word that "the just shall live by faith" is the evidence, conclusive and universal, that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God. "The just shall live by faith," not by the law. To attempt to live by the law is to attempt to live by himself: as all the law he can thus have is his own conception of the law, and not God's at all, which is the only true one.

Galatians 3

¹² And the law is not of faith: but, The man that does them shall live in them.

And it is with life as it is with righteousness: for "in the way of righteousness is life;" and in the way of life—true life—is righteousness. Every man must live before he can possibly do anything. And every man must live from God, before there can be found in his life any of the doing of the things of God.

And the life can come only as the gift of God, and is received by faith. And having received the life of God, which, in itself, is able to manifest the righteousness of God that is in the law, then the man that does these things is righteous. In the doing of them there is no sin; consequently, no curse: therefore, no death; and so, in such doing he lives; and so long as the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in him, so long he lives.

Thus, he that does those things "shall live in them;" but even then he does not get life by the doing of these things: he has to get life from God to begin with, before he can possibly do; and this life can come only from God as the gift of God, and can be received only by faith. And so it is forever written:

"The just shall live by faith."

Therefore, as all have sinned, all are under the curse, and all

are dead; because “the wages of sin is death.” *Romans* 6:23. But now, bless the Lord, Christ, the Gift of God, has come, and:

Galatians 3

¹⁹ ...has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.

Therefore “the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” *Romans* 6:23. And:

Galatians 2

²⁰ ...Christ lives 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.

And in all this,

²¹ I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

Romans 3

²¹ But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

²² Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

²³ For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

²⁴ Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

²⁵ Whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

²⁶ To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believes in Jesus.

²⁷ Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.

Bless the Lord! Believe, only believe, in the Lord Jesus Christ; and you shall be saved. And,

John 6

²⁹ This is the work of God, that you believe on him whom he

has sent.

21. Redeemed from the Curse of the Law

Galatians 3

¹³ Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangs on a tree:

¹⁴ That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

The curse of the law, all the curse that ever was or ever can be, is simply because of sin. This is powerfully illustrated in *Zechariah* 5. The prophet beheld:

Zechariah 5

² ...a flying roll; the length thereof...twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof ten cubits.

Then the Lord said to him:

³ This is the curse that goes forth over the face of the whole earth...

That is, this roll represents all the curse that is upon the face of the whole earth. And what is the cause of this curse over the face of the whole earth? Here it is:

³ ...for every one that steals shall be cut off as on this side according to it; and every one that swears shall be cut off as on that side according to it.

That is, this roll is the law of God, and one commandment is cited from each table, showing that both tables of the law are included in the roll. Every one that steals—everyone that transgresses the law in the things of the second table—shall be cut off as on this side of the law according to it; and every one that swears—everyone that transgresses in the things of the first table of the law—shall be cut off as on that side of the law according to it.

Thus the heavenly recorders do not need to write out a statement of each particular sin of every man; but simply to indicate on the roll that pertains to each man, the particular commandment which is violated in each transgression. That such a roll of law does go with every man wherever he goes and even abides in his house, is plain from the next words:

Zechariah 5

⁴ I will bring it forth, says the Lord of hosts, and it shall enter into the house of the thief, and into the house of him that swears falsely by my name: and it shall remain in the midst of his house,...

And unless a remedy shall be found, there that roll of the law will remain until the curse shall consume that man, and his house,

⁴ ...with timber thereof and the stones thereof.

That is, until the curse shall devour the earth in that great day when the very elements shall melt with fervent heat. For “the strength of sin” and the curse “is the law.” *1 Corinthians* 15:56.

But, thanks be to God,

Galatians 3

¹³ Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.

All the weight of the curse came upon him, for “the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.” *Isaiah* 53:6. He was made “to be sin for us, who knew no sin.” *2 Corinthians* 5:21. And whosoever receives him, receives freedom from all sin, and freedom from the curse because free from all sin.

So entirely did Christ bear all the curse, that, whereas, when man sinned, the curse came upon the ground, and brought forth thorns and thistles (*Genesis* 3:17-18), the Lord Jesus, in redeeming all things from the curse, wore the crown

of thorns, and so redeemed both man and the earth from the curse. Bless his name. The work is done. “He has redeemed us from the curse.” Thank the Lord. He was made a curse for us, because he did hang upon the tree.

And since this is all an accomplished thing, freedom from the curse by the cross of Jesus Christ is the free gift of God to every soul on the earth. And when a man receives this free gift of redemption from all the curse, that roll still goes with him; yet, thank the Lord, not carrying a curse any more, but bearing witness to:

Romans 3

²² ...the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference.

For the very object of his redeeming us from the curse is,

Galatians 3

¹⁴ That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ.

That blessing of Abraham is the righteousness of God, which, as we have already found in these studies, can come only from God as the free gift of God, received by faith.

And as “as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse;” and as “Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law;” then he has also redeemed us from the works of the law, which, being only our own works, are only sin; and has, by the grace of God, bestowed upon us the works of God, which, being the works of faith, which is the gift of God, is only righteousness, as it is written:

John 6

²⁹ This is the work of God, that you believe on him whom he has sent.

This is rest indeed—heavenly rest—the rest of God. And,

Hebrews 4

¹⁰ He that is entered into his rest, he also has ceased from his own works, as God did from his.

Thus, “Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law,” and from the curse of our own works, that the blessing of Abraham, which is the righteousness and the works of God, “might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ.” And all this in order “that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.” And:

Romans 8

¹ There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

² For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

³ For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

⁴ That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Thanks be unto God for the unspeakable gift of his own righteousness in place of our sins, and of his own works of faith in place of our works on the law, which had been brought to us in the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,

Galatians 3

¹³ ...[who] has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.

22. The Return to the Faith of Abraham

So far in our studies in *Galatians* we have reached the end of the fourteenth verse of the third chapter. And in this study we have been brought about five times, by different lines of reasoning, to the fact that the coming of Christ—the sacrifice of Christ, and the work of Christ—brings salvation to the Gentiles just where the Gentiles are, and not where the Jews are; that the special claims of the Jews are now passed, and that, instead of the Gentiles being required to meet Christ in the field of the Jew, even the Jew himself must now meet Christ in the field of the Gentile, and not in the field of the Jew.

Over and over it has been seen that the Jews claimed justification by law, while the truth of the gospel is, and always was, justification by faith.

Laws were given to the Jews by the Lord; yet the object of these never was that those to whom they were given should be justified by the laws: the giving of those laws was but the consequence of their transgression and their unbelief, and that they might the better attain to righteousness by faith. As they went further into darkness by unbelief and transgression, God in mercy followed them with further means that, if by any means, he might bring them to a true and clear faith in Jesus Christ.

Consequently, if they had maintained the true faith which Abraham had before he was circumcised,—faith which works the works of God, and which, therefore, keeps the commandments of God,—the keeping of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus,—none of these other laws, not even the written form of the law of God, would ever have been added. They would have kept the commandments of God and the

faith of Jesus. For:

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 364:

If man had kept the law of God, as given to Adam after his fall, preserved by Noah, and observed by Abraham, there would have been no necessity for the ordinance of circumcision. And if the descendants of Abraham had kept the covenant, of which circumcision was a sign, they would never have been seduced into idolatry, nor would it have been necessary for them to suffer a life of bondage in Egypt. They would have kept God's law in mind, and there would have been no necessity for it to be proclaimed from Sinai, or engraved upon the tables of stone. And [even when God's law had been engraved upon the tables of stone] had the people practiced the principles of the ten commandments, there would have been no need of the additional directions given to Moses.

But the sole object of all these laws when they were added, was faith in Christ, and not works of law. And, therefore, when Christ had come, who was the sole object, aim, and purpose of all the laws and statutes that had been given by the Lord—when these had all met and found their purpose in him, and he had showed the grand glory of the true and clear faith of God, it is, of all things, extravagant to claim justification by law, as did “the Pharisees which believed,” and who had confused the Galatians who believed in Christ, by insisting that, in order to be saved, they must be circumcised and keep the law.

This was made clear by Paul in his appeal to Peter before them all, when he said,

Galatians 2

¹⁴ If you, being a Jew, live after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why do you compel the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?

That is, if you have abandoned the ground of the Jews, which, in order to be justified, is the right thing to do, and

have gone over to the ground of the Gentiles, how can it be required of the Gentiles to abandon their ground and go over to that of the Jews, which, as we ourselves have confessed, must be abandoned by even us who by nature belong on the ground?

Next he followed this thought back to Abraham himself, and showed that even Abraham was justified by faith, and received all the promises, and became heir to the inheritance, by faith alone, without circumcision, or any other of the laws which were given to the Jews.

He next showed that even to those who were circumcised and had all these laws, these things were of no profit, and availed, only when they walked,

Romans 4

¹² ...in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised.

So that, even with themselves, and through all their day, and forever,

Galatians 3

⁹ They which are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

Next he demonstrates by the Scripture that those who are of the works of law, those who go about by the law to be saved, and to be justified by law, are under the curse; and that Christ is come, and...

Galatians 3

¹³ ...has redeemed us from the curse of the law,

from the curse of our own works; and that he did this in order

¹⁴ That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles.

In all this it has been shown over and over that the Gentile meets Christ in the field of the Gentile, and not in the field of

the Jew. It is also demonstrated over and over that the Jew meets Christ not in the field of the Jew, but also in the field of the Gentile; exactly where the Gentile meets him, where Abraham met him, and where all, alike, and forever, must meet him—in the glorious field of “the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.”

All this, too, gives added emphasis, and sets in a fuller light, those two expressions in the word of Peter at the council in Jerusalem on this question, when he, telling the assembly that God had made choice of him among the apostles that the Gentiles by his mouth “should hear the word of the gospel, and believe,” and then said:

Acts 15

⁸ God, which knows the hearts, bear them [the Gentiles] witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us;

⁹ And put no difference between us and them [note, not between them and us, but “between us and them”] purifying their hearts by faith.

He then appealed to them:

¹⁰ Now therefore why tempt you God, to put a yoke upon the neck of disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

¹¹ But we believe that through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.

Note again that Peter by the Holy Spirit, said not that they shall be saved even as we, but “WE shall be saved even as THEY.” The means of salvation to the Gentile, and not to the Jew, is the supreme standard of salvation. We, Jews, shall be saved even as they, the Gentiles, are saved.

And they were saved by being justified, by faith; not by law, but without law. They must be so justified; for they did not have any of these laws, as had the Jews, by which to be justified, if that had been the way. And so we, the Jews must be

justified even as they must be justified—without any works of any law, even though we had all the laws that ever were.

There was a time when the Gentile could meet Christ in the field of the Jew; but that time is past. It passed by the fact of the Jews rejecting Christ, even though it had not passed by any other means. But it also passed by the coming of Christ as the object, purpose, aim, completion, and fullness, of all these laws that must of necessity be given to the Jews because of their unbelief and transgression.

And since that time is doubly past, in which the Gentile could meet Christ in the field of the Jews: and since it is more than doubly so that now the Jew must meet Christ in the field of the Gentile there is no other name, nor other means, by which either Jew or Gentile must be saved but by the name of Jesus Christ through faith in his name.

It must be borne in mind always that in all this there was no question raised nor any point made as to the value of any law in itself; the sole question was, and is, as to any value or use of any law *in justification*.

Justification is by faith not by law, by faith which is of God, and so, which works by the love of God, which is the keeping of the commandments of God. And so of all who catch the thought of God as it is in the book of *Galatians*, it can truly be written:

Revelation 14

¹² Here are they which keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

23. The Abrahamic Covenant

Galatians 3

¹⁵ Brethren, I speak after the manner of men: Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannuls, or adds thereto.

Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannuls, or adds thereto. How much more, then, shall it be so with God's covenant? Then, since the making of God's covenant with Abram, there has never been, and never could be, anything added to it, nor anything taken from it. Let us notice God's covenant with Abram, and what it included.

In *Genesis* 11:29-32 is recorded Abram's leaving his native country, Ur of the Chaldees, and settling in Haran. Then,

Genesis 12

¹ The Lord had said unto Abram, Get out of your country, and from your kindred, and from your father's house, unto a land that I will show you.

At that time God also said to Abram:

² I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing.

At that time also God preached the gospel unto Abram (*Galatians* 3:8), saying:

³ In you shall all families of the earth be blessed.

After Abram had lived in the land of Haran, and had come into the land of Canaan, God said to him:

⁷ Unto your seed will I give this land; and there he built an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him.

The Lord had said that he would show to Abram the land which was to be his. And, though he was in the land of

Canaan, yet the Lord had not showed to him the land that he said he would give to him: and he could not yet show it to him, because Lot, of his kindred, was yet with him; and the first condition of the promise was,

“Get out of your country, and from your kindred, and from your father’s house.”

Abram was separated from his father’s house, but so long as Lot was with him, he was not yet separated from his kindred: and so long as that was so, God could not show him the land.

But after a while, their flocks and herds increased so that “the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together” (*Genesis* 13:6); and so, by mutual agreement, and as “brethren” (verse 8) they separated, Lot choosing “all the plain of Jordan” (verse 10). Then, “after that Lot was separated from him,” the Lord said to Abram,

Genesis 13

¹⁴ Lift up now your eyes, and look from the place where you are northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward:

¹⁵ For all the land which you see, to you will I give it, and to your seed forever.

¹⁶ And I will make your seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall your seed also be numbered.

And the land which Abram then saw, and which was promised to him, included the world; for this promise was

Romans 4

¹³ ...the promise that he should be the heir of the world...

And that is a world that includes:

Hebrews 11

¹⁰ ...a city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

It is a world which God “has prepared” for him and his children; and since it is “a better country” than any on the earth, even “a heavenly” (*Hebrews* 11:16), it is certain that the land which Abram then saw, and which included the world, was, and is, “the world to come.”

And more: since this was promised to Abram and his seed—to neither without the other, but to both together; since this promised seed “is Christ;” and since while Abram was in this world, he never received any “inheritance in it,” no, not so much as to set his foot on (*Acts* 7:5), it is certain that the inheritance then promised to Abram, and which he then saw, and which included the world, is only “the world to come.”

This is further confirmed by that which Abram next met in his experience; for it is written that when Abram had returned from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him, he met “Melchisedec king of Salem,” who “brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God.” (*Genesis* 14:18).

Genesis 14

¹⁹ And he [Melchisedec] blessed him [Abram], and said,
Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven
and earth.

Thus the priest of the Most High, Melchisedec, who “was the voice of God in the world,” recognized Abram.

In this connection there is another important element to be noticed, that is, that Abram now meets and recognizes “Melchisedec,” “the priest of the most high God,” and in him recognizes the Melchisedec priesthood. He received blessing from this priest of the Melchisedec priesthood; and yet further recognized this priesthood in that “he gave him tithes of all.” *Genesis* 14:20.

Several times, now, in Abram’s experience, the Lord has referred to that “seed” of Abram. And now Abram makes defi-

nite inquiry about this “seed,” saying to the Lord:

Genesis 15

³ Behold, to me you have given no seed: and lo, one born in my house is my heir.

⁴ And, behold, the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, This shall not be your heir; but he that shall come forth out of your own bowels shall be your heir.

⁵ And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if you be able to number them: and he said unto him, so shall your seed be.

⁶ And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

⁷ And he said unto him, I am the Lord that brought you out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give you this land to inherit it.

Abram had now received from God, in promise, the blessing of God which would make him a “blessing to all nations;” he had received the promise of the world for an inheritance; he had received the promise of a seed in whom all nations should be blessed; he had received the benefit of the priesthood of the most high God; and he had received the righteousness of God, fitting him to enter of right into that eternal inheritance. And now Abram asks:

Genesis 15

⁸ Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?

And here and now, in pledge to Abram that he shall inherit all that has been promised, God made a covenant with Abram:

⁹ And he said unto him, Take me a heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle dove, and a young pigeon.

¹⁰ And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not.

¹¹ And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

¹² And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon

Abram; and, lo, a horror of great darkness fell upon him...

¹⁷ And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces.

¹⁸ In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto your seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.

Now it is a truth laden with meaning that in these animals and birds which he brought and offered, there was included every animal sacrifice that was ever allowed or commanded to be offered to God. And when Abram, as directed, had divided all these except the fowl, and had laid them in their pieces, one against another,

“behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces.”

And

“In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto your seed have I given this land.”

The Lord did this because in ancient times it was the custom of those who entered into a covenant with each other to take a heifer and cut it in two, and then the contracting parties passed between the pieces.

And the reason of this was that the contracting parties agreed, and thus expressed the agreement, that if either of them broke that covenant, he submitted himself to be cut in two just as was the sacrifice between the parts of which they passed.

But Abram did not pass between the parts of these victims: only God passed through¹⁰. This is because this is not a covenant of agreement between two persons in which each is

¹⁰ This was not correct, and a correction was published two weeks later, which is included in the [Appendix](#).

equally responsible; but it is a covenant of promise from God, in which he alone is the responsible party. Consequently, God alone passed between the parts of the slain victims, in the making of this covenant.

And, in that act, God agreed, and thus expressed his agreement, that that covenant could no more fail than that he himself could be severed in twain. Thus the Lord pledged himself, in his very life, that all the promises which he had made to Abram should be fulfilled, and that not one of these promises could fail; that this covenant to fulfill the promises could not fail any more than that God should cease to live.

Thus, that covenant of God with Abram was confirmed even there, by the sacrifice of Him who made the covenant. And when Abram, not yet fully comprehending the greatness of the blessed promises of this covenant, slipped, the Lord, in his mercy, even repeated himself, and again pledged himself,—“interposed himself”—swearing by himself, and thus by his oath confirmed his covenant that his promises should not fail. *Hebrews 8:17*. And thus again that covenant was “confirmed.”

Therefore, since “though it be but a man’s covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulls, or adds thereto,” how much more shall this be so of God’s covenant with Abram, which is doubly confirmed? Therefore, that covenant could never be disannulled, nor could anything ever be added to it. In that covenant at that time was all that ever has been since, or that ever can be to anybody. And whoever has that covenant, has everything in heaven and earth,—everything in the wide universe, to all eternity.

That is the Abrahamic covenant,

Galatians 3

²⁹ And if you be Christ’s, then are you Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise,

which is made sure by that covenant.

24. Replacing the Covenant

Galatians 3

¹⁶ Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He said not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one. And to your seed, which is Christ.

¹⁷ 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.

God's covenant with Abraham was not a covenant of law, but of promise: not of works, but of faith. This covenant, as we have seen, and as is even here said, was not only confirmed, but was even doubly confirmed, "in Christ," at the time of the making of the covenant.

Then, since the covenant, even though a man's, once confirmed, cannot be disannulled, neither can anything be added to it, it is perfectly plain that the law, which entered four hundred and thirty years afterward, was never intended to change the character of the covenant. The law did not enter in any sense to take the place of the promise. In the entering of the law there was never any purpose in the mind of God that the works of the law should take the place of righteousness by faith.

But just here was the great mistake that was made by Israel: they utterly mistook their own standing, and the meaning of what the Lord gave to them, and his purpose in the giving of all that came after that covenant was confirmed. If the covenant with Abraham had been held in faithfulness, nothing else would have ever been needed to enter.

But, when the real truth and virtue of that covenant were not discerned, and men went further into unbelief and darkness, the Lord followed them, and employed means and gave

instruction to bring them from unbelief and darkness to the faith, light, and blessing of the covenant that he had made.

For,

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 364:

If man had kept the law of God, as given to Adam after his fall, preserved by Noah, and observed by Abraham, there would have been no necessity for the ordinance of circumcision. And if the descendants of Abraham had kept the covenant of which circumcision was a sign, they would never have been seduced into idolatry, nor would it have been necessary for them to suffer a life of bondage in Egypt. They would have kept God's law in mind, and there would have been no necessity for it to be proclaimed from Sinai, or engraved upon the tables of stone. And had the people practiced the principles of the ten commandments, there would have been no need of the additional directions given to Moses.

The sacrificial system, committed to Adam, was also perverted by his descendants. Superstition, idolatry, cruelty, and licentiousness corrupted the simple and significant service that God had appointed. Through long intercourse with idolaters, the people of Israel had mingled many heathen customs with their worship; therefore the Lord gave them at Sinai definite instruction concerning the sacrificial service.

The law entered in written form, ordinances were established, and all only because of their unbelief and transgression. None of these things were ever necessary to the covenant, nor were they parts of the covenant: the covenant was complete in itself when it was confirmed, and being confirmed, nothing could possibly be added to it.

Therefore nothing that ever came afterward was essential to the covenant. But because of their unbelief and transgression, these things were essential to them, to help them to the place where they could discern the truth, the light, and the purpose of the covenant; and where in faith they could enjoy all its

blessings and its power. In other words, these things were all to help them to an enlightened faith—the true faith of the covenant—the faith of Christ. Accordingly, in another place, it is written:

Romans 5

²⁰ The law entered that the offense might abound [to make sin appear “that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful” - *Romans* 7:13]. But, where sin abounded grace did much more abound,

²¹ that, as sin has reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.

Thus the object of the entering of the law was to bring men to Jesus Christ. And the object of all that came in after the covenant was made and confirmed was to help them to a true knowledge of that covenant.

But instead of receiving all these things in this light, and using them for this purpose,—the purpose only of coming to the full faith of the covenant of Abraham,—Israel made the mistake of putting all these things in the place of the covenant, and using these, instead of God’s covenant, as the way of salvation. Thus the law of God which, as we have seen, entered to give the knowledge of sin, and so impress the need of the Saviour provided in the covenant with Abraham, Israel turned it into the way of salvation by their own endeavors to do the law.

The law of the Levitical priesthood, which was instituted to instruct them with respect to the true,—the Melchisedec priesthood of the covenant with Abraham,—Israel turned from this purpose, and made it the final priesthood, and expected salvation and perfection by it. *Hebrews* 7:11.

The earthly sanctuary and its services, which were given in connection with the Levitical priesthood, and which were

given to instruct them concerning the true,—the heavenly sanctuary and its services, in which Christ was to be priest after the order of Melchisedec,—this Israel also perverted, and made it the final service, and expected salvation by this service. *Psalm* 110:4; *Hebrews* 6:13-20; 7:9-22, 28; 8:1-5; 9:2-28; 10:1-17.

Thus they lost sight altogether of the covenant with Abraham,—the true way of salvation,—and all these things which were given to them in their unbelief and transgression to lead them to the light and to instruct them unto the covenant with Abraham and the true way of salvation, they put in the place of that.

And this was only to put their own perverse views in the place of the truth of God; to pervert to the inventions of their own carnal minds, the sacred ordinances which the Lord had given to lead them to spiritual mindedness, it was only to make themselves their own saviors, it was to put themselves in the place of God.

But when these things which, in his love, God had given to help them to faith, were thus perverted to their own carnal views, all life was taken out of them, and they found in them no help whatever to righteousness.

And, as in this way which they had gone, everything depended upon their own doing, this caused them to go yet further, and add to these things that God had given, that vast multitude of fine-spun distinctions, legal exactions, and pharisaic traditions, which was manifested in the ceremonialism of the Jews in the days when Jesus came, and which “the Pharisees which believed” thought to fasten upon Christianity, by which they confused the Galatians.

And this it was which called forth from the Lord the epistle to the *Galatians*, to show to both Jews and Gentiles the truth of God’s everlasting covenant and the true relation of the law,

both moral and ceremonial, to that covenant.

And this instruction is needed today just as well as then, or ever; because it is the bane of human nature to be ever ready to put its own views in the place of the truth of God; to put its own works in the place of the righteousness of God; to put ordinances and ceremonies in the place of faith; to put the inventions of the carnal mind in place of the work of God; to put self in the place of God.

25. Exclusiveness

Galatians 3

¹⁶ Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He said not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one. And to your seed, which is Christ.

¹⁷ 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.

We have seen that Israel made the mistake of putting in the place of God's covenant the things which the Lord gave to them to aid them in arriving at the full light and blessing of the covenant.

There is another great mistake that Israel made, and the same mistake is made today by thousands of persons concerning Israel; and that is that the things which God gave to them were for them alone, not for the people of the world in general.

Israel, thinking thus, naturally shut herself away from the nations, and made all these things specially her own. Thus she separated herself from all the nations, and held herself aloof from, and above, the nations, as being holier than they, and because of this special holiness, as more highly regarded by God than were the other nations. Yet this whole conception of things was an utter mistake, and was a perversion of the intent of the things that God had given.

Everything that the Lord gave to Israel was for the benefit of the whole world. Israel was to be the missionary people who should extend to all nations the light and blessing given to her, in order that all nations might enjoy the light and blessing of God, as revealed in the Abrahamic covenant, to the full knowledge of which all these things that were given were

to lead Israel, and all people.

We again set down here, for study, the passage from *Patriarch and Prophets*, which was quoted in the last chapter:

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 364:

If man had kept the law of God, as given to Adam after his fall, preserved by Noah, and observed by Abraham, there could have been no necessity for the ordinance of circumcision. And if the descendants of Abraham had kept the covenant, of which circumcision was a sign, they would never have been seduced into idolatry, nor would it have been necessary for them to suffer a life of bondage in Egypt. They would have kept God's law in mind, and there would have been no necessity for it to be proclaimed from Sinai, or engraved upon the tables of stone. And had the people practiced the principles of the ten commandments, there would have been no need of the additional directions given to Moses.

The sacrificial system, committed to Adam, was also perverted by his descendants. Superstition, idolatry, cruelty, and licentiousness corrupted the simple and significant service that God had appointed. Through long intercourse with idolaters, the people of Israel had mingled many heathen customs with their worship; therefore the Lord gave them at Sinai definite instruction concerning the sacrificial service.

It was the apostasy of mankind in general that was the cause of God's calling Abraham, and setting him as a light to the nations. It was the unfaithfulness of the descendants of Abraham that caused them "to suffer a life of bondage in Egypt." In Egypt, amid its darkness of every sort, the ideas that they had received in descent from Abraham were more and more obscured until they were practically lost. And thus "in their bondage the people had, to a great extent, lost their knowledge of God, and of the principles of the Abrahamic covenant."

As they had thus lost the law of God from their minds, all this must be renewed. But, having no true conception of the

law of God as in the Abrahamic covenant, this had to be taught them. Therefore God proclaimed his law with his own voice to all the people, then gave it in written form, that they might under his guidance, discern its deep, spiritual principles.

And that this might the better be done in their obscurity of mind, the principles of the ten commandments were drawn out in detail, in the writings of Moses, which the people had in their hands, and which they were to study constantly until these words of God and these holy principles should be engraved upon their hearts, imbedded in their souls and written in their minds; that is, until they had attained to the glory of the covenant with Abraham.

Now, since all this was necessary to Israel because of her unfaithfulness and the confusion of Egypt, it is certainly plain enough that all these things were necessary to the people of Egypt and the other nations that were in darkness, as she was, that these might find the knowledge of God and his salvation. Then, in the very nature of things, all these things, and all this teaching that came to Israel to bring them to the light of God, were intended by the Lord to be passed on by Israel to the other nations, that these also might be brought to where they should walk in the light of God.

Thus it is perfectly plain that the law of God in all its forms—as spoken from heaven, as written on the tables, and as drawn out in detail in the writings of Moses—was just as much for the nations of the world as it was for the people of Israel. And both Israel and the nations made the mistake of thinking that it was only for Israel,—Israel thinking so, and confining it to herself, and shutting it away from the nations; and the nations thinking so, and therefore despising it.

And the nations were, indeed, helped in their mistake by the attitude that was assumed by Israel in her mistake. For

when, in her self-righteousness, Israel shut herself away from the nations, despising them, this only resulted in the nations seeing her as shut away from them in self-righteousness, and despising them, and consequently, further resulted in their despising her, and all that was given to her for their benefit. And that same thing continues to this day concerning those things in the Bible which were given to Israel for all the nations.

This is true, not alone of the moral law, but of the ceremonial law—the sacrificial system—as well. Before Adam left Eden, the sacrificial system was instituted. By Noah it was observed. Thus the sacrificial system pertained to all mankind; it was simply the means of expressing faith in God's sacrifice, which he had made to save man from sin.

As God has given the firstling of his flock, the best that he had, so every soul who accepted that gift of God, and would show his faith therein, would, in very gratitude to God, offer the firstling of his flock, the best of all that he had. That was true faith in God, and in the Lamb that he had given.

Hebrews 11

4 By faith Abel offered unto God...[his sacrifice, "the firstlings of his flock" - *Genesis 4:4*]...by which he obtained witness that he was righteous.

Thus Abel's righteousness was true righteousness by faith. And that was the way for all mankind.

But as the nations apostatized, and came more and more under the darkening influence of Satan, they began to look upon God as, like themselves, a stern, forbidding, exacting judge, who was angry with them, and waiting only for the opportunity to punish them for their evil doing. Therefore they thought they must offer sacrifices to appease him, and the more precious and costly the sacrifice, the more favor they should gain, and so they were led to sacrifice their own sons and daughters.

Thus the sacrificial system, which God had given to Adam, and which was observed by Noah, and which was included in the covenant with Abraham, was altogether perverted and lost sight of in this apostasy of the nations. And the descendants of Abraham, in their unfaithfulness, through their association with the nations, and amid the darkness of Egypt, also lost sight of the true, the simple, and the significant service that God had given to Adam, and had continued with Abraham.

Accordingly, when they came out of Egypt, the Lord renewed to Israel the sacrificial system, with definite instruction in it, that they might, according to his own direction, offer his sacrifices in purity, and according to truth; that they might see in these the true meaning that God put there at the beginning, which was the sacrifice that he had made,—the offering of his only begotten Son,—the firstling of his flock,—the best of all that he had.

Thus it is plain that the sacrificial system that was given to Israel was for the enlightenment and instruction of all the people of the world as certainly as it was for Israel; because it was Israel's likeness to all the other nations in their darkness that made it necessary that this should be given to them.

God has no favorites, and never had any. All that he ever had is free to all people. All that he ever gave to anybody is free to all others, and he gives to any only that they may pass it on to all others. And those who receive, and do not pass it on to all others, but confine it to themselves, lose that which God has in truth given, and can cling only to the empty form of the truth, absolutely dry and barren.

This principle is present truth today, to the people of the Third Angel's Message. There is positive danger, and there has been for years, that these shall repeat the history of the Jews.

26. The Inheritance by Promise

Galatians 3

¹⁸ For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise, but God gave it to Abraham by promise.

THE Greek words are *ik nomos* “of law,” not *ik tou nomos* “of the law,” signifying law in general rather than any particular law. Thus the inheritance, exactly as justification, is received altogether by faith, and not at all by the works or deeds of any law.

It cannot possibly be otherwise, because the inheritance is the first and grand object in the call of Abraham. For, first of all, God said to Abram:

Genesis 12

¹ Get out of your country and from your kindred, and from your father's house, unto a land that I will show you.

And in this,

Hebrews 11

⁸ ...he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance; [and when so called he] obeyed, and he went out not knowing where he went.

And since this inheritance is altogether in the world to come, and includes the whole world to come, it is absolutely impossible for anyone ever to obtain it by works. It was and is impossible for Abraham or any other man ever to work enough to earn it; and so, since the inheritance is so utterly beyond all possible reach of the works of any man, in the nature of things it must come only as the gift of God, and can be received by men only by faith, altogether as the gift of God.

And since the inheritance is the one great object in the call of Abraham, everything else that came from God to Abraham was only contributory to this great object; it was only to fit

Abraham to enter upon and enjoy in all its fullness that wondrous inheritance which is the original and settled object of the call to him.

For instance, God said to Abraham: "I will bless you." This blessing is essential to entering upon the inheritance; for no one who is under the curse can possibly have any part in the inheritance. Therefore, to be relieved from the curse, and to be put under the blessing of God, is an essential to anyone's ever having any part in the inheritance. And this blessing upon Abraham, relieving him from the curse, and preparing him for the inheritance, was to be extended, through him, to all the families of the earth, that these also might be relieved of the curse and receive the blessing, and thus have a part in the grand inheritance.

Again, we have found that in the covenant with Abraham there was sacrifice and a priesthood—the Melchisedec priesthood. This also was essential to the entering upon the inheritance, because "all have sinned," and "without shedding of blood is no remission." Therefore every one who will enter upon that grand inheritance must be absolutely cleansed and purified from all sin.

But this can be done only by that great sacrifice which God made in the gift of his Son, and by the ministration of that priest and priesthood of Christ unto which he was ordained by God alone, "after the order of Melchisedec." Thus the sacrifice and service of the priesthood are also essential in behalf of every soul who shall enter into that inheritance, and are essential in order that he may enter into that inheritance.

Righteousness is essential to the entering upon that inheritance. It is an eternal inheritance; the righteousness, which alone can fit anyone to enter upon the inheritance, must be eternal righteousness. But the only righteousness that is eternal is the righteousness of God. To this no man can possibly

attain by works, or anything that he can do. It is only the righteousness of God, and it can come to man only as the free gift of God, and can be received by man only by faith.

Again, as this inheritance is an eternal inheritance, whosoever enters upon it must have eternal life in order to possess it. But all have sinned and “the wages of sin is death.” How then can these who are subject only to death ever obtain eternal life by any works that they can do? It simply cannot be done.

This life, therefore, being eternal life, must come from him who is eternal—the only source of eternal life, which is God. It can, therefore, come to men in no conceivable way except as the gift of God, and can be received only by faith. And since only in the way of righteousness is life, only in the way of eternal righteousness can be eternal life.

And these both being essential to entering upon the inheritance, every soul who will ever enter upon that inheritance must have these. And they can come only as the gift of God, received only by faith.

Thus the inheritance being the great and original object of the call of Abraham; that inheritance being altogether the gift of God; and it being impossible for man ever to have obtained it otherwise, it follows that everything that can help man unto that inheritance, and fit him for the inheritance, must also be altogether from God, as the gift of God, received by men only by faith.

And since the blessing of God, the sacrifice and priesthood of Christ, eternal righteousness, and eternal life, are the essentials to receiving the inheritance; and since all these are utterly beyond any possible reach of man by anything that he can do, it follows that these all, in the nature of things, come as the gift of God, and are obtained by men only by faith in God.

And, thank the Lord, he has given all these. He has given the blessing; for it written:

Ephesians 1

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ;

Acts 3

²⁶ Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.

He has given his only begotten Son, the “Lamb of God,” which priest, who “ever lives to make intercession” for us. *Hebrews* 7:25.

He has given his righteousness, the free gift of God “unto all and upon all them that believe, for there is no difference.” *Romans* 3:22. To every creature he has sent his gospel, wherein is “the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith.” *Romans* 1:17.

He has given eternal life; for it is written:

1 John 5

¹¹ This is the record, that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

¹² He that has the Son has life; and he that has not the Son of God has not life.

And the Son of God says:

John 5

²⁴ Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that hears my word, and believes on him that sent me, has everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

Therefore the inheritance cannot possibly be of law,—of any kind of law, nor of all kinds of law:

Galatians 3

¹⁸ For if the inheritance be of law, it is no more of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise.

And everything that God ever gave or ordained after this promise, is, in the nature of things, contributory to the promise. And whoever would use anything God ever gave after the promise, at any time or in any way, without, in such use, holding the promise in view, frustrates every purpose of God in the giving of those things.

Therefore even though it had been a man's covenant, yet, once confirmed, no man could disannul it nor add thereto. Much more, being God's covenant, and being even doubly confirmed, it could not possibly be disannulled, neither could anything be added thereto.

And since "to Abraham and his seed were the promises made," and that seed "is Christ" (*Galatians* 3:16); and since that covenant "was confirmed before of God in Christ" (*Galatians* 3:17), anything that came afterward cannot take the place of the covenant, neither can it be added to the covenant.

27. The Pharisees Which Believed

Galatians 3

¹⁹ Wherefore then serves 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.

IT will be noticed that the word “serves” is a supplied word. It really adds nothing to the sense. The question stands just as strong and just as plain to read. “Wherefore then the law?” Another translation is, “Why then the law?”

This was the ready argument of “the Pharisees which believed,” against all the gospel which was presented by Paul. And this, because the gospel presented justification by faith of Christ, and not by works of law. And wherever this was presented, “the Pharisees which believed,” who had no conception of justification in any other way than by works of law, raised this inquiry,

“Wherefore then the law?”

“What is the use of the law?”

In their estimation, this objecting question was a sufficient refutation of all that might ever be said as to justification by faith, without any deeds of any law.

And, indeed, this same argument, in this same superior, self-assertive way, is used for this same purpose by “the Pharisees which believe” today. Let the claims of the law of God, precisely as God wrote it, be presented today in any part of this whole land, or even in any other land, and immediately professed ministers of the gospel will arise, all bristling with objections, and will oppose every claim of the law of God upon them, because it “never could justify anybody.”

They will single out, and search out, every expression they

can find in the Scriptures, such as, "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified" (*Romans* 3:20); and, "Whosoever of you are justified by the law; you are fallen from grace" (*Galatians* 5:4), etc.; and with strong voice will ring forth and then vigorously demand,

"What is the use of such a law? What is it good for? It cannot justify anybody."

The scene here described is perfectly familiar to thousands upon thousands of the readers of the *Review and Herald*, and especially to the preachers of the gospel, in the Third Angel's Message, which calls all people to the keeping of "the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

It is worthy of notice, however, that in the ancient days this objection was never raised by the Gentiles, but only by "the Pharisees which believed:" never by the plain, simple sinner, who knew that his works could not justify him, and who therefore longed for justification indeed; but only by those who professed to know God, and to know justification, but who knew only justification by their own works of law. And so it is even now.

Therefore, this inquiry—"Wherefore then the law?"—is present truth, and will be present truth forever. To a person whose conception of justification is altogether justification by works, such an inquiry, presented in objection, is a sufficient refutation of all the claims of the law of God; and no stronger proof could ever be given by anyone that his only conception of justification is altogether by works, than that he should raise against the law of God, this objecting inquiry:

"Why then the law? What is the use of the law?"

This because such an objection certifies that in his estimation, there can be no possible use for law of any kind unless it will justify a man, even the transgressor.

But everyone who knows justification in truth, which is justification by faith, knows full well, and can see with perfect plainness, that there may be abundant use for law, altogether apart from any idea of justification by it. And thus there is a place for this question, in sober inquiry:

“Why then the law?”

The answer is:

1. “By the law is the knowledge of sin:” “that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful,” in order that men, knowing the enormity of sin, may be able to appreciate the greatness of the salvation that God has sent in the gift of his Son. Even so, it is said in another place:

Romans 5

²⁰ The law entered, that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:

²¹ That...even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

2. When the sinner, having learned by the law the greatness of his sin, and having found in the Lord Jesus a salvation so great as to save him from all sin, and a righteousness so complete as to reign in him against all the power of sin, he still finds a second grand use for the law in its witnessing, in his behalf, to the righteousness of God, which he obtained without the law. And so, it is written:

Romans 3

²⁰ By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

²¹ But now the righteousness of God WITHOUT THE LAW is manifested, being witnessed BY THE LAW and the prophets;

²³ Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference.

Such, and so far, is, “Wherefore then the law?”

28. Wherefore then the Law?

THIS inquiry of “the Pharisees which believed” was not limited to the law of God, although that, being the chief of all laws, was of course the principal thought in the inquiry. But from the beginning of this study of the book of *Galatians* we have found that there was involved not only the moral law, but also the ceremonial law—indeed all that God had given. And this, because all the service of the Pharisees was a service merely of law; since their only idea of justification was justification altogether by law, and their only idea of salvation altogether by works.

Therefore with “the Pharisees which believed” this inquiry extended also to,

“Wherefore the Levitical law?”

“Wherefore the sacrificial system?”

“Wherefore circumcision?”

What was the use of all these, if salvation were not attained by any of them? Such was the only use they had ever made of any of these things: indeed, this was the only conception that they had of them.

They expected perfection by the Levitical priesthood; the same by circumcision; and the same by all that was given by the Lord. Their only idea of their use was that justification, salvation, came to them in the doing of these things. BY THE DOING of them.

But this was all error, and was a perversion of the true intent of all that God gave. Justification was not by any of these, nor by all of them together, any more than it was by the law of God. Justification was always by faith; and the sacrificial system, and all the services and ceremonies of the Levitical

law, were only means which God gave, by which faith was expressed: the sacrifices were means of expressing faith that they already had in the great Sacrifice that God had made.

And this same query, and for the same reason, is raised to-day by thousands of “Pharisees which believe,” in their enmity against the truth of the gospel. For this reason alone, “Wherefore then the law?” is a live question today, and always will be a live question wherever the truth of the gospel—righteousness by faith—is preached.

But there is a greater reason, than that, as to “Wherefore then the law?” being a live question today and always. It is a true and proper question always, in the inquiry after the truth as it is in Jesus. For in the whole divine economy of the times of Israel, there is precious truth, rich instruction, and glorious light, for all who would be taught of God. This was all there for the people of Israel of old; but through carnal-mindedness and its self-justification, they missed it.

And because Israel did thus miss it, thousands of professed believers today, stumbling over Israel’s failures, neglect and even reject all the great riches which Israel missed, but which were then and are now for all people. For to the people of the very last days it is written:

Malachi 4

⁴ Remember the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments.

Review and Herald, February 6, 1900:

The Christian who accepts the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, will look at Bible history in its true bearing. The history of the Jewish economy from beginning to end, though spoken of contemptuously, and sneered at as “the dark ages,” will reveal light, and still more light, as it is studied.

“Wherefore then the law” of Levitical priesthood, sacrifice,

offering, burnt offering, and offering for sin, the sanctuary and its ministry? It was all only the divinely appointed means of expressing the faith that they already had, and that had already brought to them the righteousness of God without any deeds of any law

The Levitical priesthood was the means of expressing faith in that greater priesthood—the priesthood of the Son of God—announced in the words:

Psalm 110

¹ The Lord said unto my Lord...

⁴ You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

The sanctuary and the services of this priesthood were but means of expressing faith in the sanctuary and the services of the priesthood that is in heaven. For, of all that system,

Hebrews 8

¹ ...this is the sum: We have such a high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;

² A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.

And this whole story, as here outlined, is shown in the instruction given to the people, in the book of *Leviticus*:

Leviticus 4

¹³ And if the whole congregation of Israel sin through ignorance, and the thing be hid from the eyes of the assembly, and they have done somewhat against any of the commandments of the Lord concerning things which should not be done, and are guilty;

¹⁴ When the sin, which they have sinned against it, is known, then the congregation shall offer a young bullock for the sin, and bring him before the tabernacle of the congregation.

¹⁵ And the elders of the congregation shall lay their hands upon the head of the bullock before the Lord...

Thus confessing the sin of the congregation, and laying it upon the bullock. Then the bullock must be “killed before the

Lord.”

¹⁶ And the priest that is anointed shall bring of the bullock’s blood to the tabernacle of the congregation:

¹⁷ And the priest shall dip his finger in some of the blood, and sprinkle it seven times before the Lord, even before the veil.

¹⁸ And he shall put some of the blood upon the horns of the altar which is before the Lord, that is in the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall pour out all the blood at the bottom of the altar of the burnt offering, which is at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

²⁰ ...and the priest shall make an atonement for them, and it shall be forgiven them.

1. There was the law of God, and by it the knowledge of sin, showing them guilty.
2. Then there was the sacrifice, and the laying of the sin, in confession, upon the sacrifice as a substitute.
3. Then there was the slaying of the sacrifice and the offering of its blood in their behalf, and by it atonement made and the forgiveness of sin to them.

There was by the law the knowledge of sin, and by the gospel of sacrifice the forgiveness of sin and atonement with God. But,

Hebrews 10

⁴ It is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

Wherefore then all this law, sanctuary, service, and ceremony? Ah! it was:

Hebrews 9

⁹ ...a figure for the time then present...

¹⁰ ...until the time of reformation.

¹¹ But Christ being come a high priest of good things to come by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;

¹² Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own

blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

And with Christ and in Christ we have this day, A.D. 1900, the substance of which all that was the shadow. In the heavenly temple there is the ark of his testament, in which is the testament—his law. “By the law is the knowledge of sin.” And by the Gospel of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and his priestly service, and the offering of his blood in the heavenly sanctuary, there is forgiveness of sin “to every one that believes,” and righteousness in his being made at one with God, in Jesus Christ, who is the atonement.

And the only difference between the times before Christ and these times after Christ, is that then, because Jesus had not yet come and offered himself, but was to come, faith in his coming and offering himself could be expressed only in this way; whereas, now that he has come and has offered himself a sacrifice, and has entered upon his priesthood and “ever lives to make intercession for” us, faith is now expressed in the bread and wine—the body and blood—representing that which has actually been offered.

To offer a sacrifice now, and to have a priesthood and a priestly ministry on earth, would be to deny that Christ, the true Sacrifice, has yet been offered.

Thus, there was clear use, and intelligent use, for all the laws, both moral and ceremonial, which were given to Israel. And this without any purpose or thought of any justification coming by any of them, or all of them together; but that justification comes always and ONLY by faith.

And this is “Wherefore the law?” as to the ceremonial law.

And from the considerable and careful study of the subject, we are thoroughly convinced that in the book of *Galatians*, the book of *Romans* and the book of *Hebrews* MEET. The letter

to the *Galatians* was written before either the letter to the *Romans* or that to the *Hebrews*.

In the controversy raised by “the Pharisees which believed,” which had confused the Galatian Christians, both the moral and the ceremonial law were involved; and so both are involved in the letter to the Galatians, and the whole ground is briefly covered.

Then afterward the book of *Romans* was written, enlarging, and dwelling wholly, upon that phase of *Galatians* which involves the moral law, and justification by faith.

And the book of *Hebrews* was written, enlarging, and dwelling wholly, upon that phase of *Galatians* which involves the ceremonial law, and justification by faith.

And we believe that as the whole subject is more and more carefully studied, the more it will be seen that in *Galatians*, both *Romans* and *Hebrews* are comprehended.

29. The Added Law

Galatians 3

¹⁹ Wherefore then serves the law? It was added because of transgressions.

THE Greek term that is here translated “added,” is the same word that, in *Hebrews* 12:19, is translated “spoken,” in the clause referring to the voice of God speaking from Sinai, “which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be *spoken* [or *added*] to them any more.” It is the same word that is used also in *Deuteronomy* 5:22 where it is translated “added,” in the sentence,

Deuteronomy 5

²² These words the Lord spoke unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice: and he *added* [or *spoke*] no more.

In both *Hebrews* and *Deuteronomy* the word is used with direct reference to the giving of the law of God, the ten commandments. This passage in *Galatians*, therefore, would certainly seem to suggest that the law here referred to would be the same law.

And this is further sustained by the expression later, in this verse, that the law referred to was ordained “*in the hand of a mediator*.” Now, since there is only “one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus” (*1 Timothy* 2:6), it was certainly Christ’s hand in which this law was ordained. And *Deuteronomy* 33:2, speaking of the same scene referred to in *Deuteronomy* 5:22 and *Hebrews* 12:20, says:

Deuteronomy 33

² The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them: he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints: from *his right hand* went a fiery law for

them.

Now the ten commandments were not only written by *the hand* of the Lord himself, but they were written on tables of stone, which “tables were *the work of God*” (*Exodus* 32:16), as well as the writing, which was the writing of God. And these tables were given by *the hand* of the Lord, unto Moses. And even when Moses had broken these tables, and had been directed to make other tables, the Lord wrote again with *his hand* on these tables the *same law* that at first he had written on the tables that he himself had made.

But this is not true of any other law. It is true that the ceremonial law—the law concerning sacrifices, offerings, the sanctuary, the whole Levitical system—was also given by the Lord to Moses; but it was not given by *the hand* of the Lord to Moses. It did not come forth from *his hand*, either in writing by his own hand, or upon tables made with his own hand. It was given to Moses by the Lord, and was *written* altogether by *Moses*, and not at all by the Lord.

Some, taking the English word “added” in this clause in *Galatians* 3:19, and holding it in the restricted English sense of “added,” have supposed that it is here taught that whatever law is referred to was necessarily added *to something* as a part of that thing, and so have held that it was added to *the covenant with Abraham*.

But such a view as that would plainly be a mistake, because, in *Galatians* 3:15, it is positively stated that:

Galatians 3

¹⁵ ...Though it be but a man’s covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man...*adds* thereto.

Thus it would be impossible for anything to be added to that covenant. The word translated “adds,” in *Galatians* 3:15, is not the same in Greek as that translated “added” in *Galatians* 3:19, nor are the words akin.

From the Greek word itself, in *Galatians* 3:19, and its use in connection with the law, in *Hebrews* 12:20 and *Deuteronomy* 5:22, as well as its further use in the Scriptures, it is plain that it is not necessarily implied that what is referred to should be literally added in the sense of a mathematical addition.

One expression in which the Greek word is used is:

Matthew 6

³³ Seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be *added* unto you.

Here it is plain that the expression is equivalent to merely to “give”—“all these things shall be *given* unto you,” or “you shall *receive* all these things.” Such is exactly its meaning in *Mark* 4:24, in which our translation is, “Unto you that hear shall more be given”—shall more be *added*.

In *Acts* 12:3 our translation reads, “He *proceeded further* to take Peter also.” This, translated as in *Galatians* 3:19, would be, “He *added* to take Peter.” Thus the word in *Galatians* 3:19 could, with equal propriety be translated,

“Wherefore then the law? It was *spoken* because of transgressions,”

or,

“It was *given* because of transgressions.”

One translation of the clause is, “It was set because of transgressions.” Another is, “It was introduced,” etc. True, to translate it, “It was added,” is just as good, provided it be understood that the word “added” conveys these senses, and is not to be restricted to its special meaning of a mathematical addition, as of adding “one cubit unto his stature.”

The law, then, was given, was spoken, was added, because of transgression. Will this statement that “it was added *because of transgressions*” hold in the case of the law of God, the

ten commandments? With respect to that law as it is referred to throughout in the discussion in which the Galatian Christians were involved, that is, the law *in its written form*, the expression does certainly apply. This will not only be clearly seen, but it is positively stated, in a passage already several times quoted in these *Studies in Galatians*; and we here set it down again:

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 364:

If man had kept the law of God, as given to Adam after his fall, preserved by Noah, and observed by Abraham, there would have been no necessity for the ordinance of circumcision. And if the descendants of Abraham had kept the covenant, of which circumcision was a sign, they would never have been seduced into idolatry, nor would it have been necessary for them to suffer a life of bondage in Egypt; they would have kept God's law in mind, and there would have been no necessity for it to be proclaimed from Sinai, or engraved upon the tables of stone. And had the people practiced the principles of the ten commandments, there would have been no need of the *additional* directions given to Moses.

This corresponds exactly to the other expressions with reference to the entering of the law of God:

Romans 5

²⁰ The law *entered*, that the offense might abound.

Romans 7

⁷ ...I had not known sin, but by the law...

¹³ That sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.

"To bring transgressions to a head."¹¹

"In order to bring about *as transgressions* the transgressions of it."¹²

¹¹ Farrar's translation of *Galatians* 3:19.

¹² Alford.

30. Which Law Was Added? - Part 1

Galatians 3

¹⁹ Wherefore then serves the law? It was added because of transgressions.

From the evidences presented in the last chapter, it is perfectly plain that the law of God, the ten commandments, in written form, both in tables of stone and as drawn out in its principles in the statutes and judgments of the “additional directions given to Moses,” was spoken, was given, was added, because of the transgressions of men.

As men went further into darkness, the Lord followed them with added efforts, and with further details to bring them to the light. Indeed, they went so far into transgressions and darkness that the Lord actually followed them so far as to give them “statutes that were not good.” The whole story is told in the following passage:

Spirit of Prophecy, vol. 1, p. 261-265:

(See also *Patriarchs and Prophets*, chap. 32, pars. 1-4)

The law of God existed before man was created. The angels were governed by it. Satan fell because he transgressed the principles of God’s government. After Adam and Eve were created, God made known to them his law. It was not then written, but was rehearsed to them by Jehovah.

The Sabbath of the fourth commandment was instituted in Eden. After God had made the world and created man upon the earth, he made the Sabbath for man. After Adam’s sin and fall, nothing was taken from the law of God. The principles of the ten commandments existed before the fall, and were of a character suited to the condition of a holy order of beings. After the fall, the principles of those precepts were not changed, but additional precepts were given to meet man in his fallen state....

Adam taught his descendants the law of God which law was handed down to the faithful through successive genera-

tions. The continual transgression of God's law called for a flood of waters upon the earth. The law was preserved by Noah and his family, who for right-doing were saved in the ark by a miracle of God. Noah taught his descendants the ten commandments. The Lord preserved a people for himself from Adam down, in whose hearts was his law. He says of Abraham, He "obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, my laws."...

If the descendants of Abraham had kept separate from other nations, they would not have been seduced into idolatry....

There were but a few families that first went down into Egypt. These increased to a great multitude. Some were careful to instruct their children in the law of God; but many of the Israelites had witnessed so much idolatry that they had confused ideas of God's law....

To leave them without excuse, the Lord himself condescended to come down upon Sinai enshrouded in glory, and surrounded by his angels, and in a most sublime and awful manner made known his law of ten commandments. He did not trust them to be taught by any one, not even his angels, but spoke his law with an audible voice in the hearing of all the people. He did not, even then, trust them to the short memory of a people who were prone to forget his requirements, but wrote them with this own holy finger upon tables of stone. He would remove from them all possibility of mingling with his holy precepts any tradition, or of confusing his requirements with the practices of men.

He then came still closer to his people, who were so readily led astray, and would not leave them with merely the ten precepts of the decalogue. He commanded Moses to write, as he should bid him, judgments and laws, giving minute directions in regard to what he required them to perform, and thereby guarded the ten precepts which he had engraved upon the tables of stone. These specific directions and requirements were given to draw erring man to the obedience of the moral law, which he is so prone to transgress.

If man had kept the law of God, as given to Adam after his fall, preserved in the ark by Noah, and observed by Abraham,

there would have been no necessity for the ordinance of circumcision. And if the descendants of Abraham had kept the covenant, of which circumcision was a token of pledge, they would never have gone into idolatry, nor been suffered to go down into Egypt; and there would have been no necessity of God's proclaiming his law from Sinai, and engraving it upon tables of stone, and guarding it by definite directions in the judgments and statutes given to Moses.

Moses wrote these judgments and statutes from the mouth of God while he was with him in the mount. If the people of God had obeyed the principles of the ten commandments, there would have been no need of the specific directions given to Moses, which he wrote in a book, relative to their duty to God and to one another. The definite directions which the Lord gave to Moses in regard to the duty of his people to one another, and to the stranger, are the principles of the ten commandments simplified and given in definite manner, that they need not err.

The Lord said of the children of Israel, "Because they had not executed my judgments but had despised my statutes, and had polluted my Sabbaths, and their eyes were after their fathers idols. Wherefore I gave them also statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live." Because of continual disobedience, the Lord annexed penalties to the transgression of his law, which were not good for the transgressor, or whereby he should not live in his rebellion.

By transgressing the law which God had given in such majesty, and amid glory which was unapproachable, the people showed open contempt of the great Lawgiver, and death was the penalty.

It is true that the sacrificial system was also given, added, because of transgressions. This is true as to the sacrifices originally, with Adam and Abraham: it is also true of the Levitical system given to Israel in the wilderness. This is also stated in a passage quoted in previous studies, as follows:

Spirit of Prophecy, vol. 1, p. 261:

A system was then ["after the fall"] established requiring

the sacrificing of beasts, to keep before fallen man that which the serpent made Eve disbelieve, that the penalty of disobedience is death. The transgression of God's law made it necessary for Christ to die a sacrifice, and thus make a way possible for man to escape the penalty, and yet the honor of God's law be preserved.

Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 364-365:

The sacrificial system, committed to Adam, was also perverted by his descendants. Superstition, idolatry, cruelty, and licentiousness corrupted the simple and significant service that God had appointed. Through long intercourse with idolaters, the people of Israel had mingled many heathen customs with their worship; therefore the Lord gave them at Sinai definite instruction concerning the sacrificial service. After the completion of the tabernacle, he communicated with Moses from the cloud of glory above the mercy seat, and gave full directions concerning the system of offerings, and forms of worship to be maintained in the sanctuary. The ceremonial law was thus given to Moses, and by him written in a book. But the law of ten commandments spoken from Sinai had been written by God himself of the tables of stone, and was sacredly preserved in the ark.

Thus, of either the moral law or the ceremonial law it is true that it was given, added, because of transgressions. The question then is,

“Which one is the law preeminently referred to in this clause in *Galatians* 3:19?”

And from the specifications already noticed, as to this law having been “ordained...in the hand of a mediator,” and the direct association of this text with the speaking of the law of God in *Hebrews* 12:20 and *Deuteronomy* 5:22, it certainly must be the truth that the law which in this passage is preeminently intended, is the law of God, the ten commandments, in written form on tables of stone and in the Bible.

31. Which Law Was Added? - Part 2

Galatians 3

¹⁹ Wherefore then serves the law? It was added because of transgressions...and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

This statement in *Galatians* 3:19 is identical in substance with that by Stephen in his last words to the Sanhedrin, as they were about to stone him to death, when he said:

Acts 7

⁵² Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One, of whom you have been now the betrayers and murderers;

⁵³ Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it.

This expression by Stephen, that the law was received, “by the disposition of angels,” and the expression in *Galatians* 3:19, that the law “was ordained by angels,” are identical; for Stephen’s word translated “disposition,” and Paul’s word translated “ordained,” are the same Greek word precisely, with simply a variation in tense. Stephen’s word is *diatagas* and Paul’s word is *diatageis*.

Now, what law could it be which, whatever else might be included, was preeminently the law referred to by Stephen when, in connection with the law that they had not kept, he charged them with being murderers? What law is it which preeminently is not kept by a murderer? It is the law of God—the ten commandments, one of which says, “You shall not kill.”

And when the same identical word is used in *Galatians* 3:19, in the same identical connection, then what law alone can be referred to as preeminently the law there referred to,

whatever other laws may be included? To have any other than the same law in both places, would be simply to do positive violence to the plain scripture in its whole connection. And since there can be no possible question as to what law is preeminently the one referred to by Stephen, there can likewise be no question as to what law is preeminently referred to in *Galatians* 3:19, when the same identical word is used as was used by Stephen, and in the same connection and in the same sense precisely.

What, then, is the thought expressed in the words “the disposition of angels,” “ordained by angels”? The root of the two words used by Stephen and Paul is *diatasso*, which signifies:

“to arrange, ordain, establish; to set in order, and draw up an army [on parade, or] in battle order.”

Thus, the specific statement in the two passages is that at the giving of the law referred to in the two places, the angels were drawn up in a grand array, as a king disposes his army, or a general his troops; and that, in the presence of this grand array of the angels of God, the law in question was given by the hand of a mediator.

As was presented in a former study: Since there is but “one mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,” Christ is unquestionably the Mediator in whose hand this law was ordained. And the scene is described thus:

Deuteronomy 33

² The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand went a fiery law for them.

From his right hand went forth this “fiery law” in the writing upon the tables of stone, and also in the work of making the tables of stone upon which the law was written by the hand of fire. For:

Exodus 32

¹⁶ The tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables.

And when those original tables had been broken by Moses, although Moses hewed out a second two tables like unto the first, he was required to take up these tables into the mount; and there, Moses says, the Lord again...

Deuteronomy 10

⁴ ...wrote on the tables, according to the first writing, the ten commandments, which the Lord spoke unto you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly: and the Lord gave them unto me.

⁵ And I turned myself and came down from the mount, and put the tables in the ark which I had made; and there they be, as the Lord commanded me.

Thus the law of the ten commandments, in the completest sense, was given by the hand of the “one mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus;” and no other law was given. Other law was given by word, or by inspiration, to Moses, which he wrote with his hand; but no other law than that on the tables of stone was given in or by the hand of the Mediator.

From his “hand” went forth that “fiery law;” and from that hand went forth no other law. And when from that “right hand” went forth that “fiery law,” then thousands of saints were present. These ten thousands of saints (or “holy ones,” R.V.) were the grand and glorious array of angels ordained, disposed, set in order, by the heavenly King, to behold and to do honor to this wonderful transaction of that most wonderful occasion.

Even Christian people have never yet truly discerned the majesty and glory of the giving of the law at Sinai; and that majesty and glory are only the true measure of the importance of that event.

Exodus 19

¹⁶ ...there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud:

¹⁸ And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly:

¹⁹ ...the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder:

Psalm 77

¹⁸ The voice of your thunder was in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook.

And from the midst of that glorious and terrible scene, when...

Deuteronomy 4

¹¹ ...the mountain burned with fire unto the midst of heaven, with darkness, clouds, and thick darkness,

Deuteronomy 5

²² The Lord spoke...out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice [the ten commandments], and he added no more.

And

Exodus 19

¹⁶ ...all the people that was in the camp trembled,
and

Hebrews 12

¹⁹ ...entreated that the word should not be spoken [added] to them any more.

And then, with his hand of fire,

Deuteronomy 5

²² ...he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto [Moses].

Psalm 68

¹⁷ The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place.

“The angels, ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, surrounded the people of God as they were assembled around the mountain, and were all above them; thus making a great living tabernacle, from which every evil angel was excluded, that not one word that was to come from the voice of Jesus should be altered in any mind, nor one suggestion of doubt or evil to a soul be made.”¹³

Thus when the law was delivered at Sinai, the glorious Lord and all the people were surrounded with the heavenly host of angels, disposed, ordained, arranged in orderly array. Four-faced and four winged cherubim, six-winged seraphim, and bright angels in glittering golden chariots—all these by the thousands upon thousands accompanied the Majesty of heaven, the Mediator, as in love there went forth from his hand to sinful men his great fiery law of love. *Deuteronomy* 33:3.

Then at the giving of the law of God, the ten commandments, at Sinai, there certainly has been no more majestic scene since the creation of the world. And that is the only law ever given by the hand of the Mediator.

How can there be any question or doubt that this is the law of *Galatians* 3:19 that was added because of transgressions, and that was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator?

¹³ This is a description from Brother Starr, of Ellen White’s vision of Mt. Sinai and the giving of the law, which she related to him in a personal conversation.

32. Till the Seed Should Come

Galatians 3

¹⁹ Wherefore then serves 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.

By each particular clause of this verse, considered by itself alone, we have found that the law of God—the ten commandments in written form, as given at Sinai, and as in the Bible—is the law that is preeminently meant, and is the only one that meets all the requirements of all the specifications so far considered. What now of this one?

“...till the seed should come to whom the promise was made...”

There are two laws referred to in *Galatians*. That is settled. They were both added; and they were both added because of transgressions. But which is preeminently the law referred to in that place, and its connection? That is the question here.

There are also two comings of the seed, which is Christ; and it is proper and fair to ask, Which is the coming referred to here? Why should any one settle and firmly fix as the coming of this passage a coming that requires that a law shall also be settled and fixed as the law of the passage, which will not meet the requirements of the passage in its connection? That is what has been done; and it has been the great defect in the usual consideration of this passage of Scripture.

Those who are the enemies of the law of God in any form, and who would be glad to have it abolished in every form, but who do not know that the law could not by any possibility be abolished, have always wrung this verse in to do service in that terribly mistaken cause. These eagerly seize upon and

settle it that the coming of the Seed here referred to is the first coming of Christ. They never look beyond the single clause: it is not to their interest to do so; because the only use they have for this scripture is that they may support their determination that the law of God is abolished. Thus the enemies of the law of God reason.

On the other hand, the friends of the law of God know that it is true that there was a law abolished at the first coming of Christ. And since here is a law that was added “till the seed should come,” these friends of the law of God allow, and even settle upon, the claim of the enemies of the law of God, that the first coming of Christ is the coming that is here meant: THEN, and CONSEQUENTLY the law that was abolished is decided to be the law here referred to.

But it must be confessed that this is a weak way of getting at the thing. It bears on its face more the aspect of the begging of the question than of a real study and discovery of the truth as it is in the Word, for the truth’s sake. As a matter of fact, there is nothing in the passage, nor any where in this whole connection, that suggests the abolition of any law. The subject is:

“Wherefore serves the law? What is the purpose, the object, the aim, of the law?”

But there are two comings of the Seed. There is another, the second coming of Christ as well as there was the first. Is it impossible that this second coming of the Seed should be the coming referred to in this passage? There are other similar expressions in the Scripture. For instance, *Ezekiel 21*, speaking of the removing of the diadem and crown of the king of Judah, says:

Ezekiel 21

²⁷ I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it; and it shall be no more, until HE COME whose right it is; and I will give it to

him.

What coming is this? The answer to this question can be given only by a consideration of the facts in the case, He came, but instead of receiving that crown, he received a crown of thorns; instead of being seated upon that throne, he was nailed to the cross. So we know that that was not the coming referred to in the text, but that it is his second coming seated upon the throne of his father David (*Luke* 1:32), and having on his head many crowns (*Revelation* 19:12). Then it is that:

Revelation 11 [RV]

¹⁵ ...The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever.

And this is the coming of him whose right it is, that is referred to in the text, and then it will be given him.

Again, it is written that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. That Seed CAME, and did not bruise the serpent's head, but himself was bruised instead. *Isaiah* 53:5. And after he had come, and had thus been bruised, even to death; had risen again from the dead; and had ascended to heaven,—even thirty years after these things—it was written:

Romans 16

²⁰ The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.

In *Daniel* 2 it is written:

Daniel 2

⁴⁴ In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.

We all know that it is generally held by the ministers of the day that this was done at the first coming of Christ: that there

the stone was cut out without hands, and is to roll on, and on, and on, until it fills the whole earth. But WE know that when he was here, he said,

John 18

³⁶ My kingdom is not of this world,...not from hence.

And so we know that this scripture is fulfilled at his second coming. Now, why should it be thought impossible that *Galatians* 3:19 should refer to his second coming? Look at the situation as it is in the text, with its context:

Galatians 3

¹⁹ ...till the seed should come to whom the promise was made...

What promise? The promise of the inheritance, unquestionably: as it is written:

¹⁸ For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise.

¹⁹ Wherefore then serves the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made.

Thus it is fixed by the Word itself that the promise referred to is the promise of the inheritance. And whatever law it is that is here referred to, it is given, added, till He comes to whom the promise of the inheritance was made.

Now, at his first coming did he receive any of the inheritance? No; no more than did Abraham, to whom with him, the promise was made. He “had not where to lay his head.” And of him it was equally true, as with Abraham, that he received “none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on.

Notice, too, particularly, that the clause says, “Till the seed should come to whom,”—not concerning whom, but TO whom —“the promise was made.” That is, the promise referred to was made to HIM, personally; and not simply to somebody, con-

cerning him.

But it is fixed by the text that the promise is the promise of the inheritance. This promise was made to Abraham and to his seed, which is Christ; and this was done when the promise was made to Abraham.

But, further, it was also done TO the seed himself in person, which is Christ. Read it in the second Psalm:

Psalm 2

⁷ The Lord has said unto me, You are my Son; this day have I begotten you.

⁸ Ask of me, and I shall give you the heathen for your inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for your possession.

Here is the promise of the inheritance made direct to the seed, which is Christ. Now, when is this promise fulfilled? And when something should be done, make, or instituted, “till the seed should come TO whom” that promise was made, then which coming would be the true and the only logical one that could be considered? Plainly, the coming that would be at the receiving of the inheritance REFERRED TO THE PROMISE; and with which alone the promise is concerned.

Therefore, considering what the promise is plainly in the scriptures declared to be,—the promise of the inheritance,—and considering that this promise relates and pertains particularly, and above all, to his second coming, it is evident that the second coming of Christ, rather than his first, is the one referred to in the clause “till the seed should come to whom the promise was made.”

And since by every other clause of the verse, we have found that the law of God, as given on tables of stone at Sinai, and in the Bible, is the one preeminently referred to, and the only one that will meet all the specifications of all the clauses; and since the coming referred to in this clause is the coming in

connection with the inheritance and the receiving of it, this settles it beyond all possibility of controversy that the law of God, the ten commandments, as given on the tables of stone and in the Bible, must remain in full force and obligation UNTIL THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST and the end of the world. And we all know that it will not be abolished then.

It is always true that those scriptures that Satan fixes upon and uses most tenaciously to prove the abolition of the law of God are the very ones which, when truly grasped, are seen to most conclusively and most beautifully show its everlasting integrity and obligation.

Look at the subject further. The inheritance is the thing referred to in the promise. But with what is the inheritance connected? Plainly, and only, with God's covenant with Abraham—the everlasting covenant. Notice in the context that

Galatians 3

¹⁷ The covenant [that is the covenant with Abraham, the everlasting 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 [the promise of the inheritance of that covenant] of none effect.

As we have seen in a former study, the inheritance is the great thing in the covenant with Abraham, the everlasting covenant. Indeed, the covenant with Abraham was made by God in pledge to Abraham that he should inherit that which God had promised. For after God had promised it to him, Abraham said,

“Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?”

And, in answer, God made with him, and entered into with him, that blood covenant, in which he pledged his life that the promise of the inheritance should never fail. *Genesis* 15:8, 18.

And as we also found in the former studies, all that ever

come in after that covenant was made, was, in blessing men, to enable them to attain to the fullness of that covenant, and to the inheritance of which that everlasting covenant is the pledge. And this was exactly the object of the giving of the law of God on tables of stone on Mount Sinai, and in the Bible. For if men had kept that covenant, they would have kept God's law in mind, and there would have been no necessity for it to be proclaimed from Sinai or engraved upon the tables of stone."

The object of that law, thus written and given to men, bringing transgressions to a head, making sins abound, was and is that men might find the grace of Christ much more abounding,—that through him they might attain to the fullness of that everlasting covenant with Abraham, and so to the inheritance of which that covenant was and is the pledge.

And to allow the coming of the seed to whom the promise of the inheritance was made, to be the second coming of Christ, and not his first,—this gives opportunity for the law of God, in its written form, to fulfill its grand object, which is the bringing of men, through faith in Christ, to the fullness of that everlasting covenant.

The fullness of that everlasting covenant is the righteousness of God—the keeping of the commandments, and the faith of Jesus. And men must be brought to the fullness of that everlasting covenant in order that they may receive the inheritance, of which that everlasting covenant is the pledge.

That this view is the correct one, and is the truth of the matter, is emphasized by the fact that the everlasting covenant is not met in its fullness, in believers, until the second coming of Christ; that is, till the seed really comes to whom the promise of the inheritance was made.

One provision of that everlasting covenant is:

Jeremiah 31

³³ I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts.

And that provision will not be accomplished in its fullness until, by the Third Angel's Message, men are brought to the actual keeping of "the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus;" so that the Lord, looking down from heaven upon them, can say, in perfect truth:

Revelation 14

¹² Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

Another provision of that covenant is:

Hebrews 8

¹¹ And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.

Although we are now living in the times of the new covenant as really as was Abraham, yet neither the world nor we have attained to that point where it is not necessary any more for any man to teach his neighbor or his brother, saying, Know the Lord. And this part of the everlasting covenant will not be met in its fullness until, through the blessing and power of God in the Third Angel's Message, the mystery of God shall have been finished. *Colossians* 1:26-27; *Revelation* 19:7.

It is not necessary here to take up all the clauses of the new covenant one by one. These are enough to illustrate the truth that the everlasting covenant, the new covenant, the covenant with Abraham, which is the pledge of the inheritance that is promised to the Seed, is not met in its fullness in those who accept it, till the second coming of Christ.

And if this be not plain enough by the scriptures presented, or is not convincing enough, then read the following sen-

tences from the testimony of Jesus, which is the Spirit of Prophecy:

Early Writings, p. 145-146:

It was at midnight that God chose to deliver his people. As the wicked were mocking around them, suddenly the sun appeared; shining in his strength, and the moon stood still. The wicked looked upon the scene with amazement, while the saints beheld with solemn joy the tokens of their deliverance. Signs and wonders followed in quick succession. Everything seemed turned out of its natural course. The streams ceased to flow. Dark, heavy clouds came up and clashed against each other. But there was one clear place of settled glory, whence came the voice of God like many waters, shaking the heavens and the earth. There was a mighty earthquake. The graves were opened, and those who had died in faith under the Third Angel's Message, keeping the Sabbath, came from their dusty beds, glorified, to hear the covenant of peace that God was to make with those who had kept his law.

The sky opened and shut, and was in commotion. The mountains shook like a reed in the wind, and cast out ragged rocks all around. The sea boiled like a pot, and cast out stones upon the land. And as God spoke the day and the hour of JESUS' COMING, and delivered the EVERLASTING COVENANT to his people, he spoke one sentence, and then paused, while the words were rolling through the earth. The Israel of God stood with their eyes fixed upward, listening to the words as they came from the mouth of Jehovah, and rolled through the earth like peals of loudest thunder. . .The wicked could not look upon them [the saints] for the glory. And when the never-ending blessing was pronounced on those who had honored God in keeping his Sabbath holy, there was a mighty shout of victory over the beast and over his image.

The following quotation also, though concerning in substance what is in the foregoing quotation, contains statements that make it worth printing in this connection:

Great Controversy, p. 635-641:

With shouts of triumph, jeering, and imprecation, throngs of evil men are about to rush upon their prey, when lo, a dense blackness, deeper than the darkness of the night, falls upon the earth.

Then a rainbow, shining with the glory from the throne of God, spans the heavens, and seems to encircle each praying company. The angry multitudes are suddenly arrested. Their mocking cries die away. The objects of their murderous rage are forgotten. With fearful forebodings they gaze upon the symbol of God's covenant, and long to be shielded from its overpowering brightness...

In the midst of the angry heavens is one clear space of indescribable glory, whence comes the voice of God like the sound of many waters, saying, "It is done." That voice shakes the heavens and the earth. There is a mighty earthquake, "such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great."...Graves are opened, and "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth" "awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." All who have died in the faith of the Third Angel's Message come forth from the tomb, glorified, to hear God's covenant of peace with those who have kept his law....

The voice of God is heard from heaven, declaring the day and hour of Jesus' coming and delivering the everlasting covenant to his people....

Soon there appears in the east a small black cloud, about half the size of a man's hand. It is the cloud which surrounds the Saviour, and which seems in the distance to be shrouded in darkness. The people of God know this to be the sign of the Son of Man. In solemn silence they gaze upon it as it draws nearer the earth, becoming lighter and more glorious until it is a great white cloud, its base a glory like consuming fire, and above it, the rainbow of THE COVENANT.

And when the saints of God have thus attained to the fullness of the everlasting covenant, the covenant with Abraham, when the object of the giving of the law from Sinai, and in the Bible, has thus been accomplished, the law will not then be

abolished, but will be kept in mind, in heart, in soul, just as it was by Adam, Enoch, Noah, and Abraham, when as yet there was “no necessity for it to be proclaimed from Sinai, or written on the tables of stone.” Instead of being then abolished, it will be observed and lived more fully and more perfectly than ever before by men.

And this is “Wherefore serves the law?” And this is why it is that “it was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise [of the inheritance] was made, and it was ordained by [the disposition, the grand array of] angels in the hand of a mediator.”

We are thoroughly convinced that more genuine study, and far more profitable study can be put upon *Galatians* 3:19, and the rest of the chapter, and the whole book, by Seventh-day Adventists, than has ever yet been put upon it by us or anybody else.

33. Not Against the Promises

Galatians 3

²¹ 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.

²² But the scripture has concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

THE law could not possibly be against the promises of God. For when God had given a promise, why should he, and how could he, set up anything against the promise? Why should he desire to weaken or to frustrate his own promise? Therefore his “God forbid” is set against any such suggestion. Instead of the law being against the promises, it is, as we have again and again seen, an aid to men in attaining unto the promises.

The divine reason here given as to why the law is not against the promises is that “if there had been a law given which could have given life,” then “verily righteousness should have been by the law.” And if righteousness had been by the law, there would have been no need of any promises. Indeed there would then have been no place for any promises. For,

Romans 4

⁴ To him that works [obtains righteousness by the law] is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

If righteousness could be obtained by working, it would be possessed in the very act of the work performed. And when possessed, there could not possibly be any room for any promise of it. And if righteousness could be obtained by working, then the reward of righteousness would be earned, and so would be a debt due; and any withholding of it from

him who had earned it, and to whom it was so due, would be injustice.

Thus again, if righteousness were by the law, there would be no room for any promise; for even to promise to a person that which he had already earned, and which was already due, would be a withholding of the thing earned and due, and so would be injustice.

Therefore upon every consideration, if righteousness could be obtained by the law, then the law would be against the promises of God. And for any one to expect righteousness by the law, he in that very thing does set the law against the promises of God. But against all thought of obtaining righteousness by the law the Lord sets his “God forbid” that the law should be against the promises.

Another reason given why righteousness cannot be by the law is that the law cannot give life.

Galatians 3

²¹ ...if there had been a law given which could have given life,
[THEN] VERILY righteousness should have been by the law.

Thus it is certified by the word of God that righteousness and life come from precisely the same source, and in precisely the same way; and that is, as the free gift of God by his creative power as, the Author and Prince of life.

But there is no law that can possibly give life to men; because all men have lost their lives by transgression of the highest law in the universe—the law of God. And since all men have transgressed that highest law in the universe, and so have lost their lives, no law subordinate to that can possibly give them life.

And even that highest law itself cannot give them life; because, having transgressed it, and so forfeited their lives, they, being sinners and under sentence of death, cannot possibly

observe it, but can only continue to transgress it. So that for men there is no life in any law.

Now it is true that the law was “ordained to life,” but because of transgression it was “found to be unto death.” *Romans* 7:10. It is true that it is written: “The man that does them shall live in them;” but there is none that does them.

Romans 3

¹⁰ There is none righteous, no, not one.

¹² They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable.

But, bless the Lord,

Romans 8

³ What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh [weak through the sinfulness of the flesh], God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh [did].

“What the law could not do,”—it could not do even that to which it was ordained, it could not give life,—“God sending his own Son” did. In the likeness of sinful flesh he...

³ ...for sin, condemned sin in the flesh;

⁴ That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Romans 6

²³ For the wages of sin is death: but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Therefore

Galatians 3

²² The Scripture has concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

And the only way in which anybody can be concluded “under sin” is by the law of God—the law by which alone “is the knowledge of sin.” And since the Scripture has thus concluded all under sin, that—so that, in order that—the promise by faith

of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe, it is perfectly plain that instead of the law being against the promises of God, it is the God-given means of men's attaining to the perfect surety of the promises of God by faith of Jesus Christ.

Therefore that law can no more be done away than the promises of God can be done away, and no more than the faith of Jesus Christ can be done away.

And anyone who would in argument or in thought do away that law, does in argument or in thought do away the promises of God and the faith of Jesus Christ, and so destroys the way of God's salvation to men.

But that cannot in truth be destroyed—except in the individual experience of men. And to destroy the way of God's salvation in individual experience, is to work eternal destruction to the soul.

Therefore the claim that the law of God—the ten commandments—is done away is the most stupendous and destructive error that could possibly be entertained by anybody anywhere.

34. Kept Under the Law

Galatians 3

²³ But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

This verse repeats, in different words, the particular thought of the two verses immediately preceding. Verse 21 declares that the law is not against the promises of God, and shows that it is a helper unto the fullness of the promises that are in Christ. Verse 22 declares that “the scripture has concluded all under sin” and this for a purpose. And what is the purpose?

Galatians 3

²² ...that [in order that] the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

Now, “By the law is the knowledge of sin;” and it is the law of God, the ten commandments, by which is the knowledge of sin. Then since “the scripture has concluded all under sin,” and “by the law is the knowledge of sin,” the scripture has concluded all under the law. And it has concluded them all under the law so that “the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.”

Then, that law by which is the knowledge of sin,—by that law it is that “the scripture has concluded all under sin.” And since it is by that law that all are concluded under sin, in order that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe, therefore, as stated in the previous verse, the law is not against the promises of God, but is an aid to all men in their attaining to the promise by faith of Jesus Christ.

Now the same thought is carried forward in the verse at present under consideration:

Galatians 3

²³ Before faith came, we were kept under the law...

Under what law? Plainly under the law by which alone “the scripture has concluded all under sin.” Even as it is said in another place:

Romans 3

¹⁹ Now we know that what things soever the law says, it is said to them who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

This is the condition of every soul upon earth before faith comes to him. But when faith does come to him, when he awakes to the exercise of faith, then

²¹ ...the righteousness of God without the law is manifested,

²² Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe.

Thus it is true, and thus it is, that all are concluded under sin and kept under the law until faith in Jesus Christ delivers them.

However, there is another expression in the verse that is particularly to be noticed: that is, that we were “shut up.”

- We were “under the law,” “shut up.”
- We were “kept under the law, shut up.”
- It was “before faith came” that “we were kept under the law, shut up.”
- And “before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.”

How was it that we were shut up? “Under the law, shut up.” But to be under the law is to be “guilty before God.” *Romans* 3:19. To be “under the law” is to be under the dominion of sin. *Romans* 6:14.

And since we were “under the law, shut up,” it was the law

that shut us up. And what law is this? It is the same law as that of the previous verse, by which “the scripture has concluded all under sin.” And the only law by which anybody can possibly be concluded under sin, is that law by which “is the knowledge of sin,” which is the law of God, the law of ten commandments.

The Greek word thus translated, “shut up” is the same word that, in the previous verse, is translated “concluded”; and also that in *Romans* 11:32 is translated in the text “concluded”, and in the margin “shut up.” So that the expressions translated alike in the two verses, would be:

Galatians 3

²² The scripture has shut up all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe;

²³ ...we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

This makes it certain that the law by which, in verse 22, “we were shut up under sin” is the same law by which, in verse 23, “we were kept under the law, shut up.” And by these twin expressions it is plain that to be “under the law” is to be “under sin,” for to be “shut up under sin” is to be “kept under the law, shut up;” to be “shut up under the law” is to be “shut up under sin.” And the only law by which anybody can be shut up under sin, is that law by which alone is the knowledge of sin; and that law is the law of God, the law of ten commandments.

Therefore, since all are shut up under sin, in order that the promise of faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe; and since the law of ten commandments is the only one by which anybody can be shut up under sin, it is certain that law is not against the promises of God, but is the only certain means of attaining to the true faith, and so to the fullness of the promises in Christ.


35. Shut Up Unto the Faith

Galatians 3

²¹ 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.

²² And the scripture has concluded [Greek: “shut up”] all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

²³ But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

 LL were “shut up under sin.” And all were “under the law, shut up.” And the only possible way in which anybody can be under sin is:

- by that law by which is “the knowledge of sin” (*Romans* 3:20; 7:7);
- by that law which is “the strength of sin” (*1 Corinthians* 15:56);
- by that law of which “sin” itself is “the transgression.” *1 John* 3:4.

That law is the law which says, “You shall not covet.” *Romans* 7:7-13. And that is the law of God, the ten commandments. This is so certain that there can be no question about it.

And it is equally certain that the ceremonial law of sacrifices and offerings never was intended to, and never could, shut up anybody under the law. On the contrary, that was for the time then present the way out from under the law. Notice the following example in illustration, from that ceremonial law:

Leviticus 4

¹³ If the whole congregation of Israel sin,...and they have done somewhat against any of the commandments of the

Lord concerning things which should not be done, and are guilty;

¹⁴ When the sin which they have sinned against it, is known, then the congregation shall offer a young bullock FOR THE SIN, and bring him before the tabernacle of the congregation.

¹⁵ And the elders of the congregation shall lay their hands upon the head of the bullock before the Lord: and the bullock shall be killed before the Lord.

¹⁶ And the priest that is anointed shall bring of the bullock's blood to the tabernacle of the congregation;

¹⁷ And the priest shall make atonement for them, and it shall be FORGIVEN THEM.

Now please look that all over, and consider it step by step:

1. The people sinned. How?
2. They had done "somewhat against the commandments of the Lord." What commandments of the Lord?
3. "The commandments of the Lord concerning things which SHOULD NOT BE DONE." What are the commandments of the Lord concerning things which should not be done?
4. Plainly enough these: "You shall have no other gods before me." "You shall not make unto yourself any graven image." "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain." "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work." "You shall not kill." "You shall not commit adultery." "You shall not steal." "You shall not bear false witness." "You shall not covet."
5. And when they had sinned by doing somewhat against any of these commandments, this law, of the Lord, they were "GUILTY." And when the sin came to their knowledge, that guilt was the more impressed—"sin by the commandment became exceedingly sinful." And so long as they remained in that attitude and in that place only,

they were held under that guilt, “shut up under sin;” so long as they remained there only, they remained the more guilty, and “were kept under the law, shut up.” But they need not remain there “shut up under sin” and “kept under the law, shut up,” held “guilty.” They need not remain there, because—

6. THERE WAS A WAY OUT. That way out, the only way out, was the way of the sacrifice and the blood of THE OFFERING; and the ministration of the priest who made “AN ATONEMENT.”
7. And when the sin was forgiven them, they were free. They were no longer guilty, no longer “shut up under sin,” no longer “under the law, shut up.” They were out and free; because they were at one with God, because of the at-one-ment made.

That whole course of the sacrifice and offering was the way of FAITH. It was the way of promise. And that way was for, and was available for, only those who were “guilty” of “sin,” and so were “shut up under sin.” That sacrifice and blood was the expression of faith in the sacrifice and blood of Jesus Christ. And that ministration of the priest, and the atonement made, was the example and shadow of the ministration of Christ, the great High Priest, and the atonement that he makes.

That whole course of sacrifice and offering was the way of the faith of Jesus Christ. That way of the faith of Jesus Christ was the way out for those who were “guilty” of “sin,” and so were “shut up under sin.” They were guilty of sin, and so “shut up under sin,” only because they had done somewhat against any of the commandments of the Lord concerning things which should not be done. And those commandments were the ten commandments.

Therefore it is by the Scripture indisputable that by the law of the ten commandments, which showed them guilty, they

were:

Galatians 3

²² ...concluded [shut up] all under sin, that [in order that, so that] the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

Now, did the sacrifice and offering bring them to faith? or did faith bring them to the sacrifice and offering? The only answer that there can be is that by all conceivable evidence faith brought them to the sacrifice. Can this possibly be doubted when it is written:

Hebrews 11

⁴ By faith Abel offered unto God a...sacrifice by which he obtained witness that he was righteous.

It was faith that brought to the offering of the sacrifice Abel and all the others who were ever accepted of God. But what brought them to the FAITH that brought the sacrifice? The knowledge of their sin—the conviction that they were “guilty.”

And what gave them the knowledge of their sin? What caused the conviction of their guilt? Their having “done somewhat against any of the commandments of the Lord concerning things which should not be done.” *Leviticus 4:13*.

Thus “before faith came” they, as all others of mankind, “were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.” They were “shut up unto the faith,” the faith expressed in the sacrifice and offering, because there was no other way out from their guilt of sin.

And there was no other way out, because:

Acts 4

¹² There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

36. How the Law Keeps Us Under

Galatians 3

²² And the scripture has concluded [Greek: “shut up”] all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

²³ But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

THE Greek word, translated in verse 23 “shut up,” and in verse 22 and *Romans* 11:32 “concluded,” is *sunekleisan*, and signifies “to shut or coop up, hem in, inclose.” In *Luke* 5:6 it is translated “inclosed,” in the statement that “when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes.”

Now, since this is the law by which is the knowledge of sin, —for by not other law is it possible to conclude, shut up, men under sin,—the question comes,

“How does the law of God, the ten commandments, shut men up?”

Bear in mind that mankind “have all gone out of the way;” “there is none that does good, no, not one;” and “there is none that seeks after God.” *Romans* 3:10-18. Therefore if any of them ever get into the way, it can be only by God’s seeking them.

And when God seeks them, it is to bring them to himself. And since they are all under sin, in order to bring them to himself he brings them to righteousness. Since the character of men is altogether bad, the Lord, in bringing them to the knowledge of himself, brings them to the knowledge of a character that is altogether good.

Since man is sold under sin, is the slave of sin, possessed of a mind that is enmity against God, and “is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be,” everything that he does is,

in its very nature, wrong. How, then, can the Lord get him into the right way when he is out of the way, and under a power and possessed of a nature, by which he does only wrong?

That he might reach man where he is, the Lord formulated for man a transcript of his own character, in such a form as to be particularly adapted to the condition and needs of man altogether as he is. And this transcript of the character of God is formulated in the law of God—the ten commandments in written form, as given at Sinai on tables of stone, and in the Bible.

It was necessary for the Lord to present his law, the transcript of his character, in this form, because of the essential sinfulness of mankind.

Mark 7

²¹ For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,

²² Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness.

Since such is the nature and confirmed condition of all men, this is why it is that the law of God as it entered in written form,

1 Timothy 1

⁹ ...is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,

¹⁰ For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine.

Here is included the principle of each one of the ten commandments, and the violation of it.

Thus the law of God, entering, comes to every man, telling

him not to do the very thing which it is natural and inherent in him to do.

1. He has it in his heart to kill; but there stands the word, "You shall not kill."
2. He has it in his heart to commit adultery; but there stands the word, "You shall not commit adultery."
3. He has it in his heart to steal; but there stands the word, "You shall not steal."
4. He has it in his heart to bear false witness; but there stands the word, "You shall not bear false witness."
5. He has it in his heart to covet; but there stands the word, "You shall not covet."
6. He has it in his heart to dishonor father and mother; but there stands the word, "Honor your father and your mother."
7. He has it in his heart to go on using all the time there is, the Lord's day as well as all others, in disregard of God; but there stands the word, "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God: in it you shall not do any work."
8. He has it in his heart to take the name of God in vain; but there stands the word, "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain."
9. He has it in his heart to have other gods than the Lord; but there stands the word, "You shall have no other gods before me."
10. He has it in the evil imagination of his heart to formulate in an image his idea of God; but there stands the word, "You shall not make unto yourself any graven image."

And thus the law of God meets every man in the world just where he is, and by its emphatic "You shall not," shuts him off from doing everything that is natural for him to do. Thus he is

shut in with himself, and is “cooped up” with his sins, “kept under the law, shut up.”

Thus there is revealed to the man the knowledge of himself, which is the knowledge of sin: he sees himself to be altogether wrong. There is awakened in him the desire for something better, and the longing to get away from his exceeding sinful self. He is stripped of every resource in himself; and, in his desperation, he cries out,

Romans 7

²⁴ O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

And the answer is:

²⁵ I thank God through Jesus Christ [there is deliverance].

In his longing to do something that is not forbidden by the holy law of God, he exclaims:

John 6

²⁸ What shall I do, that I might work the works of God?

And the answer is:

²⁹ This is the work of God, that you believe on him whom he has sent.

With the stings of sin pricking him to the heart on all sides, he cries out:

Acts 16

³⁰ What must I do to be saved?

The answer is:

³¹ Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved.

And thus it is that the law of God is an essential aid to men in bringing them unto the promises of God. Thus it is that by the law by which “is the knowledge of sin,”

Galatians 3

²² The scripture has concluded [“shut up”] all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

And thus it is that before faith comes to men, they are “kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which,” if they will only rightly use the law, and meet the true principle of the law, shall “afterwards be revealed.” And thus in *Galatians* 3:21-23 there is preached the same gospel precisely as is preached in *Leviticus* 4 and in *Romans* 3:10—and everywhere else where the true gospel is preached.

All men have sinned in doing somewhat against the commandments of the Lord concerning things which should not be done, and are guilty. An offering must be brought, an atonement made, so that the sin may be forgiven, and the guilt be removed.

Isaiah 53

⁵ All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

⁶ But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

And...

¹⁰ ...when you shall make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed.

Galatians 3

²⁹ And if you be Christ’s, then are you Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.

37. The Law Brings Us to Christ

Galatians 3

²⁴ Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

²⁵ But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

THESE two verses are the conclusion of the argument in verses 21-23. Accordingly they are introduced by “Wherefore.” “Wherefore” signifies “for which cause or reason; in consequence of which; consequently.” It is easy to see that these two verses are the consequence of the preceding ones.

²¹ 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.

The law is not against the promises of God; but, instead, is an aid in attaining unto the promises. And we know that all the promises of God are in Christ. Then, since the law is an aid in attaining unto the promises; and all the promises are in Christ, evidently the law is an aid in men’s attaining unto Christ.

²² The scripture has concluded [shut up] all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

Plainly, then, the law is a means of bringing men to Christ and to the promises by faith in him.

²³ Before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

As we were “shut up unto the faith,” and “were kept under the law, shut up,”—it was the law that shut us up, and it shut us up unto the faith,—plainly the law brought men to faith.

But faith is always Christ, and Christ is always faith, for he is “the author and finisher of faith.” And since the law brought men to faith and Christ is the substance of all faith, in the nature of things the law brought men to Christ. And so, verse 24 states the fact, as the consequence of all this:

²⁴ The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

But the great question with most persons is, What law is that? It is a fair enough question, because, since whatever law it is, it brings men to Christ: and if men take the wrong law, it will not bring them to Christ.

But it can easily be known what law it is. Read again the text:

²⁴ The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster [we are no longer under the law].

Now, what is it to be under the law? It is to be under the dominion of sin; for it is written:

Romans 6

¹⁴ Sin shall not have dominion over you: for you are not under the law.

Then, whoever is under the law, is under the dominion of sin, and this because “sin is the transgression of the law.” And what law is it? It is the moral law—the law which says: “You shall not covet;” for it is written:

Romans 7

⁷ I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, You shall not covet.

And this is the very thought that is before us in *Galatians* 3:24-25, and in the verses preceding, of which verses 24-25, are only the conclusion.

Verse 22 says: “The scripture has concluded [shut up] all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe;” and verse 23 says: “We were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.”

There can be no manner of question that these expressions “under sin” and “under the law” are identical in meaning, and therefore it is plain that to be “under the law” is to be “under sin.” And being “under sin,” being “shut up under sin,” and thus “kept under the law, shut up unto the faith,” it is certain that it is the law by which is the knowledge of sin,—the law which says, “You shall not covet.”—which is the schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

And this is the more evident by the fact that after faith is come, after we are justified by faith, we are no longer under the law; we are no longer under the dominion of sin; we are no longer shut up; because we have attained unto the very thing which is the object of the law, which is Christ. For:

Romans 10

⁴ Christ is the end [the object, the aim, the purpose] of the law for righteousness to everyone that believes.

Notice again: for what purpose is it that men are brought to Christ? “That we might be justified by faith.” This is the same as the preceding verses:

Galatians 3

²³ We were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith...

²² The scripture has concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

Plainly, therefore, whatever law it is, it is a law that brings men to faith.

Now, it is not true, and it never was true, that the ceremonial law of sacrifices and offerings ever brought anybody to

faith. It was faith that brought them to that law.

Hebrews 11

⁴ By faith Abel offered unto God...sacrifice.

Did the sacrifice, or the offering of it, bring Abel to faith? No. Faith brought Abel to the sacrifice. That sacrifice was a lamb, and, in Abel's faith, it was Christ. And by the faith of Christ, in which he offered that sacrifice,

⁴ ...he obtained witness that he was righteous.

Thus he attained to righteousness by faith; to justification by faith. Thus faith brought him to that ceremonial law of sacrifices and offerings.

But what brought him to the faith that brought him to the law of sacrifices and offerings? The knowledge of sin brought him to the faith. And what brought him to the knowledge of sin? The moral law, to be sure—the law that says: “You shall not covet”—the law by which alone is the knowledge of sin.

Cain brought an offering: but it was not brought in faith, and therefore was not accepted; and consequently sin still lay at his door. *Genesis 4:7*. Cain had no faith in Christ, and therefore his offering was of no avail. And even though an offering were made of a lamb, if there was no faith in Christ in him who offered it, it would not avail. The faith must be there before he brings his offering at all, or else it is of no avail.

Thus, by every consideration, it is certain that, instead of the ceremonial law of sacrifices and offerings bringing men to the faith, it was faith that always brought men to the sacrifices and offerings. And it must be faith that would do that, or else, the sacrifice and the offering was nothing.

38. Brought to Justification by Faith

Galatians 3

²⁴ Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

²⁵ But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

²⁶ For you are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

The law that is here under consideration brings men to Christ, that they may “be justified by faith.” Justification by faith is the object in view.

But from the example of Abel, from the ceremonial law of *Leviticus*, which we have already presented, it has been demonstrated that the ceremonial law of sacrifices and offerings was itself the way of justification by faith; so that it is impossible for a law which in itself is justification by faith, to bring men to justification by faith.

On the other hand, what is the necessity for justification? All have sinned; all have transgressed the law; all are shut up under sin, and so kept under the law. And they never can be justified by the law. The only possible escape is by faith of Jesus Christ. Their only hope of justification is in justification by faith.

Consequently, this law is the law by which is the knowledge of sin; the law “under” which every one is “kept” until he is justified by faith. This law it is that is the schoolmaster to bring men unto Christ in order that they may be justified by faith.

One other word just here. The ceremonial law of sacrifices and offerings is done away. There is no question of that anywhere. Now if it were the ceremonial law of sacrifices and offerings that brought men to Christ, that they might be justi-

fied by faith—since that is done away, how can men be brought to Christ? and how can they find justification by faith?

If that were the law here referred to, then, of all things, that law never should have been, and it never could have been, in righteousness, done away, so long as there remained a single soul that needed to be brought to Christ, that needed to be justified by faith.

Consequently, since that law has been done away, and ever since it was done away, men have needed to be brought to Christ, and to be justified by faith, this, in itself, is the most conclusive proof that the ceremonial law of sacrifices and offerings is not at all, and could not possibly be, the law here referred to.

For these reasons that law could be only a law that abides forever—and that law is the MORAL law—the law by which is the knowledge of sin, by which all the world is declared and held guilty before God, until they are justified by faith. For:

Romans 3

¹⁹ ...what things soever the law says, it says to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped; and all the world may become guilty before God.

²⁰ Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

²¹ But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

²² Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference:

²³ For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

²⁴ Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

²⁵ Whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of

sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

²⁶ To declare I say, at this time his righteousness; that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believes in Jesus.

²⁷ Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.

²⁸ Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

All this is of the moral law. But it was with the very deeds of the ceremonial law of sacrifices and offerings that men were justified by faith. Indeed, a man could be justified by faith without the deeds of the ceremonial law of sacrifices and offerings: because the deeds of the ceremonial law of sacrifices and offerings were the very expression of faith itself.

Hebrews 11

⁴ By faith Abel offered unto God a...sacrifice.

What was the faith worth that brought no sacrifice? Nothing. That was Cain's faith. The law, then, that brought men to Christ that they might be justified by faith, is a law, and must be a law, without the deeds of which men are justified by faith. And this is true and can be true only of the moral law.

One of the principle sources of misunderstanding of this text, lies in the taking of the word "schoolmaster" in the sense of our everyday word "school-teacher," and knowing that the ten commandments do not of themselves teach, instruct, or tell men about Christ and his work of salvation, while the ceremonial law of sacrifices and offerings does,—because in figure it was Christ,—it is concluded that this law which was the schoolmaster, must be, and can be, only the ceremonial law of sacrifices and offerings.

But the word translated schoolmaster does not signify a school-teacher. It signifies a schoolmaster, in the sense of a master as a disciplinarian: not a school-teacher, in the sense of

an instructor. It is true that the schoolmaster, the disciplinarian, might be, and sometimes was, also a school-teacher, an instructor, but that was only an incident. The original and primary thought of the word is that of master, as a disciplinarian, a watcher, a corrector.

Accordingly, the German of Luther translated it *Zuchtmeister*: "master of the house of correction." The Greek word corresponds to the Latin and Anglicized word "tutor." But even as connected with the idea of tutor, the thought of teacher only incidentally attaches; because the original and primary meaning of "tutor" is simply "a guardian; a watcher; a protector." A guardian may be indeed a teacher also, if he have the ability and faculty to be a teacher also, but that is not the original and primary thought in the word, it is only an incident.

The Greek word translated schoolmaster is *paidagogos* and signifies:

"a boy-ward;"

"a child-conductor;" or "child-guide;"

"the slave who went with a boy from home to school and back again, a kind of a tutor."

"Fabius is jeeringly called the *paidagogos* of Hannibal, because he always followed him about: generally a leader, demokratias, turannidos."

The thought that he was primarily a person apart from the teacher of the boy is emphasized in the word:

"*paidagogio*—the room in a schoolhouse in which the *paidagogoi* waited for their boy."

The *Century Dictionary* says:

"Among the Greeks and Romans the pedagogue was originally a slave who attended the younger children of

his master, and conducted them to school, to the theater, etc., combining, in many cases instruction with guardianship.”

If the thought intended to be conveyed in this verse were that of a school-teacher, the word would have to be not *paídagogos*, but *didaskalos*.

The law then here meant is not a law which in itself teaches of Christ; but that which conducts men as children to Christ that by him they may be taught. The law is not in itself the teacher, but that which watches, guards, corrects, and conducts men as untrained and unruly children to Christ as to the school where by him they shall be taught.

And the only law that can possibly fit the thought not only of the single word *paídagogos*, but also the whole context of which verses 24-25 are only the conclusion and consequence, is the moral law—the ten commandments. For

Galatians 4

²² ...the scripture has shut up all under sin;

Galatians 3

²³ ...we were kept under the law shut up UNTO THE FAITH.

²⁴ Wherefore [consequently] the law was our *paídagogos*—watcher, warden, guardian, corrector, and conductor—unto Christ, that [so that, in order that] we might be justified by faith.

²⁵ But after that faith is come we are no longer under a schoolmaster [no longer “kept under the law,” “shut up under sin”].

²⁶ For you are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

Two correspondents think that this is new doctrine, especially for and in the *Review and Herald*; but whatever and with whomsoever this may be new doctrine, there is one thing certain, and that is that for and in the *Review and Herald* it is not in any sense new.

Consider: The first number of the *Review and Herald* ever issued, was Vol. I, No. 1, in November, 1850—forty-nine and a half years ago. No. 5 of Vol. I was issued in January, 1851. In that No. 5 was the first notice of the third chapter of *Galatians* that was ever made in the *Review and Herald*. It is in an article by J.N. Andrews, on “The Perpetuity of the Law of God.” From that article we quote, just as there printed, enough to make perfectly plain to all now, the position that was held in and by the *Review* then:

Our faith may be expressed in a single sentence: God’s *law covers all time*, and under all dispensations it stands out before men as the rule of their lives, and the sum of their duty to God. The fall of man left “the work of the law” written in his heart though faintly indeed; then at Mt. Sinai it was written in tables of stone by the finger of God; then, under the new covenant, it is written in the hearts of God’s people, even as it was before the fall. We appeal to men of candor and reason. Are not these things so?

Galatians 3. The great doctrine of justification by faith having been lost sight of by the Galatian church, the apostle argues the point with them; and with great clearness shows that it is our only hope of salvation. Hence, the different covenants which God made with his people are here examined and contrasted. The covenant made with Abraham, which was based on the righteousness of faith, is first introduced. This covenant secured to himself, and to his seed, the inheritance of the earth. Rom. 4:13.... The question now arises. Why does the apostle say that the law could not disannul the promise made to Abraham? Is there anything in the law which is against the promise of God? No, verily. See verse 21. For the law of God, which embodies his requirements, and man’s duty, cannot be contrary to his own promise.

Why then is it said that if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise? We answer that God made perfect obedience to his law the condition on which he took Israel, the literal seed of Abraham, to be his people. Jer. 11:3, 4; Ex. 19:5-

8; 20. This covenant made the works of the law the condition on which they should receive the inheritance, instead of the righteousness of faith which was the condition of the promise made to Abraham. But it is plain that if the deeds of the law be made the ground of justification, then is justification by faith made void. And as it is evident that fallen, guilty man cannot be justified by a law which already condemns him, he could then have no hope of salvation...

Why, then, it may be asked, did God give to Israel a covenant which recognized perfect obedience as its only condition? We reply, He did it that he might exclude all appearance of heirship from the natural seed except such as should walk in the faith of their father Abraham. Hear the apostle:

“For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the Scriptures has concluded all under sin that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ *might be given to them that believe.*” Such are the only heirs.

That article on “The Perpetuity of the Law of God” was concluded in No. 6 of Vol. I, and in this Elder Andrews took up the very verses that stand at the head of this present *Study in Galatians*, as follows:

Gal. 3:23-26...How is the law a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ? Answer: The law shows our guilt and just condemnation, and that we are lost without a Saviour. Read Paul’s account of this school in Rom. 7:7-25. “By the law is the knowledge of sin.” Rom. 3:20. “I had not known sin, but by the law.” Rom. 7:7. Then the instruction of the law is absolutely necessary, that we may know ourselves to be sinners in the sight of God. We find ourselves sinners by past offenses, and unable to render present obedience. The just penalty of the law hangs over our heads; we find ourselves lost, and fly to Jesus Christ for refuge.

The same thoughts were published again in Vol. II, No. 4, Sept. 16, 1851; and in Vol. III, No. 7, Aug. 5, 1852; so that it plainly stands as the original doctrine of the *Review and Her-*

ald as to the law of God in *Galatians* 3.

And that it was sound doctrine then, and is sound doctrine now, it is certain from the fact that in the *Review and Herald* of April 5, 1898, in the first-page article, under the title of “The Perfect Law,” the Spirit of Prophecy speaks as follows:

The law of God, as presented in the Scriptures, is broad in its requirements. Every principle is holy, just, and good. The law lays men under obligation to God; it reaches to the thought and feelings; and it will produce conviction of sin in every one who is sensible of having transgressed its requirements...

In his teachings, Christ showed how far-reaching are the principles of the law spoken from Sinai. He made a living application of that law whose principles remain forever the great standard of righteousness.

Paul’s testimony of the law is: “What shall we say then? Is the law sin [the sin is in the man, not in the law]? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, You shall not covet...Wherefore the law is holy, the commandment holy, and just, and good.”...

There is no safety nor repose nor justification in transgression of the law. Man cannot hope to stand innocent before God, and at peace with him through the merits of Christ, while he continues to sin. He must cease to transgress, and become loyal and true. As the sinner looks into the great moral looking-glass, he sees his defects of character. He sees himself just as he is, spotted, defiled, and condemned. But he knows that the law cannot in any way remove the guilt, or pardon the transgressor. He must go farther than this. The law is but the schoolmaster to bring him to Christ. He must look to his sin-bearing Saviour. And as Christ is revealed to him upon the cross of Calvary, dying beneath the weight of the sins of the whole world, the Holy Spirit shows him the attitude of God to all who repent of their transgressions. “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have

ever-lasting life.”

And all this is—not the law in *Galatians*, but—the gospel in *Galatians*—justification, righteousness by faith,—the Third Angel’s Message.

39. Baptized into Christ


Galatians 3

²⁷ For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

²⁹ And if you be Christ's, then are you Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

3:27 – For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

he Greek word here translated “put on,” expresses the thought of putting on of clothes: “to be clothed in: have on to wear.” It well expresses the thought of baptism, as expressed elsewhere: of being buried, lost sight of; baptism being a burial in the water, so that the person baptized is overwhelmed, lost sight of, and shut away from the sight of the world.

Baptism in water is but the form in which is expressed the fact that the individual is buried, overwhelmed, clothed, and lost sight of, in Christ; so that instead of the old man being seen in the world and by the world, it is only Christ that is seen in the baptized individual.

The thought of this verse is expressed in another place:

Colossians 2

⁶ As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk you in him.

As you have put on Christ, and so are clothed in Christ, so wear him as your clothing, that you yourself may be hidden, and only Christ appear.

This is the truth expressed in baptism. Oh, that this truth

were indeed always expressed in baptism. How many realize that baptism in the water is not itself the true baptism; but is only the outward expression of that which is the true baptism?

For though a person be baptized, buried, overwhelmed, and lost sight of in the water—if that be all, then it is but nothing. For baptism consists not in the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God. *1 Peter* 3:21. And a good conscience is found only in “the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God.” *Hebrews* 9:14.

When each soul, to be baptized in the water has already been, by faith, overwhelmed, clothed, and lost sight of, in Christ, and the baptism in the water is the expression of his faith which has clothed him indeed in Christ, then baptism will not only bear to Christians its true meaning, but will also bear to the world its true meaning.

3:28 – There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Among those who are Christians, there are neither racial, tribal, national, nor any other distinctions, for all are one in Christ Jesus. And, whoever among those professing to be Christians, there are seen any distinctions of any kind, by that very fact it is therein declared that among them Christ is not truly apprehended.

Accordingly, the *Revised Version* brings out this very thought, that among those who have been baptized into Christ, and so have put on Christ, “there can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female,” for all are one, and that one is only Christ.

The thought is that, when the man has died, and has been

buried—baptized—into Christ: overwhelmed, lost sight of, in Christ, he is forever taken away from himself, and is not himself anymore. If he was an American before, he is not an American now: he is a Christian. If he was a Scythian before, he is not a Scythian now: he is a Christian. If he was an African before, he is not an African now: he is a Christian. If he was a slave before, he is not a slave now: he is a Christian.

So that among those who are truly Christ's, who have put on Christ, and who are wearing Christ, all manner of racial, tribal, national, or whatsoever distinction, is utterly gone. There is no respect of persons with God, nor with those who are the children of God: it is only character that counts and that the character of Christ—the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ. And thus:

3:29 – And if you be Christ's, then are you Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

For the promise is only to Abraham, and to his seed, which is Christ. Accordingly, that promise, that inheritance, could not possibly fall to any person but to Christ. For,

Galatians 3

¹⁶ ...he says not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to your seed, which is Christ.

Then, whosoever shall not be found with Christ, so that Christ is the individual who is seen, can never be heir to the inheritance nor receive the promise.

And wherever among professed Christians there are divisions or dissensions, the promise of the inheritance is forfeited. Because the promise is not unto “seeds, as of many, but as of one. And to your seed, which is Christ:” and Christ is not divided. He is one, and only those who are one IN HIM, can possible receive the inheritance.

40. Heirs of God

Galatians 4

¹ Now I say, that the heir, as long as he is a child, differs nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.

² 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.

³ And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts crying, Abba, Father.

⁴ Wherefore you are no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.



As we have seen abundantly, to be under the law is to be under the dominion of sin. And such are all men of themselves, because

Romans 3

²³ ...all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God,

¹⁹ ...[and] what things soever the law says, it says to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped and all the world may become guilty before God.

Now, it is these people who are under sin, who are under the curse, who are condemned to death, because “the wages of sin is death;”—it was them whom God sent his Son to redeem. And in order to redeem them, it behoved him to be made in all things...

Hebrews 2

¹⁷ ...like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

Therefore, that he might meet men just where men are and be a complete Deliverer, he himself came to men where they

are, and was made like to men where they are. Therefore, he was even made to be sin. *2 Corinthians* 5:21.

He took the place of the transgressor: he became flesh, just as is the transgressor: he was made to be sin, just as the transgressor is sin: he bore the sins of men,

Isaiah 53

⁶ [for] the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

He took the condemnation, because the sins of the transgressor were imputed to him. And, as to the transgressor himself, the consciousness of sin is accompanied with the consciousness of guilt and condemnation; so when these sins were imputed to him who knew no sin, it was the sin indeed, with its accompanying sense of guilt and condemnation.

He bore the curse, for sin brings the curse; and he bore the curse even unto death, because sin brings the curse even unto death. Thus,

Galatians 3

¹³ Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.

Thus he redeems them that are under the law. All the penalty, all the curse, all the wrath, all the condemnation, that the law can work upon the transgressor met upon him. And, in the divine sacrifice which he thus made, there was rendered all that the law can ever demand of the transgressor. So that everything that can possibly stand between the transgressor and God is swept away in the sacrifice of Christ.

In this, God has reconciled the world unto himself so completely that he cannot impute their trespasses unto them (*2 Corinthians* 5:19); and thus is extended freedom—absolute freedom—to every soul in the wide world. And every soul can have it, to the full and to all eternity, merely by accepting it. And, in accepting this redemption from under the law, every

soul receives “the adoption of sons;” for,

John 1

¹² ...as many as received him, to them gave he power [margin: “the right, or privilege”] to become the sons of God [“children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.” *Galatians* 3:26].

And then, being sons of God:

Galatians 4

⁶ Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

⁷ Wherefore you are no more a servant, but a son; and if a son then an heir of God through Christ.

Before this deliverance, we...

Galatians 4

³ ...were in bondage under the elements of the world.

The only elements of the world that there are, are the elements of sin; for:

1 John 2

¹⁶ All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

But, when delivered into the glorious liberty of the sons of God, we...

Romans 8

¹⁵ ...have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but...have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

¹⁶ The Spirit itself [bearing] witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God;

¹⁷ And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.

“Joint heirs with Christ.” That is, all that he had falls also to each one of the other sons. The inheritance is not divided up in equal shares among all the sons, as if they were equal heirs.

No; all the inheritance belongs to each one of the sons, because they are joint heirs. This because God has no favorites among his sons; but all that belongs to any one, belongs equally to every other one.

Accordingly, all that falls to Christ the Son and heir falls also to each and every other son and heir. And this wonderful truth Jesus wants the world to know; for, in his great prayer for us all, he prayed,

John 17

²³ That the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them, as you have loved me.

And, this wonderful fact: that God has no favorite nor preference among his sons, but that all are equal, and, therefore, that each redeemed soul is, in his estimation, equal to Jesus, and takes his stand on a plane, and in the reward, equal in all things to Christ: it is this wonderful fact that caused John, in beholding it, to exclaim:

1 John 3

¹ Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God...

² Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

41. From the Spirit to the Flesh

Galatians 4

⁸ Howbeit then, when you knew not God, you did service unto [“were in bondage to,” R.V. and Greek] them which by nature are no gods.

⁹ But now, after that you have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn you again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto you desire again to be in bondage?

¹⁰ You observe days, and months, and times, and years.

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

THE Galatians, having been Gentiles, knew not God, and, accordingly, were in bondage to them which by nature were no gods at all. To them the gospel had been preached. They had believed the gospel, and so were delivered from bondage, and had received the adoption of sons of God, and were, therefore, no more bondmen, but sons; and, being sons, were heirs of God, through Christ.

But the Pharisees which believed, knowing nothing of true faith and freedom which Christ gives, had come among the Galatians, with their perverted gospel, which was not the gospel at all, had confused them, and turned them from faith to works; from the Spirit to the flesh, as the means of justification, and the hope of salvation. *Galatians 3:1-3*

This is certain from the very words of the text, in the inquiry:

⁹ But now, after you have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn you again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto. you desire again to be in bondage?

The apostle had just stated that before they knew God, they were in bondage unto them which by nature are no gods, and now, having been turned from God, they turned AGAIN to

those things, and AGAIN to that bondage. And, as seen in the former lesson, these elements whereunto they were formerly in bondage, and to which they were now AGAIN in bondage, were “the elements of the world,” and the only elements of the world are “the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life,” the works of the flesh—in a word—are only sin.

Among these things in which they had formerly done service unto them which by nature are no gods, were the observances of certain days, and months, and times, and years, to the very things of the heathen which the Lord, even in ancient times had condemned, as it is written:

Deuteronomy 18

⁹ When you are come into the land which the Lord your God gives you, you shall not learn to do after the abominations of those nations.

¹⁰ There shall not be found among you any one that makes his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that uses divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch,

¹¹ Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer.

¹² For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord, and because of these abominations the Lord your God drives them out from before you.

¹³ You shall be perfect; [margin: “upright, or sincere”] with the Lord your God.

¹⁴ For these nations, which you shall possess, hearkened unto observers of times, and unto diviners; but as for you, the Lord your God has not suffered you to do so.

In the Galatian backsliding some of these things had entered; for the text says:

Galatians 4

¹⁰ You observe days, and months, and times, and years.

Well enough, therefore, might Paul write:

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

The one great lesson in this particular phase of the experience of the Galatians, is that there is no power but that which is in the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ, that can save man from the evil that is naturally in him; there is no halfway ground between the way of the Spirit and the way of the flesh. Every man is either in the freedom of the Spirit and of the righteousness of God, or else in the bondage of the flesh and of sin.

42. Losing the Blessedness

Galatians 4

¹² Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am; for I am as you are: you have not injured me at all.

¹³ You know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first.

¹⁴ And my temptation which was in my flesh you despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus.

¹⁵ Where is then the blessedness you spoke of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, you would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me.

¹⁶ Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?

¹⁷ They zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that you might affect them.

¹⁸ But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you.

¹⁹ My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,

²⁰ I desire to be present with you, and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you.

Paul asks, “Where is then the blessedness you spoke of?”—not the blessedness you *speak* of; but past tense: “you spoke of.” It was a blessedness which they had had, and had lost; and so it was no more a blessedness which you speak of, but only which “you spoke of.”

This was the blessing of Abraham—the blessedness of justification by faith; for they had received the true gospel; they had believed in Christ, and thus they knew that Christ had redeemed them from the curse of the law, that the blessing of Abraham might come on them through Jesus Christ, and that they might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. All this they had experienced.

But, by the delusions of the false gospel of “the Pharisees which believed,” they had been “bewitched” and driven back from the purity of faith unto justification by works.

This is plain from Paul’s appeal, in the first verses of the third chapter:

Galatians 3

¹ O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ has been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

² This only would I learn of you, Received you the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

⁵ He therefore that ministers to you the Spirit, and works miracles among you, does he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

Romans 4

⁴ Now to him that works is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

⁵ But to him that works not but believes on him that justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

⁶ Even as David also describes the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputes righteousness without works,

⁷ Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.

⁸ Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.

This “blessedness” is the blessedness which the Galatians had known when they were Christians; but from which they had been drawn away. And now, it was only a memory: only a blessedness which they had spoken of, but which they could not, as a present thing, speak of. This, because faith, and all that is of faith, is only a living, present thing. Faith is the breath of the spiritual life; and when faith is gone, that spiritual life is gone. It must be constantly present, in constant, active motion, to avail for any soul.

This “the Pharisees which believed” did not know; for they

had not true faith: they knew not what it is to live by faith. They thought that justification by faith consisted in forgiveness and justification of the sins that are past; but that, being once thus justified, they must live by works. They thought that justification is obtained by faith, but is kept by works.

And into this delusion and loss of faith they had persuaded the Galatian Christians, but with the dreadful result of the loss of the blessedness of righteousness by faith, and their relapse into the darkness of heathenism—into the bondage of sin and the works of the flesh.

And that experience is illustrative of the everlasting truth,—and it is written for the instruction of all the people as to that everlasting truth,—that righteousness by faith, true justification by faith, is righteousness and justification by divine, ever-living, present faith, “and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.” *Ephesians* 2:8.

While the Galatians enjoyed this blessedness, its fruit appeared in the love which they showed to Paul. This love was the very self-sacrificing love of Christ—the abundant love of God shed abroad indeed in the heart, by the Spirit which they had received. Seeing the apostle in need of eyes, they would gladly have plucked out their own and given them to him, if such a thing could have been done.

But now, what a change! From that height of blessedness they are driven back into such a condition that he is obliged to appeal to them:

Galatians 4

¹⁶ Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?

And this is yet the mark of the Galatian, wherever he may be—the mark of the man professing Christianity, but who is not justified by faith, who has not the righteousness of God

which is by faith of Jesus Christ. Whoever tells him the truth, in that becomes his enemy, and is so counted by him.

This, because he does “not obey the truth:” he is not in the way of truth; he does not know the truth. Therefore, truth cannot be to him the sole standard and the supreme test: only himself in his own personal preferences and ambitions, and his own self-righteousness, can be the standard. And whoever tells him the truth, especially if it be unpleasant, is counted as making a personal attack on him, and is therefore counted only an enemy.

But the man who is the Christian, who is, indeed and in truth, justified by faith of Jesus Christ; who lives by the faith of Jesus Christ; who is righteous only by the faith of Christ, and the righteousness of God, which is by faith—such a one will always count as his friend, or his brother, the one who tells him the truth.

However far it may show him himself to be wrong, however directly he himself may be involved, yet he will thankfully receive the truth, whatever it may be, however it may come, and by whomsoever it may be told to him. This, because the truth is his whole and his only salvation. It is the truth which makes him free. The truth is the only way he has in which to walk. The love of the truth is his only incentive, the Spirit of truth, his only guide.

But, as we have seen, this blessed condition—this condition of “blessedness”—the Christians of Galatia had lost, and so had again become only Galatians, because they had lost true faith, and had been turned from faith to works as the way of life and salvation. And this loss of true faith was the loss of the Christ within; for he dwells in the heart by faith. *Ephesians* 3:17.

And because of their forlorn condition, which they did not

realize, Paul longed for them as a mother for her children; and, in the depth of his longing, expressed their deep need:

Galatians 4

¹⁹ My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you.

The Christ within is what they had lost. To the experience of Christ within they must be restored, or they were lost. And this is simply the gospel, which, in itself, is:

Colossians 1

²⁷ Christ in you the hope of glory.

43. The Two Covenants

Galatians 4

²¹ Tell me, you that desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law?

²² For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman.

²³ But he who was of the bond-woman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise.

²⁴ Which things are an allegory for *these are the two covenants*; the one from the mount Sinai, which genders to bondage, which is Agar.

²⁵ For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answers to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children.

²⁶ But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.

²⁷ For it is written, Rejoice, you barren that bore not; break forth and cry, you that travailed not: for the desolate has many more children than she which has a husband.

²⁸ Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.

²⁹ But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.

³⁰ Nevertheless what says the scripture? Cast out the bond-woman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman.

³¹ So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.

Then what are the two covenants? These two women; because since the covenant from mount Sinai is represented by Hagar, the other covenant is represented by Sarah. The *Revised Version* of verse 24 reads:

²⁴ For these women are two covenants.

These two women were the mothers of the two sons of Abraham. One son was by a bondwoman: the other was by a

free woman. Hagar was the bondwoman: Sarah was the free woman. The two sons of these two women represent the children of the two covenants.

“These are the two covenants.”

- It is then settled that the subject of the Two Covenants began in the family of Abraham.
- Whoever, therefore, would study the Two Covenants, must study these.
- Any study therefore, of the Two Covenants, that is not a study of these, is not truly a study of the Two Covenants.
- With these the subject of the Two Covenants begins, and whoever would study the Two Covenants must begin where the subject begins. Therefore this is where we shall begin the study of the Two Covenants.

The two covenants were in the family of Abraham. For “these women are two covenants.” *Galatians* 4:24, R.V. But how did the two covenants get into the family of Abraham, and one of these even the covenant from Mount Sinai?

In the Family of Abraham

Galatians 4

²⁴ ...for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which genders to bondage, which is Agar.

Since Hagar is one of the two covenants,—the one from Sinai, and the one which genders to bondage,—the story of Hagar in the family of Abraham is the story of the covenant from Sinai.

But God had made a covenant with Abraham himself, before ever Hagar was heard of. And this covenant was confirmed in Christ, before ever any mention was made of Hagar.

This covenant was the covenant of God’s promise to Abra-

ham and to his seed—not:

Galatians 3

¹⁶ ...seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to your seed, which is Christ.

This was the covenant of God's righteousness,—the righteousness of God which is by faith,—for when God had made promise to Abraham,

Genesis 15

⁶ [Abraham] believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

This promise was to Abraham, that in him should “all families of the earth be blessed” (*Genesis* 12:3), that to his seed would he give the land of promise, which is the world to come; and that his seed should be as the stars of heaven.

This seed, to whom the promise was made, being Christ, this covenant was made in Christ; and, when Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness, this covenant was confirmed in Christ. This is, therefore, the everlasting covenant, which answers to Jerusalem which is above; for, in that covenant, because of that promise, Abraham “looked for a city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” *Hebrews* 11:10.

All this came to Abraham when as yet he had no child; and the promise was to be accomplished in his seed. Several years had passed after the first mention by the Lord of Abraham's seed when as yet he had no child. Abraham was already old when the thought of his seed was first suggested, and was growing older without seeing any seed. Accordingly, he said:

Genesis 15

² Lord God, what will you give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?

³ And Abram said, Behold, to me You have given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is my heir.

⁴ And behold, the word of the Lord came unto him saying, This shall not be your heir, but he that shall come forth out of your own bowels shall be your heir.

⁵ And he brought him forth abroad and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if you be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall your seed be.

⁶ And he believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness.

⁷ And he said unto him, I am the Lord that brought you out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give you this land to inherit it.

And when Abram asked:

⁸ Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?

The Lord said:

⁹ Take me a heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon.

¹⁰ And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not.

Then it was that the Lord, by passing between those pieces, “made a covenant with Abraham,” a blood covenant, in which he pledged himself to the fulfillment of every promise that had yet been made to Abraham.

Here, then, was God’s own heavenly, everlasting covenant, made and confirmed with Abraham, with God’s own life pledged that everything promised should be accomplished, so that nothing promised could any more fail than that the Lord should cease to exist.

Unbelief Enters

But still the time passed, and no child was seen; for

Genesis 16

¹ Sarai Abram’s wife bare him no children [but] she had a handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar.

² And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the Lord has restrained me from bearing: I pray you, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her.

Thus Hagar comes upon the scene, and is brought into the story. But how was it that Hagar was brought into the story at all? Was it by trusting the promise of God? No. It was altogether because of distrust. Was it by faith? No. It was altogether because of unbelief.

This is confirmed by the fact that when this part of the program had all been carried through, it all had to be repudiated, and the promised seed had still to be expected by Sarah herself:

Hebrews 11

¹¹ Through faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.

This being so at the last, why was it, then, AT THE FIRST, that “Sarai Abram’s wife bare him no children”? It was simply because of her unbelief, and her not judging “him faithful who had promised.”

Then it was that, in this distrust of God, this unbelief, Sarai invented the scheme which brought in Hagar. And this scheme, springing from distrust of God, and unbelief in him, was altogether a scheme of the natural mind—an invention of the flesh—to fulfill the promise of God.

The important consideration in this scheme of Sarai’s, is that it was to fulfill the promise of God. The thought was not merely that the Lord had not fulfilled his promise; but that he had refused to fulfill it. For Sarai said plainly,

“Behold now, the Lord has restrained me from bearing.”

This straightly charged unfaithfulness on the part of the Lord. And since it was held that the Lord had failed to fulfill

his promise, it was naturally concluded that they were to fulfill it themselves, by an invention altogether of their own, springing from distrust and unbelief in God.

And even Abram swerved from his trust in God, from his faith in the Lord's promise. Abram fell in with this scheme of distrust and unbelief, this invention of the flesh.

Genesis 16

² ...Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai.

³ And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife.

⁴ And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived.

¹⁵ And Hagar bare Abram a son.

Galatians 4

²³ But he who was of the bondwoman was born after THE FLESH.

How could he be born of anything else? The whole scheme by which he was ever born at all, was altogether of the natural mind, in distrust and unbelief of God,—an invention of the flesh.

²⁴ Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which genders to bondage, which is Agar.

²⁵ For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia.

The covenant, therefore, for which Hagar stands,—the covenant from Mount Sinai,—is a covenant in which people, in distrust of God and unbelief of his promise, knowing only the natural man and the birth of the flesh, seek by their own inventions, and their own efforts, to attain to the righteousness of God, and to the inheritance which attaches to that righteousness.

But the righteousness of God, with the accompanying inheritance in all its fullness, is a free gift.

Hagar represents the covenant from Sinai. Hagar was a bondwoman, and an Egyptian. Her son, therefore, was a bond-son. He was a bond-son, by whatsoever means he might have been born: because his mother was a bondwoman.

As we have seen, the means by which Hagar's son was born was altogether out of distrust of God and of unbelief in his promise—was only a scheme of the flesh; and, therefore, “he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh.” But,

Romans 8 [margin]

⁷ The minding of the flesh, the carnal mind, is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

⁸ So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

Accordingly, the covenant for which Hagar stands—the covenant from Mount Sinai—is a covenant in which people, knowing only the natural man and the birth of the flesh, seek, by their own inventions and their own efforts, to attain to the righteousness of God, and to the inheritance which attaches to that righteousness.

This, because, as we have also seen, Sarai and Abram had the fullness of the promise of God, and of his righteousness, in God's covenant confirmed in Christ, before ever the scheme concerning Hagar was invented. And this scheme was invented, and could be invented, only by forsaking that promise and covenant. And to forsake that promise and covenant was to trust only in the flesh.

The Abrahamic Covenant Before Sinai

Did, then, the people at Sinai have any promise of God, or any covenant, in which they could trust, before they entered into the covenant of Sinai? They had. They had the Abrahamic covenant, exactly as had Abram and Sarai before they entered into the scheme which brought in Hagar.

Not simply did they have this covenant with Abraham, as a far-distant thing, bedimmed by the lapse of time between Abraham and them: but they had it repeated to them, directly by the Lord, and made with them, as with Abraham; and all this before they ever left Egypt at all. Read:

Exodus 6

² And God spoke unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the Lord:

³ And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Issac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them.

⁴ And I have also established my covenant with them, TO GIVE THEM THE LAND OF CANAAN, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers.

⁵ And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and I have REMEMBERED MY COVENANT.

⁶ Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments:

⁷ And I WILL TAKE YOU TO ME FOR A PEOPLE, and I WILL BE TO YOU A GOD, which brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians,

⁸ And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I DID SWEAR [margin: "lift up my hand,"] to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I WILL GIVE IT TO YOU FOR AN HERITAGE; I am the Lord.

Here was given to the children of Israel, in Egypt, all that was ever given to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. The same covenant precisely that was "made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac," and which was "confirmed" unto Jacob, was made with Israel, WHILE THEY WERE YET IN EGYPT, when God came down to deliver them from Egypt.

Unbelief Enters Again

How, then, could it come about that Israel must enter into a covenant at Sinai? Just as the scheme concerning Hagar had come about. How could another covenant be brought in at all? Just as Hagar was brought in—together because of distrust of God's covenant; together because of unbelief of the promise of God confirmed by his oath.

For if they had trusted the promises of God which he had made to them in Egypt, they would have had all that Abraham or any other person ever could have, they would have had the righteousness of God, his everlasting salvation, and the inheritance promised to Abraham: and this ALL IN CHRIST; for this is how Abraham had it.

True, they had sung the song of triumphant faith at the Red Sea, after crossing; and if they had continued in this faith, they would have continued in God's everlasting covenant which he gave them in Egypt: and there never would have been any covenant at Sinai.

But they did not continue in that faith; for, immediately afterward, when in their journey they came to Marah, they murmured against the Lord. And when the Lord had delivered them from their fears of that place, and they came into the Wilderness of Sin:

Exodus 16

² The whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured [again].

³ And the children of Israel said unto them [Moses and Aaron], Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots, and when we did eat bread to the full: for you have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger.

And when the Lord had delivered them from their fears that time, and they had left the Wilderness of Sin, and had

come to Rephidim, again they murmured, and said:

Exodus 17

³ Wherefore is this that you have brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?

⁴ And Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me.

All this shows confirmed distrust of God, and unbelief of him, on the part of Israel. And this distrust and unbelief hid from them the blessings and the power given to them in the covenant with Abraham, which God had given to them when they were in Egypt.

They could not trust God for the inheritance to which they were coming, not for the righteousness which alone would entitle them to that inheritance. This they thought that they themselves could earn. And, that they might see how far short of earning it they would come, the Lord gave to them the widest possible opportunity to try. Accordingly, he said:

Exodus 19

⁴ You have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself.

⁵ Now therefore, if you will obey my voice INDEED, and keep my covenant, THEN you shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people; for all the earth is mine;

⁶ And you shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. ["So shall you be my people, and I will be your God." *Jeremiah 11:4.*] These are the words which you shall speak unto the children of Israel.

⁷ And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the Lord commanded him.

⁸ And all the people answered together, and said, all that the Lord has spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord.

They had not yet heard his voice; but, when they did hear it, the ten commandments were spoken. And so they had

agreed to obey the ten commandments indeed. And, even after they had heard his voice in such majesty that they feared and “removed and stood afar off,” they declared:

Exodus 24

⁷ All that the Lord has said will we do, and be obedient.

But they corresponded to the child of Hagar the bond-woman, who “was born after the flesh.” They knew only the birth of the flesh; and so had only the mind of the flesh, which “is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be;” and they could no more obey that law “indeed” than Ishmael, the child of the flesh in the family of Abraham, could fulfill the promise to Abraham. In that condition they could no more keep God’s covenant than the scheme of Sarai in bringing in Hagar was the keeping of that covenant.

The Causes of the Old Covenant

How, then, could such a covenant ever be brought in? Why did they enter into such a covenant?

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 371-372:

They had no true conception of the holiness of God, of the exceeding sinfulness of their own hearts, their utter inability, IN THEMSELVES, to render obedience to God’s law, and their need of a Saviour. All this they must be taught....The people did not realize THE SINFULNESS OF THEIR OWN HEARTS, and that without Christ it was impossible for them to keep God’s law; AND THEY READILY ENTERED INTO COVENANT WITH GOD. Feeling that they were able to establish THEIR OWN RIGHTEOUSNESS, they declared, “All that the Lord has said will we do, and be obedient.”

They were already in the bondage of sin and self-righteousness; and in that bondage, with minds “not subject to the law of God,” and which indeed could not be, they promised to obey the law of God “indeed.” But in the condition in which they were, it was inevitable that they would break their prom-

ise: they simply could not keep their promise. It was not in them to do it. Thus, in that covenant, they were breakers of the law, and BREAKERS OF THEIR PROMISE not to break the law.

And this is all that they could be, in that covenant, or by virtue of anything in that covenant. Accordingly that covenant, AS HAGAR, gendered, and could gender, only to bondage. And this, all simply because of their distrust of God and their unbelief of his promise as revealed in the covenant with Abraham, which covenant was given to them directly, before they ever started from Egypt at all.

The Nature of Ishmael

Ishmael was the son of Abraham, born after the flesh. And what was his disposition? Before he was born the Lord described it:

Genesis 16

¹² He will be a wild man...

The *Revised Version* translates it: “He shall be as a wild ass among men.”

¹² ...his hand will be against every man, and every man’s hand against him.

Remember that this child of Hagar, this son that was born after the flesh, this “wild ass among men,” was the fruit of the invention of Sarai’s, which sprang from her distrust of God and unbelief of his promise to give a son.

Accordingly, bear in mind that this son was intended by Sarai to fulfill the promise of God. It was really intended, and even expected by Sarai, and even by Abraham, that this child of the flesh, this wild man, should be accepted by the Lord as the son whom he intended in his promise; and that the promises to Abraham should be fulfilled in him. This is certain, by the fact that, afterward, when the Lord told Abraham that he

would give him a son by Sarai, Abraham answered:

Genesis 17

¹⁸ O that Ishmael might live before You!

Now remember that Hagar, the mother of this “wild ass man,” represents the covenant from Sinai; and her son, who was born after the flesh,—this wild man,—represents the children of that covenant from Sinai.

And just as in the invention which brought forth Ishmael, it was intended that he should fulfill the promise of God, and that the Lord’s covenant with Abraham should be fulfilled through him, so these children of the covenant at Sinai, like Ishmael, born after the flesh, expected that they could fulfill the promise of God, and that the Lord’s covenant with Abraham should be accomplished in its fullness through them; that is, through the flesh.

But Abraham kept the commandments of God. The righteousness of God is an essential part of the covenant with Abraham; for, without it, no one can attain unto the inheritance given to Abraham in the covenant.

But how would Ishmael, born after the flesh, keep the commandments of God, when the minding of the flesh is only enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, and neither indeed can be? How could that wild ass man keep the commandments of God, with his hand against every man, when one of the two principles of the whole law of God is, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself”? *Leviticus* 19:18.

And this child of Hagar the bondwoman corresponds to the children of that covenant at Sinai, which genders to bondage. As Ishmael, they know only the birth of the flesh, and only “the minding of the flesh,” which is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, they covenanted to keep the law of God “indeed”!

But Ishmael was not the son intended by the Lord: he could not fulfill the promise of God, nor could the promise of God be fulfilled in him. So far as God's promise was concerned, and God's covenant with Abraham, Ishmael's birth was no more than as if he had never been born at all.

The Nature of Isaac

Accordingly, when Abraham said to the Lord:

Genesis 17 [RV]

¹⁸ O that Ishmael might live before You!

¹⁹ God said, Nay, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son; and you shall call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his seed after him.

²⁰ And as for Ishmael, I have heard you: behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation.

²¹ But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto you at this set time in the next year.

At this time Sarai had become a believer in God's promise, and trusted God alone, and the Lord had changed her name to Sarah. And so,

Hebrews 11

¹¹ Through faith Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed...

And according to the promise Isaac was born. Now what was Isaac's disposition? It is illustrated in his conduct at the time that Abraham and he supposed that he was to be offered as a sacrifice. He submitted, as a lamb, to be offered.

It is further illustrated in the record in *Genesis 26*: After Abraham had died, and Isaac was the heir of the covenant, he dwelt for a time in the land where the Philistines were.

Genesis 26 [RV]

¹⁵ Now all the wells which his father's servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped them, and filled them with earth.

¹⁶ And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us; for you are much mightier than we.

¹⁷ And Isaac departed thence, and encamped in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there.

¹⁸ And Isaac dug again the wells of water, which they had dug in the days of Abraham his father, for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham: and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them.

¹⁹ And Isaac's servants dug in the valley, and found there a well of springing water.

These wells were doubly Isaac's. Abraham had dug them, and they therefore belonged to Abraham. And when Isaac became heir of Abraham, these wells became his by inheritance. And now he had dug them again, which was the same as if he had dug them new. Thus they were doubly his. Yet by even more than this they were his, because the Philistines, when the wells were open, had filled them with earth, showing in the strongest possible way that they did not wish them at all.

Yet the Philistines come now to Isaac, and say of the wells which he had opened, and which, by such full right, were his:

²⁰ The water is ours.

Isaac let them have it. But what would Ishmael have done? And what would you do? Which of the "two sons" of Abraham are you? "These are the two covenants." Of which covenant are you?

Isaac "dug another well," and the Philistines "strove for that also." But Isaac, instead of striving with them for this, which was by such large right altogether his own, "removed from thence, and dug another well."

But what would Ishmael have done? And what would you do? Which of the “two sons” of Abraham are you? “These are the two covenants.” Of which covenant are you?

When Isaac had dug this last well, for it the Philistines...

²² ...strove not: and he called the name of it Rehoboth: and he said, For now the Lord has made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.

But how was it that the Lord made room for him? Simply by Isaac’s refusal to strive with the Philistines, by his yielding to them all that they claimed, even when it was his by every possible right. But could the Lord have ever “made room” for Ishmael and those Philistines? Does the Lord “make room” for you and the envious opposers? Which of the “two sons” of Abraham are you? “These are the two covenants.” Of which covenant are you?

Genesis 26

²³ And he went up from thence to Beer-sheba.

²⁴ And the Lord appeared unto him the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham your father; fear not, for I am with you, and will bless you, and multiply your seed for my servant Abraham’s sake.

²⁵ And he built an altar there, and called upon the name of the Lord, and pitched his tent there; and there Isaac’s servants dug a well.

²⁶ Then Abimelec went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath one of his friends, and Phicol the chief captain of his army.

²⁷ And Isaac said unto them, Wherefore come you to me, seeing you hate me, and have sent me away from you?

²⁸ And they said, We saw certainly that the Lord was with you...

²⁹ ...You are now the blessed of the Lord.

But it was only by Isaac’s continual yielding before them that they ever had any opportunity to see that the Lord was with him, and that he was the blessed of the Lord. But what

would Ishmael have done? And what would you do? What do you do? Which of the “two sons” of Abraham are you? “These are the two covenants.” Of which covenant are you?

Breaking Free from the Old Covenant

The scheme invented by Sarai, and agreed to by Abram, which brought forth Ishmael, the son of the bondwoman, who was born after the flesh, proved unsatisfactory to the whole company, from the first step taken toward carrying it out.

Genesis 16

³ And Sarai Abram’s wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife.

⁴ And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived: and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes.

And although, as the record says, Sarai was the first to propose this plan, and that “Sarai...took Hagar her maid the Egyptian,...and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife,” yet, as soon as she found herself despised by Hagar, and this because of the success of Sarai’s own plan, she turned in reproach upon Abram, and said:

⁵ My wrong be upon you: I have given my maid into your bosom; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes.

⁶ But Abram said unto Sarai, Behold, your maid is in your hand; do to her as it pleases you.

And Sarai dealt so “hardly with her” that Hagar ran away. And though the Lord told Hagar, “Return to your mistress, and submit yourself under her hands” (verse 9), it is evident that all was not peaceful and pleasant afterward.

Further, as we have seen, when, after Ishmael was born, Abram said to the Lord, “O that Ishmael might live before you!” he was not heard; but Ishmael was plainly set aside, and

Abram was told that Sarai his wife should bear him a son indeed, and that he should call his name Isaac;

Genesis 17

¹⁹ ...and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him.

Genesis 21

² Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him.

⁸ And the child grew, and was weaned: and Abraham made a great feast the same day that Isaac was weaned.

⁹ And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking.

¹⁰ Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac.

¹¹ And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son.

¹² And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in your sight because of the lad, and because of your bondwoman; in all that Sarah has said unto you, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall your seed be called.

But not yet was the record clear. Abraham had swerved from the clear promise of God, and had put dependence in the flesh; and not only must the bondwoman and her son be cast out, but every item of that whole scheme which had brought in the bondwoman and her son must be utterly renounced and abandoned. Accordingly, the Lord said to Abraham:

Genesis 22

² Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and get you into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell you of.

Isaac was the child of promise. There was no other promise of a child, there could be no other such promise; and there could be no other child without another promise. And now

for Abraham to offer Isaac for a burnt offering was, so far as could be seen, to take away all that had been promised.

But when Abraham had looked thus far, he looked yet further, even back to the original promise of God, and trusted and expected that when he should offer Isaac, God would certainly fulfill his promise by raising him from the dead—by bringing him back from the ashes when he should have been burned in sacrifice.

This call of the Lord, therefore, to Abraham to offer Isaac for a burnt offering, brought Abraham back to the night of the original promise, when God had said to him:

Genesis 15

⁵ Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if you be able to number them: and he said unto him. So shall your seed be.

⁶ And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

Thus Abraham was brought to depend upon and trust in the naked promise of God alone, for all that the promise contained. And if Abraham had stood there from the first and refused Sarai's suggestion with regard to Hagar, there would have been no such family trouble as came between Sarai and Hagar; Ishmael never would have been born; and Abraham would never have been called to offer Isaac.

Had he from the first "staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief" (*Romans 4:20*), but been strong in faith, giving glory to God, fully persuaded that what he had promised he was able also to perform, righteousness might have been imputed to him throughout.

Galatians 4

²⁴ These are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which genders to bondage, which is Agar.

The covenant at Sinai was the fruit of the flesh, of distrust and unbelief in God, just as was the plan that introduced Hagar and brought forth Ishmael. And just as Hagar and Ishmael, the bondwoman and her son, had to be cast out, and the whole scheme that brought them in had to be utterly repudiated, so the covenant from Mount Sinai had to be cast out, and all that brought it in had to be utterly repudiated.

As Abraham and Sarah had to cast out Hagar and Ishmael, and repudiate the whole scheme that had brought them in, and themselves come back to the original promise of God, to depend wholly upon that for all that was in it, so must the covenant from Sinai be cast out, and all that brought it in must be utterly repudiated by Israel and everybody else, and God's original covenant with Abraham be depended upon and trusted in, wholly and alone, for all that it promises. And so we read:

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 371-372:

In delivering them from Egypt, God sought to reveal to them his power and his mercy, that they might be led to love and trust him. He brought them down to the Red Sea—where, pursued by the Egyptians, escape seemed impossible—that they might realize their utter helplessness, their need of divine aid; and then he wrought deliverance for them. Thus they were filled with love and gratitude to God, and with confidence in his power to help them. He had bound them to himself, as their deliverer from temporal bondage.

But there was still greater truth to be impressed upon their minds. Living in the midst of idolatry and corruption, they had no true conception of the holiness of God; of the exceeding sinfulness of their own hearts; their utter inability, in themselves, to render obedience to God's law; and their need of a Saviour. All this they must be taught.

God brought them to Sinai; he manifested his glory; he gave them his law, with the promise of great blessings on condition of obedience:

“If you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant,

then...you shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.” Ex. 19:5, 6. The people did not realize the sinfulness of their own hearts, and that without Christ it was impossible for them to keep God’s law; and they readily entered into covenant with God. FEELING THAT THEY WERE ABLE TO ESTABLISH THEIR OWN RIGHTEOUSNESS, they declared, “All that the Lord has said will we do, and be obedient.” Ex. 24:7.

They had witnessed the proclamation of the law in awful majesty, and had trembled with terror before the mount; and yet only a few weeks passed before they broke their covenant with God, and bowed down to worship a graven image. They could not hope for the favor of God through a covenant which they had broken, and NOW, seeing their sinfulness and their need of pardon, they were brought to feel THEIR NEED OF THE SAVIOUR REVEALED IN THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT, and shadowed forth in the sacrificial offerings. NOW by faith and love they were bound to God as their deliverer from the bondage of sin. NOW they were prepared to appreciate the blessings of THE NEW COVENANT.

How the Covenant at Sinai was Formed

The covenant from Mount Sinai is the covenant that God made with the children of Israel when he took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt. That covenant was faulty.

Hebrews 8

⁷ For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.

That covenant was faulty in the promises: for the second covenant is “a better covenant” than that, in that it “was established upon better promises.” *Hebrews* 8:6. The fault in that covenant was primarily, in the people.

⁸ For finding fault with them, he said, Behold the days come, says the Lord when I will make a new covenant...

Therefore, since the fault of that covenant was in its promises, and the fault was primarily in the people themselves, it

follows that the promises upon which that covenant was established were primarily the promises of the people.

What, then, were these promises? They are in the covenant which was made with them when they came forth out of Egypt, and here is that covenant:

Exodus 19

⁴ You have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself.

⁵ Now therefore, if you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then you shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:

⁶ And you shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation...

⁸ And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord has spoken we will do.

In this agreement, all the people promised to obey the voice of the Lord. They had not yet heard what that voice would speak. But in the twentieth chapter, they heard that voice speaking the words of the ten commandments, to which, when the Lord had spoken, "he added no more." And when they had heard this, they solemnly renewed their promise:

Exodus 24

⁷ ...All that the Lord has said will we do, and be obedient.

That this is the covenant that the Lord made with them when he took them by the hand to bring them out of Egypt, is made certain by the following words:

Jeremiah 7

²² For I spoke not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices;

²³ But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, AND I will be your God, and you shall be my people: and walk you in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you.

And this certainly is confirmed in the following words:

Jeremiah 11

³ Thus says the Lord God of Israel: Cursed be the man that obeys not the words of this covenant,

⁴ Which I commanded your fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace, saying, Obey my voice, and do them, according to all which I command you; so shall you be my people, and I will be your God.

Note carefully each of these three statements of the covenant, and see how the promises lie. The first one runs, on the part of the Lord:

Exodus 19

⁵ IF you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, THEN...you shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation...

By this the Lord's promises could not come in until they had fulfilled their promises; for the covenant begins with an "if." "IF you will" do so and so, "THEN" so and so.

This is the arrangement also in the second statement:

Jeremiah 7

²³ Obey my voice AND I will be your God, AND you shall be my people.

According to this agreement, he was not to be their God, nor they his people, until they had done what they promised; until they had obeyed his voice, as they had promised.

The third statement stands the same:

Jeremiah 11

⁴ Obey my voice and do them, according to all which I command you: SO shall you be my people, and I will be your God.

This makes it perfectly plain, not only that none of the Lord's part could come in until they had done what they had

promised; but that the Lord's part was to come in BY THE DOING of what they had promised. "Obey my voice," "and do;" "SO [in this way, by this means] shall you be my people, and I will be your God."

Since, then, in this covenant the Lord's part, what the Lord could do, the Lord's promises, could come in only in the secondary way as a consequence of the people's doing what they had promised, it is perfectly plain that the covenant rested, was established, only upon the promises of the people.

What, then, were these promises of the people worth? What had they promised? They had promised to obey the voice of the Lord indeed. They had promised to obey his law,—to keep the ten commandments, indeed.

But what was their condition when they made these promises? It corresponded to the condition of Ishmael in the family of Abraham. They corresponded to Ishmael: they had been born only of the flesh, and knew only the birth of the flesh, and so had only the mind of the flesh. But,

Romans 8

⁷ ...the minding of the flesh is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

⁸ ...they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

This being their condition, what could be the worth of any promises that they might make to keep the ten commandments indeed? Any or all such promises could be worth simply nothing at all.

Accordingly, in that covenant, the people promised to do something that it was simply impossible for them to do. And since the Lord, with his promises, could not, in that covenant, come in until they had fulfilled their promises; until they had done what they agreed, it is certain that, for any practical purpose which the people discerned, or designed, that covenant

was worth nothing at all, because the promises upon which it rested were worth nothing at all.

In the nature of things that covenant could only gender to bondage; because the people upon whose promises it rested were themselves already subject to the bondage of the flesh, the bondage of sin; and instead of keeping the commandments of God indeed, they would break them.

And not only would they break the commandments, which they had promised not to break, but they would inevitably break the promises that they had made not to break the commandments. This simply because they were in a condition in which they were not subject to the law of God and could not be.

And this was demonstrated immediately. For, when Moses had gone up into the mount, to receive a copy of the law, which they had promised to “obey indeed,” he had been gone but forty days when they exclaimed:

Exodus 32

¹ Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.

And they made themselves a golden calf—the god of Egypt—and worshiped it, after the manner of Egypt; which shows that, in heart, they were still in Egyptian bondage, and were indeed as Ishmael, the son of Hagar the Egyptian, “born after the flesh.”

And though all this is written for the understanding of all people who should come afterward, and for our admonition “upon whom the ends of the world are come,” it is a singular fact that even today there are persons who, knowing only the birth of the flesh, not having been born again, not knowing the birth of the Spirit, yet will enter into exactly such a covenant; and will sign to it, to keep all the commandments of

God indeed.

But the trouble with these is just the trouble that was with the people at Sinai, as it is always the trouble with people at Sinai:

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 371-372:

They had no true conception of the holiness of God; of the exceeding sinfulness of their own hearts...Feeling that they were able to establish their own righteousness, THEY DECLARED: "All that the Lord has said will we do and be obedient."

The first covenant was faulty. It was faulty in the promises; because it rested primarily upon the promises of the people wherein the people promised something that it was impossible for them to do.

Why the Lord Permitted It

Why, then, were they allowed of the Lord to enter into such a covenant? Did he not know that the people could not do what they promised? To be sure, he did. But the people did not know it.

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 371-372:

Living [in Egypt] in the midst of idolatry and corruption, they had no true conception of the holiness of God; of the exceeding sinfulness of their own hearts; their utter inability, in themselves, to render obedience to God's law; and their need of a Saviour. ALL THIS THEY MUST BE TAUGHT.

God brought them to Sinai; he manifested his glory; he gave them his law, with the promise of great blessings on condition of obedience...The people did not realize the sinfulness of their own hearts, and that without Christ it was impossible for them to keep God's law; and they readily entered into covenant with God. Feeling that they were able to establish their own righteousness, they declared, "All that the Lord has said will we do, and be obedient."

Since the people did not know these essential things con-

cerning themselves;—"their utter inability, etc.;—since they would not believe God, so that they could know;—and since "all this they must be taught,"—the only sure means by which they could be caused to learn this which they did not know was to have them try, and fail; and so learn by experience that they could not of themselves establish their own righteousness as the righteousness of God. Then they would be willing to accept by faith God's righteousness, which is established by faith. This is all perfectly plain from the circumstances of the case.

As we have seen in a former study, before they left Egypt the Lord had said:

Exodus 6

⁷ I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and you shall know that I am the Lord your God...

Now is it not perfectly plain that if they had believed this, they would have known that He was already the Lord their God, nor would they have needed to enter into any bargain to get the Lord to be their God, and to make themselves his people.

If they had believed, by his own word, that he was already their God, and that so they were already his people, would they have needed to promise that they would keep his law "indeed" so that they might be his people, and he be their God? Plainly, no.

If they had believed that the Lord would "give" to them "for a heritage" the inheritance that he had sworn to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob (*Exodus* 6:8), could there ever have been found any place for a bargain into which they would enter, and according to which they would, by works, earn that inheritance? Plainly, no.

In other words: If they had received God, by faith, in these

things which he had promised to them before they left Egypt, would they have needed to undertake to win him to the in those things, by their own works? Plainly, no.

In other words: If they had known, and had been in, God's covenant with Abraham, the everlasting covenant, would they have ever needed to know, or to enter into, this other covenant at Sinai, which in substance was only their own, because it rested only on their promises? Plainly, no.

Following back the thought to its original in the parallel, in these verses in Galatians, the parallel question is: If Sarai and Abram had believed God's promise, and had held fast only to that, would Ishmael ever have found a place in the family of Abraham? Would two sons ever have been born to Abraham? Plainly, no.

Plainly, then, there never was any need of Abraham's having more than one son, the son that God had promised. Yet,

Galatians 4

²⁴ ...these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which genders to bondage, which is Agar.

And just as there was never any need of Abraham's having but one son,—the son that God had promised,—so there was no need for Israel ever to have but the one covenant—the covenant of God with Abraham—the everlasting covenant. Just as there was no need of those two sons, so there was no need of the two covenants.

And as, through unbelief and distrust of God, Hagar and Ishmael were brought in on the side; just so, through unbelief and distrust of God, the covenant at Sinai was brought in on the side.

And as Hagar and Ishmael never had any recognition at all in the promise that God made to give Abraham a son, just so the covenant at Sinai never had any recognition at all in God's

promise of salvation to mankind.

As Hagar and Ishmael had to be cast out, and all that had brought them in had to be utterly repudiated, in order that the son whom God had promised should have the place that belonged to him; just so the covenant at Sinai had to be cast out, and all that brought it in had to be utterly repudiated, on the part of the people, upon whose promises alone that covenant rested, in order that God's original covenant—the covenant with Abraham—the everlasting covenant—should have the place that belongs to it, in the life and salvation of men.

Yet, as the troubles and the failure of Sarai and Abram in the scheme that brought in Hagar and Ishmael, were instrumental in bringing them at last to the point where they did trust implicitly in the promise of God alone; so the trouble and the dismal failure that Israel experience in the first covenant brought them to the point where they appreciated, and implicitly trusted in, God's original covenant,—the covenant with Abraham,—his everlasting covenant,—which he had given them before they left Egypt at all.

For, as we have seen, Israel broke both the law of God and their covenant not to break it. And when Moses came down from the mount, having in his hands the table of the law that they had covenanted to obey “indeed,” and saw what they had done,

Exodus 32

¹⁹ ...he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount,

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 320:

...thus signifying that as they had broken their covenant with God, so God had broken his covenant with them.

They thus found themselves stranded, and utterly helpless, with all their resources utterly exhausted.

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 372:

They could not hope for the favor of God through a covenant which they had broken; and now, seeing their sinfulness and their need of pardon, they were brought to feel their need of the Saviour revealed in the Abrahamic covenant, and shadowed forth in the sacrificial offerings. Now they were prepared to appreciate the blessings of the new covenant.

Thus the covenant from Sinai brought them to the covenant with Abraham. The first brought them to the second covenant. The old covenant brought them to the new covenant. And thus the law, which was the basis of that covenant,—the broken law,—was the schoolmaster to bring them to Christ, that they might be justified by faith.

As Ishmael was born altogether of the flesh, without any promise of God, but from distrust and unbelief of the promise of God, so was the first covenant—the covenant from Sinai.

And as Isaac was born altogether of the promise of God, solely from dependence upon that promise, so is the new covenant—the everlasting covenant.

The first covenant rested upon the promises of the people, and depended solely upon the efforts of the people. The second covenant consists solely of the promise of God, and depends upon the power and work of God.

The first covenant runs: “If YE will” do so and so. The new covenant has neither “if” nor any of men’s doing, but is altogether the doing of the Lord. Look at them as they stand together:

The Old Covenant

Exodus 19

⁵ If you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then you shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:

⁶ ...and you shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation.

Jeremiah 7

²³ Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people.

Jeremiah 11

⁴ Obey my voice, and do them, according to all which I command you: SO shall you be my people, and I will be your God.

The New Covenant

Hebrews 8

¹⁰ ...I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people,

¹¹ And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.

¹² For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

Let us read the new covenant, beginning with an “If you will,” etc.:

“If you will put my laws into your minds, and write them in your hearts, then I will be your God, and you shall be my people.”

If the new covenant read thus, how many persons could ever become the Lord’s people? and of how many persons could He ever be the God? None at all; because no person can write the law of God in his heart; no person can put the law of God into his mind; for:

Romans 8

⁷ The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

Nothing short of the power of God alone, through the eter-

nal Spirit, can ever put the law of God in anybody's mind, or write it in his heart.

Taking the Place of God

Yet, to do just this, was practically what the people of Israel agreed to do at Sinai, in the old covenant. For they agreed to keep the law of God "indeed," which no person can do without that law being put into his mind, and written in his heart. They agreed to keep the law of God "indeed," SO that, in order that, they could be his people, and he be their God.

Their agreement, therefore, was plainly in effect that they themselves would put the law of God in their minds, and write it in their hearts; and this when, as yet, they knew only the birth of the flesh; when, as yet, they had only the carnal mind, which "is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

Thus it was by their own efforts that they were to be righteous; and by this righteousness they were to make themselves God's people, and win him to be their God. Thus that covenant was altogether one of works; of righteousness by works; of winning the favor of God by works; of salvation by works.

It was a covenant in which, because of their works, the reward was to be not reckoned of grace, but of debt. It was a covenant by which there was no such thing as the forgiveness of sins: it was of bondage, and gendered only to bondage.

And this is why that covenant is brought into this letter of instruction to the Galatians. The Galatians were seeking righteousness by works, by their own efforts. They were seeking to be "made perfect by the flesh." But whatsoever Christian seeks righteousness, or to be perfect, in that way, has fallen from grace. He has indeed forsaken grace; because:

Romans 4

⁴ To him that works is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

And,

Romans 11

⁶ ...if it be of works, then it is no more grace.

This was the position and the condition of “the Pharisees which believed,” who had led the Galatians astray. Into a system of righteousness by works, and of seeking to be made perfect by the flesh, the Pharisees that believed had turned everything that God had given them to save them from the bondage of self-righteousness and the works of the flesh; and they would even have perverted to that false system the very gospel of Christ itself.

Wholly of Grace

On the other hand, the new covenant is wholly of grace, and of the work of God by grace. It is a covenant in which the work is solely the work of God, and righteousness is the righteousness of God.

It is a covenant in which every one who shares it is born of the Spirit, and who thus receives a new mind and a new heart, in which mind the law of God is put, and upon which heart that law is written by the Spirit of the living God.

It is a covenant in which, by the creative power of the promise of God, each one who submits to that promise is created a child of God.

Ephesians 2

¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them.

It is a covenant in which, solely because of the mercy of God, and by his promise, there is obtained forgiveness of sins,

full and free: the sins and iniquities to be remembered no more forever.

It is a covenant by which indeed forgiveness must be found for the sins of the people even under the first covenant. For,

Hebrews 9

¹⁵ He [Christ] is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

Note, again, that in the new covenant there is no mention of any doing on the part of the people. The doing is all of God:

Hebrews 8

¹⁰ ...I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts...I will be to them a God.

¹² I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

In the new covenant it is God who is the worker.

Philippians 2

¹³ For it is God which works in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

It is “through the blood of the everlasting covenant,” that “the God of peace” makes “you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight through Jesus Christ,” who is the “surety” of this “better testament.” *Hebrews* 13:20-21; 7:22.

The only way in which the people come into this covenant is passively: the must submit themselves unto the righteousness of God. *Romans* 10:3. They “yield” themselves unto God and their “members as instruments of righteousness unto God.” *Romans* 6:13.

Thus, whoever is partaker of this covenant in any way whatever, is partaker of it wholly by the promise of God; and

so becomes, “as Isaac was,” a child of promise.

There is no other way to be a partaker of the new covenant than by the promise of God: for there is nothing in the covenant but the naked promises of God. There is no way to be a child of God, but by the promise of God: that promise accepted by faith. Our sins are forgiven, our unrighteousness is pardoned, because God says it, and by the word of that promise we know it.

He who accepts and depends only on the promise of God is of the people of God because God has said it. God is his God, because God has said it. The law of God is in his mind, and is written upon his heart, because God has promised that he will put it in his mind and write it on his heart; and he has submitted himself to God to have it done by God.

And having so submitted himself to the righteousness of God, he rests securely in the promise of God in Christ, who is the mediator and the surety of the new covenant.

John 6

²⁹ This is the work of God, that you believe on him whom he has sent.

Broken Promises

The old covenant consisted, and ever consists, of the promises and the works, of the righteousness, of people who know only the birth and the mind of the flesh. The new covenant consists forever of the promises and the works of righteousness of God in those who know the birth of the Spirit by the promise of God.

The first covenant depended upon the promises of a people, who knew only the birth of the flesh. These promises were that they would keep the ten commandments “indeed.” But, knowing only the birth of the flesh, they were, at the time, transgressors of the law of God, and so were in bondage to

sin. And knowing only the birth of the flesh, and having only the mind of the flesh, their promise to obey the law of God “indeed,” was worthless, because “the minding of the flesh is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.”

If they had made no promise at all to obey the law, they would have broken it; because they knew only the birth of the flesh, and “they that are in the flesh cannot please God.” Therefore, without any promise to keep the law, without the new birth, they would have continued in the bondage of sin.

And when they promised to keep the law “indeed,” and then broke their promise (which, having only the mind of the flesh, it was inevitable that they would do), this brought them only yet deeper into bondage, because to “vow a vow unto the Lord,” and then “slack to pay it,” is “sin in you.” *Deuteronomy* 23:21.

Therefore, that covenant being entered into by those who were already in bondage, and being a covenant which, by its terms, gendered to bondage, it was only a covenant of bondage—a covenant in which their very efforts to deliver themselves from the bondage in which they already were, brought them only deeper into bondage, the bondage of sin, the bondage of their own works and broken promises, which were only sin.

Consequently, all that was seen, or could be seen, in the first covenant was, and is, the broken law. And that this should be forever so plain that no one could fail to see it, when Moses came down from the mount and saw their idolatry, he, having the tables of the law of God in his hands,

Exodus 32

¹⁹ ...cast the tables out of his hands, and broke them beneath the mount.

They were at first breakers of the law. They promised never-more to break the law. They again broke both the law and their promise not to break it.

And when, therefore, because of this, Moses cast out of his hands the tables of the law of God, and broke them, this was to give to them, and to all people forever, a divine object lesson, that in the first covenant, in all their efforts at self-righteousness, and in all their promises not to break the law, no one can ever see anything but THE BROKEN LAW.

Their Need of a Saviour

But, there was then and there present the Abrahamic covenant, the covenant of faith, God's everlasting covenant, to deliver them from the bondage and the yoke of bondage that was upon them because of the covenant of works, of unbelief, into which they had entered.

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 371:

They could not hope for the favor of God through a covenant which they had broken;

Through a covenant in which nothing could be seen but the broken law of God.

And now, seeing their sinfulness and their need of pardon, they were brought to feel their need of the Saviour, revealed in the Abrahamic covenant and shadowed forth in the sacrificial offerings.

It was the covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob which Moses pleaded to God, for mercy to the people worshipping the golden calf at the foot of the mount, while he was yet in the mount, before he had come down the first time.

Notice: in *Exodus* 32:1-6 is given the account of the people's making the golden calf and worshipping it.

Exodus 32

⁷ The Lord said unto Moses, Go, get down; for your people,

which you brought out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves: they have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them; they have made them a molten calf, and have worshiped it....

¹⁰ Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them.

¹¹ And Moses besought the Lord his God, and said, Lord, why doth your wrath wax hot against your people which you halt brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand?

¹² ...Turn from your fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against your people.

¹³ Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, to whom you swore by your own self, and said unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it forever.

¹⁴ And the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people.

Thus it was the Abrahamic covenant, God's everlasting covenant, that saved the people from the bondage and the curse of their sins, is the first covenant. And so it is ever. *Hebrews* 9:15.

Then Moses came down from the mount, with the tables of the law in his hands, and cast out of his hands the tables of the law, and broke them, thus "signifying that as they had broken their covenant with God, so God had broken his covenant with them;"¹⁴ and signifying that in that covenant there was nothing to be seen but the broken law; and that they "could not hope for the favor of God through a covenant which they had broken."¹⁵ And,

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 373:

Now, seeing their sinfulness and their need of pardon, they

¹⁴ *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 320.

¹⁵ *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 372.

were brought to feel their need of the Saviour revealed in the Abrahamic covenant, and shadowed forth in the sacrificial offerings. Now by faith and love they were bound to God as their deliverer from the bondage of sin. Now they were prepared to appreciate the blessings of the new covenant.

Thus the covenant from Sinai brought them to the covenant with Abraham. The first covenant brought them to the second covenant. The old covenant brought them to the new covenant. And thus the law, which was the basis of that covenant,—the broken law,—was the schoolmaster to bring them to Christ, that they might be justified by faith.

Thus,

Exodus 31

¹ The Lord said unto Moses, Hew two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which you broke.

The Sacrificial Service

And, says Moses,

Deuteronomy 10

³ I made an ark of shittim wood, and hewed two tables of stone like unto the first, and went up into the mount, having the two tables in my hand.

⁴ And he wrote on the tables, according to the first writing, the ten commandments, which the Lord spoke unto you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly: and the Lord gave them unto me.

⁵ And I turned myself and came down from the mount, and put the tables in the ark which I had made; and there they be, as the Lord commanded me.

There was then established among the people the sanctuary service, with “the Saviour shadowed forth in the sacrificial offerings;”¹⁶ and with Christ, “the Mediator of the new covenant” (*Hebrews* 12:24), the “one Mediator between God

¹⁶ *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 372.

and men" (1 Timothy 2:5), represented in the high priest in his ministration in the sanctuary.

To that sanctuary they brought, in penitence and faith, their offering, and confessed their sin. The blood of their offering was taken by the high priest into the sanctuary, atonement was made for them, and the sin was forgiven.

And in the great day of atonement the blood of the offering for all the people was sprinkled upon the mercy-seat, and before the mercy seat, which was upon the top of the ark, over the tables of the law.

Thus between the sinner and the law there was always the sacrifice, representing Christ (and which, in his faith, was Christ, the Surety of the "better testament"), by which was brought to the sinner the forgiveness of sins, and the righteousness of God, which satisfied all the demands of the law. And thus, through faith in Christ, in this covenant in which Christ is Mediator, and of which he is the Surety, there is seen only the unbroken law.

Such was, and is, the true meaning of the new order of things at Sinai, after the breaking of the table, and after the complete nullification of the first covenant. It was the way of faith, the way of the "righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe." *Romans* 3:22.

But, behold, in their unbelief Israel afterward turned all this into a system of works, precisely as was the first covenant. And those sacrifices and offerings, and the ceremonies connected therewith, were given by the Lord to be altogether the expression of faith.

But Israel, in their unbelief, missed all this, and made it only a system of works, of ceremonialism. Instead of righteousness coming by faith, and the sacrifices and offerings being but the

expression of the faith, they expected righteousness by means of the offering itself, and because of their good work in making the offering.

Thus it was in the time of Christ on earth, and in the time of Paul and the Galatians. Thus it was with “the Pharisees which believed,” who had confused the Galatians and driven them back from righteousness by faith to righteousness by works and ceremonialism. And, therefore, Paul could write, and did write,

Galatians 4

²² ...that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman.

²³ But he who was of the bond-woman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise.

²⁴ Which things are an allegory for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which genders to bondage, which is Agar.

²⁵ For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answers to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children.

Thus the very means that God had given to deliver them from the bondage of the old covenant they, through unbelief, had turned into a system of bondage, which corresponded exactly to that bondage of the old covenant.

They had, indeed, perverted the new covenant as then expressed, into the very principle of the old covenant—righteousness by works. That which was the gospel as expressed in the sacrifices, offerings, and ministry of that time, they perverted to the bondage of righteousness by works, and ceremonialism, exactly as among the Galatians the “Pharisees which believed” were perverting the gospel as expressed in the sacrifice and ministry of Christ himself.

And just as Hagar and Ishmael were cast out, that God’s covenant with Abraham might be fully enjoyed; and just as

the covenant at Sinai had to be repudiated and cast out, that the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant, the new covenant, might be enjoyed; so when Christ came, and, by the sacrifice and offering of himself and by his own ministration, brought in the fullness of the gospel,—in order that this should be fully enjoyed, there must be repudiated and cast out that system of ceremonies and ceremonialism, that system of righteousness by works, into which Israel had perverted that which in its time was indeed the expression of the true gospel, of righteousness by faith.

Galatians 4

²⁵ ...Jerusalem which now is...is in bondage with her children.

³⁰ Nevertheless what says the scripture? Cast out the bond-woman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman.

²⁶ ...Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.

²⁸ Now, we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.

And thus was cast out forever the very principle of ceremonialism,—the very principle of the bondage of righteousness by works in whatever form it might present itself; and there was established in its place the principle of divine liberty in righteousness by faith.

Galatians 4

³¹ So then, brethren, we are not the children of the bond-woman, but of the free.

And because of this there is sounded to all people forever the blessed rallying cry,

Galatians 5

¹ Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

The old covenant, the covenant from Sinai, is summed up in

the word “SELF.” The new covenant, the everlasting covenant, is summed up in the word “CHRIST.”

The old covenant is self and his righteousness. The new covenant is Christ and the righteousness of God.

The old covenant is self and the bondage of sin and works of law. The new covenant is Christ and the liberty of righteousness which is by faith.

The old covenant—self—must be cast out, and utterly repudiated, that the new covenant—Christ—may have its proper place and may manifest its saving power, for the son of the bondwoman can never be heir with the son of the free.

44. Putting the Law Above Christ

Galatians 5

² Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if you be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.

³ For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.

⁴ Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; you are fallen from grace.

Through unbelief and distrust of the promise of God in his covenant with Abraham, the eyes of Sarah and Abraham were hidden from the truth and blessings of the Abrahamic covenant, God's everlasting covenant. Therefore, the real truth and spirit of that covenant they must be taught.

Through the disappointing experience of Sarah's scheme in bringing in Hagar and her son Ishmael, Sarah and Abraham were brought to sincerely trust in the promise of God by which they received the child of promise; and by which Abraham was enabled to see the day of Christ, and, in seeing it, to rejoice and be glad. *John 8:56*.

Through the darkness of Egypt, which was upon their minds and hearts,—the darkness of unbelief and self-righteousness,—Israel at Sinai could not discern the truth and blessings of the Abrahamic covenant.

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 371:

All this they must be taught.

By their experience in the covenant at Sinai, they were brought to the knowledge of themselves.

They had witnessed the proclamation of the law in awful majesty, and had trembled with terror before the mount; and yet only a few weeks passed before they broke their covenant with God, and bowed down to worship a graven image. They could not hope for the favor of God through a

covenant which they had broken; and now, seeing their sinfulness and their need of pardon, they were brought to feel their need of the Saviour revealed in the Abrahamic covenant and shadowed forth in the sacrificial offerings. Now by faith and love they were bound to God as their deliverer from the bondage of sin. Now they were prepared to appreciate the blessings of the new covenant.

Through the darkness of Egypt, which was upon their minds and hearts,—the darkness of unbelief and self-righteousness,—Israel before Calvary, and at Calvary, and “the Pharisees which believed” after Calvary, could not discern the Saviour revealed in the Abrahamic covenant and shadowed forth in the sacrificial offerings—the blessings of the new covenant. All this they must be taught.

And by Stephen, and especially by Paul; and by the church in council at Jerusalem, and especially by inspiration in the epistle to the Galatians, they were taught that there was not to be put upon the necks of Christians the yoke which neither their fathers nor themselves were able to bear; but that Christians are to stand fast in the freedom of the Abrahamic covenant,—God’s everlasting covenant,—“the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free.”

Therefore it is written:

Galatians 5

² Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if you be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.

It is the truth that Timothy was circumcised, and it is also the truth that Christ did profit Timothy unto the very fullness of the salvation of God. How, then, can it be true that “if you be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing,” and yet Timothy be both circumcised and profited by Christ?

The key to this problem lies in the purpose for which circumcision was employed. The Pharisees which believed, who

had confused the Galatians, and were making this contention against Paul,

Acts 15

¹ ...taught the brethren, and said, Except you be circumcised after the manner of Moses, you cannot be saved.

With them, then, circumcision was the means of salvation; and to be saved was the object in the circumcision. And how entirely salvation was made to depend upon circumcision is shown in the fact that this was said to persons who were already saved by the faith of Jesus Christ.

The Galatians had heard the gospel in its purity, preached by Paul. They had believed the gospel; and in that they had believed on the Lord Jesus, and had received him as their Saviour. Thus, they were already saved by faith in Christ; for by that they received the gospel, which is:

Romans 1

¹⁶ ...the power of God unto salvation [working salvation] to every one that believes.

And it was to these Christians who were already saved by Christ, through the faith of Christ,—to these it was that “the Pharisees which believed” had said,

Acts 15

¹ Except you be circumcised...you cannot be saved.

This was, therefore, nothing else than to put circumcision above Jesus Christ as the way of salvation. It was to set Christ aside as the Saviour, and to put circumcision in his place as the saviour.

Therefore it is perfectly plain, in itself, that whosoever was circumcised under that scheme and for that purpose, Christ would profit him nothing; because, in the very process, he set Christ aside for circumcision; he repudiated Christ as the Saviour, and took circumcision as his saviour.

And while that controversy was going on, as yet unsettled, Paul would not give countenance for a moment to any suggestion to circumcise Titus, or anybody else.

But when the controversy had been settled by the Holy Spirit, and the decree had been published by the Holy Spirit from the council at Jerusalem, that people are saved by Christ, without circumcision, and where there was no question of salvation in the circumcision that was performed,—then Paul circumcised Timothy, so that a wider door should be open to both Paul and Timothy in the preaching of the gospel without circumcision.

Now, with those “Pharisees which believed” circumcision was the badge, the seal, the very pinnacle of works, of self-righteousness, and of salvation by works of self-righteousness. And these works included the law,—all law, moral and ceremonial, which the Lord had given,—and the ceremonies which the Pharisees had heaped upon all that the Lord had given.

So that the scheme meant justification, salvation, by “law” and works of law, by ceremonialism, not by Christ and the faith of Christ. Therefore exactly as he wrote of circumcision, so now he writes of law:

Galatians 5

⁴ Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by law; you are fallen from grace.

The Greek is *nomos* law, in general: not *ho nomos*, the law, in particular.

In this controversy the question was not whether it is right or wrong to keep the law of God. The question is whether or not men are justified, saved, by works of law, whatever law it may be.

These people were already saved by Christ, and by faith in

him; and now, to those who were saved by Christ, and by faith alone in him, these “Pharisees which believed” insisted that these must be circumcised, and keep the law, in order to be saved.

This was putting the law, the keeping of the law, above Christ. It was, in fact, the setting aside of Christ as Saviour, and putting in his place as the Saviour their own works of law.

And therefore, plainly enough, in the very fact of so doing they were “fallen from grace.” For, for any one to turn from Christ, for any purpose whatever,—and, above all, for the purpose of being saved,—is most definitely to fall from grace.

And all this is true forever. Men are never saved by any of their own works in the keeping of any law. They are saved alone by Christ, and the faith of Christ: saved to the uttermost.

45. A Debtor to the Law

Galatians 5

³ For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.

It is curious that men, in considering this statement, have made it mark a distinction between two laws, and have made it exclude the law of God from the subject under consideration, by allowing to the word “debtor” only the sense of “obligation.”

They know, by the scripture, that it is the whole duty of man to fear God and keep his commandments. They know that there cannot be any other scripture to contradict that. They know that every man is under obligation to keep the whole law of God, whether he is circumcised or uncircumcised.

And, allowing that this term implies only obligation,—that if he is circumcised, he is under obligation to do the whole law,—they conclude that this must exclude the law of God: they conclude that it must be some law that no person is under any obligation to do unless he be circumcised; and that therefore the “whole law” here under consideration must be only the whole ceremonial law of sacrifices and offerings.

On the other hand, there are those who hold themselves under no obligation whatever to keep the law of God, who bring in this text to support them in their disobedience and opposition. They will have it that only those who are circumcised are under any obligation to keep the law of God, and that it was only by being circumcised that the obligation comes; and they know that they are not under any obligation to be circumcised. From this they argue that they are under no obligation to keep the ten commandments.

But both of these are wrong; both of them fail to see the thought that is in this verse. And the cause of this failure is in their allowing to the word “debtor” only the sense of “obligation.”

It is true that the word signifies “obligation.” But, in this place, and in every other place in its connection with men’s moral obligations, the word has a meaning so much broader and deeper than that of mere obligation that the sense of mere obligation becomes really secondary.

The word “debtor” in this verse—*Galatians* 5:3—signifies not only that a person is in debt, and under obligation to pay; but that, beyond this, he is overwhelmingly in debt, with nothing at all wherewith to pay.

If a man is debtor, and so under obligation, to pay one thousand dollars, and yet has abundance, or even only the ability to pay the one thousand dollars, that is easy enough.

But if a man is debtor, and so under obligation, to pay fourteen millions of dollars (\$14,000,000) and has not a single cent wherewith to pay, and is in prison besides, and has no ability whatever to make a cent wherewith to pay his debt, to that man the word “debtor” signifies a great deal more than mere “obligation to pay.”

And that is precisely the case here. That is the thought in this verse. That is the meaning embodied here in the word “debtor.” This is because the word “debtor,” when used in connection with morals, implies, and can imply, only sin: that the man is a sinner.

This word “debtor” in *Galatians* 5:3 is precisely the word that is used here:

Luke 13

⁴ Those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think you that they were sinners above all men

that dwelt in Jerusalem?

The word “sinners” in the text, is “debtors” in the margin. It is the word used in the Lord’s prayer:

Matthew 6

¹² Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors;

In Luke’s version of the prayer, it plainly expresses the thought of sin, in the words:

Luke 11

⁴ Forgive us our sins; for we also forgive everyone that is indebted to us.

It is the same word also that is used by the Saviour:

Luke 7

⁴¹ There was a certain creditor which had two debtors; the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.

⁴² And when they nothing [with which] to pay, he frankly forgave them both.

It is the same word also that is used in the parable in *Matthew* 18:23-35. Indeed, from the verse, *Luke* 13:4, where the word “sinners” is used in the text and “debtors” is in the margin, the reference is direct to this parable in *Matthew* 18.

That is the parable in which it is said that when a certain king “had begun to reckon” with his servants, “one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents,”—about fourteen million four hundred thousand dollars,—and he had nothing with which to pay. Then the lord “forgave the debt.”

But, when the servant found one of his fellow servants who owed him about fifteen dollars, he would not forgive him the debt, but cast him into prison until he should pay the fifteen dollars. Then the king called up his debtor...

Matthew 18

³⁴ ...and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all

that was due unto him.

³⁵ So likewise shall my Heavenly Father do also unto you, if you from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.

That thought of delivering the debtor to the tormentors until he should pay all that was due to his lord, belongs with the word; for “the use of the word involves the idea that the debtor is one that must expiate his guilt.” And “sin is called *hopheilema*, because it involves expiation and the payment of it as a debt, by punishment and satisfaction.”

From these scriptures the attentive reader can begin to see that in the words of *Galatians* 5:3, “he is debtor to do the whole law,”—there is far more suggested than that he is merely under obligation to accept the claims of the law upon him, and do his best to meet them.

All this shows that he is not only under obligation to recognize the binding claims of the law of God, but that he is actually debtor to render to that law all the claims that it has upon him.

And in this it is further shown that, of himself, he must everlastingly be debtor; because he has absolutely nothing wherewith to pay, and of himself has no means of acquiring anything with which to pay.

And this indebtedness lies not only in his obligation to do the law from this time forward; it also lies in obligation to make satisfaction for all that is past,—for all the accumulations of the past, up to the present time.

Accordingly, of himself, every man is everlastingly a debtor in all that is implied in this thought in *Galatians* 5:3, and the kindred texts that we have here cited; because...

Romans 3

²³ ...all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

And whosoever would be circumcised in order to be saved and thus seek to be saved by works of self-righteousness, thereby takes upon himself the obligation to pay to the law of God his whole debt, from the beginning of his life unto the end of it.

And in that, he also takes upon himself the obligation to expiate all the guilt attaching to his transgressions, and accumulated thereby.

That is what it is to be “debtor to do the whole law.” That is what is stated in the words:

Galatians 5

³ I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.

He is not only debtor; but, by that transaction, he himself voluntarily assumes of himself to discharge all that is involved in his indebtedness.

Now it is true that every man in the world is, of himself, that kind of a debtor. It is also true that any man today who seeks justification by his own works, even in the doing of the ten commandments, or of anything else that the Lord has commanded, does thereby assume, and bind himself to pay, all that is involved in the indebtedness. But he cannot pay. There is not with him the first element of any possibility, in himself, to pay any of the debt. He is overwhelmed and lost.

But, thanks be to God, whosoever has the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ, whosoever depends only on the Lord Jesus and that which Jesus has done, though he be of himself debtor just like any other man, yet, in Christ, he has wherewith abundantly to pay all the indebtedness.

Christ has expiated, by punishment and satisfaction, all the guilt of every soul; and by the righteousness of God which he brings, Christ supplies abundance of righteousness to pay all

the demands that the law may ever make in the life of him who believes in Jesus.

Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift of the unsearchable riches of Christ. Oh, believe it! Oh, receive it! Poor, overwhelmed, lost “debtor,”

Revelation 3

¹⁸ ...buy of me gold tried in the fire, that you may be rich; and white raiment, that you may be clothed.

Isaiah 55

¹ ...yea, come, buy...without money and without price.

46. Waiting for the Hope

Galatians 5

⁵ For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.

Notice, it is not that we wait for righteousness by faith. This is the free gift of God, always open to every soul in the world, and does not have to be waited on for a moment. Rather, it waits, in the longsuffering of God, for men to awake to receive it.

The word is, We “wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.” That is, righteousness by faith is the foundation of a “hope” not yet realized, but which is certain to be realized.

What, then, is this hope? It is the inheritance, which none can receive except they have eternal life. And none can have eternal life—the life of God—who have not eternal righteousness—the righteousness of God.

This hope was referred to by Paul in his answer before King Agrippa:

Acts 26

⁶ And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: unto which promises our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come.

⁷ For which hope’s sake, King Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews.

The promise made of God unto the fathers was the promise to Abraham, which embraces the world, even the world to come. As it is written:

Hebrews 11

⁹ By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the

heirs with him of the same promise:

¹⁰ For he looked for a city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

Paul said that it was for this “hope’s sake” that he was accused of the Jews, when he made his answer before King Agrippa. But before Paul was brought before Agrippa, he had also stood before Festus the governor; and before that, he had made answer before Felix the governor. And in his word before Felix, he said,

Acts 24

¹⁵ [I] have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.

But even before this, Paul had been obliged to stand before the Sanhedrin and answer; and there...

Acts 23

⁶ ...he cried out in the council, Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question.

Of the hope of the dead, and the resurrection of the dead; that is, even the dead have hope, if they be of the righteousness of faith; for it is written:

Proverbs 14

³² The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous has hope in his death.

Therefore again it is written:

1 Corinthians 15

¹⁹ If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

Not only in his life, but in his death, he who is in Christ has hope; and, being dead, his flesh rests in hope as did that of him in whom all the hope and promises of God are yea and amen.

The resurrection of the dead is an essential part of “the hope” which rests on righteousness by faith—this hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers. Indeed, the resurrection is the essential means of receiving “the hope.” For, though God promised to Abraham the land in which he sojourned, yet,

Acts 7

⁵ ...he gave him none inheritance in it, no not so much as to set his foot on: [though] he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet you had no child.

And even at that time, the Lord taught Abraham that it was through the resurrection of the dead that he was to receive the inheritance. For, in his call to the offering of Isaac, in whom was called the promised “seed,” he was brought to the point wherein he accounted...

Hebrews 11

¹⁹ ...that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.

It was through the seed only that Abraham was to receive the promised inheritance. And thus, in his receiving that seed “from the dead,” “in a figure,” upon his accounting that God was able to raise him up even from the dead, he was taught the resurrection of the dead.

There is another bright element that enters into this hope which is begotten by righteousness by faith. Without the coming of the Lord there can be no resurrection of the dead. For he said to his disciples:

John 13

³³ Wither I go, you cannot come.

John 14

¹ [But] let not your heart be troubled...

³ ...I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where

I am, there you may be also.

And so all the fathers...

Hebrews 11

³⁹ ...having obtained a good report through faith,...

¹³ ...died in faith, not having received the promises,...

⁴⁰ God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

Therefore,

1 Thessalonians 4

¹⁵ This we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

¹⁶ For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first;

¹⁷ Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Thus the second coming of the Lord is the crowning essential in “the hope of righteousness which is by faith.” We cannot have the inheritance without the righteousness of God, we cannot receive the inheritance without the resurrection of the dead.

And having the righteousness of God, and the hope of the resurrection of the dead, there cannot be the resurrection of the dead without the coming of the Lord in power and great glory.

Therefore, they who have the righteousness of God, which is by faith, are ever:

Titus 2

¹³ Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

And, so, it is the present truth forever that:

Galatians 5

⁵ ...we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.

47. Faith Which Works by Love

Galatians 5

⁶ For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision avails anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which works by love.

This is the climax of Paul's argument in answer to the "Pharisees which believed," who preached to those who were saved by faith of Jesus Christ, that "except you be circumcised and keep the law, you cannot be saved."

The force of it is more fully discerned when there is understood just what was claimed for circumcision, and what it represented to those who there preached it. By them it was held that:

"So great is circumcision that but for it the Holy One, blessed be he, would not have created the world;"

"But for circumcision, heaven and earth could not exist. It is as great as all the other commandments."

"How great is circumcision, since it is equivalent to ALL the commandments of the law!"¹⁷

Thus, in their estimation, he who was circumcised had, in that, all the keeping of all the commandments. How this emphasizes the weight of that sentence of Paul's:

Galatians 5

³ I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.

Instead of his having in circumcision all the keeping of the commandments, he had by that none of it at all; but was still in debt to do the whole law, with nothing at all wherewith to pay.

From the value which they gave to circumcision, it is easy

¹⁷ Farrar's *Life of Paul*," chap. 15, note to par. 4 from end; and chap. 22, note to par. 5.

to see how the “Pharisees which believed” could insist that persons who believed in Jesus, and so were saved by the faith of Jesus, must yet be circumcised in order to be saved. This was so, and was so easy, simply because to them circumcision was greater than was Jesus; and because to them, in every sense, circumcision stood exactly in the place that Christ in truth occupies.

Thus the question involved between Christianity and “the Pharisees which believed,” the question which was settled by the Holy Spirit, and which is made plain in *Galatians*, is:

“Are men saved by faith of Christ, or by something else? Is Christ the true Saviour, or is something else the saviour?”

Yet, in reality, though that was the question, it did not stand exactly that way. Notice: the people to whom came preaching the “Pharisees which believed,” were already believers in Jesus; and the “Pharisees which believed” did not say that men should not believe in Jesus. They admitted that it is proper to believe in Jesus. They themselves professed to believe in Jesus. But they insisted that the faith of Jesus is not enough to save: salvation must be by the faith of Jesus *and something else*.

Therefore the question in reality stood:

- Is Christ alone sufficient for salvation? or must salvation be by Christ and something else?
- Does faith in Christ alone, save the soul? or must salvation be by faith in Christ and something else?
- Is it by Christ alone? Or is it by Christ and circumcision?
- It is by Christ alone? or is it by Christ and penance?
- Is it by faith of Christ alone? or it is by faith and works?
- Is it by faith which comes from God as the gift of God, and therefore itself works the works of God? or is it by a so-called faith which springs from mere assent of the

mind, is thus “of yourselves,” and therefore must be supported by the works of the law in self and self-righteousness.

- Is it by faith which works? or is it by faith and works?

And to this question, in all the various and subtle ways of insinuating self in place of Christ, the divine answer stands full and complete forever, in the single mighty sentence,

Galatians 5

⁶ In Christ Jesus neither circumcision avails anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which works by love.

“In Christ Jesus”—that is, with whomsoever believes in Jesus—“neither circumcision avails anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith.”

“In Christ Jesus”—with whomsoever believes in Jesus—“neither circumcision avails anything nor uncircumcision,”—neither works, avails anything, nor no works,—“but faith WHICH WORKS.”

“In Christ Jesus”—with whomsoever believes in Jesus—“neither circumcision...nor uncircumcision”—neither keeping the commandments avails anything, nor not keeping the commandments; “but FAITH WHICH works by LOVE”—FAITH WHICH keeps the commandments of God; for “this is the LOVE of GOD, that we keep his commandments.” And he who has Christ, and is in Christ, has IN CHRIST all the keeping of all the commandments.

Even as it is written in another place in *Galatians*:

Galatians 6

¹⁵ In Christ Jesus neither circumcision avails anything, nor uncircumcision; but A NEW CREATURE.

And this, simply because,

2 Corinthians 5

¹⁷ If any man be in Christ he IS a new creature...

If he is not a new creature, his profession of being in Christ is only a profession, and is in vain. And as it is written yet again in another place:

1 Corinthians 7

¹⁹ Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing; but the keeping of the commandments of God [is something].

But this only when the man “is a new creature;” only when the keeping of the commandments is the result of faith, which is of God, and which therefore works the works of God; only when the keeping of the commandments is the effect, of which the sole cause is “faith WHICH works BY LOVE”—faith which is of God and works by the love of God, which love in itself is expressed and can be expressed only in the keeping of the commandments of God, and which therefore is the keeping of the commandments of God; all of which is because of Christ within,—“Christ IN YOU the hope of glory,”—by whose obedience alone every believer in Jesus is made righteous.

48. The Liberty of the Gospel

Galatians 5

⁷ You did run well; who did hinder you that you should not obey the truth?

⁸ This persuasion comes not of him that calls you.

Verse 8 here ought to make plain to all who is the one, in chapter 1, verse 6, that called them into the grace of Christ. Some are inclined to hold that Paul refers to himself in that scripture, in the words,

Galatians 1

⁶ I marvel that you are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel.

They think that Paul is marveling that the Galatians should be so soon removed from himself, because they think that Paul was the one who called the Galatians into the grace of Christ.

But this is a mistake. Paul did not draw men to himself: and this for the simple reason that he did not preach himself. He preached Christ—Christ and him crucified, and Christ crucified in every place where Paul preached.

Consequently, men saw Christ instead of Paul—Christ with themselves, just where they were. And Christ, being thus lifted up in person, drew men to himself. And since, even in that, it is forever true that no man can come to Christ except the Father draw him, it is evident that in this work of the grace of Christ it is God who called these people into the grace of Christ.

And when men come to them, preaching another gospel, which was not another, but was a perversion of the gospel of Christ, as many as trusted in that false gospel were, by that, removed, not from Paul, but from Christ, who had drawn

them to himself; and from God, who had called them into the grace of Christ, which drew them to himself.

And thus verse 8 of the present study—"This persuasion comes not of him that calls you"—shows that it could not refer to Paul, because he had not been near to them, so that the persuasion could be an alternative between them and the others.

But God was present with them, with his persuasion and his calling, so that whatever persuasion and calling were against that gospel which they had at first heard, could not possibly come from him who had called them, who was God.

Galatians 5

⁹ A little leaven leavens the whole lump.

¹⁰ I have confidence in you through the Lord, that you will be none otherwise minded: but he that troubles you shall bear his judgment, whomsoever he be.

¹¹ And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? Then is the offense of the cross ceased.

¹² I would they were even cut off which trouble you.

As we saw in the last chapter, if he had preached circumcision, it would have been but to put circumcision in the place of Christ; and that, in itself, would have been to reject the grace of Christ, Christ and him crucified; and so the offense of the cross would have ceased, and the persecution with it, in the preaching of circumcision.

¹³ For, brethren, you have been called unto liberty; only use not the liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

¹⁴ For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

Every soul, in being called unto Christ, is called to liberty; and every soul who receives Christ is delivered from bondage, into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. Jesus Christ came

into the world only to set men free, and to plant in their souls the genuine principle of liberty.

And this liberty with which Christ made men free is liberty actuated only by love.

- It is a liberty too honorable to allow itself to be used as an occasion to the flesh, or as a cloak of maliciousness.
- It is a liberty led by a conscience enlightened by the Spirit of God.
- It is a liberty in which he who has it, is made free from all men, yet it makes him who receives it so gentle by love that he willingly becomes the servant of all, in order to bring them to the enjoyment that same liberty.

This is freedom indeed: this is the freedom which Christ gives to whomsoever believes in him: for,

John 8

³⁶ If the Son therefore shall make you free, you shall be free indeed.

And thus:

Galatians 5

¹⁴ All the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

This, because all that law, of which this “one word” is but one of the two great principles upon which the whole hangs,—that law is itself “the law of liberty.”

This is Christianity: this is the gospel and the liberty of the gospel.

Galatians 5

¹⁵ But if you bite and devour one another...

If so you repudiate the gospel and deny the liberty which it brings: if you be critical, narrow, and intolerant,

¹⁵ ...take heed that you be not consumed one of another.

For that is the only consequence that can come of such a course, with utter destruction at the last.

49. The Two Ways

Galatians 5


¹⁶ This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

¹⁷ For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: for these are contrary the one to the other: so that you cannot do the things that you would.

¹⁸ But if you be led of the Spirit, you are not under the law.

Romans 8

¹⁴ As many as are led of the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

s sons of God, these have the mind of the Spirit, the mind of Christ; and so with the mind they “serve the law of God.” Accordingly, whosoever is led of the Spirit of God, and thus has the mind of Christ, fulfills the law; because, by that Spirit, there is shed abroad in the heart the love of God, which, in itself, is the fulfilling of the law, in whomsoever has it.

On the other hand, whomsoever is led of the flesh, and so has the mind of the flesh, does the works of the flesh, and so serves the law of sin.

And the two ways, the way of the Spirit and the way of the flesh, are always open before every man. As certainly as the flesh is there, it “lusts against the Spirit;” and as certainly as the Spirit is there, it “lusts against the flesh.” Whosoever is led of the flesh cannot do the good that he would; he serves the law of sin, and so is under the law. But whosoever is “led of the Spirit is not under the law.”

And every man is always free to choose which shall be his way—the way of the Spirit, or the way of the flesh.

Romans 8

¹³ If you live after the flesh, you shall die; but if you through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live.

Note that, in the text of *Galatians* now under consideration, and its kindred texts in *Romans* and also in *Colossians*, it is stated in words, and constantly held in view, that the flesh, in its true, fleshly, sinful nature, is still present with him who has the Spirit of God; and that this flesh is warring against the Spirit.

That is, when a man is converted, and is thus brought under the power of the spirit of God, he is not so delivered from the flesh that he is actually separated from it, with its tendencies and desires, so that, by the flesh, he is no more tempted, and that with it he has no more contest. No; that same degenerate, sinful flesh is there, with its same tendencies and desires. But the individual is no longer subject to them. He is delivered from subjection to the flesh, with its tendencies and desires, and is now subject to the Spirit. He is now subject to a power that conquers, and brings under, crucifies, and keeps under, the flesh, sinful as it is, with all its affections and lusts. Therefore, it is written that:

Romans 8

¹³ ...you through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body.

Colossians 3

⁵ Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

Note that all these things are there in the flesh and would live and reign if the flesh were to rule. But since the flesh itself is brought into subjection to the power of God, through the Spirit, all these evil things are killed at the root, and thus prevented from appearing in the life.

This contrast between the rule of the flesh and the rule of

the Spirit, is clearly shown in *Romans* 7:14-24 and in *1 Corinthians* 9:26-27. In the seventh of *Romans* is pictured the man who is under the power of the flesh, “carnal, sold under sin,” who longs to do good, and wills to do good, but is subject to a power in the flesh that will not let him do the good that he would.

Romans 7

¹⁹ For the good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do.

²¹ I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.

²² For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

²³ But I see another law IN MY MEMBERS, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

²⁴ O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

That describes the man who is subject to the flesh, “to the law of sin” that is in the members. And when he would break away from the power of the flesh, and would do good, that power still brings him into captivity, and holds him under the dominion of the flesh, the law of sin, which is in his members.

But there is deliverance from that power. Therefore, when he cries out, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” there is given instantly the answer:

²⁵ I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

There is the way of deliverance; for Christ alone is the Deliverer. And now this man, though he is thus delivered, is not delivered from A CONTEST: he is not put into a condition where he has no fighting to do with the flesh. There is a fight still to be carried on; and it is not a make-believe fight; it is not the fighting of a phantom. Here is the man of:

1 Corinthians 9

²⁶ ...so fight I, not as one that beats the air.

What does he fight? What does he beat? Read:

²⁷ But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

Thus, the battle that the Christian fights, is with his body, is with the flesh, with its affections and lusts. The body is to be, by the Christian, kept under, and brought into subjection, by the new power of the Spirit of God, to which he is now subject, and to which he became subject when delivered from the power of the flesh and the law of sin.

This is made yet more expressive by the fuller rendering of the Greek word translated “keep under,” in *1 Corinthians* 9:27: “I keep under my body.” It means literally,

“to strike under the eyes, hit and beat the face black and blue.”

Accordingly, Conybeare and Howson translate this passage thus:

“I fight not as the pugilist who strikes out against the air; but I bruise my body and force it into bondage.”

Thus the seventh of *Romans* shows the man subject to the power of the flesh and the law of sin that is in the members, but longing for deliverance. The ninth of *1 Corinthians* shows the flesh subject to the man through the new power of the Spirit of God. In the seventh of *Romans*, the flesh is ruling, and the man is under. In the ninth chapter of *1 Corinthians*, the man is ruling, and the flesh is under.

And this blessed reversal of things is wrought in conversion. By conversion the man is put in possession of the power of God, so that, by that power, he is made ruler over the flesh,

with all its affections and lusts; and, through the Spirit, he crucifies the flesh with the affections and lusts, in his fighting “the good fight of faith.”

Men are not saved by being delivered utterly from the flesh; but by receiving power to conquer and rule over all the evil tendencies and the desires of the flesh. Men do not develop character (in fact, they never could) by being delivered into a realm of no temptation; but, by receiving power, in the field of temptation exactly where they are, to conquer all the temptation.

If men were to be saved by being delivered utterly from the flesh just as it is, then Jesus need never have come to the world. If men were to be saved by being delivered from all temptation, and set in a realm of no temptation, then Jesus need not have come into the world.

But never, by any such deliverance as that, could man have developed character. Therefore, instead of trying to save men by delivering them utterly from the flesh, just where they were, Jesus came to the world, and put himself IN THE FLESH, just where men are; and met that flesh, JUST AS IT IS, with all its tendencies and desires; and by the divine power which he brought by faith, he “conquered sin in the flesh,” and thus brought to all mankind that divine faith which brings the divine power to man to deliver him from the power of the flesh and the law of sin, just where he is, and to give him assured dominion over the flesh, just as it is.

Instead of Jesus’ trying to save men in a way in which they would be limp and characterless, by setting them in a realm of no temptation, he came to man, just where man is, in the midst of all his temptations. Jesus came in the very flesh such as man has; and in that flesh, he met all the temptations known to that flesh, and conquered every one of them; and by that conquest brought victory to every soul in the world.

Bless his name.

And every soul can have in its fullness that victory, who will receive and keep “the faith of Jesus.” For:

1 John 5

⁴ ...this is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith.

50. The Works of the Flesh

Galatians 5

¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

²⁰ Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

²¹ Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Fornication, uncleanness, and lasciviousness are but different forms of the practice of adultery; as Jesus said:

Matthew 5

²⁷ You have heard that it was said to them of old time, You shall not commit adultery:

²⁸ But I say unto you, That whosoever looks on a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her already in his heart.

Thus, adultery begins in the unclean thought, the lascivious desire. Indeed, truly and strictly speaking, it begins in any thought which, if carried to its ultimate extent, could possibly lead to adultery. This is why it is that the commandments of God are “exceeding broad.”

Each of the commandments of God forbids the ultimate act, by forbidding the imagination of the thought, which, if followed up, could possibly lead to the ultimate act. And thus the law of God, with its eternal “You shall not,” forbids all unrighteousness of men, and asserts the righteousness of God.

Idolatry is the having of other gods before the Lord. And anything that, in the estimation of any one, stands, to him, before the Lord, is an idol; and he who so allows such a thing is an idolater. Perhaps the clearest and most comprehensive

statement of what is idolatry, is that by John:

1 John 2

¹⁵ Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

¹⁶ For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

¹⁷ And the world passes away, and the lust thereof: but he that does the will of God abides forever.

As expressed by James, it is:

James 4

⁴ Know you not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

The world, with its ways, is not of God, but is of Satan; for it is written:

1 John 5 [RV]

¹⁹ The whole world lies in the wicked one.

And it is...

2 Corinthians 4

⁴ ...the god of this world [who blinds] the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

Accordingly, any way of this world that is followed by any one in preference to the way of God—that is idolatry to that person, and he is an idolater.

Witchcraft is, literally, sorcery; and in other translations is mostly rendered sorcery. The original word is *pharmakeia*, which means “the preparing or using of medicine,” and is the original of the present English word “pharmacy,” the art of compounding medicines and drugs.

From the original meaning of “the preparing of medicine,”

the word was applied to “the using of any kind of drugs, potions, or spell.” Hence, it signifies “the use of super natural knowledge or power gained in any manner, especially through the connivance of evil spirits, magic art, enchantment, witchcraft, spells, charms.”

And how natural a work of the flesh is that tendency to divination! How many persons there are who like to know their fortune; and who, therefore, are always ready to respond to the invitations of a gypsy or a crone. And how ready people naturally are to wish to feel the experience of being mesmerized, or hypnotized!

All these things come under the heading of this word *pharmakeia*, witchcraft, or sorcery. They are all works of the flesh. And bear in mind that it is written that,

Galatians 5

²¹ ...they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

In the eternal righteousness, the eternal life, and the eternal promises, which God has given in Jesus Christ our Lord, the Christian already knows his fortune, even to the depths of all eternity; and he needs no pharmacy, no drugging, no charms, spells, witchcrafts, or sorcery, at any time, not in any way whatever.

Hatred, being the opposite of love, all the following-named works of the flesh—“variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders”—are but variations of it, just as we have seen that fornication, uncleanness and lasciviousness are simply various forms of adultery. So the commandment which says, “You shall not kill,” and which, in that, forbids hatred, which is, in itself, murder. For:

1 John 3

¹⁵ Whosoever hates his brother is a murderer.

As defined in the sermon on the mount, the thought stands:

Matthew 5

²¹ You have heard that it was said to them of old time, You shall not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:

²² But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, You fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

However, it is well to look at each of these words, that we may get as clear a view as possible of the subtlety and deceitfulness of sin in the works of the flesh. This, because few persons realize that they hate a person unless they actually do regard them “with a strong and passionate dislike, or aversion,” or “with extreme ill-will.”

But when there is borne in mind the principle that the law of God in forbidding the ultimate act of evil, forbids the very imagination of the thought which, if carried out, could possibly lead to that ultimate act; and when it is borne in mind that, according to the Lord’s own definition, to hate a person, or to speak ill of a person, is to break the commandment that says, “You shall not kill,”—then it can be easily understood that hatred can be indulged without that direct and extreme ill-will and aversion to the presence, or even the thought, of the person hated, which alone is commonly recognized as hatred.

“Variance” suggests “difference,” especially “difference that produces disagreement or controversy; dispute; dissension; discord.” The original word signifies “strife, quarrel, debate, wordy wrangling, disputation, contention.” The spirit and tendency, therefore, of “variance,” is a readiness to differ and to raise questions, and then hold tenaciously to personal views, and run the difference into debating and dissension; then to

ill-will, which, in itself, is hatred, which, in itself, in turn, is the breaking of the commandment that says, "You shall not kill."

It is not in vain that, in the Scriptures, debate is cataloged with "envy, murder," "deceit," and "malignity," and is placed definitely between murder and deceit. Whoever, therefore, would avoid murder must avoid hatred; and whoever would avoid variance must diligently avoid the spirit that raises questions and indulges differences that lead to controversy, debate, and its further train of evils, which continues unbroken unto hatred, which itself is murder. And this thought is worthy of special attention everywhere in the study and recitation of the Sabbath-school lessons.

"Emulation" is the "love of superiority; desire or ambition to equal or excel others;" "the desire and the resulting endeavor to equal or surpass another, or others, in some quality, attainment, or achievement." It is the expression of sheer love of self-superiority, and inability to endure the thought that another should be superior.

The original word is, literally, "jealousy;" and in other translations it is so rendered; and the declaration of the word of God, as to jealousy, is that it "is cruel as the grave." Its synonym is "envy;" and envy is "a feeling of uneasiness, mortification, or discontent, excited by the contemplation of another's superiority, prosperity, or success, accompanied with some degree of enmity or malignity, and often, or usually, with a desire or an effort to discomfit or mortify the person envied."

Emulation appears first, and aims to attain to a standing of superiority over another. And when that cannot be attained, then envy sweeps in with its tide. When emulation has obtained its aim, it is succeeded immediately by exaltation at the defeat of the foe. When emulation in itself is defeated, it is im-

mediately followed by envy, which, being “enmity prompted by covetousness,” waits in secret for an opportunity to vent its malignity, which, in itself, is hatred.

It is easy to see how, in association with variance, emulations, and envyings, there should also appear “wrath, strife, seditions [a going apart], heresies [a choosing for one’s self],” and, finally “murder,” which is but the ultimate of any one of the works of the flesh named in this list, beginning with “hatred” and ending with “murders.”

Drunkenness and revelings are simply all manner of intemperance, which, in itself, is idolatry, and carries in its train a multitude of the evils already described in the dreadful works of the flesh.

Galatians 5

²¹ ...And such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things SHALL NOT INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

51. The Fruit of the Spirit

Galatians 5

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

²³ Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

²⁴ And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts.

²⁵ If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

²⁶ Let us not be desirous of vainglory, provoking one another, envying one another.

WE have seen somewhat of the essential evil and deceitfulness of the works of the flesh. But, thank the Lord, there is a better picture.

The Spirit of God, which, in his fullness, is freely given to every believer, lusts against the flesh, so that in him who is led by the Spirit of God the flesh cannot do the things that it would. In such the Spirit of God rules, and causes to appear in the life “the fruit of the Spirit,” instead of “the works of the flesh.”

And though it be true “that they which do such things” as we described in the list of the works of the flesh, “shall not inherit the kingdom of God,” yet in the gift of the Holy Spirit, through the grace of Christ, God has made full provision by which every soul, in spite of all the passions, lusts, desires, and inclinations of the flesh, can “inherit the kingdom of God.”

In Christ the battle has been fought, on every point, and the victory has been made complete. He was made flesh itself—the same flesh and blood as those whom he came to redeem. He was made in all points like these; he was “in all points tempted like as we are.” If in any “point” he had not been “like as we are,” then, on that point he could not possibly have been

tempted “like as we are.” *Hebrews 4:15*.

He was “touched with the feeling of our infirmities,” because he “was in all points tempted like as we are.” When, he was tempted, he felt the desires and the inclinations of the flesh, precisely as we feel them when we are tempted. For,

James 1

¹⁴ ...every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lusts [his own desires and inclinations of the flesh] and enticed.

All this Jesus could experience without sin; because to be tempted is not sin.

¹⁵ Then when lust has conceived, it brings forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, brings forth death.

It is only “when lust has conceived,” when the desire is cherished, when the inclination is sanctioned,—only then it is that “it brings forth sin.” And Jesus never even in a thought cherished a desire, or sanctioned an inclination, of the flesh. Thus, in such flesh as ours, he was tempted in all points as we are, and yet without a taint of sin.

And thus, by the divine power that he received through faith in God, he, in our flesh, utterly quenched every inclination of that flesh, and effectually killed at its root every desire of the flesh; and so “condemned sin in the flesh.”

Romans 8

³ For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

And in so doing, he brought complete victory, and divine power to maintain it, to every soul in the world. All this he did,

⁴ That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

This victory, in its fullness, is free to every soul in Christ Jesus. It is received by faith in Jesus. It is accomplished and maintained by “the faith of Jesus,” which he has wrought out in perfection, and has given to every believer in him. For,

1 John 5

⁴ ...this is the victory which overcomes the world, even our faith.

He “abolished in his flesh the enmity” that separated mankind from God. *Ephesians* 2:15. In order to do this, he took the flesh, and must take the flesh, in which that enmity existed. And,

Ephesians 2

¹⁵ [He] abolished in his flesh the enmity...for to make [in order to make] in himself of twain [God and the estranged man,] one new man, so making peace.

He “abolished in his flesh the enmity,” in order...

Ephesians 2 [margin]

¹⁶ ...that he might reconcile both [Jew and Gentile—all mankind who are subject to the enmity—] unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity in himself.

“The enmity” was “in himself,” by being “in his flesh.” And there “in his flesh” he slew it and abolished it. And he could do this only by its being indeed “in his flesh.”

Thus Jesus took upon him the curse, in all its fullness, precisely as that curse is upon mankind. This he did by:

Galatians 3

¹³ ...being made a curse for us.

But “the curse causeless shall not come” (*Proverbs* 26:2), and never came. The cause of the curse is sin. He was made a curse for us, because of our sins. And to meet the curse as it is upon us, he must meet sin as it is in us. Accordingly,

2 Corinthians 5

²¹ [God] has made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin.
that we might be made the righteousness of God IN HIM.

And though he thus placed himself entirely at the same great disadvantage as are all mankind—made in all points like us and so, “in all points tempted like as we are,”—yet not a single tendency or inclination of the flesh was ever allowed the slightest recognition, even in thought; but every one of them was effectually killed at the root by the power of God, which, through divine faith, he brought to humanity.

And thus,

Hebrews 2

¹⁴ ...as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also HIMSELF LIKEWISE took part of THE SAME; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

¹⁵ And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

¹⁶ For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.

¹⁷ Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

¹⁸ For in that he himself has suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted.

And this victory which Christ wrought out in human flesh, is brought by the Holy Spirit to the rescue of everyone in human flesh who today believes in Jesus. For by the Holy Spirit the very presence of Christ himself comes to the believer; for it is his constant desire to

Ephesians 3

¹⁶ ...grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;

¹⁷ That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that you, be-

ing rooted and grounded in love,

¹⁸ May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;

¹⁹ And to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge, that you might be filled with all the fullness of God.

Thus the deliverance from the guilt of sin and from the power of sin, which holds the believer in triumph over all the desires, the tendencies and inclinations, of his sinful flesh, through the power of the Spirit of God,—this is wrought today by the personal presence of Christ Jesus IN HUMAN FLESH in the believer, precisely as it was wrought by the personal presence of Christ in human flesh eighteen hundred and seventy years ago.

Christ is ever the same—"the same yesterday, and today, and forever." *Hebrews* 13:8. The gospel of Christ is ever the same—the same yesterday, and today, and forever. The gospel of Christ today is the same that it was eighteen hundred and seventy years ago. Then it was "God manifest in the flesh" (*1 Timothy* 3:16); and today it is the same—"God manifest in the" same flesh, the flesh of sinful men, human flesh, just as human nature is.

That gospel is "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (*Colossians* 1:27),—Christ in you just as you are, sins, sinfulness, and all; for he gave himself for our sins, and for our sinfulness. And you, just as you are, Christ has bought, and God "has made accepted" (*Ephesians* 1:16) in him. He has received you just as you are; and the gospel, "Christ in you, the hope of glory," brings you under the reign of the Spirit of God, makes you so subject to the power of Christ and of God that "the fruit of the Spirit" appears in you, instead of "the works of the flesh."

And the fruit of the Spirit is—

Love

The love of God which is shed abroad in the heart by the

Spirit of God. And instead of hatred or any of its kin ever being allowed, even in thought, no man can possibly do anything to you that can cause you to do anything but love him. For this love, being the love of God, is “the same yesterday, and today, and forever;” and loves not for reward, but for the mere sake of loving; it loves simply because it is love, and being only that, it cannot do any thing else.

Joy

Joy is “ardent happiness arising from present or expected good.” But in this case, the alternative “or” is excluded; for this joy is ardent happiness arising from present AND expected good; for the cause of it is eternal. Accordingly, it is everlastingly present, and is everlastingly to be expected. And therefore, it is “exultant satisfaction.”

Peace

Perfect peace that rules in the heart—“the peace of God, which passes all understanding,” and which “keeps the heart and mind” of him who has it. *Philippians 4:7*.

Long-Suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith

This faith [Greek: *pistis*] is “firm persuasion; the conviction which is based upon trust, NOT upon knowledge [the faith of “the heart,” not of the head; the faith of Christ, not of the creed,]; a firmly relying confidence cherished by conviction, and bidding defiance to opposing contradictions.”

Meekness, Temperance

Temperance is self-control. Thus, the Spirit of God delivers the man from subjection to his passions, lusts, and habits, and makes him a free man, master of himself.

“Against such there is no law.” *Galatians 5:23*. The law of God is against nothing but sin. In human lives the law of God is against everything that is not the fruit of the Spirit of God.

Therefore it is certain that everything in human life that is not the fruit of the Spirit of God, is sin. And this is but stating, in another way, the eternal truth that “whatsoever is not of faith is sin.” *Romans* 14:23.

Therefore,

Galatians 5

²⁵ If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

And because we do live in the Spirit and walk in the Spirit,

²⁶ Let us not [—yea, we shall not; yea, we cannot—] be desirous of vainglory, provoking one another, envying one another.

52. The Spirit of Restoration

Galatians 6

¹ Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, you which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering yourself, lest you also be tempted.

Note that when a man is overtaken in a fault, the only thing that the Scripture commands the Christians to do is to “restore such a one.” There is no commandment to condemn him, to set him at naught, to ostracize him, to talk about either him or his fault; but only to “restore” him.

This is the only spirit that there is in Christianity, for:

John 3

¹⁷ God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

Condemnation is not what anybody needs in this world; for everybody is already condemned over and over, by his own sins, and by his own knowledge of his own faults. And, surely, it could be nothing but an essentially vindictive spirit that would crowd more condemnation upon a person who is, already, and many times, doubly condemned.

And Christianity is not of such spirit: Christianity is the spirit of love, of the very love of God; and God’s love is manifest in his sending of Christ, not to condemn the world, but to save it. Such alone is the spirit of Christianity, everywhere, and forever.

This is shown also in the text, in directing that “you that are spiritual restore such a one.” There is no direction to anyone who is not spiritual to make any attempt to restore such a one: and this for the simple reason that any such one could not do it.

The first consideration, therefore, when the Christian re-

ceives the knowledge that one is overtaken in a fault, is that that one is to be restored. The next consideration is,

“Am I spiritual, so that I can hope to restore him?”

This brings the one who is to attempt the restoring, face to face with himself and God, in an examination of his own standing before God, as to whether he is truly spiritual.

And when this is found to be so, when one has found himself truly spiritual, then, in the spirit of meekness, which is only the spirit of Christ, and which can be only in him who is truly spiritual, seek to restore the one overtaken in the fault: at the same time “considering yourself, lest you also be tempted;” putting yourself in his place, asking yourself how you would like to be approached, how you would like to be treated, if you were in the fault in which the brother has been overtaken.

Bear in mind also that it is the man who is “overtaken” in the fault who is to be restored—not one whom you imagine to have committed a fault; not one whom you think has done what you think to be a fault. This word gives no countenance whatever to any spirit of fault-finding, or of searching for faults in a brother. It is counsel to be followed and applied only when one is “overtaken in a fault;” when it has become apparent that there is actually a fault. Then, and only then, is the matter to be touched; and then only “you which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering yourself, lest you also be tempted.”

Jesus has also given specific directions as to how Christians shall go about to “restore” the one overtaken in a fault. He says:

Matthew 18

¹⁵ Go and tell him his fault between you and him alone.

In all the word of God there is no counsel plainer than this

of the Lord Jesus; yet what counsel of his is more, and more positively, disregarded by those who profess to be his?

It is the truth well known to all, that the majority of professed Christians do go and tell anybody, and almost everybody, else than the one who has committed the fault. But how can they do so and be a Christian?

Such a course is natural to the natural man, because it is natural to each man in the world to think every other man his enemy, and, consequently, to have no confidence in him; and then he concludes that it would do no possible good for him to go and tell the man his fault, because it would only make the man still more his enemy.

But it is not so with Christians. The believer in Jesus is sure that all other believers in Jesus are not his enemies, but are his brethren; he counts them as such; he has confidence in them as such. Therefore, he who is really a Christian has confidence in his brother, that his brother will listen to him and will hear him in what he has to say, even though it be to tell him his fault "between you and him alone."

Therefore, it is lack of confidence in a brother's sincerity in the fear of the Lord, which is the cause that any professed Christian will not go and tell his brother his fault "between you and him alone." But lack of Christian confidence is only the mark of the lack of brotherly love, which in itself, is a lack of Christianity.

So the true analysis of such a course shows that it is simply the lack of Christianity that causes any professed Christian to tell it to anybody else than the one in fault, and not to "go and tell him his fault between you and him alone."

But go as a Christian, as a brother, and

Matthew 18

¹⁵ ...tell him his fault between you and him alone; if he shall

hear you, you have gained your brother.

To “gain” him, to “restore” him, is all the purpose of your going to him at all.

And when one is not a Christian, there is indeed no need for him to go and tell a man his fault, because he is not in a condition to be able to tell it in a way that will do the man any good; for even when one is a Christian, and is spiritual, and “in the spirit of meekness” goes and tells a man his fault, between the two alone, it is possible that even then the man will not hear him. And

Matthew 18

¹⁶ If he will not hear you, then take with you one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every work may be established.

Not that you are to go and tell one or two more, but you are to take one or two more, and go and tell him, in their presence as witnesses.

¹⁷ And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto you as a heathen man and a publican.

He who, against all this attempt to restore him, holds on his own way, rejecting all attempts of his brethren to help him, has demonstrated that he has not the spirit of Christian brotherhood, and has separated himself from the company of the brethren.

And then all that the church can do is to recognize the truth of the situation thus developed, and...

¹⁷ ...let him be unto you as a heathen man and a publican.

As it is written in another place:

Titus 3

¹⁰ A man that is a heretic [one who chooses for himself, against the word of God, against all considerations of broth-

erhood] after the first and second admonition reject;

¹¹ Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sins, being condemned of himself.

53. The Law of Christ

Galatians 6

² Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Thus it is seen that the law of Christ is self-sacrifice to serve others; the spending of self to help others. And so it is written in another place:

Romans 15

¹ We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

And again:

² Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification.

And this because

³ Even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached you fell on me.

Again, this law is expressed thus:

Philippians 2

³ Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory: but in lowliness of mind let each esteem the other better than themselves.

When each esteems the other better than himself, it becomes a pleasure to serve the other: it is more of a pleasure to serve the other, by helping him, than it is to serve self.

So in truth each can please himself more, in pleasing his neighbor for his good, by serving and helping him, than he can in seeking to please himself by serving only himself. This is the true Christian joy, because it was "for the joy that was set before him" that Christ "endured the cross, despising the shame" (*Hebrews 12:2*) and the reproach which must be, and which were, endured to deliver us from our shame and re-

proach.

Therefore, again this law of Christ is expressed in the words:

Philippians 2

⁴ Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

And that all may know for certain that this is precisely the law of Christ, and that the observance of it is therefore the keeping of all the law of God,—yea, even the keeping of all the law and the prophets,—Jesus himself spoke for all mankind this law of Christ. And here are the words:

Matthew 7

¹² All things whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do you even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets.

Notice, it is not, “All things whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do” that to yourself. Nor is it to have them do that to you; but it is “do you even so to them.”

Thus the knowledge of this law of Christ is the easiest of all knowledge to attain, and the observance of this law is the easiest of all observances, to him who really has the heart to do it.

To know what the law of Christ is, all that is required is that I shall simply think of what I would have any man do to me. In this transaction, at this particular moment, what would I choose that that man should do to me, if I were in his place, and all these circumstances applied to me? And whatsoever that may be, I know that that is the thing that it is right for me to do to him just at that moment, in that particular transaction, and in those circumstances.

And since it is always perfectly easy for any man to know what he would that another should do to him in given cir-

cumstances, it is thus easy for him to know, at any moment, just what is the law of Christ; just what is the law of God; just what is “the whole duty of man.”

And just as easy as it is to know it, just so easy it is to do it, when I have the heart to do it; when I have Christ before me, instead of myself; and when I have his law in my heart, instead of my own self-seeking.

But it is plain that this requires the utter emptying of self, and the appearing of Christ in the life; because none of this is the way of self; and self will never go that way. That is the way of unselfishness; that is the way of the crucifixion of self; the utter death of self, and the living of Christ.

Therefore immediately following the word, “Look not every man on his own things, but every man on the things of others,” the sum of all is written:

Philippians 2

⁵ Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus;

⁶ Who being in the form of God: thought it not robbery to be equal with God,

⁷ But emptied himself, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men,

⁸ And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Certainly it is true that without the mind of Christ no man can fulfill the law of Christ. Then wherever there is a lack of fulfilling the law of Christ, a lack of esteeming others better than ourselves, a lack of looking on the things of others, it is evident that the cause of the failure is in not having the mind of Christ. And the remedy is to receive and to retain the mind of Christ.

If this law of Christ were fulfilled daily by individuals, by the managers of our Conferences and our institutions, the

loud cry of the Third Angel's Message would shortly fill the earth, the gospel of the kingdom would speedily be preached to all the world, and very soon the end would come.

Galatians 6

² Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

54. Man Without God is Nothing

Galatians 6

³ For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

It is bad enough for a man to be deceived by another; but it is worse to be deceived by himself. But this verse gives the true corrective and preventive of self-deception—and it is found in a man's thinking himself truly what he is; that is, nothing.

But this is not natural. The natural thing is for each one to think himself something; and then continue so to think until he becomes more and more something, and the chiefest of all. That is simply the secret and the spirit of self-exaltation.

But the truth is that of himself man is nothing; and the true way for any man to find this truth is to confess that he is nothing. That is simply the way of self-abnegation. And then he can become something.

Now the reason of all this is that man is separated from God; and this separation was accomplished by his accepting the suggestion, and following the way, of the one who originally in his self-exaltation, declared:

Isaiah 14

¹⁴ I will be like the Most High.

And the end course, with that one, is that he shall be absolutely nothing. For of him at the end of his course it is written:

Ezekiel 28

¹⁹ Never shall you be any more.

And when he entered upon that course which inevitably ends only in his being absolutely nothing, then it is certain

that at the beginning of it he practically made himself nothing, and that all through his course he was truly nothing.

It is so also with the man who accepted the leadership, and followed in the way, of this one. By this the man made himself nothing. And so it is written:

Isaiah 40

¹⁷ All nations before Him are as nothing: and they are counted to Him less than nothing, and vanity.

Isaiah 42

¹² They that war against You shall be as nothing, and as a thing of naught.

Yet the original leader, and, from him, all who are led in this course, really think themselves to be something, when, in very truth, they are nothing.

Now there is a way out of this nothingness into that which is something, and in which each one shall be truly something. And this was in the way of Christ—the way of the cross. Christ is the example: he has led the way, for:

Philippians 2

⁸ ...he emptied himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Thus he gave himself up to be, and to become, lost and nothing, that he might redeem those who are lost and nothing. Therefore all are exhorted:

⁵ Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

⁶ Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery [a thing to be seized upon and to be held fast] to be equal with God:

⁷ But emptied himself [and became nothing].

And because he did this, and through his doing it,

⁹ God also has highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

¹⁰ That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things under the heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

¹¹ And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Therefore the first of all things for any man to do to help himself, to set himself in the way of deliverance from nothingness, is to recognize truly that he is nothing. Then, in Christ he becomes something, and shall be something, even though, in himself, he is ever nothing. As it is written:

2 Corinthians 12

¹¹ In nothing am I behind the very apostles, though I be nothing.

This, because we are not...

2 Corinthians 3

⁵ ...sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God.

2 Corinthians 6

¹⁶ As God has said, I will dwell in them and they shall be My people.

This is "the mystery of God;" God manifest in the flesh: "Christ in you, the hope of glory." *Colossians* 1:27.

And these things are written,

1 Corinthians 4

⁶ ...that you might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.

⁷ For who makes you to differ from another? and what have you that you did not receive? Now if you did receive it, why do you glory, as if you had not received it?

When it is true of every man that he has nothing, absolutely nothing, even to his existence, which he did not receive from God; then, without God, what is he? Plainly, he is nothing.

ing. And that is just the condition of men as they are in the world, naturally, “without God in the world.” *Ephesians* 2:12.

Thus, it being strictly true, in the nature of things, that, without God, any creature is nothing; man, being without God, is truly nothing. Then, when, in this condition, man thinks himself something, in that very thing he asserts self-existence—equality with God.

And this is true of man in his condition of sin and separation from God; because that was the very thing which was asserted to him and expected by him when sin entered:

Genesis 3

5 ...you shall be like God...

But self-existence is not true of any creature: self-existence is true only of God. All persons and things are from him, and by him; and in him all things “live, and move, and have their being” (*Acts* 17:28); each in itself nothing, but in him something, according as his mind, his will, his purpose, is manifest therein.

Thus the self-deception of a man in his thinking himself to be something, when, in absolute truth, he is nothing, is the worst and most destructive of all deceptions, because it is the deception of asserting of himself self-existence,—divinity:

2 Thessalonians 2

⁴ ...showing himself that he is God.

The only end of which is to become, indeed, absolutely nothing, in the awful consummation that is declared.

Psalms 37

¹⁰ For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, you shall diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.

But only let a man accept, in his heart and life, the truth that he is nothing; let him accept the manifestation of Christ, which alone can ever hold him in the place where he shall

know that, in truth, of himself he is nothing; let Christ live in him; let God be manifest in his flesh; let the mind, the will, the purpose, of God thus be manifest in him,—and of him it will be also true that, because of this,

Philippians 2

⁹ ...God also has highly exalted him.

For it is written:

Revelation 3

²¹ To him that overcomes will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

Jesus said,

John 15

⁵ ...without me you can do nothing.

This is so because without him, you are nothing. For to be without Christ is to be “without God in the world” (*Ephesians* 2:12); and to be without God is to be nothing.

Only the way of Christ, the way of the cross, is the way of life, the way of something. Any other way is only the way of death, the way of nothing.

Philippians 2

⁵ Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

⁶ Who...

⁷ ...emptied himself.

55. Self-Examination

Galatians 6

⁴ But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

The word “prove” here signifies, as to the thing proved, the test put upon metals by the assayer; and it is well known that such a test is the most thorough that can be employed. It goes even so far as to the testing by fire to such an extent that the fire itself shall be through and through the metal; so that the very metal itself shall be so fairly on fire that everything that is not of the metal itself, is utterly consumed.

As relates to the person who does the proving, the word signifies “to scrutinize,” “to keep an eye upon,” “to watch narrowly,” “to play the spy upon,” “to examine intently.”

This is what every Christian is particularly called upon to do respecting his own work—respecting the things he does, and which, from mere impulse, he finds himself apt to do.

The same thought is expressed in another verse, and is applied to the whole person himself, and not only to “his own work”:

2 Corinthians 13

⁵ Examine yourselves, whether you be in the faith; prove your own selves.

Let each one test his own work, and himself, in all things, in the light of the word of God, illuminated by the Spirit of God, thus holding himself and all his work up to the judgment of God. And to all who do so the blessed promise will be found sure:

Galatians 6

⁴ ...then shall he have rejoicing...

For of this same thing it is written in another place:

1 Corinthians 11

³¹ If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

All this is to say that in Christianity, in the faith of Christ, God gives to every man in this world the opportunity safely to pass the judgment. And everyone who will thus enter into God's judgment, who will put himself through the severest tests that the law of God can ever demand, and will thus judge himself in the light of God's countenance, he thus passes the judgment, and has nothing to fear "when God rises up."

And all such have God's promise that they shall "have rejoicing," and that they have nothing to fear in the great day of judgment itself. This, because they live constantly in the presence of the judgment of God. Their constant prayer is:

Psalms 139

²³ Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts:

²⁴ And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

And they find it all so; and, so, shall surely be led only in the way everlasting. He shall have "rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another." The parallel thought is in

Proverbs 14

¹⁴ A good man shall be satisfied from himself.

The sentiment is that he will find in himself a source of pure joy. He will not be dependent on the applause of others for happiness. In an approving conscience; in the evidence of the favor of God; in an honest effort to lead a pure and holy life, he will have happiness. The source of his joys will be within; and he will not be dependent, as the man of ambition, and the man who thinks of himself more highly than he ought, will, on the favors of a capricious multitude, and on the breath of popular applause.

Here is the true secret of happiness. It consists

- 1) in not forming an improper estimate of ourselves; in knowing just what we are, and what is due to us; in not thinking ourselves to be something, when we are nothing;
- 2) in leading such a life that it may be examined to the core, that we may know exactly what we are without being distressed or pained; that is, in having a good conscience, and in honest and faithful discharge of our duty to God and man;
- 3) in not being dependent on fickle applause of the world for our comfort.

The man who has not internal resources, and who has no approving conscience; who is happy only when others smile, and miserable when they frown is a man who has no security for enjoyment. The man who has a good conscience, and who enjoys the favor of God and the hope of heaven, carries with him a source of perpetual joy. He cannot be deprived of it. His purse may be taken, and his house robbed, but the high-wayman cannot rob him of his comforts. He bears about with him an unfailing source of happiness when abroad, and the same source of happiness abides with him at home; he carries it into society, and it remains with him in solitude; it is his companion when in health, and when surrounded by his friends, and it is no less his companion when his friends leave him, and when he lies upon a bed of death.¹⁸

Galatians 6

⁵ For every man shall bear his own burden.

This is the plain conclusion from all the thought of the preceding verse; and the whole thought on both sides is expressed in:

Proverbs 14

¹⁴ The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways: and a good man shall be satisfied from himself.

¹⁸ Albert Barnes, *Notes Explanatory and Practical on the Epistle to the Galatians*, p. 390.

And, again,

Jeremiah 17

¹⁰ I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins [the conscience], even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.

Every man is free to choose. To every man the Lord has said, "Choose you this day whom you will serve." God has made most abundant provision, even to all the fullness of God, for everyone grandly to succeed who chooses the service of God; and the burden of him who so chooses is only a burden of rejoicing and gladness, for evermore.

But he who chooses not the way of the Lord, but his own way, against all the call of the Lord,—he, too, must bear his burden; it is the burden which he has freely chosen to bear, but it is a burden which cannot be borne, and only works his undoing.

Galatians 6

⁶ Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teaches in all good things.

This word "communicate" means much more than simply to talk or write to a person: it means "to have things in common," "to be partakers or equal partakers in things." It is the same word and the same meaning as that given in:

1 Corinthians 10

¹⁶ The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

¹⁷ For we being many are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread.

So those who are taught in the word count him that teaches equal partners with themselves, count all other things common with him, and communicate unto him "in all good things."

And so it is written in another place:

1 Corinthians 9

¹¹ If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?

And also in yet another place:

Romans 15

²⁵ Now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints.

²⁶ For it has pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.

²⁷ It has pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things.

And, upon all this, the exhortation in the four verses, which follow is sufficient, and sufficiently forcible, without any further enlargement or explanation:

Galatians 6

⁷ Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap.

⁸ For he that sows to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that sows to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

⁹ And let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

¹⁰ As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

56. Closing Salutation and Blessing

Galatians 6

¹¹ You see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand.

This is, literally, “with what large letters;” relating to the size of the letters which he was obliged to make because of his defective eyesight.

This itself was an appeal which would tenderly touch the Galatians, and revive in them the memory of the blessedness of their first days in Christianity; for, in the fifteenth verse of the fourth chapter, he says:

Galatians 4

¹⁵ Where is then the blessedness you spoke of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, you would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me.

This was their love to him when they enjoyed the blessedness of the true gospel which they had received, and Paul gladly witnessed to it. But there never would have been any need, nor any ground for thought, of plucking out their eyes and giving them to him if there had not been in him a manifest need of eyes.

This defect in his eyes was the result of the consuming glory of Christ that day when the Lord appeared to him as he was on his way to Damascus; for, when the vision was past, he was unable to see; and “they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus.” *Acts 9:8.*

And there “he was three days without sight,” until Ananias was sent by the Lord to put his hand on him “that he might receive his sight.” And when Ananias had so done, “immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales.” *Acts 9:9, 12, 18.*

But forever there was thus in his flesh that mark which he calls “my temptation which was in my flesh.” *Galatians* 4:14.

And now, in his last words to the Galatians, when he says, “You see with what large letters I have written unto you with mine own hand,” it is a delicate and touching way in which he would call their attention to this affliction which they, in their love at the first, would have remedied by plucking out their own eyes and giving them to him.

This expression shows to them that he had written this whole letter with his own hand in spite of this affliction, which obliged him to write in exceptionally large letters, in order that he himself might be able to see his writing.

This of itself would be a powerful testimony to them of his tender love still for them, and that, whatever he had said, in none of it was there any ill-feeling toward them, but a great fear lest they should be caused to lose the great salvation that had been so freely given to them.

This writing of a whole letter in Paul’s own hand was unusual. He usually wrote the body of a letter by an amanuensis. For instance, the actual body of the letter to the *Romans* was written by Tertius. *Romans* 16:22. But always, Paul would sign the letter with his own name, with his own hand, as, for instance:

1 Corinthians 16

²¹ The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand;

Colossians 4

¹⁸ The salutation by the hand of Paul;

2 Thessalonians 3

¹⁷ The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write.

This, indeed, became essential, because *2 Thessalonians* 2:2 shows that there were those who were circulating letters as

from Paul, which were fraudulent.

Galatians 6

¹² 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.

¹³ For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.

It must be borne in mind that those who had confused the Galatians and caused all the trouble there were “Pharisees which believed.” They were Pharisees at first, and, still holding to their Pharisaism, professed to believe in Jesus; and this had made their profession of Christianity merely Pharisaism.

And pure Christianity at that time, as well as in every other time, could not be made to fit well with Pharisaism; because, at that time, it was a very humiliating thing to be known as a Christian outright. The One in whom all Christianity centered had only lately been crucified as a malefactor; had thus died the most disgraceful death, and by the most disgraceful means, known to mankind.

In addition to this, there was persecution attached to the outright profession of Christianity. But the Pharisees, still holding to their pride, had not discerned the true glory of the cross of Christ so that they could with confidence, and even with joy, suffer persecution.

But in the way of circumcision there was no persecution: that was the way of glory. True, it was worldly glory; it was pharisaic glory; it was self-glory; but that being the only glory which they knew, to them it was the true way of glory. Consequently, so long as they could hold to circumcision, they would escape persecution.

Thus the controversy centered in the question as to the true way of glory—whether it was by circumcision, or by the cross

of Christ. By the pride of the Pharisees circumcision was exalted to the pinnacle of the true way of glory.

The cross, as already stated, was the most degrading thing in the world. But behold here the illustration of the great truth that “that which is highly esteemed amongst men, is abomination in the sight of God.” *Luke 16:15*.

The Pharisees had made circumcision the greatest of all things, and the perfect highway to glory, while they, and all mankind, looked upon the way of the cross as the most disgraceful thing that could ever come to a man. But that way of the cross, God shows to be indeed the highway of glory. The way which men most despise is the way in which God would most manifest his glory: the way in which men most gloried is indeed the way which is most truly to be despised.

Therefore, it is the true, triumphant exclamation of the Christian everywhere and forever:

Galatians 6

¹⁴ 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.

¹⁵ For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision avails anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

¹⁶ And as many as walk according to this rule, peace to them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

And this is forever true:

- a) as many as walk by this rule of the cross of Christ, and of the glorying in the cross of Christ;
- b) as many as walk by this rule of being by the cross of Christ crucified unto the world, and the world unto them;
- c) as many as walk by this rule that neither circumcision avails anything, nor uncircumcision, but only a new creature avails in Christ Jesus.

“As many as walk according to *this rule*, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.”

Galatians 6

¹⁷ From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.

These marks of the Lord Jesus were those which Paul received in the scourgings, the stonings, and all of the other hardships which left their impress upon him. And another translation gives it:

“I the brands of the Lord Jesus in my body bear.”

These things were the token to all who might see, that he belonged to Christ; these were the marks, the brands, which he bore, signifying Christ’s ownership of him. And so it is with the Christian forever.

Galatians 6

¹⁸ Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Unto the Galatians written from Rome.

As to the additional subscription: “Unto the Galatians written from Rome,” it is but proper to state that the letter to the Galatians was not written from Rome at all, but from Corinth.

Appendix

Abraham Did Pass Through

Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, Jan. 23, 1900

This was published two weeks after the study on *Galatians* 3:15 ([Chapter 23, "The Abrahamic Covenant"](#)), where Jones incorrectly stated that "only God passed through" the pieces of the sacrifice. He realized his mistake and published this correction.

THAT statement was wrong that I made two weeks ago in connection with God's covenant with Abraham, in saying that "only God passed through" between the parts of the sacrifices offered by Abraham. Abraham also passed through.

This fact, however, is not stated in *Genesis*. It is given in:

Jeremiah 34

¹⁸ I will give the men that have transgressed my covenant, which have not performed the words of the covenant which they had made before me, where they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts of the calf.

This was spoken to the people in the days of Zedekiah; and the only way in which it was possible for them to have passed "between the parts of the calf" was in the fact of Abraham's having passed through; just as in *Hebrews* 7:9-10, it is said that Levi, "who receives tithes, paid tithes in Abraham." I have many a time used *Jeremiah* 34:18 to show that the people in the days of Zedekiah were included in God's covenant with Abraham: I do not know how it slipped my mind in the article of two weeks ago, unless it was that my mind was just then absorbed in discovering and describing what God had put into that blessed covenant.

This is the more singular, too, from the fact that many a time I have read, even in the galley-proofs, the words in *Patriarchs and Prophets*, to which a brother in Illinois has just now called my attention, that, when Abraham had arranged the

sacrifices according to the divine direction:

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 137:

This being done, he reverently passed between the parts of the sacrifice, making a solemn vow to God of perpetual obedience; [and] as a pledge of this covenant of God with men, a smoking furnace and a burning lamp, symbols of the divine presence, passed between the severed victims, totally consuming them.

Since writing that article, I have found the following account of an incident in the journey of General Grant around the world, which more fully, and in great beauty, illustrates the meaning of the “passing between the pieces.” The General Wassef Khayat, at Assiout, in Egypt; and the account says:

“When General Grant alighted at the consul’s house, he was detained from entering until a beef, beautifully garlanded with flowers, had been brought out. It was killed, and cut into two pieces, which were laid on either side of the doorway. Then the consul invited General Grant to enter his home with him. They stepped over the blood on the threshold, and between the pieces. By this act they entered into the most solemn covenant known to the Oriental,—the blood covenant,—and thus became ‘blood brothers,’ a relation which outranks every other relation in life. One blood brother can not ask anything that the other will refuse.”

These things show that Abraham “passed between the pieces,” that when he did so, all his children also passed between them; and that since we, being Christ’s, are Abraham’s seed, WE PASSED BETWEEN THE PIECES, and thus became “blood brothers” with the Lord; that we can not ask of Him anything that He will refuse, and that He can not ask anything of us that we will refuse. *John* 14:13-14; 15:7, 16.

Addendum

About a year after A.T. Jones began this series of articles on *Galatians*, the book was taken up in the Sabbath School Lessons of the Seventh-day Adventist church.

The following article (by L.A. Reed), and four sermons (by A.T. Jones) were presented from June to August 1900, to supplement the lessons. So this material rightly belongs with the collection of articles.

Sabbath School Study:

The Epistle to the Galatians

The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, June 26, 1900

By L. A. Reed

"Sabbath, July 7, begins in all the Sabbath-schools the study of the book of *Galatians*. The following article, contributed by Brother L.A. Reed, will be so helpful to all, as preliminary, that we lay over for this week the regular *Study in Galatians*: [*The Two Covenants*](#), to give place to this article."
-ATJ.



great deal of interest just now centers in the book of *Galatians*. It is to be the subject of study for six months now in our Sabbath-schools everywhere.

We know that the epistles of Paul were addressed respectively to certain companies or individuals at given times in the early history of the Christian church. They were written to correct certain errors that had sprung up at that time. And as is always true, these errors took on certain forms due to the education and customs of the times.

Thus the disciples of Christ in Galatia were told by some that it was not enough to receive the gospel, which is the "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (*Romans* 8:2), or the "power of God unto salvation" (*Romans* 1:16), but that they must also perform certain ceremonies. There had been a time when these ceremonies were intended for performance; but that day was now past.

But the fact that these rites were no longer in force did not affect the principle which Paul outlines. Even in the days when the rites were in force, the mere performance of them could not, and was not intended to, make the doers thereof righteous. And what Paul attempts to show is that at no time could righteousness so come. And if these rites, when in force, could not make the doers thereof righteous, how much more

shall they not when abrogated.

These ceremonies we all now acknowledge are of no binding force. There is therefore, no danger now that any man will declare obedience to them necessary. And if men are now liable to make a mistake similar to that of the Galatians, it is manifest that this latter-day mistake must take on a form different from that made back there.

In other words, the law of circumcision, animal sacrifices, etc., is now a dead letter, and ceremonialism of that form is no longer threatening any man's welfare. And if God, in the message to the Galatians, is referring only to the ceremonial law, and ceremonialism of that particular form, then—I say it without qualification—all that message of God has become dead, and is of no value only as a record of the mistakes of those of old.

But ceremonialism of that particular form is not the only ceremonialism mentioned in *Galatians*. There is a ceremonialism which any man in any age of this world may drop into. And as God's word is directed to every man and any man, in every age and any age, that ceremonialism is the mistake which now you and I are warned against.

And as the things which concern you and me are of more importance to you and me than that which more truly concerns others in some other age, it follows that this other ceremonialism which we may drop into in these days is of greater interest to us, and should be the burden of our thought and study, rather than that which almost wholly concerned others in another age of the world now long gone by.

But what is that ceremonialism? It is to think that a man is justified by the works of the law; and not to know "that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ." *Galatians* 2:16, 21; 3:2-3, 5-14, 18-27. Almost every verse in the third chapter is but a declaration, variously made,

of this one principle,—not by the works of the law, but by the faith of Christ.

There was a law called the ceremonial law: it was the law of circumcision, sacrifices, etc. It was given for a good and sufficient purpose; but it was never given with any idea that by observance of it righteousness could be won. And he who lost sight of its true import, and attempted to use it as a means of earning righteousness, dropped into mere ceremonialism, into performing a dry round of ceremony. He began to live a Christless life; he fell from grace, he fell under the curse.

There is another law—called the law of ten commandments. It was not given from Sinai with the idea that by observance of its precepts any man could win righteousness. He who thus lost sight of its true import, and attempted to use it as a means of earning righteousness, also dropped into mere ceremonialism. He began thereby the performance of a dry round of ceremony, of outward forms. His life at once became Christless, because he chose a way of salvation other than Christ. But Christ is “the Way”; and there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. Such a man falls from grace, falls under the curse.

There was yet a manifestation of the law, other than the form given in the commandments; namely, the law of love. But he who takes even that manifestation of the law, that outward expression of the law,—love to God and love to man,—and attempts by his own efforts to live it out; that is, to earn righteousness by its works,—that man, like the others, drops into ceremonialism; possibly of another form, but nevertheless ceremonialism. He loses the true import of the law of love, falls from grace, and lives a Christless life.

There was still another manifestation of the law, a clearer presentation of its claims, in the “law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.” But the man who reads of the working of that

law in Christ, and then by a copying of those acts of Christ attempts to earn righteousness, to make himself like Christ,—that man does not know the true import of the Christ life. He, too, has dropped into ceremonialism, dry routine, dead works, yea, Christlessness.

Furthermore, ceremonialism in any of its forms must have to do with the “ten-commandment law of God.” This is true of that form of ceremonialism which takes its root in a misapprehension of the ceremonial law. He who so misread God’s purpose relative to the ceremonial law, must misread his purpose relative to the moral law. The constitution of the mind itself would produce this. And the fact that the ceremonial law of sacrifices and offerings was but a form of the gospel for the time then present, and therefore was a preaching of the moral law, would also bring it about. And the ceremonialism of the Jews not only in the things of the law of sacrifice, but in the things of the moral law, testifies that the two forms of ceremonialism go hand in hand. He who made the one mistake made the other.

When God indited the book of *Galatians*, he did not strike at a few particular forms of error, but at the great principle which was at the bottom of that error. The error might take on many forms; a form at one time giving way to another form at a later time. A word directed merely at one form, must go out of date when that particular form vanished; but a word directed at the principle underlying the various forms, and aimed to destroy the principle that gave rise to them,—that word, I repeat, must forever be needed, so long as human hearts and minds are liable to misapply the principle, and thus create these various forms.

What, then, is now the message of the book of *Galatians*? It is, as we have said, to show that righteousness is a gift of God; that it comes by promise; that it is by faith in Christ; and that

it is not by the works of the law,

Galatians 2

¹⁶ ...for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

And what is the ceremonialism which in the book of *Galatians* you and I are warned against? Is it not that ceremonialism which now is the only ceremonialism possible for us to drop into—that ceremonialism which is an outward conformity, or attempted outward conformity, to the ten-commandment law, and especially to the fourth commandment of that law?

Yes, such are the works of the law which you and I are apt to trust to; and so the message of the Galatian epistle now is relative to the ten commandments, and even the fourth of the ten, or any one of the ten, or all of the ten. It can mean nothing else to us now; and whatever more it may have included, only lends force to this other one warning not to trust in attempts to outwardly keep that law.

If you will, in the light of these things, open your Bible with a prayerful heart, and read, not having in your mind those who lived two thousand years ago, but having only your own case in mind, and your own soul in the judgment balance,—I say, if you will so read, having in mind only your own mistakes and liabilities to mistakes, and your own responsibility to God, I will trust your conclusions as to what law God's Spirit reads to you out of *Galatians* 3:19, or any other part of the epistle.

Sermon 1: The Way of Salvation

August 7, 1900

Sermon delivered Sabbath, July 28, 1900, in the Tabernacle, Battle Creek, Michigan, and stenographically reported.

I HAVE been appointed to speak today on the Sabbath school work, especially as it is at the present time—its present work in the studies now before the school. The Sabbath-school work is, plainly enough, school work—school work for Sabbath. It is a school that is held on the Sabbath, in which instruction is given, as in a school, by teachers.

So far, then, a part of the subject that was presented here the last time that I spoke, is present instruction for today,—as to what is teaching; as to what is the work of a school, and of teachers in school. I may refer to that for a few minutes, to recall the thought of what is true teaching. To teach is to show; to show how; to lead the way, in the doing of things. So teaching is not theorizing at all: it is substantial, concrete—the actual, practical “showing how” to do things.

In the Sabbath-school, of course, the teaching is showing the way to God; is teaching the truth; is showing the way of truth to people who do not know it. You remember the definition I read, of teaching, that other day, from the French:

“To show the shortest way out of the wood to those who have lost their way.”

I then quoted several expressions of Scripture, showing that all mankind have gone out of the way, and have lost their way in the darkness, the mist, and the maze of the wood of iniquity, and transgression, and sin.

When mankind had thus gone out of the way of God, they were indeed like lost sheep: they could not find the way back. It is the peculiarity of a lost sheep that he does not know

which way to turn. Other animals may get lost, and find their way out and home; but a sheep, lost, is utterly confused: he is lost for good: he does not have the first idea of how to get home. Therefore, the Scripture puts it:

Isaiah 53

⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray.

Psalms 119

¹⁷⁶ I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek your servant.

When mankind had all thus, like sheep, gone astray, and were utterly unable to find the way out of the woods and home, God, the Great Shepherd of the sheep, sent to us a Teacher to teach us the way to God: and he is a true teacher, one who shows the way.

Consequently, when he was sent to be, indeed, the Great Shepherd of his sheep in the world, to lead us back home, he did not attempt to do that in any other way than by coming here, and putting himself just where we are; and then finding the way out—being led out by God unto the home of all, to his place at the right hand of God. And having so done, he now says to all mankind:

“Come now, ‘learn of me;’ this is the way: ‘I am the Way;’ come, ‘take my yoke upon you, and learn of me,’ and you shall know the way.” (*Matthew 11:29, John 14:6*)

So he started from just where we are; and he found the shortest way to the throne of God, and to the sure place at the right hand of God forevermore. And there he is ever since, our Teacher, the Great Shepherd of the sheep, who gathers the lambs and carries them in his bosom, and leads us all, all the way.

He asks no one to take a step that he himself has not first taken. He knows perfectly the way, having gone over it; and he does not ask us even to go over the way alone, which he

has gone over before us; but, having gone before us all the way to the throne of God, he comes to us again, and goes over the way WITH US, hand in hand, taking us with him to the throne of God at the right hand of God, where we, with him, shall sit down amid the pleasures that he has prepared for us forevermore.

That is the lesson that is sent to us, to be taught, to be studied, and to be learned, in this school for the Sabbath day, the Sabbath-school. And since he has gone away from the world in person, bodily, as he was when he was here first, he has left others in his stead to call men to God; to be in the world as he was, and as he is in the world; to be teachers.

But we must all be sure that we learn the lesson, or else we cannot teach it. He cannot teach who has not first learned. You and I cannot teach; we cannot show the way to God; we cannot show the people how to find the way, nor how to walk in the way when they have found it; until we ourselves have learned the lesson of how to find the way to God, and how to walk in the way after having found it. We cannot teach these until we have learned them; and we cannot learn them except from him who is "the Way," and who is the original Teacher of the way.

And, having learned these things, then it is the sole work of the school for the Sabbath to teach these things. There is nothing else to be taught. And anything that has not that lesson in it, anything that has not in it the elements of showing how—of showing the people the way out of darkness into light, and then the way of light after they have got into light—anything that is not that, has no place in the school for the Sabbath, has no place in the Sabbath-school.

Now the work of the Sabbath-school, at this present time, is exactly that; and that in a certain sense, more definitely than it ever was before in our Sabbath-school work. I mean the

study of the book of *Galatians*. This is not to say that any of the former Sabbath-school lessons did not teach the way of salvation, nor that those who have been teaching those lessons have not been teaching the way and giving instruction concerning how to get into the way of salvation.

But this is to say that, in the studies now before the Sabbath-school, the way of salvation is, in a certain sense, more definitely made known, and especially how to walk, being in the way, than it ever was in the Sabbath-school lessons before. This, simply because it is the study of *Galatians*.

That you may see this, I cite a verse in the first chapter, over which you have gone. You remember this expression:

Galatians 1

⁶ I marvel that you are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel;

⁷ Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

⁸ 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.

And then, to make it certain that that is a deliberately formed and thought out statement, he repeats it:

⁹ As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that you have received, let him be accursed.

That is not, in itself, the putting of a curse upon any one who would do that; but anybody who does that shows by it that he is already under the curse. Nothing but the gospel saves from the curse. He who has not the gospel cannot be saved from the curse; and hence he has the curse. There are only two things in the world—the gospel and the curse.

Now, notice that the gospel—that is, the way of God—the way of God's salvation—is so set forth in the book of *Gala-*

tians that, though “an angel from heaven” were to come down today and preach the gospel in the Sabbath-schools, he could not preach to you a single thing that is not there; he could not do it any better than it is done there.

Then, when there is given to us a letter from God,—a treatise given by the Lord, in which he has presented the gospel so certainly, so clearly, so positively, that an angel from heaven could not better it if he tried,—when to swerve from it, to teach differently from it, would only be to put one’s self under the curse,—then has not the Lord, in that thing, given to us the gospel in a way, and in a sense, that is not found in any other way or in any other book?

The Sabbath-schools are now studying that epistle which God has so given—his own gospel, given in such a way—that, though so long ago given, if, today, an angel from heaven were to try to preach the gospel, and were to differ from what is there given, he would not preach the gospel at all, but would only bring himself under the curse, with all the people who should go that way with him.

Then, that being so, when God has so brought it around that all the Sabbath-schools are studying that gospel there given, is it not true that the work of teaching these lessons in the Sabbath-schools is in that sense such as we never had before? It is exactly the work of Christ, which he did in the world when he came. It is showing mankind the way unto God,—the shortest way out of the wood in which we are lost,—and the way of righteousness, after we have got into it.

Then, in order to teach that lesson, what is essential, first of all? To learn the lesson. In order to show people that way, every one who is to teach must first of all know that way, as it is shown in the book of *Galatians*.

Yet it is true that already—though only the first chapter has been covered—there have been found those who think that it

is “dry,” “very dry.” What is it that is so dry? It is the gospel given in such sincerity, in such fullness and perfection, that an angel from heaven could not preach it any differently. Is that “very dry”? If that should prove to me “very dry,” would that fact not prove that I do not have that gospel? More than that, would it not prove that I do not have any confidence in it?

When the gospel, which is the gospel of salvation of God, given by the Lord himself, is given to me for my salvation; and it falls to me to teach lessons in which that gospel is to be set forth, and I find the lessons, and the whole arrangement, “very dry,”—then what can the Lord possibly do for me?

The gospel is the only means he has of saving anybody. I profess to be in the way of salvation; I profess to have received the gospel. I am called upon to teach the way of the gospel which I profess, and in which I profess to walk; and that part of God’s great lesson book is given to me in which he himself puts that gospel before me, and in a way that an angel could not give it any differently and still preach the gospel. I have it so, and yet to me it is “very dry;” it does not seem that I can get anything out of it; it is “too tedious.”

That is a sad showing for me; not for the gospel, nor for the Sabbath-school lessons, nor for the book of *Galatians*; but for ME.

In that case, the thing for me to do—the first of all things, and the only thing, for me to do—is to get into the place where the gospel of God’s salvation will be to me salvation indeed. And when that is so, it is written—written for everlasting, for it is everlastingly true—that:

Isaiah 12

³ With joy shall you draw water out of the wells of salvation.


He who has the salvation of God; he who knows the gospel

of God, and what is this salvation—instead of its ever by any possibility being to him “dry,” much less “very, dry,” it is simply the wells of salvation eternally flowing; and he is ever drinking to the full.

Sermon 2: Effects of the True Gospel

August 14, 1900

Sermon delivered Sabbath, July 28, 1900, in the Tabernacle, Battle Creek, Michigan, and stenographically reported.

T has also been said, already, that these lessons are too tedious:

“Ask a question, and then answer the question by perhaps one or two words in a verse, and over and over so, before you get through a single verse. Why, to get the lessons the way that the lesson pamphlet requires, we should have to go over it fifty times a day!”

Well, suppose you should. Is it a dreadful thing, a toilsome, burdensome thing, to drink in eternal life “fifty times a day”? “Oh, well, it does not seem like that to me.” No, of course not! That is why it is so tedious.

There is nothing tedious, there is nothing toilsome, there is nothing monotonous at all, in drinking in eternal life by the word of God, even in the book of *Galatians*, “fifty times a day.” And in the book of *Galatians* you have the eternal life which comes by the word of God in a way that an angel could not better. And in receiving this eternal life, there is nothing monotonous, there is nothing wearisome, in any sense whatever. It is simply joy, joy, joy—“joy unspeakable and full of glory.” 1 *Peter* 1:8.

Then, if to me it is a task, if it is a weariness, if it becomes so monotonous as to grow dull; and I cannot stand it to go over that thing fifty times a day, to get the Sabbath-school lesson, so that other persons who do not know it may have it,—then it is not eternal life at all to me; I have not yet found the fountain; I am not drinking at the fountain. I am away off on the dry mountains: I am away in the desert, where that lost

sheep is.

However, that is not particularly against me, if I will only listen to the call of the Shepherd, and become a found sheep. It is nothing against a man that he is a lost sheep; for the Lord has sent Jesus to seek and to save us. But it becomes a terrible thing for a man to stay lost, when Jesus has come to save, and when that man is actually in a position where he is required to read over and over every day the lesson of salvation.

I call your attention to these things, not for the things themselves, but for illustration. These statements that the lessons are “very dry” and “so tedious,” when the lessons are simply the very words of Scripture itself—this illustrates exactly the evil which the book of *Galatians* is given to correct.

It illustrates exactly the condition of things that is considered and refuted, and annihilated by the book of things as that—a condition of things in which a people professing to be Christians were not Christians—a condition of things in which a people professing to be in the way of God knew not the way of God.

It was a condition in which all was only formalism: their profession was a form; what they did was a form; all their service to God was a form; it was formalism and ceremonialism altogether. That is how it is that there came “some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.” *Galatians* 1:7.

What is the gospel of Christ? It is God’s free salvation to every soul in the wide world. It is the power of God to lift a man up from deadness in trespasses and sins, and make him a partaker of that salvation, to hold him in the way of that salvation, and to work out the righteousness of God through him. This is what the people in Galatia had received in receiving the gospel, concerning which it is said that if even an angel should preach any other, he would be under the curse.

But here were those who had gone down to Galatia, and had confused—yes, had even “bewitched”—the people, and would have perverted the pure gospel that the Galatians had first heard and received by the Holy Spirit.

These troublers of the Galatian Christians were “Pharisees which believed.” Remember they were “Pharisees which believed.” They had come from among the Pharisees into the church of Christ. They professed to believe in Jesus, professed to have received the gospel, professed to be Christians. But they were Pharisees before; and they were still Pharisees after they professed to be Christians. They were formalists before, when they were only Pharisees; and now, when they became “Pharisees which believed,” they were still only formalists: even their belief was only a form.

And these were opposed to the gospel. Indeed, it was such a “dry thing” that they could not be content until they had followed Paul everywhere that he went, turning the people away from this gospel that he preached, which was “so dry.” And in perverting the gospel of Christ, they were presenting “another gospel,” another way of salvation. Therefore the Word says:

Galatians 1

⁶ I marvel that you are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel.

“Another gospel”! What is the gospel? It is:

Romans 1

¹⁶ ...the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes,

¹⁷ For therein is the righteousness of God revealed...

What I wish to impress upon you just now is not particularly that the gospel is “the power of God,” but WHY it is the power of God. Why is the gospel the power of God unto salvation? The reason is given in *Romans* 1:16-17. In the sixteenth verse the statement is made that the gospel “is the

power of God unto salvation to every one that believes." The reason is given in the seventeenth verse; and that reason is that "therein is the righteousness of God revealed."

That is to say, the power of the gospel lies in the righteousness of God revealed in the gospel. The power that comes by the gospel to the sinner,—that power that changes his life; that puts in him the new way, and holds him in that way,—that power comes to him in the righteousness of God. And the gospel is the power of God because the righteousness of God revealed therein imparts the power. So the power of God in the gospel lies in the righteousness of God revealed in the gospel; and that righteousness is revealed only to faith, and "from faith to faith."

Well, here come those "Pharisees which believed," preaching "another gospel." These who professed the true gospel become confused, and turned aside unto this "other gospel." Another what? "Another gospel;" another way of salvation; another power unto salvation. And this other power unto salvation must derive from some sort of righteousness whatever power it may have.

But what other power can there be to work salvation, than the power of God? None but my own. So far as my salvation is concerned, there is nobody but God and me. And in this God is dealing with me, and I must deal with God, just as if there was nobody in the universe but God and me. And the true gospel is the power of God unto salvation. Another gospel would be another power unto salvation; and that could be only my own power—the power of self.

Further: since the true gospel derives its power from the righteousness of God therein revealed, "another gospel" must derive whatever power it may have, from some sort of righteousness. It cannot derive its power from the righteousness of God, because it is "another gospel." Being "another gospel," it

must derive its power from another righteousness. And as in this there is no other power than my own, so in this there is no other righteousness than my own. Therefore the only righteousness that could possibly be revealed in this “other gospel” would be self-righteousness.

But self-righteousness is sin. Whosoever has self-righteousness is under the curse. Consequently “another gospel” is indeed “not another,” because it is no gospel at all. It is no gospel at all, because it is no power at all: it is wholly impotency, and is simply the way of perdition.

Such was the question among the Galatians—a question as to whether the true gospel is the one in which the righteousness of God is revealed, or one in which self-righteousness is revealed. That is the question that called forth the book of *Galatians*.

The book of *Galatians* was written especially to show the utter fallacy, the utter destructiveness to all who might receive it, of anything claiming to be the gospel that does not reveal the righteousness of God which is by faith.

Sermon 3: What is Righteousness?

August 21, 1900

Sermon delivered Sabbath, July 28, 1900, in the Tabernacle, Battle Creek, Michigan, and stenographically reported.

THE book of *Galatians* is God's protest of the true gospel against salvation by formalism; against salvation by self-righteousness; against salvation by our own works. It is God's protest forever against all formalism, against all ceremonialism of whatsoever sort.

And that book of *Galatians*, of all the books in the Bible, is present truth today, to Seventh-day Adventists.

- Do you suppose that it is a mere make-up, to fill time with something only to be doing on Sabbaths, that these lessons have been arranged?
- Do you think that it is a mere happen-so that the book of *Galatians* should be brought before Sabbath-schools throughout the world now, to be studied itself, within itself, for just what it says?
- Do you think that it has come about without any of God's thought at all?

I do not suppose you do. I believe that you believe that the Lord has brought it about, that this portion of the Scriptures should be studied now.

Well, then, that itself shows that it is present truth now; because—do not make the mistake of thinking that all the ceremonialism in the world was forsaken when they of the Pharisees and of the Jews, in Paul's day, were left behind. Seventh-day Adventists can be formalists and ceremonialists, just as really as could those "Pharisees which believed" back yonder. I say, They can be.

A man can turn Sabbath-keeping into ceremonialism just as

really as they did. True, they had other, and more, ceremonies than we have; but that makes no difference. We have ceremonies just as really as they had, even though not so many. Have not we the ceremony of baptism? Have not we the ceremony of the Lord's Supper? Have not we the forms of worship—going to church on Sabbath, prayers, singing, etc.? Now, we can turn all that into formalism and ceremonialism, just as really as those other folks did. The principle is the same now as ever.

Bear in mind also that the book of *Galatians* was not given to correct simply a particular form of ceremonialism; it was given to correct the THING. If it had been given to correct only some particular form of ceremonialism, and that was corrected at the time, what then would be the use of that book at the present time? It would not fit any other particular form or ceremony.

But when the book deals only with the thing itself; when it strikes at the very root of ceremonialism in whatever form it could possibly appear,—then the book is forever present truth, and is applicable everywhere and to all people.

Indeed, ceremonialism is the culmination of things in the world, in our day. Therefore the book of *Galatians* is not only present truth to us, but is likewise present truth to the whole world. What do the Scriptures say shall come in the last days?

2 Timothy 3

¹ ...in the last days perilous times shall come.

There is a cause of these perilous times. What is the cause? There are nineteen or twenty causes mentioned; but one of them is that men are:

⁴ ...lovers of pleasures mores than lovers of God,

And another is that they have a:

⁵ ...form of godliness, but [deny] the power thereof.

With the Pharisees in Paul's day—the “Pharisees which believed,” and confused the Galatian Christians—the trouble was that they had the forms of godliness but not the power.

The gospel is “the power of God.” It is right to have the forms which God has ordained, when we first have the power of God. But it is only perdition to have only the forms.

First of all in the gospel of God is the power of God. First of all in that “other gospel” are forms and ceremonies. In that “other gospel” the way is:

“Do this, do that, do the other, and you will be all right.”

The first thing in the gospel of God is:

“BE all right, THEN do this, that, or the other thing, as God calls you to do.”

And right here is where even Seventh-day Adventists are in danger of making a mistake in these times, and with relation to this very thing that is given to us to preach to the world.

You have heard it said that “righteousness is right doing.” It is no such thing—except as a consequence. If you have had the idea that, rightly speaking, primarily and in itself, “righteousness is right doing,” please abandon that idea before you leave the house. Righteousness is not that.

Listen! consider something familiar: you speak of sweetness. Now, in speaking of sweetness, do you, did you ever in your life, mean, or expect, to be understood that sweetness is sweet doing? Is sweetness sweet doing? No. What is it? It is sweet being.

Richness—is that rich doing? As a consequence the doing comes, just as the quality of sweetness will impart sweetness to other things. But sweetness itself is not sweet doing; no more is righteousness itself right doing.

The very construction of the word itself excludes the idea of righteousness being in itself right doing. Is the word “righteous-ing”? No; it is righteous-ness. Does the suffix “ness” signify action? No; never. It signifies quality.

The suffix “ing” signifies action. Sweeten-ing tells of doing something. Sweet-ness tells only of being something. Rightness is being; that signifies quality, essence. For the word “righteousness” is only the lengthened form of the word right-ness, which has descended from “right-ness” through “right-wise-ness” to “right-eous-ness.”

Do you not all now see that there is a difference between righteousness and right doing? It is just the difference between being right and then as a consequence doing right, and being wrong and then trying to do right in order to be right.

There is danger of Seventh-day Adventists falling into the idea that right doing is itself righteousness, rather than its being only the consequence of righteousness; and then going about to do right things, in order to be righteous.

And that is exactly the case of the “Pharisees which believed,” who had confused the Galatians Christians, removing them from the true gospel, “unto another gospel,”—righteousness by works,—righteousness by doing things,—“which is not another,” because it is not a gospel at all.

Of course, if righteousness is to come to me by my doing of things, then, in the nature of things, the more things I do, the more righteousness I shall have. But in all the doing I find not rest nor peace. And so the things that I must do in order to be righteous pile up, and up, until it is so much that I see with despair that I cannot do them all. Then, all that I can say is:

“Well, I know I have not the peace of God: I know that I am not what I ought to be. but I have done my best, and that is the best that I can do. And if that is not enough, I cannot help

it; for I cannot do any better.”

And that is precisely the Laodicean condition:

Revelation 3

¹⁵ I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot; I would that you were cold or hot.

¹⁶ So then because thou are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth.

¹⁷ Because, [in pride of self-righteousness,] you say, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and know not that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.

But that will never do. Therefore to the people today, in those Sabbath-school lessons in the book of *Galatians*, as really as in the book of *Revelation*, it is said:

¹⁸ I counsel you to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that you may be rich; and white raiment, that you may be clothed.

What is the white raiment?

Revelation 19

⁸ And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

It is the righteousness of God by faith which makes saints. He says, “Get it of me.” You cannot get it by your doing anything. It does not come that way. It is the righteousness of God, not of men. It is essence, quality; the character, the nature, of God. Get it of God by receiving it, the free gift of God.

Get this righteousness, and it will impart its blessed quality, its character, to all that God calls upon you to do. Sweetness will impart its quality to whatsoever needs it. And so the righteousness of God, which is the very essence of righteousness, will impart its blessed quality of righteousness to whatsoever it touches in the heart and life of him who needs righteousness.


Oh, let this righteousness touch your heart! Yea, let it dwell in your heart and life by faith. Then righteousness will be imparted to every action you perform, and to all the deeds that come from God to you to do; and thus the righteousness of the law of God will be fulfilled in you, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Let all the people say, Praise the Lord.

Sermon 4: The Philosophy of Galatians

August 28, 1900

Sermon delivered Sabbath, July 28, 1900, in the Tabernacle, Battle Creek, Michigan, and stenographically reported.

UR time is so nearly gone that I can call attention only to another phase of this subject. But I hope that this to which I have called your attention will encourage every soul here to get the principle so that we can have it, every one, every day, as we come into the school, or into the church. Let us not continue for a moment in a way that any of the Sabbath-school lessons, in the book of *Galatians*, or in any other part of the Bible, will be in any sense dry or tedious. If it has been so with any, let it not be so longer.

There is a philosophy in bringing to us now this great principle of the book of *Galatians*. This is in order that we may be able to show to the world the way to the power of God. That is what the Third Angel's Message is. We must learn it ourselves, before we can give it to the world.

There is not only a philosophy in the bringing of the study of this book to us now, but there is a philosophy in the book itself—in the way it is put together in presenting the gospel as it is, and that which annihilates all ceremonialism, root and branch.

Look at it. The first thing in the book, after the greeting, is:

Galatians 1

³ Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ.

Thus speaks that word always to every soul. Can anybody ever grow weary of drinking in the grace of God and his peace, which are poured out from heaven in a mighty stream? Then accept that word, and drink in of the grace of God, and

his peace, in all its fullness,—the peace of God, which passes all understanding. Then that peace will keep your hearts, and will keep your minds, through Christ Jesus. *Philippians* 4:7.

Many persons are distressed in keeping their minds where they would like to have them. They are anxious, and toiling, to keep their heart in the right way. Oh, just take in the grace and the peace of God, which are given to you in the very first thought of the book of *Galatians*, and that “peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” Then your peace shall be “as a river, and your righteousness as the waves of the sea.” *Isaiah* 48:18.

What is the next thought? Oh, it is that he:

Galatians 1

⁴ ...gave himself for our sins...

He gave himself for our sins. For what did he give himself? For my sins? He paid the price for all the world? Did he buy the sins of all the world? He did. Then to whom do the sins of the world belong? To him.

Let us leave out the great world now, and count those in this house. To whom do all the sins of all the people in this house today belong? To him.

Now let us leave out all the others, and let only you and me be counted. To whom do all your sins belong today? Whose are they? They are Christ's. All mine are his; every sin that I ever had, every one that the Lord himself could find in me now,—and he could find a host,—whatever sins could be found by the mighty searching of the Lord, belong to the Lord Jesus, because he paid the price for them—he gave himself for my sins. He paid such a price that I could not ask him to forgo what he paid. He gave himself for my sins; and in that he gave himself for me, sins and all.

That is where many persons mistake. They get it into their heads, somehow,—it is from Satan, of course,—that the Lord will receive them, if only they will separate themselves from their sins, and come to him without sin.

But that is a satanic delusion. We cannot separate ourselves from our sins. We can choose to have it so; but he is the only One who can take away our sins. He bought us and made us his own, sins and all. You belong to him, sins and all. We all belong to him, sins and all. And he can cleanse us from all sin. Only he can do it. We never can. We have all tried it.

Isaiah 48

²² There is no peace, says my God, to the wicked.

Because the sin is still there, and he (the wicked) cannot get rid of it. But when the Lord takes away the sin, and puts his own righteousness in the place of the sin, do you not see that this righteousness, being the very essence, the very quality of God's own character, imparts righteousness to the believer in Jesus? And through him it is manifested to others. That is just what the Lord Jesus can do; that is what he does, for everyone who will let him have what he bought—himself, sins and all.

And what did he do it for?

Galatians 1

⁴ Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world.

Oh, who would not wish to be delivered from this present evil world? Who would not be glad, and who is not glad, if he can be delivered from this present evil world? There is deliverance for every soul in the world. Christ has paid the price. He has done the work. And when we allow him to have what he has paid for, he does deliver.

Then let every soul in the house take this deliverance today, and let the Lord do what he will with his own. He makes us fit

to dwell with him—fit...

Colossians 1

¹² ...to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.

¹³ [He] has delivered us from the powers of darkness, and has translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.

Then he gives us this precious gospel, which an angel from heaven could not improve. And that comes to us “by revelation.” By next Sabbath every teacher can come before his class with that genuine gospel taught to him by revelation of God. It cannot be taught to you by men: “they shall all be taught of God.” *John* 6:45. It must be taught by revelation—the direct revelation of Jesus Christ to the soul.

And how is it done?

Galatians 1

¹⁵ ...it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son IN me.

Colossians 1

²⁷ ...Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Christ in the life, the power of God,—Christ in the life, the wisdom of God,—Christ in the life, “all the fullness of God.” *Ephesians* 3:19. That is this gospel.

And it is all put into the first chapter, to prepare you to see and to receive the truths in the following chapters. And, I pray you, do not pass by the first chapter of *Galatians* without finding the power of God. If you do, you will not be prepared to receive the truths in the chapters that follow, and you will be at sea all the way through.

God has put that book together in such a way that you and I, going through the book, shall be brought into the way of God,—into the way in which he wishes us to go,—to be delivered forever from the very principle, root and branch, of ceremonialism, in whatever way it may manifest itself in the

world.

Then, for your soul's sake, brethren and sisters,—for the sake of the sifting that will come to this whole denomination, through the very study of this book of *Galatians*,—let every one seek the Lord with all the heart, and receive the truth that is given in the lessons before you in the first chapter. Do not go into the second chapter,—do not think of going there; you are not prepared to go there,—until you have received what God has for you in the first chapter.

Then, having received the gospel as given in the first chapter; having received the power of God to deliver from this present evil world; having found God revealing his Son in you,—then you can with joy and ever-increasing light go through the following chapters of the book.

Then let there be such an awakening in this time as God calls for, in this time when the world is sunk in the condition of formalism, of the form of godliness without the power of God. God has raised us up to convey to the world the message of the true gospel,—that gospel which is indeed the power of God, because in it the righteousness of God is revealed. If that is not what we are here for, then we have no place at all. But how can we do that unless we ourselves have in very truth that true gospel, that power unto salvation?

Therefore, to prepare us for the loud cry, the crisis of the message that must be sounded to a world sunk in the form of godliness without the power, the Lord sends to us these studies in *Galatians*, this gospel that is so pure and true that even an angel from heaven could not improve it, that we may first be completely delivered from the form of godliness without the power.

Let us accept and study this gospel. And when it shall be allowed to reign in our everyday lives in everything, our lives will be filled with the power of the Lord in all his grace and all

his goodness, and we shall be saved from all formalism.

Christ in us, the hope of glory, will be revealed; and:

Revelation 10

⁷ ...the mystery of God should be finished, as he has declared to his servants the prophets.

