

# THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE

## GALATIANS

Commentary by **A. R. FAUSSETT**

### INTRODUCTION

THE internal and external evidence for *Paul's authorship* is conclusive. The style is characteristically Pauline. The superscription, and allusions to the apostle of the Gentiles in the first person, throughout the Epistle, establish the same truth (<sup><R00D></sup>Galatians 1:1,13-24 2:1-14). His authorship is also upheld by the unanimous testimony of the ancient Church: compare IRENAEUS [*Against Heresies*, 3,7,2] (<sup><R00D></sup>Galatians 3:19); POLYCARP [*Epistle to the Philippians*, 3] quotes <sup><R00D></sup>Galatians 4:26 6:7; JUSTIN MARTYR, or whoever wrote the *Discourse to the Greeks*, alludes to <sup><R00D></sup>Galatians 4:12 5:20.

The Epistle was written "TO THE CHURCHES OF GALATIA" (<sup><R00D></sup>Galatians 1:2), a district of Asia Minor, bordering on Phrygia, Pontus, Bithynia, Cappadocia, and Paphlagonia. The inhabitants (Gallo-graeci, contracted into Galati, another form of the name Celts) were Gauls in origin, the latter having overrun Asia Minor after they had pillaged Delphi, about 280 B.C. and at last permanently settled in the central parts, thence called Gallo-graecia or Galatia. Their character, as shown in this Epistle, is in entire consonance with that ascribed to the Gallic race by all writers. Caesar [*Commentaries on the Gallic War*, 4,5], "The infirmity of the Gauls is that they are fickle in their resolves and fond of change, and not to be trusted." So Thierry (quoted by ALFORD), "Frank, impetuous, impressible, eminently intelligent, but at the same time extremely changeable, inconstant, fond of show, perpetually quarrelling, the fruit of excessive vanity." They received Paul at first with all joy and kindness; but soon wavered in their allegiance to the Gospel and to him, and hearkened as eagerly now to Judaizing teachers as they had before to him (<sup><R00D></sup>Galatians

4:14-16). The apostle himself had been the first preacher among them (<sup><406></sup>Acts 16:6 <sup><406></sup>Galatians 1:8 4:13; see on <sup><406></sup>Galatians 4:13; “*on account of infirmity of flesh I preached unto you at the first*”: implying that sickness detained him among them); and had then probably founded churches, which at his subsequent visit he “strengthened” in the faith (<sup><403></sup>Acts 18:23). His first visit was about A.D. 51, during his second missionary journey. JOSEPHUS [*Antiquities*, 16.62] testifies that many Jews resided in Ancyra in Galatia. Among these and their brethren, doubtless, as elsewhere, he began his preaching. And though subsequently the majority in the Galatian churches were Gentiles (<sup><406></sup>Galatians 4:8,9), yet these were soon infected by Judaizing teachers, and almost suffered themselves to be persuaded to undergo circumcision (<sup><406></sup>Galatians 1:6 3:1,3 5:2,3 6:12,13). Accustomed as the Galatians had been, when heathen, to the mystic worship of Cybele (prevalent in the neighboring region of Phrygia), and the theosophistic doctrines connected with that worship, they were the more readily led to believe that the full privileges of Christianity could only be attained through an elaborate system of ceremonial symbolism (<sup><406></sup>Galatians 4:9-11 5:7-12). They even gave ear to the insinuation that Paul himself observed the law among the Jews, though he persuaded the Gentiles to renounce it, and that his motive was to keep his converts in a subordinate state, excluded from the full privileges of Christianity, which were enjoyed by the circumcised alone (<sup><401></sup>Galatians 5:11 <sup><406></sup>Galatians 4:16, compare with <sup><407></sup>Galatians 2:17); and that in “becoming all things to all men,” he was an interested flatterer (<sup><401></sup>Galatians 1:10), aiming at forming a party for himself: moreover, that he falsely represented himself as an apostle divinely commissioned by Christ, whereas he was but a messenger sent by the Twelve and the Church at Jerusalem, and that his teaching was now at variance with that of Peter and James, “pillars” of the Church, and therefore ought not to be accepted.

His PURPOSE, then, in writing this Epistle was:

- (1) to defend his apostolic authority (<sup><401></sup>Galatians 1:11-19 2:1-14);
- (2) to counteract the evil influence of the Judaizers in Galatia (<sup><401></sup>Galatians 3:1-4:31), and to show that their doctrine destroyed the very *essence of Christianity*, by lowering its spirituality to an outward ceremonial system;

(3) to give exhortation for the strengthening of Galatian believers in faith towards Christ, and in the fruits of the Spirit (<sup><RB1></sup>Galatians 5:1-6:18). He had already, face to face, testified against the Judaizing teachers (<sup><RB9></sup>Galatians 1:9 4:16 <sup><RB3></sup>Acts 18:23); and now that he has heard of the continued and increasing prevalence of the evil, he writes *with his own hand* (<sup><RB1></sup>Galatians 6:11: a labor which he usually delegated to an amanuensis) this Epistle to oppose it. The sketch he gives in it of his apostolic career confirms and expands the account in Acts and shows his independence of human authority, however exalted. His protest against Peter in <sup><RB4></sup>Galatians 2:14-21, disproves the figment, not merely of papal, but even of that apostle's supremacy; and shows that Peter, save when specially inspired, was fallible like other men.

There is much in common between this Epistle and that to the Romans on the subject of justification by faith only, and not by the law. But the Epistle to the Romans handles the subject in a didactic and logical mode, without any special reference; this Epistle, in a controversial manner, and with special reference to the Judaizers in Galatia.

The STYLE combines the two extremes, sternness. (<sup><RB1></sup>Galatians 1:1-24 3:1-5) and tenderness (<sup><RB9></sup>Galatians 4:19,20), the characteristics of a man of strong emotions, and both alike well suited for acting on an impressible people such as the Galatians were. The beginning is abrupt, as was suited to the urgency of the question and the greatness of the danger. A tone of sadness, too, is apparent, such as might be expected in the letter of a warm-hearted teacher who had just learned that those whom he loved were forsaking his teachings for those of perverters of the truth, as well as giving ear to calumnies against himself.

The TIME OF WRITING was *after* the visit to Jerusalem recorded in <sup><RB5></sup>Acts 15:1, etc.; that is, A.D. 50, if that visit be, as seems probable, identical with that in <sup><RB1></sup>Galatians 2:1. Further, as <sup><RB9></sup>Galatians 1:9 (“as we said *before*”), and <sup><RB9></sup>Galatians 4:16 (“Have [ALFORD] I become your enemy?” namely, at my second visit, whereas I was welcomed by you at my first visit), refer to his second visit (<sup><RB3></sup>Acts 18:23), this Epistle must have been written after the date of that visit (the autumn of A.D. 54). <sup><RB3></sup>Galatians 4:13, “Ye know how ... I preached ... at the first” (*Greek*, “at the former

time”), implies that Paul, at the time of writing, had been *twice* in Galatia; and <sup><400></sup>Galatians 1:6, “I marvel that ye are *so soon* removed,” implies that he wrote not long after having left Galatia for the second time; probably in the early part of *his residence at Ephesus* (<sup><400></sup>Acts 18:23 19:1, etc., from A.D. 54, the autumn, to A.D. 57, Pentecost) [ALFORD]. CONYBEARE and HOWSON, from the similarity between this Epistle and that to the Romans, the same line of argument in both occupying the writer’s mind, think it was *not written till his stay at Corinth* (<sup><400></sup>Acts 20:2,3), during the winter of 57-58, whence he wrote his Epistle to the Romans; and certainly, in the theory of the earlier writing of it from Ephesus, it does seem unlikely that the two Epistles to the Corinthians, so dissimilar, should intervene between those so similar as the Epistles to the Galatians and Romans; or that the Epistle to the Galatians should intervene between the second to the Thessalonians and the first to the Corinthians. The decision between the two theories rests on the words, “so soon.” If these be not considered inconsistent with little more than three years having elapsed since his second visit to Galatia, the argument, from the similarity to the Epistle to the Romans, seems to me conclusive. This to the Galatians seems written on the urgency of the occasion, tidings having reached him at Corinth from Ephesus of the Judaizing of many of his Galatian converts, in an admonitory and controversial tone, to maintain the great principles of Christian liberty and justification by faith only; that to the Romans is a more deliberate and systematic exposition of the same central truths of theology, subsequently drawn up in writing to a Church with which he was personally unacquainted. See on <sup><400></sup>Galatians 1:6, for BIRKS’S view. PALEY [*Horae Paulinae*] well remarks how perfectly adapted the conduct of the argument is to the historical circumstances under which the Epistle was written! Thus, that to the Galatians, a Church which Paul had founded, he puts mainly upon *authority*; that to the Romans, to whom he was not personally known, entirely upon *argument*.

# CHAPTER 1

## ◀️ GALATIANS 1:1-24.

### **SUPERSCRPTION. GREETINGS. THE CAUSE OF HIS WRITING IS THEIR SPEEDY FALLING AWAY FROM THE GOSPEL HE TAUGHT. DEFENSE OF HIS TEACHING: HIS APOSTOLIC CALL INDEPENDENT OF MAN.**

Judaizing teachers had persuaded the Galatians that Paul had taught them the new religion imperfectly, and at second hand; that the founder of their church himself possessed only a deputed commission, the seal of truth and authority being in the apostles at Jerusalem: moreover, that whatever he might profess among them, he had himself at other times, and in other places, given way to the doctrine of circumcision. To refute this, he appeals to the history of his conversion, and to the manner of his conferring with the apostles when he met them at Jerusalem; that so far was his doctrine from being derived from them, or they from exercising any superiority over him, that they had simply assented to what he had already preached among the Gentiles, which preaching was communicated, not by them to him, but by himself to them [PALEY]. Such an apologetic Epistle could not be a later forgery, the objections which it meets only coming out incidentally, not being obtruded as they would be by a forger; and also being such as could only arise in the earliest age of the Church, when Jerusalem and Judaism still held a prominent place.

**1. apostle** — in the earliest Epistles, the two to the Thessalonians, through humility, he uses no title of authority; but associates with him “Silvanus and Timotheus”; yet here, though “brethren” (◀️ Galatians 1:2) are with him, he does not *name* them but puts his own name and apostleship prominent: evidently because his apostolic commission needs now to be vindicated against deniers of it.

**of** — *Greek*, “from.” Expressing the *origin* from which his mission came, “not from *men*,” but from Christ and the Father (understood) as the

source. “By” expresses the immediate operating agent in the call. Not only was the call *from* God as its ultimate source, but *by* Christ and the Father as the immediate agent in calling him (<sup><4025></sup>Acts 22:15 26:16-18). The laying on of Ananias’ hands (<sup><4017></sup>Acts 9:17) is no objection to this; for that was but a sign of the fact, not an assisting cause. So the Holy Ghost calls him specially (<sup><4012></sup>Acts 13:2,3); he was an apostle *before* this special mission.

**man** — singular; to mark the contrast to “Jesus Christ.” The opposition between “Christ” and “man,” and His name being put in closest connection with God the Father, imply His Godhead.

**raised him from the dead** — implying that, though he had not seen Him in His humiliation as the other apostles (which was made an objection against him), he had seen and been *constituted an apostle by Him in His resurrection power* (<sup><4138></sup>Matthew 28:18 <sup><4001></sup>Romans 1:4,5). Compare as to the ascension, the consequence of the resurrection, and the cause of His giving “apostles,” <sup><4011></sup>Ephesians 4:11. He rose again, too, for our *justification* (<sup><4025></sup>Romans 4:25); thus Paul prepares the way for the prominent subject of the Epistle, justification in Christ, not by the law.

**2. all the brethren** — I am not alone in my doctrine; all my colleagues in the Gospel work, travelling with me (<sup><4029></sup>Acts 19:29, Gaius and Aristarchus at Ephesus: <sup><4004></sup>Acts 20:4, Sopater, Secundus, Timotheus, Tychicus, Trophimus, some, or all of these), join with me. Not that these were *joint authors* with Paul of the Epistle: but joined him in the *sentiments* and *salutations*. The phrase, “all the brethren,” accords with a date when he had many travelling companions, he and they having to bear jointly the collection to Jerusalem [CONYBEARE and HOWSON].

**the churches** — Pessinus and Ancyra were the principal cities; but doubtless there were many other churches in Galatia (<sup><4023></sup>Acts 18:23 <sup><4001></sup>1 Corinthians 16:1). He does not attach any honorable title to the churches here, as elsewhere, being displeased at their Judaizing. See First Corinthians; First Thessalonians, etc. The first Epistle of Peter is addressed to Jewish Christians sojourning in Galatia (<sup><4001></sup>1 Peter 1:1), among other places mentioned. It is interesting thus to find the apostle of the circumcision, as well as the apostle of the uncircumcision, once at issue (<sup><4017></sup>Galatians 2:7-15), co-operating to build up the same churches.

3. from ... *from* — Omit the second “from.” The *Greek* joins God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ in closet union, by there being but the one preposition.

**4. gave himself** — (<sup><R121</sup>Galatians 2:20); unto death, as an offering. Found only in this and the Pastoral Epistles. The *Greek* is different in <sup><R125</sup>Ephesians 5:25 (see on <sup><R125</sup>Ephesians 5:25).

**for our sins** — which enslaved us to the present evil world.

**deliver us from this** — *Greek*, “out of the,” etc. The Father and Son are each said to “deliver us,” etc. (<sup><S113</sup>Colossians 1:13): but the Son, not the Father, *gave Himself for us* in order to do so, and make us citizens of a better world (<sup><S113</sup>Philippians 3:20). The Galatians in desiring to return to legal bondage are, he implies, renouncing the *deliverance* which Christ wrought for us. This he more fully repeats in <sup><R113</sup>Galatians 3:13. “Deliver” is the very word used by the Lord as to His deliverance of Paul himself (<sup><R117</sup>Acts 26:17): an undesigned coincidence between Paul and Luke.

**world** — *Greek*, “age”; *system* or *course* of the world, regarded from a religious point of view. The present *age* opposes the “glory” (<sup><R117</sup>Galatians 1:5) of God, and is under the authority of the Evil One. The “ages of ages” (*Greek*, <sup><R117</sup>Galatians 1:5) are opposed to “the present evil age.”

**according to the will of God and our Father** — *Greek*, “of Him who is at once God [the sovereign Creator] and our Father” (<sup><R118</sup>John 6:38,39 10:18, end). Without merit of ours. His sovereignty as “GOD,” and our filial relation to Him as “OUR FATHER,” ought to keep us from blending our own legal notions (as the Galatians were doing) with His will and plan. This paves the way for his argument.

5. *be glory* — rather, as *Greek*, “be *the* glory”; the glory which is peculiarly and exclusively His. Compare *Note*, see on <sup><R118</sup>Ephesians 3:21.

6. Without the usual expressions of thanksgiving for their faith, etc., he vehemently plunges into his subject, zealous for “the glory” of God (<sup><R118</sup>Galatians 1:5), which was being disparaged by the Galatians falling away from the pure Gospel of the “grace” of God.

**I marvel** — implying that he had hoped better things from them, whence his sorrowful surprise at their turning out so different from his expectations.

**so soon** — after my last visit; when I hoped and thought you were untainted by the Judaizing teachers. If this Epistle was written from Corinth, the interval would be a little more than three years, which would be “soon” to have fallen away, if they were apparently sound at the time of his visit. <sup><R01B></sup>Galatians 4:18,20 may imply that he saw no symptom of unsoundness *then*, such as he hears of in them *now*. But *English Version* is probably not correct there. See see on <sup><R01B></sup>Galatians 4:18; <sup><R01D></sup>Galatians 4:20; also see *Introduction*. If from Ephesus, the interval would be not more than one year. BIRKS holds the Epistle to have been written from Corinth after his FIRST visit to Galatia; for this agrees best with the “so soon” here: with <sup><R01B></sup>Galatians 4:18, “It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you.” If they had persevered in the faith during three years of his first absence, and only turned aside after his second visit, they could not be charged justly with adhering to the truth only when he was present: for his first absence was longer than both his visits, and they would have obeyed longer in his “*absence*” than in his “*presence*.” But if their decline had begun immediately after he left them, and before his return to them, the reproof will be just. But see on <sup><R01B></sup>Galatians 4:13.

**removed** — Translate, “are being removed,” that is, ye are *suffering yourselves so soon* (whether from the time of my last visit, or from the time of the first temptation held out to you) [PARAEUS] *to be removed* by Jewish seducers. Thus he softens the censure by implying that the Galatians were tempted by seducers from without, with whom the chief guilt lay: and the present, “ye are *being* removed,” implies that their seduction was only in process of being effected, not that it was actually effected. WAHL, ALFORD, and others take the *Greek* as middle voice. “ye are removing” or “passing over.” “Shifting your ground” [CONYBEARE and HOWSON]. But thus the point of Paul’s oblique reference to their misleaders is lost; and in <sup><R01D></sup>Hebrews 7:12 the *Greek* is used passively, justifying its being taken so here. On the impulsiveness and fickleness of the Gauls (another form of Kel-t-s, the progenitors of the Erse, Gauls,



Cymri, and Belgians), whence the Galatians sprang, see *Introduction* and CAESAR [*Commentaries on the Gallic War*, 3.19].

**from him that called you** — God the Father (<sup><R115></sup>Galatians 1:15 <sup><R18></sup>Galatians 5:8 <sup><R18></sup>Romans 8:30 <sup><R10></sup>1 Corinthians 1:9 <sup><S12></sup>1 Thessalonians 2:12 5:24).

**into** — rather, as *Greek*, “IN the grace of Christ,” as the *element* in which, and the *instrument* by which, God calls us to salvation. Compare *Note*, see on <sup><R15></sup>1 Corinthians 7:15; <sup><R15></sup>Romans 5:15, “the gift by (*Greek*, ‘in’) grace (*Greek*, ‘the grace’) of (the) one man.” “The grace of Christ,” is Christ’s gratuitously purchased and bestowed justification, reconciliation, and eternal life.

**another** — rather, as *Greek*, “a second and *different* gospel,” that is, into a *so-called* gospel, different altogether from the only true Gospel.

**7. another** — A distinct *Greek* word from that in <sup><R16></sup>Galatians 1:6. Though I called it a gospel (<sup><R16></sup>Galatians 1:6), it is not really so. There is really but *one* Gospel, and no *other* gospel.

**but** — Translate, “Only that there are some that trouble you,” etc. (<sup><R17></sup>Galatians 5:10,12). All I meant by the “different gospel” was nothing but a perversion by “some” of the one Gospel of Christ.

**would pervert** — *Greek*, “wish to pervert”; they could not really pervert the Gospel, though they could pervert Gospel professors (compare <sup><R19></sup>Galatians 4:9,17,21 6:12,13 <sup><S13></sup>Colossians 2:18). Though acknowledging Christ, they insisted on circumcision and Jewish ordinances and professed to rest on the authority of other apostles, namely, Peter and James. But Paul recognizes no gospel, save the pure Gospel.

**8. But** — however weighty they may seem “who trouble you.” Translate as *Greek*, “Even though we,” namely, I and the brethren with me, weighty and many as we are (<sup><R18></sup>Galatians 1:1,2). The *Greek* implies a case supposed which never has occurred.

**angel** — in which light ye at first received me (compare <sup><R14></sup>Galatians 4:14 <sup><R11></sup>1 Corinthians 13:1), and whose authority is the highest possible next to that of God and Christ. A new revelation, even though seemingly

accredited by miracles, is not to be received if it contradict the already existing revelation. For God cannot contradict Himself (<sup><B51></sup>Deuteronomy 13:1-3 <sup><A13></sup>1 Kings 13:18 <sup><A24></sup>Matthew 24:24 <sup><A29></sup>2 Thessalonians 2:9). The Judaizing teachers sheltered themselves under the names of the great apostles, James, John, and Peter: “Do not bring these names up to me, for even if an *angel*,” etc. Not that he means, the apostles really supported the Judaizers: but he wishes to show, when the truth is in question, respect of persons is inadmissible [CHRYSOSTOM].

**preach** — that is, “should preach.”

**any other gospel ... than** — The *Greek* expresses not so much “any other gospel *different* from what we have preached,” as, “any gospel *BESIDE* that which we preached.” This distinctly opposes the traditions of the Church of Rome, which are at once *besides* and *against* (the *Greek* includes both ideas) the written Word, our only “attested rule.”

**9. said before** — when we were visiting you (so “before” means, <sup><A22></sup>2 Corinthians 13:2). Compare <sup><A21></sup>Galatians 5:2,3,21. Translate, “If any man *preacheth* unto you any gospel *BESIDE* that which,” etc. Observe the indicative, not the subjunctive or conditional mood, is used, “preacheth,” literally, “furnisheth you with any gospel.” The *fact* is assumed, not merely supposed as a contingency, as in <sup><A18></sup>Galatians 1:8, “preach,” or “should preach.” This implies that he had already observed (namely, during his last visit) the machinations of the Judaizing teachers: but his *surprise* (<sup><A16></sup>Galatians 1:6) *now* at the Galatians being misled by them, implies that they had not apparently been so *then*. As in <sup><A18></sup>Galatians 1:8 he had said, “which we preached,” so here, with an augmentation of the force, “which ye received”; acknowledging that they had truly *accepted it*.

**accused** — The opposite appears in <sup><A18></sup>Galatians 6:16.

**10. For** — accounting for the strong language he has just used.

**do I now** — resuming the “now” of <sup><A16></sup>Galatians 1:9. “Amos I *now* persuading men?” [ALFORD], that is, conciliating. Is what I have *just now* said a sample of men-pleasing, of which I am accused? His adversaries accused him of being an interested flatterer of men, “becoming all things to all men,” to make a party for himself, and so observing the law among the

Jews (for instance, circumcising Timothy), yet persuading the Gentiles to renounce it (<sup><4851></sup>Galatians 5:11) (in order to flatter those, really keeping them in a subordinate state, not admitted to the full privileges which the circumcised alone enjoyed). NEANDER explains the “now” thus: Once, when a Pharisee, I was actuated only by a regard to human authority and to please men (<sup><265></sup>Luke 16:15 <sup><4854></sup>John 5:44), but Now I teach as responsible to God alone (<sup><4003></sup>1 Corinthians 4:3).

**or God?** — Regard is to be had to God alone.

**for if I yet pleased men** — The oldest manuscripts omit “for.” “If I were still pleasing men,” etc. (<sup><4063></sup>Luke 6:26 <sup><4859></sup>John 15:19 <sup><5104></sup>1 Thessalonians 2:4 <sup><5004></sup>James 4:4 <sup><5005></sup>1 John 4:5). On “yet,” compare <sup><4851></sup>Galatians 5:11.

**servant of Christ** — and so pleasing Him in all things (<sup><5009></sup>Titus 2:9 <sup><5022></sup>Colossians 3:22).

**11. certify** — I made known to you as to the Gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man, that is, not *of, by, or from* man (<sup><4001></sup>Galatians 1:1,12). It is *not according* to man; not influenced by mere human considerations, as it would be, if it were of human origin.

**brethren** — He not till now calls them so.

**12.** Translate, “For *not even* did I *myself* (any more than the other apostles) receive it from man, *nor* was I taught it (by man).” “Received it,” implies the absence of labor in acquiring it. “Taught it,” implies the labor of learning.

**by the revelation of Jesus Christ** — Translate, “by revelation of [that is, from] Jesus Christ.” By His revealing it to me. Probably this took place during the three years, in part of which he sojourned in Arabia (<sup><4017></sup>Galatians 1:17,18), in the vicinity of the scene of the giving of the law; a fit place for such a revelation of the Gospel of grace, which supersedes the ceremonial law (<sup><4025></sup>Galatians 4:25). He, like other Pharisees who embraced Christianity, did not at first recognize its independence of the Mosaic law, but combined both together. Ananias, his first instructor, was universally esteemed for his legal piety and so was not likely to have taught him to sever Christianity from the law. This severance was partially recognized after the martyrdom of Stephen. But Paul received it by special

revelation (<sup><4123></sup>1 Corinthians 11:23 15:3 <sup><5045></sup>1 Thessalonians 4:15). A vision of the Lord Jesus is mentioned (<sup><4228></sup>Acts 22:18), at his first visit to Jerusalem (<sup><4018></sup>Galatians 1:18); but this seems to have been subsequent to the revelation here meant (compare <sup><4015></sup>Galatians 1:15-18), and to have been confined to giving a particular command. The vision “fourteen years before” (<sup><4711></sup>2 Corinthians 12:1) was in A.D. 43, still later, six years after his conversion. Thus Paul is an independent witness to the Gospel. Though he had received no instruction from the apostles, but from the Holy Ghost, yet when he met them his Gospel exactly agreed with theirs.

**13. heard** — even before I came among you.

**conversation** — “my former way of life.”

**Jews’ religion** — The term, “*Hebrew*,” expresses the *language*; “*Jew*,” the *nationality*, as distinguished from the Gentiles; “*Israelite*,” the highest title, the religious privileges, as a member of the theocracy.

**the church** — Here singular, marking its unity, though constituted of many particular churches, under the one Head, Christ.

**of God** — added to mark the greatness of his sinful alienation from God (<sup><4359></sup>1 Corinthians 15:19).

**wasted** — laid it waste: the opposite of “building it up.”

**14. profited** — *Greek*, “I was becoming a proficient”; “I made progress.”

**above** — beyond.

**my equals** — *Greek*, “Of mine own age, among my countrymen.”

**traditions of my fathers** — namely, those of the Pharisees, Paul being “a Pharisee, and son of a Pharisee” (<sup><4026></sup>Acts 23:6 26:5). “MY fathers,” shows that it is not to be understood generally of the traditions *of the nation*.

**15. separated** — “set me apart”: in the purposes of His electing love (compare <sup><4095></sup>Acts 9:15 22:14), in order to show in me *His “pleasure*,” which is the farthest point that any can reach in inquiring the causes of his salvation. The actual “separating” or “setting apart” to the work marked out for him, is mentioned in <sup><4032></sup>Acts 13:2 <sup><4001></sup>Romans 1:1. There is an allusion, perhaps, in the way of contrast, to the derivation of Pharisee

from *Hebrew*, “*pharash*,” “separated.” I was once a so-called Pharisee or *Separatist*, but God had *separated* me to something far better.

**from ... womb** — Thus merit in me was out of the question, in assigning causes for His call from <sup><401></sup>Acts 9:11. Grace is the sole cause (<sup><421></sup>Psalms 22:9 71:6 <sup><301></sup>Isaiah 49:1,5 <sup><205></sup>Jeremiah 1:5 <sup><115></sup>Luke 1:15).

**called me** — on the way to Damascus (<sup><403></sup>Acts 9:3-8).

**16. reveal his Son in me** — within me, in my inmost soul, by the Holy Spirit (<sup><421></sup>Galatians 2:20). Compare <sup><402></sup>2 Corinthians 4:6, “shined in our hearts.” The revealing of His Son by me to the Gentiles (so translate for “heathen”) was impossible, unless He had first revealed His Son *in me*; at first on my conversion, but especially at the subsequent revelation from Jesus Christ (<sup><412></sup>Galatians 1:12), whereby I learned the Gospel’s independence of the Mosaic law.

**that I might preach** — the present in the *Greek*, which includes the idea “that I *may* preach Him,” implying an office still *continuing*. This was the main commission. entrusted to him (<sup><417></sup>Galatians 2:7,9).

**immediately** — connected chiefly with “I went into Arabia” (<sup><417></sup>Galatians 1:17). It denotes the sudden fitness of the apostle. So <sup><403></sup>Acts 9:20, “*Straightway* he preached Christ in the synagogue.”

**I conferred not** — *Greek*, “I had not further (namely, in addition to revelation) recourse to ... for the purpose of consulting.” The divine revelation was sufficient for me [BENGE].

**flesh and blood** — (<sup><467></sup>Matthew 16:17).

**17. went I up** — Some of the oldest manuscripts read, “went away.”

**to Jerusalem** — the seat of the apostles.

**into Arabia** — This journey (not recorded in Acts) was during the whole period of his stay at Damascus, called by Luke (<sup><403></sup>Acts 9:23), “many [*Greek*, a considerable number of] days.” It is curiously confirmatory of the legitimacy of taking “many days” to stand for “three years,” that the same phrase exactly occurs in the same sense in <sup><103></sup>1 Kings 2:38,39. This was a country of the *Gentiles*; here doubtless he preached as he did before

and after (<sup><480></sup>Acts 9:20,22) at Damascus: thus he shows the independence of his apostolic commission. He also here had that comparative retirement needed, after the first fervor of his conversion, to prepare him for the great work before him. Compare Moses (<sup><472></sup>Acts 7:29,30). His familiarity with the scene of the giving of the law, and the meditations and revelations which he had there, appear in <sup><402></sup>Galatians 4:24,25 <sup><321></sup>Hebrews 12:18. See on <sup><412></sup>Galatians 1:12. The Lord from heaven communed with him, as He on earth in the days of His flesh communed with the other apostles.

**returned** — *Greek* “returned back again.”

**18. after three years** — dating from my conversion, as appears by the contrast to “immediately” (<sup><416></sup>Galatians 1:16). This is the same visit to Jerusalem as in <sup><426></sup>Acts 9:26, and at this visit occurred the vision (<sup><427></sup>Acts 22:17,18). The incident which led to his leaving Damascus (<sup><425></sup>Acts 9:25 <sup><413></sup>2 Corinthians 11:33) was not the main *cause* of his going to *Jerusalem*. So that there is no discrepancy in the statement here that he went “to see Peter”; or rather, as *Greek*, “to make the acquaintance of”; “to become personally acquainted with.” The two oldest manuscripts read, “Cephas,” the name given Peter elsewhere in the Epistle, the *Hebrew* name; as *Peter* is the *Greek* (<sup><412></sup>John 1:42). Appropriate to the view of him here as the apostle especially of the Hebrews. It is remarkable that Peter himself, in his Epistles, uses the *Greek* name *Peter*, perhaps to mark his antagonism to the Judaizers who would cling to the Hebraic form. He was prominent among the apostles, though James, as bishop of Jerusalem, had the chief authority there (<sup><438></sup>Matthew 16:18).

**abode** — or “tarried” [ELLCOTT].

**fifteen days** — only fifteen days; contrasting with the long period of *three years*, during which, previously, he had exercised an independent commission in preaching: a fact proving on the face of it, how little he owed to Peter in regard to his apostolical authority or instruction. The *Greek* for “to see,” at the same time implies *visiting a person important to know*, such as Peter was. The plots of the Jews prevented him staying longer (<sup><429></sup>Acts 9:29). Also, the vision directing him to depart to the Gentiles, for that the people of Jerusalem would not receive his testimony (<sup><427></sup>Acts 22:17,18).

19. Compare <sup><402></sup>Acts 9:27,28, wherein Luke, as an historian, describes more generally what Paul, the subject of the history, himself details more particularly. The history speaks of “apostles”; and Paul’s mention of a *second* apostle, besides Peter, reconciles the Epistle and the history. At Stephen’s martyrdom, and the consequent persecution, the other ten apostles, agreeably to Christ’s directions, seem to have *soon* (though not *immediately*, <sup><404></sup>Acts 8:14) left Jerusalem to preach elsewhere. James remained in charge of the mother church, as its bishop. Peter, the apostle of the circumcision, was present during Paul’s fifteen days’ stay; but he, too, presently after (<sup><402></sup>Acts 9:32), went on a circuit through Judea.

**James, the Lord’s brother** — This designation, to distinguish him from James the son of Zebedee, was appropriate while that apostle was alive. But before Paul’s second visit to Jerusalem (<sup><401></sup>Galatians 2:1 <sup><405></sup>Acts 15:1-4), he had been beheaded by Herod (<sup><402></sup>Acts 12:2). Accordingly, in the subsequent mention of James here (<sup><401></sup>Galatians 2:9,12), he is not designated by this distinctive epithet: a minute, undesigned coincidence, and proof of genuineness. James was the Lord’s brother, not in our strict sense, but in the sense, “cousin,” or “kinsman” (<sup><403></sup>Matthew 28:10 <sup><407></sup>John 20:17). His brethren are never called “sons of Joseph,” which they would have been had they been the Lord’s brothers strictly. However, compare <sup><408></sup>Psalms 69:8, “I am an alien to *my mother’s children*.” In <sup><409></sup>John 7:3,5, the “brethren” who believed not in Him may mean His *near relations*, not including the two of His brethren, that is, relatives (James and Jude) who were among the Twelve apostles. <sup><404></sup>Acts 1:14, “His brethren,” refer to Simon and Joses, and others (<sup><405></sup>Matthew 13:55) of His kinsmen, who were not apostles. It is not likely there would be two pairs of brothers named alike, of such eminence as James and Jude; the likelihood is that the apostles James and Jude are also the writers of the Epistles, and the brethren of Jesus. James and Joses were sons of Alpheus and Mary, sister of the Virgin Mary.

20. Solemn asseveration that his statement is true that his visit was but for fifteen days and that he saw no apostle save Peter and James. Probably it had been reported by Judaizers that he had received a long course of instruction from the apostles in Jerusalem from the first; hence his earnestness in asserting the contrary facts.

**21. I came into ... Syria and Cilicia** — “preaching the faith” (<sup><4023></sup>Galatians 1:23), and so, no doubt, founding the churches in Syria and Cilicia, which he subsequently confirmed in the faith (<sup><4153></sup>Acts 15:23,41). He probably went first to Caesarea, the main seaport, and thence by sea to Tarsus of Cilicia, his native place (<sup><4080></sup>Acts 9:30), and thence to Syria; Cilicia having its geographical affinities with Syria, rather than with Asia Minor, as the Tarsus mountains separate it from the latter. His placing “Syria” in the order of words before “Cilicia,” is due to Antioch being a more important city than Tarsus, as also to his longer stay in the former city. Also “Syria and Cilicia,” from their close geographical connection, became a generic geographical phrase, the more important district being placed first [CONYBEARE and HOWSON]. This sea journey accounts for his being “unknown by face to the churches of Judea” (<sup><4012></sup>Galatians 1:22). He passes by in silence his *second* visit, with alms, to Judea and Jerusalem (<sup><4013></sup>Acts 11:30); doubtless because it was for a limited and special object, and would occupy but a few days (<sup><4025></sup>Acts 12:25), as there raged at Jerusalem at the time a persecution in which James, the brother of John, was martyred, and Peter was in prison, and James seems to have been the only apostle present (<sup><4027></sup>Acts 12:17); so it was needless to mention this visit, seeing that he could not at such a time have received the instructions which the Galatians alleged he had derived from the primary fountains of authority, the apostles.

**22.** So far was I from being a disciple of the apostles, that I was even *unknown in the churches of Judea* (excepting Jerusalem, <sup><4026></sup>Acts 9:26-29), which were the chief scene of their labors.

**23.** Translate as *Greek*, “They were hearing”: tidings were brought them from time to time [CONYBEARE and HOWSON].

**he which persecuted us in times past** — “our former persecutor” [ALFORD]. The designation by which he was known among Christians still better than by his name “Saul.”

**destroyed** — *Greek*, “was destroying.”

**24. in me** — “in my case.” “Having understood the entire change, and that the former wolf is now acting the shepherd’s part, they received occasion



for joyful thanksgiving to God in respect to me” [THEODORET]. How different, he implies to the Galatians, *their* spirit from *yours!*

## CHAPTER 2

### <K&R GALATIANS 2:1-21.

#### **HIS CO-ORDINATE AUTHORITY AS APOSTLE OF THE CIRCUMCISION RECOGNIZED BY THE APOSTLES. PROVED BY HIS REBUKING PETER FOR TEMPORIZING AT ANTIOCH: HIS REASONING AS TO THE INCONSISTENCY OF JUDAIZING WITH JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.**

1. Translate, “After fourteen years”; namely, from Paul’s conversion inclusive [ALFORD]. In the fourteenth year from his conversion [BIRKS]. The same visit to Jerusalem as in <K&R Acts 15:1-4 (A.D. 50), when the council of the apostles and Church decided that Gentile Christians need not be circumcised. His omitting allusion to that decree is;

- (1) Because his *design* here is to show the Galatians his own independent apostolic authority, whence he was not likely to support himself by their decision. Thus we see that general councils are not above apostles.
- (2) Because he argues the point upon principle, not authoritative decisions.
- (3) The decree did not go the length of the position maintained here: the council did not impose Mosaic ordinances; the apostle maintains that the Mosaic institution itself is at an end.
- (4) The Galatians were Judaizing, not because the Jewish law was imposed by authority of the Church as *necessary to Christianity*, but because they thought it necessary to be observed by those who aspired to *higher perfection* (<K&R Galatians 3:3 4:21). The decree would not at all disprove their view, and therefore would have been useless to quote. Paul meets them by a far more direct confutation, “Christ is of *no effect* unto you whosoever are justified by the law” (<K&R Galatians 5:4), [PALEY].

**Titus ... also** — specified on account of what follows as to him, in <sup><481B></sup>Galatians 2:3. Paul and Barnabas, *and others*, were deputed by the Church of Antioch (<sup><481E></sup>Acts 15:2) to consult the apostles and elders at Jerusalem on the question of circumcision of Gentile Christians.

**2. by revelation** — not from being absolutely dependent on the apostles at Jerusalem, but by independent divine “revelation.” Quite consistent with his at the same time, being a deputy from the Church of Antioch, as <sup><481E></sup>Acts 15:2 states. He by this *revelation* was led to suggest the sending of the deputation. Compare the case of Peter being led by vision, and at the same time by Cornelius’ messengers, to go to Caesarea, <sup><481E></sup>Acts 10:1-22.

**I ... communicated unto them** — namely, “to the apostles and elders” (<sup><481E></sup>Acts 15:2): to the apostles in particular (<sup><481B></sup>Galatians 2:9).

**privately** — that he and the apostles at Jerusalem might decide previously on the principles to be adopted and set forward before the public council (<sup><481E></sup>Acts 15:1-29). It was necessary that the Jerusalem apostles should know beforehand that the Gospel Paul preached to the Gentiles was the same as theirs, and had received divine confirmation in the results it wrought on the Gentile converts. He and Barnabas related to the *multitude*, not the nature of the doctrine they preached (as Paul did privately to the apostles), but only the miracles vouchsafed in *proof of God’s* sanctioning their preaching to the Gentiles (<sup><481E></sup>Acts 15:12).

**to them ... of reputation** — James, Cephas, and John, and probably some of the “elders”; <sup><481B></sup>Galatians 2:6, “those who seemed to be somewhat.”

**lest**, etc. — “lest I should be running, or have run, in vain”; that is, that they might see that I am not running, and have not run, in vain. Paul does not *himself* fear lest he be running, or had run, in vain; but lest he should, if he gave them no explanation, *seem so to them*. His race was the swift-running proclamation of the Gospel to the Gentiles (compare “run,” *Margin*, for “Word ... *have free course*,” <sup><481B></sup>2 Thessalonians 3:1). His running would have been in vain, had circumcision been necessary, since he did not require it of his converts.

**3. But** — So far were they from regarding me as running in vain, that “*not even Titus who was with me, who was a Greek* (and therefore

uncircumcised), was compelled to be circumcised.” So the *Greek* should be translated. The “false brethren,” <sup><410></sup>Galatians 2:4 (“certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed,” <sup><410></sup>Acts 15:5), demanded his circumcision. The apostles, however, constrained by the firmness of Paul and Barnabas (<sup><410></sup>Galatians 2:5), did not compel or insist on his being circumcised. Thus they virtually sanctioned Paul’s course among the Gentiles and admitted his independence as an apostle: the point he desires to set forth to the Galatians. Timothy, on the other hand, as being a proselyte of the gate, and son of a Jewess (<sup><410></sup>Acts 16:1), he circumcised (<sup><410></sup>Acts 16:3). Christianity did not interfere with Jewish usages, regarded merely as social ordinances, though no longer having their religious significance, in the case of Jews and proselytes, while the Jewish polity and temple still stood; after the overthrow of the latter, those usages naturally ceased. To have insisted on Jewish usages for *Gentile* converts, would have been to make them essential parts of Christianity. To have rudely violated them at first in the case of *Jews*, would have been inconsistent with that charity which (in matters indifferent) is made all things to all men, that by all means it may win some (<sup><410></sup>1 Corinthians 9:22; compare <sup><410></sup>Romans 14:1-7,13-23). Paul brought Titus about with him as a living example of the power of the Gospel upon the uncircumcised heathen.

**4. And that** — that is, What I did concerning Titus (namely, by not permitting him to be circumcised) was not from contempt of circumcision, but “on account of the false brethren” (<sup><410></sup>Acts 15:1,24) who, had I yielded to the demand for his being circumcised, would have perverted the case into a proof that I deemed circumcision necessary.

**unawares** — “in an underhand manner brought in.”

**privily** — stealthily.

**to spy out** — as foes in the guise of friends, wishing to destroy and rob us of

**our liberty** — from the yoke of the ceremonial law. If they had found that we circumcised Titus through fear of the apostles, they would have made that a ground for insisting on imposing the legal yoke on the Gentiles.

**bring us into bondage** — The *Greek* future implies the *certainty* and *continuance* of the bondage as the result.

5. *Greek*, “To whom not even for an hour did we yield by subjection.” ALFORD renders the *Greek* article, “with THE subjection required of us.” The sense rather is, We would willingly have yielded for *love* [BENGEL] (if no principle was at issue), but not in the way of *subjection*, where “the truth of the Gospel” (<sup><R24></sup>Galatians 2:14 <sup><S05></sup>Colossians 1:5) was at stake (namely, the fundamental truth of justification by faith only, without the works of the law, contrasted with another Gospel, <sup><R00></sup>Galatians 1:6). Truth precise, unaccommodating, abandons nothing that belongs to itself, admits nothing that is inconsistent with it [BENGEL].

**might continue with you** — Gentiles. We defended for your sakes your true faith and liberties, which *you* are now renouncing.

6. *Greek*, “From those who,” etc. He meant to complete the sentence with “I derived no special advantage”; but he alters it into “they ... added nothing to me.”

**accepteth** — so as to show any partiality; “respecteth no man’s person” (<sup><R09></sup>Ephesians 6:9).

seemed *to be somewhat* — that is, not that they *seemed* to be what they *were not*, but “*were reputed as persons of some consequence*”; not insinuating a doubt but that they were justly so reputed.

**in conference added** — or “imparted”; the same *Greek* as in <sup><R16></sup>Galatians 1:16, “I conferred not with flesh and blood.” As I did not by conference impart to them aught at my conversion, so they now did not impart aught additional to me, above what I already knew. This proves to the Galatians his independence as an apostle.

7. **contrariwise** — on the contrary. So far from *adding any* new light to ME, THEY gave in THEIR adhesion to the new path on which Barnabas and I, by independent revelation, had entered. So far from censuring, they gave a hearty approval to my independent course, namely, the innovation of preaching the Gospel without circumcision to the Gentiles.

**when they saw** — from the effects which I showed them, were “wrought” (<sup><400></sup>Galatians 2:8 <sup><405></sup>Acts 15:12).

**was committed unto me** — *Greek*, “I was entrusted with.”

**gospel of the uncircumcision** — that is, of the Gentiles, who were to be converted without circumcision being required.

**circumcision ... unto Peter** — Peter had originally opened the door to the Gentiles (<sup><400></sup>Acts 10:1-48 15:7). But in the ultimate apportionment of the spheres of labor, the Jews were assigned to him (compare <sup><600></sup>1 Peter 1:1). So Paul on the other hand wrote to the Hebrews (compare also <sup><500></sup>Colossians 4:11), though his main work was among the Gentiles. The non-mention of Peter in the list of names, presciently through the Spirit, given in the sixteenth chapter of Romans, shows that Peter’s residence at Rome, much more primacy, was *then* unknown. The same is palpable from the sphere here assigned to him.

**8. he** — God (<sup><400></sup>1 Corinthians 12:6).

**wrought effectually** — that is, made the preached word efficacious to conversion, not only by sensible miracles, but by the secret mighty power of the Holy Ghost.

**in Peter** — ELLICOTT and others, translate, “*For Peter.*” GROTIUS translates as *English Version*.

**to** — with a view to.

**was mighty** — Translate as before, the *Greek* being the same, “wrought effectually.”

**in me** — “for (or ‘in’) me *also.*”

**9. James** — placed first in the oldest manuscripts, even before Peter, as being bishop of Jerusalem, and so presiding at the council (<sup><405></sup>Acts 15:1-29). He was called “the Just,” from his strict adherence to the law, and so was especially popular among the Jewish party though he did not fall into their extremes; whereas Peter was somewhat estranged from them through his intercourse with the Gentile Christians. To each apostle was assigned the sphere best suited to his temperament: to James, who was tenacious of

the law, the Jerusalem Jews; to Peter, who had opened the door to the Gentiles but who was Judaically disposed, the Jews of the dispersion; to Paul, who, by the miraculous and overwhelming suddenness of his conversion, had the whole current of his early Jewish prejudices turned into an utterly opposite direction, the Gentiles. Not separately and individually, but collectively the apostles together represented Christ, the One Head, in the apostleship. The twelve foundation-stones of various colors are joined together to the one great foundation-stone on which they rest (<sup><4811></sup>1 Corinthians 3:11 <sup><4814></sup>Revelation 21:14,19,20). John had got an intimation in Jesus' lifetime of the admission of the Gentiles (<sup><4821></sup>John 12:20-24).

**seemed** — that is, *were reputed to be* (see on <sup><4810></sup>Galatians 2:2 and <sup><4810></sup>Galatians 2:6) pillars, that is, weighty supporters of the Church (compare <sup><4810></sup>Proverbs 9:1 <sup><4810></sup>Revelation 3:12).

**perceived the grace ... given unto me** — (<sup><4815></sup>2 Peter 3:15).

**gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship** — recognizing me as a *colleague* in the apostleship, and that the Gospel I preached by special revelation to the Gentiles was the same as theirs. Compare the phrase, <sup><4816></sup>Lamentations 5:6 <sup><4817></sup>Ezekiel 17:18.

**heathen** — the Gentiles.

**10. remember the poor** — of the *Jewish* Christians in Judea, then distressed. Paul and Barnabas had already done so (<sup><4812></sup>Acts 11:23-30).

**the same** — the very thing.

**I ... was forward** — or “zealous” (<sup><4817></sup>Acts 24:17 <sup><4815></sup>Romans 15:25 <sup><4810></sup>1 Corinthians 16:1 <sup><4810></sup>2 Corinthians 8:1-9:15). Paul was zealous for good works, while denying justification by them.

**11. Peter** — “Cephas” in the oldest manuscripts Paul's withstanding Peter is the strongest proof that the former gives of the independence of his apostleship in relation to the other apostles, and upsets the Romish doctrine of Peter's supremacy. The apostles were not always inspired; but were so always in *writing* the Scriptures. If then the inspired men who *wrote* them were not invariably at other times infallible, much less were the

uninspired men who kept them. The Christian fathers may be trusted generally as witnesses to facts, but not implicitly followed in matters of opinion.

**come to Antioch** — then the citadel of the Gentile Church: where first the Gospel was preached to *idolatrous Gentiles*, and where the name “Christians” was first given (<sup><4111></sup>Acts 11:20,26), and where Peter is said to have been subsequently bishop. The question at Antioch was not whether the Gentiles were admissible to the Christian covenant without becoming circumcised — that was the question settled at the Jerusalem council just before — but whether the Gentile Christians were to be admitted to *social intercourse with the Jewish Christians* without conforming to the Jewish institution. The Judaizers, soon after the council had passed the resolutions recognizing the equal rights of the Gentile Christians, repaired to Antioch, the scene of the gathering in of the Gentiles (<sup><4111></sup>Acts 11:20-26), to witness, what to Jews would look so extraordinary, the receiving of men to communion of the Church without circumcision. Regarding the proceeding with prejudice, they explained away the force of the Jerusalem decision; and probably also desired to watch whether the *Jewish Christians* among the Gentiles violated the law, which that decision did not verbally sanction *them* in doing, though giving the Gentiles latitude (<sup><4159></sup>Acts 15:19).

**to be blamed** — rather, “(self)-condemned”; his act at one time condemning his contrary acting at another time.

**12. certain** — men: perhaps James’ view (in which he was not infallible, any more than Peter) was that the Jewish converts were still to observe Jewish ordinances, from which he had decided with the council the *Gentiles* should be free (<sup><4159></sup>Acts 15:19). NEANDER, however, may be right in thinking these self-styled delegates from James were not really from him. <sup><4151></sup>Acts 15:24 favors this. “Certain from James,” may mean merely that they came from the Church at Jerusalem under James’ bishopric. Still James’ leanings were to legalism, and this gave him his influence with the Jewish party (<sup><4118></sup>Acts 21:18-26).

**eat with ... Gentiles** — as in <sup><4100></sup>Acts 10:10-20,48, according to the command of the vision (<sup><4113></sup>Acts 11:3-17). Yet after all, this same Peter, through fear of man (<sup><3125></sup>Proverbs 29:25), was faithless to his own so distinctly avowed principles (<sup><4157></sup>Acts 15:7-11). We recognize the same old



nature in him as led him, after faithfully witnessing for Christ, yet for a brief space, to deny Him. “Ever the first to recognize, and the first to draw back from great truths” [ALFORD]. An undesigned coincidence between the Gospels and the Epistle in the consistency of character as portrayed in both. It is beautiful to see how earthly misunderstandings of Christians are lost in Christ. For in <sup><4185></sup>2 Peter 3:15, Peter praises the very Epistles of Paul which he knew contained his own condemnation. Though apart from one another and differing in characteristics, the two apostles were one in Christ.

**withdrew** — *Greek*, “began to withdraw,” etc. This implies a *gradual drawing back*; “separated,” *entire severance*.

**13. the other** — *Greek*, “the rest.”

**Jews** — Jewish Christians.

**dissembled likewise** — *Greek*, “joined in hypocrisy,” namely, in living as though the law were necessary to justification, through fear of man, though they knew from God their Christian liberty of eating with Gentiles, and had availed themselves of it already (<sup><4410></sup>Acts 11:2-17). The case was distinct from that in <sup><4401></sup>1 Corinthians 8:1-10:33 <sup><6101></sup>Romans 14:1-23. It was not a question of liberty, and of bearing with others’ infirmities, but one affecting the essence of the Gospel, whether the Gentiles are to be virtually “compelled to live as do the Jews,” in order to be justified (<sup><4414></sup>Galatians 2:14).

**Barnabas also** — “Even Barnabas”: one least likely to be led into such an error, being with Paul in first preaching to the idolatrous Gentiles: showing the power of bad example and numbers. In Antioch, the capital of Gentile Christianity and the central point of Christian missions, the controversy first arose, and in the same spot it now broke out afresh; and here Paul had first to encounter the party that afterwards persecuted him in every scene of his labors (<sup><4450></sup>Acts 15:30-35).

**14. walked not uprightly** — literally, “straight”: “were not walking with straightforward steps.” Compare <sup><4416></sup>Galatians 6:16.

**truth of the gospel** — which teaches that justification by legal works and observances is inconsistent with redemption by Christ. Paul alone here

maintained the truth against Judaism, as afterwards against heathenism (<sup><S1416></sup>2 Timothy 4:16,17).

**Peter** — “Cephas” in the oldest manuscripts

**before ... all** — (<sup><S1501></sup>1 Timothy 5:20).

**If thou**, etc. — “If thou, although being a Jew (and therefore one who might seem to be more bound to the law than the Gentiles), livest (habitually, without scruple and from conviction, <sup><A150></sup>Acts 15:10,11) as a Gentile (freely eating of every food, and living in other respects also as if legal ordinances in no way justify, <sup><A102></sup>Galatians 2:12), and not as a Jew, *how* (so the oldest manuscripts read, for ‘why’) is it that thou art compelling (virtually, by thine example) the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?” (literally, *to Judaize*, that is, to keep the ceremonial customs of the Jews: What had been formerly obedience to the law, is now mere *Judaism*). The high authority of Peter would constrain the Gentile Christians to regard Judaizing as necessary to all, since Jewish Christians could not consort with Gentile converts in communion without it.

**15, 16.** Connect these verses together, and read with most of the oldest manuscripts “But” in the beginning of <sup><A106></sup>Galatians 2:16: “We (I and thou, Peter) by nature (not by proselytism), Jews, and not sinners as (Jewish language termed the Gentiles) from among the Gentiles, YET (literally, ‘BUT’) knowing that ... even we (resuming the ‘we’ of <sup><A105></sup>Galatians 2:15, ‘we also,’ as well as the Gentile sinners; casting away trust in the law), have believed,” etc.

**16. not justified by the works of the law** — as the GROUND of justification. “The works of the law” are those which have the law for their object — which are wrought to fulfill the law [ALFORD].

**but by** — Translate, “But only (in no other way save) *through* faith in Jesus Christ,” as the MEAN and instrument of justification.

**Jesus Christ** — In the second case, read with the oldest manuscripts, “Christ Jesus,” the *Messiahship* coming into prominence in the case of *Jewish* believers, as “Jesus” does in the first case, referring to the general proposition.

**justified by the faith of Christ** — that is, by Christ, the object of faith, as the ground of our justification.

**for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified** — He rests his argument on this as an axiom in theology, referring to <sup><BEB></sup>Psalm 143:2, “Moses and Jesus Christ; The law and the promise; Doing and believing; Works and faith; Wages and the gift; The curse and the blessing — are represented as diametrically opposed” [BENGE]. The moral law is, in respect to justification, *more legal* than the ceremonial, which was an elementary and preliminary Gospel: So “Sinai” (<sup><BEB></sup>Galatians 4:24), which is more famed for the Decalogue than for the ceremonial law, is made pre-eminently the type of legal bondage. Thus, justification by the law, whether the moral or ceremonial, is excluded (<sup><BEB></sup>Romans 3:20).

17. *Greek*, “But if, seeking to be justified IN (that is, in believing *union with*) Christ (who has in the Gospel theory fulfilled the law for us), we (you and I) ourselves also *were* found (in *your* and *my former* communion with Gentiles) sinners (such as from the Jewish standpoint that now we resume, we should be regarded, since we have cast aside the law, thus having put ourselves in the same category as the Gentiles, who, being without the law, are, in the Jewish view, “sinners,” <sup><BEB></sup>Galatians 2:15), is therefore Christ, the minister of sin?” (Are we to admit the conclusion, in this case inevitable, that Christ having failed to justify us by faith, so has become to us the minister of sin, by putting us in the position of “sinners,” as the Judaic theory, if correct, would make us, along with all others who are “without the law,” <sup><BEB></sup>Romans 2:14 <sup><BEB></sup>1 Corinthians 9:21; and with whom, by eating with them, we have identified ourselves?) The Christian mind revolts from so shocking a conclusion, and so, from the theory which would result in it. The whole sin lies, not with Christ, but with him who would necessitate such a blasphemous inference. But his false theory, though “*seeking*” from Christ, we have not “found” salvation (in contradiction to Christ’s own words, <sup><BEB></sup>Matthew 7:7), but “have been ourselves also (like the Gentiles) *found*” to be “sinners,” by having entered into communion with Gentiles (<sup><BEB></sup>Galatians 2:12).

18. *Greek*, “For if the things which I overthrew (by the faith of Christ), those very things I build up again (namely, legal righteousness, by subjecting myself to the law), I prove myself (literally, ‘I commend

myself”) a transgressor.” Instead of commending yourself as you sought to do (<sup><812></sup>Galatians 2:12, end), you merely commend yourself as a transgressor. The “I” is intended by Paul for *Peter* to take to himself, as it is *his* case, not Paul’s own, that is described. A “transgressor” is another word for “sinner” (in <sup><817></sup>Galatians 2:17), for “sin is the *transgression* of the law.” You, Peter, by now asserting the law to be obligatory, are proving yourself a “sinner,” or “transgressor,” in your having set it aside by living as the Gentiles, and with them. Thus you are debarred by transgression from justification by the law, and you debar yourself from justification by Christ, since in your theory He becomes a minister of sin.

**19.** Here Paul seems to pass from his *exact words* to Peter, to the *general purport* of his argument on the question. However, his direct address to the Galatians seems not to be resumed till <sup><817></sup>Galatians 3:1, “O foolish Galatians,” etc.

**For** — But I am not a “transgressor” by forsaking the law. “For,” etc. Proving his indignant denial of the consequence that “Christ is the minister of sin” (<sup><817></sup>Galatians 2:17), and of the premises from which it would follow. Christ, so far from being the minister of sin and death, is the establisher of righteousness and life. I am entirely in Him [BENGEL].

**I** — here emphatical. *Paul himself*, not *Peter*, as in the “I” (<sup><818></sup>Galatians 2:18).

**through the law** — which was my “schoolmaster to bring me to Christ” (<sup><818></sup>Galatians 3:24); both by its terrors (<sup><818></sup>Galatians 3:13 <sup><818></sup>Romans 3:20) driving me to Christ, as the refuge from God’s wrath against sin, and, when spiritually understood, teaching that itself is not permanent, but must give place to Christ, whom it prefigures as its scope and end (<sup><818></sup>Romans 10:4); and drawing me to Him by its promises (in the prophecies which form part of the Old Testament law) of a better righteousness, and of God’s law written in the heart (<sup><818></sup>Deuteronomy 18:15-19 <sup><818></sup>Jeremiah 31:33 <sup><818></sup>Acts 10:43).

**am dead to the law** — literally, “I died to the law,” and so *am* dead to it, that is, am passed from under its power, in respect to non-justification or condemnation (<sup><818></sup>Colossians 2:20 <sup><818></sup>Romans 6:14 7:4,6); just as a woman, once married and bound to a husband, ceases to be so bound to him when

death interposes, and may be lawfully married to another husband. So by believing union to Christ in His death, we, being considered dead with Him, are severed from the law's past power over us (compare <sup><864></sup>Galatians 6:14 <sup><819></sup>1 Corinthians 7:39 <sup><806></sup>Romans 6:6-11 <sup><8124></sup>1 Peter 2:24).

**live unto God** — (<sup><861></sup>Romans 6:11 <sup><855></sup>2 Corinthians 5:15 <sup><800></sup>1 Peter 4:1,2).

**20. I am crucified** — literally, “I have been crucified with Christ.” This more particularizes the foregoing. “I am dead” (<sup><819></sup>Galatians 2:19 <sup><8180></sup>Philippians 3:10).

**nevertheless I live; yet not I** — *Greek*, “nevertheless I live, no longer (indeed) I.” Though crucified I live; (and this) no longer that old man such as I once was (compare <sup><807></sup>Romans 7:17). No longer Saul the Jew (<sup><854></sup>Galatians 5:24 <sup><8181></sup>Colossians 3:11, but “another man”; compare <sup><8006></sup>1 Samuel 10:6). ELLICOTT and others translate, “*And it is no longer I that live, but Christ that liveth in me.*” But the plain antithesis between “crucified” and “live,” requires the translation, “nevertheless.”

**the life which I now live** — as contrasted with my life before conversion.

**in the flesh** — My life seems to be a mere animal life “in the flesh,” but this is not my true life; “it is but the mask of life under which lives another, namely, Christ, who is my true life” [LUTHER].

**I live by the faith**, etc. — *Greek*, “IN faith (namely), that of (that is, which rests on) the Son of God.” “In faith,” answers by contrast to “in the flesh.” *Faith*, not *the flesh*, is the real element in which I live. The phrase, “the Son of God,” reminds us that His Divine Sonship is the source of His life-giving power.

**loved me** — His eternal gratuitous love is the link that unites me to the Son of God, and His “giving Himself for me,” is the strongest proof of that love.

**21. I do not frustrate the grace of God** — I do not *make it void*, as thou, Peter, art doing by Judaizing.

**for** — justifying the strong expression “frustrate,” or “make void.”

**is dead in vain** — *Greek*, “Christ died needlessly,” or “without just cause.” Christ’s having died, shows that the law has no power to justify us; for if the law can justify or make us righteous, the death of Christ is superfluous [CHRYSOSTOM].

# CHAPTER 3

## <R1B GALATIANS 3:1-29.

**REPROOF OF THE GALATIANS FOR ABANDONING FAITH FOR LEGALISM. JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH VINDICATED: THE LAW SHOWN TO BE SUBSEQUENT TO THE PROMISE: BELIEVERS ARE THE SPIRITUAL SEED OF ABRAHAM, WHO WAS JUSTIFIED BY FAITH. THE LAW WAS OUR SCHOOLMASTER TO BRING US TO CHRIST, THAT WE MIGHT BECOME CHILDREN OF GOD BY FAITH.**

**1. that ye should not obey the truth** — omitted in the oldest manuscripts.

**bewitched** — fascinated you so that you have lost your wits. THEMISTIUS says the Galatians were naturally very acute in intellect. Hence, Paul wonders they could be so misled in this case.

**you** — emphatical. “You, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been graphically set forth (literally, *in writing*, namely, by vivid *portraiture* in preaching) among you, crucified” (so the sense and *Greek* order require rather than *English Version*). As Christ was “crucified,” so ye ought to have been by faith “*crucified* with Christ,” and so “dead to the law” (<R1B Galatians 2:19,20). Reference to the “eyes” is appropriate, as *fascination* was supposed to be exercised through the eyes. The sight of Christ crucified ought to have been enough to counteract all fascination.

**2.** “Was it by the works of the law that ye received the Spirit (manifested by outward miracles, <R1B Galatians 3:5 <R1C Mark 16:17 <R1D Hebrews 2:4; and by spiritual graces, <R1E Galatians 3:14 <R1F Galatians 4:5,6 <R1G Ephesians 1:13), or by the hearing of faith?” The “only” implies, “I desire, omitting other arguments, to rest the question on *this alone*”; I who was your *teacher*, desire now to “learn” this one thing from you. The epithet “Holy” is not prefixed to “Spirit” because that epithet is a joyous one, whereas this Epistle is stern and reproving [BENGEL].

**hearing of faith** — Faith consists not in *working*, but in *receiving* (<sup><500F</sup>Romans 10:16,17).

**3. begun** — the Christian life (<sup><300F</sup>Philippians 1:6).

**in the Spirit** — Not merely was Christ crucified “graphically set forth” in my preaching, but also “the Spirit” confirmed the word preached, by imparting His spiritual gifts. “Having thus begun” with the receiving His *spiritual* gifts, “are ye now *being* made perfect” (so the *Greek*), that is, are ye *seeking* to be made perfect with “fleshly” ordinances of the law? [ESTIUS]. Compare <sup><800B</sup>Romans 2:28 <sup><500B</sup>Philippians 3:3 <sup><500C</sup>Hebrews 9:10. Having begun in the Spirit, that is, the Holy Spirit ruling your spiritual life as its “essence and active principle” [ELLICOTT], in contrast to “the flesh,” the element in which the law works [ALFORD]. Having begun your Christianity in the Spirit, that is, in the divine life that proceeds from faith, are ye seeking after something higher still (the perfecting of your Christianity) in the sensuous and the earthly, which cannot possibly elevate the inner life of the Spirit, namely, outward ceremonies? [NEANDER]. No doubt the Galatians thought that they were going more deeply into the Spirit; for the flesh may be easily mistaken for the Spirit, even by those who have made progress, unless they continue to maintain a pure faith [BENGE].

**4. Have ye suffered so many things** — namely, persecution from Jews and from unbelieving fellow countrymen, incited by the Jews, at the time of your conversion.

**in vain** — *fruitlessly, needlessly*, since ye might have avoided them by professing Judaism [GROTIUS]. Or, shall ye, by falling from grace, lose the reward promised for all your sufferings, so that they shall be “in vain” (<sup><400H</sup>Galatians 4:11 <sup><450D</sup>1 Corinthians 15:2,17-19,29-32 <sup><500E</sup>2 Thessalonians 1:5-7 <sup><600B</sup>2 John 1:8)?

**yet** — rather, “If it be *really* (or ‘indeed’) in vain” [ELLICOTT]. “If, as it must be, what I have said, ‘in vain,’ is really the fact” [ALFORD]. I prefer understanding it as a mitigation of the preceding words. I hope better things of you, for I trust you will return from legalism to grace; if *so*, as I confidently expect, you will not have “suffered so many things in vain”



[ESTIUS]. For “God has given you the Spirit and has wrought mighty works among you” (<sup><KRF></sup>Galatians 3:5 <sup><KRF></sup>Hebrews 10:32-36) [BENGEL].

**5. He ... that ministereth** — or “supplieth,” God (<sup><KRF></sup>2 Corinthians 9:10). He who *supplied and supplies* to you the Spirit *still*, to the present time. These miracles do not prove grace to be in the heart (<sup><KRF></sup>Mark 9:38,39). He speaks of these miracles as a matter of *unquestioned notoriety* among those addressed; an undesigned proof of their genuineness (compare <sup><KRF></sup>1 Corinthians 12:1-31).

**worketh miracles among you** — rather, “IN you,” as <sup><KRF></sup>Galatians 2:8 <sup><KRF></sup>Matthew 14:2 <sup><KRF></sup>Ephesians 2:2 <sup><KRF></sup>Philippians 2:13; at your conversion and since [ALFORD].

**doeth he it by the works of the law** — that is, as a consequence *resulting from* (so the *Greek*) the works of the law (compare <sup><KRF></sup>Galatians 3:2). This cannot be because the law was then unknown to you when you received those gifts of the Spirit.

**6.** The answer to the question in <sup><KRF></sup>Galatians 3:5 is here taken for granted, *It was by the hearing of faith*: following this up, he says, “Even as Abraham *believed*,” etc. (<sup><KRF></sup>Genesis 15:4-6 <sup><KRF></sup>Romans 4:3). God supplies unto you the Spirit as the result of faith, not works, just as Abraham obtained justification by faith, not by works (<sup><KRF></sup>Galatians 3:6,8,16 <sup><KRF></sup>Galatians 4:22,26,28). Where justification is, there the Spirit is, so that if the former comes *by faith*, the latter must also.

**7. they which are of faith** — as the source and starting-point of their spiritual life. The same phrase is in the *Greek* of <sup><KRF></sup>Romans 3:26.

**the same** — *these, and these alone*, to the exclusion of all the other descendants of Abraham.

**children** — *Greek*, “sons” (<sup><KRF></sup>Galatians 3:29).

**8. And** — *Greek*, “Moreover.”

**foreseeing** — One great excellency of Scripture is, that in it all points liable ever to be controverted, are, with prescient wisdom, decided in the most appropriate language.

**would justify** — rather, “justifieth.” Present indicative. It is now, and at all times, God’s *one* way of justification.

**the heathen** — rather, “the Gentiles”; or “the nations,” as the same *Greek* is translated at the end of the verse. God justifieth the *Jews*, too, “by faith, not by works.” But he specifies *the Gentiles* in particular here, as it was *their* case that was in question, the Galatians being Gentiles.

**preached before the gospel** — “announced beforehand the Gospel.” For the “promise” was substantially the Gospel by anticipation. Compare <sup><R86></sup>John 8:56 <sup><R00></sup>Hebrews 4:2. A proof that “the old fathers did not look only for transitory promises” [Article VII, Church of England]. Thus the Gospel, in its essential germ, is older than the law though the full development of the former is subsequent to the latter.

**In thee** — not “in thy seed,” which is a point not here raised; but strictly “in thee,” as followers of thy faith, it having first shown the way to justification before God [ALFORD]; or “in thee,” as Father of the promised seed, namely, Christ (<sup><R16></sup>Galatians 3:16), who is the Object of faith (<sup><D28></sup>Genesis 22:18 <sup><D17></sup>Psalms 72:17), and imitating thy faith (see on <sup><R09></sup>Galatians 3:9).

**all nations** — or as above, “all *the Gentiles*” (<sup><R18></sup>Genesis 12:3 18:18 22:18).

**be blessed** — an act of grace, not something earned by works. The blessing of justification was to Abraham by faith in the promise, not by works. So to those who follow Abraham, the father of the faithful, the blessing, that is, justification, comes purely by faith in Him who is the subject of the promise.

**9. they** — and they alone.

**of faith** — (See on <sup><R07></sup>Galatians 3:7, beginning).

**with** — together with.

**faithful** — implying what it is in which they are “blessed together with him,” namely, faith, the prominent feature of his character, and of which the result to all who like him have it, is justification.

**10.** Confirmation of <sup><818></sup>Galatians 3:9. They who depend on the works of the law cannot share the blessing, for they are under the curse “written,” <sup><872></sup>Deuteronomy 27:26, *Septuagint*. PERFECT *obedience* is required by the words, “in all things.” CONTINUAL *obedience* by the word, “continueth.” No man renders this obedience (compare <sup><818></sup>Romans 3:19,20). It is observable, Paul quotes Scripture to the Jews who were conversant with it, as in Epistle to the Hebrews, as *said* or *spoken*; but to the Gentiles, as *written*. So Matthew, writing for Jews, quotes it as “said,” or “spoken”; Mark and Luke, writing for Gentiles, as “written” (<sup><402></sup>Matthew 1:22 <sup><800></sup>Mark 1:2 <sup><412></sup>Luke 2:22,23) [TOWNSON].

**11. by the law** — *Greek*, “IN the law.” Both *in* and *by* are included. The syllogism in this verse and <sup><818></sup>Galatians 3:12, is, according to Scripture, “The just shall live by faith.” But the law is not of faith, but of doing, or works (that is, does not make faith, but works, the conditional ground of justifying). Therefore “in,” or “by the law, no man is justified before God” (whatever the case may be *before men*, <sup><800></sup>Romans 4:2) — not even if he could, which he cannot, keep the law, because the Scripture element and conditional mean of justification is *faith*.

**The just shall live by faith** — (<sup><817></sup>Romans 1:17 <sup><810></sup>Habakkuk 2:4). Not as BENGEL and ALFORD, “He who is just by faith shall live.” The *Greek* supports *English Version*. Also the contrast is between “live *by faith*” (namely, as the ground and source of his justification), and “live *in them*,” namely, in his doings or works (<sup><818></sup>Galatians 3:12), as the *conditional element wherein* he is justified.

**12. doeth** — Many depended on the law although they did not keep it; but without doing, saith Paul, it is of no use to them (<sup><813></sup>Romans 2:13,17,23 10:5).

**13.** Abrupt exclamation, as he breaks away impatiently *from* those who would involve us again in the curse of the *law*, by seeking justification in it, *to* “*Christ*,” who “has redeemed us from its curse.” The “us” refers primarily to the Jews, to whom the law principally appertained, in contrast to “the Gentiles” (<sup><814></sup>Galatians 3:14; compare <sup><815></sup>Galatians 4:3,4). But it is not *restricted* solely to the Jews, as ALFORD thinks; for these are the representative people of the world at large, and their “law” is the embodiment of what God requires of the whole world. The curse of its

non-fulfillment affects the Gentiles through the Jews; for the law represents that righteousness which God requires of all, and which, since the Jews failed to fulfill, the Gentiles are equally unable to fulfill.

<sup><RB0</sup>Galatians 3:10, “As many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse,” refers plainly, not to *the Jews only*, but to all, even Gentiles (as the Galatians), who seek justification by the law. The Jews’ law represents the universal law which condemned the Gentiles, though with less clear consciousness on their part (<sup><RB1</sup>Romans 2:1-29). The revelation of God’s “wrath” by the law of conscience, in some degree prepared the Gentiles for appreciating redemption through Christ when revealed. The curse had to be removed from off the heathen, too, as well as the Jews, in order that the blessing, through Abraham, might flow to them. Accordingly, the “we,” in “that *we* might receive the promise of the Spirit,” plainly refers to both Jews and Gentiles.

**redeemed us** — *bought us off* from our former bondage (<sup><RB2</sup>Galatians 4:5), and “from the curse” under which all lie who trust to the law and the works of the law for justification. The Gentile Galatians, by putting themselves under the law, were involving themselves in the curse from which Christ has redeemed the Jews primarily, and through them the Gentiles. The ransom price He paid was His own precious blood (<sup><RB3</sup>1 Peter 1:18,19; compare <sup><RB4</sup>Matthew 20:28 <sup><RB5</sup>Acts 20:28 <sup><RB6</sup>1 Corinthians 6:20 7:23 <sup><RB7</sup>1 Timothy 2:6 <sup><RB8</sup>2 Peter 2:1 <sup><RB9</sup>Revelation 5:9).

**being made** — *Greek*, “having become.”

**a curse for us** — Having become what we were, *in our behalf*, “a curse,” that we might cease to be a curse. Not merely *accursed* (in the concrete), but *a curse* in the abstract, *bearing the universal curse of the whole human race*. So <sup><RB10</sup>2 Corinthians 5:21, “Sin for us,” not *sinful*, but bearing the whole sin of our race, regarded as *one* vast aggregate of sin. See Note there. “Anathema” means “set apart to God,” to His glory, but to the person’s own destruction. “*Curse*,” an execration.

**written** — (<sup><RB11</sup>Deuteronomy 21:23). Christ’s bearing the *particular* curse of hanging on the tree, is a sample of the “general” curse which He representatively bore. Not that the Jews put to death malefactors by hanging; but *after* having put them to death otherwise, in order to brand them with peculiar ignominy, they *hung* the bodies on a tree, and such

malefactors were accursed by the law (compare <sup><4RT></sup>Acts 5:30 10:39). God's providence ordered it so that to fulfill the prophecy of the curse and other prophecies, Jesus should be crucified, and so *hang* on the tree, though that death was not a Jewish mode of execution. The Jews accordingly, in contempt, call Him *Tolvi*, "the *hanged* one," and Christians, "worshippers of the hanged one"; and make it their great objection that He died the accursed death [TRYPHO, in *Justin Martyr*, p. 249] (<sup><4RT></sup>1 Peter 2:24). Hung between heaven and earth as though unworthy of either!

**14.** The intent of "Christ becoming a curse for us"; "To the end that upon the Gentiles the blessing of Abraham (that is, *promised to Abraham*, namely, justification by faith) might come in Christ Jesus" (compare <sup><4RT></sup>Galatians 3:8).

**that we might receive the promise of the Spirit** — the promised Spirit (<sup><4RT></sup>Joel 2:28,29 <sup><4RT></sup>Luke 24:49). This clause follows not the clause immediately preceding (for *our receiving the Spirit* is not the result of the *blessing of Abraham coming on the Gentiles*), but "Christ hath redeemed us," etc.

**through faith** — not by works. Here he resumes the thought in <sup><4RT></sup>Galatians 3:2. "The Spirit from without, kindles within us some spark of faith Whereby we lay hold of Christ, and even of the Spirit Himself, that He may dwell within us" [FLACIUS].

**15. I speak after the manner of men** — I take an illustration from a merely human transaction of everyday occurrence.

**but a man's covenant** — whose purpose it is far less important to maintain.

**if it be confirmed** — when once it hath been ratified.

**no man disannulleth** — "none setteth aside," not even the author himself, much less any second party. None does so who acts in common equity. Much less would the righteous God do so. *The law* is here, by personification, regarded as a second person, distinct from, and subsequent to, *the promise of God*. *The promise* is everlasting, and more peculiarly belongs to God. *The law* is regarded as something extraneous, afterwards introduced, exceptional and temporary (<sup><4RT></sup>Galatians 3:17-19,21-24).

**addeth** — None addeth new conditions “making” the covenant “of none effect” (<sup>(K17)</sup>Galatians 3:17). So legal Judaism could make no alteration in the fundamental relation between God and man, already established by the promises to Abraham; it could not add as a new condition the observance of the law, in which case the fulfillment of the promise would be attached to a condition impossible for man to perform. The “covenant” here is one of free grace, a *promise* afterwards carried into effect in the Gospel.

**16.** This verse is parenthetical. The covenant of promise was not “spoken” (so *Greek* for “made”) to Abraham alone, but “to Abraham and his seed”; to the latter especially; and this means Christ (and that which is inseparable from Him, the *literal Israel*, and the *spiritual*, His body, the Church). Christ not having come when the law was given, the covenant could not have been then fulfilled, but awaited the coming of Him, the Seed, to whom it was spoken.

**promises** — plural, because the same promise was often repeated (<sup>(K12)</sup>Genesis 12:3,7 15:5,18 17:7 22:18), and because it involved many things; earthly blessings to the literal children of Abraham in Canaan, and spiritual and heavenly blessings to his spiritual children; but both promised to Christ, “the Seed” and representative Head of the literal and spiritual Israel alike. In the spiritual seed there is no distinction of Jew or *Greek*; but to the literal seed, the promises still in part remain to be fulfilled (<sup>(K12)</sup>Romans 11:26). The covenant was not made with “many” seeds (which if there had been, a pretext might exist for supposing there was one seed before the law, another under the law; and that those sprung from one seed, say the Jewish, are admitted on different terms, and with a higher degree of acceptability, than those sprung from the Gentile seed), but with the one seed; therefore, the promise that in Him “all the families of the earth shall be blessed” (<sup>(K12)</sup>Genesis 12:3), joins in this one Seed, Christ, Jew and Gentile, as fellow heirs on the same terms of acceptability, namely, by grace through faith (<sup>(K12)</sup>Romans 4:13); not to some by promise, to others by the law, but to all alike, circumcised and uncircumcised, constituting but one seed in Christ (<sup>(K12)</sup>Romans 4:16). The law, on the other hand, contemplates the Jews and Gentiles as distinct seeds. God makes a covenant, but it is one of promise; whereas the law is a covenant of works. Whereas the law brings in a mediator, a third party (<sup>(K12)</sup>Galatians 3:19,20), God makes His covenant of promise with the one seed, Christ (<sup>(K12)</sup>Genesis

17:7), and embraces others only as they are identified with, and represented by, Christ.

**one ... Christ** — not in the exclusive sense, the man Christ *Jesus*, but “Christ” (*Jesus* is not added, which would limit the meaning), including *His people* who are *part of Himself*, the Second Adam, and Head of redeemed humanity. <sup><RB5></sup>Galatians 3:28,29 prove this, “Ye are all ONE in Christ Jesus” (Jesus is added here as the person is indicated). “And if ye be Christ’s, ye are Abraham’s SEED, heirs according to *the promise*.”

**17. this I say** — “this is what I mean,” by what I said in <sup><RB5></sup>Galatians 3:15.

**continued ... of God** — “ratified by God” (<sup><RB5></sup>Galatians 3:15).

**in Christ** — rather, “unto Christ” (compare <sup><RB6></sup>Galatians 3:16). However, *Vulgate* and the old Italian versions translate as *English Version*. But the oldest manuscripts omit the words altogether.

**the law which was** — *Greek*, “which came into existence four hundred thirty years after” (<sup><RB4></sup>Exodus 12:40,41). He does not, as in the case of “the covenant,” add “enacted by God” (<sup><RB7></sup>John 1:17). The dispensation of “the promise” began with the call of Abraham from Ur into Canaan, and ended on the last night of his grandson Jacob’s sojourn in Canaan, the *land of promise*. The dispensation of the law, which engenders bondage, was beginning to draw on from the time of his entrance into Egypt, the land of bondage. It was to Christ in him, as in his grandfather Abraham, and his father Isaac, not to him or them as persons, the promise was spoken. On the day following the last repetition of the promise orally (<sup><RB10></sup>Genesis 46:1-6), at Beer-sheba, Israel passed into Egypt. It is from the end, not from the beginning of the dispensation of promise, that the interval of four hundred thirty years between it and the law is to be counted. At Beer-sheba, after the covenant with Abimelech, Abraham called on the everlasting God, and the well was confirmed to him and his seed as an everlasting possession. Here God appeared to Isaac. Here Jacob received the promise of the blessing, for which God had called Abraham out of Ur, repeated for the last time, on the last night of his sojourn in the land of promise.

**cannot** — *Greek*, “doth not disannul.”

**make ... of none effect** — The promise would become so, if the power of conferring the inheritance be transferred from it to the law (<sup><BIB></sup>Romans 4:14).

**18. the inheritance** — all the blessings to be inherited by Abraham’s literal and spiritual children, according to the promise made to him and to his Seed, Christ, justification and glorification (<sup><BIB></sup>Galatians 4:7 <sup><BIB></sup>Romans 8:17 <sup><BIB></sup>1 Corinthians 6:9).

**but God**, etc. — The *Greek* order requires rather, “But to Abraham it was by promise that God hath given it.” The conclusion is, *Therefore the inheritance is not of, or from the law* (<sup><BIB></sup>Romans 4:14).

**19.** “Wherefore then serveth the law?” as it is of no avail for justification, is it either useless, or contrary to the covenant of God? [CALVIN].

**added** — to the original covenant of promise. This is not inconsistent with <sup><BIB></sup>Galatians 3:15, “No man addeth thereto”; for there the kind of *addition* meant, and therefore denied, is one that would add *new conditions*, inconsistent with the grace of the covenant of promise. The law, though misunderstood by the Judaizers as doing so, was really added for a different purpose, namely, “because of (or as the *Greek*, ‘for the sake of’) the transgressions,” that is, to bring out into clearer view *the transgressions* of it (<sup><BIB></sup>Romans 7:7-9); to make men more fully conscious of their “sins,” by being perceived as *transgressions of the law*, and so to make them long for the promised Savior. This accords with <sup><BIB></sup>Galatians 3:23,24 <sup><BIB></sup>Romans 4:15. The meaning can hardly be “*to check* transgressions,” for the law rather stimulates the corrupt heart to disobey it (<sup><BIB></sup>Romans 5:20 7:13).

**till the seed** — *during the period up to the time when the seed came*. The law was a preparatory dispensation for the Jewish nation (<sup><BIB></sup>Romans 5:20; *Greek*, “the law came in *additionally* and *incidentally*”), intervening between the promise and its fulfillment in Christ.

**come** — (Compare “faith *came*,” <sup><BIB></sup>Galatians 3:23).

**the promise** — (<sup><BIB></sup>Romans 4:21).

**ordained** — *Greek*, “constituted” or “disposed.”



**by angels** — as the *instrumental enactors* of the law [ALFORD] God delegated the law to angels as something rather alien to Him and severe (<sup><405></sup>Acts 7:53 <sup><400></sup>Hebrews 2:2,3; compare <sup><400></sup>Deuteronomy 33:2, “He came with ten thousands of saints,” that is, angels, <sup><400></sup>Psalms 68:17). He reserved “the promise” to Himself and dispensed it according to His own goodness.

**in the hand of a mediator** — namely, Moses. <sup><400></sup>Deuteronomy 5:5, “I stood *between* the Lord and you”: the very definition of a mediator. Hence the phrase often recurs, “By the hand of Moses.” In the giving of the law, the “angels” were representatives of God; Moses, as mediator, represented the people.

**20.** “Now a mediator cannot be of one (but must be of *two* parties whom he mediates between); but God is one” (not two: owing to His essential *unity* not admitting of an intervening party between Him and those to be blessed; but as the ONE Sovereign, His own representative, giving the blessing *directly* by *promise* to Abraham, and, in its fulfillment, to Christ, “the Seed,” without new condition, and without a mediator such as the law had). The conclusion understood is, *Therefore a mediator cannot appertain to God*; and consequently, the law, with its inseparable appendage of a mediator, cannot be the normal way of dealing of God, the one, and unchangeable God, who dealt with Abraham by *direct* promise, as a sovereign, not as one forming a compact with another party, with conditions and a mediator attached thereto. God would bring man into immediate communion with Him, and not have man separated from Him by a mediator that keeps back from access, as Moses and the legal priesthood did (<sup><400></sup>Exodus 19:12,13,17,21-24 <sup><400></sup>Hebrews 12:19-24). The law that thus interposed a mediator and conditions between man and God, was an exceptional state limited to the Jews, and parenthetically preparatory to the Gospel, God’s normal mode of dealing, as He dealt with Abraham, namely, *face to face directly*; by *promise* and *grace*, and not conditions; *to all nations united by faith in the one seed* (<sup><400></sup>Ephesians 2:14,16,18), and not to one people to the exclusion and severance from the ONE common Father, of all other nations. It is no objection to this view, that the Gospel, too, has a mediator (<sup><400></sup>1 Timothy 2:5). For Jesus is not a mediator separating the two parties in the covenant of promise or grace, as Moses did, but ONE in both nature and office with both *God* and *man* (compare “God in Christ,” <sup><400></sup>Galatians 3:17):representing the whole

universal manhood (<sup><4652></sup>1 Corinthians 15:22,45,47), and also bearing in Him “all the fullness of the Godhead.” Even His mediatorial office is to cease when its purpose of reconciling all things to God shall have been accomplished (<sup><4654></sup>1 Corinthians 15:24); and God’s ONENESS (<sup><3849></sup>Zechariah 14:9), as “all in all,” shall be fully manifested. Compare <sup><4417></sup>John 1:17, where the two mediators — Moses, the severing mediator of legal conditions, and Jesus, the uniting mediator of grace — are contrasted. The Jews began their worship by reciting the *Schemah*, opening thus, “Jehovah our God is ONE Jehovah”; which words their Rabbis (as JARCHIUS) interpret as teaching not only the unity of God, but the future *universality of His Kingdom* on earth (<sup><3809></sup>Zephaniah 3:9). Paul (<sup><4833></sup>Romans 3:30) infers the same truth from the ONENESS of God (compare <sup><4004></sup>Ephesians 4:4-6). He, as being One, unites all believers, without distinction, to Himself (<sup><4888></sup>Galatians 3:8,16,28 <sup><4111></sup>Ephesians 1:10 2:14; compare <sup><3811></sup>Hebrews 2:11) in direct communion. The unity of God involves the unity of the people of God, and also His dealing directly without intervention of a mediator.

**21.** “Is the *law* (which involves a mediator) against the promises of God (which are without a mediator, and *rest on God* alone and immediately)? God forbid.”

**life** — The law, as an externally prescribed rule, can never internally impart spiritual life to men naturally dead in sin, and change the disposition. If the law had been a law capable of giving *life*, “verily (in very reality, and not in the mere fancy of legalists) righteousness would have been by the law (for where life is, there righteousness, its *condition*, must also be).” But the law does not *pretend* to give life, and therefore not righteousness; so there is no opposition between the law and the promise. Righteousness can only come through the promise to Abraham, and through its fulfillment in the Gospel of grace.

**22. But** — as the law cannot give life or righteousness [ALFORD]. Or the “But” means, So far is *righteousness* from being of the law, that the *knowledge of sin* is rather what comes of the law [BENGEL].

**the scripture** — which began to be written after the time of the promise, at the time when the law was given. The *written* letter was needed So as PERMANENTLY to convict man of disobedience to God’s command.

Therefore he says, “the Scripture,” not the “Law.” Compare <sup><K&R></sup>Galatians 3:8, “Scripture,” for “the God of the Scripture.”

**concluded** — “shut up,” under condemnation, as in a prison. Compare <sup><B&D></sup>Isaiah 24:22, “As prisoners gathered in the pit and shut up in the prison.” Beautifully contrasted with “the liberty wherewith Christ makes free,” which follows, <sup><K&R></sup>Galatians 3:7,9,25,26 5:1 <sup><B&D></sup>Isaiah 61:1.

**all** — *Greek* neuter, “the universe of things”: the whole world, man, and all that appertains to him.

**under sin** — (<sup><B&R></sup>Romans 3:9,19 11:32).

**the promise** — *the inheritance promised* (<sup><K&R></sup>Galatians 3:18).

**by faith of Jesus Christ** — that is which is by faith in Jesus Christ.

**might be given** — The emphasis is on “given”: that it might be a free *gift*; not something earned by the works of the law (<sup><B&D></sup>Romans 6:23).

**to them that believe** — to them that have “the faith of (in) Jesus Christ” just spoken of.

**23. faith** — namely, that just mentioned (<sup><K&R></sup>Galatians 3:22), of which Christ is the object.

**kept** — *Greek*, “kept in ward”: the effect of the “shutting up” (<sup><K&R></sup>Galatians 3:22 <sup><B&D></sup>Galatians 4:2 <sup><B&D></sup>Romans 7:6).

**unto** — “with a view to the faith,” etc. We were, in a manner, morally forced to it, so that there remained to us no refuge but faith. Compare the phrase, <sup><B&R></sup>Psalms 78:50, *Margin*; <sup><B&R></sup>Psalms 31:8.

**which should afterwards**, etc. — “which was afterwards to be revealed.”

**24.** “*So that the law hath been* (that is, hath *turned out to be*) our schoolmaster (or “tutor,” literally, “pedagogue”: this term, among the Greeks, meant a faithful servant entrusted with the care of the boy from childhood to puberty, to keep him from evil, physical and moral, and accompany him to his amusements and studies) to guide us unto Christ,” with whom we are no longer “shut up” in bondage, but are freemen. “Children” (literally, *infants*) need such *tutoring* (<sup><B&R></sup>Galatians 4:3).

**might be** — rather, “that we *may* be justified by faith”; which we could not be till Christ, the object of faith, had come. Meanwhile the law, by outwardly checking the sinful propensity which was constantly giving fresh proof of its refractoriness — as thus the consciousness of the power of the sinful principle became more vivid, and hence the sense of need both of forgiveness of sin and freedom from its bondage was awakened — the law became a “schoolmaster to guide us unto Christ” [NEANDER]. The *moral* law shows us what we ought to do, and so we learn our inability to do it. In the *ceremonial* law we seek, by animal sacrifices, to answer for our not having done it, but find dead victims no satisfaction for the sins of living men, and that outward purifying will not cleanse the soul; and that therefore we need an infinitely better Sacrifice, the antitype of all the legal sacrifices. Thus delivered up to the *judicial* law, we see how awful is the doom we deserve: thus the law at last leads us to Christ, with whom we find righteousness and peace. “*Sin, sin!* is the word heard again and again in the Old Testament. Had it not there for centuries rung in the ear, and fastened on the conscience, the joyful sound, “grace for grace,” would not have been the watchword of the New Testament. This was the end of the whole system of sacrifices” [THOLUCK].

25. “But *now that* faith is come,” etc. Moses the lawgiver cannot bring us into the heavenly Canaan though he can bring us to the border of it. At that point he is superseded by Joshua, the type of Jesus, who leads the true Israel into their inheritance. The law leads us to Christ, and there its office ceases.

26. **children** — *Greek*, “sons.”

**by** — *Greek*, “through faith.” “Ye all” (Jews and Gentiles alike) are no longer “children” requiring a *tutor*, but SONS emancipated and walking at liberty.

27. **baptized into Christ** — (<sup>618</sup>Romans 6:3).

**have put on Christ** — Ye *did*, in that very act of being baptized into Christ, *put on*, or clothe yourselves with, Christ: so the *Greek* expresses. Christ is to you the *toga virilis* (the Roman garment of the full-grown man, assumed when ceasing to be a child) [BENGEL]. GATAKER defines a Christian, “One who has put on Christ.” The argument is, By baptism ye

have put on Christ; and therefore, He being the Son of God, ye become sons by adoption, by virtue of His Sonship by generation. This proves that baptism, *where it answers to its ideal*, is not a mere empty sign, but a means of spiritual transference from the state of legal condemnation to that of living union with Christ, and of sonship through Him in relation to God (<sup><634</sup>Romans 13:14). Christ alone can, by baptizing with His Spirit, make the inward grace correspond to the outward sign. But as He promises the blessing in the faithful use of the means, the Church has rightly presumed, in charity, that such is the case, nothing appearing to the contrary.

**28.** There is in this sonship by faith in Christ, no class privileged above another, as the Jews under the law had been above the Gentiles (<sup><610</sup>Romans 10:12 <sup><623</sup>1 Corinthians 12:13 <sup><5011</sup>Colossians 3:11).

**bond nor free** — Christ alike belongs to both by faith; whence he puts “bond” *before* “free.” Compare *Note*, see on <sup><402</sup>1 Corinthians 7:21,22; <sup><408</sup>Ephesians 6:8.

**neither male nor female** — rather, as *Greek*, “there is *not* male *and* female.” There is no distinction into male and female. Difference of sex makes no difference in Christian privileges. But under the law the male sex had great privileges. Males alone had in their body circumcision, the sign of the covenant (contrast *baptism* applied to male and female alike); they alone were capable of being kings and priests, whereas all of either sex are now “kings and priests unto God” (<sup><610</sup>Revelation 1:6); they had prior right to inheritances. In the resurrection the relation of the sexes shall cease (<sup><428</sup>Luke 20:35).

**one** — *Greek*, “one man”; masculine, not neuter, namely “one new man” in Christ (<sup><405</sup>Ephesians 2:15).

**29. and heirs** — The oldest manuscripts omit “and.” Christ is “Abraham’s seed” (<sup><416</sup>Galatians 3:16): ye are “one in Christ” (<sup><413</sup>Galatians 3:28), and one with Christ, as having “put on Christ” (<sup><417</sup>Galatians 3:27); therefore YE are “Abraham’s seed,” which is tantamount to saying (whence the “and” is omitted), ye are “heirs according to the *promise*” (not “by the *law*,” <sup><418</sup>Galatians 3:18); for it was to Abraham’s seed that the inheritance was promised (<sup><416</sup>Galatians 3:16). Thus he arrives at the same truth which he set out with (<sup><417</sup>Galatians 3:7). But one new “seed” of a

righteous succession could be found. One single faultless grain of human nature was found by God Himself, the source of a new and imperishable seed: “the seed” (<sup><4923></sup>Psalm 22:30) who receive from Him a new nature and name (<sup><4005></sup>Genesis 3:15 <sup><2530></sup>Isaiah 53:10,11 <sup><4124></sup>John 12:24). In Him the lineal descent from David becomes extinct. He died without posterity. But He lives and shall reign on David’s throne. No one has a legal claim to sit upon it but Himself, He being the only living direct representative (<sup><3927></sup>Ezekiel 21:27). His spiritual seed derive their birth from the travail of His soul, being born again of His word, which is the incorruptible seed (<sup><4112></sup>John 1:12 <sup><4908></sup>Romans 9:8 <sup><4123></sup>1 Peter 1:23).

# CHAPTER 4

## ◀800 GALATIANS 4:1-31.

**THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED: ILLUSTRATION OF OUR SUBJECTION TO THE LAW ONLY TILL CHRIST CAME, FROM THE SUBJECTION OF AN HEIR TO HIS GUARDIAN TILL HE IS OF AGE. PETER'S GOOD WILL TO THE GALATIANS SHOULD LEAD THEM TO THE SAME GOOD WILL TO HIM AS THEY HAD AT FIRST SHOWN. THEIR DESIRE TO BE UNDER THE LAW SHOWN BY THE ALLEGORY OF ISAAC AND ISHMAEL TO BE INCONSISTENT WITH THEIR GOSPEL LIBERTY.**

**1-7.** The fact of God's sending His Son to redeem us who were under the law (◀800 Galatians 4:4), and sending the Spirit of His Son into our hearts (◀800 Galatians 4:6), confirms the conclusion (◀800 Galatians 3:29) that we are "heirs according to the promise."

**the heir** — (◀800 Galatians 3:29). It is not, as in earthly inheritances, the death of the father, but our Father's sovereign will simply that makes us heirs.

**child** — *Greek*, "one under age."

**differeth nothing**, etc. — that is, has no more freedom than a slave (so the *Greek* for "servant" means). He is not at his own disposal.

**lord of all** — by title and virtual ownership (compare ◀800 1 Corinthians 3:21,22).

**2. tutors and governors** — rather, "guardians (of the person) and stewards (of the property)." Answering to "the law was our schoolmaster" or "tutor" (◀800 Galatians 3:24).

**until the time appointed of the father** — in His eternal purposes (◀800 Ephesians 1:9-11). The *Greek* is a legal term, expressing *a time defined* by law, or testamentary disposition.

**3. we** — the Jews primarily, and inclusively the Gentiles also. For the “we” in <sup><R01F></sup>Galatians 4:5 plainly refers to *both* Jew and Gentile believers. The Jews in their bondage to the law of Moses, as the representative people of the world, include all mankind virtually amenable to God’s law (<sup><R01H></sup>Romans 2:14,15; compare *Note*, see on <sup><R01B></sup>Galatians 3:13, <sup><R01E></sup>Galatians 3:23). Even the Gentiles were under “bondage,” and in a state of discipline suitable to nonage, till Christ came as the Emancipator.

**were in bondage** — as “servants” (<sup><R01G></sup>Galatians 4:1).

**under the elements** — or “rudiments”; rudimentary religion teaching of a non-Christian character: *the elementary lessons of outward things* (literally, “of the [outward] world”); such as the legal ordinances mentioned, <sup><R01H></sup>Galatians 4:10 (<sup><S01B></sup>Colossians 2:8,20). Our childhood’s lessons [CONYBEARE and HOWSON]. Literally, The *letters* of the alphabet (<sup><R01E></sup>Hebrews 5:12).

**4. the fullness of the time** — namely, “the time appointed by the Father” (<sup><R01D></sup>Galatians 4:2). Compare *Note*, see on <sup><R01D></sup>Ephesians 1:10; <sup><R01E></sup>Luke 1:57 <sup><R01E></sup>Acts 2:1 <sup><R01D></sup>Ezekiel 5:2. “The Church has its own ages” [BENGEL]. God does nothing prematurely, but, foreseeing the end from the beginning, waits till all is ripe for the execution of His purpose. Had Christ come directly after the fall, the enormity and deadly fruits of sin would not have been realized fully by man, so as to feel his desperate state and need of a Savior. Sin was fully developed. Man’s inability to save himself by obedience to the law, whether that of Moses, or that of conscience, was completely manifested; all the prophecies of various ages found their common center in *this* particular time: and Providence, by various arrangements in the social and political, as well as the moral world, had fully prepared the way for the coming Redeemer. God often permits physical evil long before he teaches the remedy. The smallpox had for long committed its ravages before inoculation, and then vaccination, was discovered. It was essential to the honor of God’s law to permit evil long before He revealed the full remedy. Compare “the set time” (<sup><R01E></sup>Psalm 102:13).

**was come** — *Greek*, “came.”



**sent forth** — *Greek*, “*sent forth out of heaven from Himself*” [ALFORD and BENGEL]. The same verb is used of the Father’s sending forth the Spirit (<sup><406></sup>Galatians 4:6). So in <sup><407></sup>Acts 7:12. Compare with this verse, <sup><432></sup>John 8:42 <sup><280></sup>Isaiah 48:16.

**his** — emphatical. “*His own Son.*” Not *by adoption*, as we are (<sup><405></sup>Galatians 4:5):nor merely His Son by the anointing of the Spirit which God sends into the heart (<sup><404></sup>Galatians 4:6 <sup><403></sup>John 1:18).

**made of a woman** — “made” is used as in <sup><455></sup>1 Corinthians 15:45, “The first man, Adam, *was made* a living soul,” *Greek*, “made to be (*born*) of a woman.” The expression implies a special interposition of God in His birth as man, namely, causing Him to be conceived by the Holy Ghost. So ESTIUS.

**made under the law** — “made to be under the law.” Not merely as GROTIUS and ALFORD explain, “Born subject to the law *as a Jew.*” But “made” by His Father’s appointment, and His own free will, “subject to the law,” to keep it all, ceremonial and moral, perfectly for us, as the Representative Man, and to suffer and exhaust the full penalty of our whole race’s violation of it. This constitutes the significance of His circumcision, His being presented in the temple (<sup><402></sup>Luke 2:21,22,27; compare <sup><401></sup>Matthew 5:17), and His baptism by John, when He said (<sup><400></sup>Matthew 3:15), “Thus it becometh us to *fulfill all righteousness.*”

**5. To** — *Greek*, “*That He might redeem.*”

**them ... under the law** — primarily the Jews: but as these were the representative people of the world, *the Gentiles*, too, are included in the redemption (<sup><403></sup>Galatians 3:13).

**receive** — The *Greek* implies the *suitableness* of the thing as long ago predestined by God. “Receive as something destined or due” (<sup><4234></sup>Luke 23:41 <sup><300></sup>2 John 1:8). Herein God makes of sons of men sons of God, inasmuch as God made of the Son of God the Son of man [AUGUSTINE on Psalm 52].

**6. because ye are sons** — The gift of the Spirit of prayer is the consequence of our adoption. The Gentile Galatians might think, as the Jews were under the law before their adoption, that so they, too, must

first be under the law. Paul, by anticipation, meets this objection by saying, YE ARE sons, therefore ye need not be as children (<sup><R01></sup>Galatians 4:1) under the tutorship of the law, as being already in the free state of “sons” of God by faith in Christ (<sup><R02></sup>Galatians 3:26), no longer in your nonage (as “children,” <sup><R03></sup>Galatians 4:1). The Spirit of God’s only Begotten Son in your hearts, sent from, and leading you to cry to, the Father, attests your sonship by adoption: for the Spirit is the “earnest of your inheritance” (<sup><R04></sup>Romans 8:15,16 <sup><R05></sup>Ephesians 1:13). “It is because ye are sons that God sent forth” (the *Greek* requires this translation, not “*hath* sent forth”) into OUR (so the oldest manuscripts read for “your,” in *English Version*) hearts the Spirit of His son, crying, “Abba, Father” (<sup><R06></sup>John 1:12). As in <sup><R07></sup>Galatians 4:5 he changed from “them,” the third person, to “we,” the first person, so here he changes from “ye,” the second person, to “our,” the first person: this he does to identify their case as Gentiles, with his own and that of his believing fellow countrymen, as Jews. In another point of view, though not the immediate one intended by the context, this verse expresses, “Because ye *are* sons (already in God’s electing purpose of love), God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts,” etc.: God thus, by sending His Spirit in due time, actually conferring that sonship which He already regarded as a present reality (“are”) because of His purpose, even before it was actually fulfilled. So <sup><R08></sup>Hebrews 2:13, where “the children” are spoken of as existing in His purpose, before their actual existence.

**the Spirit of his Son** — By faith ye are one with the Son, so that what is His is yours; His Sonship ensures your sonship; His Spirit ensures for you a share in the same. “If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His” (<sup><R09></sup>Romans 8:9). Moreover, as the Spirit of God proceeds from God the Father, so the Spirit of the Son proceeds from the Son: so that the Holy Ghost, as the Creed says, “proceedeth from the Father and the Son.” The Father was not *begotten*: the Son is *begotten* of the Father; the Holy Ghost *proceeding* from the Father and the Son.

**crying** — Here the SPIRIT is regarded as the *agent* in praying, and the believer as *His organ*. In <sup><R10></sup>Romans 8:15, “The Spirit of adoption” is said to be that whereby WE cry, “Abba, Father”; but in <sup><R11></sup>Romans 8:26, “The SPIRIT ITSELF maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be

uttered.” The believers’ prayer is His prayer: hence arises its acceptability with God.

**Abba, Father** — The *Hebrew* says, “*Abba*” (a *Hebrew* term), the *Greek*, “*Father*” (“*Pater*,” a *Greek* term in the original), both united together in one Sonship and one cry of faith, “*Abba, Father*.” So “*Even so* (‘*Nai*,’ *Greek*) *Amen* (*Hebrew*),” both meaning the same (<sup><600></sup>Revelation 1:7). Christ’s own former cry is the believers’ cry, “*Abba, Father*” (<sup><4140></sup>Mark 14:36).

**7. Wherefore** — Conclusion inferred from <sup><800></sup>Galatians 4:4-6.

**thou** — individualizing and applying the truth to each. Such an individual appropriation of this comforting truth God grants in answer to them who cry, “*Abba, Father*.”

**heir of God through Christ** — The oldest manuscripts read, “an heir through God.” This combines on behalf of man, the whole before-mentioned agency, of THE TRINITY: the Father sent His Son and the Spirit; the Son has freed us from the law; the Spirit has completed our sonship. Thus the redeemed are heirs THROUGH the Triune GOD, not through the law, nor through fleshly descent [WINDISCHMANN in ALFORD]; (<sup><800></sup>Galatians 3:18 confirms this). “An heir”)confirming <sup><800></sup>Galatians 3:29; compare <sup><800></sup>Romans 8:17.

**8-11.** Appeal to them not to turn back from their privileges as free sons, to legal bondage again.

**then** — when ye were “servants” (<sup><800></sup>Galatians 4:7).

**ye knew not God** — not opposed to <sup><800></sup>Romans 1:21. The heathen *originally knew* God, as <sup><800></sup>Romans 1:21 states, but did not choose to retain God in their knowledge, and so corrupted the original truth. They *might still have known* Him, in a measure, from His works, but as a matter of fact they knew Him not, so far as His eternity, His power as the Creator, and His holiness, are concerned.

**are no gods** — that is, have no existence, such as their worshippers attribute to them, in the nature of things, but only in the corrupt imaginations of their worshippers (see on <sup><400></sup>1 Corinthians 8:4; <sup><400></sup>1

Corinthians 10:19,20; <sup><443B></sup>2 Chronicles 13:9). Your “service” was a different bondage from that of the Jews, which was a true service. Yet theirs, like yours, was a burdensome yoke; how then is it ye wish to resume the yoke after that God has transferred both Jews and Gentiles to a free service?

**9. known God or rather are known of God** — *They* did not first know and love God, but *God* first, in His electing love, knew and loved them as His, and therefore attracted them to the saving knowledge of Him (<sup><412></sup>Matthew 7:23 <sup><408B></sup>1 Corinthians 8:3 <sup><512B></sup>2 Timothy 2:19; compare <sup><432></sup>Exodus 33:12,17 <sup><451C></sup>John 15:16 <sup><412B></sup>Philippians 3:12). God’s great grace in this made their fall from it the more heinous.

**how** — expressing indignant wonder at such a thing being possible, and even actually occurring (<sup><406></sup>Galatians 1:6). “How is it that ye turn back again?”

**weak** — powerless to *justify*: in contrast to the justifying power of faith (<sup><408B></sup>Galatians 3:24; compare <sup><507B></sup>Hebrews 7:18).

**beggarly** — contrasted with the *riches* of the inheritance of believers in Christ (<sup><408B></sup>Ephesians 1:18). The state of the “child” (<sup><400></sup>Galatians 4:1) is weak, as not having attained manhood; “beggarly,” as not having attained the inheritance.

**elements** — “rudiments.” It is as if a schoolmaster should go back to learning the A, B, C’S [BENGEL].

**again** — There are two *Greek* words in the original. “Ye desire again, *beginning afresh*, to be in bondage.” Though the Galatians, as Gentiles, had never been under the Mosaic yoke, yet they had been under “the elements of the world” (<sup><400></sup>Galatians 4:3): the common designation for the Jewish and Gentile systems alike, in contrast to the Gospel (however superior the Jewish was to the Gentile). Both systems consisted in outward worship and cleaved to sensible forms. Both were in bondage to *the elements of sense*, as though these could give the justification and sanctification which the inner and spiritual power of God alone could bestow.

**ye desire** — or “will.” *Will-worship* is not acceptable to God (<sup><512B></sup>Colossians 2:18,23).

**10.** To regard the observance of certain days as in itself meritorious as a work, is alien to the free spirit of Christianity. This is not incompatible with observing the Sabbath or the Christian Lord's day as obligatory, though *not as a work* (which was the Jewish and Gentile error in the observance of days), but as a holy mean appointed by the Lord for attaining the great end, holiness. The whole life alike belongs to the Lord in the Gospel view, just as the whole world, and not the Jews only, belong to Him. But as in Paradise, so now one portion of time is needed wherein to draw off the soul more entirely from secular business to God (<sup><S126C</sup>Colossians 2:16). "Sabbaths, new moons, and set feasts" (<sup><E331</sup>1 Chronicles 23:31 <sup><E303</sup>2 Chronicles 31:3), answer to "days, months, times." "Months," however, may refer to the *first* and *seventh* months, which were sacred on account of the number of feasts in them.

**times** — *Greek*, "seasons," namely, those of the three great feasts, the Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles.

**years** — The sabbatical year was about the time of writing this Epistle, A.D. 48 [BENGEL].

**11. lest** — *Greek*, "lest haply." My fear is not for my own sake, but for yours.

**12. be as I am** — "As I have in my life among you cast off Jewish habits, so do. ye; for I am become as ye are," namely, in the non-observance of legal ordinances. "The fact of my laying them aside among Gentiles, shows that I regard them as *not at all contributing to justification or sanctification*. Do you regard them in the same light, and act accordingly." His observing the law among the Jews was not inconsistent with this, for he did so only in order to win them, without compromising principle. On the other hand, the Galatian Gentiles, by adopting legal ordinances, showed that they regarded them as needful for salvation. This Paul combats.

**ye have not injured me at all** — namely, at the period when I first preached the Gospel among you, and when I made myself as you are, namely, living as a Gentile, not as a Jew. *You at that time did me no wrong; "ye did not despise my temptation in the flesh"* (<sup><R014</sup>Galatians 4:14): nay, you "received me as an angel of God." Then in <sup><R016</sup>Galatians 4:16, he asks,

“Have I then, *since* that time, become your enemy by telling you the truth?”

**13. how through infirmity** — rather, as *Greek*, “Ye know that *because* of an infirmity of *my* flesh I preached,” etc. He implies that bodily sickness, having detained him among them, contrary to his original intentions, was the occasion of his preaching the Gospel to them.

**at the first** — literally, “at the *former* time”; implying that at the time of writing he had been *twice* in Galatia. See my *Introduction*; also see on <sup><R01C</sup>Galatians 4:16, and <sup><R01E</sup>Galatians 5:21. His sickness was probably the same as recurred more violently afterward, “the thorn in the flesh” (<sup><A11D</sup>2 Corinthians 12:7), which also was overruled to good (<sup><A11D</sup>2 Corinthians 12:9,10), as the “infirmity of the flesh” here.

**14. my temptation** — The oldest manuscripts read, “your temptation.” My infirmity, which was, or might have been, a “temptation,” or *trial, to you*, ye despised not, that is, ye were not tempted by it to despise me and my message. Perhaps, however, it is better to punctuate and explain as LACHMANN, connecting it with <sup><R01B</sup>Galatians 4:13, “And (ye know) your temptation (that is, the temptation to which ye were exposed through the infirmity) which was in my flesh. Ye despised not (through *natural* pride), nor rejected (through *spiritual* pride), but received me,” etc. “Temptation does not mean here, as we now use the word, *tendency to an evil habit*, but BODILY TRIAL.”

**as an angel of God** — as a heaven-inspired and sent *messenger* from God: *angel* means “messenger” (<sup><R01E</sup>Malachi 2:7). Compare the phrase, <sup><R01D</sup>2 Samuel 19:27, a Hebrew and Oriental one for a person to be received with the highest respect (<sup><R01D</sup>Zechariah 12:8). An angel is free from the *flesh, infirmity, and temptation*.

**as Christ** — being Christ’s representative (<sup><R01D</sup>Matthew 10:40). Christ is Lord of angels.

**15. Where**, etc. — *Of what value* was your *congratulation* (so the *Greek* for “blessedness” expresses) of yourselves, on account of your having among you me, the messenger of the Gospel, considering how entirely you

have veered about since? Once you counted yourselves *blessed* in being favored with my ministry.

**ye would have plucked out your own eyes** — one of the dearest members of the body — so highly did you value me: a proverbial phrase for the greatest self-sacrifice (<sup><4162></sup>Matthew 5:29). CONYBEARE and HOWSON think that this particular form of proverb was used with reference to a weakness in Paul's eyes, connected with a nervous frame, perhaps affected by the brightness of the vision described, <sup><421></sup>Acts 22:11 <sup><4711></sup>2 Corinthians 12:1-7. "You would have torn out your own eyes to supply the lack of mine." The divine power of Paul's words and works, contrasting with the feebleness of his person (<sup><4700></sup>2 Corinthians 10:10), powerfully at first impressed the Galatians, who had all the impulsiveness of the Celtic race from which they sprang. Subsequently they soon changed with the fickleness which is equally characteristic of Celts.

**16.** Translate, "Amos I *then* become your enemy (an enemy in your eyes) *by telling* you the truth" (<sup><4816></sup>Galatians 2:5,14)? He plainly did not incur their enmity at his *first visit*, and the words here imply that he had *since then*, and *before* his now writing, incurred it: so that the occasion of his *telling* them the unwelcome truth, must have been at his second visit (<sup><4823></sup>Acts 18:23, see my *Introduction*). The fool and sinner hate a reprover. The righteous love faithful reproof (<sup><4916></sup>Psalms 141:5 <sup><4918></sup>Proverbs 9:8).

**17. They** — your flatterers: in contrast to Paul himself, who *tells* them *the truth*.

**zealously** — zeal in proselytism was characteristic especially of the Jews, and so of Judaizers (<sup><4814></sup>Galatians 1:14 <sup><4215></sup>Matthew 23:15 <sup><4810></sup>Romans 10:2).

**affect you** — that is, court you (<sup><4710></sup>2 Corinthians 11:2).

**not well** — not in a good way, or for a good end. Neither the *cause* of their zealous courting of you, nor the *manner*, is what it ought to be.

**they would exclude you** — "They wish to shut you out" from the kingdom of God (that is, they wish to persuade you that as uncircumcised Gentiles, you are shut out from it), "that ye *may zealously court them*," that is, become circumcised, as zealous followers of themselves. ALFORD explains it, that their wish was to shut out the Galatians from the general

community, and attract them as a separate clique to their own party. So the English word “exclusive,” is used.

**18. good to be zealously affected** — rather, to correspond to “zealously court” in <sup><4018></sup>Galatians 4:18, “to be zealously courted.” I do not find fault with them for zealously courting you, nor with you for being *zealously courted*: provided it be “in a good cause” (translate so), “it is a good thing” (<sup><4011></sup>1 Corinthians 9:20-23). My reason for saying the “not well” (<sup><4017></sup>Galatians 4:17; the *Greek* is the same as that for “good,” and “in a good cause,” in <sup><4018></sup>Galatians 4:28), is that their *zealous courting of you* is not in a good cause. The older interpreters, however, support *English Version* (compare <sup><4014></sup>Galatians 1:14).

**always** — Translate and arrange the words thus, “*At all times*, and not only when I am present with you.” I do not desire that *I* exclusively should have the privilege of zealously courting you. Others may do so in my absence with my full approval, if only it be in a good cause, and if Christ be faithfully preached (<sup><4015></sup>Philippians 1:15-18).

**19. My little children** — (<sup><4018></sup>1 Timothy 1:18 <sup><4011></sup>2 Timothy 2:1 <sup><4011></sup>1 John 2:1). My relation to you is not merely that of one *zealously courting* you (<sup><4017></sup>Galatians 4:17,18), but that of a *father* to his *children* (<sup><4015></sup>1 Corinthians 4:15).

**I travail in birth** — that is, like a mother in pain till the birth of her child.

**again** — a second time. The former time was when I was “present with you” (<sup><4018></sup>Galatians 4:18; compare *Note*, see on <sup><4013></sup>Galatians 4:13).

**Christ be formed in you** — that you may live nothing but Christ, and think nothing but Christ (<sup><4021></sup>Galatians 2:20), and glory in nothing but Him, and His death, resurrection, and righteousness (<sup><4018></sup>Philippians 3:8-10 <sup><4027></sup>Colossians 1:27).

**20.** Translate as *Greek*, “I could wish.” If circumstances permitted (which they do not), I would gladly be with you [M. STUART].

**now** — as I was twice already. Speaking face to face is so much more effective towards loving persuasion than writing (<sup><4012></sup>2 John 1:12 <sup><4013></sup>3 John 1:13,14).



**change my voice** — as a mother (<sup><R16></sup>Galatians 4:19): adapting my tone of voice to what I saw in person your case might need. This is possible to one present, but not to one in writing [GROTIUS and ESTIUS].

**I stand in doubt of you** — rather, “I am perplexed about you,” namely, how to deal with you, what kind of words to use, gentle or severe, to bring you back to the right path.

**21. desire** — of your own accord madly courting that which must condemn and ruin you.

**do ye not hear** — do ye not consider the mystic sense of Moses’ words? [GROTIUS]. The law itself sends you away from itself to Christ [ESTIUS]. After having sufficiently maintained his point by argument, the apostle confirms and illustrates it by an inspired allegorical exposition of historical facts, containing in them general laws and types. Perhaps his reason for using allegory was to confute the Judaizers with their own weapons: subtle, mystical, allegorical interpretations, unauthorized by the Spirit, were their favorite arguments, as of the Rabbins in the synagogues. Compare the *Jerusalem Talmud* [*Tractatu Succa, cap. Hechalil*]. Paul meets them with an allegorical exposition, not the work of fancy, but sanctioned by the Holy Spirit. History, if properly understood contains in its complicated phenomena, simple and *continually recurring divine laws*. The history of the elect people, like their legal ordinances, had, besides the literal, a typical meaning (compare <sup><R11></sup>1 Corinthians 10:1-4 15:45,47 <sup><R12></sup>Revelation 11:8). Just as the extra-ordinarily-born Isaac, the gift of grace according to promise, supplanted, beyond all human calculations, the naturally-born Ishmael, so the new theocratic race, the spiritual seed of Abraham by promise, the Gentile, as well as Jewish believers, were about to take the place of the natural seed, who had imagined that to them exclusively belonged the kingdom of God.

**22.** (<sup><R13></sup>Genesis 16:3-16 21:2).

**Abraham** — whose sons ye wish to be (compare <sup><R14></sup>Romans 9:7-9).

**a bond maid ... a free woman** — rather, as *Greek*, “the bond maid ... *the* free woman.”

**23. after the flesh** — born according to the usual course of nature: in contrast to Isaac, who was born “by virtue of *the promise*” (so the *Greek*), as the efficient cause of Sarah’s becoming pregnant out of the course of nature (<sup><4049></sup>Romans 4:19). Abraham was to lay aside all confidence in *the flesh* (after which Ishmael was born), and to live by faith alone in *the promise* (according to which Isaac was miraculously born, contrary to all calculations of flesh and blood).

**24. are an allegory** — rather, “are allegorical,” that is, have *another besides the literal* meaning.

**these are the two covenants** — “these [women] are (that is, *mean*; omit ‘the’ with all the oldest manuscripts) two covenants.” As among the Jews the bondage of the mother determined that of the child, the children of the free covenant of promise, answering to Sarah, are free; the children of the legal covenant of bondage are not so.

**one from** — that is, *taking his origin from* Mount Sinai. Hence, it appears, he is treating of the moral law (<sup><4089></sup>Galatians 3:19) chiefly (<sup><3828></sup>Hebrews 12:18). Paul was familiar with the district of Sinai in Arabia (<sup><4017></sup>Galatians 1:17), having gone thither after his conversion. At the gloomy scene of the giving of the Law, he learned to appreciate, by contrast, the grace of the Gospel, and so to cast off all his past legal dependencies.

**which gendereth** — that is, *bringing forth children* unto bondage. Compare the phrase (<sup><4025></sup>Acts 3:25), “*children of the covenant* which God made ... saying unto Abraham.”

**Agar** — that is, Hagar.

**25.** Translate, “For this *word*, Hagar, is (imports) Mount Sinai in Arabia (that is, among the Arabians — *in the Arabian tongue*).” So CHRYSOSTOM explains. Haraut, the traveler, says that to this day the Arabians call Sinai, “Hadschar,” that is, *Hagar*, meaning *a rock or stone*. Hagar twice fled into the desert of Arabia (<sup><4061></sup>Genesis 16:1-16 21:9-21): from her the mountain and city took its name, and the people were called Hagarenes. Sinai, with its rugged rocks, far removed from the promised land, was well suited to represent the law which inspires with terror, and the spirit of bondage.

**answereth** — literally, “stands in the same rank with”; “she corresponds to.”

**Jerusalem which now is** — that is, the Jerusalem of the Jews, having only a present temporary existence, in contrast with the spiritual Jerusalem of the Gospel, which in germ, under the form of the *promise*, existed ages before, and shall be for ever in ages to come.

**and** — The oldest manuscripts read, “*For* she is in bondage.” As Hagar was in bondage to her mistress, so Jerusalem that now is, is in bondage to the law, and also to the Romans: her civil state thus being in accordance with her spiritual state [BENGEL].

**26.** This verse stands instead of the sentence which we should expect, to correspond to <sup>(~~R01~~)</sup>Galatians 4:24, “One from Mount Sinai,” namely, *the other covenant* from the heavenly mount above, which is (answers in the allegory to) Sarah.

**Jerusalem ... above** — (<sup>(~~R02~~)</sup>Hebrews 12:22), “the heavenly Jerusalem.” “New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God” (<sup>(~~R03~~)</sup>Revelation 3:12 21:2). Here “*the Messianic theocracy*, which before Christ’s second appearing is *the Church*, and after it, Christ’s kingdom of glory” [MEYER].

**free** — as Sarah was; opposed to “she is in bondage” (<sup>(~~R04~~)</sup>Galatians 4:25).

**all** — omitted in many of the oldest manuscripts, though supported by some. “Mother of us,” namely, *believers* who are already members of the invisible Church, the heavenly Jerusalem, hereafter to be *manifested* (<sup>(~~R05~~)</sup>Hebrews 12:22).

**27.** (<sup>(~~R06~~)</sup>Isaiah 54:1).

**thou barren** — Jerusalem above: the spiritual Church of the Gospel, the fruit of “the promise,” answering to *Sarah*, who bore not “after the flesh”: as contrasted with the law, answering to Hagar, who was fruitful in the ordinary course of nature. Isaiah speaks primarily of Israel’s restoration after her long-continued calamities; but his language is framed by the Holy Spirit so as to reach beyond this to the spiritual Zion: including not only the Jews, the natural descendants of Abraham and children of the law, but

also *the Gentiles*. The spiritual Jerusalem is regarded as “barren” while the law trammled Israel, for she then had no spiritual children of the Gentiles.

**break forth** — into crying.

**cry** — shout for joy.

**many more** — Translate as *Greek*, “Many are the children of the desolate (the New Testament Church made up in the greater part from the Gentiles, *who once had not the promise*, and so was destitute of God as her husband), more than of her which hath an (*Greek*, ‘THE’) husband (the Jewish Church having GOD for her *husband*, <sup><251b></sup>Isaiah 54:5 <sup><311b></sup>Jeremiah 2:2).” Numerous as were the children of the legal covenant, those of the Gospel covenant are more so. The force of the *Greek* article is, “Her who has THE husband of which the other is destitute.”

**28. we** — The oldest manuscripts and versions are divided between “we” and “ye.” “We” better accords with <sup><40c></sup>Galatians 4:26, “mother of *us*.”

**children of promise** — not children *after the flesh*, but through the promise (<sup><40c></sup>Galatians 4:23,29,31). “We *are*” so, and ought to wish to continue so.

**29. persecuted** — Ishmael “mocked” Isaac, which contained in it the germ and spirit of persecution (<sup><121b></sup>Genesis 21:9). His mocking was probably directed against Isaac’s piety and faith in God’s promises. Being the older by natural birth, he haughtily prided himself above him that was born by promise: as Cain hated Abel’s piety.

**him ... born after the Spirit** — The language, though referring primarily to Isaac, born in a spiritual way (namely, by the promise or word of God, rendered by His Spirit efficient out of the course of nature, in making Sarah fruitful in old age), is so framed as especially to refer to believers justified by Gospel grace through faith, as opposed to carnal men, Judaizers, and legalists.

**even so it is now** — (<sup><451></sup>Galatians 5:11 6:12,17 <sup><41b></sup>Acts 9:29 13:45,49,50 14:1,2,19 17:5,13 18:5,6). The Jews persecuted Paul, not for preaching Christianity in opposition to heathenism, but for preaching it as distinct from Judaism. Except in the two cases of Philippi and Ephesus (where the

persons beginning the assault were pecuniarily interested in his expulsion), he was nowhere set upon by the Gentiles, unless they were first stirred up by the Jews. The coincidence between Paul's Epistles and Luke's history (the Acts) in this respect, is plainly undesigned, and so a proof of genuineness (see PALEY, *Horae Paulinae*).

**30.** <sup><1211></sup>Genesis 21:10,12, where Sarah's words are, "shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac." But what was there said literally, is here by inspiration expressed in its allegorical spiritual import, applying to the New Testament believer, who is antitypically "the son of the free woman." In <sup><188></sup>John 8:35,36, Jesus refers to this.

**Cast out** — from the house and inheritance: literally, Ishmael; spiritually, the carnal and legalists.

**shall not be heir** — The *Greek* is stronger, "must not be heir," or "inherit."

**31. So then** — The oldest manuscripts read, "Wherefore." This is the conclusion inferred from what precedes. In <sup><182></sup>Galatians 3:29 and <sup><180></sup>Galatians 4:7, it was established that we, New Testament believers, are "heirs." If, then, we are heirs, "we are not children of the bond woman (whose son, according to Scripture, was 'not to be heir,' <sup><180></sup>Galatians 4:30), but of the free woman (whose son was, according to Scripture, to be heir). For we are not "cast out" as Ishmael, but accepted as sons and heirs.

# CHAPTER 5

## ◀811 GALATIANS 5:1-26.

**PERORATION. EXHORTATION TO STAND FAST IN THE GOSPEL LIBERTY, JUST SET FORTH, AND NOT TO BE LED BY JUDAIZERS INTO CIRCUMCISION, OR LAW JUSTIFICATION: YET THOUGH FREE, TO SERVE ONE ANOTHER BY LOVE: TO WALK IN THE SPIRIT, BEARING THE FRUIT THEREOF, NOT IN THE WORKS OF THE FLESH.**

1. The oldest manuscripts read, “in liberty (so ALFORD, MOBERLEY, HUMPHRY, and ELLICOTT. But as there is no *Greek* for ‘in,’ as there is in translating in ▶863 1 Corinthians 16:13 ▶1027 Philippians 1:27 4:1, I prefer ‘It is FOR freedom that’) Christ hath made us free (not *in*, or *for*, a state of bondage). Stand fast, therefore, and be not entangled again *in* a yoke of bondage” (namely, the law, ▶802 Galatians 4:24 ▶450 Acts 15:10). On “again,” see on ▶800 Galatians 4:9.

2. **Behold** — that is, Mark what I say.

**I Paul** — Though you now think less of my authority, I nevertheless give my name and personal authority as enough by itself to refute all opposition of adversaries.

**if ye be circumcised** — not as ALFORD, “If you will *go on being* circumcised.” Rather, “If ye suffer yourselves to be circumcised,” namely, under the notion of its being necessary to *justification* (▶810 Galatians 5:4 ▶451 Acts 15:1). Circumcision here is not regarded simply by itself (for, viewed as a mere *national* rite, it was practiced for conciliation’s sake by Paul himself, ▶416 Acts 16:3), but as the symbol of *Judaism* and *legalism in general*. If this be necessary, then the Gospel of grace is at an end. If the latter be the way of justification, then Judaism is in no way so.

**Christ ... profit ... nothing** — (▶821 Galatians 2:21). For righteousness of works and justification by faith cannot co-exist. “He who is circumcised

[for justification] is so as fearing the law, and he who fears, disbelieves the power of grace, and he who disbelieves can profit nothing by that grace which he disbelieves [CHRYSOSTOM].

**3. For** — *Greek*, “Yea, more”; “Moreover.”

**I testify ... to every man** — as well as “unto you” (<sup><ARB></sup>Galatians 5:2).

**that is circumcised** — that submits to be circumcised. Such a one became a “proselyte of righteousness.”

**the whole law** — impossible for man to keep even in part, much less *wholly* (<sup><ARB></sup>James 2:10); yet none can be justified by the law, unless he keep it *wholly* (<sup><ARB></sup>Galatians 3:10).

**4.** Literally, “Ye have become void from Christ,” that is, your connection with Christ has become void (<sup><ARB></sup>Galatians 5:2). <sup><ARB></sup>Romans 7:2, “*Loosed* from the law,” where the same *Greek* occurs as here.

**whosoever of you are justified** — “are being justified,” that is, are *endeavoring* to be justified.

**by the law** — *Greek*, “IN the law,” as the element *in* which justification is to take place.

**fallen from grace** — Ye no longer “*stand*” in grace (<sup><ARB></sup>Romans 5:2). Grace and legal righteousness cannot co-exist (<sup><ARB></sup>Romans 4:4,5:11:6). Christ, by circumcision (<sup><ARB></sup>Luke 2:21), undertook to obey all the law, and fulfill all righteousness for us: any, therefore, that now seeks to fulfill the law for himself in any degree for justifying righteousness, severs himself from the grace which flows from Christ’s fulfillment of it, and becomes “a debtor to do the whole law” (<sup><ARB></sup>Galatians 5:3). The decree of the Jerusalem council had said nothing so strong as this; it had merely decided that Gentile Christians were not bound to legal observances. But the Galatians, while not pretending to be so *bound*, imagined there was an efficacy in them to merit a higher degree of *perfection* (<sup><ARB></sup>Galatians 3:3). This accounts for Paul not referring to the decree at all. He took much higher ground. See PALEY’S *Horae Paulinae*. The natural mind loves outward fetters, and is apt to forge them for itself, to stand in lieu of holiness of heart.

**5. For** — proof of the assertion, “fallen from grace,” by contrasting with the case of *legalists*, the “hope” of *Christians*.

**through the Spirit** — *Greek*, rather, “by the Spirit”: in opposition to *by the flesh* (<sup><R02></sup>Galatians 4:29), or fleshly ways of justification, as circumcision and legal ordinances. “We” is emphatical, and contrasted with “whosoever of you would be justified by the law” (<sup><R01></sup>Galatians 5:4).

**the hope of righteousness** — “We wait for the (realization of the) hope (which is the fruit) of the righteousness (that is, justification which comes) by (literally, ‘*from — out of*’) faith,” <sup><R01></sup>Romans 5:1,4,5 <sup><R02></sup>8:24,25, “*Hope ... we with patience wait for it.*” This is a farther step than being “justified”; not only are we this, but “wait for the hope” which is connected with it, and is its full consummation. “Righteousness,” in the sense of justification, is by the believer once for all already attained: but the consummation of it in future perfection above is the object of *hope* to be *waited for*: “the crown of righteousness laid up” (<sup><R02></sup>2 Timothy 4:8): “the hope laid up for you in heaven” (<sup><R01></sup>Colossians 1:5 <sup><R02></sup>1 Peter 1:3).

**6. For** — confirming the truth that it is “by faith” (<sup><R01></sup>Galatians 5:5).

**in Jesus Christ** — *Greek*, “in Christ Jesus.” In union with *Christ* (the ANOINTED Savior), that is, *Jesus* of Nazareth.

**nor uncircumcision** — This is levelled against those who, being not legalists, or Judaizers, think themselves Christians on this ground alone.

**faith which worketh by love** — *Greek*, “working by love.” This corresponds to “a new creature” (<sup><R01></sup>Galatians 6:15), as its definition. Thus in <sup><R01></sup>Galatians 5:5,6, we have the three, “faith,” “hope,” and “love.” The *Greek* expresses, “Which effectually worketh”; which exhibits its *energy* by love (so <sup><R01></sup>1 Thessalonians 2:13). *Love* is not joined with *faith* in justifying, but is the principle of the works which follow after justification by faith. Let not legalists, upholding circumcision, think that the essence of the law is set at naught by the doctrine of justification by faith only. Nay, “all the law is fulfilled in one word — love,” which is the principle on which “faith worketh” (<sup><R01></sup>Galatians 5:14). Let them, therefore, seek this “faith,” which will enable them truly to fulfill the law. Again, let not those who pride themselves on uncircumcision think that, because the law does



not justify, they are free to walk after “the flesh” (<sup><485></sup>Galatians 5:13). Let them, then, seek that “love” which is inseparable from true faith (<sup><518></sup>James 2:8,12-22). Love is utterly opposed to the enmities which prevailed among the Galatians (<sup><485></sup>Galatians 5:15,20). The Spirit (<sup><485></sup>Galatians 5:5) is a Spirit of “faith” and “love” (compare <sup><514></sup>Romans 14:17 <sup><417></sup>1 Corinthians 7:19).

7. Translate, “Ye were running well” in the Gospel race (<sup><412></sup>1 Corinthians 9:24-26 <sup><113></sup>Philippians 3:13,14).

**who**, etc. — none whom you ought to have listened to [BENGEL]: alluding to the Judaizers (compare <sup><480></sup>Galatians 3:1).

**hinder** — The *Greek* means, literally, “hinder by breaking up a road.”

**not obey the truth** — not submit yourselves to the true Gospel way of justification.

8. **This persuasion** — *Greek*, “The persuasion,” namely, to which you are yielding. There is a play on words in the original, the *Greek* for *persuasion* being akin to “obey” (<sup><487></sup>Galatians 5:7). This persuasion which you have *obeyed*.

**cometh not of** — that is “from.” Does not emanate from Him, but from an enemy.

**that calleth you** — (<sup><485></sup>Galatians 5:13 1:6 <sup><514></sup>Philippians 3:14 <sup><514></sup>1 Thessalonians 5:24). The calling is the rule of the whole race [BENGEL].

9. **A little leaven** — the *false teaching* of the Judaizers. A small portion of legalism, if it be mixed with the Gospel, corrupts its purity. To add legal ordinances and works in the least degree to justification by faith, is to undermine “the whole.” So “leaven” is used of *false doctrine* (<sup><162></sup>Matthew 16:12: compare <sup><133></sup>Matthew 13:33). In <sup><415></sup>1 Corinthians 5:6 it means the corrupting influence of one bad *person*; so BENGEL understands it here to refer to the person (<sup><487></sup>Galatians 5:7,8,10) who misled them. <sup><193></sup>Ecclesiastes 9:18, “One sinner destroyeth much good” (<sup><415></sup>1 Corinthians 15:33). I prefer to refer it to false *doctrine*, answering to “persuasion” (<sup><485></sup>Galatians 5:8).

10. *Greek*, “I (emphatical: ‘I on my part’) have confidence in the Lord *with regard to you*” (<sup><519></sup>2 Thessalonians 3:4), that ye will be none otherwise minded” (than what by this Epistle I desire you to be, <sup><515></sup>Philippians 3:15).

**but he that troubleth you** — (<sup><4007></sup>Galatians 1:7 <sup><4152></sup>Acts 15:24 <sup><4025></sup>Joshua 7:25 <sup><1187></sup>1 Kings 18:17,18). Some one, probably, was prominent among the seducers, though the denunciation applies to them all (<sup><4007></sup>Galatians 1:7 4:17).

**shall bear** — as a heavy burden.

**his** — *his due and inevitable* judgment from God. Paul distinguishes the case of the seduced, who were misled through thoughtlessness, and who, now that they are set right by him, he confidently hopes, in God's goodness, will return to the right way, from that of the seducer who is doomed to judgment.

**whosoever he be** — whether great (<sup><4008></sup>Galatians 1:8) or small.

**11.** Translate, "If I am still preaching (as I did before conversion) circumcision, why am I still persecuted?" The Judaizing troubler of the Galatians had said, "Paul himself preaches circumcision," as is shown by his having circumcised Timothy (<sup><4008></sup>Acts 16:3; compare also <sup><4005></sup>Acts 20:6:21:24). Paul replies by anticipation of their objection, As regards myself, the fact that I am still persecuted by the Jews shows plainly that I do *not* preach circumcision; for it is just because I preach Christ crucified, and not the Mosaic law, as the sole ground of justification, that they persecute me. If for conciliation he lived as a Jew among the Jews, it was in accordance with his principle enunciated (<sup><4008></sup>1 Corinthians 7:18,20 9:20). Circumcision, or uncircumcision, are things indifferent in themselves: their lawfulness or unlawfulness depends on the *animus* of him who uses them. The Gentile Galatians' animus in circumcision could only be their supposition that it influenced favorably their standing before God. Paul's living as a Gentile among Gentiles, plainly showed that, if he lived as a Jew among Jews, it was not that he thought it meritorious before God, but as a matter indifferent, wherein he might lawfully conform as a *Jew by birth* to those with whom he was, in order to put no needless stumbling-block to the Gospel in the way of his countrymen.

**then** — Presuming that I did so, "then," in that case, "the offense of (stumbling-block, <sup><4023></sup>1 Corinthians 1:23 occasioned to the Jews by) the cross has become done away." Thus the Jews' accusation against Stephen was not that he preached Christ crucified, but that "he spake blasphemous

words against this holy place and *the law*.” They would, in some measure, have borne the former, if he had mixed with it justification in part by circumcision and the law, and if he had, through the medium of Christianity, brought converts to Judaism. But if justification in any degree depended on legal ordinances, Christ’s crucifixion in that degree was unnecessary, and could profit nothing (<sup><80D></sup>Galatians 5:2,4). Worldly Wiseman, of the town of Carnal Policy, turns Christian out of the narrow way of the Cross, to the house of Legality. But the way to it was up a mountain, which, as Christian advanced, threatened to fall on him and crush him, amidst flashes of lightning from the mountain [BUNYAN, *Pilgrim’s Progress*] (<sup><30D></sup>Hebrews 12:18-21).

**12. they ... which trouble you** — Translate, as the *Greek* is different from <sup><80D></sup>Galatians 5:10, “they who are *unsettling* you.”

**were even cut off** — even as they desire your foreskin to be *cut off* and cast away by circumcision, so would that *they were even cut off* from your communion, being worthless as a castaway foreskin (<sup><80D></sup>Galatians 1:7,8; compare <sup><10D></sup>Philippians 3:2). The fathers, JEROME, AMBROSE, AUGUSTINE, and CHRYSOSTOM, explain it, “Would that they would even cut themselves off,” that is, cut off not merely the foreskin, but the whole member: if *circumcision* be not enough for them, then let them have *excision* also; an outburst hardly suitable to the gravity of an apostle. But <sup><80D></sup>Galatians 5:9,10 plainly point to *excommunication* as the judgment threatened against the troublers: and danger of the bad “leaven” spreading, as the reason for it.

**13.** The “ye” is emphatical, from its position in the *Greek*, “Ye brethren”; as opposed to those legalists “who trouble you.”

**unto liberty** — The *Greek* expresses, “on a footing of liberty.” The *state* or *condition* in which ye have been called to salvation, is one of liberty. Gospel liberty consists in three things, freedom from the Mosaic yoke, from sin, and from slavish fear.

**only**, etc. — Translate, “Only turn not *your* liberty into an occasion for the flesh.” Do not give the flesh the handle or pretext (<sup><80D></sup>Romans 7:8, “occasion”) for its indulgence which it eagerly seeks for; do not let it make

Christian “liberty” its pretext for indulgence (<sup><8856></sup>Galatians 5:16,17 <sup><6126></sup>1 Peter 2:16 <sup><6129></sup>2 Peter 2:19 <sup><6104></sup>Jude 1:4).

**but by love serve one another** — *Greek*, “Be servants (be in bondage) to one another.” If ye must be *servants*, then *be servants to one another in love*. While free as to legalism, be *bound* by Love (the article in the *Greek* personifies love in the abstract) to serve one another (<sup><809></sup>1 Corinthians 9:19). Here he hints at their unloving strifes springing out of lust of power. “For the lust of power is the mother of heresies” [CHRYSOSTOM].

**14. all the law** — *Greek*, “the whole law,” namely, the Mosaic law. *Love to God* is presupposed as the root from which *love to our neighbor* springs; and it is in this tense the latter *precept* (so “word” means here) is said to be the fulfilling of “*all the law*” (<sup><8988></sup>Leviticus 19:18). Love is “the law of Christ” (<sup><8810></sup>Galatians 6:2 <sup><4072></sup>Matthew 7:12 22:39,40 <sup><6310></sup>Romans 13:9,10).

**is fulfilled** — Not as received text “is being fulfilled,” but as the oldest manuscripts read, “has been fulfilled”; and so “receives its full perfection,” as rudimentary teachings are fulfilled by the more perfect doctrine. The law only united Israelites together: the Gospel unites all men, and that in relation to God [GROTIUS].

**15. bite** — *backbite* the character.

**devour** — the substance by injuring, extortion, etc. (<sup><3013></sup>Habakkuk 1:13 <sup><1234></sup>Matthew 23:14 <sup><4112></sup>2 Corinthians 11:20).

**consumed**, etc. — Strength of soul, health of body, character, and resources, are all consumed by broils [BENGEL].

**16. This I say then** — Repeating in other words, and explaining the sentiment in <sup><8813></sup>Galatians 5:13, “What I mean is this.”

**Walk in the Spirit** — *Greek*, “By (the rule of) the (Holy) Spirit.” Compare <sup><8816></sup>Galatians 5:16-18,22,25 <sup><8810></sup>Galatians 6:1-8, with <sup><8102></sup>Romans 7:22 8:11. The best way to keep tares out of a bushel is to fill it with wheat.

**the flesh** — the natural man, out of which flow the evils specified (<sup><8813></sup>Galatians 5:19-21). The spirit and the flesh mutually exclude one

another. It is promised, not that we should have no evil lusts, but that we should “not *fulfill*” them. If the spirit that is in us can be at ease under sin, it is not a spirit that comes from the Holy Spirit. The gentle dove trembles at the sight even of a hawk’s feather.

**17. For** — the reason why walking by the Spirit will exclude fulfilling the lusts of the flesh, namely, their mutual contrariety.

**the Spirit** — not “lusteth,” but “tendeth (or some such word is to be supplied) against the flesh.”

**so that ye cannot do the things that ye would** — The Spirit strives against the flesh and its evil influence; the flesh against the Spirit and His good influence, *so that neither the one nor the other can be fully carried out into action*. “But” (<sup><R18></sup>Galatians 5:18) where “the Spirit” prevails, the issue of the struggle no longer continues doubtful (<sup><R15></sup>Romans 7:15-20) [BENGE]. The *Greek* is, “that ye may not do the things that ye would.” “The flesh and Spirit are contrary one to the other,” *so that* you must distinguish what proceeds from the Spirit, and what from the flesh; and *you must not fulfill what you desire according to the carnal self*, but what the Spirit within you desires [NEANDER]. But the antithesis of <sup><R18></sup>Galatians 5:18 (“But,” etc.), where the conflict is *decided*, shows, I think, that here <sup><R17></sup>Galatians 5:17 contemplates the inability both for fully accomplishing the good we “would,” owing to the opposition of the *flesh*, and for doing the *evil* our flesh would desire, owing to the opposition of *the Spirit* in the awakened man (such as the Galatians are assumed to be), until we yield ourselves wholly by the Spirit to “walk by the Spirit” (<sup><R16></sup>Galatians 5:16,18).

**18.** “If ye *are* led (give yourselves up to be led) *by* (*Greek*) the Spirit, ye are not under the law.” For ye are not working the works of the flesh (<sup><R16></sup>Galatians 5:16,19-21) which bring one “under the law” (<sup><R10></sup>Romans 8:2,14). The “Spirit makes free from the law of sin and death” (<sup><R12></sup>Galatians 5:23). The law is made for a fleshly man, and for the works of the flesh (<sup><S100></sup>1 Timothy 1:9), “not for a righteous man” (<sup><R14></sup>Romans 6:14,15).

**19-23.** Confirming <sup><R18></sup>Galatians 5:18, by showing the contrariety between the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit.

**manifest** — The hidden *fleshly* principle betrays itself palpably by its works, so that these are not hard to discover, and leave no doubt that they come not from the Spirit.

**which are these** — *Greek*, “such as,” for instance.

**Adultery** — omitted in the oldest manuscripts.

**lasciviousness** — rather, “wantonness” petulance, capricious insolence; it may display itself in “lasciviousness,” but not necessarily or constantly so (<sup><4172></sup>Mark 7:21,22, where it is not associated with fleshly lusts) [TRENCH]. “Works” (in the plural) are attributed to the “flesh,” because they are divided, and often at variance with one another, and even when taken each one by itself, betray their fleshly origin. But the “*fruit of the Spirit*” (<sup><4183></sup>Galatians 5:23) is singular, because, however manifold the results, they form one harmonious whole. The results of the flesh are not dignified by the name “fruit”; they are but *works* (<sup><4184></sup>Ephesians 5:9,11). He enumerates those fleshly “works” (committed against our neighbor, against God, and against ourselves) to which the Galatians were most prone (the Celts have always been prone to disputations and internal strifes): and those manifestations of the *fruit of the Spirit* most needed by them (<sup><4185></sup>Galatians 5:13,15). This passage shows that “the flesh” does not mean merely *sensuality*, as opposed to *spirituality*: for “divisions” in the catalogue here do not flow from sensuality. The identification of “the natural (*Greek*, ‘*animal-souled*’) man,” with the “carnal” or *fleshly* man (<sup><4184></sup>1 Corinthians 2:14), shows that “the flesh” expresses *human nature as estranged from God*. TRENCH observes, as a proof of our fallen state, how much richer is every vocabulary in words for sins, than in those for graces. Paul enumerates *seventeen* “works of the flesh,” only *nine* manifestations of “the fruit of the Spirit” (compare <sup><4186></sup>Ephesians 4:31).

**20. witchcraft** — sorcery; prevalent in Asia (<sup><4189></sup>Acts 19:19; compare Revelation 21).

**hatred** — *Greek*, “hatreds.”

**variance** — *Greek*, “strife”; singular in the oldest manuscripts.

**emulations** — in the oldest manuscripts, singular — “emulation,” or rather, “jealousy”; for the sake of one’s own advantage. “Envyings”

(<sup><482></sup>Galatians 5:21) are even without advantage to the person himself [BENGEL].

**wrath** — *Greek*, plural, “passionate outbreaks” [ALFORD].

**strife** — rather as *Greek*, “factions,” “cabals”; derived from a *Greek* root, meaning “a worker for hire”: hence, *unworthy means for compassing ends, factious practices*.

**seditions** — “dissensions,” as to secular matters.

**heresies** — as to sacred things (see on <sup><419></sup>1 Corinthians 11:19). Self-constituted *parties*; from a *Greek* root, to *choose*. A *schism* is a more recent split in a congregation from a difference of opinion. *Heresy* is a schism become inveterate [AUGUSTINE, *Con. Crescon. Don.*, 2,7].

**21. tell ... before** — namely, before the event.

I ... told *you* in time past — when I was with you.

**you** — who, though maintaining justification by the law, are careless about keeping the law (<sup><422></sup>Romans 2:21-23).

**not inherit ... kingdom of God** — (<sup><418></sup>1 Corinthians 6:9,10 <sup><418></sup>Ephesians 5:5).

**22. love** — the leader of the band of graces (<sup><411></sup>1 Corinthians 13:1-13).

**gentleness** — *Greek*, “benignity,” conciliatory to others; whereas “goodness,” though ready to do good, has not such *suavity* of manner [JEROME]. ALFORD translates, “kindness.”

**faith** — “faithfulness”; opposed to “heresies” [BENGEL]. ALFORD refers to <sup><411></sup>1 Corinthians 13:7, “Believeth all things”: *faith* in the widest sense, toward God and man. “Trustfulness” [CONYBEARE and HOWSON].

**23. temperance** — The *Greek* root implies *self-restraint* as to one’s desires and lusts.

**against such** — not *persons*, but things, as in <sup><482></sup>Galatians 5:21.

**no law** — confirming <sup><R15></sup>Galatians 5:18, “Not under the law” (<sup><S10></sup>1 Timothy 1:9,10). The law itself commands love (<sup><R14></sup>Galatians 5:14); so far is it from being “against such.”

**24.** The oldest manuscripts read, “They that are of Christ Jesus”; they that belong to Christ Jesus; being “led by (His) Spirit” (<sup><R15></sup>Galatians 5:18).

**have crucified the flesh** — They nailed it to the cross once for all when they became Christ’s, on believing and being baptized (<sup><R15></sup>Romans 6:3,4): they keep it *now* in a state of crucifixion (<sup><R15></sup>Romans 6:6): so that the Spirit can produce in them, comparatively uninterrupted by it, “the fruit of the Spirit” (<sup><R15></sup>Galatians 5:22). “Man, by faith, is dead to the former standing point of a sinful life, and rises to a new life (<sup><R15></sup>Galatians 5:25) of communion with Christ (<sup><R15></sup>Colossians 3:3). The act by which *they have crucified the flesh with its lust*, is already accomplished ideally in principle. But the practice, or outward conformation of the life, must harmonize with the tendency given to the inward life” (<sup><R15></sup>Galatians 5:25) [NEANDER]. We are to be executioners, dealing cruelly with the body of sin, which has caused the acting of all cruelties on Christ’s body.

**with the affections** — Translate, “with its passions.” Thus they are dead to the law’s condemning power, which is only for the fleshly, and their lusts (<sup><R15></sup>Galatians 5:23).

**25. in ... in** — rather, as *Greek*, “If we live (see on <sup><R15></sup>Galatians 5:24) BY the Spirit, let us also walk (<sup><R15></sup>Galatians 5:16 6:16) BY the Spirit.” Let our life in practice correspond to the ideal inner principle of our spiritual life, namely, our standing by faith as dead to, and severed from, sin, and the condemnation of the law. “Life by (or ‘in’) the Spirit” is not an occasional influence of the Spirit, but an abiding state, wherein we are continually alive, though sometimes sleeping and inactive.

**26.** *Greek*, “Let us not BECOME.” While not asserting that the Galatians are “*vainglorious*” now, he says they are liable to *become* so.

**provoking one another** — an effect of “*vaingloriousness*” on the *stronger*: as “*envying*” is its effect on the *weaker*. A danger common both to the orthodox and Judaizing Galatians.



# CHAPTER 6

## ◀<sup>REB</sup> GALATIANS 6:1-18.

### EXHORTATIONS CONTINUED; TO FORBEARANCE AND HUMILITY; LIBERALITY TO TEACHERS AND IN GENERAL. POSTSCRIPT AND BENEDICTION.

**1. Brethren** — An expression of kindness to conciliate attention. Translate as *Greek*, “If a man *even* be overtaken” (that is, caught in the very act [ALFORD and ELLICOTT]: BEFORE he expects: unexpectedly). BENGEL explains the “before” in the *Greek* compound verb, “If a man be overtaken in a fault *before ourselves*”: If another has *really* been overtaken in a fault *the first*; for often he who is *first to find fault*, is the very one who has *first transgressed*.

**a fault** — *Greek*, “a transgression,” “a fall”; such as a falling back into legal bondage. Here he gives monition to those who have not so fallen, “the spiritual,” to be not “vainglorious” (◀<sup>REB</sup> Galatians 5:26), but forbearing to such (◀<sup>REB</sup> Romans 15:1).

**restore** — The *Greek* is used of a dislocated limb, reduced to its place. Such is the tenderness with which we should treat a fallen member of the Church in restoring him to a better state.

**the spirit of meekness** — *the meekness* which is the gift of the *Holy Spirit* working in our spirit (◀<sup>REB</sup> Galatians 5:22,25). “Meekness” is that temper of spirit towards God whereby we accept His dealings without disputing; then, towards men, whereby we endure meekly their provocations, and do not withdraw ourselves from the burdens which their sins impose upon us [TRENCH].

**considering thyself** — Transition from the plural to the singular. When congregations are addressed collectively, each individual should take home the monition *to himself*.

**thou also be tempted** — as is likely to happen to those who reprove others without meekness (compare <sup><400D</sup>Matthew 7:2-5 <sup><502S</sup>2 Timothy 2:25 <sup><502B</sup>James 2:13).

2. If ye, legalists, must “bear burdens,” then instead of legal burdens (<sup><4E3H</sup>Matthew 23:4), “bear one another’s burdens,” literally, “weights.” Distinguished by BENGEL from “burden,” <sup><406I</sup>Galatians 6:4 (a different *Greek* word, “load”): “weights” exceed the strength of those under them; “burden” is proportioned to the strength.

**so fulfill** — or as other old manuscripts read, “so ye will fulfill,” *Greek*, “fill up,” “thoroughly fulfill.”

**the law of Christ** — namely, “love” (<sup><4514</sup>Galatians 5:14). Since ye desire “the law,” then fulfill the law of Christ, which is not made up of various minute observances, but whose sole “burden” is “love” (<sup><4E3H</sup>John 13:34 15:12); <sup><451B</sup>Romans 15:3 gives Christ as the example in the particular duty here.

3. Self-conceit, the chief hindrance to forbearance and sympathy towards our fellow men, must be laid aside.

**something** — possessed of some spiritual pre-eminence, so as to be exempt from the frailty of other men.

**when he is nothing** — The *Greek* is subjective: “Being, if he would come to himself, and look on the real fact, nothing” [ALFORD] (<sup><406D</sup>Galatians 6:2,6 <sup><4E3B</sup>Romans 12:3 <sup><406D</sup>1 Corinthians 8:2).

**deceiveth himself** — literally, “he mentally deceives himself.” Compare <sup><502S</sup>James 1:26, “deceiveth his own heart.”

4. **his own work** — not merely his own *opinion* of himself.

**have rejoicing in himself alone** — Translate, “Have *his* (matter for) glorying in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another (namely, not in regard to his neighbor, by comparing himself with whom, he has fancied he has matter for boasting as that neighbor’s superior).” Not that really a man by looking to “himself alone” is likely to find cause for glorying in himself. Nay, in <sup><406E</sup>Galatians 6:5, he speaks of a “burden” or *load*, not of matter for glorying, as what really belongs to each man. But he

refers to *the idea those whom he censures had of themselves: they thought they had cause for “glorying” in themselves, but it all arose from unjust self-conceited comparison of themselves with others, instead of looking at home. The only true glorying, if glorying it is to be called, is in the testimony of a good conscience, glorying in the cross of Christ.*

**5.** For (by this way, <sup><R0P></sup>Galatians 6:4, of proving himself, not depreciating his neighbor by comparison) each man shall bear his own “burden,” or rather, “load” (namely, of sin and infirmity), the *Greek* being different from that in <sup><R0P></sup>Galatians 6:2. This verse does not contradict <sup><R0P></sup>Galatians 6:2. There he tells them to bear with others’ “burdens” of infirmity in sympathy; here, that self-examination will make a man to feel he has enough to do with “his own load” of sin, without comparing himself boastfully with his neighbor. Compare <sup><R0P></sup>Galatians 6:3. Instead of “thinking himself to be something,” he shall feel the “load” of his own sin: and this will lead him to bear sympathetically with his neighbor’s burden of infirmity. aeSOP says a man carries two bags over his shoulder, the one with his own sins hanging behind, that with his neighbor’s sins in front.

**6.** From the mention of bearing one another’s burdens, he passes to one way in which those burdens may be borne — by ministering out of their earthly goods to their spiritual teachers. The “but” in the *Greek*, beginning of this verse, expresses this: I said, Each shall bear his own burden; BUT I do not intend that he should not think of others, and especially of the wants of his ministers.

**communicate unto him** — “impart a share unto his teacher”: literally, “*him that teacheth catechetically.*”

**in all good things** — in every kind of the good things *of this life*, according as the case may require (<sup><S1Z></sup>Romans 15:27 <sup><R0P></sup>1 Corinthians 9:11,14).

**7. God is not mocked** — The *Greek* verb is, literally, to sneer with the nostrils drawn up in contempt. God does not suffer Himself to be imposed on by empty words: He will judge according to works, which are seeds sown for eternity of either joy or woe. Excuses for illiberality in God’s cause (<sup><R0P></sup>Galatians 6:6) seem valid before men, but are not so before God (<sup><R0P></sup>Psalm 50:21).

**soweth** — especially of his resources (<sup><400></sup>2 Corinthians 9:6).

**that** — *Greek*, “this”; this and nothing else.

**reap** — at the harvest, the end of the world (<sup><413></sup>Matthew 13:39).

8. Translate, “He that soweth *unto his own* flesh,” with a view to fulfilling its desires. He does not say, “*His* spirit,” as he does say, “His flesh.” For in ourselves we are not spiritual, but carnal. The flesh is devoted to *selfishness*.

**corruption** — that is, destruction (<sup><300></sup>Philippians 3:19). Compare as to the deliverance of believers from “corruption” (<sup><400></sup>Romans 8:21). The use of the term “corruption” instead, implies that *destruction* is not an *arbitrary* punishment of fleshly-mindedness, but is its *natural* fruit; the corrupt flesh producing corruption, which is another word for destruction: corruption is the fault, and corruption the punishment (see on <sup><400></sup>1 Corinthians 3:17; <sup><400></sup>2 Peter 2:12). Future life only expands the seed sown here. Men cannot mock God because they can deceive themselves. They who sow tares cannot reap wheat. They alone reap life eternal who sow to the Spirit (<sup><400></sup>Psalms 126:6 <sup><410></sup>Proverbs 11:18 22:8 <sup><400></sup>Hosea 8:7 10:12 <sup><400></sup>Luke 16:25 <sup><400></sup>Romans 8:11 <sup><400></sup>James 5:7).

9. (<sup><400></sup>2 Thessalonians 3:13). And when we do good, let us also persevere in it without fainting.

**in due season** — in its own proper season, God’s own time (<sup><400></sup>1 Timothy 6:15).

**faint not** — literally, “be relaxed.” Stronger than “be not weary.” *Weary of well-doing* refers to the will; “faint not” to relaxation of the powers [BENGE]. No one should faint, as in an earthly harvest sometimes happens.

10. Translate, “*So then, according* as (that is, in proportion as) we have season (that is, opportunity), let us *work* (a distinct *Greek* verb from that for “do,” in <sup><400></sup>Galatians 6:9) *that which is* (in each case) *good*.” As thou art able, and while thou art able, and when thou art able (<sup><400></sup>Ecclesiastes 9:10). We have now the “season” for *sowing*, as also there will be hereafter the “due season” (<sup><400></sup>Galatians 6:9) for *reaping*. The whole life is, in one sense,

the “seasonable opportunity” to us: and, in a narrower sense, there occur in it more especially convenient seasons. The latter are sometimes lost in looking for still more convenient seasons (<sup><4025></sup>Acts 24:25). We shall not always have the opportunity “we have” now. Satan is sharpened to the greater zeal in injuring us, by the shortness of his time (<sup><4020></sup>Revelation 12:12). Let us be sharpened to the greater zeal in well-doing by the shortness of ours.

**them who are of the household** — Every right-minded man does well to the members of his own family (<sup><5088></sup>1 Timothy 5:8); so believers are to do to those of the household of faith, that is, those whom *faith* has made members of “the household of God” (<sup><4009></sup>Ephesians 2:19): “the house of God” (<sup><5085></sup>1 Timothy 3:15 <sup><4017></sup>1 Peter 4:17).

**11.** Rather, “See in how large letters I have written.” The *Greek* is translated “how great” in <sup><5004></sup>Hebrews 7:4, the only other passage where it occurs in the New Testament. Owing to his weakness of eyes (<sup><4045></sup>Galatians 4:15) he wrote in large letters. So JEROME. All the oldest manuscripts are written in uncial, that is, capital letters, the “cursive,” or small letters, being of more recent date. Paul seems to have had a difficulty in writing, which led him to make the uncial letters larger than ordinary writers did. The mention of these is as a token by which they would know that he wrote the whole Epistle with his own hand; as he did also the pastoral Epistle, which this Epistle resembles in style. He usually dictated his Epistles to an amanuensis, excepting the concluding salutation, which he wrote himself (<sup><4022></sup>Romans 16:22 <sup><4021></sup>1 Corinthians 16:21). This letter, he tells the Galatians, he writes with his own hand, no doubt in order that they may see what a regard he had for them, in contrast to the Judaizing teachers (<sup><4012></sup>Galatians 6:12), who sought only their own ease. If *English Version* be retained, the words, “how large a letter (literally, ‘in how large letters’),” will not refer to the length of the Epistle *absolutely*, but that it was a large one for *him* to have written with his own hand. NEANDER supports *English Version*, as more appropriate to the earnestness of the apostle and the tone of the Epistle: “How *large*” will thus be put for “how *many*.”

**12.** Contrast between his zeal in their behalf, implied in <sup><4011></sup>Galatians 6:11, and the zeal for self on the part of the Judaizers.

**make a fair show** — (<sup><AUG></sup>2 Corinthians 5:12).

**in the flesh** — in outward things.

**they** — it is “these” who

**constrain you** — by example (<sup><AUG></sup>Galatians 6:13) and importuning.

**only lest** — “only that they may not,” etc. (compare <sup><AUG></sup>Galatians 5:11).

**suffer persecution** — They escaped in a great degree the Jews’ bitterness against Christianity and the offense of the cross of Christ, by making the Mosaic law a necessary preliminary; in fact, making Christian converts into Jewish proselytes.

**13.** Translate, “For not even do they who submit to circumcision, keep the law themselves (<sup><AUG></sup>Romans 2:17-23), but they wish you (emphatical) to be circumcised,” etc. They arbitrarily selected circumcision out of the whole law, as though observing it would stand instead of their non-observance of the rest of the law.

**that they may glory in your flesh** — namely, in the outward change (opposed to *an inward change wrought by the SPIRIT*) which they have effected in bringing you over to their own Jewish-Christian party.

**14.** Translate, “But *as for me* (in opposition to those gloriers ‘in your flesh,’ <sup><AUG></sup>Galatians 6:13), God forbid that I,” etc.

**in the cross** — the atoning death on the cross. Compare <sup><AUG></sup>Philippians 3:3,7,8, as a specimen of his glorying. The “cross,” the great object of shame to them, and to all carnal men, is the great object of glorying to me. For by it, the worst of deaths, Christ has destroyed all kinds of death [AUGUSTINE, *Tract 36*, on John, sec. 4]. We are to testify the power of Christ’s death working in us, after the manner of crucifixion (<sup><AUG></sup>Galatians 5:24 <sup><AUG></sup>Romans 6:5,6).

**our** — He reminds the Galatians by this pronoun, that *they* had a share in the “Lord Jesus Christ” (the full name is used for greater solemnity), and therefore ought to glory in Christ’s cross, as he did.

**the world** — inseparably allied to the “flesh” (<sup><481B></sup>Galatians 6:13). Legal and fleshly ordinances are merely outward, and “elements of the world” (<sup><481B></sup>Galatians 4:3).

**is** — rather, as *Greek*, “has been crucified to me” (<sup><481D></sup>Galatians 2:20). He used “crucified” for *dead* (<sup><512D></sup>Colossians 2:20, “dead with Christ”), to imply his oneness with Christ *crucified* (<sup><503B></sup>Philippians 3:10): “the fellowship of His sufferings being made conformable unto His death.”

**15. availeth** — The oldest manuscripts read, “is” (compare <sup><481B></sup>Galatians 5:6). Not only are they of no *avail*, but they *are nothing*. So far are they from being matter for “glorying,” that they are “nothing.” But Christ’s cross is “all in all,” as a subject for glorying, in “the new creature” (<sup><481D></sup>Ephesians 2:10,15,16).

**new creature** — (<sup><481B></sup>2 Corinthians 5:17). A *transformation by the renewal of the mind* (<sup><512B></sup>Romans 12:2).

**16. as many** — contrasting with the “as many,” <sup><481B></sup>Galatians 6:12.

**rule** — literally, *a straight rule*, to detect crookedness; so a rule of life.

**peace** — from God (<sup><481D></sup>Ephesians 2:14-17 6:23).

**mercy** — (<sup><512D></sup>Romans 15:9).

**Israel of God** — not the Israel after the flesh, among whom those teachers wish to enrol you; but the spiritual seed of Abraham by faith (<sup><481B></sup>Galatians 3:9,29 <sup><512B></sup>Romans 2:28,29 <sup><503B></sup>Philippians 3:3).

**17. let no man trouble me** — by opposing my apostolic authority, seeing that it is stamped by a sure seal, namely, “I (in contrast to the Judaizing teachers who gloried in the flesh) bear (as a high mark of honor from the King of kings).”

**the marks** — properly, marks branded on slaves to indicate their owners. So Paul’s scars of wounds received for Christ’s sake, indicate to whom he belongs, and in whose free and glorious service he is (<sup><47123></sup>2 Corinthians 11:23-25). The Judaizing teachers gloried in the circumcision mark in the flesh of *their followers*: Paul glories in the marks of suffering for Christ on

*his own* body (compare <sup><8164</sup>Galatians 6:14 <sup><5180</sup>Philippians 3:10 <sup><5121</sup>Colossians 1:24).

**the Lord** — omitted in the oldest manuscripts.

**18. Brethren** — Place it, as *Greek*, “last” in the sentence, before the “Amen.” After much rebuke and monition, he bids them farewell with the loving expression of *brotherhood* as his last parting word (see on <sup><8106</sup>Galatians 1:6).

**be with your spirit** — which, I trust, will keep down the *flesh* (<sup><5123</sup>1 Thessalonians 5:23 <sup><5102</sup>2 Timothy 4:22 Philemon 1: 25).